

DE EGYPTISCHE OERGNOSIS

THE EGYPTIAN ARCH-GNOSIS

EN HAAR ROEP IN HET EEUWIGE NU

OPNIEUW VERKONDIGD EN VERKLAARD
AAN DE HAND VAN DE
TABULA SMARAGDINA EN HET CORPUS HERMETICUM
VAN
HERMES TRISMEGISTOS

BY

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The woman of the Apocalypse

The Woman of the Apocalypse

The seven headed dragon with the ten horns is brooding on the earth. With its tail it wipes out a third part of the stars in the sky. Its bat-wings are set with eyes: it rules the earth.

The Woman of the Apocalypse is cloaked with the Sun, she is standing on the Moon and the serpent, and she has a garland of twelve stars around her head. She is the Brotherhood, fleeing to the desert with the child, the young Gnosis, the new link in the golden chain of Brotherhoods, to save it from the dragon. Then she offers the child up to the hands of the Father, to the crown, the all-seeing eye, which admits it behind the veils of the All.

The Arch-Father is standing to the right of the Woman. He is the divine creative impulse, who emits power; he keeps the zodiac, in the shape of a ring, in his hand. The serpent, with its tail in its mouth, coils itself twelve times around the ring. The Arch-Father points at the Arch-Mother: he pours his power into her. She receives it, and for that reason her hands resemble a receptacle. She is the one who offers resistance, she is Saturn, time, restriction; that is why she carries an hourglass on her head. Their garments form a curtain, that is drawn back for the Sun, which is the central Christ-principle: No one comes to the Father but by me.' That is the reason why the child, too, is lifted up from the spheres of the Sun. In the All-Father we also find the symbol of yang and yin, the complete unity, the circle: the Sun sends its rays throughout the All.

The straight path for the gnostic pupil is the road through the middle arch, the human life-field, via the soul towards the Christ. Then there is also the contact with the All-Father: 'Whoever sees me, has seen the Father.' To merge fully with the All-Father signifies the end of all materiality.

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Preface

The publication of the fourth and final part of *The Egyptian Arch Gnosis and its Call in the Eternal Present* fills us with profound joy and gratitude.

In keeping with the task of the young Gnostic Brotherhood of the Golden Rosycross, this book explains to seeking mankind the eternal message of redemption in its universal form, so that the one path leading to the fulfilment of mankind's true destiny may be made visible once again.

In these 'times of the end', in which all the old certainties are being overturned, countless people are yearning for the one light that always shines in the darkness, but can never be grasped by it. It is for all those seekers that the call 'out of Egypt', the call of love and wisdom from Him who 'never forsakes the works of his hands', is being sent out. Those who are seeking Him will hear the call sent out to them by the hermetic wisdom, and they will know what they have to do.

May they heed that call while there is still time! The harvesters of the present are ready: may many soon join the harvest!

JAN VAN RIJCKENBORGH

Thirteenth Book:

Hermes Trismegistus to Tat: Concerning the Universal Spirit

- 1 *Hermes: The Spirit, O Tat, is of God's very essence, at least, if one could speak of such a thing as the essence of God: however that may be, it is the Spirit alone that knows itself perfectly.*
- 2 *That is why the Spirit cannot be distinguished from the essence of God; it emanates from that source just as light emanates from the sun.*
- 3 *This Spirit is The Good in men; hence some men are gods: their human state very closely approximates to the divine state. The Good Demon has accordingly called the gods immortal men, and men mortal gods. In beings devoid of reason the soul is nature. Wherever there is life, there is also a soul. In beings devoid of reason, however, the soul is nothing but life, empty of Spirit. But the Spirit is a benefactor of the Souls of men: it works on them and forms them for the sake of The Good.*
- 4 *In beings devoid of reason, the soul cooperates with each one's natural disposition; in men, however, it works against this disposition.*
- 5 *Every soul that has entered a body is tormented by pain and lust since, in this dense body, pain and lust course*

like a blaze into which the soul is plunged and in which it is drowned.

- 6 *Whenever the Spirit can give guidance to such souls, it causes its light to go out to them and opposes their inclinations. Just as a good physician cauterises or cuts away what is diseased in the body, so the Spirit inflicts suffering on the soul by leading it away from lust, which is the cause of its diseased state.*
- 7 *But the great disease of the soul is its denial of God, with the resulting erroneous thinking which gives rise to all evils and certainly nothing good. That is why the Spirit, by combating this disease, imparts The Good to the soul once more, just as the physician restores health to the body.*
- 8 *But human souls that do not allow themselves to be guided by the Spirit find themselves in the same condition as the souls of animals devoid of reason. The soul cooperates with them and gives free rein to their desires, towards which they are drawn by the intensity of the lust they are chasing in their reasonless state. As irrational beings they ceaselessly surrender themselves without any restraint to their passions and desires, and their sins will never satisfy them as the irrational activities of passions and desires constitute a boundless evil.*
- 9 *Over these souls God has placed the law as castigator, so that they might become aware of their wickedness.*
- 10 *Tat: In view of all this, O Father, it appears to me that what you told me before concerning fate is entirely discredited. If someone is predestined to commit adultery, or sacrilege*

or some other crime, will he then be punished although he has done the deed in the coercive grip of fate?

- 11 *Hermes: Everything, my son, is the work of fate, without which nothing can happen with regard to things corporeal, be it good or evil. It is equally through fate that he whose deeds have been beautiful and good will experience the result of that action; therefore, everybody acts, in order to gain experience through the variety of his actions.*
- 12 *But let us now no longer speak about sin and fate, for those we have dealt with before. We are now talking about the Soul and its faculties, and how it works differently in men and in beings devoid of reason. In the latter it cannot work beneficially, but in men it extinguishes the passions and desires. Among men one should distinguish between those who possess the Soul and those who have no link with the Soul. All men are subject to fate, to birth and change, for these are the beginning and the end of fate.*
- 13 *Thus all men experience the decrees of destiny, but those who follow Reason, those who, as we have said, are guided by the Soul, do not experience them as the others do. Since they have freed themselves from evil, they do not experience the decisions as something evil.*
- 14 *Tat: What then do you want to say, Father: is the adulterer not bad? Is the murderer not bad? Nor all the others?*
- 15 *Hermes: My son, a man who is guided by Reason will nevertheless know the suffering connected with adultery and murder, just like an adulterer and a murderer, even though he does not practice adultery and does not*

commit murder. It is impossible to escape from change, just as it is impossible to escape from birth, but he who possesses the Soul can free himself from evil.

- 16 *Therefore, my son, I have at all times listened to the words of the Good Demon¹. If he had made them available in writing, he would have rendered a great service to the human race. He alone, my son, has spoken truly divine words, since he, as the first-born of God, recognises all things. Thus I once heard him say that all created things are one, and in particular the corporeal beings endowed with intellect; that we live out of potential power, through active power and through the essence of eternity. That is why the Spirit, just like the Soul thereof, is good.*
- 17 *Consequently, the things of the Spirit are undivided and the Spirit, which rules over all things and is the Soul of God, is capable of doing whatever it wills. Consider these things and relate what I said just now to the question you asked me earlier about fate and the Soul. If you now put aside all contention over words you will find, my son, that the Spirit, the Soul of God, truly has dominion over everything: over fate, over the law and over everything else, and that nothing is impossible for it. It is able to exalt the human soul above fate, but equally to subject it to fate if it has fallen into error. Behold the sublime words spoken by the Good Demon.*
- 18 *Tat: These are divine, true and enlightening words, Father. But may I ask you to explain the following as well? You said that, in beings devoid of reason, the soul acts in keep-*

¹ See glossary

ing with their disposition and inclinations. Now I suppose that passion, (*pathos*) is the inclination of beings devoid of reason. If the soul cooperates with the inclinations, and the latter are passions, is then the soul also a passion, since it is affected by *pathos*?

19 *Hermes*: Very good, my son. Your question is discerning, and it is fair that I should answer it. Everything incorporeal in a body is subject to *pathos* (passion, suffering) and, strictly speaking, is itself passion (*pathos*). Whatever gives rise to movement is incorporeal. Whatever is moved, is a body. The incorporeal is also moved, and that by the Soul, and this movement, too, is passion (*pathos*). So both that which causes movement and that which is moved are subject to suffering (*pathos*); the one because it imposes movement, the other because it is subjected to the impulse of motion. If however, the Soul disengages itself from the body, it also frees itself from suffering (*pathos*, passion). It may be better to say, my son, that nothing is without *pathos* (suffering), but that everything is subject to it. *Pathos* (suffering) is not the same as the experience of *pathos*. The former is active, the latter passive. Bodies, too, are active of themselves. They are either motionless or being moved. In both cases there is *pathos*.

20 The incorporeal is forever being urged to action, and is therefore subject to suffering. So do not let yourself be misled by words: active power and *pathos* (suffering) are one and the same. But there is nothing against using the purest, most favourable name for it.

21 *Tat*: Your explanation has been very clear, Father.

- 22 *Hermes: Furthermore, my son, consider that, on the human being alone among all mortals, God has bestowed two gifts: the Soul and the Word, which are equivalent to immortality. If man uses these gifts in the right way, he will differ in nothing from the immortals. Even more than this: he will free himself from the body and be guided by these two to the choir of the gods and the blessed ones.*
- 23 *Tat: Do other living beings not use the Word, Father?*
- 24 *Hermes: They only have at their disposal a sound, a voice. The Word, speech, differs very much from the voice. All human beings have words in common, while every other living being has a voice, or sound, entirely of its own.*
- 25 *Tat: Yet the language of men differs for every nation?*
- 26 *Hermes: Indeed, languages differ, my son, yet mankind is a unity. And words too are a unity. If they are translated from one language into another, it turns out to be the same both in Egypt and in Persia and Greece. It seems to me, my son, that you do not yet comprehend the marvel and the tremendous significance of the Word. The blessed God, the Good Demon, said that the Soul is in the body, the Spirit in the Soul, the Word in the Spirit, and that accordingly God is the Father of all of them. So the Word is the image and the Soul of God, the idea is the image of the Soul, the body is the image of the idea.*
- 27 *So the most subtle part of matter is the air (ether), the most subtle part of the air is the Soul, the most subtle part of the Soul is the Spirit, and the most subtle part of the Spirit is God.*

- 28 *God encompasses and permeates everything, the Spirit encompasses the Soul, the Soul encompasses the air (ether), the air encompasses matter.*
- 29 *Fate, providence and nature are instruments of the cosmic order and the order of matter. All things that are equipped with a soul are beings, and their state of being is identical. However, each one of the bodies from which the All is composed is multiple in nature: the identity of the composite bodies is preserved in imperishability, changing from one form into the other.*
- 30 *Moreover, all composite bodies have a unique number, since without a number neither a combination nor a dissolution could be achieved. It is the units which generate the number that makes them multiple, and that absorb again the composite parts when the number dissolves, whereas matter remains singular.*
- 31 *Well then, this whole world, this great godhead which is the image of Him who is even greater, and with whom it is one and with whom it maintains the Father's order and will, is the fullness of life. There is nothing in it that is without life, neither in its generality or in any part of it, in the entire course of return throughout the aeons, proclaimed by the Father. There has never been, and nor will there ever be anything in the world that is dead.*
- 32 *It is the will of the Father that the world should live as long as it maintains its cohesion; that is why the world must needs be God.*
- 33 *How then would it be possible, my son, for a thing such as*

death to be within God, in Him who is the image of the All, in Him who is the fullness of life? For death is decay, and decay is destruction. How then could one think that any part of what is imperishable could pass into decay, or that any part of God could be destroyed?

34 *Tat: But Father, do living beings not die, even if they are in the world and part of it?*

35 *Hermes: Do not put it like that, my son, for such an expression of what is taking place will mislead you. Living beings do not die, but their composite bodies are dissolved. This dissolution is not death, but the annulment of a complexity. This dissolution is not meant to be destruction, but a new becoming, renewal. For what is the active life-force? Is it not movement? And what is motionless in the world? Nothing, my son!*

36 *Tat: But do you not consider the Earth to be motionless, Father?*

37 *Hermes: No, my son, it is unique in being both full of motion and permanent. Would it not be absurd to assume the one who sustains the All, the one who gives birth to everything and makes it grow, to be motionless? For without motion nothing could come to birth. It is rather absurd to ask, as you do, whether a fourth part of the world might be inactive, for an immobile body means nothing else than inactivity.*

38 *Know then, my son, that everything that exists in the world is, without any exception, being moved, whether it be in order to decrease or in order to increase. And what is*

in motion is also alive, and it is a holy law that nothing which is alive remains equal to itself, that is, unchanged. Broadly speaking the world is unchanging, but all its creations change, although without perishing or being annihilated. It is only words, and names, that confuse and disturb people.

39 *Life does not consist of birth, but of consciousness; and change does not mean death, but forgetting.*

40 *In this regard everything is immortal: matter, life, breath, the soul, the spirit, the intellect, instinct, everything of which every living being is composed.*

41 *In this sense every living being is immortal, but most of all the human being, who is able to receive God and be one with Him. It is only with this living being that the Godhead communicates: during the night by dreams and during daytime by signs. In manifold ways it foretells the future: by birds, by entrails, the clouds and the oak, so that it is given to man to know past, present and future.*

42 *Also, my son, pay attention to the fact that each of the other living beings exists solely in one part of the world: aquatic animals in water, terrestrial animals on the land, winged animals in the air. The human being, however, relates with all the elements: with the earth, with water, with the air and with fire, and even with heaven; he comes into contact with it and perceives it with increasing knowledge and insight.*

43 *God encompasses everything and permeates everything, for He is both the active and the passive power of the All.*

That is why it is not difficult at all to understand God.

- 44 *When during your reflections you wish to apprehend God, then behold the world's order, and the beauty of this order. Behold the necessity of all that you thus perceive, and of providence, which rules over past and present. See how matter is entirely filled with life, and how the movement of this majestic Godhead works with all the good and beautiful ones: with gods, demons and men.*
- 45 *Tat: But those are activities of power, Father!*
- 46 *Hermes: If they are only activities of power, my son, by whom then are they wrought? By another Godhead? Do you not see that life and immortality, blood, fate, providence, nature, the Soul and the Spirit are aspects of God, just as heaven and water and the earth and air are part of the world, and that the permanence of all this is called The Good? So there is nothing, either today or in the past, in which God is not present.*
- 47 *Tat: Is God in matter then, Father?*
- 48 *Hermes: Should matter exist outside of God, my son, what place would you then choose for it? And what else could it be, as long as it had not been brought to activity, but a confused mass? And if it had to be brought to action, by whom then? We have said that active powers are the creations of God. So from whom do all living beings receive life? To whom do the immortal ones owe their immortality? Who brings about the change in what is changeable?*
- 49 *Whether you speak of matter, or of the body, or of the*

essence of things, know that these are also activities of God's power: the activity of power in matter constitutes substance; the activity of power in bodies constitutes corporeality, and the activities of power in the essence determines the essential being. All this is God, the All.

50 *In the All there is nothing that is not God. That is why God cannot be defined by conception of size, place, quality, form or time: for God is the All, and as such He is in everything and encompasses everything. Worship these words, my son, and revere them: there is only one religion, one way to serve and worship God, namely by not being evil.*

II

The Heart and the Soul-State

The thirteenth book of Hermes Trismegistus is devoted to the mystery of the Spirit-Soul, a subject it explores very deeply. We have often mentioned this subject in earlier discussions of the hermetic philosophy, but now we need to look at it in more detail.

Whenever we think or speak about a person's soul-state and his emotions, our attention is involuntarily drawn to the heart, to the disposition of the heart. The human heart is a wonderful organ. It is sevenfold in nature, just like the head and the solar plexus. The seven cerebral cavities can be compared with a seven-branched candelabrum, and similar comparisons can be made with respect to the heart and the solar plexus.

The seven-branched candelabrum of the heart has a central function in the life-system; it is an essential factor in the candidate's total consciousness. All the fluids of consciousness are transferred, via the medulla, from the head sanctuary to the heart, where they are collected. Meanwhile, the candelabrum of the solar plexus, situated below the stomach between the liver and the spleen, also sends all kinds of forces upwards to the heart, for the liver and spleen are responsible for transmitting to the heart sanctuary all the entity's astral and etheric conditions.

The three candelabra of the head, heart and solar plexus work together, and the central position is occupied by the candelabrum of the heart, which is fed from the head sanctuary and the pelvic sanctuary. From the head sanctuary it receives

the consciousness-fluids, and from the pelvic sanctuary all the astral and etheric influences present in the microcosm that have played an important role in the past of the human being concerned. In addition, at least in many cases, the heart receives direct radiations from the central heart of the microcosm, the domain of the rose.

So the position occupied by the heart in the human system is really very central. Many influences, impulses and radiations come together in the heart, where they are blended and transmuted to form one fundamental soul-state. This, in turn, also has a radiative capacity.

In this way, the soul-state penetrates the blood, the nerve-fluid and the serpent-fire; it rises into the head sanctuary and occupies all the organs present there. The quality, the nature of the soul-state is thus the result of the human nuclear reactor, the heart, and it determines the state of one's life, the direction of one's life. So the human being has no choice but to follow the disposition of the heart. Once the soul-state and hence the radiation of the heart sanctuary have become a fact, the human being is bound to follow the influences and tendencies of that soul-state.

Therefore, all your abilities, all your intellectual or other accomplishments are dependent on and subject to your soul-state, its quality and scope.

Suppose you had been given what is generally thought of as a marvellous education; suppose you had attended the very best schools. That would be something to be grateful for, since it could, for instance, be helpful to you socially. However, if your soul-state had been left far behind in all this education, if from childhood onwards, your soul-state had failed to receive any genuine culture, any culture in a soul-liberating sense, then your marvellous education would become a deadly danger to your fellow human beings, as can easily be

demonstrated. If a person's life is to change in a truly liberating sense, that change must begin with the heart, in the heart. That is why the heart sanctuary is the first one to be subjected to the process of transfiguration.

The importance of the state of the heart is very often mentioned in the holy language of all times. A person's soul-state can turn him into a murderer, a demoniac, or a hypocrite; it can lead him into immeasurable pain or cast him into the abyss. But: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God', as the Sermon on the Mount jubilates. And it is the pure in heart who are described in the prologue of the thirteenth book of Hermes:

Hermes: The Spirit, O Tat, is of God's very essence, at least, if one could speak of such a thing as the essence of God: however that may be, it is the Spirit alone that knows itself perfectly. That is why the Spirit cannot be distinguished from the essence of God; it emanates from that source just as light emanates from the sun. This Spirit is The Good in men; hence some men are gods: their human state very closely approximates to the divine state. The Good Demon has accordingly called the gods immortal men, and men mortal gods. In beings devoid of reason the soul is nature. Wherever there is life, there is also a soul. In beings devoid of reason, however, the soul is nothing but life, empty of Spirit. But the Spirit is a benefactor of the Souls of men: it works on them and forms them for the sake of The Good.

Seen superficially, this hermetic conclusion might appear somewhat bewildering, but if we test it against the facts, we will invariably find it confirmed.

When we imagine the three candelabra within us: the seven-branched candelabrum in the head sanctuary, the one in the solar plexus and the one in the heart, and if we experi-

ence that the three times seven lights in the heart sanctuary merge together into one soul-state, we should certainly not conclude that this is a fully automatic process from which the soul-state inevitably results. That is not how it is. It is not only the subconscious, the voice of the primordial past, that plays a role in the heart, but also the waking consciousness, the sevenfold light present in the head sanctuary; the consciousness-fluid with which the seven cerebral cavities are filled.

The seven cerebral cavities can be compared with mirrors through which all the forces coming together in the waking consciousness are reflected into the heart. So when we speak of a soul-state that is formed in the heart sanctuary, we must bear in mind that your direct, waking consciousness has an extremely important role to play in this formation. In other words, it is up to you. In your heart you encounter all the influences, all the radiations, all the impulses active in your being in whatever way. They are like so many voices, all speaking to you. In addition, at least if you are a serious pupil of the young Gnosis, the fundamental touch is present in your heart, the voice of the central heart, the voice of the rose.

In this way, with your normal waking consciousness, you meet in your heart, from second to second, all the influences that are coming to you from all sides. And the voice of the rose, too, is speaking within you and can have a decisive, form-giving effect. You can judge everything that comes to you in the light of the rose's influence; it can become the influence that determines the norms within your own being, and which has sometimes been called the voice of conscience.

So the heart is a workshop in which you, as a conscious being, can exercise a very important influence and carry out some vital work. And you will need to do that work before all the influences, forces and lights active in you combine to form

one, ineradicable soul-state. Once that soul-state has been formed, you will have no choice but to follow it.

Have you ever heard about the conflict of the heart, the struggle of the heart? Of the sorrow and the joy of the heart? Or of the hardening of the heart? The most important battle, the battle for true pupilship, must be fought in the heart. Did you know that the truly liberating alchemical product, the product necessary to bring about the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross, must be prepared in the heart?

Throughout all history, there has never been a gnostic Spiritual School that has allowed itself to be misled, for instance, by ordinary social standing. True nobility is always nobility of the heart. That is why it is said in the Bible that God, the Spirit, sees into the heart. So it is of no use to be able to talk ever so nicely, or to be able to pose as if one was our dear Lord himself, for the spirit sees into the heart. This means that the only decisive factor is the soul-state arising from the heart and encompassing the whole being. We are saying this so emphatically because, in fact, many do not yet know the struggle of the heart. They still only think of the heart as an organ of feeling.

You say, 'I feel this or that.' But by then it is already too late, for what you are experiencing is the soul-state. You are only aware of the heart as a fully automatic organ, and you accept the soul-state arising from it. But you cannot do otherwise, can you? And when you experience the results of your soul-state and enter into conflict with them, as you so frequently do, what you are fighting against is your soul-state, which has perhaps brought you a great deal of trouble and sorrow.

But the fight is hopeless. You will never win. You think about it all (in the head sanctuary, not in the heart): 'What ever should I do? And what should I stop doing? How should I act in order to win?' You fight this battle in the head until you are tired to death. And yet, it is already too late; you need to

transfer the conflict to the work-place of the heart, in which the soul-state is being formed from second to second. If you do that and are successful, then you will no longer be helpless in the face of facts and coming events. You yourself can determine your fate, for everything that happens in your life is controlled and driven by your soul-state. So if you succeed in changing your soul-state, you will have taken your fate into your own hands and you yourself will be able to determine the course of events in your life. In this way, you really can reverse your fate.

And that is soul-birth. The birth of the Soul, genuine Soul-regeneration, is not some vague sentiment: 'I feel this and I feel that'. Such vague feelings, that we all experience from time to time, are nothing else than a soul-state one has formed oneself. So we say again: you need to enter into battle in the heart sanctuary; you need to drive out all those forces and tensions that could obstruct you on the path, and allow the helping, constructive forces to flow in. In this way, you yourself can form your soul-state and bring about the rebirth of the Soul.

The condition of the heart that animates you from second to second is your soul-state. So your soul-state is not a static value that you simply have to accept just like that. No, you can change your soul-state; you can change it fundamentally. So if we hear someone say: 'Yes, that's how I am. It's my nature to be like that', well, then we know how far things have gone. For if you are really a serious pupil of the Gnosis, you will change, if all is well, from day to day. Your type, your character, will alter.

As a result of your birth, the time comes when a certain soul-process, a certain soul-nature becomes apparent. As the years go by, you discover it. But you do not need to be satisfied with that state. You can change it fundamentally, through self-

surrender. This means that, with your whole self, with your consciousness, with the powers of the candelabrum in the head sanctuary, you must descend into the heart sanctuary.

Your soul-state can be altered in all kinds of ways. You can make your soul-state increasingly wicked and destructive. You can also accept it as if it were automatic. Or you can consciously prepare it in such a way that it is capable of receiving the spirit.

Most people simply accept their soul-state as it is. In such cases, the nature, the character, the type is quickly formed as the person grows older and all the metabolic processes are brought into line with it. In this way, a state of crystallisation is reached and such persons are lost as regards any form of change.

Indeed, they may still want to have the Gnosis as well, as a kind of consolation in their lives. There are some people who take that point of view. 'The Gnosis will help you to get through life!' But *that* is not the aim of the Gnosis. It wants to liberate you from this state of misery! And that is why you need to descend into the heart sanctuary and there enter into battle with your soul-state.

There is also a group of people whose representatives do not accept the life-state of the masses. Such people seek power, honour and fame: self-exaltation. In the nature of death, all these things are only to be obtained by concentrated self-maintenance, quite possibly over the backs and corpses of others, or by means of all sorts of lies and dirty tricks. The result is always a soul-state that falls far below the average norms. If one listens to people of this group, one often hears them say: 'Yes, I used to pay attention to ethical considerations, but I always suffered for it, so now I have hardened my heart!' You probably know people like that.

So those who do not simply accept their soul-state and do

not want to close and harden their hearts, but begin the struggle of the heart, can change and renew their soul-state and thus the whole course of their lives. They will receive another soul-state in which the life of the rose will be able to unfold completely. And the result will be that the Spirit, God himself, will be able to enter the heart sanctuary. And of them one will be able to say, with Hermes: *The Spirit, O Tat, is of God's very essence.*

III

The Alteration of the Soul-State

When one enters the workshop of the heart, consciously yearning to adapt the soul-state to a higher plan, and for that purpose engages in the soul-struggle, one needs to be aware that such a soul-transformation, or soul-rebirth, is indeed possible, structurally and fundamentally. One also needs to understand the direction this development will need to take, and the power in which it will unfold.

The aim is to regenerate the entire microcosmic nature; to reattune it to its essence and original purpose, the unification with God, with the Spirit. So let us first consider what powers are or will become available to the candidate at the beginning of his work.

The first of these is reason, the rational doctrine, the rational message of salvation. Of course, if reason is to speak to you, some means of access must first be present. If that is not yet the case, then the words, 'Hearing, they are deaf', will apply to you. The ability to understand a rational doctrine, a doctrine of the Gnosis, will only be present if there has been sufficient experience of the irrational, and one only gains that experience through suffering and sorrow, by shedding many tears, and by drinking deeply from the cup of bitterness. Only then will it be possible for reason to speak to you, and only then will it be possible to determine whether you yearn for liberation enough to be able to accept and follow reason. Positive reason always requires a certain activity, an action, a way of life. There are many who do not understand this and only assimilate the tidings of reason with their intellect, believing that reason can be grasped by intellectual assimilation

alone. What a mistake! The assimilation of reason also implies the adoption of an appropriate way of life, which may possibly be in total conflict with the existing soul-state. So the pupil who rationally accepts the message received must also accept, immediately, the struggle against any aspects of the soul-state which conflict with that rational message. The future will then reveal whether the rational message imparted will indeed emerge in a demonstrable and liberating way. If it does not, then either the message was a fallacy, or the person concerned has not yet descended into the work-place of the heart. That is why we speak of a rational-moral acceptance of the salvation of the Gnosis. The rational touch is the intellectual aspect, while moral acceptance concerns the adoption of an approach to life in keeping with the rational message.

So one needs to descend into the workshop of the heart in order to test out the rational message in actual practice. Those who make no attempt to bring a gnostic doctrine to reality have only accepted the rational message in a theoretical way. Then the flood-waters of distress will have to rise up to their necks once again, before a genuine, serious effort can be made, because receiving a rational message is not the same as understanding it, for that means applying it. Several draughts from the bitter cup of suffering are usually necessary before such lessons are learned.

People generally protest against suffering, and the world does everything possible to neutralise and alleviate it. But for most people, suffering is the only method of making the nature-born consciousness, which is governed and coloured by a wicked or undeveloped soul-state, realise that something is wrong. For the soul-state overshadows and controls the entire personality, the whole being.

Anyone who has gone through experience – and everyone does that in the nature of death – will begin seeking sooner

or later. As soon as the seeking life begins, the person concerned ought to begin, in the heart, the struggle against the soul-state. The moment he does so, all kinds of voices will speak to him, reactions to all the radiations and influences which until that time played a role in the heart-sanctuary and are thus on the same level as the soul-state. Initially, all those voices urge the candidate to try out various social, political, ethical or nature-religious experiments, with which the world is full and which are intended to make him realise the ultimate pointlessness of all efforts on the dialectical level.

And so it will come about, whether after ten years or a thousand years, or even after a sidereal year, that a person becomes mature enough for his life to take a different direction. Then the moment dawns when gnostic reason begins to speak to him to a certain extent. It points in the only direction that can lead to a solution to all problems, the direction of the soul-state, the state of the heart. And into it the nature-born consciousness must now descend, as it were. Then one can no longer allow the soul-state and its development to remain an automatic process, but must assail the soul-state with the I-consciousness.

As a nature-born being, you have such a powerful ego, don't you? You are so I-central, aren't you? And you know so precisely what you want! You are very self-aware and, particularly if you are in the Spiritual School, you are likely to have a very strong personality. So, use the I, the ego, to attack your soul-state! You are capable of achieving so much with respect to ordinary things, aren't you? So why not do so with respect to your pupilship, and use your I-consciousness to assail your own soul-state? Begin that remarkable struggle now, today, and from that moment onwards you will experience the results of it and your entire life will change. We are not saying it

will become more tranquil and harmonious. No, it will become quite different. In what way, then? Well, the nature of the suffering, the nature of your sorrows, the nature of your difficulties in life will change. An entirely different cup of suffering will be put to your lips. And then it will no longer be the useless, stupid suffering in the monotonous course of things, but a sorrow caused by the I-consciousness itself, born of its attack on the heart.

So we are concerned not with an attack on others – and how often you excel in such attacks – but an attack on your own self. And that entails much bitterness which, however, is extremely instructive and purifying. This sorrow may be much more intense, more painful than before but, as we said, it is purifying. And purification brings the pupil to the path of liberation, it conducts him into the liberation-process.

The pain caused by the fire of purification can sometimes be so bad that the beginning pupil often reverts to his former state of being, in order to avoid the increasing opposition. When, with the candelabrum of his consciousness, he begins to attack the candelabrum of the heart, many confrontations will result, since in the heart converge all the forces, radiations and influences that together form the soul-state. Anyone who, with the self, attacks the soul-state which has been the cause of so much affliction, will encounter, in the heart, the self-unleashed forces and influences occupying his respiration-field.

During the course of your life you have built up a great deal of unholiness in your respiration-field! Numerous thought-forms and desire-phantoms are enjoying the best of health there. And if now you begin to take control of your own heart, your own soul-state, you will have to confront all those forces and influences of karma and the subconscious, as well as the natural forces of the aeons. So anyone who enters the heart in this way will literally unleash a storm.

Think of the gospel legends that deal with these things, such as Matthew 8:24-27 and Mark 6:48-51, for instance. The storm becomes violent and lasts until Jesus boards the ship or until he awakens from sleep and quells the storm. In other words, the storm lasts until, through one's perseverance in the struggle, the 'seed-grain of Jesus', the central heart of the microcosm, opens and the power of the rose, the light of the rose begins to radiate, bringing a certain measure of tranquillity to the soul. From that moment on, the soul-state begins to undergo a transformation, a soul-transformation affecting the whole being, that has lived for so long under the old dispensation of things, a transformation involving the entire former self.

To sum up, then: attack your soul-state with your nature-born ego. The result will initially be a whole complex of difficulties and vexations, and perhaps awful tensions. But the solution to it all will be the opening of the rose, the activating of the light, the fragrance of the rose. In that radiation-power you will certainly change.

When this procedure has begun, we speak of the rebirth of the Soul or of the transformation of the soul-state. Then the light emanating from 'the candelabrum that stands in the midst', the sevenfold candelabrum of the heart, will be totally transformed. A new soul-state will then have come into being, through which the character and essence of the consciousness-candelabrum in the head sanctuary will be completely changed.

Once the soul-state has been altered it will drive the whole being in the new direction, the direction indicated. If, with your I, through the self-surrender of your ego, you succeed in changing the state of your heart, then the head sanctuary, the ordinary consciousness, will *have* to demonstrate an altered

approach to life. Think of what we have often told you² about how, when the blood changes in the heart sanctuary, the lesser circulatory system carries the changed blood to the head sanctuary, where it alters the state of all the head sanctuary's organs. In this way, changing the soul-state leads to an alteration of your whole state of life.

So we can be quite certain that if the new state has not been manifested, you have not yet fought the ego's struggle of self-surrender. In that case, you have accepted the rational message, presented to you as a practical indication for your pupilship, in a purely intellectual way, without doing anything about it. So yearning for the liberating life is not present in you either, and you will have to go on being battered and wounded by life until finally you make the necessary decision to undertake the surrender of the self to an inner process that will lead to the total transformation of your being.

Why are there pupils who have been in the School for years, and yet have remained exactly the same as they were when they joined? They have not fought the light; they have not accepted the struggle. And look at all the misery that has developed in their lives over the years! If only they had made better use of their time! Then they would already have been purified by suffering sufficiently to enter the new state of life.

We know that, in spite of the difficulties encountered, many pupils have followed, or are in the process of following the path we have been describing. As a result, their soul-state is changing, at a pace appropriate for each one of them individually. In this way, they are acquiring new soul-qualities, and this is being demonstrated in many respects by their actions. Among other things, this new action gives the candidate to-

² See *The Coming New Man* Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem. The Netherlands, 1957.

tally new perspectives on life, so that he gains more tranquility and confidence, and greater goodness. However, it is important to bear in mind that this often brings with it a certain feeling of superiority. This is one of the by-products of goodness. The good person has a kind of feeling of superiority, albeit combined with a certain measure of humility. It gives him the feeling of having 'arrived'. So this by-product constitutes a danger – and a grave one at that – for those who have reached the border. For what is the purpose of the new soul-state, the new soul quality? What is the aim of the process of soul-rebirth? Surely it is to bring your self into a condition in which your whole being is capable of meeting and receiving God himself, the Spirit itself; only then will you become a true human being.

John the Harbinger struggles to bring about the alteration of the soul-state, and in that endeavor he must ultimately perish entirely. The victory of the commencing transformation is the manifestation in him of Jesus, the new Soul. The light of the candelabrum that stands in the midst changes. And finally, the spirit descends on him like a dove. The Son of God, the true human being, has then come into existence: 'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.'

That is why the work only ends when the spirit can enter, when it can celebrate its meeting with the soul in the heart sanctuary, so that in this way spirit, soul and body are made one. Only then can the words of Hermes, spoken at the beginning of the thirteenth book, be understood:

*The Spirit, O Tat, is of God's very essence.
The Spirit alone knows itself perfectly.*

IV

The Nature-Born Consciousness

The Spirit is of God's very essence. We have spoken at length about the meaning of these words. They concern a return to the starting point of the true human state, the restored link between spirit, soul and body. In this state, as a being created by God, as a child of God, the human being is able to manifest himself and bring to reality the divine plan that lies at the foundation of the world and mankind.

Hermes goes on to say that *it is the Spirit alone that knows itself perfectly.* We would like to consider what this means. In the first place, knowing oneself obviously refers to a state of consciousness. If one wants to know something, one must be conscious of it. All human beings possess consciousness, but it is at most a nature-born consciousness. And this consciousness is one of the lowest forms of consciousness a being can possess. It enables the human being to react to certain sensory perceptions and all the while he is being controlled by his soul-state, by his heart. That is why the seat of human nature, the nucleus of the conscience, lies in the heart, as the Universal Doctrine explains.

Why is man so very conscious in the head sanctuary? Because all the senses are located there, as well as the brain system. Some animal species have no brain as yet; others have only a rudimentary one. Man, too, has a rudimentary brain system that enables him to perform intellectual operations.

Basically, natural man is an animal species too, as Hermes often states with considerable emphasis. The natural consciousness is nothing else than the result of an atomic, ele-

mentary process. That is why one can say that all animals, including nature-born man, generate and maintain one another. This means to say that any kind of animal life automatically entails self-preservation, which is achieved by various expressions of that animal life. The struggle for existence, for example, is the planning and application of means and actions intended to ensure a better and safer place for oneself in the nature of death, and to protect oneself from danger. These expressions of life entail the development of radiations of the vital organs, radiations of an etheric and astral nature. Through these radiations and their element-formations, further animal species come into being, such as the various kinds of micro-organisms, bacteria and viruses, as well as the many insect species, as a result of which yet more animal species develop.

We are mentioning this to draw your attention to the consciousness human beings have as their natural starting point, and the class to which their consciousness belongs. This consciousness is the natural result of their being born in a bodily form. So nature alone speaks in the human consciousness and nothing else, apart from a few hereditary factors as is the case with every animal species.

Now whether human beings have become what they are – i.e. animals with a natural consciousness plus a mentality – through natural selection, through culture, through aeons of time, passing through lower animal forms of development, or whether they have sunk to their present state through degeneration – if they remain in that state it will be no use at all to them to know how it was achieved. The only significant fact will be that they *are* as they are. That is why the science of biology will never reach a solution through the controversial questions it constantly raises, as long as its investigations do not go beyond the natural consciousness and its points of departure.

With its massive delusion of superiority, nature-conscious humanity has also developed occult science during the course of the ages, and many people are undergoing training in it. And what is the sole result? At best an extension of the sensory perceptions of the natural consciousness, which neither diminishes nor adds to its natural, animal nature.

If the term 'animal consciousness', so often used by Hermes, is a stumbling block for you, then we can use a more exotic one; Indian philosophy, for instance, speaks of the *kama-manas* consciousness. Mrs Blavatsky says of it: 'The kama-manas consciousness relates to the lowest grades of the instinctive consciousness of animals and some human beings. This consciousness therefore belongs to, and remains confined within, the field of perception. In human beings, this field of perception has become rational to a certain extent.' And then she gives some examples. Among other things, she says: 'A dog locked in a room has the instinctive urge to escape, but is unable to do so because its instinct is not sufficiently rational to make use of the necessary means, while a human being understands the situation and frees himself consciously from the room.' Finally, she says: 'The man of the masses occupies the seventh and highest rung of the kama-manas consciousness.' In other words, man with his natural consciousness is, and remains, an animal.

