

*Meditation on the
Fifth Major Arcanum of the Tarot*

THE POPE

LE PAPE

*At vero Malki-tzadek rex Salem, proferens
panem et vinum, erat enim sacerdos Dei
Altissimi, benedixit ei, et ait:
Bene diet us Abram Deo excelso. . .et
benedictus Deus excelsus....*

(Genesis xiv, 18-20)

(And Melchizadek king of Salem brought our
bread and wine; he was priest of God
Most High. And he blessed him and said:
Blessed be Abram by God Mosr High. . .
and blessed be God Most High. . .)

*Ego sum via et Veritas et vita: nemo
venit ad Patrem, nisi per me.*

(John xiv, 6)

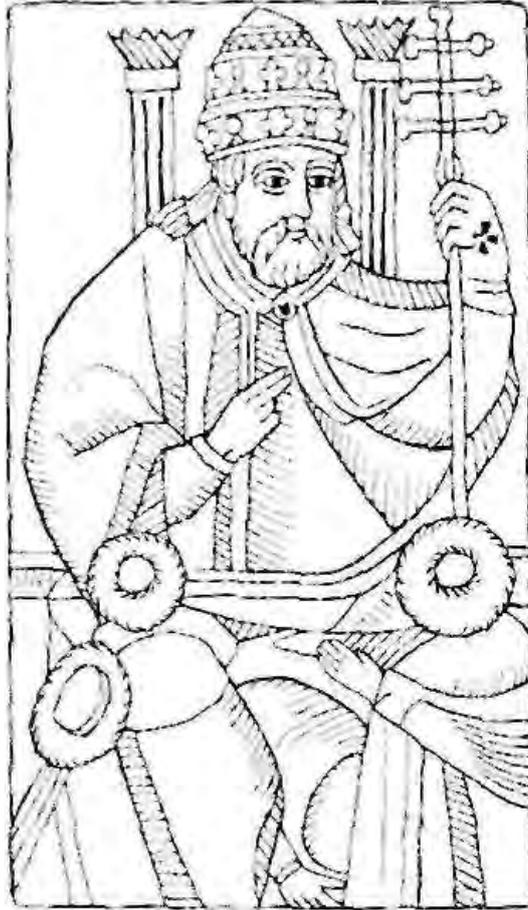
(I am the way, and the truth, and the life:
no one comes to the Father, but by me.)

*De cetero nemo mihi molestus sit: ego
enim stigmata Domini Jesu in corpore
meo porto.*

(Galatians vi, 17)

(Henceforth let no man trouble me:
for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.)

LETTER V



THE POPE

Dear Unknown Friend,

The Card "The Pope" puts us in the presence of the *act of benediction*. It is essential to have this in mind when one undertakes the interpretation not only of the structure of the whole Card but also of each of its particular elements. One should therefore never lose from sight that in the first place it is a matter of *benediction* and everything associated with it—no matter who the Pope may be or who the acolytes kneeling before him are, and no matter what the two columns behind the Pope signify, and no matter what his tiara and the triple cross he is holding symbolise. What is benediction? What is its source and its effect? Who has the authority to bestow benediction? What role does it play in the spiritual life of humanity?

Now, benediction is more than a simple good wish made for others; it is also more than a magical impress of personal thought and will upon others. It is the putting into action of divine power transcending the individual thought and will of the one who is blessed as well as the one who is pronouncing the blessing. In other words it is an essentially *sacerdotal* act.

The Cabbala compares the role of prayer and benediction to a double movement, ascending and descending, similar to the circulation of the blood. The prayers of humanity rise towards God and, after having been divinely "oxidised", are transformed into benedictions which descend below from above. This is why one of the acolytes of the Card has his left hand raised and the other has his right hand lowered. The two blue columns behind the Pope symbolise *in the first place* this twofold current—rising and descending—of prayers and benedictions. At the same time the Pope himself holds aloft a triple cross on the side with the "column of prayer" and the praying acolyte, whilst his right hand—on the side with the "column of benediction" and the acolyte receiving (or "inspiring") benediction—makes the gesture of benediction.

The two sides of the Cabbala—the "right" side and the "left" side—and the two columns of the Sephiroth Tree, the pillar of Mercy and that of Severity, and similarly the two pillars of the Temple of Solomon, Jachin and Boaz, correspond exactly to the two columns of prayer and benediction on this Card. Because it is Severity which stimulates prayer and it is Mercy which blesses. The venous "blue blood" of Boaz ascends and the arterial oxidised "red blood" of Jachin descends. The "red blood" bears the vivifying benediction of oxygen; the "blue blood" rids the organism of the "severity" of carbonic acid. It is the same in the spiritual life. Spiritual asphyxia menaces he who does not practise *some form* of prayer; he who practises it receives vivifying benediction in some form. The two columns therefore have an essentially *practical* significance—as practical spiritually as respiration is for the life of the organism.

Thus, the first practical teaching—for the Major Arcana of the Tarot are spiritual *exercises*—of the fifth Arcanum relates to *spiritual respiration*.

There are two kinds of respiration: horizontal respiration which takes place between "outside" and "inside", and vertical respiration which takes place between "above" and "below". The "sting of death" or the essential crisis of the supreme agony is the abrupt passage from horizontal to vertical respiration. Yet he who has learnt vertical respiration whilst living will be spared from this "sting of death". For him the passage from the one form of respiration to the other will not be of the nature of a right angle but rather the arc of a circle: —I -J . The transition will not be abrupt but gradual, and curved instead of rectangular.

Now, the essence of vertical respiration is the alternation between prayer and benediction or grace. These two elements of vertical respiration manifest themselves in all domains of the inner life—mind, heart and will. Thus a relevant problem for the mind, which is not due to curiosity or intellectual collectionism, but rather to the thirst for truth, is fundamentally a prayer. And the illumination by which it may be followed is the corresponding benediction or grace. True suffering, also,

is fundamentally always a prayer. And the consolation, peace and joy which can follow are the effects of the benediction or grace corresponding to it.

True effort of the will, i.e. one hundred percent effort, true *work*, is also a prayer. When it is intellectual work, it is prayer: Hallowed be thy name. When it is creative effort, it is prayer: Thy kingdom come. When it is work with a view to supplying for the material needs of life, it is prayer: Give us this day our daily bread. And all these forms of prayer in the language of work have their corresponding benedictions or graces.

The law of correspondence between the column of prayer (problems, suffering, effort) and that of benediction (illumination, consolation, fruits) is found expressed by the Master in the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. The nine (for there are nine, and not eight) beatitudes can thus be understood as the formula of *vertical respiration*. They teach it to us.

