

— ROSICRUCIAN —
BEACON



December 2023, Vol 33, No. 1



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Cover spread

A winter walk with
Light, Life and Love.



Ecology

by **Claudio Mazzucco**
Imperator of AMORC



“We must bring back into society a deeper sense of the purpose of living. The unhappiness in so many lives ought to tell us that success alone is not enough. Material success has brought us to a strange spiritual and moral bankruptcy.”

– Ben Okri –

Ben Okri, writer and long-time member of the Rosicrucian Order, expresses in the quote on the left, something dealt with in the Rosicrucian manifesto the *‘Positio Fraternitatis’* and which is at the heart of the large imbalances that industrialisation has brought the world. One such imbalance, which I reflect upon here, is our relationship with the environment. Its study is called *‘ecology.’* Words such as *ecological, bio-compatible, bio-ecological, eco-sustainable*, etc., have become so widespread that they risk losing the meaning they should have. Their use in marketing serves only to confuse consumers and ease the conscience of producers, thus perpetuating damage to ecosystems that we are intrinsically a part of. We often speak about environmentally friendly cars running on eco-friendly petrol (!), green detergents, green building methods and green raw materials without considering further what these terms really mean.



Used like this, these terms are meaningless. Every human activity has an environmental impact so we can only talk about degree (greater or lesser impact) but not about truly green products. Furthermore, we must treat ecological systems as complex systems; environmental problems cannot be solved with simplistic solutions. Despite this, we can see that humanity's ecological awareness is advancing, however slowly, much as the awareness of the need for social justice and peace between nations and individuals is also advancing.

The question we must consider is the following: will a real change in humanity's vision – a *paradigm shift* as the saying goes – be possible without that change coming through a change in consciousness which, in turn, arises from a spiritual worldview? Note well, I am referring to a spiritual worldview and not a religious one. Will it be possible to develop a healthy and profound perspective of Nature and the environment without that perspective coming from the expansion of consciousness of the individual? I believe it will not. Sometimes we hear people say “*we must protect Nature*”, quite unwittingly and sincerely but entirely without seeing the larger picture.

Left to itself, nature has no need of protection. It is estimated that 98% of the species that have ever existed on our planet have gone extinct. If necessary, nature will reassert its equilibrium by eliminating us all. It will not treat us with any special consideration or more exceptional privileges than if we were ants, bees or grass

upon which humans tread. Meister Eckhart, the 14th century mystic and philosopher, said that God is as present in wood and stone as He is in us, the only difference being that we humans are capable of knowing it. This is the consciousness to which we should aspire and which ought to guide us in the decisions we must make. The environment is not something ‘*out there*’ to be protected; that is a limited and partial understanding. There is a continuous exchange of matter and energy between the environment and ourselves, so that, in a certain sense, we are not separable from it.

Furthermore, there is a widespread perception that we are about to cross a threshold after which it is difficult to predict what will happen to humanity. This feeling is expressed in catastrophic visions of the end of the world, such as asteroids about to strike the planet and apocalyptic prophecies of the future; for example, predictions of strange illnesses breaking out with no known cure. These are perceptions that can occur during the process of awakening, for a large part of humanity is already dying from disease, hunger and war caused by the economic system that has emerged on our planet and from which only a fraction of humanity reaps any benefits.

We all feel we are approaching a crossroads and that we have to correct the imbalances caused by our way of living. Economists and scientists are already beginning to argue for the need to make these changes. But, as Rosicrucians, we are convinced that this will



“It is estimated that 98% of the species that have ever existed on our planet have gone extinct.”



not happen without a substantial raising of world-wide consciousness. The conscious act taking part in an Order such as ours is important in moving forward towards a new society. Leaving behind old ways of thinking, old ways of relating with others, old ways of relating with the environment and ourselves, old ideas about what constitutes prosperity and happiness – all this requires inner development, and this is the scope of the Rosicrucian Order as our brothers of the past already called for when they referred to a *“Universal Reformation of Humankind.”* Being part of an Order like ours makes us responsible for a spiritual heritage passed down from person to person. And we understand the necessity of acquiring an inner balance that makes room for the expression of our Soul, often referred to as the *‘Master Within.’*

Unhappiness and frustration, which are different aspects of depression, are with us today as perhaps never before in human history. And the *‘bankruptcy’* of which Ben Okri speaks is the result of the distance between our rational and spiritual sides. Only by re-embracing our humanity and recognising our inner spiritual nature, are we able to understand that we are already a large part of the world’s environment. Indeed, the planet is us and all humanity is one. Let us not be mistaken though, for it takes hard work and diligent application in order to establish behaviour patterns that

accurately reflect our ideals. We are not talking about undertaking detailed research studies on ecology, world peace or respect for the animal kingdom; we seek to embrace such attitudes ourselves. To do this without artifice or sacrifice, we have to apply ourselves to a path of spiritual search from which beneficial changes will emerge. The many Rosicrucian meeting groups that exist throughout the world, are not only places where Rosicrucian principles are perpetuated, but also meeting places for the exchange of ideas, conversation and fraternity.

We must create or seek out opportunities of getting together with others who, like us, seek self-improvement and inner growth. We have to apply ourselves to creating groups that share ideas and reflect upon the fundamentals of life. We have to create *‘mystical ecosystems’* where consciousness expands like a beautiful vine that rises towards the light of the sun. This is a great way to feed the soul while we would all agree that the body is already quite well-fed. Rosicrucians of the 21st century have this educational task: to contribute to the expression of all the potentialities of humanity and of all the capabilities rooted in our true nature. In this way it will become no longer necessary to speak about ecology and the environment, for we will, by then, have understood that we and the environment are one.

“Only by re-embracing our humanity and recognising our inner spiritual nature, are we able to understand that we are already a large part of the world’s environment.”





Evidence of Rosicrucianism in Early Modern England

by Paul Goodall

This article tentatively suggests that the rise in public consciousness of Rosicrucianism was not confined entirely to Germany and particularly to the *Johann Valentin Andreae* (1586-1654) circle, as traditional scholarship has advocated.¹ Evidence of this lies in several English contemporary arenas, but I will confine myself to the cultural and, more especially, the literary sphere that characterised the early modern period of English history, namely the late 16th century and the first two decades of the 17th century.

Scotland's contribution to hermetic and Rosicrucian thought, though important, will not be considered here. It must be kept in mind, of course, that Hermetism had a direct influence on the Italian Renaissance through the works of *Plethon*, *Ficino* and *Mirandola*, among others. This influence allowed the surfacing of esoteric philosophies to come to the attention of literate people throughout Europe.





Francis Thynne (1545-1608), was a herald and antiquarian who was well connected to the major figures of the Elizabethan age. He had a particular interest in alchemy and combined this with his knowledge of heraldry to create his 'Insignia Philosophorum,' a coat of arms displaying clear alchemical symbolism.

The central shield is flanked by two figures. On the left we see the winged figure of Mercury with caduceus and winged helmet and sandals. On the right is Vulcan the god of fire, dressed as a blacksmith, with fiery projections from his shirt and hair. We also see flames at his ankles, mirroring the wings on Mercury's feet. He is holding a forging hammer reflecting the alchemical work.

According to Paracelsus, Vulcan symbolised the archetypal alchemist. In his 'The Advancement of Learning,' Francis Bacon wrote of alchemists as relying upon Vulcan.

Sources: https://www.alchemywebsite.com/Alchemy_Symbolism_Alchemical_coat_of_arms.html and Lyndy Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery* (see endnotes), p. 212-213.

Culture plays an important role in society. The attitudes, values, ideals and beliefs of the individual are greatly influenced by the way one associates with people and by the acquiring of knowledge through cultural areas such as books, theatre and works of art. Certainly, books published in this period in English, as opposed to Latin, and the greater freedoms that came with this change, brought about a rapid advancement of knowledge for all who could read. Those with new ideas were able to disseminate their thoughts to a much wider audience than ever before, though being careful to use veiled language, where necessary, to disguise new, sometimes radically different, world views that challenged the often brutal and intolerant authority of *'the Church'*, both Catholic and Protestant factions. This article will survey some of the associated personalities of the period and their writings, and identify those parts that allude to our subject in order to highlight a possible early English Rosicrucian undercurrent that operated in parallel to that of the German states.

Francis Thynne

We begin with a less known literary figure, earlier than Shakespeare, but one that provides us with an indication of Rosicrucian overtones in his writings: *Francis Thynne*

(c.1545-1608), cousin of Sir John Thynne of Longleat House in Wiltshire. Francis Thynne owned numerous alchemical manuscripts, reflecting his interest in the subject. His coat-of-arms displays the figure of Hermes holding a caduceus. Many of these manuscripts are today housed in the British Library, in Longleat House, and in the Ashmolean collection in the Bodleian. His preoccupation with esoteric subjects is evident in his *'Homo Animal Social'* (*'Man is a Social Animal'*) of 1578 where he discusses diversities such as Egyptian hieroglyphics, Druids and Cabala, the *"most profounde knowledge"* as observed by *"the learned Cabaliste Mr 'Dee'"* in his book *'monas heroglyphica'* [sic].² In his *'Emblemes and Epigrames'* [sic] (c.1600), Thynne mentions the meeting of a society at *"the Rose"* (no doubt the Rose Tavern) in his poem *'White heares'* [hairs]:

*At the Rose within newgate, there friendly did meet, four of my old friends, each other for to greet.*³

While this could be referring merely to a meeting of old friends to debate the grey hairs appearing in their beards, as indicative of their advancing age, it could also be a veiled reference to an exclusive society. An earlier



snippet, though, is much more revealing in its crucial reference to the *'damask rose'*, a flower of great importance to the later Rosicrucian movement in the German states.

The purple Rose which first Damasco bred,
adorned with colour gratefull to the sight.

So two fair dowries which man does enjoy...
true perfect love, and suer fidelity...
firmly preserve humane society.⁴

Roses have a rich symbolism in literature and myth, with the purple rose, in this instance, bringing together *"true perfecte love"* and *"suer fidelitie"*, two of the mainstays of human society. *'Damasco'* almost certainly refers to the town of Damascus (in modern-day Syria) since the Oxford Dictionary gives *'damask'* as deriving from the Latin *'Damascus.'* In the first Rosicrucian manifesto to appear in Europe, the *'Fama Fraternitatis'*, the key figure of the story, *'Christian Rosenkreutz'*, stayed for a time in Damascus during his travels. A further extract expands on this and suggests that this society, which met at the Rose [Tavern], was, in its deliberations, somehow associated with the image of a rose:

...their friends assisting in each hard annoye,
when want of each brings no security; both
which, this damask rose does well unfold, as
honest heart, which faith and love does hold.⁵

Thynne finishes with...

So our society, without love and faith, is
never perfect, as true reason says; for where is
perfect love, there trusty faith is found, and
where assured trust does dwell, there love
must needs abound.⁶

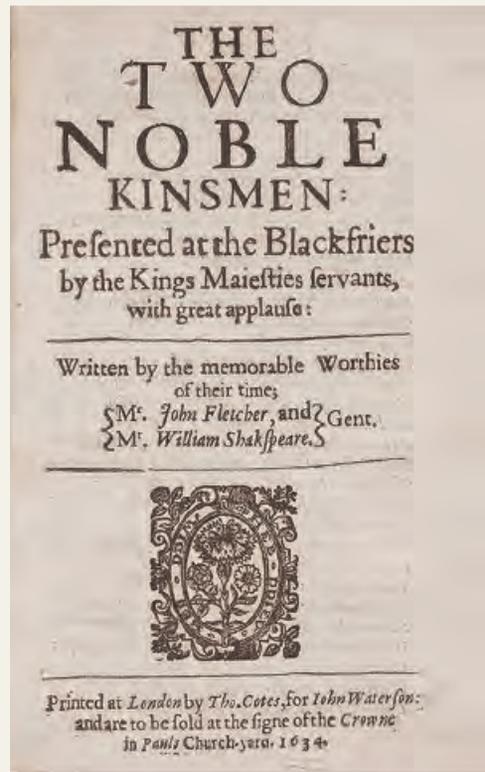
The central theme of the *'damask rose'* that Thynne uses, reinforces the idea of a *'Rose Society'* and its attributes. Maybe the damask rose was used as its emblem, though we may never know this with certainty. Moreover, the Latin expression *'sub rosa'* (*'under the rose'*) denotes knowledge or action under a veil of secrecy, and we know that it is an expression that was used by Rosicrucians of the period. Given Thynne's interest in hermetic philosophy and alchemy, it would be odd indeed if esoteric subjects such as these were not the primary items of discussion of this group of friends.

William Shakespeare

Of course it would be difficult not to encounter the heavyweight of the period, *William Shakespeare* (1564-1616). One of his plays in particular, *'The Two Noble Kinsmen'*, has a definite Rosicrucian resonance. Although it is believed to have been co-authored with *John Fletcher* (1579-1625), it has been argued that the two did not actually collaborate, with Fletcher merely penning some additions to it at a later date.⁷ Nevertheless, in the play, there are two main characters, *Palamon* and *Arcite*. They fall in love with the same woman, *Emilia*, the sister of *Hippolyta*, queen of the Amazons whom *Theseus*, the Duke of Athens, is about to marry. Eventually they have a duel and the gods *Venus* and *Mars* decide the outcome. The work was essentially derived from Chaucer's *'The Knight's Tale'*, which in turn has past origins in *'La Teseida'* by *Boccaccio*, and the epic poem *'Thebaid'* by *Statius* (d. 90 C.E.).



William Shakespeare, by Charles William Sherborn.



Although *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was premiered during October or November 1613 at Blackfriars theatre by the *King's Men Players*, it did not get into print until 1634. Perhaps its more than covert references to rose symbolism is what caused a delay in this, namely until after the initial outrage in clerical circles of the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* had subsided. The title page of the *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is especially interesting, as it depicts, among the various patterns of flowers, a *rose combined with a cross*, albeit small, at its centre. Perhaps Robert Fludd's title page to his *Summum Bonum* (1629) is derived in part from this, where a single rose is set atop a stalk that forms a cross beneath it. We can also speculate that it was no coincidence that the performance of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* occurred in the same year that *Friedrich U*, the Elector Palatine, married Elizabeth, the daughter of James I of Britain. The marriage was intended to ally the German Protestant Princes with the British monarchy against the Catholic Habsburgs of Europe. The whole scheme, however, collapsed into a Bohemian tragedy.

