

*Meditation on the
Nineteenth Major Arcanum of the Tarot*

THE SUN
LE SOLEIL

When I began drawing the mandalas, however, I saw that everything, all the paths I had been following, all the steps I had taken, were leading back to a single point — namely, to the mid-point. It became increasingly plain to me that the mandala is the centre. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the centre, to individuation . . . I knew that in finding the mandala as an expression of the self I had attained what was for me the ultimate. Perhaps someone else knows more, but not I.

(C, G- Jung)*

Corjesu, Rex et centrum omnium cordium.
("Heart of Jesus, King and centre of all hearts.")

(Litany of the Sacred Heart)

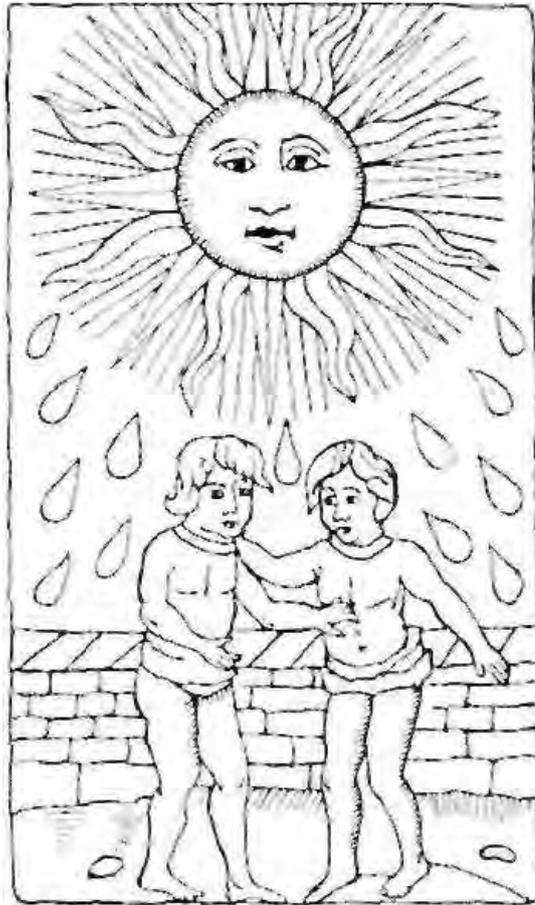
I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

(Revelation xxii, 13)

Under the combined influence of men's thoughts and aspirations, the universe around us is seen to be knit together and convulsed by a vast movement of convergence. Not only theoretically, but experientially, our modern cosmogony is taking the form of a cosmogenesis...at the term of which we can distinguish a supreme focus of personalising personality.. . Just suppose that we *identify* (at least in his "natural" aspect) the cosmic Christ of faith with the Omega Point of science: then everything in our outlook is clarified and broadened, and falls into harmony.

(Pierre Teilhard de Chardin)**

LETTER XIX



THE SUN

Dear Unknown Friend,

The preceding Arcanum—"The Moon"—confronted us with the *task* of human intelligence to liberate itself from the magical enchantment which separates it from spontaneous wisdom, and to unite itself with the latter, i.e. to arrive at *intuition*. The nineteenth Arcanum—"The Sun"—is that of the accomplished union of intelligence and spontaneous wisdom: *the Arcanum of intuition*.

Intuition is what results from the intimate and profound alliance of intelligence

"Memories. Dreams, Reflections; trsl. R. and C. Winston. London. 1967, p. 222.

"Christianity and Evolution, trsl. R. Hague. London, 1971. p. 180.

and spontaneous wisdom. Now, the Card of the nineteenth Arcanum represents two children placed under the sun, where the one puts his right hand on the neck of the other as if he wanted to draw his head near to himself, whilst the other touches with his left hand the place on the body of the first where his heart is to be found. These two children thus represent intelligence endowed with childlike confidence with regard to the spontaneous wisdom of the heart, and spontaneous childlike wisdom which uses the language of the heart and which tends to draw the attention of the head, i.e. intelligence, to what it has to say. The image is therefore of two children united by bonds of a reciprocal confidence without reserve—where the one indicates and the other understands—placed under the sun. One could hardly better represent the relationship of intelligence and spontaneous wisdom brought into play in intuition than as it is in the Card of the Arcanum "The Sun". For this relationship presupposes such purity of intention as is found only with a child, and it postulates such reciprocal confidence, without a shadow of doubt or suspicion, which belongs naturally to children. Lastly, this relationship excludes tendencies to domination and authority—to pose as a pontiff and to pride oneself on the eminence of the guru or master whose favours one enjoys—which tendencies are also foreign to children.

"The children who are fraternising under the sun correspond all the better to *Gemini* because this zodiacal constellation brings in the longest days to us"—says Oswald Wirth (*Le Tarot des imagiers du moyen age*, Paris, 1927. p. 208), thus locating the nineteenth Arcanum in the zodiacal circle of twelve cosmic mysteries or, speaking in the language of C. G. Jung, in the circle of twelve archetypal force-images of the collective unconscious which work in the depths of every human soul. For the zodiac is that which the human soul knows unconsciously; it is the book which the soul once "ate" and which is present and active only in his "bowels"—in the depths of his being—from whence it renders him strong or weak, fertile or arid, fervent or tepid, according to whether he is in harmony or not with its teaching-impulse.

Now, the teaching-impulse called "Gemini" can be expressed by paraphrasing a little the first statement of the *Emerald Table* of Hermes:

May that which is below be as that which is above, and may that which is above be as that which is below to accomplish the miracles of one thing.

This is the principle of analogy put into practice, taking its point of departure from the *principle of cooperation*. It is the opposite of that of the *struggle for existence* advanced by Charles Darwin as the principle of evolution called "Sagittarius". Nature furnishes us at the same time with a great number of proofs of the principle of cooperation in the process of evolution—perhaps as many proofs as there are of the struggle for existence. The proofs are of a kind such that one could uphold the principle of cooperation to be worthy as the directing principle

of natural evolution with the same justification as the principle of struggle may be upheld. Indeed, is it the struggle for existence within an organism—let us say the human body—which explains the effect of the activities of millions of biological units (cells) in the organism or, rather, is it their cooperation? Don't the cells of the muscles, the nervous system, the glands, the blood, etc., cooperate rather than struggle? And isn't the life and health of the whole organism due to this cooperation?

Bees and flowering plants cooperate. Air, light and plants cooperate in photosynthesis, where the miracle of the transformation of inorganic matter into organic matter takes place—where "stones" are transformed into "bread". And, lastly, if mankind had not cooperated more than it had struggled, it would not only not have achieved the international civilisation of our time but it would probably have been annihilated.

There is therefore no doubt that the principle of cooperation has at least the same rights to be considered as the directing principle of evolution as that of the struggle for existence advanced by Darwinism. In other words, the diurnal principle of Gemini plays a role at least equal to the nocturnal principle of Sagittarius in natural evolution.

One of the highest aspects of the principle of Gemini, the principle of cooperation, is that which is present in intuition: that of the cooperation between spontaneous wisdom and intelligence. Here it is a matter of a state of consciousness where intelligence advances from formal knowledge to material knowledge, i.e. from knowledge of the relationships of things to knowledge of the things themselves. Now, the "knowledge of things themselves" entails two functions: on the one hand what Henri Bergson happily designates as "sympathy", and on the other hand a sustained and profound deepening in that with which the sympathetic relationship is established. In other words, one has to enter into a contact of essential sympathy (i.e. from essence to essence) first of all, and then not to glide off to other contacts of the kind, but to dwell in this sympathy so as to result in sufficient intensity and clarity in order to be able to say, in all honesty, that in fact an act of material knowledge has taken place. Here is a concrete example:

You venerate (i.e. you love and respect) a non-incarnated being—a departed person, a saint, or a hierarchical being—in a disinterested manner. Your veneration—which includes love, respect, gratitude, the desire to conform, etc.—cannot fail to create an invisible link of sympathy with its object. It may be in a subtle and dramatic way, or rather in a slow, gradual and almost imperceptible way—this does not matter—the day will come when you will experience the *presence*. . . not a fluidic, semi-electrical presence close to you in space—as in the apparition of a phantom or a ghost—but a breath of radiant serenity, of which you know with certain knowledge that the source from which it emanates is not at all in you. It influences you and fills you but it does not take its origin in you; it comes from outside of you. Just as you know, in drawing near to a fireplace, that the warmth that you feel does not arise from you, but rather from the fireplace, so also do

you feel that the breath of serenity in question is due to an objective presence. Here, therefore, a relationship of sympathy is established. After this it is up to you to remain silently concentrated so that the relationship established is subsequently developed, i.e. that it gains in intensity and clarity—that it becomes a *meeting* in full consciousness.