And we would like to add that we know dogs who, if they want to escape from a room, are quite capable of opening the door. We are saying this to underline the fact that, up to certain limit, all kinds of gradations exist in the developing animal consciousness.

And now another example. If you were to train your eyes to perceive higher or lower vibrations, as a result of which you could then see more than other people, that would neither add to nor detract from the nature or the quality of your con-

consciousness. And so it is with all the senses. Also, it can easily be proved that many animal species possess such extensions of the senses. A trained occultist pats himself on the chest and says: 'I am clairvoyant. I am clairaudient. I have mastered the method of splitting my body, so that I can move, in full conscious-ness, in the reflection sphere.' But there are many animal species that are equally capable of splitting their bodies, their personalities. Think of spiders, for instance. Such creatures express themselves simultaneously in both the material and the etheric spheres. For them, there is no difference between the two. So when an occultist is boasting about his abilities, you can reply, 'Yes, spiders can do that, too.'

It is also easy for birds to see in the etheric world, and in fact they are controlled by etheric forces. The group-spirits of birds are etheric forms, etheric expressions of life. If you have ever watched the flight of a flock of birds, you may have asked yourself, 'How is it possible for them all to keep together like that?' They are held together by a group-spirit, and etheric force, a certain vibration, a certain light-energy that they can perceive very clearly, and that guides them to the areas in which it is suitable for them to live; in summer to one region and in winter to another. Most cats, too, possess astral vision, and all dogs and most wild animals have a very keen sense of smell, as you know.

So we can state that the extension of the senses in whatever way does not raise man above the natural, animal state of life. So if you become more sensitive, for instance through a life of simplicity and abstinence or, with advancing years, through the natural process of bodily decline, so that it becomes easy for you to perceive etheric vibrations and astral activities, and hence to allow for them, this will have nothing to do with any liberating change in your natural state of consciousness. All claims of this kind are false, misleading, the result of self-de-

ception. Such sensitivity has nothing to do with the genesis of a second, other, new state of consciousness.

When sensory changes are mentioned in connection with the Gnosis (and the gnostic development does indeed involve some very remarkable sensory changes), such alteration has quite a different aim, quite a different significance, and leads to quite a different result than extending the natural consciousness. On the contrary! If the gnostic development becomes a reality, the natural consciousness diminishes in many respects. It begins to withdraw into the background.

Now let us ask ourselves whether the human being possesses, alongside his nature-born consciousness, another consciousness capable of raising him above the animal state. Let us consider the subconscious mind, under whose influence the candelabrum in the solar plexus burns, and connects the human being with the whole past of all the previous existences in the microcosm.

This past is recorded in the auric being and as such has a powerful influence on the human being's nature-born state. However, if the subconscious were to become totally open to him so that he could go right back through the past to the original, first cause (and we consider that possible in principle), this still would not alter the state of the natural consciousness in any respect. Think, in this context, of I Corinthians 13, where it says, 'If I knew all things, understood all things, and possessed all things, but had not that one essential thing, then I would have, and be, nothing'

Delving into your nature and experimenting with various natural forces will not enable you to change that nature, except in a degenerative sense, for by interfering with natural laws one can cause one's entire state of life to degenerate. The fact that your nature-born consciousness has never yet been able to raise itself above the normal, natural, animal level

proves that one could never derive any ennobling influence from the past either, for what is conscious in nature is always overshadowed by the subconscious.

So the only thing left is to explore the state of the heart. What is the state of your heart sanctuary? Do you possess consciousness in your heart sanctuary? No, only emotions. There is certainly no consciousness in the full sense of the word.

So now let us return to our starting point, and state that man only possesses a natural I-consciousness, associated with the head sanctuary. Of that consciousness it cannot be said that it knows itself perfectly' in the sense meant by the thirteenth book of Hermes. Such a statement would be pure delusion. And your heart sanctuary is entirely governed by your soul-state, the central nuclear reactor of your existence, in which are combined all the radiations, influences and forces that play a role in your being.

So, having made this analysis, we can see that, as nature-born human beings, we are indeed standing here quite empty handed. And we can also say that a divine consciousness as meant by Hermes Trismegistus, must be associated with the Soul, with the altered Soul-state, and thus with the purified heart. And so we must state, yet again, that a completely new state of consciousness connected with the Soul must be born in the heart sanctuary. It will be a consciousness so clearly aware, so absolutely positive, that it will know both God and itself, both the Soul and the primordial past, in their totality.

Go, and Sin No More

The consciousness capable of raising man above the animal level and turning him into a true child of God is not to be sought in any extension of the nature-born consciousness, which is nothing but a consciousness of sensation, of perception, the blending of the entire sensory condition into one, composite sense-organ. Every living being, every animal, even the least evolved, possesses an organ of perception in some form or other. So the fact that the human being possesses such an organ of perception, albeit equipped with an intellectual apparatus, does not raise him in any way above the animal level.

Most students of esoteric science know that the nucleus of the perceptual organism is located in the pineal gland, which is a remarkable organ situated just beneath the crown of the head. It possesses a radiation-field that we call the pineal aura. This radiation-field extends above the head, by a few inches on average, and spreads all around the head, and particularly above the crown.

We call it a radiation-field because it shines, but in reality it is surprisingly magnetic, attracting. It is also sevenfold in nature. Seven colours, seven light-gradations are clearly visible within it. Whenever it is moved – and that happens unceasingly, from second to second – one can immediately perceive in it an interplay of colours and radiations, because the pineal gland is the organ of perception *par excellence*, the most important antenna of the human animal; and the entire head sanctuary, with all its various organs, responds to it.

Moreover, as soon as the pineal gland is stirred, its motive

power – light – shoots straight through to the heart. Within a fraction of a second, whatever has touched the radiation-field of the pineal gland will also be present in the heart sanctuary. The heart, too, has a radiation-field; just think of the sternum. And the heart also has seven aspects, seven ventricles. Whenever the pineal radiation-field is stirred, the seven cerebral cavities generally react instantly. You can compare the cerebral cavities with mirrors. They receive the impression and immediately reflect it in a sevenfold way into the seven ventricles of the heart. In this way, the candelabrum of the heart straight away begins to radiate in a manner in keeping with the impression that stirred the pineal gland. And, for the sake of completeness, we must say that everything radiated into the perceptual consciousness also affects the serpent-fire and the entire nervous system.

Whatever enters the head sanctuary at any given moment will at the same time also be present in your fingertips, as it were. The bodily system is organised in such a way that the moment an impression touches the pineal part of the brain, that same radiation streams right through to the outermost parts of the nervous system. So it is clear that if a human being has only a positive, perceptive consciousness, if the nature-born consciousness alone is active in the head sanctuary, and the consciousness in the heart – intended to be the central consciousness – is only working automatically, so that the soul-state and its sphere of activity remain unaffected, then this must be the cause of declining vitality, disease and death. You cannot control what is entering the head sanctuary, and thus you have no control over what, at that same moment, is passing through your entire nervous system. This causes tremendous tensions in you, from time to time. What can you do to get rid of all these tensions? What will become of them? If there is no positive reaction, if you

know no means of ejecting from your system the things that are bothering you and causing you tension, then you can imagine how rapidly the body will deteriorate, how quickly you will run into all kinds of physical problems.

All the time, from second to second, countless impressions are being transmitted via the pineal field to the heart and nervous system. If there is no positive reaction to them, if there is no self-creating action on the part of the central nervous system and the central consciousness, then the whole system, subjected to so many tensions, will be unable to avoid rapid deterioration. That is why people age; that is why the time eventually comes when they cannot hold out any longer, and you know what the end is in the nature of death.

There is an ancient therapy based on this knowledge, that has been practised in China since the days of Lao Tzu. It is based on the use of healing methods rejected by the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross. This healing technique is even more harmful to the pupil than the western methods of healing, because it acts on the system in a much more direct way, and is sometimes combined with hypnosis.

This ancient Chinese method is being imported into the West nowadays, and is currently being employed by many healers who are desperately seeking for the missing link in the therapies known in the West. Neither allopathy, nor homoeopathy, nor naturopathy have proved sufficient to stem the flow of physical misery. If you read magazines and other literature you will know how desperately many people are seeking ways in which to help ailing mankind.

Of course, these efforts to help are understandable, merciful and humane. But the School of the Rosycross has to be careful that, in the midst of all this seeking and experimenting, the possibilities for practical experience of pupilship remain open. After all, that is why you became a pupil of the young

Gnosis. So when factors appear on your path that could obstruct your development, we are obliged to say, as leaders of the School: 'Brother or sister, that won't work. You shouldn't do it'

And if you then say, 'I reserve my right to total freedom. I will do it whatever you say', then that is your prerogative, but then the responsibility will be yours. That is logical. The School follows a plan, a methodology, a course; it gives you detailed information about the path and the new life, and about the method leading to it. If you do not want that method, then the choice is yours, but in that case there will be no point in your pupilship.

This has been our point of view ever since the young Gnostic Spiritual School began in 1924, and as a result we have had to turn away many people who had considerable potential. But if we had just calmly allowed pupils to accept treatment from magnetizers, spiritual healers, and so on, all kinds of negative forces would have had free play in the School and would then have harmed our work or even prevented it entirely.

It is wonderful that people are trying to serve mankind, but the ways and means must be acceptable. In Sweden, a newly discovered method has been tested on thousands of dogs. Not one single one of those dogs is still alive. All were murdered, because people wanted to serve mankind with the aid of proton rays, a by-product of the atom. The idea is that if these proton rays are shot at high speed through the patient's body, then he will be freed of all his ills, all his difficulties. What takes their place is not mentioned. Generally, the truth comes out only later.

In the Spiritual School we need to take care that, in the midst of artificial means and experiments, the possibility of practically experiencing pupilship remains open. The core group of the School is making a great effort to bring pupilship

to a good end, with all those who have joined it. That is why we need to be of service to each other and work together in everything.

We view acupuncture as a serious danger. It involves piercing with gold needles certain parts of the nervous system to relieve pain or discomfort. We have already mentioned that nerve-pains are closely connected with the pineal field, since all impressions received by the pineal gland are transmitted by the nervous system to every part of the body. Suppose one of your organs became painful, sensitive or sick because the tensions aroused by the radiations could not immediately be discharged in a positive way.

And now you complain of a pain in your head, or in your arm or leg or whatever. Then the doctor takes a large, gold needle, grasps it firmly with his fingers and pierces the appropriate acupuncture point. In this manner, the doctor performing the puncture transfers his magnetic fluid into your body in a direct and positive way. Generally, people react as if they had been given an electric shock. With such a needle acting as a conductor, the magnetic fluid is transferred into the body much more powerfully and directly than by the Western method of using magnetic passes. With such a magnetic needle, the doctor conducts his fluid, his personal magnetism that streams constantly from his fingertips, into your body, and into your life. Then your life-processes will no longer be yours, for the doctor will be obstructing them with his own state of being.

Moreover, your physical pain could well be a tremendous help in the great process of developing the higher consciousness. That is why, in a bonafide Spiritual School, the personal element is excluded as far as possible. The direct introduction of the magnetic fluid of one person into the nervous system of another is in most cases likely to be counterproductive, as

much for the donor as for the subject. After bitter experience, this fact was also realised by the ancient Chinese therapists who therefore did not, in most cases, perform the operation themselves. They had a picture of the human body showing all the nerve meridians. They then secured the assistance of a girl, who acted as a kind of nurse. They would use the picture to show the nurse where to insert the needle, and then it would be she who inserted it. In this way she would transfer the mental orientation of the doctor to the patient. This often gave rise to a kind of hypnotic contact. In saying all this, we only wish to explain that acupuncture treatment, which is being encouraged by so many people, is not compatible with pupilship of our Spiritual School, any more than any other form of therapy involving the transfer of magnetic fluid from one person to another. We do not advocate any method through which our pupils could be harmed in the process of awakening the new consciousness.

This brief explanation will perhaps have helped you to realise how the subject we are discussing is really very topical and should in fact be at the very centre of your interest.

Let us assume for the moment that you have been engaged for a long time in transmuting your soul-state with the aid of your nature-born consciousness, transforming it in a liberating sense. Then, with your organism of perception, and particularly with your pineal gland, you will have been establishing magnetic contact between the pineal gland and the heart sanctuary. Let us suppose that, as a result of this very personal and intimate struggle you have genuinely succeeded in elevating your soul-state so that the liberating soul-life is beginning to be manifested in your heart sanctuary. Then a completely new soul-quality will develop in the heart sanctuary; a totally different soul-state will begin to manifest itself in and through

you. Once these facts of manifestation have become apparent, it is obvious that, via your magnet of perception, the pineal gland, a radiation-power in keeping with your new state of being will immediately be attracted, so that a different fire, a different play of flames will become visible above your head sanctuary. And a new power will be connected with the heart sanctuary. This radiation-power which is adapted to the new state of being is always spiritual in essence, in quality; it is the royal power of the Seven-Spirit.

Can you imagine that? The I-consciousness begins the struggle in the heart sanctuary and you persevere, right through everything. The heart sanctuary changes, your soul-state is altered, and at the same time the pineal gland becomes open to the Seven-Spirit.

In the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross³ the candidates for higher life ascend via the spiral staircase to the head sanctuary, and there may behold the King and Queen, accompanied by sixty maidens: the pineal gland has sixty aspects; the lotus has sixty petals. And once this meeting has been celebrated there, the procession descends to the heart sanctuary. This short story from the Fourth Day of *The Alchemical Wedding* portrays exactly what we are trying to explain.

If, having entered into battle with your soul-state, you are successful, the pineal gland's sphere of activity will be changed straight away, and the seven rays of the spirit will descend into it. As soon as the power of the Seven-Spirit is connected with the candelabrum of the heart, a new state of consciousness will develop in the heart sanctuary. The heart will then immediately change from an organ of feeling into an organ of

² See *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, Volume II. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands, 1992.

consciousness. That is why the Sermon on the Mount says, Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God! They will meet the spirit, they will become conscious of the spirit.

And then the words can be spoken: *The Spirit, O Tat, is God's very essence.* And what kind of essence is that? An essence that *knows itself perfectly.*

From that moment on the Soul is no longer to be distinguished from the essence of God himself. On the contrary, it is united with it, just as light is with the sun. Yes, this Spirit-Soul is then the human being who has become like a God: *hence some men are gods: their human state very closely approximates to the divine state.* So speaks Hermes in the first verses of the thirteenth book.

It is on the basis of this fact that the healing work of the *Rozenhof* operates, and this healing is available to every genuinely professing pupil. In other words, it is open to all those pupils who are really beginning to take control of their soul-state in the manner described. Only when the spirit enters a human being does true new consciousness arise. It is a state that can neither be written nor spoken about. All consciousness-states known in the nature of death pale by comparison, and are like candle flames in relation to the mighty light of the sun.

The Spirit has entered the Living Body of the School of the Golden Rosycross. The Living Body, the classical celestial ship, is part of the Universal Gnostic Chain, and everything that the Universal Chain is, everything that the Universal Chain possesses, is at the disposal of the young Gnosis.

The Universal Chain is the huge, mighty group of deified human entities which touches the earth and the human beings who still exist in the nature of death. This great mystery of salvation is touching mankind in the nature of death, via the young Gnosis. That is why people who approach the Spiritual School are literally very close to the Godhead.

A mighty radiative plenitude emanating from the Spirit of the Universal Gnosis is touching us, is at our disposal. Is there any power you could compare with that? Is there any help you could compare with that? When, by accepting the process, the group becomes more and more conscious of this, it will be possible for any illness not related to the end of the journey through this earthly life to be healed in an increasingly direct and absolute way. The work of the Rozenhof already furnishes ample proof of this. But the possibilities could be infinitely greater if only the group would cooperate with us in the one correct way. So do you not think it tragic that people sometimes seek help in all kinds of negative ways, whilst rejecting *the* help, sometimes in a very shameful way?

Do not think that we are planning to exclude our brothers who are members of the medical profession, and who feel totally at home in the School. On the contrary. In addition to their everyday medical duties they will have an extremely important role to play in the great and glorious work that lies before us. All we are trying to say at the moment is that genuine healing by the Spirit is now possible for mankind, in its state of subjugation and disease.

You know, and can read almost daily, about all the experimentation that has gone on since the last world war to find ways of working with the Holy Spirit, and how much of all this is under the influence of the reflection sphere. Now that this storm has abated slightly and humanity is close to despair; now that people in many parts of the world are resorting to narcotics as a means of escaping all those tensions caused by fear and dread, and the effects of the heavily radioactive field hanging over the world, it is necessary, in the midst of this chaos, in the midst of this terrible misery, to explain that true healing by the Spirit is now possible for subjugated and

diseased mankind. But on one condition, framed in the familiar words: 'Go, and sin no more.'

VI

The Sanctifying Spirit

The thirteenth book of Hermes Trismegistus, such a powerful book, says in verse three that *The Good Demon has accordingly called the gods immortal men, and men mortal gods.*

The central consciousness of the human being is located in the heart sanctuary, and it is in continuous close contact with the pelvic sanctuary, the subconscious, and with the nature-born consciousness, which has its seat in the head sanctuary.

These three, as a cooperating unity, do not remain static, generally speaking. On the contrary, in most people the consciousness is in a state of intense agitation, which particularly affects the heart, the seat of the central consciousness. You will be familiar with this agitation of the heart, the disquiet and dividedness, the anxiety, worry and fear that can arise in it, constantly demanding your attention and bringing your entire nervous system into a state of tremendous tension.

If this continuous conflict were indeed a static, unchangeable state of Soul, one would be in a condition that the Bible calls 'hardening of the heart'. Such a state is generally incurable, hopeless.

The fluctuations in your consciousness, which are sometimes so acutely painful, all those constant changes in your soul-state, are always evidence of an aim which has not yet been attained. As long as that goal has not yet been reached, the soul-state will remain in that fiercely agitated condition. That is why Hermes says in the third verse: *The Spirit is a benefactor of the Souls of men: it works on them and forms them for the sake of The Good.*

Even in the present racial body with its highly crystallised

state, human life has a purpose. As long as that purpose has not yet been reached, man will be kept constantly in a state of agitation. And what is the purpose? Well, man of this present-day generation, is a mortal god. This means that he is called to the kingship of the Spirit; that is the destiny for which he was made. As long as this kingship has not been attained, there will be no equilibrium in the soul-state, in the focus of the heart. The peace of the people of God only comes to the child of God when God himself, the Spirit itself, is able to manifest in the child. The word 'God' means, the infinite, perfect Spirit. If this Spirit is not yet able to make its dwelling in the human being, then he is not yet a true human being. He is hounded along his path in life, and anything can happen to him: he can stray and be lost, he can crystallise and become totally calcified, and be afflicted with all the attendant phenomena of sickness and death. And sickness and death are purely the result of not yet having attained the aim of life, and the incidents that may consequently arise.

The soul-state and its activities are fuelled by the nerve-fluid, the nerve-ether and the other corresponding soul-fluids. Nerve-ether is nothing else than astral fire, received and inhaled by the mighty pineal organ and radiating throughout the bodily system. Via the pineal gland, and in keeping with its quality, what has been inhaled is radiated throughout every part of the personality. The pineal gland and everything that pertains to it, is the most important part of the human organism. Even at birth, it is already in a specific condition that corresponds to the state of the race, the family and the individual microcosmic past.

The pineal gland also has a radiation-field, the pineal aura. It has a diameter of about fifty centimetres. It is as a result of this radiation-field and its quality (a quality determined by the nucleus of the aura) that the nerve-ether is brought into its spe-

cific condition. Anything not in keeping with the nature and quality of the pineal aura simply does not enter the system; it cannot be inhaled by the pineal gland. The quality of the nerve-ether, which Paracelsus called the archaeus, determines among other things your state of health, your level of strength or weakness, any possible illnesses or tendencies towards ill-health, and also the nature and quality of your soul-state and its fluctuations.

So from the point of view of your liberation it is wonderful – and that is why the Spirit is such a benefactor of the Soul, as Hermes says – that as long as the quality of your archaeus falls below a certain level, all your difficulties, whatever they may be, will go on existing. As long as you have not solved the great puzzle of your life, your difficulties will continue. That is why your soul-state is goaded on and on until you understand all the causes of your suffering and strike at the root of them.

The pineal centre is meant to be the point of contact, the point of entry and the dwelling place of the Spirit. It was made for this purpose. The entire alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross culminates in this. And now, driven onward by your soul-state, enabled by your soul-state, you must make the sacrifice of your whole self, in unconditional, total self-surrender. Out of this sacrifice, a new soul-state will arise, and the Spirit, that is, God, will then be able to touch you and stream into the archaeus.

When the Spirit touches you, it is the Holy Spirit, the healing Spirit, the divine physician. It is in response to the cry of the new Soul-state that the Spirit touches you and finds the pineal gland, the pineal aura and the archaeus in a certain condition. And immediately, you will experience an acute pain, a fierce anguish, an extreme tension. It is the sanctifying Spirit,

burning through your being as a scorching fire, a fire of purification. But if one accepts this fire and is able to apply its results, one will, after the encounter with the sanctifying Spirit, meet the Comforter, which means contact with the Spirit in a higher aspect. Before the Comforter can appear in you, the system must first be purified. That is why the sanctifying Spirit comes before the great mercy of the Comforter.

That is why things like tranquillisers and various nerve-therapies are in fact not capable of solving your physical problems, and it would be foolish for a pupil-gnostic to think they could. Of course it is possible to tranquillise your nervous system with narcotics and various other remedies, and hence to influence your archæus, against its nature, in your nervous system. But you should realise that by doing so you will simply be displacing your difficulties. You will be shifting the nature of your tensions, for instance, to other aspects of your light-vesture such as the blood, the endocrine system or the serpent-fire or even to the seven mirrors in the head sanctuary, the seven 'weights', the seven cerebral cavities – and that would be the most fatal of all.

If you use such methods to calm your nervous system, it could well have a calming effect on you heart also. You breathe a sigh of relief, and who would begrudge you that? But it is a false calm, which sometimes proves that the seven mirrors, the seven can-delabra have been temporarily 'removed from their places' as the *Book of Revelations* puts it. For all the forces entering the pineal centre are projected into your system via the seven cerebral cavities, the seven mirrors. And it can happen that for a short period of time these seven mirrors stop working, they suspend their activities; they become dull and can therefore no longer project. During these moments you will experience, or at least you may experience, a

false calm. The candelabra will then have been temporarily removed from their places.

Let us assume that this does not happen, that the sanctifying Spirit does not withdraw from your system but is able to remain active within it. Then it will continue its work of purification in a different way. Your problems will continue to exist or, as is often the case, they will become even worse. But anyone who accepts this suffering so necessary for him, this fire of purification, with joy and understanding, on the basis of the new soul-state, will be relieved of his suffering in the shortest and most positive way possible.

And it gives us joy to know that there are physicians who themselves are engaged in this process and who can give very good advice, for instance in connection with diet and other physical habits, and that there are doctors who in some cases can help the malfunctioning organs, and therefore play a very important role. So we are very grateful that there are physicians who have joined the School because they, too, have been attracted by the process it follows.

However, what we are getting at now is that we are under an obligation to show you how, as a pupil, you can unleash the help of the Holy Spirit. Everyone needs that help; without it they are nothing and can do nothing, and suffering will continue to exist. So, if the sanctifying Spirit has begun its work in you and you have been stabbed by the sword of the Spirit – as indeed has already happened or will soon happen in many of you, thanks be to God – then wouldn't it be a great shame if, driven by anxiety, worry and fear, you were to stand in the way of this process?

Tranquillity in your archaicus, and hence a more harmonious soul-state, can only take shape in you when the sanctifying Spirit has really sanctified you, or is engaged in carrying

out that merciful work. Therefore, experience your soul-state as the great benefactor of the human soul, even if you are having an extremely hard time. For the aim of the Good Demon, the aim of the whole of the creative, original nature as it is manifested in the true human Soul, is to make all human beings into immortal, transfigured beings, into human gods.

VII

Healing Through the Sanctifying Seven-Spirit

As an introduction to our continued discussions about the thirteenth book of the Corpus Hermeticum, we would like to quote verses 4-8:

In beings devoid of reason, the soul cooperates with each one's natural disposition; in men, however, it works against this disposition. Every soul that has entered a body is tormented by pain and lust since, in this dense body, pain and lust course like a blaze into which the soul is plunged and in which it is drowned. Whenever the Spirit can give guidance to such souls, it causes its light to go out to them and opposes their inclinations. Just as a good physician cauterises or cuts away what is diseased in the body, so the Spirit inflicts suffering on the soul by leading it away from lust, which is the cause of its diseased state. But the great disease of the soul is its denial of God, with the resulting erroneous thinking which gives rise to all evils and certainly nothing good. That is why the Spirit, by combating this disease, imparts The Good to the soul once more, just as the physician restores health to the body. But human souls that do not allow themselves to be guided by the Spirit find themselves in the same condition as the souls of animals devoid of reason.

We would like to add what the third verse states with such emphasis: *In beings devoid of reason, the soul is nature.* So the creature devoid of reason possesses a soul entirely to be explained by nature. Consequently, this animal creature cannot do other-wise than be totally one with nature, completely in harmony with it. It is quite content to be so, for that is

the aim of its existence. Nature and the creature's inner disposition are in perfect equilibrium. Many people are like this, people who are entirely wrapped up in nature and completely attuned to it, who even pride themselves on being like this and have chosen such an attitude to life as a sort of religion. Just think of the many kinds of 'nature-worshippers', and of the gluttonous hordes bent wholly on matter and the gratification of the senses.

Nature dissolves unceasingly, as the Universal Doctrine explains. It is not a reality. As soon as one tries to hold onto it, antitheses come into play. So nature as we know it is unreal, dialectical. And everything bound to nature and dependent on it is equally unreal.

Nature is, or at least ought to be, a clear mirror of the imagination, imparting to us the images of goodness, beauty and love. The image, however, fades into its opposite, in accordance with the laws of nature. We have drawn your attention to this many times, but not to change the attitude of someone who is entirely one with nature. That would be pointless, for in beings devoid of reason the soul is completely in harmony with nature. But in the true, original and thus fundamental disposition of mankind, or at least in the case of very many people, there is a powerful element that turns completely away from nature. It is to awaken and strengthen that element that the Universal Doctrine speaks repeatedly of what is fading, of dialectics, and shows how unintelligent it is to hang on to it. And when, in pursuit of this delusion, people discover their inability to grasp it, then the School speaks to them of dialectics.

It is impossible to deny nature and its delusion, for the human being, your nature-born personality, is part of the nature of antitheses. Your personality is born of it, derives its sustenance from it and in the end its death is caused by it. But

what man, or at least a part of mankind has, is a Soul which is not to be explained from this nature. The microcosm of such entities has a nucleus, the central heart of the microcosm. This nucleus, this rose, is linked to a certain extent to the nature-born heart and speaks within it. When this nucleus speaks to you and within you, then once again the state of the soul sets itself against everything transitory, and the individual will then rebel desperately against unreality, so that he is incited to do all sorts of strange things.

Throughout the ages there have been many who were amazed about the fact that on the one hand there can be such a thing as a Soul exempt from nature – the Soul we know as the rose or primordial atom – while on the other hand that same person can prove to be so closely bound to nature. The cause of this is explained by Hermes:

Every soul that has entered a body, and thus is locked within the nature-born personality, is tormented by pain and lust, since in the densified body, pain and lust course like a blaze into which the soul is plunged and in which it is drowned.

Certain mysteries are connected with all this. Ideally, the human figure ought to be the instrument of the indwelling, living Soul. But in its crystallised form as we know it, it is not suitable for that. Seen from the soul's point of view, the human being received this figure from nature, from his father and mother. For this reason, it possesses characteristics which are powerfully destructive to the soul. Or at least, the soul is taken prisoner by them. We discover these soul-destroying characteristics, among others, in the vital currents associated with the physical form, the nerve-ether the 'archaeus' or, as Jacob Boehme calls it, the evil salniter. In this life-essence, in these vital currents, the soul is drowned. The influences of this archaeus cannot be neutralised with the aid of

medicines. If only that were possible! Neither can these vital fluids be removed surgically or by any other means. No, the archaeus or evil salniter must be neutralised from within. To achieve this, you will need to engage in a life-struggle.

If you are to carry through this process, the first necessity is of course to possess a Soul, a Soul which rebels against its afflictions, against its experiences. Not in a negative sense, against the world, mankind and society, or against one's fellow human beings. You will need to offer resistance to the evil in your own system, which means to resist the sorrow and lust that are the very substance of the salniter in you.

You know sorrow. Its aspects – so many and varied – are experienced by every human being. As far as lust is concerned, you need to bear in mind that in former times this word did not have the unfavourable connotations it has now. The meaning hermetic philosophy attaches to this word can best be described as a state in which all sensory activity is directed towards nature, and towards all the results of such directedness.

Now when the Soul begins to rebel against all this, because the cup of experience has become full, then this shows that the primordial atom, the nucleus, is beginning to exercise a powerful influence on the consciousness located in the heart sanctuary. This is especially the case when a particularly bitter experience has to be endured. One's entire state will react powerfully to such a situation. And as Hermes says, through such a burning of the Soul a glow, a light, a radiance comes into being. This radiance of the Soul is of course totally un-natural; it can certainly not be explained by the ordinary state of nature, for it comes from the central heart of the microcosm. Well then, as Hermes says, this glow, this radiance, this influence, sets itself against the evil in you. We say: the soul enters, or at least can enter, into a new state of being, a state which can lead to a total change, a total rebirth of the Soul. The radi-

ance of the soul challenges the evil salniter, the nerve-ether, directly, without the need for any roundabout methods. It acts like a powerful surgeon who cauterises or cuts away from the body whatever is diseased. Why? For the sake of the soul's health and that of the body. Not dialectical health, but true health, in the sense of the universal Gnosis – the health that is a going forward on the path to fulfilment of the aim of life.

Why do you possess a body? Is it so that you can kick your heels here for a few years, going through trouble and strife of every possible variety, and to pursue some career in society, to keep your head above water, only to die in the end? And so that you can spend all those years just drowning in your nerve-ether, in evil? Just fighting and struggling? Is that the aim of your life?

Why do you possess a body? The bodily form, says Hermes, is an instrument, an attribute of the soul, intended to be able to enter into the service of the soul, as a handmaiden of the soul.

So there is a state of soul which exists entirely in the bondage of nature and which functions in cohesion with the nerve-ether. But there is also a state in which the pure, original human Soul opposes the dictatorship and domination exercised upon it by the body.

Imagine that a child is born, a child endowed with an original Soul. When this Soul becomes linked with the body, it encounters the evil associated with dialectical nature. Now the question is: when this child develops and grows older, and has to accept life, will it combat the evil present within itself? Or will it simply accept the evil and allow itself to follow the lines of least resistance?

As a soul-entity, you undergo the dictatorship of the physical human being, as a result of which the soul is threatened

with extermination, with drowning. For, as the Bible says: 'The soul that sins must die.' That special state of being, which dares to join battle against nature, arises when 'the Spirit can give guidance to such Souls,' as Hermes puts it. We speak of a new soul-state, from which a light, a luminescence, a radiance emanates, and which acts in the nerve-fluid as a medicine, causing a great deal of pain with its purifying fire. Man has received this soul-state as an aid. And if you, reader, know this state, you will be kept constantly in motion by the pain of its medicine. Every day something else will happen in the great soul-struggle. You will not be left in peace for a second. Each moment will bring a new impulse to undergo the purifying process of cutting and burning. Until the soul discovers that the great disease of the soul is the denial of God.

Generally speaking, people tend to conduct this struggle on a much lower level, battling against pain and sorrow as they are suffered in the body. Until the soul discovers that the great sin, the great disease of the soul, is the denial of God and all the erroneous thinking which results from it.

If, in its daily struggle against the evil salniter, the soul's attention remains focused purely on what it suffers in the body, it will eventually become exhausted. But the Soul ought instead to wait for the spirit, full of yearning for salvation, as the Bible so frequently states. Think for instance of the poet of the Psalms, who said: 'As a hart thirsts for flowing streams, so my Soul thirsts for you, O God!'

The body, called to become the instrument, the tool or attribute of the Spirit-Soul, as Hermes sometimes calls it, remains in its state of imprisonment in nature as long as the Spirit itself has not descended into it, no matter how fervent the Soul's entreaties.

In previous discussions we prepared you for this important

subject by drawing your attention to the pineal centre. The nature-bound human being will remain in his state of imprisonment in nature, as long as the spirit has not descended into it.

Now you might ask: 'What use, then, is the radiance of the Soul? However fervent the appeals of the soul-power, the soul-light, against its imprisonment, what use will it be without the spirit?'

The radiance of the Soul has a twofold benefit. Firstly, the system is prevented from sinking and drowning any further in the night of downward development by the radiance of the Soul, active in the evil salniter, although without the link with the spirit, the soul will die just like the body. True, there cannot be any question of a standstill, and there is only either rising, or falling ever deeper, yet even so, the radiance of the Soul is capable of holding back the further submergence of the human being for a certain amount of time, sometimes for a long time. In this sense, the radiance of the Soul is like a piece of cork upon which the human being can remain drifting on the sea of life for a certain length of time. So further falling is delayed by the rebirth of the soul.

This is a very important point that needs to be considered very carefully in the sevenfold Body of the Spiritual School. After the decease of those who have been, as it were, 'suspended' in the radiance of the Soul, it is often possible for them to be kept in the life-field we call 'the Golden Head', so that from there an attempt can be made to guide them further into the liberating life.

Nevertheless, the slowing down of the fall through soul-power is not at all the same as being saved, not at all the same as genuine rising, a real redemption and ascent to one's true destiny. Soul-rebirth is not transfiguration, either. And transfiguration is the goal of the modern Spiritual School.

The Spiritual School of the Tri-Unity of the Light aims at transfiguration, at the genesis of the New Man.

So, as a pupil of this School you may not content yourself with the first benefit, with the new soul-state, with the cork on which you can keep yourself afloat for a while. For the new Soul possesses a second ability. Once it has entered the state of rebirth, the stage of the new soul-state, it is capable of invoking and actualising the descent of the spirit into the pineal centre: 'As a hart pants for flowing streams, so my Soul thirsts for you, O God, for the living God.'

When the Soul raises itself in this way, the Spirit will descend into the prepared pineal centre in the brain. Then the Seven-Spirit itself will affect the nerve-ether with its sanctifying power, in an absolutely liberating way. It is that Spirit for which we wait in our School. May that Spirit touch you in totality.

VIII

The Twofold Panacea

The Logos has granted every human being who has gained a Soul two healing remedies, with the help of which all the evils of the body can be cured. These two remedies are the radiance of the Soul and the sanctifying Spirit.

However, this twofold panacea will only have its full effect if one has set it free within one's inner being. In other words, the key issue is a process of self-healing. All other methods of healing known and applied in this world, whatever they may be, are always partial, even the cures and sanctifications brought about by Jesus the Lord and other great ones of the spirit. This is immediately apparent, for instance, from the words Jesus the Lord spoke when he cured someone: 'Go, and sin no more.' If the person concerned had fallen back into his old way of life, the difficulties would have returned straight away. Sanctification is only complete when the three, spirit, soul and body, are united in an absolute sense. So that is what the aim of the candidate in the gnostic mysteries should be.

On this point, the utmost confusion prevails and tremendous divergence is apparent, owing to the very crystallised state of the modern human being. He is governed by anger and irrational desires, and orientated totally towards nature. His entire life is determined by the radiations of the aeons of dialectical nature.

While we are on this subject, we would like to draw your attention to the chakras. There are seven major chakras, as well as a number of minor ones. The seven chakras cannot be specified as being material, but are present on all levels of the personality. On the material level, they are in a gaseous state. In

addition, they are unmistakably etheric, as well as being active in the astral body. An exception to this is the pineal gland, which is a unique organ. This endocrine gland can be detected on the gross-material level, because it is an organ in the head-sanctuary, but at the same time it is connected with the crown chakra; hence its powerful radiation.

The chakras, which are also sometimes called 'wheels', each of which has its own task, are constantly in motion. Seen from within, they turn clockwise, from left to right, and they attract various astral forces in harmony with the individual state of the person concerned. Through the rotation of the chakras these forces are converted into ethers and in that state, via the etheric body, they are transmitted throughout the bodily system. In addition to the seven major chakras there are at least forty-two minor ones which together form a network of seven times seven power-centres.

The astral body, the etheric body and the material body are very intimately connected, so that the astral state is transferred to the etheric in a fraction of a second, and the etheric state is imparted to the material body just as quickly.

How does this come about? Primarily through the field of life surrounding the person concerned. The pineal centre, the crown chakra, also functions as a centre of respiration. Various powerful forces, differentiated into positive and negative aspects, first enter the pineal centre and from there are distributed to all the chakras, both major and minor. In other words, all these forces are constantly being supplied and dispersed throughout the system. Radiations, forces, prana, aeons of dialectical nature, of whatever kind, determine the human being's entire state of life. These currents of forces give rise to particular states in the astral body; and all those turning wheels, which rotate at different speeds depending on their function,

convert the astral forces into ethers which are then introduced into the physical body.

In this way, conformity with the laws of dialectics is maintained in the body. And if the consciousness derived from the body has supremacy in the system – as is the case in ninety out of a hundred human beings – the microcosm is plunged into a constant fall, into the rotation of rising, shining and fading, into a perpetual death. And the soul, which was introduced into this remarkable system at birth, is drowned in all these vital fluids of the body.

The best proof of this is that the human being possesses a waking consciousness and a sleeping consciousness. During sleep the gross-material body lies resting, while the etheric double and the astral body, though remaining linked to the physical body, leave it to do some 'globe-trotting' in the reflection sphere. When the more tenuous part of the personality leaves the physical body during sleep, this generally happens via the chakra that roughly corresponds with the spleen. The state of sleep is complete when the etheric double has been driven out of the spleen. When one looks at the etheric double of most people it is, more often than not, a horrific sight. One can dress up and cultivate the physical body to a certain extent, and adopt a pose of civilisation and culture. But have you ever heard of the etheric double being cultivated? People are not quite able to do that just yet!