In the play there is a particular scene (Act 2, Scene 2) that portrays a ceremony in the temple of Diana. The vestal virgin *Emilia*, in her role as priestess, and utterly pure, enters in white, carrying a wheaten sheaf and preceded by a maid bearing a silver hind. Having been put in place upon the altar, the hind is set alight but

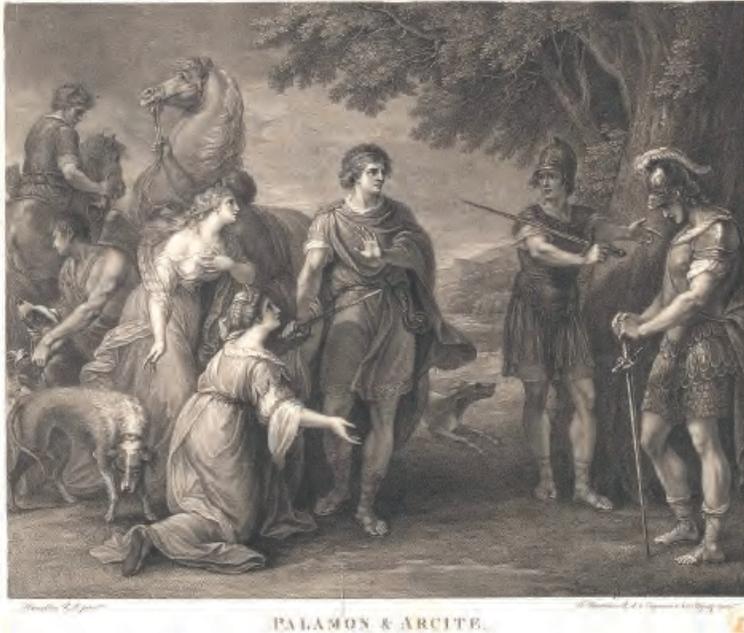
disappears to be replaced by a rose-tree with a single rose upon it. Emilia tells us that the rose is the *"very emblem of a maid"* (i.e., a virgin). She says:

For when the west wind courts her gently,
How modestly she blows and paints the sun
With her chaste blushes!
When the north comes near her,
Rude and impatient, then, like chastity,
She locks her beauties in her bud again
And leaves him to base briars.

So when the rose falls from the tree that appears after the burning of the hind, she takes this as a sign that Diana has discharged her and she may then marry.

This scene from *The Two Noble Kinsmen* derives from the story of *Palamon and Arcite* as told in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* where Emily (Emilia) is associated with rose imagery. It has been conjectured that Emilia symbolises Princess Elizabeth, and this would certainly reinforce the Palatinate link mentioned above. There is also an intriguing connection to Michael Maier here. In December of 1611, Maier, acting as emissary to Friedrich the Elector Palatine, sent James I a Christmas greetings card containing, among other items, a poem with the line:⁸ *"May the Rose not be gnawed by the Canker of the*





Palamon and Arcite, by Francesco Bartolozzi, 1728–1815.

North Wind.” There appears to be some resonance with the Shakespeare verse above, particularly the reference to a rose being blown by a “cankorous”, “rude and impatient” north wind. As a metaphor, *wind* denotes *change* and in alchemy, it equates with ‘*argent vive*’ or *Mercurius*, the agent of transmutation,⁹ namely, through the interaction of opposites. Coincidence? Does this indicate a familiarity with Shakespeare’s work? Given that the premiere of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was in 1613, perhaps Maier had seen an earlier text of the play, as he is known to have had a significant connection to Shakespeare’s circle of associates.

Philip Henslowe

Philip Henslowe (1550-1616), a theatrical impresario and entrepreneur of the time, notes in his diary for 17th September 1594, a premiere performance of *Palamon and Arcite*¹⁰, (being a translation of the *Knights’ Tale*’ by *Chaucer* who died in 1400), at the appropriately named ‘*Rose Theatre*’, built in 1587/8, which he owned, although the ground was apparently rented.¹¹ Notably, Christopher Marlowe’s most popular plays, including *Doctor Faustus*, were performed there. It is also interesting that we see an association between Henslowe and the image of a rose, particularly in the context of the subject matter of this article.

The *Diary* was handwritten in manuscript form by Henslowe, mostly with some work by assistant scribes, and

it was passed on to the actor *Edward Alleyn* following Henslowe’s death in 1616. Alleyn was married to Henslowe’s step-daughter, Joan, in 1592. It should be noted here that there was an older version of this play by *Richard Edwardes* that had been performed in 1566 at Oxford University in honour of a visit by Queen Elizabeth I.

John Donne

John Donne (1572-1631) was the leading poet of the *Metaphysical School* and dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral, London (1621-31). He was a keen Palatinist and visited the Elector Palatine in Heidelberg in 1612 in connection with the wedding preparations for the following year. In his poem, ‘*The Crosse*’, from a manuscript dated no later than 1614, there is a telling verse with obvious references to a Rose Cross:

Material Crosses then, good physic be,
But spiritual have chief dignity,
These for extracted chimique medicine serve,
And cure much better, and as well preserve.

He discussed this poem in a letter to *Sir Henry Goodyer* (1571-1627) who, like Donne, was a member of the *Mermaid Club*.¹² This literary Society was likely to have been a cover for Rosicrucian activities held at the



Portrait of John Donne by William Skelton, line engraving from the early 19th century.

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Mermaid, a “celebrated tavern in Friday-street.”¹³ Such was its appreciation that Francis Bacon wrote to Ben Jonson:

What Things have we seen, Done at the Mermaid!
 Heard Words that have been, So Nimble and so full
 of Subtle Flame.¹⁴

It had three grades: *probationers, brothers* and *fellows* and, according to State papers, the club was under constant suspicion.

Some of Donne’s sermons, notably of 1619 and 1621, reflected intimate knowledge of the ideas of *Robert Fludd* and *William Harvey* on the circulation of the blood which was not in print at this time.¹⁵ His Christmas Day sermon of 1624 quotes from the Rosicrucian, *Daniel Cramer*, a Protestant theologian and author of ‘*The True Society of Jesus and the Rosy Cross*’ (1617).

John Dowland

Moving away from literature now, we can look at some evidence in the musical field. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* there is a ballad entitled ‘*The George Aloe.*’ Importantly, the first part of this ballad is proven to have been registered with the *Stationers Company* for the publisher *Thomas Creede* on 14th January 1595.¹⁶ This is close enough to

Henslowe’s 1594 diary entry concerning the premiere performance of *Palamon and Arcite* in which *The George Aloe* is included, to support the origin of the later *The Two Noble Kinsmen* of 1613. The music for this ballad was composed by none other than the great lutenist, *John Dowland* (1562-1626). This adds weight to the argument that the *Kinsmen* play, as a late work by Shakespeare, is not as certain as some scholars would have us believe.

Dowland had, among others, one patron in particular that is germane to our subject. This was *Moritz*, the *Landgrave of Hessen-Kassel*, a powerful man closely associated with Rosicrucian circles. The first editions of the Rosicrucian Manifestos were printed in Kassel with Moritz’ knowledge and consent. John Dowland served as court musician to the Landgrave during the 1590’s where his talent was greatly admired and in his ‘*Varietie of Lute-Lessons*’ (1610), Moritz is credited with composing the first pavan.¹⁷ This was possibly a ploy to familiarise those at the British court with the Landgrave in order to strengthen Palatinist sympathies.

Given his composition of *The George Aloe* in the 1594 premiere of *Palamon and Arcite*, and his employment at the Kassel court which began in March 1595, it is not unreasonable to speculate that it was Dowland who brought to the Landgrave Moritz the

Moritz of Hessen-Kassel (pictured opposite) was a great patron of Rosicrucian alchemists and medical men; the link between his court and England was strong for many years. An anglophile, he employed English ‘comedians’ and musicians such as John Dowland, whose handwritten work appears here from the Album Amicorum of Johannes Cellarius.



<https://www.puzzlecanon.com/single-post/2018/05/30/john-dowlands-descending-canon-its-composition> (from the British Museum).



Matthäus Merian - http://www.bibliothek.uni-augsburg.de/dda/dr/hist/we_00001-00021/we_01084/ [Public Domain]



mystical aspects of rose symbolism evoked in the play. This would be a significant point toward reinforcing the thrust of this article.

The high regard accorded to Dowland by Rosicrucians is indicated by his ‘*Farewell*’ appearing on page one of Mylius’ ‘*Thesaurus*’ (Frankfurt, 1620) under the title ‘*Grammatica illustriss: Doulandi.*’ *Johann Daniel Mylius* (c.1583-1642) was a prominent Rosicrucian and personal physician to Moritz, and Robert Fludd even used some of his prescription methods in England. He was also a composer for the Lute and produced the alchemical treatises, ‘*Opus medico-chymicum*’ (1618) and ‘*Philosophia Reformata*’ (1622).

Philip Hainhofer and William Trumball

Two other important personalities associated with Dowland that provide a window on his Rosicrucian circle of acquaintances were *William Trumball* (c.1575-1635), who put together an anthology of lute pieces (the Trumball *Lute Book*’ (c.1595) which included *The George Aloe*), and *Philip Hainhofer* (1578-1647), a diplomat and art connoisseur. Hainhofer’s manuscript collection of lute pieces today resides in the Wolfenbüttel library. Begun in 1603 or 1604 it contains three singular contributions from Dowland. *Daniel Stolcius* dedicated his Rosicrucian ‘*The Hermetic Garden*’ (1627) to Hainhofer who...

...inspired me with your gentle conversation, even to the extent of thoroughly showing me your storehouse of philosophy, the like of which I have never seen in my travels.

Several contemporary letters indicate that William Trumball was acquainted with Robert Fludd. Furthermore, they show that by the beginning of 1610 his relationship to the Landgrave of Hessen-Kassel was established. Trumball’s daughter, Elizabeth, married *George Rudolph Weckherlin* (1584-1653), a German poet who resided in England. Weckherlin eventually became an Under-secretary of State at Whitehall in 1624. His diary gives a chronological correspondence with *Lewis Ziegler*, a Rosicrucian and the agent of *Lord Craven*, who was the main financial supporter of James I’s daughter Elizabeth of Bohemia, pointing to his Palatinist sympathies and his initiation into a Rosicrucian Society. Moreover, it also shows an acquaintance with Robert Fludd and Weckherlin’s purchase of a house from him.

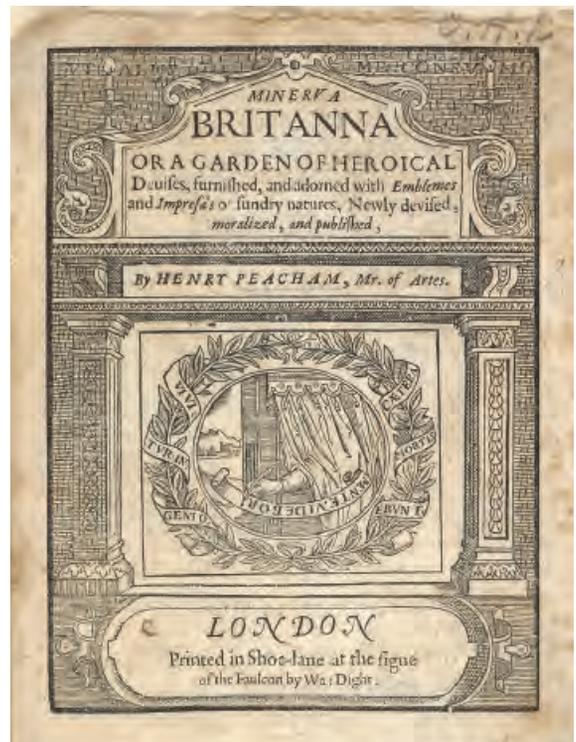
Henry Peacham

Another associate of John Dowland was *Henry Peacham* (1578-1644) who was a prolific writer. Significantly, in his book of emblems ‘*Minerva Britannia*’ of 1612, Peacham not only dedicates an emblem to Dowland, but also to the Landgrave Moritz. A note in the margin records:

This most noble Prince beside his admirable knowledge in all learning, & the languages, has excellent skill in music. Mr Dowland has many times showed me ten or twelve several sets of Songs for his Chapel of his own composing.¹⁸