The meeting is thus the realisation of the relationship when it is borne to the limit of the intensity of clarity. According to the case, it can take either the character of a "conversation through forces" or that of a "conversation through words". In the former case it is not precise and articulated thoughts or images which are communicated to you, but rather "forces" or impulses—spiritual and psychic seeds impregnated germinally with moral ideas and judgements. In the case of the "conversation through words" a revelation of articulated thoughts and representations takes place. The revelation to the shepherds at Bethlehem can be considered as a prototype of the meeting whose character is "conversation through words" and the experience of the mages of the Orient—who saw the star of the "king of the Jews... in the East", but who had to ask at Jerusalem, "where is he who has been born king of the Jews?" (Matthew ii, 2)—is an example of the meeting whose character is "conversation through forces". The "star" of the king of the Jews gave them certainty concerning the coming of Christ and gave them the impulse to go and search where he was awaited, but it did not give them information with respect to the place and parents, whilst to the shepherds of Bethlehem it was revealed that "to you is born *this day* in the *city of David* a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger" (Luke ii, 11-12), i.e. precise and complete information was given to them with respect to time, place and external circumstances.

Now, the meeting whose character is "conversation through forces" always resembles the experience of the "star" of the mages from the East, and that whose character is "conversation through words" always resembles the experience of the shepherds of Bethlehem. The "star" does not speak, it *moves*; and it leaves to the subject of its revelation the work of research in the domain of intelligence and facts. The meeting whose character is "conversation through words", in contrast, moves *and* teaches — it bears also on the domain of intelligence and facts. It *guides*.

I am not in a position to say which of the two forms of revelatory meeting is more frequent or which is objectively preferable, although subjectively that of the shepherds of Bethlehem seems to me preferable to that of the mages of the Orient. Be that as it may, *intuition* — understood as the alliance of *active* wisdom and *active* intelligence, which is the theme of the nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot and which not only underlies Hermeticism but is its very reason for existence — presupposes the *cooperation* of two principles and therefore falls in the category of the revelation whose character is "conversation through forces". Just as the mages from the Orient made a long journey and brought presents to the Child, in following the "star", so also Hermeticism is on the way from century to century to arrive

at the manger—not to arrive there with empty hands, but to place there the presents which are the fruit of the millennial-old effort of human intelligence which follows the "star".

The manger: where the mages from the Orient and the shepherds of Bethlehem meet, of which the octogenerian C. G. Jung said—in calling it a "mandala"—that "all the paths I had been following. . . were leading back to a single point—namely, to the mid-point" and that "it became increasingly plain to me that the mandala is the centre. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the centre, to individuation" (C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*; trsl. R. and C. Winston, London, 1967, p. 222). And of this Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said:

Under the combined influence of men's thoughts and aspirations, the universe around us is seen to be knit together and convulsed *by a vast movement of convergence*. Not only theoretically, but experientially, our modern cosmogony is taking the form of a cosmogenesis. . . at the term of which we can distinguish *a supreme focus of personalising personality*. (Teilhard de Chardin, *Christianity and Evolution*; trsl. R. Hague, London, 1971, p. 180)

The manger—the centre, the individuation of the psyche, the supreme focus of the personalising personality of the universe, or the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word in history, worshipped by the mages from the East and by the shepherds of Bethlehem — is this not the centre of the movement of convergence, in time and space, of all efforts and all aspirations of those who have endeavoured throughout the centuries to transform the base into the precious, to listen and understand the message of the stars, to raise their problems to Angels, Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim so as to consult them, and to guard and not forget the memory of all the altars and chalices of the past? In a word, is this not the centre also for Hermeticists?

The "star" which Hermeticists follow leads them to the manger—to the centre of history, to the centre of the psychic life (individuation), to the centre of universal evolution or the "supreme focus of the personalising personality", to the Alpha and Omega of revelations, to the Heart which is at the centre of all hearts. For there is a centre of gravitation of hearts, just as there is a centre of gravitation of the planets. Like the latter, it causes the "seasons" of the life of the soul. This is why it is not without reason that the manger is venerated by the Church each year and that a unique light is lit in the world each Christmas. What I want to say is that Christmas is not only the festival dedicated to the *memory* of the historical nativity of Christ but that it is in addition the *event* of the nativity which is repeated each year, where Christ becomes Child anew and where the history of mankind becomes the manger. Then all that which is in us of the nature of the shepherds of Bethlehem and all that which is in us of the nature of the mages

from the East responds as in the past. That which is in us of the nature of the mages from the East is enamoured of the "star" and sets out *en route* with the little incense, myrrh and gold gathered during the year which is drawing to an end; and that which is in us of the shepherds of Bethlehem kneels down before the Child whose reality and presence is revealed from above.

The annual repetition of the nativity of Christ as a real event on the spiritual plane—like those of his miracles, his passion, his resurrection and ascension—means to say that just as the external sun eternally repeats springtime, summer, autumn and winter, so does the spiritual sun reveal his eternal springtime aspect—his infancy—at Christmas, his eternal summer aspect—his miracles, his eternal autumnal aspect—his passion and resurrection, and his eternal winter aspect—the ascension. This means to say, again, that the ages are eternal—that infancy, youth, middle age and old age are eternal. The Christ is eternally Child, Master, Crucified and Resurrected. Man bears in himself at one and the same time the child, the young man, the mature man and the old man. Nothing of the past is lost or destroyed; the past simply passes from the stage into the wings—from the framework of the conscious to the domain of the unconscious from where it operates in a no-less active way. It is the same with past epochs and civilisations of human history; they have not disappeared, but are present and active in the instinctivity of our epoch and civilisation. It is to the great merit of C. G. Jung that he discovered the presence of the remote past in contemporary psychic life and established the existence of "archaeological layers" in human psychic life—just as archaeology did for the material objects of past civilisations and as palaeontology did for material fossils of the biological past. Thanks to the work of Jung, "psychological excavations" can be added to archaeological and palaeontological excavations, and can come to their aid. The difference between the vestiges of the past with which archaeology and palaeontology work and the "psychic layers" of the past established by Jung is that the latter are *living*—although outside of the framework of consciousness dominated and determined by intelligence—whilst the materials of archaeology and palaeontology are *dead*; they are only skeletons of the past.

The sense of the *idea of resurrection* (the theme of the following Major Arcanum of the Tarot, the twentieth Arcanum) is the actualisation of the fullness of all spiritual, psychic and corporeal forces in latent being (latent is from the Latin *latere*: to be hidden), i.e. where they have withdrawn from the domain of action and intelligence to one of latent energy—the unconscious (in Jung's sense of the word). In other words, it is the domain that we call "the past" but which, according to Henri Bergson (who traced out a "footpath" for Jung), forms a part of indestructible *duration* and is therefore revivable or *recallable to the present through memory* (if it is a matter of the human psychic life) or *through resurrection* (if it is a matter of divine cosmic memory). Resurrection is thus the divine analogy of the act of human memory. Just as man, by remembering, evokes or actualises the part of duration that we name "the past", so does God actualise that which has become

latent and evokes to consciousness that which lives in the domain of the unconscious by an analogous magical act to that of human memory. The "resurrection of the dead" is therefore when God "remembers" the whole fullness of past duration. It is the act of divine magic whose human analogy is memory.

Now, it is resurrection which is the "good news" of Christianity. For this reason the history of Christianity is—and will be—that of the resurrection of all that which is worthy of resurrection from the past of the history of mankind and the world. It is—and will be—the history of a series of "renaissances"—in the manner of the renaissance of Graeco-Roman philosophy and arts which took place at the end of the Middle Ages. This "renaissance" will be followed by others, including that of ancient Egypt and Chaldaea. Modern evolutionism and "cosmism" are its dawn. The "renaissances" in question are only the first degree of resurrection: they bear on the spiritual life and realise—or restore—its continuity, i.e. its spiritual duration. Another series of "renaissances" will re-establish psychic continuity and will signify the second degree of resurrection: that of the *life of the soul*. This will be followed by the resurrection of the *body*—which will be its completion.