Of course there are systems for cultivating the etheric double somewhat, but the ordinary person does not know about these methods, and that is just as well! So, the etheric double usually reveals the true shape of the bodily human being.

And anyone who sees it will gasp in horror, for in the form of the etheric human being all the degeneration, fragmentation and chaos of the nature-born human being come to the

fore. After that first glance of horror one is seized by boundless compassion, for it could have been quite otherwise!

However, first of all the Soul must be born, the new soul-state must awaken. A radiance, a light, a radiation, emanates from it. This radiance of the Soul gains a hold on all the chakras, the seven major ones and the forty-two minor ones. In this way, the radiance of the Soul gains a hold on the physical man; it enters into battle against the wrath and lusts of corporeality, against all the inclinations of the human being. It also engages in combat against the various vital fluids circulating in him, holding him in their thrall. In this way, the first remedy begins to work.

So all those chakras, great and small, are rotating in specific processes: all kinds of forces and currents are constantly propelled into the personality and released within it; the person is driven along his path through life. And now the Soul enters the scene, and the radiance of the Soul. This radiation, this light of the Soul, undermines all the processes which make the human being ill and keep him in a state of bondage. The remedy begins to work. And, as a voice coming to us from tens of thousands of years ago, Hermes tells us that when the radiance of the Soul begins to shine, this gives rise to fierce pain. And how could it be otherwise?

The moment you dare to say 'yes' to the Soul, you cause a fierce pain throughout your system. And we saw how, fundamentally and in principle, the downfall of the bodily human being is immediately retarded by this remedy. The activity of all those chakras, the impulsion within you – via the chakra system – of all those forces of nature, is leading you towards death. And now the radiance of the Soul makes its appearance and causes all those processes to stagnate. Try to imagine how human beings are constantly slipping and sliding, as if at

lightning speed, into the mud, into nothingness. And see how, through the touch of the Soul, this process cannot only be slowed down but even the impossible – a standstill – can be achieved on the negative path of death.

This has to do with a remarkable change and a movement occurring in the chakras, which rotate in a clockwise direction, from left to right. Through the radiance of the Soul it is possible to slow down these rotations and then to bring them to a standstill, and ultimately to make them begin to rotate again in the opposite direction.

When this happens, the person's conception of the world and his inner disposition change completely. Through the changes in the operation of the chakras he enters a new world and becomes a totally different person.

As soon as stagnation begins to be manifested in the various chakra-processes, and the radiance of the Soul is thus successful in a pupil, the attention of the person who has been seized by the Soul is drawn to the fact that the greatest sin, and thus the greatest of all deficiencies, is the God-denying life, and that the two – the soul and the body – must therefore strive for the influx of the spirit; that they will have to make room, so that from then on the two will be three.

Why must the two become three? Why must the physical human being, too, fulfil an important role in this process?

Well, it is because of the pineal gland, which is not only an astral and an etheric organ, but also a physical organ. The pineal gland is physically demonstrable; it can be designated anatomically. Once the soul-process has made a certain amount of progress; once the fragrance of the soul, the radiance of the Soul, can be perceived in the system, and the system is thus undergoing the effects of the first remedy, then, first and foremost, the pineal gland will need to open in a new way. For it will be necessary for the candidate to

begin to inhale a totally different prana. Without that he will not be able to go any further. A totally different form of respiration will need to develop; the pineal gland will have to become open to the influx of the Seven-Spirit. The seven rays will need to enter together and support the unfoldment of the soul-process.

When the three have become one, the Spirit will first have to sanctify, to heal, the entire system. And that is the second pana-cea, needed for transfiguration.

Transfiguration is the great restoration. It is the ultimate goal of the Gnosis. It is the supreme aim of the gnostic Spiritual School. It is the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross. And *this* is the Arch-Gnosis of Hermes Trismegistus: to assail, in principal, the personality by means of the radiance of the Soul; opening the pineal centre for a new respiration, for the influx of new vital forces, new vital fluids, which straight away begin their healing work.

In the modern Spiritual School the attention of the group is constantly being drawn to this mighty process, in various ways and with ever increasing emphasis. This causes an inner perturbation which many pupils experience largely as a burden.

But why this emphasis? It is to make you realise the absolute necessity of the tri-unity in your state of life, and because the radiance of the Soul is active to a certain extent in the majority of the group. The two, soul and body, are linked. But we cannot remain standing at that stage. The School must go further, because only then will it be able to begin its essential work. For we are not forming a *Soul school*, but we are called to form a *Spiritual School!*

There are more than enough soul schools and soul training programmes. There are great multitudes of people who are being held back from an impending fall by the radiance of

the Soul. As a result, such people are seriously concerned, for instance, with ethical requirements; they want to rise above the animal, and yearn to bring mankind together into one great, glorious Soul-community. Our group, too, can count many such soul-people, admirable and full of integrity, among its number. But you should realise that now you have to go further, that you are called to the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of the Spirit. And that Kingdom is not of this world: 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.' The fact that there is currently such a serious outbreak of criminality and debauchery among mankind should surely make it clear how necessary it is for a *Spiritual School* to be formed once more. Do not make your soul-state into a sorry state!

The soul which has become a Soul is a basis for further building. Are you already standing on the square of construction? Are you taking Soul-requirements, Soul-values and Soul-forces into consideration in your life? Well then, go on building! Devote yourself to the Spiritual School, to building the link with the Spirit within you. The presence of the radiance of the Soul is a requirement for a pupil of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, for the radiance of the Soul endows you with the faculty of discrimination.

See how beautiful and glorious this is: when the radiance of the Soul is active within you, you will always know what is wrong. Then you will have received the faculty of discrimination between good and evil. Some people do not have that, but then, neither do they possess a new Soul. As soon as there is a new Soul, there will be the ability to distinguish between good and evil. And you must listen to it; you must constantly take it into consideration, and accept whatever consequences arise. And you will have to develop your own morality, your own ethical code, in keeping with the radiance of the Soul, for it imparts to you the ability to discern the true character of the

nature of death. Without this ability the human being is just like the animal devoid of reason and, as Hermes says in verse eight, the same things will happen to him as to the animal devoid of reason. And in verses eight and nine, to which we would like to draw your particular attention, Hermes goes on to say that the reasonless activities of passions and desires constitute a boundless evil, and that: *Over these souls God has placed the law as castigator, that they might become aware of their wickedness.*

The radiance of the Soul is not only a panacea, but as an activity of the holy law it acts at the same time as a castigator and accuser. One of the results of this is that when a person has experienced Soul-birth, he no longer has any inner peace. As soon as he experiences the radiance of the Soul, everything that is dark and has to disappear is driven to the surface, and he no longer has a single second of peace. Then the radiance of the Soul not only causes the pain of purification, but also acts as an affliction, because the person concerned is brought almost daily into what amounts to a conflict of conscience.

The conscience is the accuser, and the conflict of conscience the castigator. How many times have you endured the consequences of this? Almost every day? And see how you go on experiencing it, time and time again, day by day! So you find yourself in a state of never-ending disquiet, in a constant inner turmoil. Why? Because the Soul-being is something quite different from the nature-born human being. The two are in constant conflict with each other. Disquiet, self-accusation, yearning, hope and despair alternate incessantly. And the fluctuating tensions in turn give rise to all kinds of physical difficulties. True joy, true fulfilment in life, and the inner peace which could have been the result, remain very far away.

The Soul-human being cannot be in a state of equilibrium. That is impossible, because his connection with the bodily human being results in contrasts that are too sharp. That is the reason why, in the course of the ages, mystical systems of an occult nature have been devised, with the aim of causing the Soul-human being to lose himself in all kinds of mystical reflections, through the forced penance and subjugation of the bodily human being: with thick prayer-books, as little presents for the soul: morning, noon and night, night, noon and morning, reading, reading, reading prayers, and exalting oneself in meditation. While the bodily human being – like a worthless rag in the corner – is not used, but only afflicted and tortured by all sorts of penances: the subjugation, the forced subjugation of the bodily human being.

Even if one can well understand such efforts, they are still utterly wrong. Although in practice, and in the sunken state of the nature of death, the physical human being constitutes an acute hindrance for the Soul, an intense stumbling block, yet nevertheless, he is also called to a magnificent, sublime task – the task of raising himself out of his fallen state through transfiguration, and becoming the exalted servant, the tool of the Spirit-Soul.

In the thirteenth book, in verses 10 to 15, there is a conversation between Hermes and Tat about fate and destiny. This part is quite remarkable, in that it throws a confirmatory light on much that is expounded in gnostic philosophy.

The universe is manifested by means of natural laws, which govern the courses and rotations of stellar systems, suns and planets, and thus also apply to the fullest extent on our planet earth, and the various life-waves manifested on it.

These laws operate by means of radiations. The entire network of chakras in the human organism is nothing else than

a system for receiving and assimilating radiations. Thus, in this respect, the personality can be compared with an atomic reactor.

There are three groups, three orders of radiations, of vital currents: there is one that relates to the physical human being, one that has to do with the Soul-human being, and one that concerns the spiritual human being. Thus the human being exists in a certain state of life in which his physical destiny, his fate, is fulfilled. That is why certain radiations have access to him, and so he undergoes the fate laid down by natural law. Not the fate that began at his birth, but the fate that was already anchored in his microcosm prior to birth. For the pineal gland has a very powerful grip on the material body, and also a unique connection with the etheric and astral bodies, as well as the auric being. Everything that was inhaled and assimilated in a previous existence by the personality that then inhabited the microcosm, was afterwards, at the end of that lifetime, returned to the auric being.

It is on the basis of this situation, originating in the past, that the inhalation of the pineal system develops at birth. In this way, it follows one continuous line, one continuous destiny, the destiny of the nature-born human being. If such a person breaks the elementary laws of nature that apply to him, he is corrected by them, and his destiny then becomes his fate. Then an inescapable power will hold sway over him, bringing him into a situation or state of being he has neither willed nor desired.

When the pupil enters, when you enter, the world of the Soul, and in this way you link yourself with a quite different order of radiations, which begins to exert its influence on you, they will disturb and weaken the radiations of the physical order with their natural laws. If you keep going, if you persevere to the end, you will thus take leave of your current des-

tiny, and the course of your fate will be obliterated. But if you remain in the state in which, on the one hand, you live the life of the personality to the full, while on the other hand you allow your system to be disturbed by all kinds of Soul-radiations, thus calling into being the intense turmoil we mentioned earlier, well, then you will make your fate even worse. Then some compulsive state will develop, into which you have manoeuvred yourself.

That is why both soul and body need to live within the sphere of the Soul-radiation, through one's disposition, through positive and consistent action, and by means of a high morality. As soon as you dare to say an absolute 'yes' to the Soul, the grip of fate will decrease and ultimately cease to exist. Then, the entire system will have to be entrusted to a third order of radiations, that is, to the Seven-Spirit itself.

In the great process of development, not a single entity can avoid the suffering caused by the purifying and severing action of the twofold panacea. That is why Hermes Trismegistus says in the fifteenth verse:

It is impossible to escape from change, just as it is impossible to escape from birth; but he who possesses the Soul can free himself from evil.

That is the path you must follow. If only you persevere, with determination and vigour, you will truly come home.

IX

The Only Begotten Son of God

We would now like to consider verses sixteen and seventeen of the thirteenth book of Hermes:

Therefore, my son, I have at all times listened to the words of the Good Demon. If he had made them available in writing, he would have rendered a great service to the human race. He alone, my son, has spoken truly divine words, since he, as the first-born of God, recognises all things. Thus I once heard him say that all created things are one, and in particular the corporeal beings endowed with intellect; that we live out of potential power, through active power and through the essence of eternity. That is why the Spirit, just like the Soul thereof, is good. Consequently, the things of the Spirit are undivided and the Spirit, which rules over all things and is the Soul of God, is capable of doing whatever it wills.

We would like to try explaining to you what Hermes meant by these words. If we succeed, you may well see shining through them the entire compendium of the gnostic doctrine.

The voice of the Good Demon is nothing less than the voice of the original Soul. In the western world, the word 'demon' has adverse connotations, because the terms 'demon' and 'demonism' are associated with various evil forces and influences of nature. In antiquity, however, the word 'demon' was used simply to refer to a force or being of nature. The voice of the Good Demon in our context is nothing else than the voice of the original Soul created within every microcosm, to whose voice Hermes says he has always listened.

Anyone endowed with a Soul functioning in the proper way,

is capable of eluding all evil; he is able to break through all the evil one's resistances. So if we liberate the voice of The Good in our heads, we will always have in our possession the weapon capable of bringing us to freedom. The human race would benefit greatly if it knew this from within, but the heart of the person who allows himself to be led by his physical nature, will close up; it petrifies or, as the Bible puts it, it becomes hardened, it grows fat. Not because that person is so objectionable, or because he should be totally negated as some yoga systems claim, but because he needs to be guided by the Spirit and the Soul. For the Good Demon, the original Soul, is the first-born or only-begotten Son of God.

You may well be familiar with this expression, particularly if you have been brought up in the Christian church. 'Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God' is what you were taught, isn't it? And over and over again the dogma was drummed into you that 'Jesus Christ is the only and absolute Son of the Father'

As confessors of the Arch-Gnosis, we fully accept this. We believe in this absolutely one and consummate man: Jesus Christ and Him crucified. But we divest this ineffable divine truth of all theological and dogmatic fetters. We free it of all those fatal, ecclesiastical trusses because the Good Demon or the original, pure Soul is, and has been from the beginning, the only begotten Son of God.

When the dawn of the universal manifestation broke and the human life-wave was differentiated into myriads of microcosms, there was a blazing light present in each microcosm. This light was capable of self-realisation: it was the only begotten Son of God manifested in nature, it was the Good Demon or original Soul.

Only through him, the only begotten One, can you attain blessedness, completeness. There is no other way. So if you look far away, outside of yourself for that One, if you seek Him in some

remote heavenly world, yes, then your vision will become distorted. Then you will be turning from what is within to what is outside. And if, with folded hands, you pray for help to this only begotten One, whom your misguided vision tells you is sojourning in some heavenly domain or other, then that help cannot be given to you. The Christian revelation of salvation will then have been rendered entirely negative.

Knowing this, the Rosicrucians wholeheartedly confess with respect to the Bible that: 'Blessed is he who possesses it; more blessed is he who reads it; most blessed of all is he who truly understands it; while he is most equal to God who both understands and obeys it.'

That is why all confessors of the Tri-Unity of the Light are Christo-centric. Indeed, they were so even tens of thousands of years before our era, before there was even any mention of Jesus of Nazareth. When the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove upon the head of Jesus the Lord and a voice is heard to say: 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased', then this does not mean the nature-born human being called Jesus, as the whole of church christendom, deluded by theology, would have it. It means the original Soul which, as the divine son, as the only begotten Son of God, is at that moment connected once again with the holy Seven-Spirit. In this only begotten Son of God, in this human being who has been raised up in the Soul, what existed from the beginning has been made alive and real once again. And in this way, the person concerned is guided to his high and true destiny.

You may be wondering why the original Soul is called God's only begotten Son. Well, it is because only this blazing, living principle, this central heart, was created in the original microcosm, as the only and highest created thing, the 'principle unto life', generated by God: the only begotten One.

The flame, which we also call the rose-bud or primordial

atom, exists in the original microcosm. So the only begotten Son is potentially within you. This divine principle, anchored by the Logos in every microcosm, understands everything and is capable of manifesting itself: *out of potential power, through active power and through the being of eternity*, as Hermes puts it. Everything undertaken by the original Soul can and will succeed. 'I can do all things', says Paul, the Soulman, 'through Christ who gives me strength', the power of the Spirit. That is why the Son, when united with the Father, is: the power which cooperates with the principle and in this way forms a living unity; it is the activity resulting from that union, which will always achieve its aim perfectly and without any difficulty whatsoever; and which, by its total freedom from every dialectical phenomenon, will lead the result of that activity, the everlasting One, the being of eternity, to its true destiny in timelessness.

That is why Jesus Christ could say, as can, and indeed should, every true Soul-being: 'The Father and I are one.' 'The Father has given all things into my hands.' And thus it is also logical for Jesus the Lord to say: 'Without me, the original Soul, you can do nothing.'

Whatever you attempt with the intelligence of your physical state, it will only lead to death. If you associate the tidings of redemption with the human being (which is the fundamental mistake of Christianity), if you even go so far as to associate them with the human being in his present state, and persist in taking as your starting point the mistaken assumption that it is always the human being who is at the focus of the process of salvation, then everything will turn into delusion. If you persist, even as a pupil of a School like ours, in giving expression to the human being's efforts to maintain itself, albeit in a somewhat changed and camouflaged form, then everything will go wrong; then your pupilship will be nothing but fiction.

So may we tell you in brotherly love to stop all your chatter! What you have to do is not talk but act, on the basis of a new attitude to life, arising from the central Soul-principle. The Christian tidings of salvation are never intended for the personality. They are only for the Soul-being, who is the only begotten Son who has fallen and must be brought back to life again. And in that process you, as a personality-being, can at most offer a helping hand.

When we begin discussing the fourteenth book of Hermes, we will be guided onto a mountain; we will be listening to a sermon on the mount. And the first piece of advice Hermes gives there to the younger ones is to observe silence. The signature of the Soul is silence, and activity through power: power, activity and eternity. If we do not pay attention to this, if we do not take it into consideration, then the term 'Christian' or 'Rosicrucian' becomes a caricature, as has so often been the case throughout history. So should one spurn the personality, as some yoga systems do? No, certainly not: this personality needs to be transfigured.

The fourteenth book of Hermes also fulminates against intellectualism. The personality-being thinks he knows everything. But Hermes asserts that he knows nothing, and indeed is incapable of knowing anything essential.

That is why all chatter should cease, and one should enter into silence. May we warmly recommend this to you yet again? For in chatter lies an immense danger for the pupil.

The personality needs to be transfigured. But do not understand these words in the wrong way: he does not transfigure himself; only the Soul, the only begotten Son of the Godhead, performs this miracle. For the Son is one with the Father. As far as the personality-being is concerned, no one is good, not even one, as Jesus the Lord says. Only the Son of God is absolute; only the Soul and the radiance emanating from it are

good. A multiplicity of forms and manifestations are present in corporeal nature. If only that multiplicity becomes perfect through the law of the Spirit, or is able to comply with that law, then the Soul, which is of God, will be able to achieve whatever it wills; if only you comply with the only begotten One within you.

If you release the power which lies sunken in the primordial atom by surrendering yourself in inner silence and calm; if, in this way, the 'fragrance of the rose' can find expression, then the Soul which is of God, will be able to make and achieve anything it wills. If, regardless of his current state of being, the personality-being places himself completely under the wings of the Soul, then from power, activity and eternity the only true human form will arise.

That is why humanity needs to understand these things. And that is why we are talking about them now. For, as the Bible laments, 'My people, my brothers and sisters of the Soul, are lost for Jack of knowledge'. And that is why the Brotherhood of the Rosycross reveals the science of liberation, the knowledge of salvation. But if you absorb this knowledge intellectually, and hold on to it as a mere intellectual concept, taking the nature-born self as your starting point, it will go wrong; then you will never reach your goal. That is why people must be given the understanding necessary to enable them to cooperate with the process, consciously and in the right way.

Now you might say: 'I already knew about that; it is like this, and it is like that, and I must do this, and I must do that...', but *you* must do nothing! Only surrender, in inner stillness, to the God within you. Do, please, understand it: within your microcosm bums the light, the central heart; and it is to that you must turn.

The central heart must grow, but you must perish. And

since you must perish, you will need to understand the process. That is the reason why the knowledge is given to you. Not to cram your head with it, so that you can say 'now I know it all,' but to enable you to walk the path of liberation. Church Christianity knows nothing of the liberating truth, and that is why it can so easily be misguided by the various authorities. In verse seventeen of our text it is therefore said to Tat:

If you now put aside all contention over words, you will find, my son, that the Spirit, the Soul of God, truly has dominion over everything: over fate, over the law, and over everything else, and that nothing is impossible for it. It is able to exalt the human soul above fate, but equally, to subject it to fate if it has fallen into error.'

Hermes could not have put it more positively. This passage implies that, though nature-born man may have transgressed and sinned most grievously against the elementary laws of life, provided he surrenders and entrusts himself to the only begotten Son within him, to the immortal Soul, this immortal Soul will be able to break through even the most fatal, self-invoked doom; this is the only forgiveness of sins. That is why we read in the Bible, for instance with respect to the penitent adulteress who had turned to the true Soul: 'Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone.'

That is why we never raise any objection to any pupil who-ever, regardless of what misdeeds he or she may have done in the past; provided those concerned entrust themselves to the Soul, genuinely and positively, and give proof of it in their way of life. Then, in the modern Spiritual School, too, the words will be spoken: 'Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone.' Pupilship must be shown in a concrete way, and carried out demonstrably. The doctrine of guilt and the

forgiveness of sins and grace is a classical hermetic teaching. It fills us with joy to be able to tell you this and to be able prove it with the aid of the gospel of the Arch-Gnosis, which is so many thousands of years old. This great and glorious consolation comes to us in this passage from the thirteenth book with the assurance that the true Soul is higher and more powerful than any fate. This consolation is also given to us in the more familiar words from the Bible: 'Though your sins be as red as scarlet, they will become white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they will become white as white wool.'

He who speaks these words is the living Soul, who dwells within you. Where there is guilt, there must also be repentance. And where there is repentance in the only possible way, there is the soul, to redeem and save. And likewise, it is the Soul who stands ready to embrace in love and joy his brothers and sisters, who once fell and yet have been saved. Hence the words: 'There is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents'

May you welcome this very ancient saying in an entirely new way, in the hermetic light, and may you draw from it the stimulus it contains.

X

Passion

In verses 17 to 20 of the thirteenth book Hermes says:

Consequently, the things of the Spirit are undivided and the Spirit, which rules over all things and is the Soul of God, is capable of doing whatever it wills. Consider these things and relate what I said just now to the question you asked me earlier about fate and the Soul. If you now put aside all contention over words you will find, my son, that the Spirit, the Soul of God, truly has dominion over everything: over fate, over the law and over everything else, and that nothing is impossible for it. It is able to exalt the human soul above fate, but equally to subject it to fate if it has fallen into error. Behold the sublime words spoken by the good Demon.

Tat: These are divine, true and enlightening words, Father. But may I ask you to explain the following as well? You said that, in beings devoid of reason, the soul acts in keeping with their disposition and inclinations. Now I suppose that passion, (pathos) is the inclination of beings devoid of reason. If the soul cooperates with the inclinations, and the latter are passions, is then the soul also a passion, since it is affected by pathos?

Hermes: Very good, my son. Your question is discerning, and it is fair that I should answer it. Everything incorporeal in a body is subject to pathos (passion, suffering) and, strictly speaking, is itself passion (pathos). Whatever gives rise to movement is incorporeal. Whatever is moved, is a body. The incorporeal is also moved, and that by the Soul, and this movement, too, is passion (pathos). So both that which

causes movement and that which is moved are subject to suffering (pathos); the one because it imposes movement, the other because it is subjected to the impulse of motion. If, however, the Soul disengages itself from the body, it also frees itself from suffering (pathos, passion). It may be better to say, my son, that nothing is without pathos (suffering), but that everything is subject to it. Pathos (suffering) is not the same as the experience of pathos. The former is active, the latter passive. Bodies, too, are active of themselves. They are either motionless or being moved. In both cases there is pathos.

The incorporeal is forever being urged to action, and is therefore subject to suffering. So do not let yourself be misled by words: active power and pathos (suffering) are one and the same. But there is nothing against using the purest, most favourable name for it.

As you will have noticed, these texts are all about passion. *Pathos*, the term for passion used in the Greek text, refers both to suffering in general and to the suffering of the soul in particular, as well as to the suffering caused by lust, by passion.

Tat asks his Master Hermes for information about these things, in view of his statement that in beings without reason, the soul works in accordance with their instincts. And Tat goes on to say: 'I thought that the instinct of beings devoid of reason is passion. So is the soul, too, a passion?'

In reply, Hermes points out that all activities taking place in a body, and hence all those activities set in motion by the state of the soul, are passion. It is necessary for you to form a clear concept of this.

All human bodies are moved by a 'soul-state', and stand at the centre of a microcosm. In some cases the microcosm is al-

ready considerably developed and of a high quality. In other cases, as is the situation with life-sparks, there is no microcosm but only an elementary astral principle. But whatever the case, in every microcosm and in every astral principle, be it of life-spark entities or animals, there is a nucleus. From this nucleus a radiation emanates, aimed at the heart of the creature concerned and causing a movement, a certain disposition, within it.

So, first there is the nucleus with its radiation, referred to here as 'soul-state'. The radiation of the nucleus ensouls the heart of the creature, which in turn is bound to react to that ensoulment. So there is an immaterial movement, a radiation emanating from the nucleus of the microcosm, and there is something which is being moved – the body, the personality.

In animals, the radiation of the nucleus does not meet any obstruction in the heart, and the radiation emanating from the heart does not encounter any obstruction in the body. That is why animals behave like others of their species. With human beings, however, the situation is quite different. On entering the human heart the radiation of the nucleus always encounters obstructions, which often are considerable. In many cases the radiation of the nucleus cannot even enter the heart at all. It is then as if the heart has become petrified: barren, empty, fat. And should it come about that, after a very long time, something of the radiation of the nucleus *is* able to enter the heart and later, via the heart, the personality, then a great conflict will arise: the great conflict and suffering of pupilship.

It is perhaps necessary to explain all this in more detail. The body, the personality, has a life of its own. The vital consciousness that dwells in every personality is a purely atomic consciousness which, in dialectical human beings, is always in conflict with the radiation of his microcismic nucleus.

The dialectical personality is no longer an ideal personality; it is crystallised, and through its crystallisation it has degenerated. Various organs have become latent, and other organs have been added to enable the human being to manifest himself in the gross-material state. As a result of this densification the human heart has also degenerated. Its seven centres have closed up, and indeed have never been open in the vast majority of human beings. Such individuals are therefore no longer motivated by the radiation of the nucleus, but only by the nature-consciousness.

When Hermes calls people in this condition 'animals', he is in fact being too optimistic: the many millions of people whose hearts are closed in this way are in reality sub-animal, or at any rate no longer human in the true sense of the word. They are creatures of Authades. It is this terrible reality that the Gnosis takes as its starting point. For every personality that enters a microcosm as a result of birth in nature represents a possibility of restoring that microcosm to its original state. In theory, this possibility exists, but what will become of it in practice remains to be seen.

Now we have to present a truth some may find horrifying. In our era, many great powers of the Universal Chain are engaged in stimulating every microcosm to intense activity and the majority of living mankind is experiencing the results of the radiation of the rose in the heart. The human heart is being broken into, as it were. Entrance is being forced, if at all possible and, incidentally, this is giving rise to many illnesses.

Why all this activity? Why all this intense effort? Because if such a forced entry is not successful there will no longer be any possibility of rescue and, excluded from any regenerating impulse, life will just continue without any sense, without any reason, until death comes. One might now ask: 'Do the

great powers of the Universal Chain you mentioned just now suppose that forcing the heart will have a liberating effect on the radiation of the microcosmic nucleus?' Our answer is: 'Look at the results of such forcing, and the corresponding facts and phenomena in our society.'

Hermes says in verse 19: *Whatever gives rise to movement is incorporeal. Whatever is moved, is a body. The incorporeal is also moved, and that by the Soul, and this movement, too, is passion (pathos). So both are subject to suffering (pathos).*

When a human heart is forced open by the microcosmic radiation, the rose of the heart, and the light makes itself known in the personality as a radiance of the Soul, then a fierce conflict will arise between the desolate personality with its sources of nourishment, and the soul. Both will consequently experience intense pain as a result of the conflict: the grief of the Soul, because it is unable to arouse the slightest harmony in the personality, but causes and experiences only disharmony there; and the grief of the personality, because the Soul's influence is so contrary to its nature that it is thrown completely off balance, causing all kinds of problems such as physical illnesses, but also moral defects of various kinds, overwhelming passions, sexual abnormalities and various forms of criminal behaviour.

The cause of this conflict-situation is easy to imagine. It lies in the clash between the personality, which is entirely of the earth earthly, and the rose-radiation. It may, however, be more difficult to see how this can lead to such things as criminal behaviour and moral abnormalities.

Imagine a personality with, for instance, a good, humane disposition combined with a powerfully I-central consciousness (astrologers would speak of a Jupiter influence) expressing itself in a strong urge towards delusory goodness. Now

imagine that this person undergoes the radiation of the nucleus in the heart, without being prepared for it in any way. In this way, the delusion will be strengthened and often driven to tremendous excesses. If the person concerned is strongly intellectual, the radiation of the nucleus to which he is exposed may give rise to serious dishonesty as the result of a negative reaction. If the emotional being, with a strong, negative Mars-influence, rules the body, then the radiation of the nucleus may often cause moral defects. All kinds of passions can develop in this way. This may also account for the attempts of some pupils to bring the School into line with nature.

And now you may ask again: 'How can all this lead to anything useful? How crazy to drive someone into all this conflict, even though they are not capable of reacting positively!'

Well, if you look at the waves of delinquency and degeneration raging throughout the world, if you observe the peculiar behaviour patterns of human beings, who appear to have broken loose from all control and restraint, you will, at the very least, have to conclude that humanity is creating some very heavy karma for itself at the moment.

And that, however paradoxical it may sound, is a great blessing; the only blessing, apparently, to which the majority of mankind is still susceptible. Often the only result is conflict in suffering and sorrow, in a nameless woe. These experiences, full of bitterness, are etched so deeply into the auric being that, from that moment on, the microcosms concerned are 'marked'. And that brings with it the tremendous possibility that, in a future revivification of the microcosm, the heavy karma in the auric sphere will prepare the new personality in an entirely new way. For the past suffering will then have a powerful influence on the archæus, the endocrine system and the blood, and will open the heart to a certain extent.

As a result, there will be less opportunity for the conflict we

have just described to arise or, if it does, its consequences will be much less serious. In very many cases the suffering experienced in the past will make the person concerned strong enough to attempt a serious reaction to the radiations of the original Soul. In these cases there is a strong chance that if pupilship is undertaken, it will be possible to bring it to a good end. The work the universal Brotherhood does with human beings sometimes has extremely long-term aims: 'With God, a thousand years are as one day.'

We are not saying all this because we are happy about criminal behaviour and immorality, but because there is a passion life, and a passion death. The first *is* a victory of the light; the second will one day *become* a victory of the light, albeit via a path of immense suffering. And the passion we need to be moved by, as those who wish to serve God and mankind, is that of intense compassion for all those who are being taken through the depths, so that one day they might experience the dawn of their new morning.

The Soul and the Word

We have discussed Hermes' explanations about the deepest essence of passion, of suffering. We have seen how the impulsion of the Soul lies behind the radiation of the heart, so that every human being is driven to a resurrection or a fall, and how even a fall will ultimately turn into a blessing. In verse 22, Hermes then goes on to point out that, of all mortal entities, only the human being has received two gifts: the Soul and the Word, and that these two attributes bear the values of immortality. If the human being were to use these attributes in the right way, he would be indistinguishable from the immortals. Moreover, he would leave behind the mortal body and be led by those two gifts into the choir of the gods and blessed ones.

In verse 26 Hermes speaks further of these two sublime faculties: *God has said that the Soul is in the body, the Spirit is in the Soul, the Word is in the Spirit, and that God is thus the Father of all these things.*

We would like to investigate what Hermes means by all this. Let us begin by outlining once more the true nature of the Soul. It has its seat in the nucleus of the microcosm. This nucleus is the great life-principle; it has been kindled by the Logos and is therefore in, and of, God, and hence immortal. So this immortal principle is present in your microcosm, and that fact should be an added incentive for you to begin using it.

When we speak of the immortal principle of the human being, you should understand the term human being' in the correct way. The personality, that we are accustomed to labelling with the term 'human being', is only a small part of the

total human entity. The radiation of the microcosmic nucleus, which is known in our philosophy as the rose-heart or the central heart, is aimed not only at the physical heart in order to break into it, but moves throughout the whole microcosmic respiration-field. So the radiation of the nucleus is present not only in the heart, but all around the human being, just as the microcosm, too, is all around him. These radiations emanating from the central heart are astral in nature, and can be compared with the pure sidereal power of the primordial substance, about which Paracelsus once wrote.

Now when the radiation of the nucleus breaks into the heart of the body, the moment will come when the Soul is in the body, the Spirit in the Soul, and God 'is the Father of all of them.' Hermes then goes on to say that the Word is also in the Soul. What he means is that as soon as the personality is ensouled, then the radiation of the nucleus will also gain access to one of the other centres of the human personality – the chakra system. And initially, it is the throat chakra in particular that is affected.

This chakra is situated approximately at the level of the medulla. If you put your hand on your neck, you will be touching this chakra, which governs the entire neck area and all the organs in it. Among other things, it has a strong influence on the pharynx, the cavity at the back of the mouth. In the pharynx is situated a very powerful sense-centre, which is connected to all the cranial organs including the nose, the frontal sinus – which is the abode of the Golden Rose – the throat, and the larynx. So the pharynx controls all these marvellous organs.

In this context it is significant that no-one seems to escape regularly recurring problems with the pharynx, such as colds and throat infections. These things are the order of the day – habitual illnesses, as it were. And, perhaps even more signifi-

cantly, these infections are occurring more and more epidemically. The fact that virtually every human being suffers repeatedly from infections of the pharynx, one of the most important areas in the whole personality system, proves how much mankind has transgressed the holy laws of life.

As a result of the radiation of the nucleus that enters via the heart and spreads throughout the body, certain thoughts develop. All sorts of feelings well up in the body. The entire nerve-ether is set in motion and all the chakra-meridians become extremely sensitive. In this way, a powerful concentration of astral fluid and ethers forms in the throat area.

So the throat is a vibratory centre in which, from second to second, the actual, momentary situation is reflected and developed. On this basis a corresponding vibration arises, which travels upwards to all those so extraordinary organs situated just beneath the crown of the head, and downwards, via the blood and via the nerve-ether throughout all the organs and fluids. In addition, the vibration travels from the throat to the larynx, to the organs of speech. What *is*, exists at a certain moment as a vibration-field in the head sanctuary; and what *is*, is thought. And in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases what *is*, is spoken. In other words, what *is*, is made by speech into an incontrovertible act. Through speech it is made operative, on various levels, both within your system and outside it.

We have often mentioned that thoughts, too, are very active. Thoughts arouse and give form to astral images which, if they are constantly re-animated, will be present in the respiration-field and will contain various possibilities. Through speech, thoughts are converted into living, activating processes, within and outside the body, for speech is a creative organ. Speech is magical.

Moreover, speech is highly magnetic. It attracts and repels, and causes all kinds of occurrences and processes. So we discover what an enormous faculty human speech is. It can either *be* extremely beneficial in its effects, or extremely harmful and poisonous. It can be a blessing or a curse, self-elevating or self-mutilating.

Has it ever occurred to you that, by needless chatter or injurious tittle-tattle, you harm yourself considerably? The Universal Doctrine says of the thought-life that, 'Five minutes unconsidered thinking can undo the work of five years.' You may be familiar with these inspired words. We would like to add that *one minute's* uncontrolled talking at random can undo the work of fifty years.

When the radiation of the nucleus enters the heart, it simultaneously enters the pharynx via the throat chakra. In this way the Word, the power present in the living heart of the microcosm, enters and takes shape in you. Thus, in this initial phase of openness, the Word is spoken in you; so in the beginning there is always the Word, and the Word is of God. Do you understand, now, the prologue of the gospel according to John? Are you making positive use of this Word, which is of God and which becomes present and active in you by means of speech? Or are you making destructive use of it, as a result of your darkness, your countenance? That is the problem we are facing at this moment. The Word is a creative force, and when the Soul begins to live, so that the Spirit begins to flow into the pineal centre, one is obliged to live in keeping with that Word, or to die. If the Soul is affecting you; if, in a power-field, the Word is spoken in you, then you are obliged to live out of it. And if you do not, the consequences will make you shudder.

If the Word, which is of God, is spoken within you, you can render this creative power active within you in a liberating way

by speaking, by living out of that Word, that power. That is why Hermes says that speech is a faculty of immortality, and why you are repeatedly told to 'set a guard on your lips'. Just think of how you have been injuring yourself, perhaps for years, and how you are delaying your liberation. For when you misuse a faculty of immortality within your being, you will suffer harm.

To by far the majority of people can be said: you do not have your speech under control. You are incapable of speaking the living language because of your own inner chaos. Think, for instance, of the many words that cause pain. How often you inflict wounds, without even thinking, because of your sharp tongue. Think of the words that insult or belittle other people. Think of your expressions of temper and your great I-centrality. And think, too, of that so harmful language of lies, of hypocrisy, of criticism and scolding. How much wrong, in this respect, may you have done since you woke up this morning!

Alas, when we think of all the habits of humankind, all this is only too easy to understand. But at least you should no longer be surprised that throat infections and related problems are the order of the day. These things are so common that one doesn't even think about them. But do you understand how the vibration-field in your pharynx is repeatedly poisoned? It is hardly possible any longer to speak of an illness; it is a state of being from which it is no longer possible for any child of man to escape. You run to the doctor, or to your medicine-chest. You swallow all kinds of remedies, by the litre or by the pound. But it is all a waste of time if you do not begin to live out of the Word. Because through speech you render all the forces present in you active, actual. The man of the masses does it, and the pupil of the Spiritual School does it. And now you know how, and you understand something of the results.

The occultist, too, makes use of speech, the human being's magical faculty, in order to render forces active. But the occultist, as an egocentric human being, knows how this faculty works, and makes ample use of it. And there are countless forms of occultism, countless ways of misusing the immortal faculties granted to man.