This respiration is the state of soul that the apostle Paul designated as "freedom in God". It is a new way of breathing. One freely breathes the divine breath, which is freedom.

The Lord is Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (II Corinthians iii, 17)

The spiritual counterpart to horizontal respiration is the alternation from "extroversion" to "introversion" or from attention to the objective external life to the subjective inner life. The law of horizontal respiration is: "Love your neighbour as yourself (Luke x, 27). There is the equilibrium between these two directions of attention.

With respect to vertical respiration, its law is: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew xxii, 37). There is the relationship between prayer and benediction or grace.

There are *three* levels of horizontal respiration, just as there are three stages of vertical respiration.

The three levels of horizontal respiration are:

- love of Nature;
- love of one's neighbour;
- love of the beings of the spiritual hierarchies (Angels, etc.).

The three stages of vertical respiration are:

- purification (by divine breath);
- illumination (by divine light);
- mystical union (in divine fire).

This is why the Pope holds aloft the *triple cross*. The triple cross has three cross-

pieces which divide the vertical line into three parts. It is the *cross of complete and perfect spiritual respiration*, horizontal and vertical: ☩ It is the cross of triple love of neighbour (lower neighbour = Nature, equal neighbour = man, higher neighbour = beings of the hierarchies) and triple love of God (breath or faith, light or hope, fire or love).

It is the sceptre of the Pope's authority for this Card, just as the sphere formed from the double cup and topped by the cross is the sceptre of the Emperor. Just as the Emperor, guardian of the throne of David, represents towards heaven the human, i.e. the divine image and likeness in man, so does the Pope, guardian of the portal to the pillars of benediction and prayer, represent transcendental Divinity towards mankind. The two *posts*, that of Emperor and that of Pope, are two spiritual realities. They are as real as the head and the heart are in the life of the individual. The heart is the centre of respiration and blood circulation; the head is the centre of the nervous system and is the seat of thought.

And just as no parliament will replace the spiritual reality of the post of Emperor—the throne of David cannot be replaced by collectivity—so will no oecumenical council replace the spiritual reality of the post of Pope or the "throne of Melchizedek, king of plenitude (Salem)". Whether the "cannon shot" predicted in esoteric circles of the Occident be given or not, whether the sacerdotal throne remains visible or whether it be installed in the catacombs, it will *certainly remain present* for ever in the future history of humanity—despite what the prophets of its destruction may say.

Because history—as, moreover, the life of the individual—is "worked" by day and by night. It has a diurnal aspect and a nocturnal aspect. The former is exoteric, whilst the latter is esoteric. The silence and obscurity of the night is always full of events in preparation—and all that which is unconscious or superconscious in the human being belongs to the domain of "night". This is the magical side of history, the side of magical deeds and works acting behind the facade of history "by day". Thus, when the Gospel was preached by the light of day in the countries around the Mediterranean, the nocturnal rays of the Gospel effected a profound transformation of Buddhism. There, the ideal of individual liberation by entering the state of *nirvana* gave way to the ideal of renouncing *nirvana* for the work of mercy towards suffering humanity. The ideal of *mahayana*, the great chariot, then had its resplendent ascent to the heaven of Asia's moral values.

Dies diem eructat verbum et nox nocti indicat scientiam. Day to day pours forth *speech* (אָמַר — 'omer) and night to night declares knowledge (דַּעַת — da'ath) (Psalms xix, 1)

This is the formula of the twofold teaching—by the speech of day and by the knowledge of night; of the twofold tradition—by verbal teaching and by direct inspiration; of twofold magic—by the spoken word and by silent radiation; and lastly, of twofold history—"visible" history by day and "invisible" history by night.

Now, the posts of Emperor and Pope are realities beyond as well as on this side of the threshold which separates "day" and "night". And the Pope of the fifth Card is the guardian of this threshold. He is seated between the two pillars- the pillar of day or prayer and the pillar of night or benediction.

The Emperor of the fourth Card is the master of the day and the guardian of the blood or quintessence of the nocturnal reality of the day. The Pope is the guardian of respiration or of the reality of the relationship between day and night. That which he guards is the equilibrium between day and night, between human effort and divine grace. His post is founded on primordial cosmic deeds. Thus the first book of Moses says:

... and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. (Genesis i, 4-5)

And the act of separation of the intelligible from the mysterious signifies at the same time the establishing of cosmic respiration, which is the analogy of "the Spirit of God moving above the face of the waters". For the divine breath (*ruah 'elohim*) above the profoundness of peace ("the waters"—it is this which is the psychological as well as the cosmic reality of *nirvana*) is the divine prototype of respiration. Therefore the "great chariot", the *mahayana* of Buddhism, raises itself towards the divine breath—the mercy which moves above the waters of the pre-cosmic peace of *nirvana*, whilst the "little chariot", the *hinayana*, aspires towards the end of respiration; its aim is to be drowned in the waters of peace—to enter into *nirvana* where there is no movement—neither change nor respiration.

But the divine breath (*ruah 'elohim*) is above the ocean of peace of *nirvana*; the divine breath moves it. And to renounce *nirvana*, after having arrived at its threshold, means to say: rise above *nirvana* and participate in the divine breath transcending it.

Now, primordial water penetrated by divine breath is the essence of *blood*; breath reflected by the water is *light*; the rhythmic alternation from absorption of the breath by water to its reflection by it is *respiration*. Light is the day, blood is the night, and respiration is plenitude (Salem). MELCHIZADEK, king of Salem, *priest* of the Most High God (*kohen le'el elyon* — נָתַן לְאֵל צְלִיּוֹן) is therefore appointed to plenitude, to *respiration*, whilst the *annointed king*, guardian of the throne of David, or the Emperor, is appointed to the day. Although he is appointed to the day, he is annointed by the night and he owes his authority to the night, whose mysterious presence during the day—the blood-he guards.

Dear Unknown Friend, you will probably ask yourself if there is a *third post*, a post for he who is appointed to the night?

Yes, the post of master of the night (he is also named "lord of the night") exists. We shall approach the various ideas relating to this post in the ninth Letter dedicated to the ninth Arcanum of the Tarot.

It suffices to indicate here that in Israel there were *three* higher posts—the posts

of king, high priest and prophet. This is also the place to remark that it is a matter of *posts*, and not of persons; a single person can sometimes occupy two or even three posts.