Complete resurrection, i.e. that of the body, is therefore preceded by spiritual and psychic "resurrection", where *duration* is re-established on earth—where memory triumphs over forgetfulness. And the history of Christianity is, in the last analysis, the history of these triumphs.

It is the same with the liturgical year of the Church. This is simply the yearly endeavour of human memory to unite itself with divine memory so as to realise resurrection, i.e. to make the past *live* in the present. The words of consecration, "This is my body, which is given for you; do this in memory of me," is the key to the liturgical year. One does these things in memory of him, his mother, the apostles, saints and martyrs—and he, his mother, the apostles, saints and martyrs are *present* and living and acting in the present. The whole liturgical year says to us: do not forget. Remember, for it is through memory that resurrection is accomplished.

All the festivals of the year aim at resurrection. And that of Christmas is the resurrection of the Child who was worshipped by the shepherds of Bethlehem and the mages of the Orient. But it is at the same time the festival of the resurrection of the shepherds and mages also, i.e. the time of the magical evocation of the spiritual and psychic forces made use of by revelation and gnosis. For just as the Child is present at Christmas, so also there is an awakening and activation at Christmas offerers (including individual souls) capable of receiving His revelation, be it from Angels or from the stars. It is thus that it happens that Hermeticism also undergoes each year the rejuvenating and inspiring effect of Christmas, and that Hermeticists—often without being aware of it—receive vivifying impulses and illuminating inspirations for their efforts. The mystery of the "star" is thus repeated.

But those who follow the "star" must learn a lesson once and for all: not to consult Herod and the "chief priests and scribes of the people" at Jerusalem, but to

follow the "star" that they have seen "in the East" and which "goes before them", without seeking for indications and confirmation on the part of Herod and his people. The gleam of the "star" and the effort to understand its message ought to suffice. Because Herod, representing the anti-revelatory force and principle, is also eternal. The time of Christmas is not that of the nativity of the Child alone; it is also the time of the massacre of the children of Bethlehem—the time where autonomous intelligence is driven to kill, i.e. to strangle and push back into the unconscious, all the tender flowers of spirituality which threaten the absolute autonomy arrogated to itself by intelligence.

May those who follow the "star" do so completely and without reserve! May they not seek—once having the "star" before their eyes—scientific confirmation, approval or sanction. . .or, what would be still worse, direction on the part of science! May they follow the "star" above them and *nothing else!* *Noblesse oblige.*

There is a recent example from which everyone can learn; namely, how Carl Gustav Jung followed the "star" without ever seeking support from outside. Dear Unknown Friend, read his autobiography (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*) and you will know what the crux of the matter is for those who follow the "star"; you will know that a whole world is at stake underlying the exhortation: follow the "star" above you and nothing else!

What I have in mind is Jung's spiritual biography, which gives a model example of a Hermeticist—a mage from the Orient—who followed the "star" all his life, and followed the "star" alone. I do not have the *results* of his work in mind, which are able to satisfy or not. They do not satisfy me, I confess, but what right have I to demand of Jung that he should have gone further than he did? What he has done he did in a way which can serve as a model for everyone—the model of a method carried to perfection. The essential is not the *presentation* to the world of the results of Jung's work, but rather his *method* of working. I mean to say that it is: the method of "free association", where the first Arcanum of the Tarot—that of "concentration without effort"—finds its application; the method of interpretation of dreams and of spontaneous phantasy, which is the application of the second Arcanum of the Tarot; the method of cooperation between the fertilising sphere (outside of and beyond normal consciousness) and fertilised consciousness, which corresponds to the third Arcanum of the Tarot; the method of the amplification of immediate data from the manifestation of the unconscious by means of alchemy, myths, and mysteries belonging to mankind's historical past, which is an application of the fourth Arcanum of the Tarot; the method of psychic healing which consists in making the patient understand the warnings of his unconscious and accept the latter as guide and master, where the fifth Arcanum of the Tarot is put into practice: the method of passing courageously through unparalleled temptations and conflicts of duties by making decisions according to the "arrow of inspiration" and not according to a code of rules of conduct, which is the sixth Arcanum of the Tarot; and, lastly, the method of not identifying oneself with the superhuman forces of archetypes— not allowing them to take possession

of individual consciousness (so that the latter does not become a victim of *inflation*)—*which* is the application of the seventh Arcanum of the Tarot.

With respect to the nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot, we find it again in the work of Jung in the guise of the active cooperation of intelligence and transcendental revelatory being, which cooperation is not only the mature fruit of the work of his long life, but also it is the principal thesis of his method of work in the domain of depth psychology, which he openly advanced and maintained. The *intuition* postulated by Henri Bergson as necessary in order to be able to understand life and the world was practised by Jung in order to understand and to heal the life of the human soul. He did not commit the error of the mages of the Orient. He did not consult Herod and his people.

Another example of faithfulness to the "star" is the life and work of Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. This mage from the Orient followed the "star" on a long voyage: through the paths of the universal evolution of the world throughout millions of years. What did he do, properly speaking? He showed the "star" above the universal evolution of the world, in a way that the latter "is seen to be knit together and convulsed by a vast movement of convergence... at the term of which we can distinguish a supreme focus of personalising personality" (Teilhard de Chardin, *Christianity and Evolution*; trsl. R. Hague, London, 1971, p. 180). Darwinian evolution — this nightmare of a struggle for existence of species without number in life's feverously multiplying endeavour, blind and groping, to produce that which is most viable — has therefore become henceforth the *way* leading to personalisation, a movement which has direction and aim. Teilhard de Chardin, in having perceived the "star" above Darwinian evolution, has crowned the latter with this guiding "star" and has thus transformed it from the nightmare of rampant production attempting to produce the viable into *the way towards the manger*. In following this "star", he did not let himself be turned aside from the path indicated by it—neither by enemies of the new from the camp of religion nor by enemies of the transcendental in the camp of science: the "sanctioners" and the "scribes" of Herod. It was to his faithfulness to the "star" that he owed the singular force of his soul which allowed him to be a faithful son of the Church and at the same time a conscientious worker for science—and to remain so until his last breath. He never revolted against or broke with the Church and Academia. Having been loyal to them with his whole heart until the end, he therefore comes under the seventh beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew v, 9).

In writing of the force of soul resulting from faithfulness to the "star"—the force which manifests itself in the power to resist the weakness of revolt (for revolt is a weakness where one lets oneself be carried away by the current of emotional impatience—the fundamental weakness of all rebels, including religious reformers as well as political revolutionaries and the most celebrated social reformers) and in the power to procure peace between two aspirations which are, or are believed to be, opposed to one another—it is difficult for me not to pay homage to two

Hermeticists of our century, notably Francis Warrain and Dr. Paul Carton, both avowed Hermeticists. The former followed the "star" through the study of law, through creative work in the domain of sculpture, through the metaphysics of Hoene Wronski, through mathematics, logic and Charles Henry's psychophysics, through the Cabbala and Jacob Boehme. "By combining as much as possible the resources of the intuitive mode proper to antiquity with the instruments pur at our disposal by the discursive method," he defined the essential conditions for an intermediary gnosis allowing the antinomy between the absolute and the relative—between faith and reason—to be correctly resolved. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God!

Paul Canon followed the "star" as a naturopathic doctor and as a Christian supernaturalist, along the narrow way between the natural and the miraculous, which way is that of Hermeticism pure and simple. His book *La science occulte et les sciences occultes* (Brevannes, 1935), where the Major Arcana of the Tarot are also the object of study, bears witness to his life's endeavour to unite the divine supernatural and the human natural through the intermediary magic of the Hermetic tradition. Again: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God!

Intuition is therefore the cooperation of human intelligence with superhuman wisdom. It is what creates the link—or the "intermediary gnosis" and "intermediary magic"—between the absolute and the relative, between the supernatural and the natural, between faith and reason. Now, intuition can be developed only by people who have faith and who have reason. It is reserved for believing thinkers. Whosoever believes and does not think will never attain it. Whosoever thinks and does not believe will never have the certainty of transcendental things that intuition alone can give.