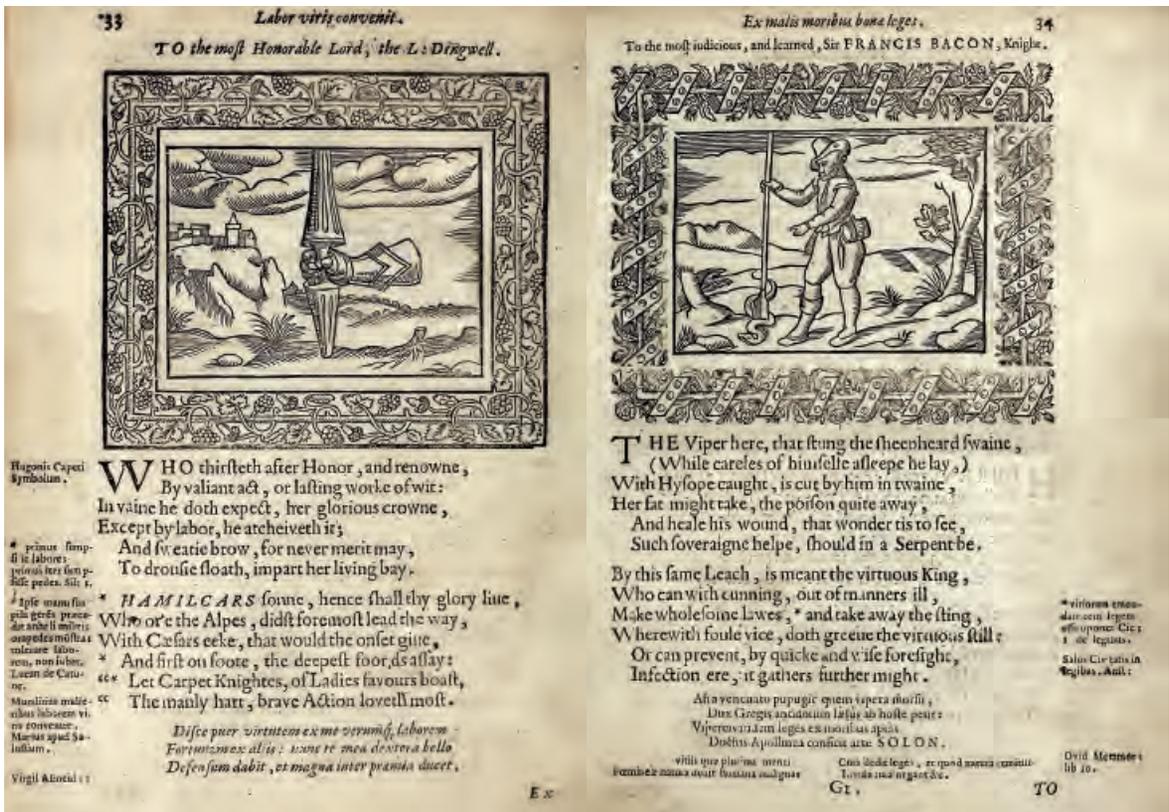
Also in *Minerva Britannia* a verse appears which has an intriguing link to the rose symbolism in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and Michael Maier’s ‘*Christmas Card*’ of 1611:

Here, Philomel,¹⁹ in silence sits alone,
In depth of winter, on the bared brier,
Whereas the Rose, had once her beauty shown;
Which Lords, and Ladies, did so much desire:



Henry Peacham’s *Minerva Britannia* “Or a garden of Heroical Devises, furnished, and adorned with Emblemes and Impresa’s [Impressions] of sundry natures, Newly devised, moralized, and published.” (n.d. 1612)





Two pages from Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britannia*. Notice that page 33 is particularly emphasised with an asterisk, the only page to do so. The emblem appears to show a gauntlet grasping a lance (shake-spear). This is followed by the next emblem depicting Francis Bacon cutting by shaking a spear at a serpent which represents ignorance. This resonates with the persona of the Greek goddess of knowledge and wisdom, Pallas Athena, who is often depicted as shaking her spear at the serpent of ignorance. Some say this is the reason for Bacon's apparent *nom de plume*, Shake-speare, since he took the goddess as his muse when he was young.

But fruitless now, in winter's frost, and snow,
It does despised and unregarded grow.²⁰

As an aside, there is another interesting point before leaving *Minerva Britannia* that I can't resist including here, tentative as it may be, but one that resonates with the subject matter. It appears to show veiled references to *Francis Bacon* and *William Shakespeare*, and their association, on two pages in particular – 33 and 34. I direct your attention to the accompanying illustration for more information. Although I cannot vouch for its veracity, it is interesting, all the same.

Getting back to the literary aspect of our subject, we find one particularly interesting snippet, using Rosicrucian terminology, from another of Peacham's works, *'The Truth of our Times'* (1638), which, taken in context with Francis Thynne's poem *'Societie'*, provides us with the idea of a tavern tradition such as the Mermaid mentioned above:

...in many places, as well in England, as the Low Countries, they have over their Tables a rose painted, and what is spoken under the Rose, must not be revealed; the reason is this: The Rose, being sacred to Venus, whose amours and stolen sports that they might never be revealed, her son Cupid would needs dedicate to Harpocrates, the god of Silence.²¹

Conclusion

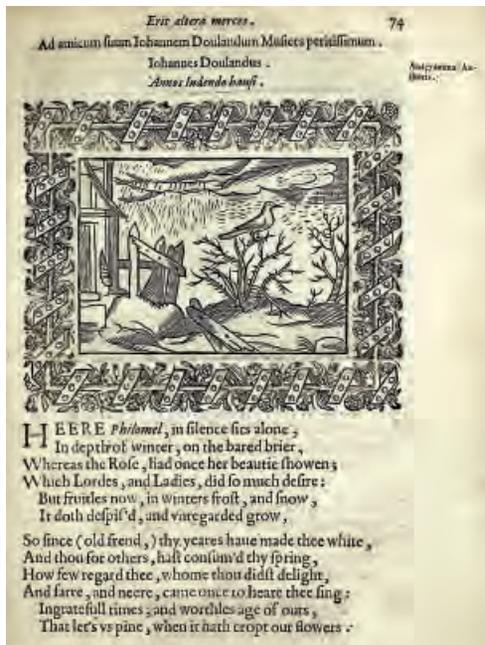
The main thrust of this article has been to show how Rosicrucian and Hermetic ideas of this period in English history permeated the cultural fields of theatre, poetry, prose and music, bringing together many important and lesser personalities. It has hopefully demonstrated that the flow of ideas between London and Kassel were not all one-sided. In England and wider Britain there was a distinctly common consensus of thought structured around the



combined symbolism of the rose and the cross that gave rise to ‘*Rose Societies*’ and an outflowing of Rosicrucian ideas to Europe. English influence and concepts spread to enthusiastically receptive audiences in Germany, particularly since English actors were employed by the Landgrave Moritz at the Kassel court. Many influential figures were motivated to bring about a utopian vision, as espoused by early Rosicrucians, into actual reality, through political and religious means, culminating in the ill-fated Palatinate marriage of Friedrich V and Elizabeth Stuart in 1613 and the subsequent publication of the first Rosicrucian Manifesto, the ‘*Fama Fraternitatis*’, in 1614.

Endnotes

1. This is more fully discussed in an article by Ron Heisler in his ‘*The Forgotten Roots of English Rosicrucianism*’, *The Hermetic Journal*, (ed. Adam McLean), 1992, pp. 97-112. This article is based largely on his research.
2. As quoted in Heisler, *ibid.*, p. 98.



A verse in Minerva Britannia which appears to have an intriguing link to the rose symbolism in ‘The Two Noble Kinsmen’ and Michael Maier’s ‘Christmas Card’ of 1611.

3. F. J. Furnivall (ed.), Francis Thynne’s ‘*Emblemes and Epigrames*’, (48) ‘*White heares*’, 1876, p. 75.
4. *Ibid.*, (27) ‘*Societie*’, p. 25.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
6. *Ibid.*

7. Fletcher was educated at Cambridge University. He wrote about 16 plays of his own and collaborated with several more. His father was Queen Elizabeth’s personal chaplain and later the Bishop of London.
8. See further, Paul Goodall, ‘*A Rosicrucian Christmas Card*’ (revised), *Rosicrucian Digest*, Vol. 89, No. 1, 2011, pp. 41-45.
9. Lyndy Abraham, *Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, CUP, 2003 reprint (1998), p. 217.
10. The ‘*Diary of Philip Henslowe from 1591 to 1609*’, printed from the original manuscript at Dulwich College, (J. Payne Collier, editor), London, Printed for the Shakespeare Society, 1845, p. 41.
11. See: ‘*The Diary of Philip Henslowe*’, *ibid.*, p. 5, where he lays out the expenses for repairs to the Rose Theatre in 1595 (during Lent).
12. Donne wrote weekly letters to Goodyer over a period of time (after 1600). Some of this correspondence is printed in ‘*Letters to several Persons of Honour*’ (1651), and over forty were published in Edmund Gosse’s ‘*Life of Donne*’, 1899, Vols I-II.
13. W. Gifford, ‘*The Works of Ben Jonson*’, Vol. I, 1816, London, pp. LXV-LXVI. It appears, however, that there were at least three Mermaid Taverns in London at the time, but none of those were in a ‘Friday-street’ as noted in I. A. Shapiro, ‘*The Mermaid Club*’ in ‘*The Modern Language Review*’, V. 45, No. 1, 1950, p. 6.
14. Alfred Dodd, ‘*Shakespeare: Creator of Freemasonry*’, Rider, n.d. 1933, p. 15.
15. Ron Heisler, ‘*Rosicrucianism: The First Blooming in Britain*’ in ‘*The Hermetic Journal*’ (ed. Adam McLean), Glasgow, 1989, p. 34. and W. Pagel, ‘*William Harvey Revisited*’ in ‘*History of Science*’, Vols. VIII-IX, 1969-70, on Donne’s reference to research into the viscera. (Heisler n.16.)
16. Ron Heisler, ‘*The Forgotten Roots of English Rosicrucianism*’, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
18. Henry Peacham, ‘*Minerva Britannia*’, London, (n.d. 1612), p. 101. This work was entered on the Stationers’ Register on 9th August, 1611. (Heisler, *op. cit.*, p. 107.)
19. Philomela is a minor figure in Greek mythology who is frequently invoked as a direct and figurative symbol in literary and artistic works in the Western canon. She is associated with the nightingale, the female of which is actually mute, since only the male of the species sings, hence the reference in the poem to her silence.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
21. Henry Peachman, ‘*The Truth of our Times: Revealed out of one Man’s Experience, by way of Essay*’, London, Printed by N.O. for James Becket [sic], 1638, p. 174.





Four Virtues of a Mystic

by **Sven Johansson**
(Grand Master)

We are told that some two millennia ago, there once lived in the Roman province of Judea a person who was known simply as *'the carpenter's son'* and, for many, he was nothing less than the one and only son of the Hebrew God. To some however, he was known not so much as the only begotten son of God, than an extraordinary human being with deep spiritual insight, great intellect and compassion, and possessing a power of healing of an unworldly sort.

By his early thirties, this man had undoubtedly attained a high degree of spiritual maturity and wished to spread his insights and wisdom to as wide an audience as possible. Exhorting people to follow



his example of living a life of spiritual devotion to an almost impossibly high level, he challenged them to do better and even greater things than he did. And in the two millennia since he lived, he has been regarded by millions as the ultimate template for a true mystic from whom hundreds of millions the world over have derived comfort, inspiration and even a reason for living.

Although the Christian gospels continue to inspire millions to live better lives, the details we can glean from them give us only a very broad outline of what the traits of a true mystic really are. Wide reading and research elsewhere is therefore essential in order to fill in the gaps; for there have existed some highly advanced mystics, men and women, who lived their entire lives within the often suffocating boundaries of their ecclesiastical disciplines yet still managed to leave us clues as to how, without leaving their religious faiths, they escaped the shackles of their confinement and silently, in great privacy, incorporated into their lives the sort of universal qualities that form the mark of every accomplished mystic.

Men and women of great spiritual attainment undoubtedly lived before the carpenter's son, many have lived after him and, even in our own era, it is certain that some great souls are alive today. Truly accomplished mystics do not necessarily have to be affiliated with any particular religion, for they transcend all attempts at labelling while they privately commune in the stillness of the heart, in direct and unimpeded ways, with their highest concepts and experiences of a Supreme Deity.

Mysticism Misunderstood

Like *'meditation'* the word *'mysticism'* is greatly misunderstood. For some, it evokes ideas of occult practices, incantations and strange goings on, and, to a great many, it is equated with something unwholesome or even malevolent. What great misunderstanding exists, for mysticism is nothing less than the deepest part of

the human quest for self-knowledge; the acquisition of an understanding through which men, women and children of good will have glimpses of their most sublime concepts of the primeval source of all human *'Good.'* Note that I did not use the word *'God'* but *'Good'*, for there are some who do not accept the existence of a being, power, force or intelligence greater than anything that a sentient human can experience.

The intellectual notion of a higher *'Good'*, as in good human morals, good human virtues, decent human behaviour, fairness in human interactions with all other creatures, justice towards all beings, good political governance, etc..., this more than suffices for

such people as ideals to strive for and in no way reduces the personal goodness that many possess in abundance, simply because they have not yet experienced that *'Good'* in the form that others have, namely, in the form of their deepest and most reliable guide and friend through life, something they have experienced in deeply intimate terms and to whom they have assigned the word *'God.'*

A Mystic Defined

According to Rosicrucian philosophy, a mystic can be defined as...

...one who communes with a deeply personal inner realisation of a Supreme Reality, immanent in all things animate and inanimate, and who perceives that Reality directly, deliberately and with confidence, in an all-absorbing, whole-being experience often referred to simply as the God of his or her realisation.

For many others though, a mystic is not so much a person in tune with a personal God, as a person with extraordinary powers, a person of virtuous character perhaps, deep and mysterious and with great psychic abilities. Some Rosicrucian mystics certainly embrace these and many other admirable qualities, but such qualities are not ends in themselves..., they are merely



consequences of the manner in which the lives of such mystics are governed while keeping in sharp focus their main task, namely, an ever closer union with their personal, highest concepts of that Supreme Reality, and a constant striving for purity of purpose and sanctity in every thought, word and deed that comes from them.

Greater Challenges for Mystics

Accomplished or aspiring mystics are regularly tested with more challenging situations than people who care little about their inner growth; for mystics actively attempt to live by *'higher'*, more exacting laws than most other people. And the demands of those higher laws naturally imply the need for greater precision in personal thoughts, words and deeds. There is a need for greater control of every aspect of the mystic's life, in order to remain on a given path of inner evolvment.

As abilities increase, ever more options are available to choose from. And with more choices, comes the need for greater powers of discretion, the ability to accurately choose good from bad, right from wrong. With an ever broadening, more inclusive perspective of the world, an evolved mystic can often foresee the pitfalls of life long before becoming trapped in them. And whatever evasive action is needed, can then be taken before disaster strikes.

Mystics act Positively and Deliberately

True mystics are positive and deliberate in choosing only actions that produce results of only the highest moral and spiritual integrity. And they plan their actions carefully in ways that attracts them to optimal learning experiences. Like mature students who need no tutors to encourage them to study, true mystics examine their place in life and their reactions to it with purpose and deliberation. And they seldom need any encouragement to do the highest good at every stage of life; for an inner certainty reassures them that they are on the right path.