But let us return to the post of the Pope, which is the subject of the fifth Arcanum of the Tarot. It relates to spiritual respiration, as we have seen. This is why the Pope represents another category of truth and another criterion of truth than the scientific truth and criterion. For him "true" is that which comprises *harmonious respiration*; "false" is that which upsets the harmony of spiritual respiration. Thus, the heliocentric system of modern astronomical science is true from the point of view of the science of phenomena, but it is at the same time fundamentally false from the viewpoint of spiritual respiration. The blood that issued from Christ onto the earth is precious to such a degree that he gave the earth the central position in the space of noumenal values. *The geocentric* cosmos is therefore *true* from the point of view of respiration, i.e. from the point of view of the life of prayer and benediction. And the heliocentric cosmos, although it has the support of all the facts of the phenomenal world, *is false* because it fails to recognise that which is truly central—the Incarnation of the Word—and replaces it by a centre situated more at the periphery, removed from the central value. The sun is only a centre in phenomenal space, and one commits the sin of idolatry in attributing to it the central role, which belongs to the sanctified earth—sanctified, and thus rendered central, by the Incarnation of the Word.

Here is another example, this time from the domain of esoteric experience. As we have already mentioned, reincarnation—successive lives of the same human individuality—is a fact of experience, as are the successive periods of wakefulness belonging to the day, which are interrupted by sleep at night. Buddha recognised the fact of reincarnation as such, but he considered it *regrettable*. This is why the aim of the eightfold path which he taught is to put an end to reincarnation. Because *nirvana* is the end of successive terrestrial lives.

Thus Buddha *recognised* and at the same time *denied the* fact of reincarnation. He recognised it as *fact* and he denied it as *ideal*. Because facts are transitory; they come and go. There was a time when there was no reincarnation; there will be a time when it will no longer be. Reincarnation commenced only after the Fall and it will cease with Reintegration. It is therefore not eternal, and therefore it is not an ideal.

There are therefore two truths: the one is actual or temporal and the other ideal or eternal. The first is founded on the *logic of facts*; the other on *moral logic*. Now, Psalm 85 designates actual truth (אֱמֶת -*emeth*) by the word truth (*veritas*) and truth based on moral logic (חֶסֶד —*Chesed*) by the word mercy (*misericordia*). The Psalm says:

Mercy (*chesed*) and truth (*emeth*) will meet;
Justice (*tsedek*) and peace (*shalom*) will embrace each other.

Truth (*emeth*) will spring up from the ground (*meeretz*).
 And justice (*tsedek*) will look down from the heavens
 (*mischamaim*). (Psalm 85, 10-11)

Here is the problem of "double truth" in its entirety—and here is the moving prophecy that the two truths, the factual and the moral, will at some time meet and that their revelation in man—justice (*isedek*) and peace (*schalom*)—will embrace each other! But they will meet only slowly and, given the actual state of affairs, they often still contradict one another, at least in appearance. This is why St. Paul had to say that "the wisdom of this world is folly with God" (I Corinthians iii, 19). And this is why also divine wisdom is often folly before this world.

Now, the Pope, being the guardian of *spiritual respiration* (and the letter ה, He, the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, has *breath* as its primitive hieroglyph), is the representative of moral logic.

Benediction and prayer are the two pillars between which he is seated. It is only that which is *ideal* which is true for him. Here is why, for him, marriage is indissoluble—though there may be thousands of matrimonial catastrophes; here is why confession and repentance efface every sin—though thousands of tribunals only *punish* the guilty, whether they repent or not; here is why the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit—though it practised or tolerated the practice of the Inquisition for centuries; and here is why *a single life on earth suffices for eternal salvation*—although souls reincarnate.

Thus, the Pope is always at the middle of a conflict between ideal truth and actual truth, between mercy (*chesed*) and truth (*emeth*). And this conflict is a *wound*—namely the fifth wound, *the wound of the heart*. For if the Emperor has four wounds, the Pope has five.

If you are acquainted, dear Unknown Friend, with the symbolism of the Cabala, you know that the wound spoken of here is due to the opposition between the fourth Sephirah, CHESED (Mercy), and the fifth Sephirah, GEBURAH (Severity), on the Tree of the Sephiroth—and that this wound refers to the sixth Sephirah, TIPHERETH (Beauty or Harmony), which is the synthesis of the two preceding Sephiroth.

If, moreover, you occupy yourself with Christian esotericism, you will comprehend that the wound in question is that of the Sacred Heart, caused externally by "one of the soldiers (who) pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (John xix, 34). And you will understand also that it is mercy and truth (*chesed and emeth*) that came out as blood and water. This is why the Evangelist emphasises the symbolic reality or the real symbolism of the fact that the blood and water that came out of the wound *were not mixed* and that it is in this fact that the spiritual sense of the wound is found expressed. The wound is caused spiritually by the conflict between mercy and truth, between ideal truth and actual truth, which are not united. . .

And the Evangelist goes on to say: "He who *saw* it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he *knows* that he tells the truth—that you also may believe" (John xix, 35). He has therefore *seen* the fact, and he *knows* what he wants to say as a symbol of the spiritual reality of the wound.

But now we are in the realm of the esotericism of the five wounds, the flaming star, the pentagram, the quinary or the number five. . . Louis Claude de Saint-Martin says that:

As long as numbers are united and bound up with the decad, there is not one that presents the image of corruption or deformity. It is only when one separates them that these characteristics manifest themselves. Amongst the numbers thus specified, some are *absolutely evil*, such as *two and five*. These are also the only ones which divide the number ten. (Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. *Des nombres*, Nice, 1946, xxi)

According to Saint-Martin, the quinary (with respect to the binary, we refer you to Letter II, where you may find a discussion of the statement of Saint-Martin concerning the evil nature of the number two) is therefore *absolutely evil* when it is not united and bound up with the decad. Thus he says:

. . . the forms of animals must also be such as to serve as receptacles for the torments of the quaternaries, torments that we ourselves exert against them in imitation of these same quaternaries. (Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, *Des nombres*, Nice, 1946, xxxi)

Eliphas Levi says, however, that:

The Pentagram signifies the domination of the mind over the (four) elements; and the demons of air, the spirits of fire, the phantoms of water and ghosts of earth are enchained by this sign. Equipped therewith, and suitably disposed, you may behold the infinite through the medium of that faculty which is like the soul's eye, and you will be ministered unto by legions of angels and hosts of fiends (trsl., p. 63). [Then:] The empire of will over the Astral Light, which is the physical soul of the four elements, is represented in Magic by the Pentagram, placed at the head of this chapter (trsl., p. 67). [And further still:] On 24 July in the year 1854, the author of this book, Eliphas Levi, made an experiment of evocation with the Pentagram, after due preparation according to the Ceremonies indicated in the thirteenth chapter of the *Ritual* (trsl., p. 69). [And lastly:] We must remark, however, that the use of the Pentagram is most danger-

ous for operators who are not in possession of its complete and perfect understanding. The direction of the points of the star is in no sense arbitrary, and may change the entire character of an operation, as we shall explain in the *Ritual* (trsl., p. 69). (Eliphas Levi, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*; trsl. A. E. Waite, *Transcendental Magic. Its Doctrine and Ritual*, London, 1968, pp. 63, 67, 69)