Intuition combines two certainties: essential certainty (that of essence), and consistent certainty (that of consistency). The former is of a *moral* order; its force of conviction resides in the good and the beautiful. The latter is of a cognitive order; its force of conviction resides in consistency in the vision of the relationships of things. Intuitive certainty is therefore "faith at first hand" combined with "intelligence at first hand". Let us explain this. There is faith founded on extrinsic authority—a person, an institution, a book, etc.—and there is faith founded on intrinsic authority—the inner and intimate experience of the divine breath, and the direct impression of the divine realm. The latter is first hand. There is still a third kind of faith—the most heroic, perhaps—the "intermediary faith" between faith founded on extrinsic authority and that founded on the intrinsic authority of inner experience: this is *postulative faith*, where one believes without any support, either from without or from within. It is the faith of "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (Matthew iii, 3)—the voice itself of the soul who cries, i.e. postulates in complete solitude ("in the wilderness") the things without which it could not live. Kant's three postulates: God, freedom of will, and the immortality of the soul, are such a cry of the soul in the wilderness. For they are founded neither on extrinsic authority nor on mystical experience, but rather on semi-structural exigencies of the soul itself. It is the reality of hunger and thirst alone

which bears witness to the existence of bread and water. "Freedom, immortality and God"—or the desperate night of nothingness—such is the cry from Kant's soul in the desert where he found himself.

Such was also the faith of John the Baptist before he had the experience of the descent of the Spirit from heaven upon Jesus, at the baptism in the Jordan. His faith, which is summed up by the conclusion of his sermon, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew iii, 2), was a cry in the wilderness, i.e. the voice of supreme hunger and thirst for the kingdom of heaven. And it is precisely this faith which made John the Baptist the first "eyewitness", so to say, of the reality of the descent of the kingdom of heaven, and which made him the first human being to recognise the Christ. His faith was crowned with experience. John the Baptist became one who saw.

Now, it is postulative faith become faith at first hand (mysticism) which arrives at the perfect certainty of intuition as a consequence of the help of intelligence. John the Baptist still had need of this latter in order to have complete certainty. For this reason he—who had seen the Spirit descend upon Jesus—sent two disciples to Jesus to ask him, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (Matthew xi, 3). And Jesus had to reply in the framework of intelligence alone:

Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good news preached to them. (Matthew xi, 4-5)

In other words, Jesus said that these phenomenal effects indicate consistency between the revelation of the descent of the Spirit experienced by John the Baptist and the manifestation of this Spirit through Jesus Christ. It is the language of intelligence, pure and simple, which Jesus makes use of in order to fill the gap in John the Baptist's consciousness—which required the help of intelligence. And it was because of this gap that Jesus Christ said of John the Baptist that, although a prophet, he is "more than a prophet" and that "among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist, yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew xi, 9, 11). For the kingdom of God brings with it the absolute certainty of the cooperation of faith at first hand and intelligence—it is the *kingdom of intuition*.

This is why the Master made appeal not only to faith but also to intelligence, not only to essential certainty but also to consistent certainty, by stating the fundamental principle of intelligence, i.e. judgement by effects, knowledge of things by their fruits:

You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. (Matthew vii, 16-18)

This is the briefest and most complete characteristic of intelligence and its role. Its role is immense, if one considers that intelligence is called to constitute an integral part of intuition which, in its turn, determines greatness and smallness in the kingdom of God.

This role was understood in the Middle Ages in the ecclesiastical milieu of the West. Believers set themselves to thinking. Scholasticism thus took its birth. It is not true that scholasticism is due to the desire to intellectualise faith and to replace it by philosophy—that it owes its birth to secret doubt in the hearts of believers of the Middle Ages. No, what is at the root of scholasticism is the *desire for the fullness of intuition*, i.e. that of "baptising" intelligence and winning its cooperation with faith. It was thus a matter, truth to tell, not of doubt, but of an act of ardent faith which did not at all doubt that human intelligence is also as "baptisable" and "Christianisable" as the heart and the will. St. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas were in no way impelled by doubt when they set out upon their grandiose work of thought; they were full of confidence that the Blood of Calvary would penetrate, warm and transfigure the domain of the cold clarity of thought that there was up until then. Their work was apostolic rather than apologetic. Just as missionaries went to non-Christian countries in order to bear the good news there, so did St. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas go to the non-Christianised land of human intelligence in order to Christianise it. Was this doubt? Indeed no! It was an act of apostolic faith and apostolic zeal!

Dear Unknown Friend, do not scorn mediaeval scholasticism. It is, in truth, as beautiful, as venerable and as inspiring as the great cathedrals that we have inherited from the Middle Ages. To it we owe a number of masterpieces of thought—thought in the light of faith. And, like all true masterpieces, those of mediaeval scholasticism are beneficial. They heal the disorientated, feverous and confused soul. Just as a doctor prescribes for certain physical illnesses a change of climate and air—a sojourn of several months in the mountains—so it would be right and beneficial for him to prescribe to many a person disturbed by "existential problems" and troubled by the "contradictions of life" that he should remove himself for some time into the climate of high scholasticism and breathe there pure air from mental mountains. It is not a matter of a conversion to scholastic philosophy, i.e. that the person in question embraces the scholastic doctrine, but rather of a more elevated intellectual *niveau* and, above all, of continuous work for some time with the clear and precise notions of scholasticism on this elevated *niveau*.

Perhaps the *quinque viae*, the five ways of reasoning, of St. Thomas Aquinas will not necessarily convince you, but you will emerge from meditative work on the five arguments (proposed to prove the existence of God) with a clear head and a calm heart, well-prepared and equipped to seek and find other ways to certainty. It is the *occupation* with these five ways of reasoning which will render you stronger and more calm, which will elevate you above all the entanglements due to the confused play of complexes which are a mixture of feelings in which personal preferences assert themselves and thoughts which are only a mouthpiece

for these preferences. And it is this elevation above psychological complexes which is the salutary effect—even the healing action—of occupation with scholasticism, when one reads in the style of scholastic meditation.

One could object: Why not mathematics? Doesn't mathematics have the same effect of detachment and elevation above personal psychological limitations?

Without doubt mathematics also has a salutary effect. But it does not so engage the whole human being as does the totality of scholastic problems, and consequently its salutary effect does not have the same significance. What is at stake with scholasticism is God, the soul, freedom, immortality, salvation, good and evil. The triumph over psychological factors here is something quite different than triumph over the same psychological factors through occupying oneself with quantities and their functions alone. Scholasticism has more at stake than mathematics and in consequence its salutary effect is of greater significance. Therefore, do not despise mediaeval scholasticism, dear Unknown Friend; it is still of value.

No more is it true that the mystical impulse from the end of the thirteenth and into the seventeenth century was purely and simply a *reaction* against the "dry intellectualism" of scholasticism. No, the flowering of mysticism during this epoch was the *fruit* and the *result* of scholasticism, prefigured in the spiritual biography of St. Thomas Aquinas himself. Notably, St. Thomas towards the end of his life arrived at mystical contemplation of God and the spiritual world and said, on returning from this ecstasy, that his written works now appeared to him "like straw". Indeed, he wrote nothing after this.

The believing thinker thus became a seeing mystic. And this transformation did not take place in spite of his work of scholastic thought, but rather thanks to it—as its fruit and its crowning glory.

Now, what happened to St. Thomas Aquinas also happened to a group of individuals who formed the crest of the wave of scholasticism. Just as St. Thomas, through scholastic reasoning, arrived at contemplation, so did part of advanced scholasticism arrive at mysticism, i.e. at the *aim* of scholasticism, which is *intuition* or the state of union of faith and intelligence. Meister Eckhart, Ruysbroeck or, lastly, St. John of the Cross are spirits amongst whom you will search in vain for a spirit of opposition to scholasticism. For them also it was true that scholasticism was "like straw", but they knew at the same time from their own experience that this straw proved to be an excellent combustible. They certainly surpassed scholasticism, but they did so by attaining its aim. For the aim of scholastic endeavour is contemplation, and it is mysticism which is the fruit of the scholastic tree.

The mystics of the epoch under consideration were individuals who signified a successful outcome of the scholastic endeavour, i.e. in them intelligence was baptised and Christianised. The missionary work with regard to "pagan" intelligence undertaken by St. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas was crowned with success in the guise of the mystical impulse which followed high scholasticism. The marriage of faith and intelligence was consummated and believers and thinkers were reinforced by a third group: that of the *people of intuition*.