We have found that by applying all these methods, those concerned bind themselves more strongly than ever to the wheel of birth and death. So do you not find it incomprehensibly foolish when pupils of the young Gnosis also indulge in these errors? On the one hand they want the liberating life, while on the other hand they chatter away at random. One cannot imagine anything more stupid.

Think also of the people who press themselves into the straitjacket of certain cultural habits, habits that often involve the way one speaks. For instance, people try to make their voices sound cultured: very soft or passionate, depending on the results intended. A whole science has been made of it, particularly in modern times. What a delusion, what an insanity all this is generating. What a deceit is being perpetrated. And what a stupid deceit. For it will all come home to roost, and what a vengeance that will bring! Think also of the priests who have been trained to pronounce and sing mantrams for dialectical ends.

All these people are not using speech; they are not using the Word as meant by Hermes, but only the voice, the voice trained for a specific purpose. And on this point, Hermes rightly observes that all other living beings, animals, have only a voice. The animal can warble like a nightingale or croak like a raven. The human voice can play the angel or the exalted being, but is the angel or the exalted being really there behind the voice? That is the question! That is why Hermes concludes by saying: *The Word, speech, is very different from*

the voice. And we would like to add to this, that the would-be angel and the would-be exalted person, when they forget themselves, will speak a language quite different from the one they speak when they are playing their roles.

You are equipped with two magical faculties, two magical attributes: the Soul and the Word. Begin to live from the Soul. Enter immortality, and apply true gnostic magic – by means of speech.

XII

The Liberation of the Heart

Every human entity possesses two immortal faculties: the Soul that is being born of the Spirit, and the Word, which also develops from the Spirit. It will therefore be easy for you to imagine the tremendous tension experienced by a pupil who devotes his whole interest to the Gnosis and thus begins to open his heart to the radiation of the microcosmic nucleus, which is so contrary in every respect to the state of being of the personality. Invoked by the ego itself, the power that enters is totally annihilating for the ego and everything it might still cherish. So it is clear that the great conflict that has to be fought must begin in the heart. All the desires of the self-maintaining, self-centred I are radiated outwards by the heart, and the objects of desire are attracted by the heart. As a result of these functions of the heart sanctuary, present in every human being, the heart is in a constant state of agitation, even during sleep. In consequence, the human heart is highly crystallised and fatigued, and there is not a moment when it can be still, when it can become silent.

The pupil's greatest battle is always fought in the heart, by the heart and with the heart. The heart is the great battleground, as the *Bhagavad Gita* so clearly explains. The heart is always chasing after something, driven by the desires of the human ego. But since, in our world, the law of antitheses operates, it is obvious that as soon as the heart's desires are emitted, all sorts of counteracting factors and forces will also be invoked. These will, for instance, take the form of people who oppose you. Without them knowing or even having a single suspicion, you will see them as opponents, owing to

your egocentric state. Your heart radiations will then attempt to neutralise these people whom you believe to be your adversaries, for they stand between you and your objectives. And all the functions of your entire personality will be summoned to your aid, particularly the faculty of speech. With speech, with words, people break each other, they tear each other apart, they kill each other.

So the human heart is very impure. This becomes particularly apparent when the human being enters the Living Body of the young Gnosis. No-one has a pure heart, a clean heart, in the light of the Gnosis, for the heart has been a battlefield for a very long time. So if a person wishes to follow the path, his heart must be purified, it must become silent. It must become 'still before God', as the Bible puts it. The constant agitation, conflict and turbulence of the ego must come to an end. If you do not put a stop to the heart's ordinary processes of attraction and conflict, your heart will never be able to receive the radiation of the nucleus of the microcosm in a harmonious way, and then it will destroy you.

Only when the heart has become genuinely still, when it has been purified, can it devote itself to the true task to which every human being has been called and chosen on account of his two divine faculties. That task is to overcome death, and in this way to enter the true, new state of life.

How can one begin? How can one bring about the silence of the heart, the purification of the heart? By disengaging the heart from the dialectical process of life and devoting it entirely to the soul-process which is beginning to dawn, to the radiation emanating from the centre of the microcosm.

Can that be done? Is it possible? Yes, it is. If you undertake to accomplish it, you will discover that you can adopt and persevere in a totally new way of life, without needing to force yourself in any way; you will discover that the ship of your

life will enter another stream, by which it will be borne along. If you decide on such a new way of life, then the I, the ego of nature, will still be in you, but it will have resolved very consciously not to use the heart any longer in the daily game of life; the ego will have decided to make the paths straight for its God.

It may sound strange to say that the ego will no longer involve the heart in the processes of its dialectical life, for the heart will naturally go on fulfilling its biological functions. However, the heart will be withdrawn from everything that is of the 'here' it will be disengaged from all dialectical turbulence and conflict. The heart will enter a deep state of peace, the peace of Bethlehem. It will no longer desire dialectical things. It will no longer struggle against people, things and circumstances.

Even so, it will not be indifferent towards people and things. With the heart, you can approach dialectics from three different angles: you can attract things, or you can repel them, but you can also be totally indifferent towards them. And that indifference towards people, things and the world is perhaps the worst of the three. If, as a pupil, you begin to disengage the heart from dialectical things, you should certainly not fall into indifference. It is only that the heart no longer desires to participate in the battlefield of life. It no longer fights against people and things, and maintains this position right down to the smallest detail. All the functions that have to be performed here in order to live, in order to fulfil your social obligations, are carried out solely with the aid of the organs of intelligence, and thus without involving the heart. If you do this, you will discover that you can perform your activities in society much better than before. Think, for instance, of the widespread aversion to work. Aversion is an activity of the heart.

So, with your heart, you can make your daily work much harder.

You will also find that if the ego no longer has the heart and its functions at its disposal, the self-maintaining nature will be completely fettered from within. If you withdraw the heart from all turbulence and open it to the radiation of the microcosmic nucleus, you will lose all your self-preserving instincts. And if you adopt this new attitude of the heart, you will experience that your nerve-ether will enter a state of intense tranquillity. You will stand in the midst of life, you will do your duty, but you will not wish to hold on to any of it.

Now you should not think that the heart will simply be inactive throughout all this. If one no longer allows the heart to do anything in a dialectical sense, it will then be able to perform its true, sublime task, the task for which it has been chosen by God. When the heart surrenders itself to the radiation of the original atom, this rose begins to bloom and can be attached to the cross of nature without any interference. Only then does one become a true Rosicrucian. Once this cross has been erected, it will have a purifying, transforming effect on the entire personality. In short, the whole life, the whole approach to life, will change. The person will begin to prove that he has become a Rosicrucian, that he has entered the Brotherhood of the Red Rosycross. Once his heart has become still, such a person can no longer do anything else than be a Rosicrucian.

So your heart must first become truly still, and devoted to its true purpose, which is to receive and assimilate the radiation of the nucleus of the microcosm. When, in this way, the heart has become silent and pure, the rose will begin to open for the universal Gnosis, and the Word can be made alive in you. A tremendous joy will come over you, a joy that will never fade. Your heart will be filled with a great and glorious happi-

ness, and you will feel an intense affinity with everyone and everything. The first, mighty, immortal faculty of man will have entered the system in a liberating way. The Spirit, which is from God, will then have been ensouled in you, and it will no longer encounter any opposition in the heart, the place of vivification. It will then be able to purify the heart completely. It will be able to adapt itself to the personality very harmoniously, and will irradiate the whole personality system, with health-restoring and diseasepreventing results. That is the secret of being healthy, by dialectical standards. That is the secret of being able to go on with your work, right until extreme old-age, even if your body has been weak from birth.

When you have entered the rose garden in this way, the classical first day of the new week will dawn for you, the first day in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. This garden is located on a mountain, and the word 'Arimathea' means 'a high place'. In this high place, on this mountain, the second immortal faculty of the New Man will arise in you: the Living Word. The Living Word and the voice will then become united within you, into one living, vibrating reality. The great feast of the resurrection can then be celebrated in you. Born in the stillness of the heart, the high place, which existed in the beginning, will once again be dedicated to life. The mighty faculty of the Holy Grail, gnostic magic, can then be applied. Moved by the Word, the voice will speak, and lo, it is there. It will command, and lo, it is done. For through the Word, the entry of the Spirit will be celebrated in your being. At that moment, the Seven-Spirit will be linked with the Soul and the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross, transfiguration, will begin.

And then you will be able to enter by the Golden Gate. Wonderful dreams of the inner Sign will then begin to speak. And Hermes adds:

The Soul is in the body, the Spirit in the Soul, the Word in the

Spirit, and God is the Father of them all. So the Word is the image and the Soul of God, the idea is the image of the Soul and the body is the image of the idea.

XIII

The Two Immortal Faculties

The Word is the image and the Soul of God, the idea is the image of the Soul, and the body is the image of the idea.

In these words of Hermes, and all that follows in the thirteenth book, lies the key to transfiguration, which has to be brought about by the candidate in the gnostic mysteries himself, with the aid of his two immortal faculties, the Soul and the Word.

We have discussed these two divine faculties and pointed out the way in which they can be awakened and unleashed. There is not a single entity who could walk the path of true liberation without them. To gain a clear understanding of the significance of these two faculties, you should begin by investigating the microcosm.

The mighty ideation-power of the Logos, the omnipresent and all-pervading One, projects itself into what we call space. Space, as the Rosicrucians state, is not empty: 'There is no empty space' space is filled with primordial substance. When the divine idea relating to God's plan for his creature, man, is radiated into space, the microcosm comes into being. You could think of a concentration of primordial substance, of atoms. Initially, the microcosm is the not yet embodied monad, a concentration of primordial substance formed as a result of a magnetic principle. The classical Rosicrucians sometimes called such a light-emitting principle a spark, the divine spark. The spark is the nucleus of the monad, and from it a radiation emanates, which gives rise to a sevenfold rotation, a sevenfold magnetic field. With the radiation of this

spark as its centre, the surrounding magnetic field then becomes a microcosmic field of creation, a field of manifestation. It is in this field that the great process of self-realisation has to take place.

The time comes when a manifestation, a form, a body develops in the microcosmic field of creation. This manifestation is, to put it in hermetic language, 'the image', the sculpture, the expression of the vivifying radiation of the microcosmic nucleus. This radiation is in keeping with the idea of the Logos. Hence the words of verse 26: *The body is the image of the idea.* The idea is manifested via the Soul, the Soul is manifested through the nuclear principle, while the nucleus in turn is an image of the Godhead. And in verse 27 Hermes says: *So the most subtle part of matter is the air or primordial substance, the most subtle part of the air is the Soul, the most subtle part of the Soul is the Spirit, and the most subtle part of the Spirit is God.*

So, in the primordial past, man was a self-manifesting entity in the absolute sense of the word. Through the radiation of the nucleus of the monad, a glorious personality was manifested in the creation-field of the monad as a pure image, a pure idea of the Godhead. This entity was equipped with mighty talents that enabled it to act and fulfil a task within the All.

But a group of these entities became involved in a process known as 'the Fall', a process we would like to discuss with you in more detail later. One of the results was that the bodies, the images of the divine idea, crystallised. The bodies became increasingly dense until finally the moment came when an incident occurred, involving the radiation of the nucleus on the one hand, and the crystallising bodies on the other. In the end, it was no longer possible for this radiation to provide these bodies with sufficient energy. It was then

that the process we know as death first appeared. The discarded crystallisations were replaced by new manifestations, for the radiation of the nucleus went on performing its task. Time and time again, a new form appeared in the microcosm. That is why there are myths which state that in the beginning man was an androgynous being, a male-female being, a hermaphrodite.

This condition could not last, however. A human projection that constantly functions in opposition to its nature will ultimately give rise to an intense conflict, and in this instance it could not be withstood by the radiation of the microcosmic nucleus. Thus it could no longer express itself in the personality, which at that time lived much longer than it does now, and was almost entirely of an astral-etheric nature. When this incident between the radiation of the nucleus and the increasingly solidifying personality reached its culmination, the separation of the sexes occurred, so that the personality could be maintained by means of sexual intercourse. From then on, the process of birth was necessary, and the relationships were reversed: disembodied, emptied microcosms were given the opportunity, through the birth of new personalities, to envelop the latter during their birth in nature so that, if at all possible, the age-old process could be restored and death could be abolished. So when a personality is born, it is simultaneously brought into contact with a microcosm. The aim of establishing this connection between personality and microcosm is to restore the original condition and to bring the original, immortal human being back into manifestation, in keeping with the idea of the microcosmic radiation.

It was to cooperate with this aim, to help restore the original Gnosis to your microcosmic world, that pupilship of the School of the Golden Rosycross was made available. The modern Spiritual School is devoted to this one work; it is cer-

tainly not there for the glorification or improvement of your present, nature-born personality, or to make it more divine. There are many primitive and unintelligent methods aimed at such useless endeavours. You are a pupil of this School for the sole purpose of subjecting your present personality, which is at the same time your consciousness, to the great restoration, the mighty process of transfiguration, in cooperation with your monad. If that were not what you wanted, there would be no point in your pupilship, it would only be a burden. And if you really do want to bring about this process of restoration, if your entire being, your whole heart is devoted to that aim, then you will have two mighty faculties at your disposal: the Soul and the Word, which you can release and apply whenever necessary.

It is often a riddle to us why some people have joined our School, in view of their inclinations, mentality and general behaviour. During the centuries when the Brotherhood of the Rosycross had to work more in secret, a neophyte was only accepted if he possessed genuine yearning and the firm resolution to enter the glorious process of transfiguration. The neophyte gave himself utterly to that, exerting every atom of his being.

But what, in our modern times, ought we to think of pupils who promise and resolve to enter the process but do not actually do so? Surely that is rather unintelligent, irrational? And is it not also rather immoral, seen from the standpoint of the Living Body which they have infiltrated? Are such situations not proof of how degenerate, how crystallised the present racial body has become? And how abnormal the persons concerned have become? Is it not proof of the regrettable fact that, in practice, such people can no longer be helped?

In keeping with the task of the Universal Chain, the modern Spiritual School has opened wide its gates. Anyone

who wishes can enter, providing certain requirements are accepted. So if a person has, of his own free will, accepted those requirements formally, one can expect of honest, normal people that they will live up to their resolutions and keep their promises. If it turns out that they do not, then one can only conclude that they are in a rather seriously submerged state.

There are two mighty faculties that are capable of turning your pupilship into candidateship, and that can lead you to victory. They do not need to be conferred on you, they do not need to be introduced into your system, because they already belong to the system of your monad. However, you yourself have to release them. Then they will lead you irresistibly to the ultimate goal. These two immortal faculties are to be found in the nucleus of the microcosm. The first is what the prologue of the Gospel according to John calls the Word. It is the divine idea, radiated by the Logos throughout eternity. The second is the radiation of the nucleus that corresponds to the divine idea.

By making the heart still, by withdrawing it from all conflict and causing it to enter into a state of deep peace, you make the heart sanctuary open for the Soul, the harmonious influx of the light of the monad. When you are vivified by this light, there will be a number of wonderful results, and when these are manifested, one will be able to speak of pupilship in the true sense. Then it will be possible to speak, genuinely and literally, of a deep connection between the Soul and the personality. *Then* the foundation for restoration, the foundation for transfiguration, will have been laid.

And then the second faculty will be added: the Word. The throat chakra will then function in your system in a new way and with an increasing intensity. The nerve-centre in your

throat will concentrate the new light-power, which needs to be applied by means of the voice.

Consider this wonder: anyone who frees the basis-faculty, the new soul-state, within his being, surrendering the whole heart to the Gnosis and living out of that state, will gain a new, grandiose creative faculty: the Word, with the aid of which all the forces controlling the system can be applied or, if they are harmful, neutralised and eliminated.

Every pupil will receive these two faculties, if only you will withdraw from the conflict of the heart; if only you are willing to enter the profound peace of Bethlehem and eradicate the anarchy of the voice. If only you are willing to use your voice in the proper way, and to overcome the cry of the animal, then the new heaven-earth will open for you in true, applied pupilship.

XIV

The Inner Law

To continue our study of the thirteenth book of the *Corpus Hermeticum* it is necessary to speak about death, a subject with which we are all most closely concerned, and which is an object of fear for so many. The prospect of death is a very real spectre which makes many people ask the ever-recurring question: 'How was it possible for the original human being, who surely existed in such great glory, to die? Doesn't that cast doubt on divine perfection?' The answer is that death is actually the proof of perfection, and that in deepest essence there is no such thing as death. If you test this answer against reality and truth, you will always find it confirmed.

The Spirit manifests itself in matter, in the ocean of primordial substance, by means of its radiation-powers. As a result, a light-emitting principle, a microcosm, a monad comes into being in the primordial substance.

Primordial substance is the boundless, omnipresent ocean of atoms. That is why the ancient Rosicrucians stated that, 'There is no empty space.' Atoms are living, moving, infinitely tiny particles, universes and stellar systems in miniature. So there exists one infinite space, one pulsating, mighty life. There is nothing, anywhere in the entire All, that is lifeless, wherever you might probe. The essence of the All is ineradicably, fundamentally alive. That is why, in our temples, we sing: 'The smallest thing on earth is adoration worth; beats with life divine.'

There is no death. Think again of the monad. What is the monad other than a collection of living atoms, made by the

Spirit, by God himself? The atom is life; the monad is a concentration of life, ignited by the Spirit of God.

This enkindled, composite, cooperating life has an aim; it proceeds from an idea, a plan, that is carried out by radiation, by a complex of light-energies. The radiation emanating from the microcosm creates an image of the idea in the magnetic field of the monad, at the critical point designated for that purpose. This image, in turn, can be nothing else than an assembly of living atoms which ought, in combination, to carry the image, the aim of the idea into effect. In this way, they form an embodiment of the idea.

The flow of the idea into the embodiment is the vivifying factor, which is maintained between the idea and the embodiment as if by means of light. It follows that the embodiment, or the image of the living idea, must be the great instrument that carries out the idea. So, whatever the situation, the body of birth in nature is always God manifested in the flesh, because behind all this boundless activity in the microcosm stands the Spirit, God.

This entire development unfolds under the guidance of various laws of nature, which in antiquity were called *cosmocrators*, which means world-rulers. Thus there is a natural law of amalgamation. By means of this law, living atoms are drawn together by the monadic radiation to form an image of the idea, a body. The law of atomic amalgamation regulates the process. However, this law is subject to limitations, because if living atoms were to combine into one body without any restriction, then that body would crystallise, it would become petrified and unable to move, and thus no longer able to fulfil its purpose. That is why all bodies formed under the law of amalgamation, are regulated and kept in harmony with the divine All by the operation of a second law, the law of disintegration. All bodies are controlled by these two natural laws of

amalgamation and disintegration. They are the cause of all metabolic processes, and thus the law of expansion and contraction universally applies.

In a cycle lasting billions of years, the development of mankind passes through seven periods. Helena Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, Max Heindel and others have described these in detail. Heindel, for instance, talks about seven circles, about seven globes, in seven eras. Seven times seven times seven astronomical cycles. We are telling you about all these things to make clear that the universe, the boundless ocean of atoms, forms one great system in which various developments are manifested in a organised way, in keeping with natural laws.

So, the universe is not static. Changes occur unceasingly within it. Without going into any greater detail for the moment, we would like to say that the law of amalgamation expresses itself in different ways in each of the various astronomical cycles. In some macrocosmic periods it permits a more intense amalgamation of atoms, a greater degree of crystallisation, than in previous or subsequent periods. Present-day mankind is living in a period – now almost at an end – during which the solidification of bodies has reached a maximum. However, it goes without saying that in such a period the law of disintegration will also operate in a very powerful way. The law of disintegration of atoms and bodies will operate to the same extent that the law of amalgamation is dynamically active.

People are accustomed to calling the pronounced intervention of disintegration 'death'. But in essence, death is nothing else than the stimulation of living metabolism. A body disintegrates into living atoms. The atom itself, the unit in the universe, is never lost; atoms combine to form bodies and then they separate again. Life remains absolute. Death is all in the mind.

The idea may now occur to you, particularly if you had a church upbringing, that 'I thought death was the wages of sin. And what am I to think now about the meaning of good and evil?'

Well, in the course of the astronomical cycles, there comes a time when mankind reaches the nadir of atomic amalgamation. The image of the idea, the body, becomes increasingly solidified, and eventually can no longer be properly controlled by the radiation of the microcosmic nucleus which, ideally, should work together with the body. Allow your imagination to work, and see it clearly before you. Visualise the microcosmic sphere. Within it is a nucleus from which a radiation emanates. Through the vivifying activity of this radiation, an amalgamation of atoms is manifested: the body, which is constantly maintained by that radiation. The nucleus, on the one hand, and the body, the amalgamation of atoms on the other, remain together; they are linked by the ensouling essence. In this way, there exists a unity of Spirit, Soul and body.

And now there comes a moment during the astronomical cycle when this whole system enters a state of solidification. The bodily substance becomes increasingly concentrated. As this development continues, the moment eventually comes when the radiation of the nucleus is no longer capable of making itself sufficiently felt in the system. And then, unless the image bearer is willing to cooperate with that radiation from within, it will be forced into a state of inactivity. It will stagnate. The Soul will withdraw into itself, and the image of the idea, the body, will no longer receive its nourishment from the microcosmic centre, so that eventually it will have to be propagated through the familiar process of sexual reproduction.

Once the radiation of the nucleus is no longer able to control the embodiment, the body disintegrates, and a new one has to

be introduced into the microcosm by the reproductive process. This body is then brought to adulthood by the law of amalgamation, and then dissolved again by the law of disintegration. This body is what we refer to as the 'emergency-order body'. By this means it is ensured that the monad always has an embodiment at its disposal, so that this image-bearer – which *you are* – might become conscious of its state of being, of its calling. Your calling, our calling, is to cooperate once more with the original idea of the Logos, and in this way to restore the age-old process.

Now if, in the manner described, the image-bearer descends right into the nadir, and then forgets that there is any such thing as an original Soul, and it becomes entirely focused on the horizontal level of life, believing that it is completely dependent on this world, this nadir, then there will be a problem. It is the problem of how to ensure that every image-bearer remains capable of following the path of return, by means of the emergency-order body.

However, added to this is yet another problem. Every body, as we explained, is life, because a body is an amalgamation of atoms, and every atom is life. There is no such thing as dead matter in the universe. Hermes says in verses 31, 32 and 33:

There has never been, and nor will there ever be anything in the world that is dead. It is the will of the Father that the world should live as long as it maintains its cohesion; that is why the world must needs be God. How then would it be possible, my son, for a thing such as death to be within God, in Him who is the image of the All, in Him who is the fullness of life? For death is decay, and decay is destruction. How then could one think that any part of what is imperishable could pass into decay, or that any part of God could be destroyed?

'Do not be so foolish as to suppose,' says Hermes so emphatically to Tat, 'that there could be any such thing as death.' All is life, one living ocean of atoms. Therefore, every body is life. And that is why every body also possesses consciousness. And every consciousness possesses a boundless power which, naturally, is divine. For the atom is life. And life is always derived from the primordial fount. Since your personality consists of an amalgamation of atoms, the fundamental essence of your being is God, God revealed in the flesh.

However, if the personality in its passage through the nadir is no longer linked directly with the monad, is no longer generated directly by the monad as it was before, then this body will no longer possess any inner law: the original vivifying principle. Only when you are reborn in the sense meant by the gospels, will you possess an inner law once again; only then will the law speak again in your heart. As long as that law remains mute, as long as the link between you and your monad remains broken, the law can only speak to you from without. That is why your life is often so difficult. For what you hear from without, what comes to you from without, can easily be forgotten. And you *will* forget it, because you are far too preoccupied with things on the horizontal level.

In its passage through the nadir, the body no longer has access to the law from within, but must be guided by an outer law. That is why ancient esoteric doctrine tells that, at a certain moment during the course of human development, man's physical, inner eye was made dormant; it shrivelled. And that eye is the pineal gland, the human being's original, third eye.

In essence, nothing is dormant: your pineal gland is still in its original state. But you are not using this inner eye; you *cannot* use it, because you are still keeping your heart tightly closed. Generally speaking, your heart is full to the brim with

every kind of thing imaginable, but not with the one thing necessary. As long as one keeps the heart closed to the radiation of the nucleus, it is as if the human being is blind to its direct influence and intervention. That is why the New Testament so often speaks about people who are born blind. Didn't they come into the world in such a state of blindness? And in the same way, aren't you, too, a person who has been born blind?

How can this fundamental condition of your birth in nature be erased? You need to be healed in the grace of Christ, which means: in the vivifying light of the rose of the heart. A person who is fundamentally blind is like the people described in the Bible: seeing, blind and hearing, deaf. In such a state, you do not know the right way to act and then you do the most foolish things. Someone wandering about in the darkness will bump into things and be hurt, cause accidents, make mistakes, and create problems, won't he?

When, during the passage through the nadir, all this was manifested for the first time, evil came into the world, wickedness appeared in the domain of the nadir, and all this was the result of the loss of the inner faculty of perception. In such a situation, the mortal becomes the victim, held in the thrall of outer life. So wickedness, evil, is not fundamentally present in the human being. It is manifested as darkness, in which the blind person goes his way, ignorant, groping, and from time to time bumping himself. Therefore, ignorance is the greatest sin. Think of the Biblical lament: 'My people are lost for lack of knowledge.' Does this mean book-knowledge, or school-learning? Or the knowledge transmitted to you by a worker of the Spiritual School? No, it means inner knowledge!

Everything in existence, everything God has revealed, lies sunken within your monad. Open your being to the monadic radiation and your ailments will disappear, and you will become healthy again, just as your monad was in the begin-

ning. If you go on wandering and groping in the darkness, bumping into things from time to time, the law of disintegration will have to correct you in an increasingly dynamic way. From the moment when the human being became totally blind, the law of disintegration no longer operated in a painless way. That is why the results of mistakes almost always cause great sorrow in your life. It was in this way that death became a source of grief, because death was the 'wages of sin'.

This so difficult process is accompanied by the most tremendous sorrows. The external law, which made its appearance during the passage through the nadir, is set down in the Old Testament. While the herd is being driven onward – the ignorant herd, which looks without seeing and listens without hearing – it must be protected as much as possible by the law operating from without. That is why the threatening voice constantly resounds: 'Thou shalt...If you do not do this, then the result will be that. The day you do that, this will occur.' So speaks the external law, the law of the ten commandments.

We were once in contact with a clergyman who asked us: 'Do you keep the law of the ten commandments in your School?' We gave the reply: 'Yes, we have to. Otherwise our School would come to nothing.' If the inner law is not operative in you, if you have not been reborn in the light of the New Testament, then the Old Testament will apply: there will be wars and the rumours of wars, and all kinds of miseries in many places. That is the way of the world. So the external law is not a law of hate, but a law for the protection and guidance of entities who are blind; a law for protecting as far as possible an image-bearer who is associated with the monad but no longer has any knowledge of that fact and therefore no longer acts accordingly. It is a law intended to keep open for as long as possible the opportunity to restore such a being to its former state. For that purpose, the image-bearers are guided

and if necessary punished by the external law. And it is because of this fact that we would like to draw your attention to the last verse of the thirteenth book:

Worship these words, my son, and revere them: there is only one religion, one way to serve and worship God, namely by not being evil.

This means that if you cast evil aside, as far as you possibly can, you will be keeping open within you the possibility of one day meeting the true light once again.

And now another question may have arisen in you: 'Why did such a passage through the nadir have to be included in the course of the astronomical cycles? Why did such a great glory have to be lost? Was it predestined? Was there no other way?'

Let us try to answer these questions.

The Sword of the Spirit

The word nadir means lowest point'. So passing through a nadir in the course of the astronomical cycles may never be seen as some sort of fall, in the sense of a descent into obscurity. This is because, in the nadir, at the crucial point in the astronomical cycles, merit has to be won, the great goal set by the Logos has to be reached, the divine plan for the world and mankind must become a reality.

So what is the essential thing about a course through a nadir? What is the aim of such experience in the darkness? It is to find the light during such an odyssey and, with the aid of the light one has found, to overcome evil and restore the microcosm to its original state. All the mysteries culminate in this; as soon as the human being becomes aware of this, the line of his development turns upwards again and returns to its origin. But with what an immeasurable difference! The human being set out as an ignorant entity; he returns as one who knows. He set out as a prodigal son; now he is the son who has been found once more, and who returns to the House of the Father.

That is the reason for the process of salvation which is going on throughout the entire All, throughout all the astronomical eras. It is intended to give the human consciousness purification and a fullness of experience, gained by following a descending path and passing right through a nadir; by passing right through an Old Testament period full of hazard, disaster and sorrow, until the whole process is reversed in Christ, and one enters an ascent in the New Testament.

This is what the classical Rosicrucians meant when they said:

*'Ignited by the Spirit of God,
passed away in Jesus the Lord,
reborn through the fire of the Holy Spirit.'*

The monad is created by God, the Soul develops, and the four-fold personality is formed as an image of the idea, and is subsequently vivified by the monad.

That is the sevenfold, total human being, ignited by the Spirit of God. It is the beginning of God's mighty manifestation, in and through his creature. And when the creature is complete, the design must take on values; it must gain a fullness of experience in God's great training school, and thereby become totally self-realising. Hence the course of development through the astronomical epochs, in seven circles, on seven globes, through seven periods.

The Rosicrucians referred to all this as 'passing away in Jesus the Lord'. It is the way of the cross of roses, from the beginning to the end, portrayed in countless myths and legends as a history that unfolds during the course of a number of years. It results in the resurrection, the great restoration, replete with the treasure of maturity: the eternal rebirth, from, through and in the Holy Spirit.

Throughout all of this, throughout the whole journey of evolution, death is a fiction, evil is a by-product and there remains only the one, absolute life.

What, in the passage through the nadir, we refer to as birth in nature, the birth of the emergency-order body, is thus the ever-recurring opportunity for overall restoration, for gaining a fullness of experience. The only danger that threatens this process is that of evil, wickedness, delusion. It is a delusion, of which every entity will have to rid itself sooner or later, by

making the discovery that all evil is a fiction, caused by the interplay of opposites, and thus by dialectics.

So we can understand Hermes when he asserts that there is no death, that there has never been a single dead thing, because every atom is and remains a living principle. The strength of an atom can certainly be depleted, but it will keep on being revived, filled with the fundamental energy of the Godhead. Death is decay, and decay is perishing. But such a process of decay could not possibly be included in the All-manifestation, as Hermes clearly states.

The process that actually occurs, and that so often deceives you, the process you call death, is the disintegration of a composite body. It is disintegrated so that it might live again, so that it might be renewed. For there is one, continuous movement throughout the All, an eternal progress of all things. In fact, movement is the fundamental work of the All. *Everything is moved*, as Hermes rejoices.

Through this continuous movement, through the constant transformation of all things and the accompanying interplay of opposites, evil comes into existence and must be neutralised independently by every single entity. That is why you need to have a thorough understanding of the essence of evil.

The passage through the nadir is the journey to the lowest point, the journey to the bottom. It is the state in which inner certainty, inner consummation, is reached.

If you are endowed with great possibilities, if you are called to carry out a great work, you will need to be trained beforehand, and to gain a thorough experience, so that you will know how things can be done, and how they cannot be done. But the purpose of passing through the nadir is certainly not to drag man through the darkness, through depths and misery, merely to lead him to experience.

No, the passage through the nadir means the consolidation

of a rock-hard certainty about salvation and its manifestation. All the journeys through the astronomical cycles together constitute the manifestation of divine salvation with respect to the creature. Every fibre of the entire monadic system must be absorbed in this one, immutable certainty, so that God-in-God can genuinely be manifested, and not some kind of fully automatic entity, working with clockwork precision and populating the universe by the billion. The Logos manifests itself through its creatures. That is why every monad is brought to its nadir, so that, like a tree, it can truly find deep soil for its roots.

Once this aim stands clearly before your eyes, everything will look different. How can you achieve this inner certainty about life? Not only through experience, but also through conflict. Why does conflict come into your life? Because you are submerged in dialectics; because you are confronted with the existence of antitheses: light and darkness, good and evil. Everything turns into its opposite. Through the existence of opposites, through the great conflict situation of dialectics, you will enter the life of self-discovery: through experience and conflict. You try to hold onto something: it slips through your fingers. You try to achieve something, but as soon as you have brought it to fruition, you lose it again. You build something up, and then it collapses.

Think of the familiar story of Parsifal, in the quest for the Holy Grail. In the distance, the candidate sees a Golden City. He hurries towards it, but by the time he reaches the place where it stood, it has faded away. He sees an amazingly beautiful figure. He rushes towards it; the figure crumbles into dust. That is dialectics. Everything, but everything, dwindles away in your hands.

When you are young, you expect a great deal of life. As you grow older, you find that little or none of what you hoped for

so ardently has materialised. What do you have left? Experience. What do you have left? The essence of conflict. Many people are totally entangled in conflict. Conflict is evil. That is why Hermes said to his son Tat: 'Disengage yourself from conflict.' In other words, distance yourself from dialectics; free yourself from it in one clean break.

You can always choose between two possibilities. On that point, you have made endless experiments and, indeed, you are still doing so with your I, your nature-born ego. For your ego must learn the lesson. And the Spirit and the original Soul are waiting until you discover and see through your predicament and, acknowledging your destiny, you open wide the door of your heart.

Your ego must penetrate to knowledge and understanding. Your ego must get rid of the thick walls of self-maintenance surrounding you. Occasionally, some pupils come to the temple as if clad in armour, as if they wanted to say: 'Don't think you will be able to penetrate my defences.' Why do they behave like that? Out of self-preservation. They have been battered by life for so long, they have so often been humiliated and tormented, that they always adopt a defensive attitude. They see everyone as an enemy. Such walls will have to go. All that self-defence must disappear. Your ego must penetrate to knowledge and understanding. In other words, the discovery of the only Good lies hidden in the essence of the nadir and its nature. In that primordial nature you will have to find 'deep soil.'

So is it true that everyone who passes through the nadir must drain the cup of bitterness to the last drop? No, not at all. What happens is entirely up to you. You only need to experience bitterness, misery and sorrow until you have attained insight and inner certainty from that experience, gained amid the interplay of opposites.

You will never be done with the interplay of changes. It has no beginning and no end. In keeping with natural laws dialectics constitutes the deepest depth to which one can go. And you find yourself in that borderland. But you do not need to go through it. You must rise out of it. In that, perhaps, lies your mistake: you want to break right through the boundary of the depths. But you should rise above it. You can leave this borderland at any time, and make the journey upwards. Indeed, many people are raising themselves out of the depths with every moment that passes, but then they fall back down again with a thud. Until at last, in the end, sufficient understanding has been born as a result of experience and conflict. And if there is understanding, genuine understanding, then there will also be sufficient strength to make the upward journey successfully.

That is why profound insight must first be born. And that is why the Bible says: 'My people are lost for Jack of knowledge.' This does not mean intellectual knowledge. No, it concerns the knowledge of experience, purified by conflict. And when a person has reached this point via the path of bitterness, he will begin to understand the words of Hermes:

Worship these words, my son, and revere them: there is only one religion, one way to serve and worship God, namely by not being evil.

This means that you must say farewell to dialectics. You must close your account with this world and leave the borderland. You must raise yourself up and liberate yourself, in an absolute sense, from all conflict in evil.

That is the meaning of the temptation in the desert. The powers of the borderland offer the candidate everything. If he cannot resist the tempter, he will become entangled in the web. Anyone who has truly awakened to insight will detach

himself from all this. You will be able to do this as soon as you possess sufficient inner understanding, as soon as you know the direction in which you have to go, and that you must disengage yourself from the interplay of opposites. If you are aware of all this, you should not be content simply to know it. You must act straight away and, by gnostic science, disengage yourself firmly, directly and absolutely: 'Today, if you hear the voice, the voice of inner knowledge, do not harden your heart, but allow yourself to be guided into the New Land.'

And then you should not only pray, like a person crying out in sorrow: 'Lord, forgive us our debts', but at the same time you should say: 'as we forgive our debtors'. For if you follow the path of the Soul, you will be connected with every other being. (Indi-vidualists, will you please understand that!) It is out of the ques-tion that you could walk the path alone, as an ego. In the life of the Soul there is no ego; there is only the Soul, and the Soul knows that it is connected with all other beings. So if you unleash the power that leads to life, it will be a power that can only be applied together with the group, and by applying it, you will disengage yourself firmly, as far as nature is concerned, from everything; you will no longer become involved in evil, you will no longer wish to have any part in it, and you will no longer allow yourself to be dragged along by it.

Can this really be done? Yes, because the knowledge born of experience and purification places two immortal faculties at your disposal: the Soul and the Word. When the human being, the image of the idea, celebrates this tremendous discovery and enters into the one religion, which he does 'by not being evil', then he will have at his disposal the monadic faculties of the beginning, which God himself has manifested in the monad, since He is perfectly reflected therein.

If you keep holding on to your bitterness, you will never be able to hear the voice of the monad. Then you will not be able

to enter the great rest of detachment, the rest mentioned, for instance, in Hebrews, chapters 3 and 4. If, today, you can hear 'the voice' from within, do not harden your heart, as you have so often done in the past. If you hear the voice of the Word and the Soul, then open your heart completely. And when you have opened your heart, do not think that you will instantly enter the heavenly fairyland. No, then you will be struck by the sword of the Holy Grail. Paul says of this: 'The Word of the Spirit is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of Soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart'

He who is struck by the sword of the Spirit will enter the process of sanctification, which means healing; he will enter the processes of transmutation and transfiguration.

The Word that was in the Beginning

Knowledge, born of experience and purification, enables the human being to gain the use of two immortal faculties: the Soul and the Word. Hermes comments on this in verse 41 of the thirteenth book:

In this sense every living being is immortal, but most of all the human being, who is able to receive God and be one with Him. It is only with this living being that the Godhead communicates: during the night by dreams and during daytime by signs. In manifold ways it foretells the future: by birds, by entrails, the clouds and the oak, so that it is given to man to know past, present and future.