In chapter five of *Transcendental Magic. Its Doctrine and Ritual-TIC* find the following summary of Eliphas Levi's doctrine concerning the pentagram:

The Pentagram, which in Gnostic schools is called the Blazing Star, is *the sign of intellectual omnipotence and autocracy*. (ibid., trsl. p. 237)

But in *The Key of the Mysteries* Eliphas Levi says:

The quinary (or quinternary) is the number of religion, for it is the number of God united to that of woman. (Eliphas Levi, *The Key of the Mysteries*; trsl. A. Crowley, London, 1969. p. 30)

And much later still, in his posthumous work *Le Grand Arcane ou l'occultisme dévoilé* ("The Great Arcanum, or Occultism Unveiled"), Eliphas Levi writes:

The ancient rites have lost their effectiveness since Christianity appeared in the world. The Christian and Catholic religion, in fact, is the legitimate daughter of Jesus, king of the Mages. A simple scapular worn by a truly Christian person is a more invincible talisman than the ring and pentacle of Solomon. The Mass is the most prodigious of evocations. Necromancers evoke the dead, the sorcerer evokes the devil and he shakes, but the Catholic priest does not tremble in evoking the living God. Catholics alone have priests because they alone have the altar and the offering, i.e. the whole of religion. To practise high Magic is to compete with the Catholic priesthood; it is to be a dissident priest. Rome is the great Thebes of the new initiation . . . It has crypts for its catacombs; for talismen, its rosaries and medallions; for a magic chain, its congregations; for magnetic fires, its convents; for centres of attraction, its confessionals; for means of expansion, its pulpits and the addresses of its bishops; it has, lastly, its Pope, the Man-God rendered visible. (Eliphas Levi, *Le Grande Arcane ou l'occultisme dévoilé*, Paris, 1921, pp. 67-68, 83-84)

And we conclude by citing Josephin Peladan, who declared himself in agreement with the preceding:

The Eucharist is the whole of Christianity; and through it Christianity has become living magic. . Since Jesus there are still sorcerers, (but) there are no more mages. (Josephin Peladan, *L'occulte catholique*, Paris, 1898, p. 312)

Well, after all these quotations, where are we now?

We have arrived at a very serious problem: that of the pentagram or *evil quinter-nary* and the Pentagram or *good quinternary*.

Because according to Saint-Martin—whose dear presentation of the problem lends itself better than any other in serving as a point of departure—the quinter-nary is *good* "as long as it is united and bound to the decad" and it is "absolutely *evil*" when it is separated and isolated from it. In other words, the pentagram, as the sign of *intellectual autocracy*, i.e. the emancipated human personality, is *good* when it is the expression of the personality whose will is united and bound to the fullness of the manifestation of Unity (the decad); and it is *evil* when it expresses the will of the personality separated from this Unity. Or, in other words again, the sign is good when it expresses the formula: *Fiat voluntas tua* ("Thy will be done"); and it is evil when the formula of the underlying will is: *Fiat voluntas mea* ("my will be done"). Here is the moral and practical meaning of Saint-Martin's statement.

With regard to the statements of Eliphas Levi and Josephin Peladan that we have quoted, they add their conviction that it is the Universal or Catholic Church which represents for humanity the decad or fullness of manifested unity. For them, the will united and bound to the essence of the Church is expressed by the good pentagram, understood in the sense of Saint-Martin, and the will that is purely and simply personal is expressed by the evil pentagram. This is why Madame Blavatsky accused Epiphias Levi of Jesuit politics and why Josephin Peladan's old occultist-friends regretted his relapse into Roman sectarianism.

But now, it is not a question of taking sides in the "war of the two roses", nor of accusing or regretting. Here it is a matter of the problem of personal arbitrary magic (the quinter-nary separated from the decad) and personal sacred magic (the quinter-nary united and bound to the decad). And this is the thesis that I put forward with regard to this problem, a thesis which is the fruit of forty-three years of experience in the esoteric domain: It is only *the pentagram of the five wounds* which is the effective sign of personal sacred magic, whilst the *pentagram of the five currents of personal will*, no matter how the points of this pentagram are turned, is the effective sign for the imposition of the personal will of the operator on beings weaker than him—it is always a fundamentally tyrannic act.

This is the thesis. Let us now proceed to its explanation.

A magical act presupposes an effect surpassing the normal power of the operator.

This surplus of power may be furnished by forces which are obedient to the operator, or by forces borrowed by him, or, lastly, by forces acting through the operator and which he obeys.

In the case of forces which are supplied to the operator by submission it is a matter of the operation of magic that we have designated (in Letter III) as "personal or arbitrary", i.e. an operation whose source of initiative, whose means and aim are found exclusively in the will and understanding of the personality of the operator. Such an operation can only make use of forces lower than the operator. For one does not command Angels. The operator here is alone and acts as a magical technician under his own responsibility and at his own risk and peril. One could also designate this type of magic as "Faustian".

In the case of forces borrowed by the operator, it is a matter of an act of collective magic. It is the "magic chain" which renders the operator more powerful; it "lends" him the forces which he then makes use of for the operation. In this case the operator is aided by forces which are equal to him (and are not lower than him as in the case of Faustian magic). The power and the effect depend here on the *number* of people belonging to the chain. One could designate this type of magic as "collective".

Lastly, in the case of forces acting through the operator as intermediary and which he obeys, it is also a matter of a "chain", but a *vertical and qualitative (hierarchical) chain* instead of a horizontal and quantitative chain, which latter is the case with collective magic. The operator here is alone in the horizontal sense, but he is not in the vertical sense: above him beings higher than him act with him and through him. This type of magic presupposes the fact of being in conscious relationship with higher spiritual beings, i.e. it assumes prior mystical and gnostic experience. We have designated this type of magic (in Letter III) as "sacred magic", because the forces active in operations of this magic are superior to the operator. However, its historical name is "theurgy".

The formulae expressing the fundamental attitude of the personal will corresponding to the three types of magic described above are:

Fiat voluntas mea (Faustian magic);
Fiat voluntas nostra (collective magic);
Fiat voluntas TUA (sacred magic).