Thus, dear Unknown Friend, do not at all despise mediaeval scholasticism, but

make use of it not only to re-establish the health of your soul, but also — by thinking in the light of faith — to arrive at intuition, without which Hermeticism is something merely literary. . . of doubtful literary value. It lives only from intuition, and without intuition it is something dead. And it is this dead thing alone that is seen by people of faith and people of science, who are genuinely astonished that there are people who take it seriously. They see only scientific and religious "tinsel" or, at most, a weak faith which borrows crutches from science or, perhaps, a childlike science which has not yet learnt to distinguish between what one believes and what one knows. And they are not at all mistaken: without the invisible cement of intuition, Hermeticism is indeed only an improvised assemblage of heterogeneous elements of science and religion.

It suffices to indicate the following analogy: it was neither the straw of the crib, nor the animals that were present, which guided and enabled the mages from the East to find the Child, but rather the "star" in heaven. Similarly, in Hermeticism one will find only straw and animals if one is not guided by its "star", which exists only for intuition. Now, it is the nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot which invites us to occupy ourselves quite especially with the "star" of Hermeticism in the heaven of intuition. What is this "star"? The *Zohar* says:

And God made the two great lights. . . originally, when the moon and sun were in intimate union, they shone with equal luminosity. The names JEHOVAH and ELOHIM were then associated as equals. . . and the two lights were dignified with the same name: MAZPAZ MAZPAZ. . . The two lights rose simultaneously and were of the same dignity. But. . . the moon humbled herself by diminishing her light, and renounced her place of higher rank. From that time she has had no light of her own, but derives her light from the sun. Nevertheless, her real light is greater than that which she radiates here below; for a woman enjoys no honour save in conjunction with her husband. The great light (the sun) has the name JEHOVAH and the lesser light (the moon) has the name ELOHIM, which is the last of the degrees and the close of thought. Originally she was inscribed above among the letters of the sacred name (YHVH), which are four in number; it was only after diminishing herself that she took the name ELOHIM. But her power is manifest in all directions. . . EL being "the dominion of the day", IM being "the dominion of the night" and HE in the middle being the remainder of the forces ("the stars"), participating in both dominions. (*Zohar. Bereshith* 20a; compare also with the English translation by H. Sperling and M. Simon in *The Zohar*, vol. i, London-Bournemouth, 1949, pp. 84-85)

It is left to us only to cite another passage from an ancient source — from the eleventh book of Apuleius' *Transformations* — in order to have all the elements

necessary to grapple, sufficiently equipped, with the problem of the "star" of Hermeticism and "The Sun" of the nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot. Apuleius summarised his great vigil at the temple of Isis — the "arcana of the sacred night" (*noctis sacratae arcana*)—in the following way:

I approached the very gates of death and set one foot on Proserpine's threshold, yet was permitted to return, rapt through all the elements. *At midnight I saw the sun shining in its brilliant radiance*; I entered the presence of the gods of the under-world and the gods of the upper-world, stood near and worshipped them. (Apuleius, *Transformations: The Golden Ass*; trsl. R. Graves, Penguin, 1950, p. 286)

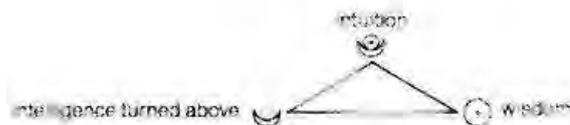
Let us now seek for the *reality*, having in view the above-cited passage from the *Zohar* and the statement made by Apuleius. The *Zohar* tells us that the moon "renounced her place of higher rank"—that of equality with the sun—and that "from that time she has had no light of her own, but derives her light from the sun; nevertheless, her real light is greater than that which she radiates here below". *Here below*, therefore, the moon reflects the light of the sun, whilst *above*—where her name is ELOHIM—"her power is manifest in all directions... EL being 'the dominion of the day', IM being 'the dominion of the night' and HE in the middle being the remainder of the forces ('the stars'), participating in both dominions."

Now, the moon, in so far as she is the nocturnal luminary here below, reflects the sun, but in so far as she is the nocturnal luminary above, she shines with her own light, and it is the sun which reflects her. In other words, the moon is "solar" above and "lunar" here below, whilst the sun is "solar" here below and "lunar" above. It is in this sense that EL, the radiant part of the moon's name above, has "the dominion of the day", i.e. it is the visible sun—reflecting the invisible moon during the day. Similarly, the visible moon reflects the sun (become invisible) during the night. *The spiritual moon is therefore the sun which shines at midnight*. And it is the spiritual moon—or Isis-Sophia—that Apuleius "saw shining at midnight in its brilliant radiance". For the long vigil in the Isis temple resulted in a vision of the cosmic principle of Isis, i.e. the spiritual moon or the "sun at midnight".

All these things, although presented to us in mythological clothing, relate to the profound reality of the relationship of intelligence and wisdom, and their union—intuition. For intelligence corresponds to the moon, wisdom to the sun, and intuition to the restoration of the "intimate union" of the two luminaries. *Here below* intelligence reflects wisdom—or, if it is eclipsed (see Letter XVIII), it reflects the terrestrial world of external experience. But there is another intelligence *above*, a transcendental intelligence, whose "light is greater than that which it radiates here below", and which—united intimately to wisdom—is "inscribed

above among the letters of the sacred name (YHVH), which are four in number", and which shines in the middle of the night "in its brilliant radiance". This higher intelligence, this "sun at midnight", which is the conjunction of the spiritual sun and spiritual moon—or, in other words, the intimate union of intelligence and wisdom—is the "star" of Hermeticism, and it is "The Sun" of the nineteenth Arcanum. "The Sun" of the nineteenth Arcanum is the "sun at midnight", i.e. the "sun" that Apuleius "saw shining at midnight in its brilliant radiance", and it is this "sun" which is the "star" of Hermeticism across the ages. It is the principle of intuition, or the intimate union of transcendental intelligence and wisdom.

The Arcanum of intuition is therefore that of knowing how to raise to creative intelligence the intelligence which reflects, and how to effect its union with wisdom, i.e. that of the work of re-establishing, firstly, the union of intelligence of diminished light here below with the intelligence of complete light above, and then the union of intelligence-thus-reunited with divine wisdom (see figure). The triangle of the figure shows in a most clear way what the relationships are: intelligence, attracted by wisdom, does not unite itself to the latter on the plane of reflection, but raises itself to the creative plane, where it regains its higher "non-fallen" status and unites with wisdom, the result of which union is intuition.



Therefore it is not thanks to the suppression of intelligence, or by becoming less intelligent, that intuition is attained; but rather, on the contrary, it is thanks to its intensification—until it becomes creative and is thus united to its higher, transcendental aspect, *after which* it is united to wisdom. It is therefore by becoming more and more intelligent that one arrives at intuition—although there is another way, that of "sunstroke", namely the annihilation of intelligence by the brilliance of wisdom, which is the theme of the twenty-second (or zero) Arcanum "The Fool". We shall therefore return to this in the twenty-first Letter on the Major Arcana of the Tarot, which is dedicated to "The Fool".

But those who hold to the tradition of Hermeticism—that of mysticism, gnosis, magic and Hermetic philosophy—keep away from the way of "divine folly" (*yurodivost* in Russian; *Narrheit in Gott* in German) and follow the way indicated by the parable of the talents (Matthew xxv, 14-30), where the master entrusted his servants with a number of talents, each according to his ability, so that they should put them to good account. Thus, they *raise* intelligence to a level at which it becomes capable of uniting with wisdom; they render it of maximum account—which is intuition.

Just as the impulse of scholasticism, on the historical ladder of western civilisation, did not lead to a perfect system of scholastic philosophy, but rather to

mysticism, so does individual intelligence, on the ladder of individual development, lead to intuition and not to a state where it knows all and explains all. Intelligence is not the absolute aim; in developing, it is transformed into intuition. It is called to effect the passage from argumentative reasoning to comprehensive intuition.