God is omnipresent. He is activity and power. It is not at all difficult to understand Him. You probably find these words of hermetic doctrine somewhat amazing. Let us try to understand them. First, let us briefly summarise what we have already discussed.

The process of the monad, born of God, has three main aspects. The first is the influx of the Spirit, or the divine intervention. The second is the Soul, which is the radiation produced by the monadic nucleus owing to its connection with the Spirit. The third is the vivification by the Soul of the heart sanctuary in the fourfold personality. When this vivification has become a fact in the

130 nature-born human being who has opened himself entirely for the process of rebirth, then the human being once again has at his disposal an immortal, divine power.

In his nature-born form, the human being is as yet only an

image-bearer of God, an image of the divine idea, in principle. For his wandering in dialectics, the consequences of his many conflicts, and his interminable search for the Holy Grail, have done considerable damage to his nature-born form. However, through the influx of the Soul, the person has now received the power to become a child of God again, to become a perfect image of the idea once more. At that moment, the monadic process has been fundamentally restored, and the great process of transfiguration can now unfold. Everything must be done to call the original figure back into existence, on the basis of the emergency-order form, guided by the Spirit and the Soul – the king and queen in *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*.

However, this mighty process cannot possibly happen automatically. Those who are involved in it must cooperate in a very personal way, with their utmost interest and intelligence. They will have to explore the path themselves, step by step. Once the basic possibility is present, owing to the influx of the Soul, a second faculty develops. This, too, is immortal, and Hermes calls it the Word. With the aid of this second faculty, there develops what the Bible calls, 'the hidden communion with God.' This happens because the Spirit is then manifested in a highly distinct way in the candidate, so that at a given moment understanding God no longer presents any difficulty.

You may have thought that 'the hidden communion with God' was a kind of mystical expression for living a life of devotion. But that would be a mistake. All higher knowledge, every deepened insight, all realisations that serve to lead the candidate out of the dialectical house of delusion, come about with the aid of this second faculty.

Everything that, in the past, was called initiation – in the positive, bonafide sense – is manifested by means of this

second, immortal faculty, the living, creative Word. So the commencement of the truly liberating path also lies in 'the Word that was in the beginning'. By stating this fact in its prologue, the Gospel according to John proves that it is the most important gospel, and this statement has also made it the gospel most loved by the gnostic Brotherhoods of all times. Its prologue makes it the hermetic gospel *par excellence*.

Once the radiation of the nucleus has broken through into the heart sanctuary and fills the entire being, this radiation will also enter the head sanctuary, provided the human being is to some extent attuned to this mighty vibration and is beginning to heed the influx of the Gnosis into his heart. The chakra system as a whole, and the three chakras in the head in particular, act as an intermediary in this process. The pineal chakra forms the point of entry for the monadic kundalini, which brings about the influx of the Seven-Spirit. The forehead chakra is located in the open space behind the frontal bone, and it is from there that the nature-born ego must be driven away and the new Soul, as a ruling factor, must be put on its throne once again. The third chakra is the throat chakra with the aid of which the higher, liberating, creative faculty is released. This faculty enables the candidate to make the second element of immortality a fully active factor in his life.

If you possess a very strong ego, this can be determined from the light emanating from your forehead. A very singular radiance, a very special fire then emanates from it, which is also imparted to the eyes. In the process we are discussing, the ego has to give way; it has to disappear. In fact, as the process of genesis of the new, gnostic consciousness unfolds, the ego simply glides away downwards until, finally, it disappears via the sacral plexus. As soon as the nature-born ego has vanished, the newly born Soul takes up its position in the seat in-

tended for it from the beginning. From that moment onwards it will no longer be the nature-born ego but the Soul which is the guiding factor of consciousness in your life.

The first immortal faculty, that of the Soul, can be thought of as the Knight of the Holy Grail's shield. The second immortal faculty, the Word, can be seen as the sword of the Holy Grail.

The entry of the Spirit – or the Bridegroom or King, as *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross* calls it, into the pineal centre can be viewed as a positive current of energy. The entry of the Soul – or the Bride or Queen – into the centre of the forehead concerns a negative pole of energy. These two currents come to a focus in the uppermost area of the throat, and there give rise to a sparkling, a radiance, an active, creative faculty that renders the candidate fully able to liberate himself from the nadir and raise himself out of the borderland of dialectics.

Perhaps you have already discovered, or are in the process of discovering, that the realm of dialectics is an absolute borderland. You are not able to circumvent matter; you are not able to cross that border, for in dialectics everything turns into its opposite. You are aiming at something, and you find yourself faced with its opposite. You try to achieve it in another way, and sooner or later the adversary, the counternature, appears again, right in front of you. That is why you will never be able to make your way right through dialectics; it is a borderland.

Now the new, second faculty is capable of liberating you from this borderland; it is capable of raising you into the liberating life. It is the miraculous sword of the Holy Grail. Divested of its legendary wrappings, divested of its symbolism, it is made into an active factor in one's life. All those who have restored the connection between the monad and the physical personality receive this sword in order to enter the process of transfiguration.

To give some indication of the activity and power of this weapon, Hermes says:

It is only with this living being –who possesses this weapon – that the Godhead communicates: during the night by dreams and during daytime by signs. In manifold ways it foretells the future: by birds, by entrails, the clouds and the oak, so that it is given to man to know past, present and future.

We will need to go rather deeply into these pronouncements, for without some explanation you will almost certainly misunderstand. People have not understood these words of Hermes. They sound very mediumistic, very negatively occult, and have led many an author to condemn hermeticism as accursed heathenism, supporting their claim with all kinds of Biblical warnings, like the one that cautions against heeding the cries of birds or engaging in sorcery and similar activities. But there is no reason to think that Hermes is using these words to draw attention to things like that. His words are a veiled indication intended for serious pupils and not for the profane. We would like to explain to you what Hermes meant by dreams, signs, omens, birds, entrails and oaks.

All the processes related to the transformations in the head and heart sanctuaries are very closely connected with new currents, radiations and developments in the astral atmosphere. When you follow the path and seek connection with the monad, the pure, astral atmosphere will come to you, in order to form a link with you. The time will come when your entire astral body is pervaded by it. The pure astral substance and the pure ethers – the holy foods – will be linked with you. Now if you think of the threefold process just explained, the process unfolding in the pineal centre and the forehead centre, as well as in the throat, where the positive and negative

aspects of the new touch converge, giving rise to a spark, a new faculty, then you will be able to imagine that the new atmospheric substance which comes into contact with you via the new, sparkling principle in the head sanctuary, will also enter into contact with the nerve-ether.

The nerve-ether, the nerve-fluid, will undergo all the reflexes, all the influences of the new development. After a while, these new impulses in the nerve-ether will begin to speak to certain vital organs, because it is with the aid of the nerve-ether that your thinking processes and all your sensory organs work, live, burn and function. The quality of your nerve-ether also determines your mentality, the various aspects of your sensorial behaviour, and so on.

So when the new power is poured out over you and enters you after all the preparations we have described, it will make itself known to you via the nerve-ether through its activities and stimuli. When the new impulses begin to work and speak in the nerve-ether, the candidate will begin to understand them with the aid of the new, creative faculty.

And what Hermes means to say is that, when this happens, the candidate enters into a genuine, positive, living communion with the Logos. The new astral light, the pure astral substance and all the activities that go on within it are reflected in the nerve-ether. You should think, in this context, of the Golden Head, as the summit of the Living Body, in which many pure astral values are concentrated. In this way, the candidate who has been ennobled to this state of being, who has penetrated through to this point, will enter into a genuine, living, inner communion with the Golden Head. Such impulses can be assimilated and understood by the second new faculty, which controls all the organs of the head sanctuary.

Now that is what Hermes Trismegistus means by 'dreams' They are nothing else than visionary impulses, visionary in-

sights, impressions that correspond, for instance, with what Peter spoke about in his Pentecostal address when, quoting the words of the prophet, he said: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams.' These words refer to a new, visionary intuition, a new sensory condition. So the dreams meant by Hermes are something quite different from what is generally understood by the word, and from what one experiences as an 'I', in I-centrality. They in fact concern the way in which suggestions and impulses of gnostic wisdom, which are developed in the Universal Chain via the seven Schools, are transmitted to all candidates who are appropriately ennobled.

In this way, a living communion develops between all the children of God. This communion excludes any possibility of misunderstanding, and cannot be impeded by time or distance. Through the new faculty you enter into contact with all the others. Instructions for walking the path can only be transferred to your consciousness by means of these nerve-projections. The result is an intimate communion with the Unseen. That is where it begins. And this beginning is not in the least spectacular, for it is the commencement of 'the hidden communion with God', in souls who have entered the peace of Bethlehem. Those who have entered into this intimate communion with the Logos do not speak about it. They go their way in silence and carry out their task. And that is the meaning of the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the miracle of Pentecost. The new language spoken by the Apostles means the use of this new creative faculty, this second, immortal faculty, in the blazing fire of astral renewal.

Truly, it is this that Hermes was speaking about, and that was later discussed by the prophet Joel, in emulation of Hermes: 'Thereafter it shall come to pass that I shall pour out

my spirit upon all that lives, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.'

If you are truly a son or daughter of the young gnostic Brotherhood, in the full and serious sense of the word, then this will be your future, if only you are willing to walk the path. And read once again, in the Book of Acts, how the Holy Spirit, the second function of the creative faculty, is suddenly poured out over thousands of people at once.

It is a privilege to be allowed to talk to you about all these things, and we hope that you will not misuse these communications. Treasure them in your heart.

XVII

Signs, Omens, Birds, Entrails, Oaks

We have not yet finished explaining what Hermes meant by dreams, signs, omens, birds, entrails and oaks. We have dealt with dreams, but we would now like to give you a small glimpse of the other terms mentioned by Hermes, because it would carry us too far if we were to deal in detail with them all. For now, we would like to look primarily at the language of the Bible, because this language is better known to us than that of Hermes, and because we want you to see how much the biblical books refer back to the ancient texts of Hermes.

In remote antiquity, priests and kings were always initiates equipped, at the very minimum, with the two immortal faculties. The ancient priesthoods were educated in the great schools of the past and those who worked for the world and mankind were only brought into contact with the public after a thorough preparation and maturation in those schools.

It was one of the high, noble aims of the Cathar Brotherhood to revivify that priestly status in our era. But Rome crushed their efforts in blood and burning at the stake. Since then, the so-called priesthood we now know so well has been able to flourish unhindered. And whatever qualities its representatives may have, they certainly do not possess the two immortal faculties. For if the immortal faculties were to awaken in priests of the church, they would immediately withdraw from the churches. A brother or sister of the Community of the Light will never lend his support to communities whose hands are stained with the blood of the Cathars and other holy ones.

The classical kingship alluded to by the mysteries declined

long before our era, so it would make no sense to dwell on it. However, in the language of the mysteries the true priests and initiates of the past were compared with and referred to as trees. Knowing this we can understand Hermes when he says that God is essentially one with the candidate who is awakening in Him, and speaks to him with the aid of such things as oak trees: a veiled reference to the initiates of the Universal Chain.

This brings us onto biblical terrain. Just think of the cedars of Lebanon, which mythology tells us were used to build the temple of Solomon. That temple was never destroyed! It never stood in the geographical Jerusalem, for the temple of Solomon is one of the true, living temples of the divine life-field, constructed and maintained by living trees, by soul-beings living in God. So in the language of the mysteries, a tree represents man himself. That is why Jesus was called the Tree of Life. In the Bible, the true children of God are literally called 'oaktrees of the Lord', which, among other things, is a reference to the extraordinary strength, power and durability of the oak. The Bible also talks about 'oak trees of righteousness', and about the oak woods of Mamre and Moreh, in which amazing manifestations occurred. The word 'Moreh' refers to the initiated teacher, while 'Mamre' denotes abundant wealth.

Simply by virtue of having the new creative faculty at his disposal, the candidate can and will enter into a living communion with the entire Universal Chain, and certainly to the extent that The Universal Chain communicates with the Golden Head of the Living Body of the young Gnosis.

The communion with the initiates of the Universal Brotherhood, with the 'oak trees of the Lord', does not come about, for instance, through meetings with distinguished ladies or gentlemen. There is no question of that! The living contact con-

sists in an inner experience, an inner encounter, on the basis of the two immortal faculties. The ego has no part in it at all. One will never be able to perceive 'the oak trees of the Lord', the initiates of the Gnostic Brotherhood, with faculties such as etheric sight, clairvoyance, clairaudience and so on, which are developed in an occult way. With faculties like these, of which some people are so very proud, it is only possible to communicate with the reflection sphere.

Now why is the tree, and in particular the oak tree, used as a symbol?

The serpent-fire system is called the tree of life. So, every person possesses the tree that has to grow into 'the oak tree of the Lord'. The three canals of the spinal column can be thought of as a tree of life, with the closely connected sevenfold chakra system as its fruit, with the outstretched twelvefold nervous system as the branches and leaves, and the nerve-ether or archaëus as the vital sap of this holy tree.

Now in the great initiates, the new faculty we have been discussing has reached a very high level, a very high quality, as a result of which the whole serpent-fire system has been transfigured, and stands in the service of their transformed human state, awakened in God. In them, Manas, the thinker, the classical serpent, corresponding with the cognitive faculty, has become a high, new power of thought. This serpent no longer seduces them, but remains behind in the borderland of dialectics.

He who has restored the tree of life to the age-old image of the idea will at the same time possess the wings and the power to liberate himself from the nature of death and enter the new life-state. This brings us to the bird symbolism: the Holy Spirit descends like a dove upon the head of Jesus the Lord.

Immortality, the monadic powers of the Spirit, and the Soul have always been compared with birds. Think of the eagle in Biblical symbolism; think of Hansa, the bird of immortality. In this way, the Spirit of the Lord can and will speak to the awakened human being, and the flock of birds, the divine touch, will descend upon the Soul-person by day and by night. And so the liberated Soul-being will one day raise his Mercury-wings in the light of the new morning, like the celebrated fire-bird, the Phoenix.

And now, for the sake of completeness, we would like to mention the old sayings about the entrails of the earth, and about being inwardly moved 'to one's very entrails', as you can read in the Bible. Of course, this does not simply refer to the intestinal system. The Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord penetrates the human being, right into his leart and reins' (kidneys). And it says, 'My Soul was moved to the very entrails'.

We hope and pray that these explanations will have spoken to you in a profound way, touching your innermost being, right to the depths of your entrails, and that you are now firmly resolved to walk the one path more positively than ever before.

XVIII

Fourteenth Book:

The Secret Sermon on the Mount, concerning Rebirth and the Vow of Silence

- 1 *Tat: In your general discourse, Father, you were enigmatic and vague when you talked about the divine nature. You did not reveal that nature to me, saying that no one can be saved unless he has been reborn.*
- 2 *But when, after your talk with me, I made myself your supplicant during our descent from the mountain, and inquired about the doctrine of rebirth so that I might come to know it as this is the only part of the doctrine that is unknown to me you promised to convey it to me as soon as I had disengaged myself from the world.*
- 3 *Now I have done so and have made myself inwardly strong against the world's delusion. So would you please now complete what is lacking in me, just as you promised me, and teach me about rebirth, either by word of mouth or by means of a mystery. For I do not know, O Trismegistus, from what matrix the true man is born, and from what seed.*
- 4 *Hermes: My son, he is born from the wisdom which thinks in the silence, and from the seed which is the Only Good.*
- 5 *Tat: But then, who sows it, Father? All this is utterly incomprehensible to me.*

- 6 *Hermes: It is the will of God, my son.*
- 7 *Tat: And of what quality is the one who comes to birth, Father? For he will neither participate in my earthly being nor in my intellectual thinking.*
- 8 *Hermes: The reborn one will indeed be different: he will be a god, a son of God, all in all and equipped with all faculties.*
- 9 *Tat: You are talking in riddles, Father, and not like a father speaking to his son.*
- 10 *Hermes: Such things cannot be taught, my son. But God willing, He himself will restore your memory of it.*
- 11 *Tat: You are telling me things, Father, which pass my understanding and which perplex me utterly. The only appropriate response I can make is to say: I am a son who is a stranger to his father's house. Do not continue to withhold your wisdom, Father, for I am your legitimate son. Explain in detail in what manner rebirth takes place.*
- 12 *Hermes: What can I say, my son? Only this: When I perceived in myself an undefinable vision, brought forth by God's mercy, I went out of myself into an immortal body. So I am now no longer the one I was before, but have been begotten of the Spirit. Such a thing cannot be taught nor can it be perceived by the physical element through which we see here. That is why I no longer worry about the composite form that once was mine. I no longer have any colour, nor a sense of feeling, nor dimension; all this is foreign to me.*

- 13 *At this moment you see me with your eyes, my son, but what I am you are not able to understand by looking at me with your physical eyes. Indeed, you are not seeing me now with those eyes, my son.*
- 14 *Tat: You have put me into a state of considerable confusion and conceptual bewilderment, Father. For now I no longer even see myself'*
- 15 *Hermes: May God grant you to go out of yourself like those who dream in their sleep; but then, in your case, without sleeping.*
- 16 *Tat: Now reveal this also to me: Who is it that instigates the rebirth?*
- 17 *Hermes: It is the son of God, the one man, according to God's will.*
- 18 *Tat: Now you have really made me speechless, Father, because now I no longer understand any of it: I still see you with the same body, with the same outward appearance.*
- 19 *Hermes: In this you are mistaken, for the mortal form changes from day to day. Imaginary as it is, it changes in the course of time by increasing and decreasing.*
- 20 *Tat: What, then, is true and real, Trismegistus?*
- 21 *Hermes: It is that which is not defiled, my son, that which is unlimited, colourless, unchangeable, uncovered, formless, radiant, only to be fathomed by itself, the unalterable*

Good, the incorporeal.

22 *Tat: That is beyond my comprehension, Father. I thought I had become wise through you. But all my insight has been confounded by these concepts.*

23 *Hermes: That is how it is, my son, with what goes up like fire, or down like the earth, or is liquid like water or blows through the universe like air. But how would you be able to perceive with your senses what is neither solid nor liquid, what can neither be collected nor caught, and can only be comprehended through its aptitude and active power – something which is possible only for one who can comprehend the birth in God?*

24 *Tat: Am I then incapable of that, Father?*

25 *Hermes: That is not what I meant, my son. Withdraw into yourself, and it will come. Will it, and it will happen. Still the body's sensory activities, and the birth of the divine will become a fact. Purify yourself of the irrational castigations of matter.*

26 *Tat: Do I have castigators within me, Father?*

27 *Hermes: You have not a few, my son, and they are terrifying and numerous.*

28 *Tat: I do not know them, Father.*

29 *Hermes: This very ignorance is the first castigation, my son; the second one is grief and sorrow; the third intemperance; the fourth desire; the fifth injustice; the sixth*

greed; the seventh deceit; the eighth envy; the ninth guile; the tenth anger; the eleventh thoughtlessness; the twelfth malice. These castigations are twelve, but there are many more which, by means of the prison of the body, force the human being by their nature to suffer through the activity of the senses. However, when God has had mercy on the human being, they desist, albeit not immediately. And the latter explains the nature and significance of rebirth.

30 *But be quiet now, my son, and listen in respectful gratitude. God's mercy will then no longer leave us.*

Rejoice my son, now that God's power is purifying you thoroughly so that the segments of the Word can be joined.⁴

The Gnosis of God has come to us: through its appearance ignorance has been banished.

The Gnosis of joy has come to us. Through its appearance sorrow will flee to those who have a place for it.

After joy the power I invoke is gentle courage. O wonderful power! Let us receive it in great gladness, my son; behold how its arrival has expelled intemperance.

Fourthly I name self-control, a power that resists desire.

The next step, my son, is the support of righteousness, for behold how without ceremony it has banished injustice. So we have become the righteous ones, now that injustice has disappeared.

⁴ This refers to the genesis of the new Man, who is the 'Word of God' within us.

The sixth power I invoke is the one that wages war against greed; it is the power of magnanimity, which imparts itself to all.

And when greed has disappeared, I further invoke truth; as soon as falsehood flees, truth will approach us. See, my son, how The Good has become complete now truth has appeared, for envy has left us.

The Good follows after truth, accompanied by life and light; and not a single castigation of darkness can affect us any longer, for, being vanquished, all have fled at whirlwind speed.

- 31 *Now you know, my son, the way in which rebirth takes place: through the advent of the ten aspects the spiritual birth is accomplished and the twelve aspects are expelled. Thus we are deified by this process of birth.*
- 32 *Whoever then, by God's mercy, has achieved this birth-out-of-God and relinquished the physical senses, knows himself to be formed from divine forces and is filled with an inner joy.*
- 33 *Tat: Now I have achieved vision by divine dispensation, I see things no longer by means of the ordinary eyesight, but through the spiritual faculty of the powers received. I am in heaven, on earth, in water, in the air; I am within animals, and in plants; I am before, during and after birth, yes, I am everywhere. But now tell me this: how are the castigations of darkness, which are twelve in number, driven out by ten forces? How does this come about, Trismegistus?*

- 34 *Hermes: The tent dwelling which we have left, is composed from the circle of the zodiac which, in turn, consists of twelve elements; one nature, but manifold of conception, in keeping with man's erring thoughts.*
- 35 *Among these castigations, my son, there are some that act in combination. For instance, undue haste and thoughtlessness cannot be separated from anger. They cannot even be distinguished. Thus it is understandable and logical that they will disappear together when they are driven away by the ten forces. It is these ten forces, my son, that give birth to the Soul. Life and light are united. And so the number of unity is born out of the Spirit. Likewise, according to reason, the unity contains the number ten, tenfoldness, and the number ten again contains unity.*
- 36 *Tat: Father, I perceive both the entire All and myself in the Spirit-Soul.*
- 37 *Hermes: That is rebirth, my son – one cannot form any three-dimensional concept of it. You know and experience it now thanks to this Discourse on Rebirth, which I have put in writing solely for your benefit, since we would not divulge all this to the multitude, but exclusively to those whom God has chosen.*
- 38 *Tat: Tell me, Father, will this new body, which is composed of the ten powers, one day be dissolved?*
- 39 *Hermes: Stop talking about impossible things, because that would make you sin and veil the eyes of the Spirit-Soul. The natural body of the senses differs widely from the essential, divine birth. The former can be dissolved,*

the latter cannot; the first is mortal, the second immortal. Do you not know that you have become a god, a son of the One, just as I have?

40 *Tat: Father, I would like to hear the song of praise which, as you told me, you heard the powers sing when you reached the Ogdoad.*⁵

41 *Hermes: In keeping with what Pymander revealed in the Ogdoad, I approve of your haste to break down this tent dwelling, because now you are pure. Pymander, the Spirit, did not reveal more to me than I have written, knowing well that I am able to comprehend and hear, and to see everything I desire, and he has ordered me to do everything that is good. That is why the powers that are within me sing all the time.*

42 *Tat: Father, I too want to hear and know all these things.*

43 *Hermes: Be still then, my son, and listen to the song of praise that concerns these things – the hymn on rebirth. I had not meant to make it known so readily, except to you who have reached the end of this initiation. This song of praise, therefore, is not taught, but remains hidden in the silence. Go, then, and stand in a place in the open air, your face turned towards the south wind after sunset. Then kneel down and pray, and do the same at dawn, but then turn eastwards. And now, be still, my son:*

44 *THE SECRET SONG OF PRAISE*

⁵ Ogdoad means 'the eighth' it is the phase of entering into God, of being a complete Spirit.

May the entire nature of the cosmos listen to this song of praise.

Open up, O earth! Let the waters of heaven open their floodgates when my voice is heard

Stir not, ye trees! For I wish to sing the praise of the Lord of Creation, the One and the All.

Open up, ye heavens! Ye winds, be still, so that God's immortal cycle may accept my Word.

For I will sing the praise of Him who created the entire All, who gave the earth its place and fixed the firmament;

who ordered fresh water to leave the ocean and spread over the inhabited and the uninhabited earth, serving the survival and existence of all people;

who ordered fire to appear for whatever use the gods and men might wish.

Let all of us together give praise to Him, who is exalted above all the heavens – the Creator of all nature. He is the eye of the Spirit: unto Him be the praise of all powers.

45 *O you powers that are within me: sing the praise of the One and the All; sing in harmony with my will, O you powers that are within me.*

Gnosis, O holy knowledge of God, enlightened by you, it is given to me to sing praise to the light of knowledge, and to rejoice in the joy of the Spirit-Soul.

O you powers, sing with me this song of praise. And O you, modesty, and you, justice within me, sing for me the praise of what is honourable.

O love for the All within me, sing within me the praise of the All; sing praise, O truth, of truth; sing praise, O virtue, of what is Good.

46 *The song of praise, O life and light, comes from you, and to you it will return.*

I thank you, Father, who manifest the powers. I thank you, Father, you who urge what is potential to action.

Your Word sings your praise through me. Receive through me the All, as the Word, as an offering of the Word.

47 *Hear what the powers that are within me exclaim: they sing praise of the All, they accomplish your will. Your will emanates from you, and everything returns to you again. Receive from all the offering of the Word.*

48 *Save the All that is within us. Enlighten us, O life, light, breath, God, for the Spirit-Soul is the guardian of your Word.*

49 *O bearer of the Spirit, O Demi-Urge, you are God.*

This is the call of him who belongs to you, through fire, through light, through earth, through water, through Spirit, through your creatures.

From you I have received this song of praise out of eternity,

and through your will I have also found the tranquillity I sought.

50 *Tat: I have seen, Father, how, according to your will, this song of praise should be uttered. I have now made it known in my world too.*

51 *Hermes: Call it, my son, the true, that is: the divine world.*

52 *Tat: Yes, Father, in the true world I have power. Through your song of praise and your thanksgiving the enlightenment of my Spirit-Soul has become complete. From my innermost being I, too, now wish to give thanks to God.*

53 *Hermes: Do not be rash in doing so, my son.*

54 *Tat: Listen, Father, to what I say in my Spirit-Soul: To you, O first cause of rebirth, to you, my God, I, Tat, present the offering of the Word. O God, you Father, Lord and Spirit: accept from me the offering that you desire. For all this is accomplished according to your will.*

55 *Hermes: My son, thus you present to God, the Father of all things, an offering pleasing to Him. But now add something to it: through the Word.*

56 *Tat: Thank you, Father, for the advice you have given me.*

57 *Hermes: I rejoice, my son, that you have gained the good fruits of truth; a truly immortal harvest. Now that you have learnt this from me, promise to be reticent with regard to this miraculous faculty, and not to transmit to anyone the method of realising rebirth, so that we will*

not be judged as belonging to those who debase the doctrine. Be it sufficient that we have both of us done our share: I by speaking, you by listening. In the light of the Spirit you now know yourself; both yourself and our Father.

XIX

The Matrix of Rebirth

The fourteenth book of Hermes contains *The Secret Sermon on the Mount* and is about rebirth, the central problem of all Gnosis. The contents of this book are therefore very important and we plan to make a detailed study of them, for our task is to fathom this subject as deeply as we can.

If our plan is to succeed, you will need to think over everything the Spiritual School has made known over the years about the Gnosis and its aims. If you do, the first verse of Hermes' fourteenth book will come as no surprise to you. It states that no-one can be saved without rebirth; in other words, not a single human being can enter the liberating life without that mighty process known to us theoretically as rebirth, the basis for all transfiguristic growth. Naturally enough, Tat wants Trismegistus to tell him about the way and the method of rebirth, and he says:

In your general discourse, Father, you were enigmatic and vague when you talked about the divine nature. You did not reveal that nature to me, saying that no one can be saved unless he has been reborn. But when, after your talk with me, I made myself your supplicant during our descent from the mountain, and inquired about the doctrine of rebirth so that I might come to know it – as this is the only part of the doctrine that is unknown to me – you promised to convey it to me as soon as I had disengaged myself from the world.

The meaning is clear. If you want to understand the discourse on rebirth, you will need to have become detached from the world. What benefit would any mortal derive from an intellec-

tual comprehension of the how and why of rebirth, without a yearning, born deep in the heart, for a solution to a hopeless existence; without turning away from the world and its ways?

This is something you ought to consider deeply. The modern Spiritual School expects from all those who join it a yearning for liberation, born in the heart. If that yearning is not present, pupilship will be a constant source of misery, for the pupil as much as for the School. This is because the rationale, the meaning, the essence of rebirth stands as an antithesis in this world. So the candidate in the gnostic mysteries needs to resolve this antithesis in himself by turning away from the world. If he does not want to or is not yet able to do so, then, for the time being at least, pupilship of a gnostic Spiritual School is not the right thing for him. And there you have the reason why the fourteenth book speaks of a *secret* sermon on the mount of rebirth.

Throwing yourself at gnostic philosophy with the nature-born ego and the ordinary, dialectical lust for life will never lead to an unveiling of the mystery of rebirth, how ever hard you try. No-one in this state of being could possibly understand the mystery or react to the secret discourse in the right way, and any attempt to imitate the process would very quickly fail. The meaning of the discourse on rebirth will always be hidden to those who remain on the outside, even if they were to learn every word that has ever been written on the subject. We are reminded of the words in Matthew chapter 11, verse 25: 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding of this world and revealed them to the children of God.'

The wise of this world, if they are religious in outlook, think they are already children of God. They look on their reason, their knowledge, as a divine gift. They even refer to them as great, spiritual abilities, and everyone bows before such authorities.

But this blocks the road to the mystery, because if you still

follow the delusion of the ego in whatever way, if you keep the serpent of nature in its place, if you do not change in the least, you will not know, you will not possess that fundamental yearning, and then the Spiritual School will have nothing to say to you. The hidden discourse will remain hidden.

In the third verse of our text, Tat says: *I have disengaged myself from the world and have made myself inwardly strong against the world's delusion. So would you please now complete what is lacking in me, just as you promised me, and teach me about rebirth, either by word of mouth or by means of a mystery.*

This is the cry of the heart, that ultimately proves the presence of true pupilship. The urge towards rebirth is made a reality by inner preparation and detachment from the world of dialectics. This reminds us of the other Sermon on the Mount, the one in the gospels, so familiar to us, for it opens with the words: 'blessed are those who yearn for the Spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Out of that yearning, the prayer arises: 'I have prepared myself. I have freed my Soul from the world's delusion. I beg you now to teach me about rebirth.' When this request is made from the depths of one's being, the gate to the divine mysteries is opened and the words of the discourse on rebirth, hidden until that moment, will begin to speak. The place where they were hidden is the kingdom of heaven itself. But now the inner ear will be opened so that you can understand this secret discourse.

Once in this state, you will find there are certain apparent problems that first need to be solved. They are mentioned in the text, and we would like to go through them now.

The first question is: *from what matrix is the true man reborn, and from what seed?* Hermes replies: *My son, he is reborn from the wisdom which thinks in the silence, and from the seed which is the Only Good.*

Tat: But then, who sows it, Father? All this is utterly incomprehensible to me. Hermes: It is the will of God, my son.

Tat: And of what quality is the one who comes to birth, Father? For he will neither participate in my earthly being nor in my intellectual thinking. Hermes: The reborn one will indeed be different: he will be a god, a son of God, all in all and equipped with all faculties.

Tat: You are talking in riddles, Father, and not like a father speaking to his son. Hermes: Such things cannot be taught, my son. But God willing, He himself will restore your memory of it.

If we consider these four problems in the light of everything we know about pupilship, it should be relatively easy to solve them.

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

This intellectual globe-trotting, often so fruitless and misleading, is of course not what Hermes means when he speaks

about the matrix of the Sophia. He is thinking of the sphere in which the four bodies of the personality – the material body, the etheric double, the astral body and the cognitive faculty – operate. The material organism is maintained by the ethers of the etheric body. If the circulation of these ethers is weak or sluggish, a disturbance or weakening of the material body will result.

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

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

You should see it like this: you are here in your dialectical personality – material body, etheric double and astral vehicle. At best, your cognitive faculty is visible as a centre at the top of the head sanctuary, radiating light to a greater or lesser extent. In that state, the cognitive faculty is not capable of enabling you to absorb the Sophia. Nevertheless, your personality has to maintain itself. So it is inevitable that your personality will

be nourished by the astral substance of the nature of death. You are not living, but *being* lived. You are trapped in the retrograde motion we talked about earlier. That is the reality.

So it is a very concrete problem for you to know *from what matrix the true man is born, and from what seed*. And Hermes replies that it is *from the Sophia that thinks in the silence*.

This matrix, this primordial substance of the Sophia, exists far beyond the turmoil and ruin of this nature of death. The Sophia is in the silence, that is, in the free, original space, and every particle of this substance is laden with divine forces, with the ideas of the Logos. That is the seed of the Only Good.

When this glorious seed, the substance of the Sophia, can gain access to the rudimentary cognitive faculty, the latter will begin to function as a proper body and the fourfold life originally intended for man will become a fact. Then, via the head sanctuary, the glorified figure will once more be able to breathe in the Sophia. The resulting thoughtprocesses will then animate the astral body, the astral will animate the etheric, and the etheric the material. And that is how transfiguration begins.

The Seed of the Silence

When the Sophia unites with the mental body, rebirth becomes a fact.

The person of ordinary nature lives and exists out of the astral substance of the nature of death. He cannot free himself from it because his highest vehicle has no access to the Sophia of the silence. That is why the way of salvation, the path of liberation, has to begin with a process of preparation, from the foundation upwards. This preparation must begin with a turning away from the dialectical world-order with all its deception, and purifying the sevenfold heart of all earthly desires. If you do that, you will be touched and ensouled by the radiation of the nucleus of the monad. This ensoulment is what prepares the cognitive faculty for the influx of the sanctifying Spirit, the Sophia, the essence of the silence.

Who sows the seed of the silence in the candidate? Do not imagine that some kind of master, adept or initiate could give it to you. In essence, you do it yourself, by preparation – preparation carried out in self-surrender. In this way, you open your rudimentary thinking apparatus to divine wisdom, to the influx of the Spirit. And straight away a divine law is fulfilled: divine wisdom descends into all those who open themselves to it.

Tat goes on to ask: *And of what quality is the one who comes to birth, Father? For he will neither participate in my earthly being nor in my intellectual thinking.* Hermes replies: *The reborn one will indeed be different: he will be a god, a son of God, all in all and equipped with all faculties.*

He incorporates all the forces manifested through the divine plan. Tat thinks Hermes is again speaking to him in

veiled language, but the Royal Art can neither be learned nor taught; neither can it be studied or understood in advance. There is only one way of entering into the process of sanctification, and only if the candidate follows that way will the truth begin to radiate for him. Then, as soon as the necessary openness is present, the Sophia will descend into the sanctuary and register in the memory. Then the Royal Art will be understood from within. Only then will the candidate possess the knowledge of wisdom. That is why the tenth verse says: *Such things cannot be taught, my son. But God willing, He himself will restore your memory of it.*

Yet Tat still urges Hermes to tell him more. And this is the reply he is given:

What can I say, my son? Only this: When I perceived in myself an indefinable vision, brought forth by God's mercy, I went out of myself into an immortal body. So I am now no longer the one I was before, but have been begotten of the Spirit. Such a thing cannot be taught nor can it be perceived by the physical element through which we see here. That is why I no longer worry about the composite form that once was mine. I no longer have any colour, nor a sense of feeling, nor dimension; all this is foreign to me. At this moment you see me with your eyes, my son, but what I am you are not able to understand by looking at me with your physical eyes. Indeed, you are not seeing me now with those eyes, my son.

In answer to Tat's lament Hermes tries to explain something which, in fact, cannot be put into words. His consciousness, which is illumined by the Soul and renewed by the Sophia, sees how a new state is developing in his vehicles. This condition is as yet indefinable, vague, although the image of this new state is already present. It is a temporary garment sometimes called 'the golden wedding raiment', which is immortal,

because it will develop into a perfect new system of vehicles. The wedding raiment comes into being through God's mercy. In the golden radiance of the Soul, *the wisdom which thinks in the silence, the seed of the Only Good*, converts the unformed image into a reality.

That is the secret: in a flash, at the moment when the newly born Soul and the descending Spirit come into contact with each other, there arises the state of being we call the golden wedding raiment, the Soul-body, the *soma psychikon*.

Once the radiation of the monadic nucleus has entered the heart sanctuary and begins to circulate in the system, the next step is for this new Soul essence, this new Soul power, to take up its seat behind the frontal bone, between the eyebrows. This battle, the birth of the Soul, is the first one the candidate has to go through. Then, at the moment when this soul-quality encounters the Spirit in the head sanctuary, the royal mantle, the golden wedding raiment comes into being. And what happens next, Hermes describes as follows: *I went out of myself into an immortal body. So I am now no longer the one I was before, but have been begotten of the Spirit.*

The meaning of these words is clear, because in the dialectical human being it is the ego that occupies the central position in the king's chamber, the open space behind the frontal bone. This is the normal, natural state of things. However, the growing new Soul has to drive the I-being out of the king's chamber, via the chakra-system. As soon as the Soul has taken up its rightful seat, intended for it by God, and the I of nature has disappeared, the state Hermes describes arises: *I went out of myself into an immortal body. So I am now no longer the one I was before, but have been begotten of the Spirit*, or, in other words, reborn from the original idea of the monad. These things do not lend themselves to be taught, but must be experienced and struggled through.

It has to be emphasised here that with the ordinary, nature-born body composed of elements one will never attain true vision. Higher or deeper sensory experiences of the gnostic mysteries are quite out of the question for the human being of this nature. Many people want to penetrate to absolute knowledge, to understand, see and experience higher realities with their ordinary system of vehicles, but it is not possible, and any efforts in that direction are only a waste of energy. Any manifestation achieved in that way, however wonderful they may seem, are of the earth, earthly, nature-bound, not liberating and, from a gnostic point of view, unreal. That is our position with respect to positive as well as negative occultism, and we have to be very strict about maintaining it.

So, with the body composed of elements one will never achieve true vision. Or gnostic consciousness. What is a body composed of elements? It is a body born of this nature. Is there another kind of body, then? Yes, there is. Hermes speaks of the body begotten of the Spirit, or Sophia: the Spirit-Soul, born of the union of Soul and Spirit.