The first two forms of magic — Faustian and collective — make use of the method of which the pentagram of the five currents of personal and collective will is the sign. They are based on the principle that the strong dominates the weak. It is a matter here of the power of *compulsion*.

with respect to the third form of magic — sacred magic - the method it makes use of is not the *force* of the will, but rather its *purity*. But as the will as such is never entirely pure - for it is not the flesh which bears the stigmata of original sin, nor thought as such, but rather the will — it is necessary that the five dark

currents inherent in the human will (i.e. the desire to be great, to take, to keep, to advance and to hold on to at the expense of others) are paralysed or "nailed". *The five wounds* are therefore the five vacuities which result in the five currents of the will. And these vacuities are filled by will from above, i.e. by absolutely *pure* will. This is the principle of magic of the pentagram of five wounds.

Before proceeding to the question of the way in which the five wounds of the will are produced and what the concrete practical method of the magic of the pentagram of five wounds is, it is necessary rather that we ponder on the concept itself of "wound".

A wound is a door through which the objective exterior world intrudes into the interior of the closed system of the subjective interior world. Speaking biologically, it is a breach in the walls of the fortress of the organism by which forces from outside the organism penetrate into its interior. A simple lesion of the skin, for example, signifies such a breach and for a certain time gives the air (and all that which is borne by the air) access into an interior region of the organism which would be barred to it if the skin were intact.

Now, the organ of sight, the eye, in comparison with the surface of the human body covered over with skin, is a *wound* which can be covered by mobile skin—the eyelids. Through this wound the objective outer world penetrates into our inner life with that much greater intensity, corresponding to the degree that sight reveals more of the outer world than the sense of touch. With the eyelids dosed, the place where the experience of the world named "sight" takes place becomes again that reduced experience of the world—yet normal for the entire surface of the body—that we designate as "touch".

The eyes are open wounds which are so sensitive that they suffer with (i.e. react to) every nuance of light and colour. And it is the same with the other sense organs. They are *wounds*, i.e. it is they which impose on us the *objective* reality of the outer world. There where I would like to see beautiful flowers, my eyes make me see a pile of dung. I am *forced* to see what the objective world shows me by way of my eyes. It is like a nail from outside nailing my will.

The senses—given that they are sound and functioning normally—are wounds through which the objective world, without regard to our will, imposes itself on us. But the senses are organs of *perception*, not of action. Imagine that the five organs of action—the limbs, including the head in its function as a limb—were to have analogous wounds, i.e. that the five currents of will of which they are an expression were to give access to an *objective will* which would be to personal desires what sense perceptions are to the play of fantasy.

This is the esoteric concept of the wound. And this concept can become a spiritual reality, then psychic, and eventually even physical with some people. The stigmatics—from St. Francis of Assisi to Padre Pio in Italy and Teresa Neumann in Germany during the present epoch—are people for whom the reality of the five wounds has reached to the physical plane. These are *the future organs* of the will in formation, the organs of action which taken together have the sacred penta-

gram as their sign — the quinary united and bound to the fullness of the decad, according to Saint-Martin.

It is still necessary to specify the five wounds corresponding to the five dark currents of the will — the desire for personal greatness, to take, to keep, to advance and to hold on to at the expense of others — which correspond, in their turn, to the five limbs (including the head as a limb), although only four are allocated to the corresponding limbs. The desire to take or get hold of things is bound to the right hand: similarly, the desire to retain or keep belongs to the left hand; likewise, the desire to advance at the expense of others and the desire to hold on to at the expense of others correspond to the right foot and the left foot respectively; but it is not the case concerning the desire for personal greatness that it corresponds to the head. The head does not bear the fifth wound, for two reasons: firstly, because it bears the "crown of thorns" (to which we endeavoured to give an explanation in Letter IV), which is borne, in principle, by every person capable of *objective* thought — the "crown of thorns" being given to the human being since the beginning of human history. It is that subtle organ which is designated for us in the Occident as the "eight-petalled lotus", and which is designated in India as the "thousand-petalled lotus" or *sahasrara* (crown centre). This crown centre is a "natural gift", as it were, to each human being and every normal person possesses it. The "thorns" of the crown centre function as the "nails" of objectivity, which give conscience to thought. It is thanks to them that thought has not become wholly emancipated and as arbitrary, for example, as the imagination is. Thought *as such* is, in spite of all, the organ of truth, not of illusion.

Thus, it is not thought as such which allows the desire for personal greatness or the tendency towards megalomania, but rather *the will* which makes use of the head and which can take hold of thought and reduce it to the role of its instrument. And this constitutes the second reason as to why the fifth wound — that of *organic* humility, replacing the current of the will-to-greatness — is not round in the head, but rather in the heart, i.e. it reaches the heart, penetrating from the right-hand side. Because it is there that the will-to-greatness has its origin and it is there from whence it takes hold of the head and makes it its instrument. This is why many thinkers and scientists want to think "without the heart" in order to be objective — which is an illusion, because one can in no way think without the heart, the heart being the activating principle of thought; what one can do is to think with a humble and warm heart instead of with a pretentious and cold heart.

Thus, the fifth wound (which is the *first* in so far as its importance is concerned) is that of the heart instead of the head, the head being *from the point of view of the active will* an instrument or "limb" of the heart.

Let us now turn to the question concerning the origin of the five wounds — i.e. how they are produced — and to the concrete practical method of the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds.

How does one acquire the five wounds?

There exists only one single method, one sole means leading to this. And—no matter whether in full knowledge or whether instinctively—every esotericist, every mystic, every idealist, every spiritual-seeker and, lastly, every man of good will makes use of it, in Europe as in Asia, today as twenty centuries ago. This universal method of all ages and all cultures is nothing other than the practice of the three traditional vows, namely *obedience*, *poverty* and *chastity*.

Obedience rivets the will-to-greatness of the heart; *poverty* holds fast the desire to take and the desire to keep of the right hand and the left hand; *chastity* pins down the desires of the "Nimrodic hunter"—to advance and to hold on to at the expense of others or, in other words, to hunt and to trap game—of the right foot and the left foot.

The vow of *obedience* is the practice of silencing personal desires, emotions and imagination in the face of reason and conscience; it is the primacy of the ideal as opposed to the apparent, the nation as opposed to the personal, humanity as opposed to the nation, and God as opposed to humanity. It is the life of cosmic and human hierarchical ordering; it is the meaning and justification of the fact that there are Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; Dominions, Virtues, Powers; Principalities, Archangels, Angels; Priests, Knights and Commoners. Obedience is order: it is international law; it is the state; it is the Church; it is universal peace. True obedience is the very opposite of tyranny and slavery, since its root is the love which issues from faith and confidence. That which is above serves that which is below and that which is below obeys that which is above. Obedience is the practical conclusion to that which one recognises as the existence of something higher than oneself. Whosoever recognises God, obeys.