In relation to the theme of the mission of intelligence being the way to intuition, it is relevant to indicate the fact that the philosophical work of Immanuel Kant—which scorched the pretensions to certainty of autonomous intelligence with respect to metaphysical things by demonstrating the set limits of knowledge possible to autonomous intelligence—has had an effect comparable to that of wind, which extinguishes the weak fire and which revives the strong fire: the one becoming sceptics and the others becoming mystics. Kant put an end to the speculative metaphysics of autonomous intelligence and opened up the way to a mysticism which non-autonomous intelligence or "practical reason" (*praktische Vernunft*) is capable of—Kant's "practical reason" being intelligence united to the wisdom of moral nature, i.e. intuition. Indeed, several times I have had occasion to observe the fact that with time Kantians become mystics—to name, for example, the German philosopher Paul Deussen, the author of a synthesis of Kantianism, Platonism and the Vedanta (cf. Paul Deussen, *The Elements of Metaphysics*; trsl. C. M. Duff, London-New York, 1894).

Deussen's fundamental thesis is that the incapability of autonomous intelligence attaining to the noumenon behind phenomenon (demonstrated by Kant) entails the task of resorting to intuitive perception of the essence of things, which is manifested in Platonism and in the Vedanta. It was probably with a view to showing the working of the intuitive method that Deussen translated and published sixty Upanishads from the Vedas (*Sechzig Upanishads des Veda*, Leipzig, 1897).

But let us return to the "star" of Hermeticism—to the midnight sun—which is the "sun" of the nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot.

The *Zohar* and Apuleius have helped us to understand an important aspect of this sun, namely that of the "intimate union of the sun and moon"—or of wisdom and intelligence—in the guise of the midnight sun. A third ancient document can now help us to place ourselves in the presence of another important aspect of the problem occupying us, and presents it to us in its entirety. This is the Apocalypse of St. John, where we read:

And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. (Revelation xii, 1)

The *Zohar* and Apuleius speak of the moon and the sun joined—the sign ☽ which is the sign of Isis. We find this sign again in the apocalyptic vision of the woman enveloped by the sun and with the moon under her feet. But the apocalyptic vision adds here a third element: the twelve stars.

In other words, intelligence united to wisdom in intuition still does not signify

the achievement of the work of the reintegration of consciousness, if it is not crowned by a third element, which corresponds to the "stars" just as intelligence corresponds to the "moon" and wisdom to the "sun". What, therefore, is this third element?

In order to understand its role and nature it is still necessary for us to look at — and this time more closely — the experience of spirits who turned from intellectualism to intuitionism, as we indicated above in speaking of the effect of the work of Kant. We mentioned the German philosopher Paul Deussen, but perhaps it would be more to the point to mention his master, the German philosopher of worldwide renown — Arthur Schopenhauer. For it was he, author of the celebrated book *The World as Will and Representation*, who made the decisive step from Kant's thesis (that phenomena hide the essence of things, and that the essence remains inaccessible to intelligence as such) to the intuitive introspection of the essence of one thing — the Self — a thing that represents and contains the other things of the world.

This intuitive introspection allowed him to arrive at the conclusion that it is the will which is the essence of things, and that things are only representations of the will. Therefore the world is, according to Schopenhauer, a unique will which represents or "imagines" the multiplicity of things. And as Schopenhauer found that the same experience gave rise to almost the same conclusion in Indian mystical philosophy — above all in the Vedanta, based on the Upanishads of the Vedas — he said: "The Upanishads were my consolation in life, and they will also be so in death" (*Die Upanishads waren mein Trost im Leben; sie werden es auch im Tode sein*).

Thus, the mystical philosophy of India is the original and prototype of intuitionist philosophies of the West — such as that of Schopenhauer, Deussen and Eduard von Hartmann (cf. *Philosophy of the Unconscious*; trsl. W. C. Coupland, London, 1931). Let us therefore examine the fundamental experience and principal conclusion to be drawn from the mystical philosophy of India, as represented by the Vedanta of the Advaita ("non-dualist") school.

This philosophy is founded on intuitive- introspection - as method. This is based on the one hand on experience of the will as the element underlying all intellectual, psychological, biological and mechanical movement, and on the other hand on the experience of the "inner eye" or detached transcendental Self, which observes the movements produced by the will. The will creates the multiplicity of mental, psychic, biological and mechanical phenomena, in contrast to the unity of "the Seer in seeing" (the transcendental Self). The transcendental Self does not move, therefore it does not change, therefore it is immortal, therefore it is not an entity separated from the real essence of the world, and thus it is one with it. The true Self of man and the essence of the real world — or God — are identical. *Aham Brahma asmi* ("I am Brahma") — this is the formula which gives a summary of the experience and conclusions drawn by the Vedanta.

Now, it suffices on the one hand not to identify with the will and its movements and on the other hand to identify with the transcendental Self—"the Seer in seeing"—in order to attain to the real being and essence of the world in the *intuitive experience* of Vedanta adherents and German intuitionist philosophers. But one could ask: Is the intuitive experience of the transcendental Self truly final and complete, so that nothing follows it or surpasses it? Is the experience of the transcendental Self truly the *nec plus ultra* ("the ultimate") of knowledge?

Indeed, it lacks something important: *the whole spiritual world*, i.e. the Holy Trinity and the nine spiritual hierarchies. The "great portent" of which the Apocalypse speaks indicates beyond the sun and moon *a crown of twelve stars on the head of the woman*.

The intuitive experience of the transcendental Self—sublime and stimulating as it may be—does not suffice, alone, to let us perceive, and to render us conscious of, the spiritual world. The union of the "moon" and the "sun" alone, in the human spiritual *microcosm*, still does not signify the experience of the spiritual *macrocosm*. It is not sufficient to elevate oneself to the transcendental Self; it is necessary, still further, that this transcendental Self perceives and becomes conscious of other "transcendental Selves"—many of which are higher than it. The transcendental Self of man, as eternal and immutable as it is, is not the ultimate summit in world evolution.

The transcendental Self is not God. It is in his image and after his likeness, according to the law of analogy or kinship, but it is not identical with God. There are still several degrees on the ladder of analogy which separate it from the summit of the ladder—from God. These degrees which are higher than it are its "stars"—or the ideals to which it aims. The Apocalypse specifies the number of them: there are *twelve* degrees higher than that of the consciousness of the human transcendental Self. It is necessary, therefore, in order to attain to the ONE God, to elevate oneself successively to degrees of consciousness of the nine spiritual hierarchies and the Holy Trinity. The conclusion of the Vedanta—*aham Brahma asmi*, declaring the identity of the transcendental Self and the One God—is therefore an error due to a confusion of values. Here the image and likeness of God is taken for God, and experience of the Divine, likewise, is taken to be God himself. All which glitters is not gold—and all which is transcendental and immortal is not God. For the devil, also, is transcendental and immortal.

This confusion can easily take place if one keeps exclusively to the empirical psychological method, whilst avoiding the principle of transcendental metaphysics. Thus even C. G. Jung only narrowly missed identifying his psychological experience of the seventh "archetype"—the (transcendental) Self (*das Selbst*)—with what religions call "God". It was only thanks to his prodigious prudence that he had, though, left a door open and did not go as far as to pretend to have had a psychological experience of God. Then again, consider disciples of the *Sankya* (or *Samkhya*) metaphysical school, concerning which Krishna said:

Fools, not wise men, say that *Sankya* (renunciation of action to know God) and *Yoga* (pursuit of action living in God) are distinct. He who practises one, fully earns the fruits of both. The place which the follower of *Sankya* obtains is also gained by the followers of *Yoga*. He sees truly who sees the *Sankya* and the *Yoga* as one and the same. (*Bhagavad-Gita* v, 4-5; trsl. M. N. Dutt, *Bhisbma Parva* xxix, 4-5 in *The Mahabharata* vi, Calcutta, 1896, p. 38)

They have, therefore, the same experience of the transcendental Self as yogis and Vedantins, yet without arriving at the conclusion that the transcendental Self is God. On the contrary, thanks to the principles of their metaphysics, they recognise the *plurality* of individual *purushas*, i.e. the plurality of "transcendental Selves". Thus, the same experience can give rise to different—even contrary—interpretations, if one applies different directing metaphysical principles. Yoga and Sankya are "one and the same" with respect to the *experience* of the transcendental Self, but they differ radically with respect to the interpretation of this experience: the "men of yoga" believe that with it they have attained God, whilst the "men of Sankya" do not pretend to have achieved anything other than the experience of the individual transcendental Self, the individual *purusha* (or *monad*— in the sense of Leibnitz's term).