The new Soul is born in the heart sanctuary and then breaks through into the head sanctuary, where it takes up its seat behind the frontal bone. In this process, the ego is driven out and the candidate allows the Soul to take over the rulership of his life. As a result, the Soul is manifested as a golden rose between the eyebrows, and at that point the Spirit unites with the Soul. Then a mighty fire arises, a flash in which the candidate is clothed in the golden robes of a king, the golden wedding raiment, the basis for the new personality, the new body. Hence Hermes' reply to the question of whether there is another body: there is a body begotten of the Soul and the Sophia; it arises from the original substance, through the radiation of the monadic nucleus, and it is a body that begins with the wedding garment.

We would like you to realise the enormous difference between the body composed of elements and the body of the Sophia. An element is a raw material which cannot be broken down into anything simpler and thus appears in nature as an immutable mass. Living bodies can be created from elements because each element, each atom in the element, contains vital force. Your consciousness, the nature-born I-consciousness, is simply a combination of the vital forces present in each of the body's constituent atoms. The sum of vital forces in these atoms defines and is your consciousness. Such a consciousness can never transcend the nature of which it is composed. A body composed of the elements of this earth can never free itself from the earth, however hard it tries.

Within the bounds of this prison, there are various things one can do. Following the lines of occult science one can, for instance, alter the state of the body composed of elements, perhaps by weakening one element and strengthening another, or by changing the personality's mineralogical constitution with the aid of astral substances and reflecting ether.

Such efforts have been made by occult science throughout the ages, often with powerful results, but whatever results are achieved, they always remain *within nature*. We cannot say often enough that with the personality composed of elements one can never reach liberation; one can never behold the Sophia, because such a body is and will always remain imprisoned in the nature of death.

There are material, etheric and astral elements. However, human beings do not have access to the pure, mental element, the element of liberation, the material of the silence, the substance of the Sophia because their mental body, their thinking apparatus, is not complete. What we call intellectual thought is only a minuscule fragment of the true cognitive faculty. In-

tellectual thinking can never bring you anything liberating. The true cognitive faculty is the only gate, the only exit leading to the essence of silence.

Remember the pit of Christian Rosycross. At the bottom of the pit, everyone is writhing and struggling for freedom. But all their struggles are in vain. Their only chance is to grasp the cord that is being let down into the pit. With the aid of the seven cords about which you can read in *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, one can climb out of the pit. Within the bounds of the prison, inside the pit, material, etheric and astral elements are available, but the substance of the silence is lacking. So man and microcosm remain imprisoned, be it on the material, the etheric or the astral plane. On the material plane, the body of dense matter is consumed. On the etheric plane, the etheric double dissolves. In the astral nature of our world-order the personality's astral shell disappears. What remains is the microcosm, which has no choice but to seek re-animation in the pit of mortality.

The idea may have crossed your mind that nuclear science has crossed the bounds of this prison, for it has discovered how to split and change the elements. Don't be deceived, however. Even nuclear science cannot change your prison. The art of nuclear fission has always been known to occult science, albeit at a slower rate. The alterations to the bodily vehicles brought about by occult methods are also achieved by changing the elements of which the personality is composed. In nuclear fission, this occurs in a forced way. Yet however this science is applied, it can result only in a change of decor.

By applying enormous heat, scientists are able to split certain elements, thus transforming material elements into etheric and astral ones. Considerable heat and electromagnetic radiations are released during this process which systematically disrupt the material, natural order. The whole economy of

nature – everything pertaining to nature-born man, to the animal kingdom and to the plant kingdom – is changed by this disruption. In this way, life is ultimately prevented from manifesting itself in matter and can only take form on an etheric and astral level. This means a forced regression back to an earlier, prehistoric period of existence when life expressed itself primarily on the etheric plane, and earlier still, on the astral plane. And that is all. So the occult initiate in his astral garment has regressed right back to the Hyperborean era. The result is not a liberating resurrection from the nadir, but a useless, time-robbing, incalculably long course through dematerialisation, a perishing of the world by fire.

This is what the nuclear fission scientists, under orders from their respective governments, are currently busy doing. So people discuss whether to go ahead with it or not, and whether or not it should be used as a weapon of war. But we know they will go ahead with it, if not for violent purposes, then for peaceful ends, and either way it will mean the end, for both applications will have the same result: dematerialisation.

We hope it has now come home to you that the development of gnostic consciousness involves neither material, nor etheric, nor astral elements. The new, gnostic consciousness cannot develop from a body composed of elements and remains emphatically separate from all the planes connected with those elements. The gnostically conscious being is not to be found on earth. Neither is it to be found on Mars, or on Venus. You are not going to become a Venusian lady or gentleman. If you succeed in developing the gnostic consciousness, you will even rise right out of the whole zodiacal system.

The generation of this consciousness must begin with ensoulment by the radiation of the microcosmic nucleus. This radiation must seize and fill the entire system of vehicles,

and this is what makes possible the influx of the Sophia, the substance of the silence. As a result of this influx, the golden wedding raiment, the basis for the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross, comes into being. This is the substance of the silence combined with the radiation of the Soul, and it clothes the candidate in a new garment, the Soul-vehicle. In a flash, as soon as the Sophia enters the system, the Soul forms this garment from the substance of the silence. The Soul-body is very subtle. It is the immortal basis for the glorious body of the resurrection. So this, too, is a dematerialisation, but it is a dematerialisation that leads to liberation.

Do you see, now, the delusion of these times? Do you realise the delusion and the tremendous misfortune of nuclear radiation? The dematerialisation of liberation is something quite different, and in the light of that knowledge you can understand Hermes when he says: *That is why I no longer worry about the composite form that once was mine.*

As soon as the new Soul begins to dwell behind the window in the forehead, it occupies a central position in one's being and constitutes the consciousness, not of your imprisonment in nature, but of the new Soul-garment, of the wholly Other One who is close by you and also, partially, within you. The person who possesses the new Soul body no longer occupies a central position in the nature-born body, but neither is he separated from it. One can feel and measure the composite body, as Hermes says, while the new Soul, at most, is linked with it.

The *Bhagavad Gita* says that the essence of the Soul, the essence of what is original, in so far as it has taken shape in man, should be greeted and approached as a friend. Hermes turns this around and says that this friend, the new Soul, has already taken over the rulership of the system from the moment when the soma psychikon, the golden wedding garment, has come into being. Then, from its central position in the golden wed-

ding garment, the Soul rules the nature-born personality as an instrument in the nature of death so that, for as long as is necessary, it can go out into the night as one sent by God, to save what can be saved.

At the moment when he speaks these words, Hermes, the kingly human being, is still in the nature-born figure; he is not yet separated from it, for it is still possible to approach and experience him in that body. However, he no longer stands at its centre, but in the Soul-figure. He is no longer of the earth, earthly. At best, he is linked to the earth as a friend. He manifests himself in two figures, one of which is perishing, whilst the other will live in all eternity.

The Development of Gnostic Consciousness

Imagine a person who has just approached the gnostic mysteries for the first time in his life. He has just discovered that the development of gnostic consciousness does not involve material, etheric or astral elements in any way. He has found out that true vision can never be attained with the nature-born body composed of elements, but only with a quite different vehicle, formed not from the substance of death but from the substance of the Sophia. Faced with this insight for the first time, it is quite likely that he will be filled with the greatest bewilderment.

In many cases, as experience has taught us, denial follows, and he turns away from the Gnosis. Tat, too, feels this bewilderment and cries: *You have put me into a state of considerable confusion and conceptual bewilderment, Father. For now I no longer even see myself!* And not long afterwards he says: *Now you have really made me speechless, Father, because now I no longer understand any of it: I still see you with the same body, with the same outward appearance.*

The ego is utterly dethroned before the eyes of the approaching nature-born human being. But in that state, it is possible for him to discover that the personality composed of elements is nevertheless the basis on which and with the help of which resurrection is brought about. If there is to be a resurrection, there must also be a grave; one must have passed through that grave before resurrection can happen.

Now we can understand those words engraved on the tomb of Christian Rosycross, in the *Fama Fraternitatis R. C.*: 'All

this, while living, I have made into my tomb.' The nature-born personality does not need to be seen as a useless, worthless vehicle that only gets in the way, to be cast aside like a dirty rag. On the contrary, the living Soul makes use of it, *has* to make use of it as a tool. However, the tool must first be prepared in the right way. But the candidate should no longer expect of it, or see in it, more than there actually is. That is why Hermes says in verse 12:

That is why I no longer worry about the composite form that once was mine. I no longer have any colour, nor a sense of feeling, nor dimension; all this is foreign to me.

When Jesus the Lord arises from the grave, then it is a matter of hermetic logic that the grave will then be found empty. But the nature-born personality and the body of the Sophia remain together to the end. That is why, in the gnostic gospel of the Pistis Sophia, Jesus appears to his disciples as the living Master who has not yet died, while at the same time there is a mighty, three-fold light-garment surrounding him.

Now just cast your mind back, for a moment, to the thirteenth book of Hermes. The monad or microcosm descended into the nadir of materiality, until the time came when it was no longer possible for it to keep the light-garment of the original personality. So the original personality had to be replaced by the emergency-order personality, a personality adapted to the laws of life in the nadir. The emergency-order personality and the life existing within it must come to experience the nadir as a boundary it may not cross, because of the laws of dialectics. The natural result of this is the awakening of a yearning for liberation. It may take a long time, or a shorter time, but this yearning must arise in the end, because the monadic impulse drives us ever onward, ever upward, until eternity is reached.

But the laws of the nadir always stand in the way, and that is why this increasing dynamic tension eventually gives rise to a new idea, the idea of climbing out of the nadir. People think: 'If I can't break through the boundary, perhaps I can transcend it, and enter freedom that way.' And they try to do so with the ego. So modern space-travel stems from the ego's desire to transcend the nature of death, but the only result is the spreading of the essence of death throughout the whole of space.

Eventually, the realisation is born that as long as one uses the ego, one cannot transcend the boundary of the nadir. The emergency-order body is simply not suited for that, because it is a body composed of elements, formed in the nadir of materialisation. That is why the nature-born personality has to experience the reality of this. When this experience has sunk home deeply enough, and you follow the path of the endara, you can 'die while living' so that, when the right way of life is practised, the original monadic light garment, the light raiment of the Sophia, will come over you and descend into you, making resurrection in the present, or in the near future, into a reality. *What, then, is true and real? you ask, echoing hermetic philosophy. And the reply comes: it is that which is not defiled, my son, that which is unlimited, colourless, unchangeable, uncovered, formless, radiant, only to be fathomed by itself, the unalterable Good, the incorporeal.*

This is the ninefold signature of the sparkling, original light garment of the monad which is manifested once again by all who transcend with Jesus the Lord. So, driven by your urge to transcend the nature of death, you attune yourself to the one appropriate way of life so that, through that way of life, you can make it a reality. But if you want to do this, you need to be aware that this process necessitates the neutralisation and purification of the nature-born system with its senses and ac-

tivities. It must be cleansed of all the vices of the nature-born state so that the vehicle, from which the ego has withdrawn, can be made into a suitable tool.

Imagine that, driven by Soul power, you are in the process of climbing out of the nature of death. Imagine that the sparkling light-raiment is in the process of unfolding around you – and the first indications of this are evident in many brothers and sisters of the young Gnosis – and imagine that the light-raiment is increasing in strength and vitality. Then, with the aid of the living Soul, you must purify the nature-born personality and make it fit to act as a tool in the service of the world and mankind.

Amazed, Tat asks Hermes: *Do I have castigators within me, Father?* By 'castigators' Tat means 'vices', and many pupils would be just as painfully astonished if their vices were to be pointed out.

Hermes replies that, in addition to the impediments every nature-born animal has, the human being possesses twelve fundamental vices, horrifying to behold. These are: ignorance, grief and sorrow, intemperance, desire, injustice, greed, deceit, envy, guile, anger, thoughtlessness, and malice. These fundamental vices are present in every human being born of matter. There is no exception. The worker in God's vineyard, sent out to labour in the nature of death, is daily reminded: 'Take care in your contact with the inhabitants of the nature of death. Keep in mind the twelve fundamental vices. If one of them fades into the background, it is more than likely that the others will act with redoubled vigour.'

And that is how the inner man can be kept prisoner, if brothers and sisters in whom the Soul has been resurrected do not use their Soul-power to neutralise their own vices. And if they do not, no further progress can be made. People often battle to control their vices. They observe these vices in

themselves, or other people point them out, and then, full of good intentions, they often try to neutralise them with their ego. But that is never any use, in a liberating sense. These fundamental vices can only be rooted out with living Soul-power.

The period during which the influence of the Soul is increasingly exerting itself, but the birth of the inner man from the substance of the Sophia has not yet taken place, is a critical one. That is why many pupils who already possess something of the inner new man are often obstructed in their progress by the presence of the twelve fundamental vices. One can never afford to forget them for a moment. However, if you understand the process of rebirth, if you can really see how the light-raiment of the Sophia develops – and only a complete acceptance will make this possible – if you truly recognise the Gnosis, the Sophia, then ignorance, the first vice, will be driven out. Hermes says that if you truly come to recognition, to insight, from within, you will be purified. If you do not simply accept the truth of the Gnosis on authority, but experience it from within, ignorance will recede from you.

Through purification and a growing self-knowledge, ignorance is cast out and straight away, a great tremor of joy will pass through you, reverberating throughout your being. This joy casts out all sorrow: the second vice. It cannot be compared with any joy in the nature of death, any happiness arising from the interplay of opposites. It is a scintillating force from the life-sphere of the living Soul-state; it confers on you an inner state that will never fade.

Imagine that ignorance has been taken away from you in a fundamental way, and in your nature-born state of experience it is as if veils have been removed. Ignorance has vanished. And straight away, a glorious radiation descends into you from the light-raiment of the Sophia – if you possess it – bringing with it an inner joy that fills you utterly and passes all un-

derstanding. And behold, intemperance is driven out in the same way, for the flood of inner joy poured out over you continues flowing into you in a steady rhythm, feeding and sustaining you. And as a result, any tendency towards disequilibrium – which is what Hermes means by ‘intemperance’ – disappears.

If you are living in such a torrent of abundance, you will no longer want to keep on renewing your attachment to the nature of death. This renunciation of everything dialectical, this forbearance, will drive out the vice of desire. By ‘desire’, Hermes means ‘chasing after earthly goals’ – the constant pursuit of things on a horizontal level, things which are purely of the earth, earthly. So, when you stand in the steadily flowing current of energy coming from the light-vesture surrounding you, the vice of desire will be driven out.

If you regard life and action in the nature of death with an objective eye, because you possess and experience the inner man, then, as Hermes says, this will provide a foundation for justice. Then all unrighteousness will be banished, without any trouble at all.

The person with an enlightened Soul lets his light shine over good and evil alike, over everyone and everything. Hermes calls this virtue magnanimity, which drives out the vice of greed. Hermes does not mean greed for money or goods, or anything like that, but greed, miserliness with respect to your expressions of sympathy and the giving out of your love-radiations.

There are many people, also among pupils of the gnostic Spiritual School, who totally ignore each other. Sometimes they don’t even see each other. They never look each other straight in the eye. They even look right through each other, as if the other person was not there. And it is even worse if people do this deliberately, as often happens.

Suppose, as a Soul-born person in possession of a light-riament, you were to permit your nature-born body, intended to function as a tool in the service of the living Soul, to maintain sympathies and antipathies. Surely you can see that this tool would then be unsuitable, spoiled in advance? The Soul belongs to everyone, and is in everyone. The Soul makes no distinctions. Like the sun, it shines on good and bad alike. All that approval and disapproval, all those sympathies and antipathies people have, amount to nothing more than foolish, miserable unfairness and bias, and in Hermes' terms this vice can be called the worst, the most shameful desire. If you free yourself from this vice by radiating your Soul-power to everyone, regardless of who they are, you will stand in the power of truth. Then truth will reveal itself, the truth that dispels all lies, all deceit. Lies and deceit, in this sense, are the attachments and sympathies the nature-born human being harbours out of habit, or because of the expectations of society.

Or these sympathies might be maintained for diplomatic or political reasons. The newspapers are full of this kind of thing. You should read and study it all until you are sick. And when you are, you will learn a lesson, perhaps a lesson you will need to learn a hundred times over, but anyhow, it is good to begin. You will read how, in diplomatic meetings, peace talks, parliamentary debates and the like, the opposing parties scold and rail against each other, appearing, for the benefit of public opinion, to desire no contact whatsoever. And you can read how, five minutes later, relaxing in a private room over lunch, the two parties collaborate over how to organise this or that. Deceit and lies, not felt, not meant, just acted. Clearly, this deception has disastrous results, for it keeps the masses divided against each other, making them like fighting cocks, consuming each other with their hate and fear.

The world thirsts and sighs for truth. Only if truth, in its

absolute sense, enters the candidate, can the Only Good become perfect and complete in him. When truth finds admittance, the good, the life and the light appear. All jealousy, and any other vices, must then depart. And finally the moment comes when, out of the dark, dialectical, nature-born body, no further vice emerges. All vices are banished, overcome by the storm of the soma psychikon. As soon as the ten virtues have entered, the twelve vices are vanquished. Only in this way can the process of rebirth from the Sophia be brought to completion. Many of you possess much splendid and glorious Soul-quality, and with it you should root all those vices out of your personality, with great determination, like a storm. Then you will make your body, your personality, suitable for use as a tool in the service of God and mankind. Then there will no longer be anything to prevent you from rising right out of the nadir of materiality, and resurrection will become a fact. We hope and pray that you will soon complete this labour of purification.

In the World, but not of the World

When, through God's mercy, as Hermes Trismegistus puts it, you have attained the birth out of God, leaving behind your orientation towards material things, and you live in inner joy, you will have been made steadfast by Him. When the words 'in the world, but not of the world' have thus become a reality, Tat asks Hermes a question:

But now tell me this: how are the castigations of darkness, which are twelve in number, driven out by ten forces? How does this come about, Trismegistus?

Hermes replies: *The tent dwelling which we have left, is composed from the circle of the zodiac which, in turn, consists of twelve elements; one nature, but manifold of conception, in keeping with man's erring thoughts. Among these castigations, my son, there are some that act in combination. For instance, undue haste and thoughtlessness cannot be separated from anger. They cannot even be distinguished. Thus it is understandable and logical that they will disappear together when they are driven away by the ten forces. It is these ten forces, my son, that give birth to the Soul. Life and light are united. And so the number of unity is born out of the Spirit. Likewise, according to reason, the unity contains the number ten and the number ten again contains unity.*

Tat's response to this explanation is as follows: *Father, I perceive both the entire All and myself in the Spirit-Soul. And Hermes concludes: That is rebirth, my son – one cannot form any three dimensional concept of it. You know and ex-*

perience it now thanks to this Discourse on Rebirth, which I have put in writing solely for your benefit, since we would not divulge all this to the multitude, but exclusively to those whom God has chosen.

So now we must extend our reflections on this hidden discourse from the cosmos to the macrocosm. This is necessary because of Tat's question: *how are the castigations, which are twelve in number, driven out by ten forces?* and the answer Hermes gives to it.

This answer shows that the personality you yourself are, is not only of the earth, earthly, but of the zodiac. If you have ever studied astrology, you will know that our solar system, with all its planets and their moons, moves within and is enclosed by the twelve signs of the zodiac, so that the zodiac and everything it contains forms one system. This system triggers everything that happens in your life, and your personality is determined by it. This tent-dwelling owes its whole existence to the action of the twelve signs of the zodiac. If you study these things you will realise that the zodiac forms one astral system out of which all its inhabitants have to live, whatever planet they come from.

So this system and everything it contains is the nature of death, the non-static realm in which the forces of antitheses hold sway, constantly cancelling each other out. Even without astrology you can easily find proof of this, because astronomy, too, shows how every process in the universe of death is characterised by a constant rising, shining and fading. You can confirm for yourself the validity of Jacob Boehme's idea that the zodiacal system is a closed off space in which 'God has enclosed mankind, so that the evil taking shape therein would not penetrate the entire universe.'

Hermes states plainly that the twelve vices are the direct

result of zodiacal activity. He says: *the zodiac consists of twelve elements; one nature, but manifold of conception.* This means to say that you are born under one sign of the zodiac, one zodiacal activity. So there is one aspect which is fundamental in your life, and the other eleven merge with it. They all work together to mislead mankind. They form an absolute, insurmountable unity, and that is why the twelve vices are anchored fundamentally in man. You have not learned them. You have not cultivated them. They are not the result of evil, and neither are they the result of an accumulation of sins. No, they are twelve fundamental flaws that appear in your life as vices. Think of the two words: 'flaw', and 'imperfection'. As long as any flaw is present there can be no perfection, and the result will be a certain amount of disorder.

To put it another way, our nature is a nature in genesis, it is only an aspect of what it must one day become. That is why we speak of birth in nature and birth in the Spirit, of Soul-birth and Spirit-birth, and of being 'twice-born'.

The twelve vices are present in man in their positive and negative, their good and evil aspects, and thus are capable of building up a heavy karma, under which man wanders bowed under a great burden of sin. And that is how what is not yet perfect can be held fast in the clutches of imperfection.

The existence of these activities and their effects has always been known to mankind. However far you go back in history, you will find knowledge of the forces of the zodiac. Think, for instance, of the Great Pyramid, that mighty Egyptian symbol whose construction is based entirely on measurements and data derived from the zodiacal system and the solar system. You will also see how the forces of the zodiac have always been a source of the greatest confusion for seekers. This confusion lasts until the pupil on the path discovers that the absolute, insurmountable unity of the twelve can be assailed by

the ten forces; that only the ten forces can bring a solution, for when they begin to assert themselves, the twelve automatically recede.

To recap: the birth in which the human being exists, the natural figure in which he comes into contact with others, is not perfect, not complete. It is necessary for a second birth to take place. There is no way in which that necessity can be avoided. As long as you continue to exist in the first birth, you will remain a prisoner of the imperfect. The Soul, dwelling in the Soul-body, must purify the personality of its twelve vices. Only when these have been driven out will the personality have been freed from the earth, and only then can it really function as an instrument in the service of the Gnosis. The next step is logical: as soon as the personality begins to live exclusively under the influence of the ten forces, it will quickly change; it will quickly transfigure.

Only then can nature come into its own. Nothing imperfect, nothing flawed, can exist anywhere in God's universe. It is not strictly true to say that what you see around you is simply the result of the manifestation of evil; evil is brought into existence by human beings who live in the imperfect state. But there is a plan underlying God's universe. And you need to know that in your present, natural figure, which exists in the phase of the first birth, you are capable, with the aid of the ten forces, of driving out all imperfection. It is these ten forces, as Hermes says, that give birth to the Soul. In the Soul, life and light are united, and then, out of the Spirit, the number of unity is born. So unity contains the number ten, and the number ten contains unity. Do you see what this means? In Hermetic terms, the number ten is nothing less than the original Spirit of life, which can be ensouled, which *will* be ensouled, in all who, standing in the phase of the first birth, open themselves to it.

One is the universal symbol of the Spirit; the zero or circle is the Soul born of the pure primordial substance of the Sophia, represented by the circle on the carpet in our temple. So the number ten can represent the golden wedding raiment, the Soulbody that surrounds you in its state of union with the Spirit. This state of being, and the flood of force that emanates from it, will drive out all the fundamental vices.

When Tat realises the truth of all this, he jubilates: *Father, I perceive both the entire All and myself in the Spirit-Soul.* In that state of being, the natural figure is not discarded as if it were worthless, but can be used, for the first time, as an instrument in the service of God and man. The natural figure, having been combined with the Soul-figure, has become the Son of the Father, a child of God again. *That is rebirth.* And if you have really understood all this, you will never again make any three dimensional concept of it.

So now you can see how God can take hold of the whole system of the nature of death within you and bring it to rebirth, so that the temporal is swallowed up in the eternal. The natural figure belongs to the world of time, it is subject to time, but the Soul-figure is subject to heavenly forces and therefore stands in eternity. So time is dissolved in eternity and death is overcome through the manifestation of the Soul-body. And to the reborn Soul the words can be spoken: *Do you not know that you have become a god, a son of the One!* Only such a one can rightly be called a true human being.

The outwardly perceptible body of nature differs widely from the essential, divine birth, for the latter is the birth of the immortal. We are so privileged to have been able to discover all this together, and now that we know it, what can hold us back? Doesn't it surprise you that you so often continue to value the things of nature more highly than the things of the Spirit? How can you possibly go on allowing

yourself to be held back in your present state? What can death have to offer, when Life awaits? But perhaps you have realised it now: the universe of the nature of death is nothing else than the boundary of the monad's journey through the nadir; it is the place in which the descent is brought to a halt. In that nadir you must learn a lesson, the great lesson of resurrection into eternity: the fulfilment. So the nature of death is the womb of eternity, as the Dutchman Professor De Hartog put it. If you understand the zodiacal system in that way, you no longer need to see it as a universe of devils trying to exploit you, for you make the devils yourself, if you do not understand the path. The twelve vices are the complications that arise when you persist in holding onto the lower nature as if it were your final goal. If you go on clinging to the first birth, you will never understand anything of the second.

In his *Secret Discourse* Hermes makes the situation regarding this twofold birth very clear indeed. And Tat understands and experiences it to the full. That is why the fourteenth book ends with the *Secret Song of Praise*. To end this chapter, we would like to quote a small part of it:

May the entire nature of the cosmos listen to this song of praise.

Open up, O earth! Let the waters of heaven open their flood-gates when my voice is heard.

Stir not, ye trees! For I wish to sing the praise of the Lord of Creation, the One and the All.

Open up, ye heavens! Ye winds, be still, so that God's immortal cycle may accept my Word.

For I will sing the praise of Him who created the entire All, who gave the earth its place and fixed the firmament;

who ordered fresh water to leave the ocean and spread over the inhabited and the uninhabited earth, serving the survival and existence of all people; who ordered fire to appear for whatever use the gods and men might wish.

Let all of us together give praise to Him, who is exalted above all the heavens – the Creator of all nature. He is the eye of the Spirit: unto Him be the praise of all powers.

O you powers that are within me: sing the praise of the One and the All; sing in harmony with my will, O you powers that are within me.

Gnosis, O holy knowledge of God, enlightened by you it is given to me to sing praise to the light of knowledge, and to rejoice in the joy of the Spirit-Soul.

This is not a superficial song in praise of nature, the sort of thing one would sing if one saw the nature of death as the highest goal. It is a song of praise that wells up in the heart of Hermes, who has transcended the forces of nature and is now allowed by the powers of heaven to catch a glimpse of God's true intentions. All life, all manifestations that are not the result of rebirth, are finite. But any life that does arise from rebirth is eternally inviolable.

As long as the Spiritual School with its sevenfold body is able to raise its Golden Head into the inviolability of the living Soul-state, it will be beyond all harm. The efforts of those who form the Community of the Golden Head and the Community of the Ecclesia are vital in maintaining this state.

If the Living Body were to be unable to attain full resurrection, the twelve vices would have access to it, and if that were to happen, the Living Body of our School would be marked by the same characteristics as the nature of death.

We hope you will bear this in mind and resolve to make the utmost effort to transcend your birth in nature and attain Soul-birth, so that you, too, can be counted among the twice-born.

XXIII

Fifteenth Book

Hermes Trismegistus to Aesclepius Concerning Right Thinking

- 1 *Hermes: As in your absence my son Tat wanted to obtain information regarding the nature of the universe, and would not allow me to postpone this instruction – as he is my son and a young pupil who only recently came to knowledge of things – I was compelled to dwell upon this information more specifically, so that it would be easier for him to understand the doctrine.*
- 2 *But for you I have selected the most important chapters from our discussions and summarised them in a more mystical way, in view of your more mature age and the knowledge you have gained about the nature of things.*
- 3 *If all things that are revealed come into being, or have come into being, and if they are not like this by themselves, but through someone else, and if all things that have come into being differ and are not alike, and owe their creation to someone else, then someone exists who is their Creator. This one, then, did not come into being himself, if one accepts that He existed before everything that was created. As I said before, that which is created comes into being through some other creature. So there is nothing that existed before anything came into being, with the exception of the Creator, who never came into being.*

- 4 *He is also more powerful, and the only one. He alone is truly wise in everything, for there was nothing that existed before Him. For He is the first one, in order of rank as well as size; and also because of the difference between Him and all creatures, and through the continuity of his creation. Moreover, all creatures are visible, but He is invisible. For this very reason He creates: to make himself visible. Thus He creates continuously and in this way makes himself visible.*
- 5 *It is in this way that one should think and come to reverence, and deem oneself to be blessed that one has come to know the Father. For what is more glorious than a true Father! But then, who is He and how shall we learn to know Him? Is it correct to call Him by the name of God? Or should it be Creator? Or Father? Or perhaps all three? God, because of his power? Creator, because of his activity? Father, because of his goodness? For He is powerful, in view of the diversity of the things that have come into being; and He is active, because through Him everything is brought into existence.*
- 6 *So, putting aside endless, vain chatter, we should distinguish these two: that which is created, and the Creator. Between these two there is no mediator, no third one.*
- 7 *Distinguish these two in everything you understand and are told about, and be convinced that they encompass everything within themselves. Let no doubt whatsoever take hold of you, neither about the things that are above, nor about those things which are below; neither about divine things, nor about what is changeable, nor about what concerns the mysteries. All that exists can be sum-*

marized by these two: what is created and the Creator, and it is impossible for them to be separated. The Creator cannot exist without creation. Each of them is exactly what the word means and nothing else. That is why the one cannot be separated from the other – not even from itself

8 *Since the Creator is just the single, simple, undivided function, He must of necessity be equal to himself; because the Creator's creation is the genesis of a state of being. For what is created cannot exist as if it had brought itself forth. A creation is necessarily brought forth by someone else: without the Creator nothing comes into being and nothing exists. If Creator and creature were to be separated, each would lose its being, because it would then be robbed of its counterpart. So if one accepts the fact that reality can be summarised in these two – Creator and creation – one concedes their unity by virtue of their mutual indispensability: first there is the creating God-head and after that the creation, whatever it may be.*

9 *Do not fear that the distinction I have been making could diminish the reverence felt for God or his splendour. For Him there exists only one glory, which is to bring forth all creatures. This, the granting of form and life – creation – is, as it were, God's body. Do not think that the Creator has ordained anything bad or ugly. These aspects – the bad and the ugly – are inseparably bound to creation, just as rust is bound to iron, and impurity to the body. However, it is not the smith who makes the rust, and it is not the parents that cause the contamination of the body, nor is it God who has created what is evil. It is the use that is made of it, the corrosion of created things that brings*

about this corollary of evil. It is precisely for this reason that God established variability, in order to purify creation.

10 If a painter is able to depict both the gods and heaven, as well as the earth and the sea and man and animals and soulless things, would God then not be able to create all this? How unwise and ignorant, if one were to think He could not! Those who think like that experience the most abnormal things. While they claim to praise God and worship Him, they refuse to acknowledge Him as the Creator of all things. In this way they not only prove that they do not know God, but also commit the most terrible blasphemy by imputing arrogance and incompetence to Him. If God were not the Creator of all things, it would then be as if He had not deigned to call them into being, or as if He were unable to do so.

11 God has only one attribute, The Good. And this absolute Good is neither arrogant nor incompetent. Yes, that is God: The Good, the almighty who creates everything. The whole of creation came into being through God; thus through Him who is totally Good and who has the power to bring forth everything.

12 Now if you would like to know how God creates, and how creation comes into being, behold then this beautiful comparison: just think of the farmer who sows grain in the earth –here wheat, there barley, and there a different kind of wheat. See how he cultivates a vine here, and an apple tree there, and different trees elsewhere. In the same way God plants immortality in heaven, changeability on earth, and life and movement in the All. These

aspects of His activity are not numerous. They are small in number and easy to count, for they are four in total, in addition to God himself and creation. These six together constitute everything that exists.

XXIV

The Third Nature

The fifteenth book of Hermes, which is a letter, written by Hermes to Aesclepius, begins by mentioning Tat. Tat is the struggling pupil on the path who has not yet transcended the nature-birth and thus still stands in the nature of death, constantly in danger of being victimised and deluded by the strange, sinister and capricious interplay of opposites. He is full of problems and questions, and hardly a moment passes without him demanding some sort of solution or answer. This Tat, the seeker you know so well, is protected in the midst of these great dangers by the light of the Gnosis. The true seeker, whose whole way of life is focused on the path, is always overshadowed by the Gnosis as a natural result of the workings of the astralis.

Aesclepius is Tat's companion. He is the helper, the healer, whose symbol is two serpents entwined around a staff, the mighty symbol of Mercury. The pupil who perseveres in the new way of life and does not forsake the path is accompanied by the living Soul. This companionship becomes ever more clear, ever more positive, ever more permanent until finally a firm bond is formed which exercises a powerful influence on the serpent-fire column. Only the living Soul, the Soul united with the Spirit, can truly help, heal, and liberate you, and when it does, it will demonstrate its presence throughout your being. Anyone who possesses this staff of Mercury is strong, and he will overcome. Those who do not yet possess it, are weak, mortal beings wandering and stumbling in darkness.

The first verse of the fifteenth book reads:

As in your absence my son Tat wanted to obtain information

regarding the nature of the universe, and would not allow me to postpone this instruction – as he is my son and a young pupil who only recently came to knowledge of things – I was compelled to dwell upon this information more specifically, so that it would be easier for him to understand the doctrine.

Here we are shown the pupil in whom the living Soul is not yet manifested. The Pistis Sophia, too, was someone who, even after her repeated songs of repentance, still received no response from her liberator. Yet, even in this loneliness, the true pupil is never really left alone, because Hermes, the Thrice Great One, watches over him.

Hermes is the prototype, the sublime representative of liberated mankind, dwelling in the other realm. He is one with the Gnosis, he *is* the Gnosis, absolutely one with God. The message of the fifteenth book of Hermes is that even if the Soul is not able to speak or is not yet sufficiently awake, the serious pupil who perseveres on the path is always helped by the universal Gnosis, not only as regards his soul, but also as regards his personality, Tat as well as Aesclepius.

The true nature of things is set out in the fifteenth book of Hermes, and that is why it is so important. If you want to understand these things, you should always bear in mind that the Soul and the personality are very different in nature. The Soul has to incline itself towards the personality which is in and of the nature of death, and the personality has to incline itself towards the Soul, which is of the nature of life. The central issue of gnostic alchemy, the great problem of the inner grades, is that the Soul and the personality must first incline towards each other; then they must meet; then they must fuse; then transfiguration has to come about, and finally liberation itself.

So this fivefold process means that, particularly in the beginning, a new basis must be found and constructed, a basis for

working in and with two natures that do not belong to each other and which absolutely cannot and may not go together, because the personality must merge into the Soul-nature. This new basis of work, especially in the early stages, in fact constitutes a third nature. It is through this nature that the liberating life can be reached, and the great mission accomplished.

Information about this third nature is needed by every pupil. On the one hand, there is the nature of life, and on the other, the nature of death. In the power of the nature of life the candidate begins his path and dissociates himself from the nature of death. In between is the temporary third nature, which is neither the one nor the other. This third nature is referred to in practical terms as 'the path', and it brings with it a totally different psychological condition. And it is the wisdom concerning all this that forms the subject of the fifteenth book.

Imagine that you now decide to follow the path, or that some time ago, or a long time ago, you decided to do so. It is not a path that automatically connects the two extremes of the nature of death and the nature of life, but it *can* form a link between the two. Then, from the very first second, you form for yourself a third nature. The path is not there; you have to make it yourself. There is no such thing as an official, explored third nature. You must bring this nature to life yourself; you yourself must forge the way. If anyone says to you: 'Show me the path, then I can decide whether I want to follow it,' you will not be able to answer, or at least, not in a direct way, because *your* path is your own path, your own third nature, and you cannot take anyone with you on it. The third nature begins where you begin, and is manifested where you are manifested, as a true pupil.

However, what is possible and indeed desirable, what in fact could almost be called essential, is that, as a group, working together in total surrender, brotherly love and non-conflict, you form a collective third nature – an ark, a celestial ship, or Living Body. The better this ark is constructed, the more it measures up to what is required, the more the third nature adapts itself to the Living Nature, the faster and better your path will unfold. So while, in theory, every pupil follows his path autonomously, calling his own third nature into being, in practice going together is of the greatest importance, and is in keeping with divine law.

In many respects, the third nature is 'the lonely path' and 'the dangerous path', because if the ego still asserts itself too strongly, abnormalities develop.

You know the commandment: 'Love God above everything.' It is because of this law that your concentration on the divine goal opens the path for you. But the law goes on to say: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' If your pupilship is genuine, and your third nature is in the process of manifesting itself, you will be filled not only with love for God, but also for His creature. If you keep on moving forwards and upwards, the love that is in you will compel you to serve your neighbour with your most absolute love.

Then group unity will be no problem. The way of life of universal love is the key to gnostic pupilship. This love is, and must begin with: non-conflict. If you are willing to enter into that, the third nature will open for you, and for the first time you will really be in the group, in the celestial ship, which is the group's third nature. Then, for the pupil and group alike, the third nature will have become a reality. And you will be able to experience its presence anywhere, the moment you direct your attention to God, that is, to the Gnosis, or Shamballa.

Having explained all this, we can take one more step on the path of wisdom that is connected with all this and ask: What is a 'nature'? It is a field of manifestation whose values and forces can be seen, known and experienced. Hermes says: *That which is created comes into being through some other creature. So there is nothing that existed before anything came into being, with the exception of the Creator, who never came into being. Is it correct to call Him only by the name of God? Or should it be Creator? Or Father? Or perhaps all three? God, because of his power? Creator, because of his activity? Father, because of his goodness?*

Hermes goes on to say: *Putting aside endless, vain chatter, we should distinguish these two: that which is created, and the Creator. Between these two there is no mediator, no third one.*

Remember that Hermes is speaking here to the pupil on the path, who is standing firmly in his third nature, focused on the one goal, which is God. Only in this third nature can God's power, activity and goodness come into being. So he is not speaking about the creations of evil, because the latter are caused not by God but by passion. Hermes explains this in more detail in the fifteenth book, and we will come back to it later.