Such obedience as is practised in religious orders and the Catholic spiritual knighthood is a form of training—moreover, very effective—of the will, with a view to rivetting the will-to-greatness. The obedience that the *chela* has to his *guru* in India and Tibet follows, in principle, the same aim. This is true also of the absolute obedience that the *hassidim* have towards their *tzadekim* in the Jewish Hassidic communities, and similarly it is so with the obedience without reserve on the part of the disciples of the *starlzy* (spiritual masters) in orthodox, pre-Bolshevist Russia.

The universal formula of obedience is: *Fiat voluntas tua*.

The vow of *poverty* is the practice of inner emptiness, which is established as a consequence of the silence of personal desires, emotions and imagination so that the soul is capable of receiving from above the revelation of the word, the life and the light. Poverty is perpetual active vigil and expectation before the eternal sources of creativity; it is the soul awaiting that which is new and unexpected; it is the aptitude for learning always and everywhere; it is the *conditio sine qua non* of all illumination, all revelation and all initiation.

The following is a short story which makes evident in a wonderful way the practical spiritual meaning of poverty:

Once upon a time four brothers went on a journey in order to seek the greatest

treasure. After a week of travelling they arrived at a mountain of iron ore. "A whole mountain of iron ore!" cried one of the four. "Here is the treasure we have been seeking!" But the three others said: "This is not the greatest treasure," and continued their walk, whilst their brother remained by the mountain of iron ore. He was now rich and they were as poor as before. One month later they arrived at a field strewn with greenish and yellowish stones. "This is copper!" cried one of the three brothers. "This is certainly the treasure that we are seeking!" But the two other brothers did not share his opinion. Thus, he remained there, being the rich proprietor of a copper mine, whilst the two others continued on their way as poor as they were before. After a year they arrived at a valley full of stones shining with a whitish light. "Silver!" cried one of the two brothers. "This is at last the treasure that we are seeking!" But the other brother shook his head and continued on his way, whilst his brother remained there as the rich proprietor of a silver mine. Seven years later he arrived at a stony place in an arid desert. He sat down, being half-dead with fatigue. It was then that he noticed that the pebbles under his feet were gleaming. It was gold.. .

The vow of *chastity* means to say the putting into practice of the resolution to live according to solar law, without covetousness and without indifference. Because virtue is boring and vice is disgusting. But that which lives at the foundation of the heart is neither boring nor disgusting. The foundation of the heart is love. The heart lives only when it loves. It is then like the sun. And chastity is the state of the human being in which the heart, having become solar, is the centre of gravity.

In other words, chastity is the state of the human being where the centre named in occidental esotericism as the "twelve-petalled lotus" (*anahata* in Indian esotericism) is awakened and becomes the sun of the microcosmic "planetary system". The three lotus-centres situated below it (the ten-petalled, the six-petalled and the four-petalled) begin then to function in conformity with the life of the heart (the twelve-petalled lotus), i.e. "according to solar law". When they do this, the person is chaste, no matter whether he or she is celibate or married. Thus there are "virgins" who are married and mothers of children, and there are physical virgins who are not so in reality. The ideal of the Virgin-Mother that the traditional Church (Catholic and Orthodox) puts forward is truly worthy of reverence. It is the ideal of chastity which triumphs over sterility and indifference.

The practice of chastity does not concern solely the domain of sex. It bears equally on all other domains where there is choice between solar law and all sorts of dulling intoxications. Thus, for example, all fanaticism sins against chastity, because there one is carried away by a dark current. The French revolution was an orgy of perverse collective intoxication, just as the revolution in Russia was. Nationalism—such as in the Germany of Hitler—is likewise a form of intoxication drowning the conscience of the heart and is therefore incompatible with the ideal of chastity.

There are also forms of practical occultism which lend themselves to the pursuit of an unhealthy intoxication. Thus Josephin Peladan acknowledged:

I do not conceal it; we have all at first been seduced by the aesthetic of occultism, and infatuated with the quaint and the strange; one has subscribed to the amusements of nervous females; one has sought thrills — the thrill of the invisible and of the beyond; one has asked for the excitement of the incorporeal. (Josephin Peladan, *Locculte catholique*, Paris, 1898, pg. 309)

The practice of chastity holds fast the leanings of the *hunter* in the human being, of which the male side is inclined to pursue game and the female side to set traps. The practice of poverty binds the tendencies of the *thief* in the human being, where the male side is inclined to seize and the female side to keep indefinitely, instead of waiting for the free gift or the merited fruit of work. The practice of obedience, lastly, rivets the will-to-greatness or the inclinations of the *usurper* in human nature, whose male side is inclined to estimate itself great in its own eyes and whose female side seeks to make itself estimated so in the eyes of others.

These three vows therefore constitute the sole known and indispensable method which leads to the five wounds, i.e. to the effective pentagram of sacred magic. It is still necessary to specify that it is not a matter of the *virtues* of humility, poverty and chastity being wholly realised — because no man in the flesh can possess these virtues totally—but rather of their *practice*, i.e. sincere efforts aimed at their realisation. It is the effort which counts.

Such is the answer to the question: How does one acquire the five wounds? Now follows the response to the question: How does the magic of the sacred pentagram of the five wounds operate?

As we have indicated above, it is the *purity* of the will and not its force which constitutes the basis of the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds. In this it corresponds to divine magic, which does not force but establishes (or re-establishes) freedom of choice through the *presence* of the true, the beautiful and the good. Now, it is a matter in the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds of accomplishing the *living presence* of the good alongside the consciousness of the subject of the operation. For good does not *fight* evil; it does not struggle against it. The good is only present, or it is not. Its victory consists in that it results in being present, its defeat in that it is forced to be absent. And it is the five wounds which assure the presence of the good, i.e. the presence of pure will from above.

The following is an episode which is found in the "Considerations on the Stigmata of St. Francis" (fifth consideration) and which is well suited to serve as a key to the problem with which we are occupied.