The technique of development that true mystics practise, does however, carry with it certain safeguards against defeat. They are protected in ways that ordinary people are not, for they are part of an *égrégoire* or group consciousness of psychic protection precisely because of their devotion to transcendent ideals that are common to the ideals of many others of high spiritual and moral values. Under the umbrella protection of those safeguards, they ease themselves slowly and, with full understanding, into conducting their lives on an altogether *'higher plane'* than that of all other people.

Although such mystics live in the here-and-now in material reality, and are governed by the same



“True mystics are positive and deliberate in choosing only actions that produce results of only the highest moral and spiritual integrity.”



physical constraints as all other people, their real focus is on something immaterial and inward. Their single, most important goal is not of this world, but of a transcendent state of being far beyond the hustle and bustle of everyday life; and this they privately pursue above all else.

With the inevitable spiritual maturity that has emerged in those who have happily found and embarked upon genuine paths of spiritual unfoldment, there exist among them certain common-sense *'virtues'* that they steadfastly live by and which shield them from some of the more obviously wasteful and unnecessary struggles and temptations that so many people must deal with daily.

And it is by putting these virtues into practice that such people fortify and prepare themselves for the challenges that their karmic obligations require them to face up to and eventually overcome. The virtues they practise are not religious or moral allegories but down-to-earth practical actions that have both long-term and immediate beneficial consequences for both themselves and the many others whose lives they secretly touch. I will list just four such virtues today, though there are, of course, many more.

First: Love and Compassion

First and foremost of the virtues is a deep and abiding *love* and *compassion* for all things in Creation. People intending harm will enter and exit the life of every mystic, just as mystics are sometimes graced as well by the presence of kind people too. But through it all, mystics are dedicated to the welfare of all people, equally, just as devoted parents are dedicated to the welfare of their children, whether they are well-behaved or not, whether they are bright or dim-witted, and whether they love their parents in return or not.

Mystics can sense the faults and weaknesses of others, and they realise which lessons such people have yet to learn. Armed with that knowledge, their

compassion for the struggles of such people comes to the fore and they surround them deliberately and purposefully with the spiritual Light of their being and do all they can to assist them to understand the full extent of their plight and what they need to do in order to improve their conditions. Such people may not know the mystics who are helping them. Indeed they may not care about their welfare, or even be grateful for the assistance they are receiving. But true mystics still silently hope and pray for the day that those they are secretly assisting will find the door that leads to their personal paths to spiritual unfoldment. Those are karmic bonds that can only be loosed upon accomplishment of this.

True mystics neither gossip nor engage in thoughts, words or actions that are intended to bring harm to others. Whenever they cause harm through clumsiness or inexperience, they immediately go about setting things right, even if doing so takes the rest of their lives. Their every act is in the interests of harmony, and they conduct themselves accordingly. Their love is freely given, it is outgoing and unasked for, and they serve for the love of service, without thought of recompense. But their greatest and most overpowering love is for the very source of their existence. However they perceive it, this deeply personal

God is the closest, most helpful and intimate companion they have, the only one who is at their side at all times, though especially during their most difficult moments. With clarity and understanding they concur with the exhortation of the Old Testament authors and the master Jesus when they said: *"Love God with all your heart, with all your might and with all your understanding."* That is the highest law of a true mystic.

Second: Gratitude and Humility

The second group of virtues are *gratitude* for all that life brings, both good and bad, and *humility* in accepting whatever their fate decrees. True mystics cannot help but feel humbled before the magnificence of Creation; for the more they learn of its intricate perfection and

"True mystics neither gossip nor engage in thoughts, words or actions that are intended to bring harm to others."





“...true mystics know full well that their most important lessons could equally come from an abyss of poverty and deprivation as they could come from the heights of wealth and waste”

symmetry, the more they become aware of their utter insignificance in the broader scheme of things.

Because of their humility, they are therefore always ready to listen, always ready to learn, both from the meek and the humble, as well as from the arrogant and powerful; for lessons come from all quarters and at all times, and those with humility accept it from wherever it arises. Class distinction and privilege has no place with the law of Karma, and true mystics know full well that their most important lessons could equally come from an abyss of poverty and deprivation as they could come from the heights of wealth and waste.

Without humility, many an opportunity of learning is lost. No person is so lowly or so unworthy that

something could not be learned from them. Similarly, no person is so arrogant, high and mighty that a mystic could not learn lessons from them too. A true mystic never takes offence, even under the gravest, most intimidating and unjust of circumstances. For the acts of taking offence or harbouring feelings of hurt constitute the most serious and damaging error of all; and against this, the mystic remains constantly alert. Yet..., should they, despite their best attempts at retaining their composure, still succumb, and if the harsh treatment they receive causes them to stumble briefly and lash out in anger, they are quick to regain their composure, rise up, stand erect and correct their error immediately. And then, with a spring in their stride and gratitude for the experience, they continue on their path, unperturbed and unencumbered by the past.



Their humility manifests as gratitude for all that passes their way. Everything that happens to them, whether pleasant or unpleasant, they accept gratefully as a part of their essential learning experience. They know how short life is and how soon their learning experiences on earth will be over. And so, with gratitude and humility, they accept all that life brings them, both good and bad, and daily thank the God of their realisation for the experiences and lessons that come their way.

Third: Justice and Karma

The third virtue is a firm conviction that *justice* always prevails in the end, and *karma* is an inescapable law of life. True mystics know that they reap only what they themselves have sown. With confidence, they view no actions ever in personal terms but as manifestations of the great lessons they are meant to learn through the operation of the inviolable law of compensation, the law of karma.

Even if their limited time on earth may not be long enough to see the full operation of this law, they have unshakeable confidence that the law is universally just and serves the best interests of all living creatures. True mystics cooperate with the law of karma eagerly and with enthusiasm. And if they know there is a need to answer for something they have done or for something they should have done, they do all they can to compensate for their error and bring on the learning process of karmic compensation as quickly and thoroughly as possible.

At all times and under all circumstances, true mystics are just in their thoughts, words and deeds. They therefore mete out their responses to life carefully and with thought; for they know that no matter what a person may do in trying to escape the operation of this inviolable law, the full impartiality and severity of its operation will eventually manifest.

They therefore abide by the principles of justice

to the best of their understanding and ability, and make their judgements only in fair and equitable ways. The Cosmic contains all things, knows all things, experiences all things; and true mystics judiciously weigh the arguments of both sides in any controversy before taking action in the best interests of all. They know they are not always deciding between right and wrong, but rather between two partial views of a single truth, like two observers looking at the same landscape, the one sunlit under a blue sky, the other lit only by moonlight. Both describe the same landscape but through different conditions of light and understanding. Both speak sincerely from their limited understanding and conditions, and both are therefore right as far as their inner development permits.

“...they have unshakeable confidence that the law is universally just and serves the best interests of all living creatures.”

Without the compensatory laws and impartial justice of the law of karma, there can be neither order nor peace. Cosmic Law, with its inherent universal justice for all, is therefore openly invited to operate in the life of every true mystic, exacting and onerous as that law may at times be.

Fourth: Discretion

The fourth virtue is that of *discretion*. True mystics are always discreet and never flaunt their powers or wisdom, even though these may be considerable. Those who flaunt what they know or use their powers ostentatiously to impress others, certainly have neither true wisdom nor real power, and are on a fast-track to perdition.

There are always those who claim to have unusual powers, who claim to walk with Cosmic Masters, or to be specially chosen by them for elite tasks. Many claim to be messengers of God, but do not practise even the most basic of virtues they preach. The internet is filled with such fraudsters, some extremely wealthy and plausible sounding, but they must not be heeded. Their ends are for personal glory and financial benefit exclusively, and they are not worthy of being called even aspiring mystics, even though they may have accomplished a great deal in the past and may have accumulated great psychic powers.



True mystics are known by their writings, their words and above all, their deeds. With silence, sensitivity and discretion, they pass through life much as a gentle breeze can be felt but not seen. For most of us, they are the gentle souls we know, respect and can trust with anything. But for accomplished mystics like themselves, they are like rods of Light of intense and scintillating brilliance, acting purposefully with efficiency, and always entirely in secret and in the interests, not only of their own inner evolvment, but especially in the interests of the inner lives of as many other beings as they can.

And so, I have briefly covered the four virtues of a mystic that I wanted to highlight today. They are not the only ones, of course, but they are nevertheless important. And now that I have briefly outlined them, you would be right in asking if there are any simple techniques of bringing such virtues into active use in one's own life. Well, there are many well-worn paths to such accomplishments but one that struck me as the simplest I've ever encountered came about unexpectedly in the following way.

One day, I saw a small message on a noticeboard cluttered with many different messages, none of them

of interest to me. But this one message, brief as it was, struck a deep chord in me and I knew immediately it was a gift of great simplicity. It said: *"Before you speak, your intentions must pass through portals three, one of each kind in letters bold to see: Is it True? Is it Necessary? Is it Kind?"* That was all I needed to know to understand that, hidden beneath those words, was a simple truth, a new rule of life for me.

Over the next month, my mind repeatedly returned to those three brief questions and I set about tracing their origin. Some said they originated in antiquity with Socrates, others said they were originally from the Buddha, Confucius or Lao Tzu. And then others said they were from the 13th century Persian mystic Rumi, and others ascribed them to a litany of other individuals from Abraham Lincoln to Eleanor Roosevelt, William Shakespeare, Sai Baba and even Queen Victoria herself. None of them were anywhere near to being plausible until I found an 1872 poem by the author *Mary Ann Pietzker* entitled..., *'Is it True? Is it Necessary? Is it Kind?'* It is a delightful poem and still widely available. Inspired by her words, I would like to end off with words in a similar vein which summarise the kernel of truth and deeper understanding that I gained from her lovely poem.

"True mystics are always discreet and never flaunt their powers or wisdom, even though these may be considerable."





“With silence, sensitivity and discretion, they pass through life much as a gentle breeze can be felt but not seen.”

Hear dear friend of things of your heart, of things you must know afore we part. For portals three before you now stand, inviting safe passage through strength of your own hand.

Be awake dear child to what you see, for portals stood here before you met Me. In heart and mind and most loving soul, to Light, Life and Love your dear self will unfold.

And so, dear friend, a caution I give you this day, that through these words with dearest wish, you will find the life and path that was ever destined to be your way.

As to what you're about to think, to say or do, pass first through these portals three
True -- Necessary -- Kind.

And if 'tis TRUE what you're about to think, to say or do, pass with great verity through this portal first, and seek truth above all to quench your mystic thirst.

But stay dear child and rest a while if truth walks not with you this day, 'neath the shadow and dark umbra of an unhappy life.

And if 'tis NECESSARY what you're about to think, to say or do, pass with urgency through this portal too, and seek only what's needed to find the mystic view.

But stay dear child and rest a while if truth walks not with you this day, 'neath the shadow and dark umbra of an unhappy life.

And if 'tis KIND what you're about to think, to say or do, pass with kindness through this portal last, and seek but gentle feelings 'wards all creatures who've shared your path, and brought happiness and fulfilment to your life..., until arrival of that final breath that was destined from life's start, to be your very last.

But stay dear child and rest a while if truth walks not with you this day, 'neath the shadow and dark umbra of an unhappy life.

But if through portals three you've easily passed, 'neath Light and blue skies of blessed day on your path; go sow good seed 'mongst mortals few, to one day reap great harvests anew, 'mongst mortals drew, awakened to Light, with fond gratitude for what is Kind, Necessary, True; and great love for the Life that is you.



by Susan Ayles

DESIDERATA

Who was Max Ehrmann?

Many readers will be familiar with the thoughtful poem *Desiderata*, which is reproduced often on greeting cards, posters and in other contexts where a person might seek to send words of wisdom and comfort to another in need. For years the rumour has persisted that the words were penned in ancient times, hundreds of years ago. Indeed, they do have a timeless quality about them, with a quiet profundity seemingly as relevant now as in days of yore. But it was by error that they were attributed to an unknown author of, in or before the 1640s.

The oft-repeated gaff was the work, it seems, of one, Rev. Frederick Kates, a clergyman of St Paul's Church in the American town of Baltimore, Maryland. In 1956 the well-meaning rector included *Desiderata* in a collection of devotional material which he brought together for the use of his congregation. From Wikipedia we have:

The compilation included the church's foundation date: 'Old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore A.D. 1692.' Consequently, the date of the text's authorship was (and still is) widely mistaken as 1692, the year of the church's foundation.¹

The myth of its ancient date was born swiftly afterward, possibly because it lent an extra layer of charm and poignancy to the text to think of



it written so long before. It then persisted to grow legs for the next few decades as more and more people became enchanted by Desiderata, Latin for *'things desired'*, or *'to be desired'* or variations of like translation. Rev. Kates is thought to have circulated only about 200 copies and yet it became one of the best known pieces to ordinary people who were not particularly literary, spiritual or mystical by nature.

In fact, the sage advice was penned in the 1920s by an American writer Max Ehrmann who was born the youngest of five children to Bavarian immigrant parents in Terre Haute, Indiana, on 16 September, 1872 and passed away in September 1945. Ehrmann's sensitive and sensible words give the lie to anyone believing that lawyers have no hearts, for a lawyer he was, setting up practice in his home town after gaining an English degree from DePauw University, Indiana and then studying law and philosophy at Harvard University in the 1890s.

He spent two years as State Attorney in Vigo, Indiana, then worked in the family businesses of meat packing and overalls manufacture for 10 years, until he was 40. After that, he devoted himself full-time to writing and became prolific, acquiring the nickname Poet Laureate of Terre Haute. The website desiderata.com records:

*Toward the end of his life, during an interview, he told a writer, 'At DePauw, I contracted a disease which I have never shaken off. The disease was Idealism. I took it to Harvard with me where I studied philosophy. Because of it I did the thing in life I wanted to do—writing.'*²

The website continues:

During his life, Max Ehrmann contributed great thoughts to our literary lexicons, blending the magic of words and wisdom with his worthy observations. His deep and abiding concern over social issues are reflected throughout his many works. Such poems as *'Complacent Women'*, written in 1918, and *'Washington, D.C.'*, written in 1924 about the oil scandals, are as relevant today as they were then.