One could also say, in the symbolical language of the Bible, that yoga attains to union (= yoga) of the two luminaries—the moon (or intelligence) and the sun (or spontaneous wisdom of the transcendental Self)—and halts there, whilst Sankya also attains this, but it takes account of still a further kind of "luminary": the "stars" (higher entities of the spiritual world). Sankya, whilst leaving the door open to that which transcends the "transcendental Self, does not occupy itself with it, it is true, in an explicit manner—which has given it the qualification "atheistic". However, its "atheism" does not amount to its denying the existence of a universal *Purusha* higher than all individual *purushas* (it professes to know nothing of this with certain knowledge), but rather to its denying the affirmation of yoga and Vedanta, i.e. that the "transcendental Self is God,

In contrast, Judaeo-Christian Hermeticism, which ranges itself on the side of Sankya with respect to the negation of the identification of the "transcendental Self with God, is intensely occupied with the third "luminary"—the "stars"—in the three aspects of astrology, angelology and trinitarian theology, which aspects correspond to the body, soul and spirit of the third "luminary". Judaeo-Christian Hermeticism is thus the sustained effort across the centuries to know and understand the *three* luminaries in their *unity*, i.e. to know and understand the "great portent which appeared in heaven—a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (Revelation xii, 1). It is the woman in this apocalyptic vision who unites the three "luminaries"— the moon,

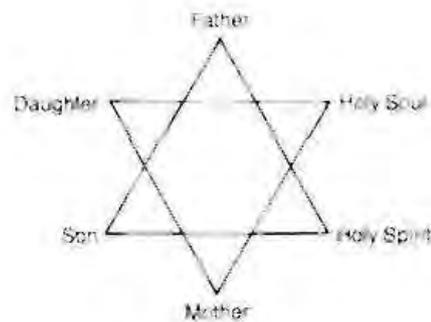
the sun and the stars, i.e. the luminaries of night, day and eternity.

It is she—the "Virgin of light" of the *Pistis Sophia*, the Wisdom sung of by Solomon, the *Shekinah* of the Cabbala, the Mother, the Virgin, the pure celestial Mary—who is the soul of the light of the three luminaries, and who is both the source and aim of Hermeticism. For Hermeticism is, as a whole, the aspiration to participation in knowledge of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the Mother, Daughter and Holy Soul. It is not a matter of seeing the Holy Trinity with human eyes, but rather of seeing with the eyes—and in the light—of Mary-Sophia. For just as no one comes to the Father but by Jesus Christ (John xiv, 6), so does no one understand the Holy Trinity but by Mary-Sophia. And just as the Holy Trinity manifests itself through Jesus Christ, so *understanding* of this manifestation is possible only through intuitive apprehension of what the virgin mother of Jesus Christ understands of it, who not only bore him and brought him to the light of day, but who also was present—present as mother—at his death on the Cross. And just as Wisdom (Sophia)—as Solomon said—was present at the creation ("when he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep. . . then I was at work beside him"—Proverbs viii, 27-31) and "built her house. . . set up her seven pillars" (Proverbs ix, 1), so Mary-Sophia was present at the redemption and "was at work beside him", and "built her house... set up her seven pillars", i.e. she became Our Lady of the seven sorrows. For the seven sorrows of Mary correspond, for the work of the redemption, to the seven pillars of Sophia for the work of creation. Sophia is the queen of the "three luminaries"—the moon, the sun and the stars—as the "great portent" of the Apocalypse shows. And just as the *word* of the Holy Trinity became flesh in Jesus Christ, so did the *light* of the Holy Trinity become flesh in Mary-Sophia—the *light*, i.e. threefold receptivity, the threefold faculty of intelligent reaction, or *understanding*. Mary's words: *mihi fiat secundum verbum tuum* ("let it be to me according to your word"—Luke i, 38) are the key to the mystery of the relationship between the pure act and pure reaction, between the word and understanding—lastly, between Father, Son and Holy Spirit on the one hand and Mother, Daughter and Holy Soul on the other hand. They are the true key to the "seal of Solomon"—the hexagram:



The hexagram is not at all the symbol of good and evil, but rather a is that of the threefold pure act or "fire" and the threefold pure reaction (the threefold *mihi fiat secundum verbum tuum*) or "light of fire", i.e. "water". "Fire" and "water" signify that which acts spontaneously and creatively on the one hand, and that which reacts reflectively on the other hand—the latter being the conscious "yes" or light of *mihi fiat secundum verbum tuum*. This is the elementary meaning of the "seal of Solomon"—elementary in the sense of the *elements* "fire" and "water", taken on their highest level.

But the still higher meaning that this symbol hides—or rather reveals—is that of the *luminous Holy Trinity*, i.e. that of *understanding* of the Holy Trinity.



Then it is the hexagram comprising the two triangles: Father-Son-Holy Spirit; Mother-Daughter-Holy Soul (see figure). And these two triangles of the luminous Holy Trinity are revealed in the work of redemption accomplished through Jesus Christ and conceived through Mary-Sophia. Jesus Christ is its agent; Mary-Sophia is its luminous reaction. The two triangles reveal the *luminous Holy Trinity* in the work of creation accomplished by the creative Word and animated by the "yes" of Wisdom-Sophia. The luminous Holy Trinity is therefore the unity of the triune Creator and the triune *natura naturans*, i.e. the unity of the threefold *Fiat* and the threefold *mihi fiat secundum verbum tuum* which reveals itself in *natura naturata*, in the world created before the Fall; and it is the triune divine *spirit* and the triune *soul* of the world manifesting in the *body* of the world—in *natura naturata*.

The *Zohar* puts forward the idea of the luminous Holy Trinity. It teaches that the great name of GOD YHVH reveals the Father (Y = י), the supreme Mother (H = ה), the Son (V = ו), and the Daughter (the second HE of the divine name YHVH). Such is the eternal name YHVH. But in the history of the created world there are also revealed: the *Sbekinah* (identified with the "community of Israel")—the true "Rachel weeping for her children" (Matthew ii, 18), who weeps in exile and who is the "beautiful virgin who has no eyes" (*Misbpatim* 95a; trsl. *The Zohar*, vol. iii, p. 285); the *Messiah-king* who "descends and reascends through all the heavens in order to exercise, with all the prophets who are to be found, the universal function of salvation" (L. Schaya, *L'homme et l'absolu selon la Kabbale*, Paris, 1958, p. 96); and the *Ruah hakodesch* (the "holy breath" or Holy Spirit), of which Saadya speaks, through the intermediary of which the thirty-two ways of wisdom are incorporated in the air that one breathes—the "holy breath" by means of which God is revealed, to the prophets, at the foundation of the secret of creation and which is called the "breath of the living God" (רוח קאלהים חיים) (cf. Henri Serouya, *La Kabbale*, Paris, 1956, p. 136). The Messiah is the seventh term or principle of the hexagram Father, Son, Holy Spirit; Mother, Daughter, Holy Soul (= *Sbekinah*, or the "community of Israel"). He is the *agent* of all, the active summary of the bi-polar Trinity or, as we have called it, the *luminous Holy Trinity*.

With respect to the concrete manifestation of the *Sbekinah*, "it is as a woman that she now appears to the visionaries among the Cabbalists, like Abraham Halevi,

a disciple of Luria, who in 1571 saw her at the wailing wall in Jerusalem as a woman dressed in black and weeping for the husband of her youth" (G. G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, London, 1955, p. 230). The weeping Lady of La Salette also wept at the foot of a wall no less real than the wailing wall in Jerusalem — the wail of universal sin which is placed between humanity and divine grace — but she differs from the *Shekinah* of the visions of the Cabbalists and Hassidim in that she is not the personification of a principle, i.e. she is not solely an *aspect* of the Divine, but rather is a human person who existed in the flesh at the bosom of the visible community of Israel twenty centuries ago. Similarly, the Messiah, whom many have seen and met during the last twenty centuries, is no more only a spirit who "descends and reascends through all the heavens in order to exercise, with all the prophets who are to be found, the universal function of salvation", but rather is a human person who existed at the bosom of the visible community of Israel twenty centuries ago. For just as the Word became flesh in Jesus Christ, so did the *Bath-Kol*, the "Daughter of the Voice", become flesh in Mary-Sophia. The Church worships her as the Virgin, as the Mother and as the celestial Queen, corresponding to the Mother, the Daughter and the "Virgin of Israel" of the Cabala, and to the Sophianic Trinity—Mother, Daughter and Holy Soul—mentioned above.