A Franciscan friar prayed for eight years following the death of St. Francis that the secret words which the Seraphim had spoken to St. Francis when he gave him the stigmata would be revealed to him. Now, one day St. Francis appeared to him and to seven other friars and, turning towards this friar, spoke to him thus:

Know, dearest friar, that when I was on the mount of La Verna, all rapt in the contemplation of the Passion of Christ, in this Seraphic vision I was by Christ thus stigmatised in my body; and then Christ said to me. "Knowest thou what I have done to thee? I have given thee the marks of my Passion in order that thou mayst be My standard-bearer. And even as I, on the day of My death, descended into limbo and drew thence all the souls I found therein, by virtue of my stigmata, and led them up to paradise, so do I grant to thee from this hour (that thou mayst be conformed to Me in thy death as thou hast been in thy life) that after thou hast passed from this life thou shalt go every year, on the day of thy death, to purgatory, and shalt deliver all the souls thou shalt find there of thy three Orders, to wit. Minors, Sisters, and Penitents, and likewise the souls of thy devoted followers, and this, in virtue of thy stigmata that I have given thee; and thou shalt lead them to paradise." And those words I told not while I lived in the world. ("Considerations on the Glorious Stigmata of St. Francis" in *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, book ii, ch. 9; trsl. T. Okey, London, 1963, pp. 129-130)

This said, St. Francis suddenly disappeared. Numerous friars subsequently heard this narrative from the lips of the eight friars who were present at this vision and revelation of St. Francis. And "*Frater Jacobus Blancus lector Romanus praedicavit hoc et dixit se audisse ab unofratre de supradictis octo*" ("Brother Jacobus Blancus, lector Romanus, proclaimed this and said that he had heard it from one of the above-named eight") adds the manuscript of Saint-Isidore (discussed by Paul Sabatier) at the end of the narrative.

Let us now analyse the narrative from the point of view of the magic of the sacred pentagram of the five wounds.

It may be noted first of all that the stigmata given to St. Francis are of a spiritual as well as a corporeal nature, for their virtue (i.e. their magical power) continues after his death. Also, here it is indicated that the virtue of the stigmata of St. Francis, as well as those of Christ himself, is revealed in that he is able to lead back souls from limbo and purgatory and conduct them to paradise. Let us mention, lastly, that the narrative is quite categorical concerning the statement that it is only by virtue of his stigmata that Jesus Christ prior to his resurrection led souls out of limbo and conducted them to paradise, and similarly it is only by virtue of his stigmata that St. Francis, also, withdraws from purgatory each year on the day of his death all souls who are bound to him by a spiritual tie and leads them to paradise.

Take the terms "limbo", "purgatory" and "paradise" in their meaning as understood by analogy and you have a clear and precise formula for the working of the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds; it effects a change from the natural state ("limbo") and from the state of human suffering ("purgatory") to that of

the blessedness of the divine state ("paradise"). The operation of the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds therefore consists in transforming the natural state into the human state and this latter into the divine state. This is the work of spiritual alchemy of the transformation from Nature ("limbo"), and from the Human ("purgatory"), into the Divine ("paradise"), according to the traditional threefold division—Nature, Man and God.

Let us now consider more closely the *practical* meaning of the terms "limbo" "purgatory" and "paradise", in so far as they are stages in the work of transmutation—or *liberation*—of the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds.

Their *practical* meaning is not spatial, i.e. referring to "places", but refers rather to *states* of the human being—in body, soul and spirit. When we understand it thus, we shall readily discover that the three states are known to us through experience and that experience supplies us with the *keys of analogy* to be able to understand the ideas of "limbo", "purgatory" and "paradise" as such, i.e. on all planes and at every **level**—psychological, metaphysical and theological—of their application.

Each of us has had the experience of a harmonious state of good health accompanied by a carefree state of soul and calmness of spirit. It is what one *calls joie de vivre*, pure and simple. If there were no serious illnesses, sorrows and problems, this would be permanently our natural state. It is what Nature, in so far as it is virgin and unfallen, offers us, which we could enjoy constantly if there were no fallen elements in Nature—no sickness and sin, no sorrow, fear and remorse in ourselves—and if, above all, life as a whole was not the field which death reaps unceasingly. But we have nevertheless from time to time moments, hours, perhaps even whole days, of the experience of the natural *joie de vivre*, without sorrows or cares. And this experience supplies us with the "key of analogy" for understanding what the meaning of "limbo" is. "Limbo" is the natural state of physical and psychic health that Nature—outside and within ourselves—can offer us from itself without the assistance of supernatural or divine grace. "Limbo" is the virginal part of Nature (human nature and outer Nature) according to the traditional doctrine "*natura vulnerata non deleta*" ("Nature is wounded but not destroyed"). Those who know the *Bhagavad-Gita*, or who have occupied themselves at all with the Hindu tradition, will easily recognise in the state designated by the term "limbo" the state *or guna* of Nature (*prakriti*) that is called *sattva* in India (the other two *gunas* being called *tamas* and *rajas*).

Concerning the experience relating to "purgatory", it comprises all purging—suffering—physical, psychic and spiritual. It is corporeal, moral and intellectual suffering which is our intermediate state between the experience of the natural innocence of "limbo" and the moments of heavenly joy when the rays of "paradise" reach us.

We already experience here below a foretaste of "purgatory" and of "paradise". We suffer and the consolations of heaven are given us. Human life is natural innocent joy, and its ruin is through sin; what ensues is suffering and it is the rays

of benediction from heaven which console us. This is our life. It consists of experiencing the *reality* of "limbo", "purgatory" and "paradise".

Now, the magic of the sacred pentagram of five wounds "leads souls out of limbo and purgatory and conducts them to paradise". This means to say that it makes heaven present in "limbo" and "purgatory", that it enables it to descend into the domain of innocent and suffering Nature. This, in turn, means to say that it introduces the supernatural into the natural, heals sickness, illumines consciousness and enables participation in the spiritual life. "Purgatory" includes *all* sickness and *all* suffering. "To be led out: of it" signifies liberation from it, i.e. to be healed, illumined and reunited with the spirit.

The magic of the five wounds operates by the *presence* of the reality of the superhuman spiritual world by means of the wounds, and accomplishes the transmutation from the states of "limbo" and "purgatory" to the state of union with the Divine, or "paradise". Concerning the ritual or technical side of the magic of the sacred pentagram with five wounds, this is to be found outlined in the third Letter, relating to the Arcanum "The Empress".

The quinternary "united and bound to the decad" of which Saint-Martin speaks is therefore the quinternary or pentagram of five wounds. The other quinternary, qualified by Saint-Martin as "absolutely evil", is separated from the *decad*, i.e. from the five currents (or "members") of the human will, endowed with five wounds from the divine will, (The five currents of the human will endowed with five wounds also correspond to the letters YHSVH of the name: יהשׁוה IHSCHUH, Jesus—as is accepted symbolically by Khunrarh, Kircher, Saint-Martin and others, although in Hebrew the name of Jesus is written: — IHSCHUAH).