Max Ehrmann

He searched endlessly for spiritual contentment, often turning to nature as in his poem, *'The Noise of the City and Away.'* His philosophical writings are a search for social truth and peace, messages that never age.

He copyrighted Desiderata in 1927 under the opening line, *'Go placidly among the noise and haste'*, which struck such a chord with the public that it has worked its way into being one of the best known phrases in the English language. The poem was recreated as an Athena poster, finding popularity with the thoughtful public. Later it became a favourite of the 1960s Flower Power generation which famously set itself in favour of love, not war. Singer Les Crane ran into a copyright hitch in 1971 when he set the words to music, winning a Grammy for *'Best Spoken Word Record.'*³ Having first read them on a poster he might have had a reasonable defence in assuming them to be in the public domain and not subject to copyright, but it seems he did have to share the proceeds of his popular recording.⁴

Also in 1971 the poem was published without the Ehrmann family's permission resulting in court action against the publisher. The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in 1976 that copyright had been forfeited because the poem had been authorised for publication without a copyright notice in the 1940s and that the poem was therefore in the public domain. Fair game therefore to be published and republished at will.⁵

Various famous people have been known to use the inspiring work for their own purposes. Actor Leonard Nimoy, Mr Spock in the hit sci-fi drama Star Trek, recited it on his 1968 album *'Two Sides of Leonard Nimoy.'* Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau quoted it after losing his majority in a 1972 election, reassuring the nation that: *'The universe is unfolding as it should.'* Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic hopeful for the American presidency, passed away in 1965 and was found to have earmarked Desiderata to be printed in his Christmas cards.⁵ US Army psychiatrist Merrill Moore wrote in 1942 to Ehrmann that he used the Desiderata poem in his therapy



work, and also wrote to Ehrmann in 1944 suggesting that the poem should be bottled and sold as *'Dr Ehrmann's Magic Soul Medicine.'*⁶

In 2010, Terre Haute honoured its literary giant with the unveiling of a life-sized bronze statue of him by artist Bill Wolfe, seated on a bench, notebook in hand. The sculpture is at the junction of Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue, a corner dubbed the *'Crossroads of America'* because it is the intersection of Highways 40 and 41, facing east-west and north-south respectively. At this spot, plaques carrying lines of the Desiderata are embedded in the footpath and the full poem is also

displayed.⁷ So, that is the history set straight at last. Read now the words of Ehrmann's beautiful text, reprinted with all its quiet wisdom.

If only everyone were able to follow this humanist advice to accept themselves and others as they are, what peace they and the rest of the world would experience. As far as I know, Max Ehrmann was not a Rosicrucian; but expressing sentiments such as these, I'm sure he would have been quite at home within the fraternity. Below, then, follows Max Ehrmann's famous poem *'Desiderata'*, followed by another, equally edifying, poem by him called *'A Prayer.'*

Desiderata⁸

by Max Ehrmann

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly, and listen to others, even the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble. It is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is. Many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love. For in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labours and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.



A Prayer⁸

by *Max Ehrmann*

Let me do my work each day. And if the darkened hours of despair overcome me, may I not forget the strength that comforted me in the desolation of other times.

May I still remember the bright hours that found me walking over the silent hills of my childhood, or dreaming on the margin of a quiet river, when a light glowed within me, and I promised my early God to have courage amid the tempests of the changing years.

Spare me from bitterness and from the sharp passions of unguarded moments. May I not forget that poverty and riches are of the spirit.

Though the world knows me not, may my thoughts and actions be such as shall keep me friendly with myself.

Lift up my eyes from the earth, and let me not forget the uses of the stars. Forbid that I should judge others lest I condemn myself.

Let me not follow the clamour of the world, but walk calmly in my path.

Give me a few friends who will love me for what I am; and keep ever burning before my vagrant steps the kindly light of hope.

And though age and infirmity overtake me, and I come not within sight of the castle of my dreams, teach me still to be thankful for life, and for time's olden memories that are good and sweet. And may the evening's twilight find me gentle still.



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Philosophy: *Its Nature & Purpose*

by **Alexander Skutch**

Philosophy begins with wonder. To understand what it is, we must go back to its origins. First among the things of wonder is the world itself. How did it begin? Of what is it made? How is it governed? Even children ask their parents these fundamental questions.

Western philosophy today evolved from the genius of the ancient Greeks. They established and outlined it. Their ideas were such that, until modern times, no European thinker made any advances of outstanding originality. The earliest Greek philosophers flourished in the prosperous Ionian cities on the Eastern shore of the Aegean Sea, in Asia Minor. They were largely interested in physical problems. Above all they sought to discover some single substance of whose modifications all the multiplicity of things is composed.



Wonder, or curiosity, is one of the fundamental attributes of the human mind, which has made us what we are. But even more deeply rooted and insistent is the desire to lead a good and satisfying life, our yearning for happiness. The penetrating intellects of the Greek thinkers soon perceived the intimate connection between their desire to know and their yearning for happiness. We do not live in a vacuum, but in a world which has definite modes of procedure, known as the *'laws of nature.'* Moreover, we also have definite characteristics. We have our human nature, which is largely inherited, but subject to modification by social and individual effort. This must also be taken into account by anyone who earnestly desires a good and happy life. Only by understanding ourselves and the world can we intelligently pursue our highest goals and set happiness on a firm foundation.

The great systems of Greek philosophy sprang from the intimate union of two fundamental and interrelated human interests: the thirst for knowledge and the yearning for happiness and fulfilment. Essentially there were three divisions to Greek thinking: logic, physics, and ethics.

- *Logic* is the study of pure thought, independent of any objects.
- *Physics* is the study of how things happen in the world of material objects.
- *Ethics* is the study of how things ought to happen in the world of human beings.

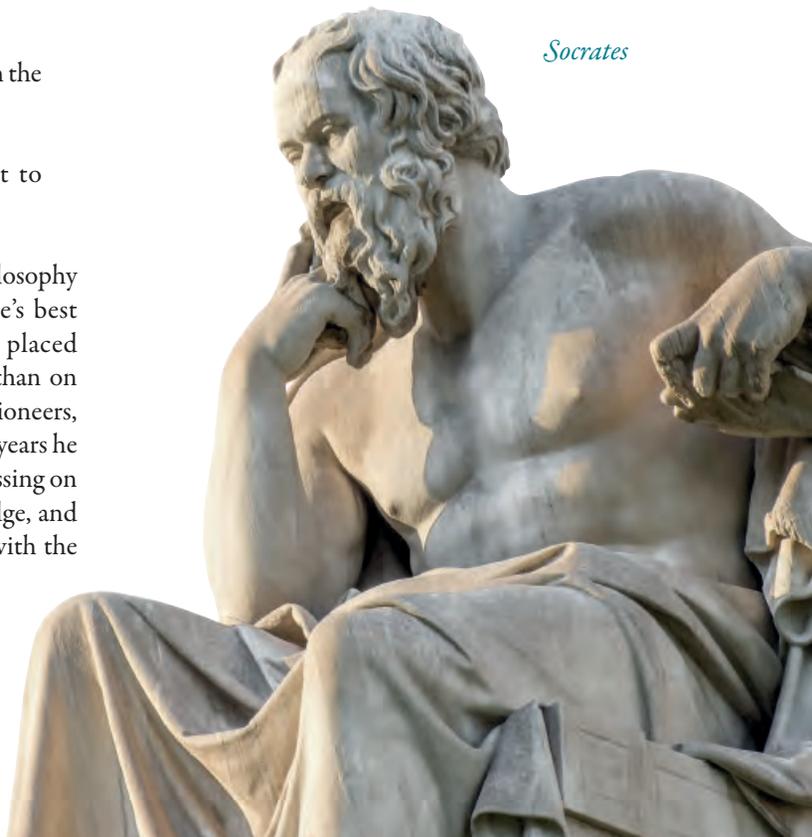
With such a vast field, the cultivation of philosophy became a large undertaking, fit to engross one's best faculties for a whole lifetime. Some thinkers placed more emphasis on one division of philosophy than on another. *Socrates* (c.469-399 BCE), one of the pioneers, was scarcely interested in physics; but in his later years he seems to have devoted most of his time to impressing on his contemporaries the need for expert knowledge, and a better understanding of the terms associated with the leading of a good life.

His disciple *Plato* (429-347 BCE) was far more concerned with logical, moral and political problems than with physics and cosmological speculation. *Aristotle* (384-322 BCE), who was Plato's pupil, is outstanding for the breadth of his interests and the scope of his writings.

He wrote treatises on logic, physics (including long works on zoology), aesthetics, ethics, politics or the art of government, and even metaphysics or the discussion of what lies beyond the world of phenomena, especially of God. The great Stoic system is also remarkable for its vast elaboration in many fields.

The second important centre of philosophical inquiry in ancient times was northern India, where thinkers no less acute than the Greeks, turned their attention to much the same problems and reached different conclusions. The *'Nyaya'* school of philosophical speculation is based on texts known as the *'Nyaya Sutras'*, which were written by Aksapada Gautama from around the 2nd century BCE. The Indians developed a logic comparable to that of Aristotle; in the *'Uaishika'*, a metaphysical philosophy closely allied to the Nyaya school of thought, an atomic theory developed which has some resemblance to that of *Leucippus* and *Democritus*. But the avowed end of the six classical systems of Indian philosophy (Vedic systems) is the release from suffering and the attainment of enduring happiness. Their logic, their physical and cosmological speculations, their prescribed disciplines, were means to this supreme end.

Socrates



In China, the third ancient centre of philosophical activity, the correct conduct of life or the attainment of communal harmony appears to have claimed relatively far greater attention than understanding of cosmic order. This approach set them apart from Western philosophy where probing the nature of underlying reality was the prime end.

The Goal

What, then, is the goal of philosophy? When we consider philosophical endeavour in the light of its origins and its total scope, we might define it somewhat as follows: Philosophy is the attempt to give life significance, coherence, and stability by seeing it whole, and in relation to a greater whole. Nothing is more important to any being than its achieving a proper relation to the whole of which it is a part.

In the case of ourselves, the larger systems with which it is indispensable for us to cultivate proper relations include our families, our community, the natural world which supports us and, above all, the Universe which embraces all of these.

Philosophy and Science

To understand adequately what philosophy is, we must clearly distinguish it from certain related endeavours,



especially science and religion. The scientist and the philosopher are equally dedicated to the *pursuit of truth*. In so far as they are loyal to their respective callings, they regard the acquisition and diffusion of truth or knowledge

The scientist and the philosopher are equally dedicated to the pursuit of truth.

as a sacred obligation; and the deliberate distortion of truth should not be permitted.

But the scientist, in his professional capacity, is concerned merely with the *accumulation of factual knowledge*. Some scientists believe that the application of these facts to the conduct of life is no concern of theirs. The more impersonal their knowledge, the less relation it has to human problems and aspirations, the more highly they seem to value it. Although the philosopher, as the scientist, ardently desires true knowledge, he above all yearns for *wisdom*, which is the application of truth to life. At the conclusion of the *Philebus*, a long Socratic dialogue written between 360 and 347 BCE which investigates the highest good, Plato assigned first place to measure and moderation, second place to beauty and perfection, and third place to mind and wisdom. Science and art, which include factual knowledge, came fourth from the top.

That the truths which philosophy discovers must be related to the conduct of life is a necessary consequence of the philosophic endeavour to give life significance and stability by seeing it whole and in relation to a larger whole. Thus to define philosophy as '*love of truth*' or the '*pursuit of truth*' is not quite accurate; since this does not distinguish it from science. The literal meaning of the



word '*philosophy*' is '*love of wisdom*.' Wisdom is more than truth or factual knowledge, for it implies the application of this knowledge to life.

Philosophy and Religion

The bonds which join philosophy to religion are no less close than those which unite it with science, and they are even more massive. Most of the great philosophers were deeply religious men, although many could not accept the orthodox beliefs of their age and nation. And from this we may deduce the resemblances and differences between philosophy and religion. At its best, religion, no less than philosophy, strives to give life significance and stability by seeing it in relation to a larger whole. For this it needs, as in philosophy, a comprehensive view of the origin, nature

The bonds which join philosophy to religion are no less close than those which unite it with science, and they are even more massive.

and destiny of the world and of humanity. Taken together, the biblical Old and New Testament provide a frame of reference for human life whose comprehensiveness we can hardly deny, no matter how we may judge its correctness.

The aims of philosophy and religion are then, almost identical. Both have had the audacity to ask, and propose answers to, the deepest questions, touching the grandest and most momentous problems which occur to the human mind. Yet despite their close resemblance in scope and aims, they differ profoundly in methods. This difference can be most succinctly expressed by saying that *philosophy is critical*, and *religion uncritical*.

Philosophy is constantly searching and testing. It desires the latest verified discoveries, from whatever source they may come. It insists on subjecting all alleged facts and all plausible explanations to merciless scrutiny, and it relentlessly rejects everything which will not withstand this probing.

Religion, on the other hand, rejects this critical

examination. Once having accepted a solution of one of the grand cosmological or human problems, it regards the question as closed; no longer a fit topic for investigation and free discussion. What philosophy welcomes as indispensable to the intellectual life is anathema to an established church. For it, there is no greater crime than to question what the sacred books advance as indubitable facts, for to disprove them might undermine the very foundation of the whole elaborate doctrinal structure. While Roman Catholicism ruled supreme in western Europe the convicted might procure pardon for some of the greatest of crimes against humanity, but to question articles of dogma was the unpardonable offence for which burning alive was prescribed.

In the measure that the human intellect is inquiring and original, the thinker inevitably comes into conflict with the dominant religious notions of the day. Any attempt to philosophise within the framework of an established religion is doomed to restriction and will not produce wisdom as we defined it above.

As has been stated, religion, no less than philosophy, strives to give life stability and significance by seeing it



in relation to a larger whole. However, it is prevented from wholly achieving this because of its very dogmatic foundations. To achieve this comprehensive vision demands free inquiry and receptivity to all fresh insights, from whatever quarter they may come.