The Athenians, also, had an analogous feminine triad, which played the principal role in the mysteries of Eleusis: Demeter—the Mother, Persephone—the Daughter, and "Athena the bringer of salvation" (cf. Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Phaedonem commentaria* = "Commentary on the Phaedo of Plato"; ed. W. Norvin, Leipzig, 1913, p. III)—where Athena was at the same time the "community of Athens" or the "soul of Athens" as it were, analogous to the "Virgin of Israel".

Historical analogies and metaphysical parallels alone, however, do not suffice to attain the complete certainty of intuition: it is for the heart to say the last decisive word. Thus the following "argument of the heart" proved to be decisive, twenty-five years ago, to the one who writes these lines.

There is nothing which is more necessary and more precious in the experience of human childhood than parental love; nothing more necessary, because the human child, alone, is not viable if it is not taken from the first moments of its life into the circle of care of parental love or, lacking parental love, its substitute-charity; nothing more precious, because the parental love experienced in childhood is moral capital for the whole of life. In childhood we receive two dowries for life, two assets from which we can draw during the whole of life: the vital biological asset which is the treasure of our health and vital energy, and the moral asset which is the treasure of health of soul and its vital energy—its capacity to love, to hope and to believe. The moral asset is the experience of parental love that we have had in childhood. It is so precious, this experience, that it renders us capable of elevating ourselves to more sublime things—even to divine things. It is thanks to the experience of parental love that our soul is capable of raising itself to the love of God. Without it the soul could not truly enter into a living relationship

with the living God, one of loving God — being unable to pass beyond the abstract conception of God as the "Architect" or the "First Cause" of the world. For it is the experience of parental love —and it is above all this —which renders us capable of *loving* the "Architect" or "First Cause" of the world as *our Father* who is in heaven. Parental love bears in itself true senses of the soul for the Divine —which are, by analogy, eyes and ears of the soul.

Now, the experience of parental love consists of two elements: the experience of maternal love and that of paternal love. The one and the other are equally necessary and equally precious. The one and the other render us capable of raising ourselves to the Divine. The one and the other signify to us the means of entering into a living relationship with God, which means to love God, who is the prototype of all paternity and all maternity.

Now, love teaches in its own way—with a certainty which excludes all doubt — that the divine commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother", is truly *divine*, i.e. that it is significant in heaven as well as on earth. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is applicable therefore not only to transitory things but also to eternal things. Such is the commandment revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and such is also the commandment emanating from the depths of the human heart. One should honour the Father who is in heaven *and* the celestial Mother. This is why practising believers of the traditional Church, i.e. the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, caring little for the difference stated in dogmatic theology between the celestial Father and Mother, love and honour— in their practice of prayer— the celestial Mother no less than the Father who is in heaven.

Dogmatic theologians may well put believers on their guard against "exaggeration" in the domain of Mariology and Protestant critics may well advance criticism of the cult of the Virgin Mary as "idolatry", but practising believers of the traditional Church continue and will always continue to honour and love their celestial Mother as the eternal Mother of all that lives and breathes. If one says that "the heart has its own reasons, which the intellect does not know", one can also say that "the heart has its own dogmas, which theological reasoning does not know". Indeed this "dogma" of the heart, although as yet not formulated —being generally confined to the domain of the unconscious —nonetheless exercises a growing influence on the guardians of dogmatic orthodoxy of a kind such that the latter are constrained to give way, through the centuries, one position after another to this irresistible impulse: in liturgical forms and in the practice of prayer sanctioned by ecclesiastical authorities, the role accorded to the Virgin Mary does not stop growing. The Queen of the Angels, the Queen of the patriarchs, the Queen of the apostles, the Queen of martyrs, confessors, virgins, and saints, the Queen of peace, is, in the texts of liturgical prayers, also the Mother of God, the Mother of divine grace, and the Mother of the Church. In the churches of the Greek Orthodox Church one sings: "More honoured than the Cherubim, more glorious than the Seraphim — thou who art the true Mother of God, we honour thee". Now, the Cherubim and Seraphim are the first celestial hierarchy and the Holy Trinity

alone is above them. This "dogma" of the heart is so powerful that the time will come when it will result in official recognition from the Church and will be formulated. For it is thus that all Church dogmas have arrived, in the past, at their promulgation: they live first of all in the hearts of the believers, then influence more and more the liturgical life of the Church, in order—lastly—to be promulgated as formulated dogmas. Dogmatic theology is only the last stage of the "way of dogma" which begins in the depths of the life of souls and results in ceremonious promulgation. This way is exactly what is understood by "the direction of the Church by the Holy Spirit". The Church knows it and has the patience to await—even for centuries—the time when the work of the Holy Spirit will have attained to maturity.

Be that as it may, whatever the duration of time for the mysterious process of the birth of the dogma raising maternal love to the level of the Holy Trinity may be, it is already well formulated and is at work across the centuries. All the same, it is a matter, whilst respecting the law of patience and abstaining from all attempts to force things, of cultivating feelings and ideas relating to divine maternal love and of meditating on the ancient Hermetic doctrines which reveal the mystical, gnostic and magical meaning of this aspect of divine love. In other words, it is a matter of meditating on the mystery of the luminous Holy Trinity, whose symbol is the "seal of Solomon":  — or again, on the symbol of the Trinity alongside that of the luminous Holy Trinity:  

This symbol of the development from the Holy Trinity to the luminous Trinity, i.e. from the triangle to the hexagram, is at the same time the divine meaning—or the highest that I know—of the number nine. Ten further spiritual exercises were necessary for us, after the meditation on the ninth Arcanum of the Tarot, in order to dare to touch on the theme of the development of the Holy Trinity into the luminous Holy Trinity, symbolised by the triangle alongside the hexagram.

We have indicated above that it is the practice of prayer and the liturgical life of the Church where the great truths anticipate their promulgation as dogmas. Now, the mystery of the number nine, that of the development of the Trinity into the luminous Trinity, also lives in the practice of prayer and ritual within the Church.

I have in mind the practice, universally diffused in the Catholic Church, of the novena—the most practised form of which is the act of prayer consisting of one *Pater Noster* and three *Ave Marias*, to which one devotes oneself for nine days. One makes a novena by appealing to the paternal love of the Father (*Pater Noster*) and to the maternal love of the Mother (the three *Ave Marias*) simultaneously for nine days, for the sake of a person or a cause. What depth there is underlying this practice that is so simple! In truth—in any case for the Hermeticist—the direction of the superhuman wisdom of the Holy Spirit is manifested here!

Similarly, it is so with the rosary prayer, where appeal to the two aspects of divine paternal love in the prayer addressed to the Father and the Mother is made during meditation on the mysteries of the Joy, Suffering and Glory of the Blessed

Virgin. The rosary prayer is — in any case for the Hermeticist — again a masterpiece of simplicity, containing and revealing things of inexhaustible profundity. . . a masterpiece of the Holy Spirit!

Dear Unknown Friend, the Arcanum "The Sun" with which we are occupied is an Arcanum of children bathing in the light of the sun. Here it is not a matter of finding occult things, but rather of seeing ordinary and simple things in the light of day of the sun —and with the look of a child.

The nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot, the Arcanum of intuition, is that of revelatory *naivety* in the act of knowledge, which renders the spirit capable of an intensity of look not troubled by doubt and by the scruples engendered by doubt, i.e. it is the vision of things such as they are under the eternally new day of the sun. It teaches the art of undergoing the pure and simple impression which reveals through itself—without intellectual hypotheses and superstructures —what things are. To render impressions *noumenous*—this is what it is a matter of in the Arcanum "The Sun", the Arcanum of intuition.

You will understand therefore, dear Unknown Friend, that in speaking of parental love and of its two aspects, in speaking of the practice of the novena and the rosary prayer, etc., we are in no way estranging ourselves from the theme of the nineteenth Arcanum of the Tarot; rather, on the contrary, we are penetrating to its very heart. For we are endeavouring to advance from an *understanding* of what intuition is to its *exercise*, i.e. from meditation on the Arcanum of intuition to the use of this Arcanum.