Now let us consider what happens if, as a person born of nature, belonging to the nature of death, you decide to make it your goal to reach the original life-field, Shamballa. You not only take this decision mentally and emotionally, but you also prove it, by adopting a new attitude of life. If you do so, you invoke the power of God, which is omnipresent. As a result of that power, a certain activity starts to make itself felt in your personal astral field. The effects of this are transferred from the astral to the etheric, and from the etheric to the ma-

terial body. In this way, a manifestation, a creation, comes into being within and around you. This creation stands entirely in the goodness, love and wisdom which is God. And that is how the divine trinity becomes a reality, in a direct and clearly manifested way. The invisible becomes visible in and through its creation, in its creature, in a way that is totally in keeping with the creature's state of being.

That is why the manifestation of the third nature is always changing, for when the pupil progresses and Aesclepius and Tat are united once again, under the shadow of the hermetic wings, the third nature will manifest itself in a different way. For the Creator always accompanies his creature, until the good end is reached.

The Unification of Tat, Aesclepius and Hermes

In the last chapter, we gave you some philosophical information about the three natures.

You know the nature of death from experience; the nature of life, too, is known to you, although only faintly as yet, for you will have gleaned some understanding of it from our literature, from your contact with the Spiritual School and, we hope, from the light of the Gnosis that has touched you. In between the two, and completely separate from them, is the third nature, which the candidate creates for himself by following the path, through the new attitude of life. This nature is formed by the group, too, as a celestial ship, an ark, which can act in the service of all, with the aim of bringing about the total unification of Tat, Aesclepius and Hermes.

Your own experience will tell you that all created things, down to the smallest details, have come into being from and through the Creator:

Without the Creator nothing comes into being and nothing exists. If Creator and creature were to be separated, each would lose its being, because it would then be robbed of its counterpart.

Hermes is saying that, in fact, there is no such thing as automatic fate. When the creature is born of the Creator, it is free, it has the freedom to reach the goal, freedom of action originating from the greatest power of the universal manifestation – God himself. And it has freedom, too, to break away from its Creator, to separate from its Creator.

Hence the classical Rosicrucian saying: *'Ex Deo nascimur* – we are born of God'. Your microcosm is born of God as a monad. The nucleus of your microcosm is born of God as the soul. Even your personality, however much it is of the earth, earthly, and laden with a great deal that is bad, has nevertheless come into being as a result of possibilities received from God, to fulfil its role as an emergency-order body. So even in the deepest depths of the Fall, that one law, the law of genesis, is upheld. In the inmost foundation of your being, you are, and will remain, born of God. Your existence may be hemmed about on all sides by degeneration, like prison walls, but still the words, 'we are born of God', remain a fact.

What a glory! Because every pupil can set out on his path in the absolute certainty that: 'All who accept Him, He gives the power to become children of God again'. That word, 'again', from the prologue of the Gospel according to John, means that one has freed oneself from the prison walls which, in practice, keep one cut off from God. If, in an unconditional new way of life, you aim towards your pure origin, then, as if in a fraction of a second, your link with God will be restored: *God, because of his power, Creator, because of his activity, Father, because of his goodness.*

A power comes to you, and it is all-fulfilling. It has an activity, it gives rise to a process, and gives birth to the Only Good. The power of the adversary, the activity of the nature of death, and the evil they call into being in your system – which is born of God – cannot be compared in any way to that threefold, divine faculty. Even so, you will need to detach yourself from the threefold evil within you, and you can do this by entering into the *in Jesu morimur*, the 'dying in Jesus the Lord', the *endura*. The aim of this process is to become freed from the blood, freed from karma and freed from the nature of death. You can be the victor over yourself, virtually without any trou-

ble at all, because you are immeasurably strong. *Do not think that the Creator has ordained anything bad or ugly.*

'How, then, does evil, which plays so many tricks on us and has led us so utterly astray, come into being?' That is a question many people ask. And Hermes' answer is:

These aspects are inseparably bound to creation, just as rust is bound to iron, and corruption to the body. However, [...] it is the use that is made of them, the corrosion of created things that brings about this corollary of evil. It is precisely for this reason that God established variability, in order to purify creation.

How are we to understand this? The words 'impurity' and 'passion' refer to emotions directly connected with the heart, and particularly with the thymus. The thymus, heart and sternum form a threefold unity, the thymus being an endocrine organ of exceptional importance. Among the hormones it produces is a sex hormone. Now man possesses two organs of creation, one in the head and one in the pelvic sanctuary. In the head, the chief organs concerned are the thyroid gland, the pituitary gland, and the larynx. In the abdomen there are the sex glands and the organs of reproduction. Both these systems work together, and each has its own endocrine system, but both endocrine systems are under the control of the thymus hormone.

The heart is the centre of the body's emotional system. Through the sternum, which acts like a radar system, you receive impressions of the thoughts, actions or feelings of others, and everything that emanates from people and things, is absorbed into the heart and processed there. The result stimulates the production of hormones in the thymus, and the nature and quality of these hormones will determine how the two creative organs in the head and abdomen will react.

The reaction is passion, an impulse towards manifestation, sent out by these two systems of organs and driving you to some form of action, which may originate in the head, or in the lower creative organs, or in both.

This always gives rise to tension in the nerve-ether, and wastage of vital energy, because the blood and the nerve-ether will obviously have to be brought into a state of equilibrium with this hormonal activity and its results. And once your blood and nerve-ether are in the appropriate state, the effects will be transmitted to all your organs, including the threefold system of the heart, and thus the sequence is closed.

So if your sternum is attuned to particular impressions or emotions, these will promptly be assimilated and processed, and the corresponding hormones will be produced, animating your head and heart so that then, reaction is inevitable. Thus, as a human being of this nature, you are trapped in not one circular course, but many. You are attuned to a vast number of influences, and the moment any atmospheric conditions arise to which you are susceptible, or the moment anyone says or does something, or fails to say or do something, or behaves in a particular way that triggers your emotional system, off it will go. Hormones will be produced, and you will react, be it mentally, and thus astrally, with a biting word, or with some spiteful action or a tension that discharges itself in one way or another. And apart from harming others, you will pollute your own being more and more, as well as your whole life-field.

And that is how the entire nature of evil and death has been brought into being. The passions of creation, the activities arising in the head sanctuary in response to hormonal urges can be countless times more immoral, destructive, deadly and devilish than the worst form of indecency arising from the hormonal urges of the pelvic sanctuary. So do not be so foolhardy

as to think of the head as a *higher* creative organ. It is the most base, the most perfidious organ you could think of!

We once asked all pupils to practise non-conflict for a month. Why? To enable the group and all its participants to put an end to the most sordid and iniquitous form of immorality in the nature of death: the immorality of the head sanctuary, caused and maintained by passion. If you live like an animal, you will never change the world in any fundamental way. You will just remain an animal. But if you debase the royal temple, the head sanctuary, the highest chamber of the tower of Olympus where the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross has to be celebrated, turning it into a devilish lair from which you spit your blasphemies, your thoughts and acts of criticism, your animosity, your antipathies and tensions, like flashes of lightning in all directions, you will heap untold guilt on your shoulders, because you will be murdering your fellow human beings, with results more dreadful than a sex killing.

So do not blame the existence of passion on the Lord of all Life. Free yourself from the straightjacket of passion and its results, and strike down your self-created adversary with the weapon of non-conflict. Do this so absolutely, so completely that, for the first time, your threefold heart-system will become completely attuned to the divine attribute.

In our next chapter, we hope to explain what Hermes means by this.

The Six Aspects of Divine Activity

God has only one attribute, The Good. And this absolute Good is neither arrogant nor incompetent. Yes, that is God: The Good, the almighty who creates everything. The whole of creation came into being through God; thus through Him who is totally Good and who has the power to bring forth everything. Now if you would like to know how God creates, and how creation comes into being, behold then this beautiful comparison: just think of the farmer who sows grain in the earth – here wheat, there barley, and there a different kind of wheat. See how he cultivates a vine here, and an apple tree there, and different trees elsewhere. In the same way God plants immortality in heaven, changeability on earth, and life and movement in the All. These aspects of His activity are not numerous. They are small in number and easy to count, for they are four in total, in addition to God himself and creation. These six together constitute everything that exists.

The divine attribute, also called the divine desire, is one thing only: The Good. It is the fullness of divine radiations, in which God makes himself known in the all-manifestation, in the boundless ocean of astral primordial substance. This is a grandiose activity. Just try to imagine it for a moment: the power of God, being manifested in the intercosmic astral field. Everything needed for every manifestation is present, in the form of atoms, in that astral field. Intercosmically, this field is kept pure by a mighty, neutral radiation which main-

tains in it a very high level of vibration. None of the results of passion can ever penetrate that field or affect it in any way.

And it is in that field that the divine power and the divine idea operate. In a part of the astral, primordial substance the Lord of all Life manifests his idea concerning the world and mankind. That idea can only be good; it *is* The Good. So in both intercosmic space and planetary astral space the divine spirit catalyses specific manifestations of the Only Good.

In our planetary field, the divine Spirit's central concern is nature-born mankind and its role in the planetary manifestation. Furthermore, the divine spirit is the most powerful force in mankind's field of existence. So it follows that, notwithstanding all life's myriad difficulties, it must be very easy to enter into a connection with that great divine power. The Only Good is very near to you. You only need to activate the appropriate law in your inner being, in a new mode of life. The results of the fulfilment of this law will be clearly evident in every aspect of your life, in a very direct way. But you should not imagine that, the moment the Only Good begins to work within you, there will only be joy, peace and happiness. If, as a nature-born human being, you experience only joy, peace and happiness, you have certainly not been touched by the Only Good. Surely you remember the saying: 'Love hurts'? There is so much in you, isn't there, that must be burnt away? So the pupil will need to be prepared to be burnt and purified by the fire of divine love.

Now let us see how God creates and how what is created comes into being: *God plants immortality in heaven, changeability on earth, and life and movement in the All.* The entire Gnosis is revealed in these words. The true, holy earth is organised by the divine in such a way that it demonstrates two aspects: birth and immortality. True rebirth, in which the soul must occupy the central position, is characterised by constant

change. This is the pure, original dialectics. This change means that, from birth onwards, there is constant growth, true evolution, in never ending immortality. And thus one progresses from power to power and from glory to glory. In the nature-birth, this true birth is opposed; it is blocked by passion and its results. That is why birth in nature is always accompanied by sickness and death, the death of disintegration and destruction. So the fifteenth book of Hermes presents the great task all of us have to learn to fulfil: the task of bringing about the shift from nature-birth to divine birth, by means of self-surrender and the new mode of life.

These aspects of His activity are not numerous. They are small in number and easy to count: God, and being born of God. Then there will be changeability on earth, but death will hold no tenor any more. Its destructive aspect will have been taken away, because every change will then unfold on the basis of immortality. So let us close, once more, with the words of the classical Rosycross:

To be born of God, which means: to be awakened to new life. To die in Jesus, which means: to erase all the old, nature-born life and enter the third nature, the path, in new birth. And as a result, to be reborn through the Holy Spirit, which means: to be reborn in absolute immortality.

XXVII

Sixteenth Book

Hermes to Ammon: About the Soul

- 1 *Hermes: The soul is an incorporeal essence, and even if it is in the body, it detracts nothing from its own reality. Its being is by nature in perpetual motion. It moves spontaneously through the activity of thoughts. It is not moved in something, nor with regard to something, nor for something, for it exists before forces come into action; and what comes before does not need that which comes later.*
- 2 *The expression 'in something' indicates place, time, natural growth; 'with regard to' is applicable to harmony, to the form, the figure; 'for something' is the body.*
- 3 *Space, time and natural growth exist for the sake of the body. These terms are conjoined because of an original bond, if, indeed, it is true that a body requires a place (a body cannot come into being without a place, without space); a body is bound to undergo a natural change (such change is impossible without time and without natural movement); and finally no body can be formed without harmony.*
- 4 *Thus space, a place, exists on account of the body. Since the changes of the body take place in space, it prevents the changing being from becoming annihilated. The body passes from one condition to another through*

change. Then it is, indeed, robbed of its former condition; nevertheless, it remains a composite body. And once it has changed into something else, then it possesses the condition thereof. So the body remains a body; only, its condition has no durability. So the body changes only with respect to the condition.

- 5 *Place and space are incorporeal, just as are time and natural movement.*
- 6 *Each has its own particular property. The property of place is to contain; the property of time is interval and number; the property of nature is movement; the property of harmony is affinity; the property of the body is change; the property of the soul is contemplation of its true essence.*
- 7 *What is moved is moved through the motive power of the All. The nature of the All imparts to it two kinds of movement: one because of its own potency, the other derived from its active faculty. The first penetrates the whole world and keeps it together inwardly; the second causes it to expand and encompasses it from without. These two movements always act together in everything.*
- 8 *The nature of the All creates everything and imparts to it the ability to grow; on the one hand by causing it to sow its own seed, and on the other hand by forming it of matter that is in motion. By this motion matter is heated and becomes fire and water. The fire is full of might and power; the water is passive. The fire, which is the enemy of the water, caused part of the water to dry up. In this way the earth was formed, floating on the water. Through the continued drying up of the water around the earth it*

released vapour from the three – water, earth and fire; in this way the air was born.

- 9 *Then these elements intermingled according to the law of harmony: warmth with cold, aridity with moisture. Through the merging of all these elements a vital breath was born, and a seed that corresponded with the encompassing life-breath. Now when this life-breath falls into the matrix it does not remain inactive in the seed; it changes the seed which then grows through this change and acquires size. Having taken on dimension, the seed attracts something resembling an external form, and makes itself an image of it. This form, in turn, serves as a vehicle for the figure. Thus everything receives its own expression.*
- 10 *Since the vital breath in the matrix had not been given the kind of motion that gives life, but only the kind that gives rise to the vital force of growth, the latter also caused a life-giving motion to arise in a harmonious way, so that into it could be received intelligent life – which is indivisible and invariable and will never leave its immutable state.*
- 11 *It guides what is in the matrix towards birth; according to the numbers it guides in the process of birth and causes that which comes to birth to emerge. The soul that is nearest adopts it; not according to its innate characteristics, but because of the decree of fate. For by nature the soul does not desire to be with the body at all.*
- 12 *It is only out of obedience to fate that the soul imparts to the entity that is being born the thinking motion and the*

thinking substance proper to life. For the soul penetrates the life-breath and moves in it in a life-generating way.

- 13 *The soul is an incorporeal essence; if it had a body it would be unable to preserve itself, for every body has need of an existence; it needs life which consists in order.*
- 14 *Everything that is born is also liable to change, since everything that is born is born with a certain size. While it is born, it grows. All growth changes into diminution, decrease; then follows eradication, destruction.*
- 15 *What is born is alive, and is linked with the existence of the soul in order to participate in the life-form. However, what, for a different reason caused its existence, already existed beforehand.*
- 16 *Existence I define as being endowed with reason and participating in intelligent life; it is the soul that provides the latter.*
- 17 *What is born is called a living being because of life, it is called intelligent because of the ability to think, mortal because of the body. So the soul is incorporeal, because it maintains its power unimpaired. How could one speak of a living being, if there were not something essential which grants it life? But neither can one speak of an intelligent being without the existence of a mental condition, which imparts life to what is rational.*
- 18 *As a result of the composition of the body, thinking does not bring hannony to all people. If the composition contains too much warmth, the creature becomes volatile*

and tense; if cold dominates, he is heavy and slow. It is nature that ordines the composition of the body for the sake of harmony.

- 19 *There are three kinds of harmony: one of warmth, one of cold, and one of the temperate. Nature establishes order in keeping with the stellar influence governing the conformation of the stars. And the soul that has a body, destined for it by fate, accepts it, and imparts life to this construction of nature.*
- 20 *Thus nature attunes the body's harmony to the disposition of the stars; it unites the separate elements in accordance with stellar harmony, so that there might be agreement between all. In fact the purpose of stellar harmony is to attune everything to the decrees of fate.*
- 21 *Thus the soul is a being that is perfect in itself, choosing in the beginning a life in keeping with fate, and attracting to itself a form brimming with life-power and desire.*
- 22 *The vital force serves as a material for the soul. If this vital force creates a state of being in accord with the soul's imagination, it becomes courage and does not yield to cowardice. Desire also offers itself as a material. If it has created a state of being in accord with the soul's considerations, it becomes moderation and yields not to voluptuousness, for the soul's rationality completes what desire lacks.*
- 23 *However, if vital force and desire cooperate, if they create a harmonious state of being and both continue to submit themselves to the soul's rationality, then they will establish the right orientation, since the stability thus created*

will serve to remove any surplus of vital force, and to replenish any deficiency of desire.

- 24 *What then guides them is the mentality, which has dominion over its own reason since it belongs to itself as a result of its own careful rationality.*
- 25 *The soul's essence governs and guides as a supreme guide; the reason within it serves as a counsellor.*
- 26 *The careful rationality of the soul's essence is therefore that knowledge of the thoughts, which furnishes an image of rationality to the irrational – to those devoid of reason; it is an image that is obscure when compared with reason, but nevertheless rational when compared with the irrational, like an echo compared with a voice, and like the light of the moon compared with that of the sun.*
- 27 *Vital force and desire are thus brought to harmony through rational deliberation; they keep each other in balance and attract rational thought in an ever circulating motion.*
- 28 *Every soul is immortal and always in motion. For in the General Discourse we said that motion proceeds either from energies or from bodies.*
- 29 *Furthermore we stated that the soul proceeds from a different essence than that of matter, since the soul is incorporeal, just as is that from which it proceeds; everything that comes into existence must necessarily have been born out of some other thing.*

- 30 *All beings that are born and afterwards are subject to decay, possess two forms of motion: that of the soul by which they are moved and that of the body through which they are made to grow, diminish and finally decompose. It is thus that I define the movement of perishable bodies.*
- 31 *The soul is perpetually in motion. It is moved without cessation and conveys this motion to other things. Considered in this way every soul is immortal and always in motion, because it is moved by the activity of its innermost being.*
- 32 *There are divine, human and irrational souls. The divine Soul is the active energy of its divine body, in which it moves, thereby setting it in motion.*
- 33 *When this Soul frees itself from mortal creatures, it enters into the divine body, freed from everything in it that did not fulfil reason. And within that body it is borne along through the All in an everlasting movement.*
- 34 *The human soul also possesses something divine but, in addition, it is bound to the irrational elements: desire and vital force. These aspects are indisputably immortal, in so far as they themselves are active forces; but they are energies of mortal bodies. That is why they are far removed from the divine parts of the soul, which inhabit the divine body.*
- 35 *The souls of irrational beings are composed of vital force and desire. These creatures are called irrational because they are deprived of the rational aspect of the soul.*

- 36 *Then, fourthly and lastly, consider the souls of inanimate things which, although existing outside of the body, move in its mechanism. Such souls could only be moved in a divine body, and then move the inanimate things at second hand, so to speak.*
- 37 *The soul, then, is an eternal and intelligent being, having for thought its own reason. When it is united with a body, it attracts the concept of harmony. But once it is freed of the physical body, it is independent and free and belongs to the divine world. The soul controls its own reason and imparts to that which is coming to life a movement in keeping with its own thoughts, and that movement is what one calls life. For it is a characteristic of the soul to confer on others something of its own essence.*
- 38 *So there are two kinds of life and two kinds of movement. One is the movement of the soul's essence, the other is that of the natural body. The latter is general, the former is limited to the soul. That of the soul is autonomous, the other is compelling. For everything that is moved will always be dominated by the compulsion of the mover. But that which moves the soul is the movement that is inseparably linked with love, which guides the soul to the divine reality.*
- 39 *The soul is indeed incorporeal, since it does not form part of the physical body. If the soul were to have a body, it would have neither reason, nor thoughts, because each body in itself is without thought. On the other hand, a living creature owes its vital breath to the fact that it forms part of the soul's essence.*

- 40 *The vital breath, or spirit, belongs to the body; reason belongs to the essence of the soul. Reason contemplates what is beautiful; the observing spirit discerns appearances with the senses. The spirit is distributed among the senses which, as components of the spirit, consist of a spirit of sight, a spirit of hearing, a spirit of smell, a spirit of taste, and a spirit of feeling. If this life-spirit or vital breath of the body has become a kind of mind, it perceives things with the senses. Otherwise it only imagines things.*
- 41 *It belongs to the body and is susceptible to everything. Reason, on the other hand, belongs to the most essential part of the soul, and judges with insight and understanding. The knowledge of divine things is connected with reason; the imagination is connected with the vital spirit. The vital spirit receives its energy from the world that surrounds it; the soul receives its energy from itself.*
- 42 *So there are: the soul's essence, reason, thoughts, and insight or intelligence. The imagination and sensory perception contribute to insight, reason belongs to the essence of the soul, thoughts are formed through reason, and are united with insight. These four, which intermingle, have become a single figure, the figure of the soul.*
- 43 *Imagination and sensory perception contribute to the insight of the soul. However, they are not consistent in this contribution, and exhibit excess, failure or variation. Separated from insight they deteriorate, but if they comply with this faculty in obedience, they attune with higher reason via the sciences.*
- 44 *We have the power of choice; we are able to choose either*

the best or, in spite of ourselves, the worst. The choice of evil approximates to the corporeal nature. That is why fate rules the one whose choice it is. The cognitive essence within us, the higher reason, is autonomous and always identical with itself; therefore, it is independent of fate.

- 45 *But if the cognitive being turns away from the Logos, who contemplates the All, and who is first after the first God, he too will be linked with the plan that nature has ordained for creation. So once the soul has linked itself with what is cre-ated, it is also linked to the destiny thereof, although it does not participate in the nature of created things.*

XXVIII

The Soul Is

It now remains for us to discuss with you Hermes' sixteenth book, and the seventeenth book, the *Book of Truth*, and then we will have completed our task, which was to provide the young Gnosis with a modern commentary on the Arch-Gnosis of Hermes Trismegistus, with a new translation of the original text, the *Corpus Hermeticum*, which was discovered sometime during the eleventh century.

The sixteenth book of the *Corpus Hermeticum* is addressed to Ammon. 'Ammon' means 'child of God, son of God, creature of God'. The name does not refer to a particular entity like Jesus the Lord, but to human beings in general.

Man is a creature, God's creation. We are children of God, creatures, born as a result of the divine plan. In the Universal Doctrine of Ancient Egypt there are two figures which often appear as a duality. They are called Khnum and Ammon. Both were portrayed with rams' heads, as a result of which they were often confused with each other. Of the Khnum-Ammon duality, Khnum is called the moulder of men, while Ammon is the procreator. You can read about these things, for instance, in the works of Mrs Blavatsky, but it is still worthwhile to take a closer look at them here.

There are many ancient tales that tell of a world-egg, and the people born of the world-egg. All kinds of speculations have been made as to what these stories may mean, and this has caused no end of confusion. Our point of view is that the egg represents the microcosm, the egg-shaped auric being. Everything relating to the true Man, everything which has to be manifested in accordance with the divine plan, must come to

life in the microcosm. So we are, and will always be, 'people born of the egg', which means: ones who have come forth from the microcosm.

So ancient Egyptian imagery is still valid, and has lost none of its truth and power. The phenomenon of man as microcosm can be referred to as the first creation. All human abilities, everything of which man will one day be capable, must emerge from the microcosm. The maker of this first creation was called Khnum, that is: the elder. From the elder, which is the microcosm, or egg, the hidden True Man, Ammon, must emerge. Ammon was, and is, completely one with Khnum, and is therefore called Khnum-Ammon: the elder who envelops that which is concealed, the hidden one, who will be revealed through the Very Ancient One. And people call these 'heathen' images! But how universal and true they are!

In actual fact, the whole *Corpus Hermeticum* is a philosophy, a revelation, a method, for liberating the hidden one, Ammon, from within the microcosm, and warning against everything that leads away from the unfoldment of this process.

Hermes is the one who has been liberated, the Thrice Great One. He is the microcosm, he is the inextinguishable, hidden Man, and at the same time he is the manifested one, Thrice Great One. In the sixteenth book, Hermes addresses himself to Ammon, to what lies enclosed within the microcosm, trying to manifest itself, for that is what it is obliged to do. And he is speaking to what, as yet, is only very partially awakened, and thus he is speaking to you, about the soul. Why? Because an ensouling principle lies enclosed within the microcosm. And when the soul-being has been resurrected from within the microcosm, then that other aspect, the personality, having become one with both the soul and the microcosm, will be able to be a Thrice Great One just like Hermes.

The great problem with respect to this process is that the ensouling principle of the hidden Man is absolutely immaterial, while the personality ought to be a material expression of the immaterial. The difficulty that emerges so strongly is that a conflict situation arises between the ensouling principle and the personality, because the personality is not an automaton that can only manifest what the soul-principle dictates. To be truly human, the personality must have its own life, its own part in the threefold unity. It needs its own vital force, its own stimulus to manifestation, in the same way as every atom has a life of its own. The great secret of Ammon, the hidden Man, is that all his aspects ought to work together of their own free will, in love and full understanding.

However, you and your predecessors in the microcosm have already aroused that conflict. As a result, the soul-principle and you, as a personality, have been driven apart. As a being of matter, you have thus become very crystallised. So now, having realised the mistake, you should first return to the point of departure. You should restore the link between you and the soul-principle. Once this has been done, the results of the mistake will need to be changed. We call that change 'transfiguration'. And then you can begin the process of bringing the re-awakened, hidden Man, Ammon, into manifestation.

If all this is to happen in the right way, if you want to avoid falling back into previous mistakes, you will first need to attain clear insight and understanding. Secondly, you will need to develop a pure faith which is attuned to that understanding. Thirdly, you will need to adopt a new mode of life, and persevere in it. Let us take it that you, a pupil of the young Gnosis, are actively involved in this process of restoration and manifestation.

Then you will find that the contents of the sixteenth book

of the *Corpus Hermeticum* have much to tell you, because they give concrete indications which will be of great use to you.

Hermes begins by stating that the soul is a non-physical being, even when it is present in the personality, in the body. The essential nature of the soul remains the same under all circumstances. In that respect, it is unchangeable, whilst possessing a very powerful ability to radiate. So the soul does not develop; it *is, for it exists before forces come into action*. When, for example, the soul begins to stir in the body, it is not true to say that then it has to develop and grow. No, it already *is*. It existed, says Hermes, before any other creation. If you imagine the soul, personality and body coming together as the hidden Man, then you must see the soul as an already perfect, divine faculty. That is why we say: it *is*.

So the soul does not, in fact, need the personality; in a certain sense, it lives its own life. The personality, on the other hand, needs the soul very much; it needs its helping, ensouling, dynamic, radiating power, so as to enter into the state intended for it, the state which is hidden away in concealment.

Why, then, is it so often said that the soul suffers sorrow? Because it is the sorrow of love, that wants to dedicate itself to the great plan. And even though the soul lives its own life, it is part of that plan that microcosm, soul and personality should one day be born as a Thrice Great One, just like Hermes.

And what use, what purpose, what task would the personality have in that threefold unity? Well, in the great field of creation of the all-manifestation, the personality functions as an instrument of action. At its core lies a concrete task that becomes clearly and immediately visible. And there is also another task, not visible as yet, but still hidden. That task is in the process of developing from strength to strength, from un-

foldment to unfoldment, from glory to glory. And if that task is to reach its goal, the personality must stand harmoniously in the ever-changing interplay of opposites. It must adapt itself closely to every change, every fluctuation, for only in this way will it be able to make manifest the great works of God, ever anew, and always in different forms. The personality will certainly be able to succeed in this, because of its innate affinity with the soul.

XXIX

Power and Motion

Let us look more deeply at how the hidden Man, Ammon, develops. In the sixteenth book, Hermes explains that, before the hidden Man, perfect in soul and body, can emerge in full glory from the microcosm, a creation must be present into which the creature can be born. To put it another way: for the microcosm to be able to manifest itself, there needs to be a cosmos; the cosmos, in turn, needs a macrocosm to sustain it, while the driving force behind the macrocosm is something Hermes refers to as 'Nature'.

Nature, in turn, is differentiated into two aspects: power and motion. The first aspect, power, is the innate potential interpenetrating the entire world and holding it together. The second aspect, motion, is an activating faculty which causes the world to expand and encompasses it from without. These two aspects always operate together in everything, and in this way they carry out the great plan. For the innate power combined with the expanding effect of motion gives rise to an alchemical process. Power and motion, in combination, cause heat, and through heat, fire arises.

The boundless ocean of primordial substance is often referred to as water, living water. When, through power and motion, fire was ignited, it affected the water, causing materialisation and calcification to arise in it. At a certain moment these combined to form earth, which floated on the surface of the water. So, through power and motion, water, fire and earth come into being. Water, fire and earth then have to reach a state of equilibrium with each other, and in that process, air

comes into being, an atmosphere. And in that atmosphere, the breath of life is manifested.

Why does Hermes speak, here, about the process of creation? Because that process is constantly repeated. Man, as a being of this nature, is ever kept in motion. Everything around man is in motion and, at the same time, a power assails him from within.

Now imagine how it would be if that power assailing you from within, that soul-power, happened to be the power of the Gnosis, and the activating factor in your life was attuned to the new way of living. Then your mode of life, reacting to and cooperating with that power from within, would give rise to heat; it would ignite a fiery flame and in this way, through transfiguration, another system of vehicles would form, another state of being. This, in turn, would result in a new radiative faculty which would spread the atmosphere of new life, into which the Spirit would descend and make itself known. And thus, a new state of life would have been realised, as the result of an alchemical process of creation.

This process of generation and regeneration, of continual inception and consummation, is going on throughout the universe all the time. So everything in time and space comes into being through power and motion. Everything changes, too, as a result of power and motion, which keep everything moving towards perfection until the final goal is reached.

When the hidden Man, Ammon, has been brought back to life to some extent, and has received the Spirit, he lives and communicates by means of his soul, which is the factor giving rise to power and motion. It is also true to say that, without the soul, he would not have come into being in the first place. That is why verse 15 says that the cause of existence, namely the soul, already existed beforehand.

So it ought to be possible for every creation to attain perfection without any problem. However, there is a difficulty, owing to the fact that the soul can and will not adapt itself in any way to the creature, because the soul is perfect and unchangeable, while the body of the personality needs to be subjected to a process of constant change.

There is a second difficulty in that the personality must develop in harmony with the power and motion innate to the cosmos in which the microcosm exists; human nature always works in accordance with the state of the earth and the positions of the stars. The result is a great conflict between the soul and the personality, for the soul gives rise to one power and motion, while the cosmos, too, gives rise to power and motion. This conflict will only end when your natural birth, under the influence of the stars and the cosmos, ends. Only then will there be friendship between the soul and the personality, and only then will the hidden Man, Ammon, arise from his grave.

The sacrifice of the soul is now revealed in its true light. Initially, the soul connects itself with a life that is entirely in the grip of the personality's fate, and it also draws to itself all the wrath and desire existing in this nature. And so a duel develops, which the soul will always win, however long it may take.

The two most damaging attributes of your nature-born state are its instincts and its desires. These are the products of your state of mind, as we explained in an earlier chapter, and the thymus hormone, which is attuned to that state of mind and stimulates activity in the head and pelvic systems. But when the pupil has surrendered himself to the soul, he should always obey the soul's advice, or Reason, as Hermes calls it. Then there will always be harmony, and thus: right action. Any excess of vital force will be tempered by the soul, and whatever is lacking in the desires will be supplied by it.

Instincts and desires are the means by which the system reacts to things. Both are reactions of the will. However, they never need to escape the control of the consciousness. If you are out of control, this is caused by a poisoning of your blood and nerveether, which react instantly to the thymus hormone released into your bloodstream as a result of your state of mind. So if your mind and emotions are attuned to the soul, calm will enter your being. Then, as Hermes says, your instincts and desires will have established *the right orientation, since the stability thus created will serve to remove any surplus of vital force, and to replenish any deficiency of desire.*

This proves how very much you need the cooperation and guidance of the soul. Ammon, the hidden Man, cannot come to life without the soul. And the fact that the soul occupies the microcosm together with you, should be an incentive for you to do everything necessary, and to refrain from doing anything that would prevent your being linked with the soul-state as quickly as possible.

The soul is from God. But you cannot say that about your personality. At most, you can say that your personality possesses something of the divine because, in fact, all living matter is ultimately part of the divine creation. Nevertheless, *it is bound to the irrational elements: desire and vital force.*

As long as the nature of death continues to exist, the instincts and the power desires will remain, because they are the products and attributes of mortal bodies. Instincts and desires are the counter-currents of the soul. For what are instincts and desires? They are instincts of the will, and instincts of the emotions.

But what is the primordial will of Ammon, the hidden Man? It is to manifest divine power; it is to bring to unfoldment the great plan, which lies at the very core of the hidden Man. And what is the hidden Man's primordial desire? It is to

come ever closer to the realisation of that great plan, to fulfil it as quickly as possible, and to embrace that reality.

So instincts and desires are mutilations, degenerations of the original natural forces, power and motion. Power and motion will only be able to function properly again when you are united with the soul, in harmony. As long as you are not, instinct and desire, the counter-currents of power and motion, will continue to dominate you. Then the raging excesses of passion and desire and their results in your life will mean that Man will remain a hidden god, entangled and imprisoned by stupidity and ignorance, and sundered from the divine being.

The Key that Solves All Problems

If ever there was a hermetic text that conveyed the full reality of the manifested life, then that text is the sixteenth book. It shows so clearly how very many forces there are at work in bodies manifesting themselves in the nature of death. But alas, all these forces and their effects arise from the mortal body, and that is why they are, and will always remain, cut off from any truly divine genesis.

Generally speaking, people experience the results of ungodly life with deep sorrow. The countless efforts they make to escape this fate are desperate and tragic. Most people today have no knowledge of the key that would enable them to solve all their problems, even though that key is in their possession. Because the moment you entrust yourself to the soul, the course of your life will be changed, for when the soul enters a mortal body, its activating forces have the effect of putting the body back on the road to true genesis.

Without soul-power, man is like an irrational animal. His only guides are instinct and desire: instincts he cannot control, and desires that drive him. However, as soon as the soul takes over the guidance of his life, instinct and desire are converted into power and motion capable of bringing the hidden Man, Ammon, to birth. We need to learn, as Hermes says in verse 37, that *the soul is an eternal and intelligent being, having for thought its own reason.*

The soul, present in the microcosm, is always and unchangeably linked with the Spirit, with God. When it leaves the natural body, it is free and independent, and belongs to the divine world. But it always maintains a link with the nat-

ural body so that, if insight dawns on the nature-born being and he decides to change his mode of life, the possibility will always be there for the union of soul and body to be realised. If, as a nature-born human being, you follow the path of the new way of life, the path on which the rosebud can open, the attributes of the soul will be able to manifest themselves because, as Hermes says: *It is a characteristic of the soul to confer on others something of its own essence.*

So there are two forms of life in the microcosm: the life of the soul and the life of this nature. And isn't it strange that the high, noble life of the soul is innate in all microcosms, while in those same microcosms, a natural life is lived that is not in the least in harmony with the soul? Isn't it disturbing to think that the divine and the most unworthy form of life should be enclosed in one and the same microcosm? But that is how it is with most people, and are you not struck by the enormity of this situation?

Hermes also disposes of the myth that the soul could be sick, or could be the cause of man's many and varied defects, for in verse 39, he says:

The soul is indeed incorporeal, since it does not form part of the physical body. If the soul were to have a body, it would have neither reason, nor thoughts.

This does not mean that the soul has no higher reason. Its reason is indeed high, and divine, with a true cognitive faculty at its disposal. No, it is the body which is totally lacking in reason and cognitive ability, according to Hermes.

There are probably lots of people who would not agree with Hermes on this point. But hermetic philosophy makes clear that the activity of the physical brain can certainly not be described as 'reason'. Hermes says that unless the human being is overshadowed by the soul, he is 'without reason'. Look

around you, and you will see the truth of this. Whether you consider individuals or societies, human behaviour makes Hermes' words alarmingly clear. Rosicrucian philosophy teaches that the human being only achieves real reason and intelligence when the soul enters the head sanctuary. Only then is the true cognitive faculty born.

So let us end this chapter by considering the profound truth of verse 44 of the sixteenth book of Hermes:

We have the power of choice; we are able to choose either the best or, in spite of ourselves, the worst. The choice of evil approximates to the corporeal nature. That is why fate rules the one whose choice it is.

The soul is very near to you; it is in your microcosm. You are capable of uniting with that true, higher self in obedience and self-surrender. If you do not... then your life will be ruled by the fate of the nature of death. Surely, the choice is not a difficult one to make?

*Seventeenth Book**Hermes to Tat: About the Truth*

- 1 *Hermes: It is impossible, O Tat, for a human being, an imperfect creature, to presume to speak about the truth, since he is composed of imperfect members and, with regard to his sheathe is constituted of an assemblage of foreign bodies. But what is possible and correct to say I will say: namely that truth only exists in eternal bodies, the elements of which are also true: in fire, which is once and forever fire and nothing else; in earth, which is once and forever earth and nothing else; in air, which is once and forever air and nothing else; in water, which is once and for ever water, and nothing else.*
- 2 *Our bodies, on the other hand, are composed from all these elements together; they contain fire, and also earth, and furthermore water and air; yet they are neither fire, nor earth, nor water, nor air, nor anything whatsoever that is true.*
- 3 *If then, from the beginning, truth is foreign to the physical constitution, how shall it behold or express truth? It will only be able to understand truth if God wills.*
- 4 *The things of this earth, O Tat, are not the truth, but the imitations of truth; and not all are even that, but only a few of them. The rest are lies and error, O Tat; illusion which only consists of phantoms. When, however, such*

an illusion receives an influx from above, it becomes a replica of the truth. Without this superior influence it remains a lie, an untruth. It is the same with a portrait that is an image of a body: the painting is not the body it represents. It has eyes, but they see nothing, ears, but they hear nothing. The painting also shows all the other parts, but it is all illusion that deceives the sight of the observers. They think they see the truth whereas reality is a mere lie.