Faith

It is sometimes held that religion differs from philosophy in that the former demands faith, whereas the latter can dispense with this attribute. This is a false distinction; for *neither can dispense with faith*, although they need it in different degrees and with reference to different things. The faith required by religion often has reference to particular alleged happenings; and the more incredible they are, in the light of ordinary experience, the more merit is sometimes ascribed to unquestioning belief in their occurrence. Regarding faith as meritorious and desirable in itself, sometimes as the highest religious virtue and the surest road to salvation, religion has rarely taken pains to reduce the burden it must bear.

Philosophy, by striving for rational demonstration in every sphere where this is possible, has tried to reduce faith to a minimum. Yet philosophy cannot dispense with faith without being driven to that extreme form of scepticism known as *Pyrrhonism*, which doubts all things, even the possibility of knowing anything. How, for example, can I be sure that I live in a world containing solid objects extended in space? When I dream, I seem to see and touch such objects, yet when I awake I recognise that they were unsubstantial creations of my own mind. Are not the



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things and people which I see, feel, and hear in my waking hours merely more vivid hallucinations of the same sort? Does anything really exist outside my own mind?

Countless pages have been written on this problem, and it has become evident that the existence of an external world, containing solid extended bodies, is not strictly demonstrable *but demands an act of faith*. We need faith in the adequacy of our own psychic processes, in the essential honesty of nature of which we are parts, or, as the French philosopher *René Descartes* (1596-1650) put it, "*faith in the goodness of God, who does not constantly deceive us.*"

Moreover, philosophy could hardly maintain its investigative nature if there was a lack of faith that reality is somehow rational, purposeful or friendly, so that if we understand it and put ourselves in accord with it, it will support our highest aspirations. Far from being able to discard faith, philosophy requires a deeper, more serious and fundamental faith than religion, which often demands unquestioning belief in relatively trivial matters.



...philosophy requires a deeper, more serious and fundamental faith than religion...

A Way of Life

The philosopher's penchant for building vast *'systems'* embracing the whole scope of human knowledge has been disparaged in recent times. Today there are many philosophers who restrict their professional activity to the analysis of the meaning of words and phrases, to logical investigations, or to the criticism of science and its methods.

In order to avoid errors and place its conclusions on a firm foundation, philosophy needs (and from ancient times has found a place for) such preliminary labour; just as biology needs microscopes and astronomy requires telescopes. But one whose philosophical work stops short with details of this sort does not deserve to be called a *'philosopher'* in the traditional meaning of the word. If nothing else were essential, then the microscope maker would deserve to be called a biologist and the manufacturer of telescopes an astronomer. These analyses certainly do not fall under the heading of wisdom, which is what the philosopher has from ancient times aspired to win.



Although the philosophic system need not be as elaborate as the structural concepts erected by Aristotle in ancient times, or his more modern descendents, philosophy still attempts to give life significance, coherence and stability by seeing it as a whole, and in relation to a greater whole. At very least it requires a world view or cosmological doctrine, an interpretation of the nature of man, and an ethic or doctrine of values and conduct. These must together form a coherent, self-consistent body of thought in order to form a system, or at least the essential framework of one.

...philosophy still attempts to give life significance, coherence and stability by seeing it as a whole, and in relation to a greater whole.

Because of the continuing incapacity of the strongly established religions to assimilate and adjust their teaching to our modern scientific understanding of the cosmos, life and man, philosophy alone can guide humanity from its present deplorable confusion to its ultimate goal. It is our best hope. Philosophy at its highest has had aims as lofty as religion at its highest, but its methods are far more adequate; for it is critical and capable of growth, whereas institutional religion clings desperately to outworn notions of a bygone age.

Philosophy, we should never forget, was in the days of its glory in the ancient world not simply an intellectual exercise but a *way of life*. The Stoic, the Epicurean, the Pythagorean, the Platonist or the Neo-Platonist did not merely learn the principles of his philosophy; he lived it. When we consider all that this venerable term implies, perhaps it is audacious of anyone to claim for themselves the honourable title of philosopher. But one who aspires to it must above all endeavour to live like a philosopher; for the ability to expound philosophical concepts and doctrines does not of itself entitle anyone to this designation. The true philosopher must be ready to accept obligations and endure hardships, to modify his occupations and habits, the whole tenor of his life, as his philosophy demands.



by **Ralph M Lewis**
Imperator of AMORC (1939-1987)

God of My Heart



Are there any people who do not have within them a concept similar to the Rosicrucian expression '*God of My Heart?*' Can any people conscientiously deny that there exists a *Transcendancy* or a state of reality infinitely greater than themselves? Must they not admit that Being, the whole of reality, is infinite in relation to the human consciousness? Solipsists affirm that there is no reality beyond the human consciousness, that nothing exists other than the self. Yet, by the very fact of their personal existence, they refute their own belief in this regard, for their very dependence upon externality for their existence is proof of their distinction from the self. No one thing is the whole; all things are part of



it. However, is there just one *'God of my Heart?'* In other words, is there a *unity of understanding* of this Transcendancy, this Absolute, of which all things are said to consist?

Among people there is no universal concept or definition of the God of one's Heart, that is, a common belief in a dynamic Supreme Power. We recognise instinctively, intuitively and rationally our subordination to the collectivity of all Being. However, we have always struggled to define it. What do we conceive its elements to be? Creativity, power, omniscience? A cosmic order, infinite and eternal? A Supreme Judge of all? Or perhaps all of these and more? Where do we derive these concepts that we attribute to this Transcendancy, the infinite reality in which we find ourselves? Is it not from within our own being? Have we not, through the ages, found in ourselves the qualities we attribute to this God of our Heart? Can we find other words or ideas to attribute to this *'Infinite All'* other than the *'human frame'* or body that comes with our mortal experience? Consequently, the God of our Heart and the concepts of that God held by all others, must be a construct of our minds; not the essential *'essence'* of it of course, but the mental image we make of that essence as we experience it.

All people therefore have a God of their Heart, though by definition it is not universally accepted by them. Different minds have come to agree on a definition of this Infinite Transcendancy which they experience; it is intimate to them and their personal definitions therefore create a corresponding mental image. This concept then, appears so effective to them, emotionally and psychically, that they consider it an absolute truth. Consequently, they believe no other image can better portray the mystical experience which they have had and which is therefore to them God.

Different Conceptions of God

Yet there is a multitude of other individuals who have experienced this Supreme Essence as well, but mentally

conceive it differently. To them, God is accepted with equal reverence and devotion, despite the fact that their individual concepts of this God may not have the same mental image as that held by others. Some feel that to attribute human qualities to the God of their Heart is to demean God's exalted nature. And there are others whom we recognise as being spiritually motivated, yet who believe that this Transcendancy lies beyond human comprehension, especially in its definition. In other words no mortal, finite mind can embrace fully the nature of the Infinite so as to declare it to exist in a specific form.

People who have a similar affinity of feeling and understanding have reduced their beliefs to sacred books which to them constitute the Divine Truth, born out of their personal enlightenment. But what of

others who have the same elevation of spirituality, but whose construct and understanding of God differs? Are they wrong? Throughout history there have been, and still exist, many names for one's personal God or Transcendancy that many have experienced: Zeus,

Brahma, Logos, Apollo, Allah, Jehovah, Mithra and more. Is one person's conception of God any less true or less in quality than another's?

Admittedly, by certain relative standards, the teachings of one particular religion, which are attributed to divine revelation from one god, may appear more morally exalted than those of another. But again, these varied moral standards are the products of human mind, inspired by mystical experience and a feeling of oneness with his or her God. There would seem to be a vast gap between, for example, the anthropomorphic concept of a God to whom humanlike qualities are attributed, and who may be accepted as a paternal being exhibiting such emotions as love and anger, a God who punishes and reproveth man, on the one hand...; and on the other hand, an equally spiritual concept of the Infinite had by those who consider God to be a Universal Consciousness far removed from the petty qualities and emotions had by humans.



This consciousness is presumed to permeate the whole of being, constituting a motivating power throughout the whole matrix of cosmic laws. If such people have reached this belief, this concept, through mystical experience, it is then to them the God of their Heart. Are we to condemn them as being wrong? Who can come forth and give evidence that one person's God is false? An individual's personal understanding and realisation of God may have the same effect upon that person, morally, as another individual's conception of God.

Ever Evolving God

Our culture has defined and redefined our image of the God of our Heart throughout the centuries. However, to deny any devout concept of a Transcendancy that was held throughout history because of its apparent primitive form is to fail to recognise the ever-evolving *'God of the human Heart.'* To most people, the word

God embraces the exalted qualities of the Absolute, for that is more easily understood. It should most certainly be used by all who find it to be the most intimate term for their comprehension of divine qualities.

Intolerance enters the picture when one set of believers think their definition of God is the sole truth

Intolerance enters the picture when one set of believers think their definition of God is the sole truth and, in their fanatical zeal, persecute those whose spiritual image and experience of supreme Reality differs. The Rosicrucian Order is not a religion, but rather a cultural, mystical and philosophical Order. In its discourses and curricula it has always used the term *'God of our Heart'* when the subjects of mysticism, ontology, Being, or the Absolute are discussed. And the term has always meant for each individual to accept as God the concept which is intimate to the spiritual feelings of the individual. Such is God to that individual, but by no means should this person's concept be the definition of God that all others must accept.



by **Ralph M Lewis**

Sanctuary of Self

Mystically, entering the silence often does not mean communing with the Cosmic or escaping in consciousness to another plane. It can and often does mean freeing oneself from all other realities except the paramount one with which one is concerned. It can mean intensive objective concentration on one important factor. In other words, it can consist of creating a mental world, perhaps for a few minutes, in which nothing exists but self and the problem at hand.

One can enter the silence so one is oblivious of one's surroundings and yet be using one's objective powers of reason, applying them to the matter at hand.

True mystics feel unworthy of making appeals to the universal mind, of entering the silence of the Cosmic for the purpose of soliciting help, if they have first failed to exercise their Divine gifts of reason and the other mental faculties they were given at birth.

The occult principle of silence is to permit the soul to *'hear without ears.'* It is also to permit our soul to speak or commune with us by other means than that of the mouth. It consists of a complete submission of the will to the Cosmic mind, to hear that which the human ear cannot hear, and to speak through the soul rather than through the mortal self.





by **Irene Beusekamp Fabert** (1915-2012)

Dutch Grand Master of AMORC (1983 to 2007)

Adepts on the Path,
let me greet you
with this eternal
affirmation:

*The Kingdom of
Heaven is within
you.*

These are long years that I have been in this world. I was five years old when I went to class for the first time. I learnt, studied, and studied more and more, and now I know so much that I no longer know what I know. And like the French writer *Montaigne* (1533-1592) I say: *Que sais-je? What do I know?*

The interpreters of Montaigne have for a long time thought that by voicing that rhetorical question he was expressing his scepticism and disillusionment. He was only a young child when he was speaking Latin fluently. Later he studied philosophy and law, travelled widely and carried out public duties. But it was the phenomenon of 'being human' which increasingly held his interest.

And so it was that he eventually retired to his château where he devoted himself to the study of mankind. Perhaps because he lived alone, he became the object of his own observations which he recorded in his *Essays*. It was in silence that he found that which, for him, was the most important: his Inner Self, which he called his 'back shop.' In the form of essays, he produced a large volume of writings about mankind, and yet he professed he never knew who or what it is. "*What do I know?*" he said. In spite of many years of study, mankind remained for him a mystery. As for possible spiritual experiences in the depths of himself, he always kept silent about them.



My Own Experiences

If you don't mind, I'm now going to revert to my own experiences. Of all that I've learnt, I've acquired a fairly extensive knowledge, but that which I really know doesn't come from what I accumulated in my brain, but from the most profound depths of myself, during the short or long moments of pure silence. Those moments where all is quiet in oneself, where it seems we're enveloped by an ethereal veil, and where all of a sudden our Inner Master manifests and confirms what the great Master said so long ago: "*The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.*" The Master, the Inner Master, God. A while back I wrote a meditation of words, of expressions, of phrases that I used to read or that I used to hear, and which became engraved in my heart. Here they are:

Adepts on the Path, let me greet you with this eternal affirmation: The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. The current illusion of mankind is the overestimation of the intellect which has brought so much to us and which has made possible, thanks to some miraculous techniques, a total change of our conditions of life. Humanity is under the influence of a technological development which seems unable anymore to come to a standstill. New discoveries are being achieved in all fields. The universe is revealing its secrets to science and we're wearing out and using up all the treasures and resources of our Mother Earth.

The World is no longer in balance. While the western countries, greedy *To Have* (they no longer know how to conjugate the verb *To Be*) are pushed more and more to acquire totally useless products, the other part of the world suffers from hunger and remains deprived of what's most essential for life. Isn't it about time for us to realise the delusions of our intellectual evolution and commit ourselves to new ways, these ways which are emerging more and more and which, from all time, the wise men and women of all civilisations pointed out to be in the scope of one science, the *'science of the soul'*?

How odd that scholars know details about the tiniest of insects they can't see with the naked eye, yet don't even know the why and how of their own existence? Why do geneticists know so much about plants, animals and humans but don't look into the mystery of their own beings and into the characteristics of their own persona? How is it that mankind can cross

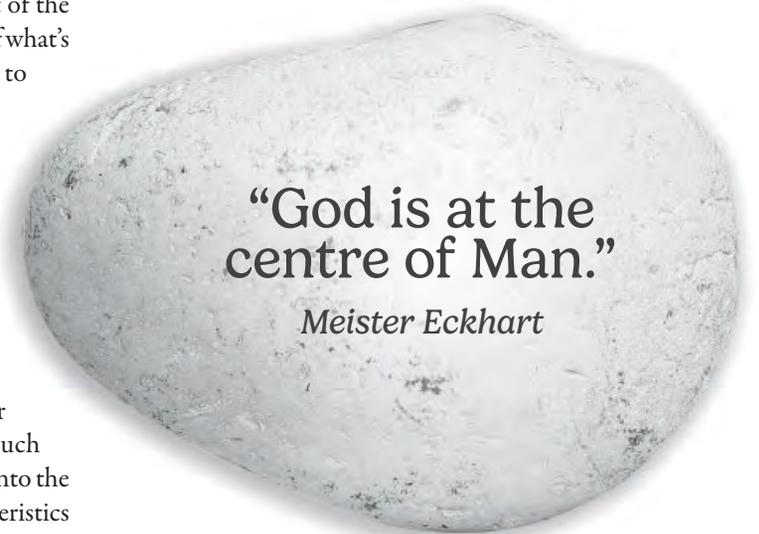
the universe in all senses, even land on the Moon, but isn't able to find the path which leads us to ourselves?