But I shall not say, as radically as Saint-Martin does, that the quinternary separated from the decad is absolutely evil. It is, rather, *arbitrary* — and it is evil only in so far as the human personality emancipated from the Divine and from Nature is evil.

In any case the pentagram, other than that of the five wounds, is not the sign of "black magic", but rather that of arbitrary magic, or "grey magic", if you wish. Because it is the sign of the power of the personality as such—which is inevitably a mixture of good and evil, even when it acts with the best intentions in the world. Oswald Wirth says concerning this:

Common magic deceives itself about the power of this sign, which by itself confers no power. The individual will is powerful only in the measure to which it is in harmony with a more general power.. .Let us not seek to develop the will artificially and to transform ourselves into athletes of the will. . . (Oswald Wirth, *Le Tarot des imagiers du moyen age*, Paris, 1927, p. 123)

Regarding the two forms of the pentagram—with the point above and with the

point below—they do not in any way correspond to the division of magic into "white magic" and "black magic" (although the traditional masters—Eliphas Levi, for example—teach this). You can certainly draw the head of a goat (as Eliphas Levi does) in the "reversed pentagram"; it does not become through this the sign of black magic. The two forms of the pentagram refer to human electricity (i.e. the electricity of the human organism accompanying the movements of the will)—of the *head* and of the *legs*, which has nothing to do with horns. It is the same electricity in both cases, with the sole difference that in the case of the pentagram with the point turned above it is the will of the intellect which moves the electrical currents, whilst in the case of the pentagram with the point turned below, it is the intelligence of the will which does so. The two poles of the will can equally serve good or evil—although in fact both represent a mixture of the two principles. It is true, however, that there is more chance in the case of the sign of the pentagram with the point turned above for reason and conscience to make the best of the operation than in the case of the reversed pentagram, but all depends here on the intellectual and moral state of the operator. A perverse intellectuality would certainly make worse use of the upright pentagram than a sound will motivated by a good intention would of the reversed pentagram. Therefore, let us not be afraid of the reversed pentagram, or depend too much on the upright pentagram.

But let us return to the quaternary bound and united to the fullness of the decad, i.e. to the sacred pentagram of five wounds. Let us consider it now not as an individual affair but rather as one for the whole of mankind.

The history of mankind—seen from its "nocturnal" side—is at root the operation of a limited number of magical formulae and signs. Whatever you may do, you place yourself under the aegis of such a formula and sign. The cross, the pentagram and the hexagram are signs and formulae which operate in the history of mankind. The cross is the vow and virtue of obedience, i.e. the sign and formula of faith, as horizontal human respiration and vertical divine respiration united together. The pentagram is initiative; it is effort and work, i.e. the vow and virtue of poverty—or the sign and formula of hope as the effect of the presence of divine light here below. The hexagram is the vow and virtue of chastity, i.e. the sign and formula of love, as the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and Mother, Daughter and Holy Soul. The spiritual history of mankind is the way from the cross to the pentagram, and from the pentagram to the hexagram, i.e. it is the *school* of obedience, poverty and chastity, and it is at the same time the *divine, magical operation* where love is attained through faith by means of hope.

The Middle Ages erected the cross above the nations, societies, aspirations and thoughts of Europe. This was the epoch of obedience and faith—accompanied by every imaginable human abuse. This was followed by an epoch where the dawn of hope made itself felt. Humanism, with its flourishing of Renaissance art, philosophy and science, was born under the sign of hope. The sign of the pentagram

began its ascent. It was then that opposition arose between the sacred pentagram of five wounds and the pentagram of the emancipated personality. A purely humanistic art, science and magic had its development under the sign of the pentagram of hope in man, as opposed to the sign of the pentagram of hope in God, i.e. the sacred pentagram of the five wounds, under which latter sign Christian esotericism — Christian-orientated mysticism, gnosis, sacred magic and Hermeticism—has its development.

The impulse of freedom —of hope in emancipated man—has built up and demolished a great deal. It has created a materialistic civilisation without parallel, but at the same time it has destroyed the hierarchical order— the order of spiritual obedience. A series of religious, political and social revolutions has ensued.

But the hierarchical order is eternal and obedience is indispensable. Now new hierarchical orders are beginning to be established, replacing obedience by tyranny and dictatorship. For he who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind (cf. Hosea ix, 7)—this is a truth that we are learning with so much suffering today. The pentagram of hope in emancipated man has in former times sown the wind—and we and our contemporaries are now reaping the whirlwind.

Now, the post of Pope in the spiritual history of mankind is that of guardian of the sacred pentagram of the five wounds, i.e. he guards the one legitimate way of passing from the cross to the pentagram and from the pentagram to the hexagram. The function of the spiritual post of Pope is to see to it that it is only *after* the cross is taken up that the pentagram has its ascent and that it is only *after* the sacred pentagram of the five wounds is taken up that the raising of the hexagram takes place. The mission of the post of Pope is to take care that spiritual obedience, poverty and chastity—free and holy —do not disappear from the world and that there are always people in the world who embrace them and represent them. For these three practical vows constitute the preliminary condition for living faith, luminous hope and ardent love, i.e. for the *spiritual respiration* of humanity. Mankind would suffocate spiritually without faith, hope and love or charity. And it would be bereft of these if the practice of spiritual obedience, poverty and chastity—free and holy —were to cease.

The post of Pope or the Holy See is a formula of divine magic — just as the post of Emperor is — in the history of humanity. It is what is meant by the esoteric term *Petrus* (Peter). Πέτρα = *petra* = rock). *Petrus* is the term in the Old and in the New Testament designating the divine, immovable ordinance or formula of divine magic. This is why the post of Pope was founded upon the quality of *Petrus* (Peter):

And I tell you, you are Peter (*Petrus*), and on this rock (*petra*)
I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail
against it. (Matthew xvi, 18)

The five "gates of hell"—the will-to-greatness, the desire to take and to keep,

the desire to advance and to hold on to at the expense of others—being the counter-formula, shall not prevail against the formula of the five wounds. And these wounds are the "keys to the kingdom of heaven".

The divine magical power of these keys is such that whatever is bound by their virtue on earth will be bound in heaven and that whatever is loosened by their virtue on earth will be loosened in heaven. For that which is above is as that which is below and that which is below is as that which is above. And when disobedience, greed and unchastity prevail on the earth of such a kind that there never was before—then it is the virtue of the keys or the sacred wounds which can re-establish the unity of that which is above and that which is below, i.e. "to bind" and "to loosen", by an act which, put into words, would have the tenor of the following:

May that which is above *be* as that which is below, and may that which is below *be* as that which is above.