- 5 *But when one observes something that is not a lie, then one beholds the truth. So if we see or understand all those things as they actually are, we see and understand true things. If they are different from what they seem, we will neither understand nor know anything that is true.*
- 6 *Tat: There is then, Father, truth even upon earth?*
- 7 *Hermes: You are mistaken, my son. There is certainly no truth on earth, and neither can truth be brought into being on earth. But it could happen that a few people could form an inkling with regard to the truth. They are those to whom God has granted the ability to see it.*
- 8 *Tat: So there is nothing true on earth?*
- 9 *Hermes: I think and I proclaim that everything is illusion and delusion. The things I think and proclaim are true things.*
- 10 *Tat: But should one not indicate as truth those things one thinks and proclaims as being true?*

- 11 *Hermes: How would that be possible? One must think and proclaim things as they are: on earth there is nothing true. This is true, that here, below, there is no truth. And how would that be possible, my son? Truth is the supreme magnificence, the absolute Good which is not obscured by matter, nor encompassed by a body. Truth is the naked, luminous, unassailable, exalted, immutable Good.*
- 12 *But behold, my son, how the things which are here below are unable to receive this Good. For they are perishable, subject to suffering, soluble, mutable, forever changing, passing from form to form. How could these things be the truth, since they are in themselves not true? Everything that changes is illusion, because it does not remain in its essence, but passes from form to form and thus presents new appearances all the time.*
- 13 *Tat: Is not even man himself true, Father?*
- 14 *Hermes: As a man he is not, my son. Truth consists solely in itself and remains what it is. But a human being is composed of manifold elements and does not continue to be identical with himself. On the contrary, he changes and transforms from one age to another, and from one form to another, as long as he inhabits a body. Often, after but a short interval of time, parents no longer recognize their children, nor children their parents.*
- 15 *Can a creature which changes to such an extent as to be no longer recognisable be true, Tat? Should we not rather think that, on the contrary, this succession of diverse appearances is an illusion? Therefore, understand that only what is lasting and eternal is true. The human being*

is transient – therefore, he is not true. He is but appearance, and as such the supreme illusion.

16 *Tat: But Father, are the eternal bodies then not true either, since they also vary?*

17 *Hermes: Nothing that is brought forth and subject to change is true, but as those bodies were created by the first Father, it could be that their substance is true. Nevertheless, there is in those bodies, too, a certain falsity, because they are variable, because nothing is true save that which remains identical with itself.*

18 *Tat: What then may we call true, Father?*

19 *Hermes: The Sun alone can be called true. While everything else changes, the Sun does not. That is the reason why only the Sun is entrusted to give form to everything in the world, to reign over and create everything. I venerate him and bow before his truth; after the Only and First One I recognise in him the Demi-Ourgos, the constructor of the world.*

20 *Tat: And what, then, is the primordial truth, Father?*

21 *Hermes: The One and Only, O Tat – He who is not made of matter, nor exists in a body; who has neither colour, nor form, who changes not, nor is changed, but who always Is.*

However, what is illusion is perishable. The providence of what is true keeps all that is on earth encompassed in dissolution, and will always do so, for dissolution is the condition of all genesis. Everything that is brought forth

dissolves so that creatures can again come to birth. It is necessary that out of dissolution life must come into existence, and what is born must, in turn, necessarily decay, in order that the generation of creatures will never cease. Behold the first active cause of the propagation of creatures who, born out of dissolution, are but illusion; at one time they are born like this, and at another like that. It is impossible for them to be born exactly the same. How could then that which is reborn and not identical with itself, be true?

If one wanted to define this simulacrum in an accurate way, one ought to regard a human being as a sham person, a child as a pretence of childhood, a young person a sham one, an adult as a pretence of manhood, a greybeard not truly an old man. For the human being is not truly a man, the child not truly a child, a young one not truly young, a mature person not truly grown up, a greybeard not truly old. As soon as things change, they deceive, both to what they were and as to what they have become.

Yet, my son, you must understand well that even the illusory activities here below depend on that which is above, that is, on the truth itself. And indeed, since this is the case, I define illusion as the expression of the truth.

Truth Always Wins

Truth – the one, absolute truth – is the core issue of hermetic philosophy. So we feel it is no accident that, of the hermetic books left to us, the final one is called 'The Book of Truth'.

To understand what Hermes means by truth, you need to remember that he is not thinking of any particular religious persuasion, or any kind of philosophical system, or indeed any form-manifestation whatsoever. For form can never be truth, as Hermes explains. For Hermes, truth – the all-encompassing truth – is God himself, the immutable. It is He, who encompasses the universe of phenomena, governing the whole of creation with his Seven-Spirit. That is why the Universal Doctrine speaks of seven truths. They are the seven rays that emanate from God, from the Spirit. So, in all the boundless space of the universe of manifestation, there can be no absolute truth. Truth may well be reflected in the world of phenomena, but these reflections are not the truth itself.

Truth is the supreme magnificence, the absolute Good which is not obscured by matter, nor encompassed by a body. Truth is the naked, luminous, unassailable, exalted, immutable Good.

Everything in the universe is always changing. Some things go, and other things come, and when they do, change is inherent in them. So, not being immutable, the ever-changing can never be true. That is why Hermes says truth can only dwell in eternal bodies, which embody truth in its absolute sense.

So there is a fundamental distinction between absolute truth, and untruth. By untruth, we do not mean falsehood,

or the deliberate distortion of divine reason. Untruth, in the hermetic sense, includes everyone and everything that is subject to change, to the interplay of opposites and the process of development.

Truth is absolute. Untruth is anything that is still developing, anything that does not yet belong to truth. If something were in the process of development and we called it 'true', we would be preventing it from unfolding as it should; we would be delaying and obstructing it, and crystallisation would set in. Then, what was fundamentally untrue, would become false, as well, for then it would be a lie, – ungodly, undivine. If things unfold as they should, what is fundamentally untrue will always be driven onward by truth until it reaches the state of truth itself. That is why truth will always manifest itself, so that what is, as yet, untrue will be able, gradually, to raise itself to truth.

In this lies a great consolation, because it means that *the* truth can never be killed. Truth is a sevenfold radiation that emanates from the absolute. It has to manifest itself in order to help the unfoldment of the great aim of creation and bring it to a good end. The radiation of truth can never be destroyed. Anyone who tries to oppose this all-encompassing law is only digging his own grave. You only need to look at history to see that this is true, or at the way the various processes of life unfold.

So how does truth gain access to things, and what methods does it use to provoke a positive reaction? Firstly, it keeps the fundamentally untrue constantly in motion, constantly subject to the process of change. That is why things and phenomena come and go. That is why there is birth and death, and rising, shining and fading. But this touch of truth is not sufficient. It is only enough to prevent any fundamental untruth from stagnating in some crystallised form which, because it

could not be changed, would then be a most undesirable 'truth.' In that sense, even the nature of death can be thought of as an intense blessing.

So, to achieve its goal, truth has to apply a second method, which is: to make itself known. It can do this because fundamental untruths are living things which therefore have the ability to react. By responding in the right way to the suggestions of truth, a constant and logical process of development is achieved.

So there are two methods:

1. *to keep what is still untrue in motion, and*
2. *to make truth known.*

In combination they ensure the smooth unfoldment of everything included in the divine plan. However, there are two other phenomena that have to be considered.

The first is the self-maintenance, the need for self-realisation innate in every creature. If the whole organisation of church, state and society were attuned to the influx of truth, to truth as it makes itself known, there would be no problem about this urge for self-realisation. On the contrary! Because the truth would then show everyone how to reach the one goal, with the aid of the innate, instinctive urge towards self-realisation.

However, secondly, there is a state of 'war in the heavens.' Forces are active in the universe and planetary field whose aim is to bring the interplay of opposites to a standstill and there are forces that prevent truth from making itself known.

One might wonder what motive there could possibly be for opposing truth so absolutely, when such efforts are useless and in fact only add to human suffering. However, this opposition is easy to understand if one remembers that every creature can very readily be victimised, time and time again, by what we

call 'delusion'. Delusion is the product of the animal I-consciousness. If you have been told the truth or given a suggestion by it, you will form an image of it. If that image is pure, flawless and accurate, it will remain connected to the one truth, and all will be well.

However, it often happens that your understanding of the truth is incorrect or only partial, so that the resulting image is not pure. Then it will be cut off from the forces of truth and, as such, it will become a delusion, a disturbance of the consciousness which has to work itself out so that you can discover its results. If you have a certain insight that is anchored in you astrally and electromagnetically, no one can take it away from you; only experience will be able to teach you.

Another problem is that delusion is highly contagious; it spreads like an epidemic, because it is an astral influence. And since the astral field is your life-field, your respiration-field, your heaven, the term 'war in the heavens' can be seen as a natural, inevitable process. That is why Hermes says in verse 4:

When, however, illusion receives an influx from above, it becomes a replica of the truth. But without this superior influence it remains a lie, an untruth.

In this way, with an astrally ignited delusion as your starting point, you can poison your whole environment and corrupt others with it, making agreements, passing laws, and forcing others to take part in your delusion. The result of such formidable insanity can only be an aggravation of the interplay of opposites, a more tragic unfoldment of life. This life of delusion can often degenerate into a desperate struggle to maintain an untruth at all costs or, on the other hand, something which has been cherished for centuries as the highest truth may sud-

denly be abandoned overnight. All this can be expected from anything which is fundamentally a lie.

So there are two possibilities: what is fundamentally untrue may develop until it reaches the state of absolute truth; or, through delusion, what is fundamentally untrue may become a lie, a falsehood, leading to a state of total downfall through bitter experience. But this, too, in the end, leads back to the state of fundamental untruth. Clearly, those committed to the latter course of development will be bound to harbour a fierce enmity against anyone involved with the former. This is caused by a negative reaction to the sixth ray. Delusion is always utterly committed to maintaining itself; fanaticism is always caused by such astral possession.

But remember: truth can never be killed, because it is free, independent from every creature and every creation. Throughout history it can be seen how the cult of delusion has waged war against truth, and how it has always lost, and will always lose. Time and time again, the world and mankind are afflicted by the consequences of delusion. However, none of this can be compared with the glory in store for you if you neutralise the delusion holding you, too, a prisoner, by practising absolute non-conflict.

Hermes, the Thrice Great One

Ever since the dawn of the Arian era, many legends and stories about Hermes have been handed down. They have come to us from a variety of sources and places and there are so many of them that, on the face of it, it might seem as though many Hermeses had existed. But then people say: 'That is impossible. If Hermes Trismegistus really existed, there can't have been more than one.'

Another confusing thing about these stories is that sometimes Hermes appears as a priest, sometimes as a king, and sometimes only as a wise man. Often, he is identified with the Egyptian God Thoth, or with a particular Egyptian ruler. Other stories portray him as a king of regions far away from the land of Egypt. All this confusion is removed when we realise that the Hermes of antiquity belonged to a class of sublime beings called the Sons of God. And these entities were indeed God's sons in the most absolute sense of the term.

The Sons of God belong to the one, universal race of those in whom the living Soul-state exists. The developed Soul-being abides in a state of unity with all. Such a being has attained union with God, and unity with all his brothers and sisters. That is why we speak of only one race of the Sons of God.

The Universal Doctrine teaches that there are sixteen races which our human lifewave must pass through on its pilgrimage. The first of these was manifested at the end of the Lemurian era, and it was in this race that human beings first became conscious of their existence. During the Atlantean era, seven races came into being. Seven more races will have emerged by

the end of the present Arian era. The sixteenth one will be a race of Soul-conscious beings, and the 'term' race will no longer be applicable to what comes after that. Then, all beings will be part of the one Universal Chain of the Sons of God. The sixteen races are also sometimes referred to, very appropriately, as the sixteen paths of destruction, because of the extent to which delusion can damage mankind on its course through the nadir.

Hermes belongs to that class of entities who, having reached the end of their path, joined the sublime throng of the Sons of God, the multitude of the Thrice Great Ones, great as to Spirit, Soul and manifestation. That is why one can speak of more than one Hermes, because ever since a certain moment in world history, many Sons of God have concerned themselves with the development of mankind.

At the time when the human lifewave had not yet become conscious of its existence, the Sons of God, or Hierarchy of Hermes, worked *for* mankind. Later, there came a time when they worked *with* mankind, insofar as human development permitted. They came to humanity to speak to it, to lead it, to set an example, and to show it the way. Today, we stand in a period in which the hierarchy works *through* mankind, because the great goal is self-realisation: what is fundamentally untrue must be raised to the state of truth.

So the manifestation of the Sons of God on earth, as history records it, will never be repeated – unless the races in manifestation were to damage themselves to such an extent that it would no longer be possible to work through them – because, as in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, there were no longer any righteous ones to be found.

The nature of these emissaries was incredibly sublime, and

they often founded noble cultures, ruled by priest-kings, in the countries where they manifested themselves. Knowing this, we can understand the confusion and disbelief of those who approach the relics of history from a purely intellectual standpoint, for they are in the grip of delusion, the primordial lie, and as long as they remain in that state, truth will not be able to shine on their fundamental untruth. Yet the truth must be made known; the way to truth must be kept open. And never forget: truth cannot be killed, for it is not of this world.

However, no one would deny that, nowadays, quite a number of difficulties are in the way. Ancient Egypt, for instance, was a mighty focus of genuine spiritual culture, but so many people think (wrongly, of course) that the truth about it can only be reconstructed from archaeological finds. And so we have endless rows of Egyptologists, laden with doctorates and professorships, burying us under an avalanche of texts explaining their widely divergent ideas and conclusions, so that in the end one despairs of ever making head or tail of it all. Indeed it is hopeless to think of finding out the truth in that way.

So now, let us look at what really happened. We have explained how the innate urge towards self-realisation can easily degenerate into self-preservation, owing to the misconceptions arising from a distorted consciousness. The result is astral encapsulation, pollution and destruction and, finally, insanity. And that insanity is very often expressed as hostility and anger towards the truth. Truth cannot do otherwise than drive man along the road towards the final goal. But the I-central human being resists it. With his church, his priesthood, and his authorities who know everything, and will soon know even more, he thinks he has already reached the goal. He thinks he is already a child of God, and that a church of Christ exists with many authorities who are omniscient. Per-

haps there are still a few minor defects, but they will soon be ironed out! Such is the signature of organised religion and science.

There was once a time when humanity was still very young, in comparison with its present-day racial characteristics, and at that time, truth made itself known in quite a different way than is possible now. There was no education in schools, no education system as we know it today. A vernacular, spoken language existed, but there was not yet any notation of characters which could be committed to memory and understood. Through the manifestation and influence of the Sons of God, a written language gradually came into existence, as a means of communication between people and, more especially, as a way of making the truth known. That is why Hermes is called the inventor of language.

So in the ancient centres of culture many means were used to connect those who had become ready for it with the great truth. Temples were built whose entire structure had to express divine sublimity. Pillars and columns were erected, covered with symbols and inscriptions conveying the language of the Sons of God to all who understood the characters. And millions of manuscripts were produced, with the aid of which many people could be reached.

Remember that in those days there were no printing presses, and culture was not widespread. The masses were still illiterate and there was only a small group of intelligentsia, some of whom were dedicated to the fundamental truth, while others, poisoned by delusion, were dedicated to the fundamental lie, because as soon as the intellect began to function, delusion became possible.

The members of the first group went on their way to liberation; they were persecuted and done to death by the second

group, but they never reacted militantly, or in any other way that could have caused astral ties to come into being. They knew that, for all those who serve and follow truth, all things work together for the good. However, the second group, in its insanity caused by delusion, did succeed in preventing the work of the first group from spreading as powerfully as it might have done. And because the masses were still illiterate and unable to understand the essential cause of the conflict – since their intellectual apparatus was still in the process of becoming concrete – the second group had free play. They combed through every temple, every monument, every construction built under the guidance of the Sons of God, so as to eradicate, as far as possible, every trace of the truth. Symbols and inscriptions were defaced or totally mutilated, and a great hunt for manuscripts began.

Specially trained groups were sent out into all lands where the one truth had dwelt, or had taken root, or was in the process of taking root, to track down all the important sites and get hold of all the material considered dangerous to the second group and wipe it from the face of the earth. Countless manuscripts containing the direct wisdom of the Sons of God were hunted out and destroyed. So the fact that, here and there, even a single page is left, is nothing short of a miracle.

Nowadays, the general intellectual level is much higher, and consciousness is much more discerning, so these methods of destruction can no longer be used. But there is another means of destruction, quite appropriate for today: whenever an ancient and valuable manuscript is found, an exclusive scientific committee translates it and adds to it all kinds of very learned observations that push it very firmly into the backwaters of antiquarianism. The contents are described as beautiful, or full of theological insight (naturally not up to modern standards, but still, quite good), and it is announced that an even

more detailed study will take place. And thus the whole thing is shunted into a siding, or at least, that is what people think.

But in spite of thousands of years of slander, betrayal and persecution, truth can, and will, fulfil its task. In the next chapter, we will see how.

XXXIV

Truth Lives

When the Universal Brotherhood of the Sons of God begins to work for the benefit of any life-wave, its work is never carried out in an experimental way, and nothing is left to chance. The work is always based on a plan which is set in motion at the appropriate point in time, and which will always succeed completely. So when, at the dawn of the Arian era, the Brotherhood of Hermes, the Brotherhood of the Sons of God, began its task of making truth known to mankind and enabling it to find entrance in human hearts, success was assured in advance.

Seen in the long term, this work has three phases: in the first phase the Universal Chain works *for* mankind; in the second it works *with* mankind; and in the third, it works *through* mankind.

In the early stages of the Arian era, when man's racial body was still barely capable of expressing any awakened consciousness in the material sphere, it was the Sons of God who regulated and guided the processes of human life and did their work *for* mankind. You could compare this work with the help given by group spirits to the various animal species. And who were the Sons of God? Well, they were not of earthly origin, but belonged to life-waves far in advance of ours, but which still belonged to the one race of universal beings, to which you, too, are called by God.

In the second phase, the consciousness of young mankind had developed sufficiently for it to continue further on its course through the nadir. The human intellect had matured enough for the truth underlying all existence to be made known to it. And from that moment onwards, the Sons of

God came to mankind in a direct way. Such help was necessary, because how could mankind have come to know the truth unaided? It had to be made known to man by those who lived it from within.

Thus began the glorious era described in myths and legends. They tell of the miraculous arrival of the gods, who appeared on earth and moved among mankind as genuine kings and priests, sometimes called the Order of Melchizedek. Thus truth came and dwelt among men. Truth came to call human beings to their true Fatherland.

Then came the birth of the third period: mankind had heard about the truth, and had seen it take living form in many people. The great breakthrough had been realised. Now human beings had to prove that they were capable of achieving liberation independently, by their own efforts. From then on, truth had to be made known through mankind itself. The human king-priesthood was born. The Sons of God withdrew to their own domain, from where they gave any necessary help and guidance. So the Sons of God will never appear again on earth, as they did in the past, although reflection-sphere entities may well imitate their return as part of the Great Play.

So there is a hierarchy of human king-priests, linked and attuned to the Universal Chain of the Sons of God, which has existed since time immemorial. Only when this second hierarchy became active did the first hierarchy withdraw from the material plane.

And whatever the hierarchy of delusion and lies might do, or wish to do, the victory has already been gained. In each successive period, the harvest has only to be brought in from the fields.

So through human heads, human hearts and human actions, you too can, and will, be touched by the truth. All you

have to do is prepare yourself for that contact! The Hierarchy of lies is sending out its radiations and making every effort to mislead. But the Hierarchy of Truth is also sending out its radiations and performing its work, and all who open themselves to that astral plenitude will certainly receive it.

And remember that it is not only through the spoken and written word that the truth comes to you. No, the truth is an astral principle which, for a very long time, has been concentrated and made available by human beings, for human beings. Throughout the ages, there has always been ample proof of this. History tells of many human king-priests who brought the truth to us in word, deed and power. Moses, for instance, was one of the earliest of these human messengers to have been recorded in history. And he came, remember, from Egypt. And think of all the prophets who came after him, and especially of Jesus the Lord, a Son of God born of humankind.

Time has dimmed the memory of their messages and the enemy has spoiled them to a great extent. But although the actions of the enemy are abominable and give rise to much sorrow, they are nevertheless quite useless, because truth *lives*. *It is*, in all eternity. Its heralds will never fail to arise, and they will keep on gathering new harvests into the barns.

Do you now understand why the epic work of Hermes Trismegistus ends with the Book of Truth?

Glossary

Aeons: Giant formations of unholy, natural forces, which in the course of time have been brought into existence through mankind's thinking, willing and desiring, deviated from God. Aeons can be differentiated into twelve main groups. These creations of mankind, which are completely beyond control, keep mankind imprisoned and create the irresistible forces of self-maintenance through which mankind is made to proceed on its ominous ways. In this way the human link with the rotating, dialectical wheel is perpetuated.

b. The term aeons also includes the hierarchic group which rules time and space, also called 'the dialectical hierarchy' or 'the prince of this world'. It consist of the highest form of metaphysical power which originates from fallen mankind, united with the nature-aeons mentioned before. This group misuses all the forces of nature because of its luciferic supremacy in the fallen, dialectical world, driving mankind to unholy activities for the benefit of its own, dark purposes. These entities have achieved liberation from the dialectical wheel at the expense of terrible human suffering. In their need for self-maintenance they can only hold on to this freedom by increasing and maintaining the suffering of the world. For the sake of completeness it must be mentioned that all of fallen man's thinking, feeling, willing and desiring – even if they are 'good' – call into being aeons which dominate man and keep him imprisoned in the nature of death.

Andreae, Johann Valentin: Author whose works include *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*. In this book the complete journey of the candidate on the path of transfiguration is described in a veiled manner.

Arch Gnosis of Hermes: This name points to the fact that present-day mankind's true gnostic activity has its origin in the primordial fount of the Egyptian Gnosis. Every gnostic work of salvation is founded

on the knowledge that human liberation is only possible through the resurrection of the hermetic or Mercury-being, the true divine Man with a consciousness illuminated by God.

Archeus: Nerve-ether, nerve-fluid, astral force, attracted to the human life-system *via* the pineal gland, in keeping with his character.

Archons: Rulers of the aeons. See: Aeons.

Astral field, new: See Gnostic Realm, new.

Attaching the Rose to the Cross: Aspect of the pupil's path on which, guided by pure insight and true longing for salvation, his material-bom personality, the I-man, perishes in a 'daily dying', so that the true god-man, the pymandric man, will awaken.

Auric being: The auric firmament represents the totality of the senses, the forces and values which result from the karma of the human being. The mortal being is a projection of this firmament, which totally determines his possibilities, limitations and existence. The auric being is the embodiment of the karma of the fallen micro-cosm. It is the old (micro-cosmic) heaven that has to pass away through a reversal of life, guided by the Gnosis. It must be replaced by a new heaven, as a result of which there will be a new earth, the resurrection of the true man. The spirit, the soul and the body of this human being will then form again a harmonious, imperishable unity with the divine plan.

Authades: 'The power with the lion's head', i.e. the unholy will of the human being, born in matter. The name Authades is derived from the gnostic gospel *Pistis Sophia*, by Valentinus. Authades also represents the unbridled passion of the human being in a more general sense.

C.R.C.: Abbreviation of the name Christian Rosycross. It refers to the archetype of the person who has accomplished the return to the true, immortal human state via the path of transfiguration. This sevenfold path is fully described as the seven new days of creation in the book *The Alchendcal Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, which contains an explanation of a veiled text, written by Johann Valentin

Andreae, Brother of the seventeenth century Rosicrucians, who lived in Calw, Southern Germany.

Celestial ship: A gnostic, Living Body –the ark mentioned in Genesis.

It is a body of liberating forces, built in cooperation with the Universal Gnostic Chain, to render service to the harvest gathered at the end of a Cosmic Day into the barns of the new life-field. It is 'the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd', mentioned in the New Testament.

Christ atom: See Rose of the heart.

Christ, inner: See Other One.

Cosmocrators: Seven mighty beings of nature, who are closely linked with the origin of creation. They maintain the fundamental cosmic laws in their spheres of action. Together they form the Seven-Spirit of the All-Manifestation. See the First Book of Pymander.

Counternature: Dialectical existence in which fallen mankind, i.e. those who are severed from God, from the Spirit, live in self-will. A life of separation from the cosmic order established by God has developed the evil which characterises all aspects of our existence and which we try to combat with the same self-will. This godless, and therefore counter-natural development can only be nullified by what is called in the Bible: 'reconciliation with God', that is, the true, conscientious ministry of this reconciliation. In other words, the reestablishment of the link with the Spirit through the path of transmutation and transfiguration, which involves the return to voluntary obedience to the universal cosmic order.

Demi-Urge: Spiritual being coming forth from God the Father. The Demi-Urge created the world out of original matter. However, original matter was itself created by God the Father and not by the Demi-Urge, who is one with the Word, with the World-Soul, the Son of the Father, and is also called the universal Architect.

Demon: Literally a force of nature. When, in accordance with the divine plan, a human being fulfils the will of the Father in voluntary obedience and in this way unites with these forces, they reveal themselves as mighty helpers along the path that leads to deifica-

tion. But one can also experience them as hostile activities of a vengeful demon, the forces of fate. Also referred to as demons, and then in an unfavourable way, are the natural aeons which came into being through the blind, natural life of fallen mankind. Closely connected are the demons, the astral forces created by man's mentality. The Good Demon is the original, creative Soul, the only begotten Son of God, revealing itself in the true, human Soul. That is why the voice of the original Soul sometimes is called 'the Good Demon'.

Dialectics: Present-day life-field in which everything reveals itself in pairs of opposites which are linked inseparably: day and night, light and dark, joy and sorrow, good and evil, life and death. They cannot but follow each other and also generate each other. Through this fundamental law everything in this field of existence is finite, in pain, sorrow, illness and death, and is subjected to continuous change and disintegration, to rising, shining and fading. From a higher point of view, this law is a divine grace. It prevents the final crystallisation of the human being and, therefore, his downfall, through a continuous demolition and renewal which offers, time and again, a new opportunity of manifestation. In this way the human being receives the opportunity to recognise the purpose of his existence so that he can walk on the path of return, through transfiguration, through the rebirth of water and Spirit.

Emergency-order personality: Owing to the stupendous cosmic drama known as 'The Fall', part of the human life-wave became entangled in the grip of irrational nature and began to identify with it, because by losing the link with the Spirit it could not maintain itself in the original human life-field. To give this fallen part of mankind the possibility of freeing itself from the imprisonment of delusion, it was subjected to the law of dialectics, the law of continuous birth and death, as it was isolated in a closed part of the Sevenfold Cosmos. In this way, through repeated, sorrowful experiences of finiteness, mankind would become conscious of its high origin and the immortality of the prodigal son, and break the shackles of

matter, the fetters of 'flesh and blood'. By restoring the link with the Father, the Spirit, mankind could then return to its original domain of life. That is why the doctrine of the Rosycross calls this dialectical field of existence the 'emergency-order', and the body in which man manifests himself 'the body of the emergency-order'. With the indispensable help of the Light of the Gnosis, the love of Christ, the pupil learns to exchange this emergency-order body for a glorified, immortal vehicle. This process of transfiguration is the evangelical 'rebirth out of water and Spirit'. It is the total transformation of what is unholy and mortal, into what is holy and immortal, through the pure original substance and by the power of the regained link with the Spirit.

Endura: The path of I-demolition, the path of the final death, through the surrender of the I to the Other One, the immortal man, the Christ within us. It is the path of John, who 'makes straight the paths for his Lord'. It means putting into practice 'He – the heavenly Other One – must increase, and I must decrease'.

I must perish so that the heavenly Other One may live within me'. The path of the endura is the age-old path, along which the fallen human being rises toward his true, immortal self. The fine of purification brings about a complete reversal in his life and he then returns to the Father. Life in dialectics is a life leading to death; the path of the endura means a voluntary death leading to true life. It is the path of the true, God-seeking human being: 'He who will loose his life for my sake, will find *the* life'.

Fivfold Universal Gnosis: The five phases of development through which the path to life reveals itself in the pupil. They are: liberating insight, dynamic yearning for salvation, self-surrender, the new way of life, and resurrection in the new life-field.

Foci: The Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross, known as the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, has several spiritual working places called 'foci', where the gnostic light-force is manifested in a concentrated way.

Gnosis: a. The divine breath; the Logos, the source of all being which reveals itself as Spirit, light, love, power, and wisdom. b. The Universal Brotherhood that reveals Christ's field of manifestation. c. The living knowledge which is of and with God, and becomes part of all those who, through the re-birth of the Spirit-Soul have entered the state of consciousness of Pymander.

Golden Head: One of the aspects of the Living Body of the young Gnosis. It also indicates the field of resurrection, the new life-field.

Golden Wonder-Flower: As a seven-petalled rose filled with the light of the Gnosis, the prana of life, the seven cerebral cavities enable the candidate to contemplate the new life-field with a new consciousness. This is the result of the birth of the divine light in the head sanctuary, in the open space behind the frontal bone.

Gnostic Realm, new: The gnostic, astral field, consisting of pure, original astral substance, built by the young gnostic Brotherhood in cooperation with the gnostic Universal Chain, of which it is the youngest link. Because of its activities in both the resurrection field of the sixth cosmic domain, and the field of our existence in the seventh cosmic domain, it allows those who are searching for liberation to enter the field of resurrection via the Living Body of the young Gnosis for as long as the time of harvest lasts. Thus the Living Body constitutes the very temporary bridge between the two cosmic domains. The *new* gnostic realm provides the forces necessary for the pupil to cross this 'bridge unto life'.

Great Play: Extensively stage managed and refined project of the reflection sphere, aiming to imitate the return of the Lord by using occult forces and nature-scientific phenomena. See *Unmasking*, by J. van Rijckenborgh, Rosycross Press, Haarlem, the Netherlands, for further information about the phenomena accompanying the end of the current Cosmic Day, threatening to imprison mankind and dragging it along in a blinding delusion.

Group unity: This is the true unity of those who have been admitted into the Living Body of the young gnostic Brotherhood. This unity is

insisted upon because of the nature of the Spiritual School. It does not mean a well intentioned manifestation of 'togetherness,' but the inner unity of new soul-life, growing in the Gnosis, proving itself in a positive, new way of life, in the sense of the Sermon on the Mount.

Head and heart sanctuaries: The head and the heart of the human being are intended to become again the consecrated working places of the divine activities of those people in whom the link between the soul and the spirit has been restored. In accordance with this lofty purpose head and heart will again become united, true sanctuaries in the service of God, after a fundamental and structural purification on the path of the endura. The need to become conscious of this purpose will compel and admonish serious pupils to purify the mentality, the will, desires and actions of everything detrimental to this high vocation.

Heart sanctuary: See Head and heart sanctuaries.

Higher Faculties: The Mercury consciousness – the consciousness of the Spirit-Soul.

House Sancti Spiritus: The resurrection field, the new life-field.

Life-spark entities: Nature-born entities lacking the rose of the heart, the spirit-spark atom. These persons are totally orientated towards existence in the material sphere of the earth. They feel completely at home in it and lack any inner life. They are, in fact, not people, but solely natural phenomena, absolutely insusceptible to spiritual contact. A way of life, deviating from God, inevitably generates life-spark entities, which come and go without leaving behind any positive effects. Present-day mankind consists of many hundreds of millions of this kind of 'simulated' human beings.

Lion's head: See Authades.

Lipika: See Auric being.

Living Body: See Celestial ship.

Man of nature: A human being born of matter and subject to the law of the dialectical nature order.

Material-Sphere – Reflection-Sphere: The two parts of the dialectical

nature-order. The human being lives his material existence in the material-sphere, and in the reflection-sphere, where the processes between the death of the old personality and the quickening of a new personality take place. Apart from the spheres of hell and purgatory (the spheres of purification), the reflection sphere includes what in natural religion and occultism are wrongly called 'heaven' and 'eternal life'. The spheres of 'heaven' are just as much subject to finiteness as existence in the material sphere. The reflection sphere is the temporary residence of the dead, which does not mean that those who die acquire a new life here, for there is no continued existence for the fourfold personality. Only the most essential nucleus of the consciousness, the dialectical spark, is temporarily taken back into the auric being and will form the basis of the consciousness of the new personality. This personality is constructed by the auric being, in cooperation with the forces active in the expectant mother.

Microcosm: The human being is a man' in this field of existence is only the damaged personality of a degenerated microcosm. The present-day consciousness is only a consciousness of the personality, of the body, which is therefore only conscious of the field of existence to which it belongs.

Nature of death: Life, true life, means life eternal. But in present-day humanity the law of continuous change and disintegration reigns. Everything that comes into being here will perish at the moment of its generation, so that what is called 'life' is, in fact, only a sham existence, an existence of delusion. That is why it is folly to cling to it. The sorrow of demolition continually experienced and quite pointlessly resisted will make humanity realise that it is not dialectics, not the nature of death which was intended to be its life-field, but the nature of life, which is the original, Adamitic life-field indicated in the Bible as 'the Kingdom of Heaven'. The compelling, indestructible human urge for constant happiness, constant peace and imperishable love, and his yearning for eternal life originates from the original life-nucleus resting within him; it is the primordial principle

of the true, immortal man. From this primordial atom, or Christ-atom, the 'Kingdom of God within him,' the immortal, true human being will arise and be able to return, through life-reversal, to the nature of life, the House of the Father.

Original atom: See Rose of the heart.

Other One: The true, immortal man who is of God and 'perfect as the Father is perfect.' The purpose of existence in dialectics is to revivify the only begotten Son, the Christ-being within us. That is, therefore, also the purpose of all true, gnostic Rosicrucianism. See also: Rose of the heart.

Pisfis Sophia: a. A gnostic gospel from the second century, attributed to Valentinus. It has been conserved in a nearly undamaged state and proclaims the path of liberation in Christ, the path of transmutation and transfiguration in impressive detail and clarity. b. The true pupil who perseveres until attainment is reached.

Religion, fundamental: See Universal Science.

Respiration field: The force-field in which life of the personality is made possible is called respiration field or field of manifestation. It links the auric being and the personality, and is entirely one with the personality through attraction and repulsion of the substances and forces that maintain it.

Rose of the heart: Mystical term for the original atom or Christ atom. It coincides with the top of the right heart ventricle in the mathematical centre of the microcosm. It is a rudimentary remnant of the original, divine life. The rose of the heart, also called the golden grain of Jesus, or the wondrous jewel in the lotus, is the germ of a completely new microcosm, the divine seed that has been kept as a promise of salvation in fallen man, so that one day the moment will come when he will remember his origin and be filled with longing for the House of the Father. Then the light of the spiritual sun, the light of the Gnosis, can awaken the slumbering rose-bud. After the pupil's positive and persevering reaction the process of regeneration will commence in keeping with the divine plan of salvation.

Royal Art: See: Universal Science.

Serpent-fire system: Cerebrospinal system, the seat of the soul- or consciousness-fire.

Seven-Spirit: Third aspect of the threefold Godhead. It is the all-embracing love of the Father which is explained by the Son, who goes out to fallen mankind as a sevenfold radiation field, to save what is lost. Under the guidance and with the help of the sevenfold universal power, manifesting itself in the Universal Brotherhood, the process of transfiguration can be accomplished. During this process the sevenfold Holy Spirit comes to dwell again in the candidate.

Song of Repentance, Redeeming: Term derived from the *Pistis Sophia*, a gnostic gospel written by Valentinus. He who begins to fulfil the demands of the path of redemption, sings the songs of repentance of the Pistis Sophia.

Spirit-Soul: The path of endura, the path of the pupil of a gnostic Spiritual School, is primarily meant to be a path leading to the awakening of the true, immortal Soul from its latent state. When this Soul arises from its sleep of death, the link with the universal Spirit, with God, will be restored. This will be proved by the resurrection of the Other One, the return of the prodigal son, the true Man within us, to the House of the Father. The Soul that realises the unity with Pyramander, as the Corpus Hermeticum calls it, is the Spirit-Soul. It is the unity between Osiris and Isis, of Father-and-Son, Christ-Jesus. It is the fulfilment of the Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross, the wedding of the heavenly groom and his heavenly bride.

Spirit-Spark atom: See Rose of the Heart.

Spiritual School: The Mystery School of the Christ Hierophants. See Brotherhood, Universal.

Universal Gnostic Chain: See Universal Brotherhood.

Universal science: The universal science, the fundamental religion and the royal art are the activities of: the Brotherhood of the Rosycross, the Brotherhood of the Cathars and the Brotherhood of the Holy Grail respectively. Together they form the threefold Unity of

the Light, at present taking shape in the young gnostic Brotherhood, under the name of the *Lectorium Rosicrucianum*.

Universal Brotherhood: The divine hierarchy of the Immovable Kingdom which forms the universal body of the Lord and is described by many different names, such as: Invisible Church of Christ, Universal Gnostic Chain, Christ Hierarchy. In its activities for fallen mankind it appears as such things as the Tri-Unity of the Light, The Brotherhood of Shamballah, and the Mystery School of Christ-Hierophants. It takes shape in the young gnostic Brotherhood.

Universal Doctrine: This is not a doctrine in the ordinary sense of the word and neither can it be found in books. In its deepest essence it is the living, divine reality. The ennobled consciousness, the hermetic or pymandric consciousness, learns to read it and thus to gain understanding of the universal wisdom of the Creator.

Upper Room: In the microcosm, the Upper Room is the head sanctuary. In the gnostic Living Body it is the Golden Head.

Wheel of birth and death: The ever-recurring process of the birth, life and death of the personality, in keeping with dialectical laws.