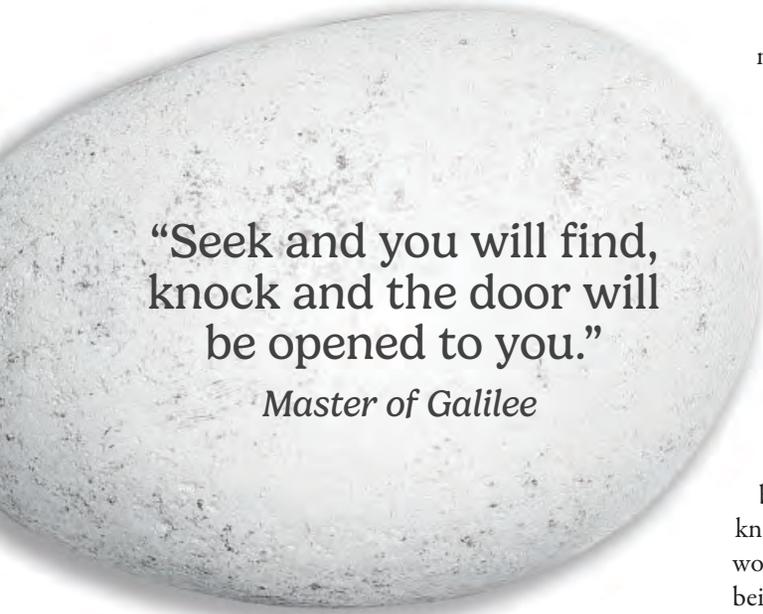
"The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." Adepts of the path, permit me to repeat to you this age-old message. It's the message of the boundless smile of the Sphinx which rises up calm and serene on the sands of Egypt. It's the message formulated in different terms by the German mystic of the 13th and 14th centuries, Meister Eckhart: *"God is at the centre of Man."* St Thomas Aquinas and Jacob Boehme gave expression to the same thing in their copious writings which aren't always easy to read, but based on genuine experience, an experience which is also possible for mankind in this new age.

Our era is precisely the one where divine values are gaining clarity and where the spiritual life is becoming as significant and real as the material life, the one where the term *'initiation'* again finds its first significance: a beginning, a new beginning. And this is that which must be, since every creature is a part of the universal Spirit which is at the origin of our world, the Spirit where eternal Love, infinite Wisdom and indestructible Peace abides.

Initiation

In the Mystery Schools of the pre-Christian civilisations, initiation was considered an extremely important act. At the end of the ceremonies of the Eleusinian mysteries in ancient Greece, the last words that initiates heard were: *"May Peace be in you"*, after which they resumed their





**“Seek and you will find,
knock and the door will
be opened to you.”**

Master of Galilee

respective paths, souls peaceful and hearts filled with joy. Initiation was for them a profound awakening into that which is genuine. It was the supreme accomplishment of their spiritual life and whoever didn't make it to that experience was not a complete being.

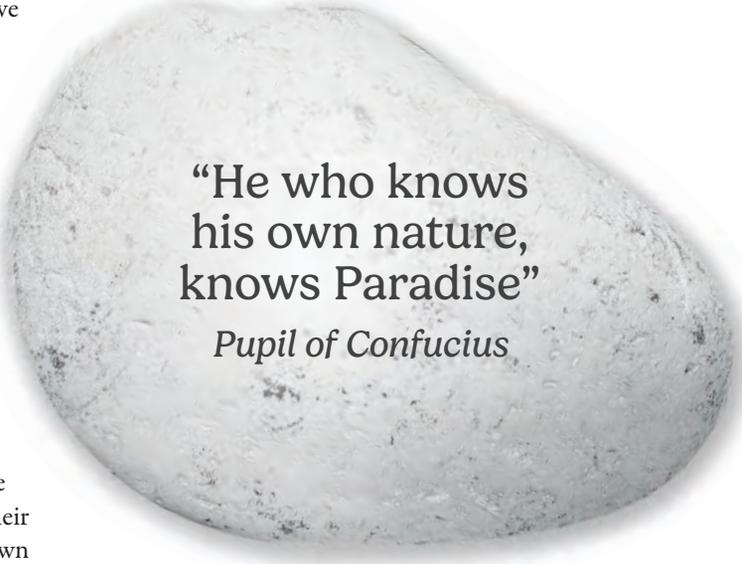
If this interior experience was possible two thousand years before the Common Era, it should be possible two thousand years into the Common Era too. During these four thousand years, the fundamental nature of mankind has not changed, nor their search for themselves..., Adepts of the Path who aspire to meeting the Divine. In their true reality, the one which was and will always be, men and women are spiritual beings even though they live in material bodies. Our senses, which play tricks of all sorts on us, are the reason why we confuse our true Self with our material body. The Divine doesn't surround us only during our earliest infancy, but all through life. We don't know it yet or don't know it any more.

Behind the person we think we are, there is a second person we don't see: our real Self, which existed already before thoughts and desires took possession of us. Behind our body of flesh and blood exists a radiant and sublime conscience. Our true life flows out in the depths of our heart and has no place in the superficial mask of the personality we show to the world. Adept of the Path, you are the heir of a hidden treasure in the deep recesses of your own

nature. The Kingdom of heaven is within you. Those who, secluded in their own silence set out to find themselves, are not dreamers. They are only doing what each one must do at a certain phase of their evolution.

The way may be long or short, but they keep their spiritual eyes wide open and listen to the voice which speaks within them. One day, their great Self will be revealed to them, and they will be on the verge of Eternity. If the door of our soul opens itself for one second, one minute or one hour, the revelation will be complete. Neither bitter suffering nor a heavy burden can destroy this knowledge, a knowledge which cannot be translated into words. Anyone who, at one time, has felt their innermost being to be dissolved and to be merged in the infinite, knows that this cannot be expressed. It's the illumination of the spirit and of the heart, that which is the most miraculous in the life of each man and woman.

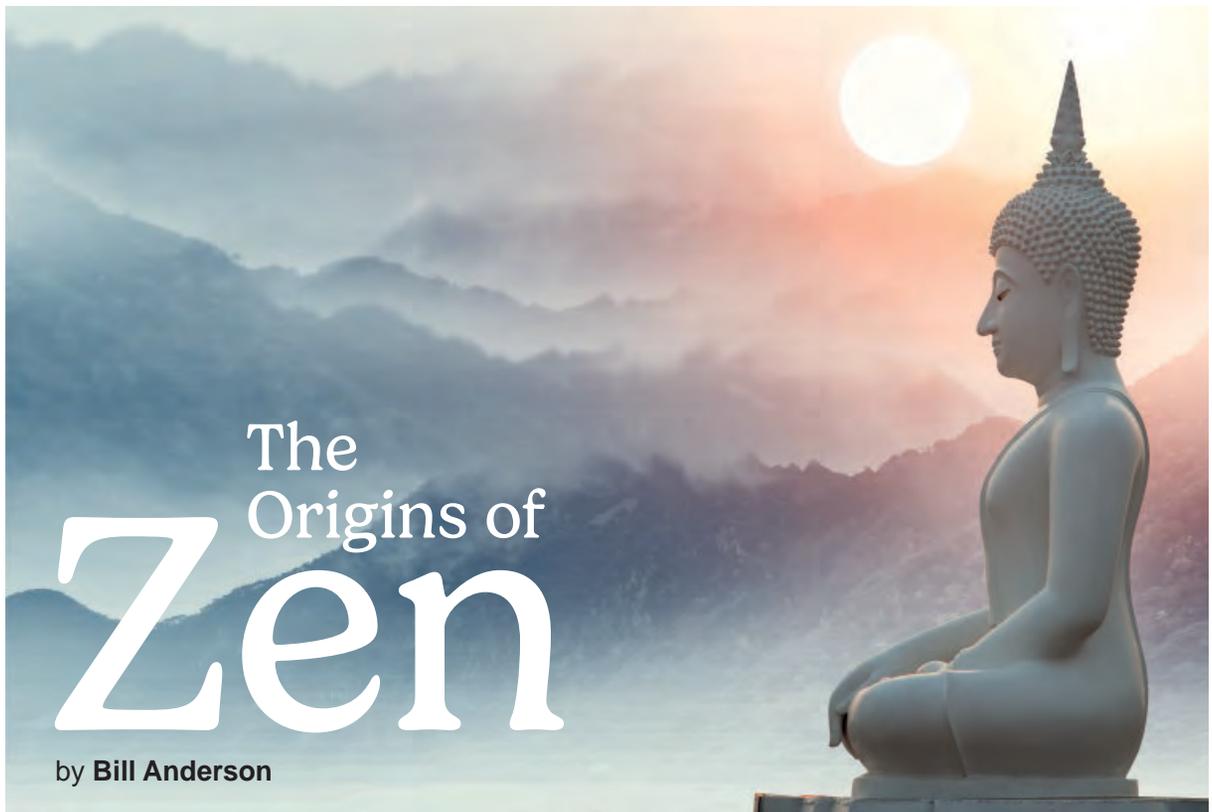
Look for your Self, find your true Self and you will know the sense of life and the mystery of the universe will be revealed to you. Think about the words of the Master of Galilee: *“Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you.”* Discover that you are one part of an infinite Life which expresses itself in Light and in Love. *“He who knows his own nature, knows Paradise”* said a pupil of Confucius. In other words: *“The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.”*



**“He who knows
his own nature,
knows Paradise”**

Pupil of Confucius





The Origins of Zen

by **Bill Anderson**

Buddhism is not a religion in the manner viewed by the three Abrahamic religions of the West.

Buddhism is, in every respect, a journey... from Unawareness to Awareness.

Zen Buddhism is not a religion in *Gandhara* in quite the same manner as the word *'religion'* is interpreted in the West. It is a way of life, a journey which guides the practitioner from *'unawareness'* to *'awareness.'* The concept of *'religion'* in the West is almost exclusively associated with the concept of an all-knowing, all-powerful, all-seeing supreme deity called *'God.'* It is not a mere cerebral concept though, for God, in the orthodox liturgy of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic lineage, personally intervenes in the daily affairs of His creation and, quite specifically, intervenes in the lives of humans. This is where Buddhism in general, and Zen in particular, part company with the predominantly Western religious tradition.

Buddhism is often referred to as a *'dharma,'* a word with no direct, single Western equivalent, though with many associated meanings which describe aspects of this single word. In the Vedic-related religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism, dharma means living in accordance with *'Rta'* (Sanskrit *ṛtaṃ*, meaning *fixed order*, [supreme] *reality, rule*, [divine] *law, truth, properly joined*), which in the West has its closest analogy with the ancient Egyptian concept of living in accordance with *'Maat'*, a word meaning something approximating *'right order,' 'truth'* and *'right way'* [of living]. In turn, *Rta* comes from the Proto-Indo-European morpheme *'rt'* which has descended, for example, into the ancient Greek Sophists' understanding of *'arete'*, meaning *'quality'*, and into English words like *aristocrat, art, rhetoric, worth, rite, ritual, wright, right* [handed], and *right* [correct.]





Map of the Tarim Basin in the 3rd century CE, showing the various states surrounding the high Tibetan plateau and desert through which the Silk Road passed.

The Buddhist *'right way of living'* encompasses a variety of traditions, beliefs and most importantly of practices, that are largely based on the life philosophy and teachings of a person known as *Siddhartha Gautama*, or more commonly in the West as *'the Buddha'*, *'the awakened one.'* In Buddhist tradition, this 'awakened person' lived and taught in the northern and eastern parts of the Indian subcontinent sometime between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE. He is recognised by Buddhists as an *'awakened'* or *'enlightened'* teacher who shared his insights to help sentient beings to end their suffering through the elimination of ignorance and craving. The ultimate goal of Buddhism is the attainment of the sublime state of *'Nirvana'* by practising the *'Noble Eightfold Path'*, also known as the *'Middle Way.'*

When I hear the word Zen, I automatically think of the cultured refinement of Japanese traditions. But I know as well that Zen Buddhism has a pedigree that can be traced far back in time through many lands: *Korea, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan* and *India* to name a few. Buddhism may have begun in India but it was disseminated along the *'Silk Road'*, which is the name given to a series of interlinked trade and cultural transmission routes. These routes were central to cultural interaction through different regions of the Eurasian continent connecting the West and East by linking traders, merchants, pilgrims, monks, soldiers,

nomads and urban dwellers from China and India to the Mediterranean Sea and Rome during various periods of time.

The Silk Road

Extending some 4,000 miles (6,437 kilometres), the *'Silk Road'* was so-named because of the lucrative trade in Chinese silk carried out along its length, beginning during the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE). The Central Asian sections of the trade routes were expanded around 114 BCE, largely through the missions and explorations of Chinese imperial envoys. Trade on the Silk Road was a significant factor in the development of the civilisations of *China, the Indian Subcontinent, Persia, Europe* and *Arabia*, opening long-distance, political and economic interactions between the civilisations.

Although silk was certainly the major trade item from China, many other goods were traded as well. And religions, syncretic philosophies and various technologies, as well as diseases, also travelled this route. In addition to economic trade, the Silk Road served as a means of carrying out cultural trade among the several major civilisations that existed along its network. So, as silk travelled west, religions such as *Manichaeism, Buddhism* and *Christianity* travelled east, and what we today consider purely Eastern or purely Western has





One of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan (Kushān Empire) before their destruction by the Taliban.

since antiquity always had elements of both hemispheres, at least to some extent.

Buddhism entered China via the Silk Road, beginning in the 1st or 2nd century CE. The first documented translation efforts by Buddhist monks in China (all non-Chinese) were in the 2nd century CE, possibly as a consequence of the expansion of *Kushānshahr*, the Greco-Buddhist *Kushān Empire*, into the Chinese territory of the *Tarim Basin*, dominated by the *Taklamakan Desert* in what is now the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China. The Tarim Basin was a strategic melting pot of Silk Road traffic, a hub of interchange of both goods and ideas, philosophies and religious beliefs. And of course the several *Tocharian* languages, the easternmost group

of Indo-European languages, were once spoken there. Besides Tocharian, various Eastern Iranian *Khotanese Scythian* dialects were also used.

Kushānshahr and Gandhara

Direct contact between Central Asian and Chinese Buddhism continued throughout the 3rd to 7th century, well into the Táng Dynasty. From the 4th century onward, with pilgrimage of *Fāxiān* to India (395–414), and later *Xuánzàng* (629–644), Chinese pilgrims started to travel by themselves to northern India, their closest source of Buddhism, in order to gain access to original scriptures. Much of the land route connecting northern India with China at that time was ruled by the Buddhist Kushān Empire, with its heart in the kingdom of Gandhara in its western section. During these centuries, the combination of Indian Buddhism with Western influences (Greco-Buddhism), gave rise to the various distinct schools of Buddhism in Central Asia and China.

Greco-Buddhist art is the finest artistic manifestation of Western Buddhism, a cultural syncretism between Classical Greek culture and Buddhism, which developed over a period of close to 1,000 years in Central Asia, between the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE, and the Islamic conquests of the 7th century CE. This syncretic art is characterised by the strong idealistic realism and sensuous description of Hellenistic art and the first representations of the Buddha in human form.

Greco-Buddhist art depicts the life of the Buddha in a visual manner, probably by incorporating the real-life models and concepts which were available to the artists of the period. The *Bodhisattvas* are depicted as bare-chested, bejewelled Indian princes, and the *Buddhas* as Greek kings wearing the toga-like himation. The buildings in which they are depicted incorporate Greek style with the ubiquitous Indo-Corinthian capitals and Greek decorative scrolls.

The *Kushān Empire* was originally formed in the early 1st century CE in the territories of the former *Greco-Bactrian Kingdom* around the *Oxus River* (nowadays called the *Amu Darya*), and later based near Kabul, now the capital of Afghanistan. The Kushāns, an Indo-



The Heart Sūtra

The *Heart Sūtra* has been called '*Buddhism in a nutshell*', for it covers the Buddha's teachings in fewer words than any other sūtra. The noble *Avalokiteśvara* looked upon the '*Five Skandhas*' [functions or aspects] and seeing they were empty of self-existence, he said:

Form is emptiness, emptiness is form; form is not separate from emptiness; whatever is form is emptiness, whatever is emptiness is form. The same holds for sensation and perception, memory and consciousness.

All dharmas are defined by emptiness, not birth or destruction, purity or defilement, completeness or deficiency.

Therefore, in emptiness there is...

no form, no sensation, no perception,
no memory and no consciousness;

no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body,
no mind;

no shape, no sound, no smell, no taste,
no feeling, no thought;

no element of perception, from eye to
conceptual consciousness;

no causal link, from ignorance to old age
and death;

no end of causal link, from ignorance to
old age and death;

no suffering, no source, no relief, no path;

no knowledge, no attainment and no
non-attainment.

Therefore, without attainment, bodhisattavas take refuge in Prajñāpāramitā and live without walls of the mind. And thus, without fears, they see through delusions and finally nirvana.

All buddhas past, present and future also take refuge in Prajñāpāramitā and realise unexcelled, perfect enlightenment.

Know therefore the great mantra of Prajñāpāramitā, the mantra of great magic, the unexcelled mantra, the mantra equal to the unequalled, which heals all suffering and is true, not false, the mantra in Prajñāpāramitā spoken thus...

**Gone, gone, gone beyond, gone utterly beyond.
Enlightenment hail!**

European people of possible Iranian or Tocharian stock, spread out from the Kabul River Valley to encompass much of the Indo-Greek Kingdom, one of the successor states of Alexander the Great, from which they took their first official language, the Bactrian alphabet, their Greco-Buddhist religion, a coinage system, and art. They absorbed the Central Asian tribes that had previously conquered parts of the northern central Iranian Plateau, once ruled by the Parthians, and reached their peak under the Buddhist emperor *Kanishka* (127–151 CE), whose realm stretched from *Turfan* in the Tarim Basin in the West, to *Pataliputra*, near *Patna* in Bihar state on the Ganges Plain in the East. They therefore controlled the central part of the Silk Road.

The *Kushāns* had diplomatic contacts with the *Roman Empire*, *Sassanid Persia*, the *Ethiopian Aksumite Empire* and the *Chinese Hān Dynasty*. While much philosophy, art and science was created within its borders, the only textual record we have of the empire's history today comes from inscriptions and accounts in other languages, particularly Chinese.

And it is in the Kushān Empire that we find the genesis of the main branch of Buddhism: *Mahāyāna*. The Mahāyāna tradition is the largest branch of Buddhism existing today, having 53% of all Buddhists, compared to 36% for the *Theravāda* and 6% for the *Vajrayāna*. Although Mahāyāna means '*Great Vehicle*', it also refers to the path of the Bodhisattva as s/he seeks complete enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Mahāyāna Buddhism

In the course of its history, Mahāyāna Buddhism spread from India to various other Asian countries such as Bangladesh, China, Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Bhutan, Malaysia and Mongolia. Major traditions of Mahāyāna Buddhism today include the following:-

1. **Zen:** most popularly known from Japan. The word originates from the Chinese word *Chán*.
2. **Pure Land:** called *Jōdo bukkō* in Japanese, *Jingtüzōng* in Chinese, and *Jeongtojong* in Korean.



3. **Lotus Sutra:** *Tendai* in Japanese, *Tiāntái* in China, and *Cheontae* in Korea.
4. **Nichiren:** *Hokke-kei Bukkyo* in Japanese.

The *Heart Sūtra* (Sanskrit: *Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya*) is a famous sūtra in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Its Sanskrit title, *Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya*, literally means ‘*The Heart of the Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom.*’ This sutra is often cited as the best-known and most popular Buddhist scripture of all. The Chinese version is frequently chanted (in the local pronunciation) by the *Chán* (*Zen/Seon*) school during ceremonies



The tranquility of a Japanese Zen-themed garden in an English woodland setting.

in China, Japan, Korea, and even Vietnam. It is also significant to the Shingon Buddhist school in Japan, whose founder Kūkai wrote a commentary on it, and in various Tibetan Buddhist monasteries it is studied extensively.

Zen began to emerge as a distinctive school of Mahāyāna Buddhism when the Indian sage Bodhidharma (ca. 470-543 CE) taught at the Shàolín Monastery in China. Because of his ground breaking work, Bodhidharma is called the *First Patriarch of Zen*. The word ‘*Zen*’ is originally derived from the Sanskrit word *dhyāna*, meaning ‘*meditation.*’ As practised in China (*Chán*), Korea (*Seon*) and Japan (*Zen*), Zen is today a quite specific form of Buddhism focusing overwhelmingly on a single outcome: true meditation. Zen places far less emphasis on scriptures than other forms of Buddhism and deals instead with a practical method of gaining spiritual breakthroughs and elevated awareness through the proper use of meditation.

Zen in China

Buddhism first reached China from India roughly 2,000 years ago, during the Hàn Dynasty. Hàn Dynasty China was deeply Confucian, and Confucianism is focused on maintaining harmony and social order in the here-and-now, with little or no thought for a ‘*hereafter*’ world. Buddhism, on the other hand, emphasised entering the monastic life to seek a reality beyond ordinary reality. The two world views were bound to collide, and this they soon did. Confucianism was not welcoming of Buddhism as it saw it as a dangerous and impractical upturning of the existing order of things.

Buddhism however found an ally in China’s other great indigenous religion, Taoism. Taoist and Buddhist meditation practices and philosophies were similar in many respects, and some Chinese took an interest in Buddhism from a Taoist perspective. Early translations of Buddhist texts from Sanskrit into Chinese



One of the first representations of the Buddha wearing a Greek himation. Gandhara, 1st-2nd century CE.





The three kingdoms of Korea: Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla. The Gaya confederacy (c. 42-532 CE) existed within the borders of the Silla kingdom, but was eventually subdued and fully incorporated into Silla. Parts of Goguryeo were conquered by Silla in the latter part of its history, considerably expanding its reach.

borrowed Taoist terminology. Still, during the Han Dynasty very few Chinese practised Buddhism.

In south China, a kind of *'gentry Buddhism'* stressing learning and philosophy, became popular among educated and well-to-do Chinese. The elite of Chinese society freely associated with the growing number of Buddhist monks and scholars. The dialogue between Buddhism and Taoism continued, and the Taoist influence caused the Chinese to favour Mahāyāna Buddhism.

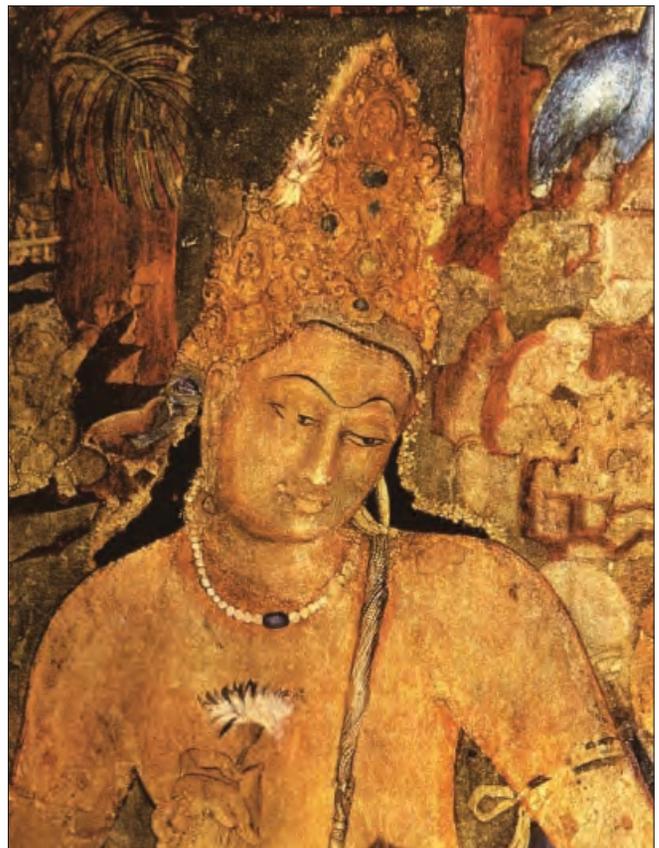
In north China, Buddhist monks who were masters of divination became advisers to rulers of the *'barbarian tribes.'* Some of these rulers became Buddhists and supported monasteries and the ongoing work of translating the Sanskrit texts into Chinese. This separation of north and south China caused Buddhism to develop into northern and southern schools in China.

There are six acknowledged Patriarchs of Zen in China. Under the 6th Patriarch, *Huinéng* (638-713), Zen removed most of its remaining Indian trappings, becoming more Chinese

and more what we now consider as being Zen. Some (although much in the minority) consider Huinéng, not Bodhidharma, to be the true father of Zen. Huinéng's tenure was at the beginning of what is still called the Golden Age of Zen which can roughly be equated to China's Táng Dynasty, 618-907. The masters of the Golden Age still speak to us through *'kōans'* and stories. Of the several distinctive schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism that had originated in China, only Pure Land and Zen survived with an appreciable number of followers despite the suppression that occurred during the later Táng Dynasty.

Seon – Korean Zen

In Korea, Buddhist temples are abundant. Many of the oldest and most famous temples are located high up in the mountains where Buddhist monks and nuns live, meditate and study. Many temples



Indian cave wall painting of Avalokiteśvara. Ajantā Caves, 6th century CE.





Shàolín Monastery or Temple is a Buddhist temple in Dēngfēng county, Zhèngzhōu, Hénán province, China. This shows one of the buildings in the large complex.

have beautiful architecture, statues, paintings and pagodas, some dating back more than 1,000 years.

Buddhism first arrived in Korea in 372 in the *Goguryeo* kingdom (37 BCE – 668 CE). In 374 the influential Chinese monk *Ado* arrived in the kingdom and so deeply impressed the king *Sosurim* the following year that the first two temples *Seongmunsa* and *Ibullansa* were built by him in 375. Buddhism soon became the national religion of the *Goguryeo* kingdom.

A series of teachers transmitted Zen to Korea during the Golden Age. A new epoch in Korean Buddhism began in another of the three kingdoms of Korea, the *Silla* kingdom (57 BCE – 935 CE) with the establishment of several Zen (*Seon*) schools. In China, the movement towards a form of Buddhism based primarily on meditational practices began during the 6th and 7th centuries. It was not long before the influence of this new approach reached Korea, where it was known as '*Seon*', meaning '*meditation*.' Tension developed between the new meditational schools and those which were until then academically-oriented, and which were described by the term '*gyo*', meaning '*learning*' or '*study*.'

Beomnang (fl. 632–646), said to be a student of the Chinese Fourth Patriarch *Dàoxin* (580–651), is

generally credited with the initial transmission of *Seon* into Korea. *Seon* was popularised by Sinhaeng (704–779) in the latter part of the 8th century and by *Doui* who died in 825. From then on, many Koreans studied Zen in China, and, upon their return, established their own schools at various mountain monasteries with their leading disciples. Initially, the number of these schools was fixed at nine, and Korean *Seon* was, as a consequence, called the '*gusan nine mountains*' school. Eight of the schools were of the lineage of *Mǎzǔ Dàoyī* (709–788), as they were established through connection with either him or one of his eminent disciples. The one exception was the Sumi-san school founded by *Jeom* (869–936), which had developed from the *Cǎodòng* lineage.

Here is a recent description of a visit to a Korean *Seon* temple which gives an insight into Korean temple life:

Everything was so clean: from the mountain air to the spring water that flows from stone fountains and tastes better than any fine wine from Bordeaux. And this, combined with some vigorous hiking and quiet meditation and reflection, contributed to the best nights' sleep I have had since I was a child.





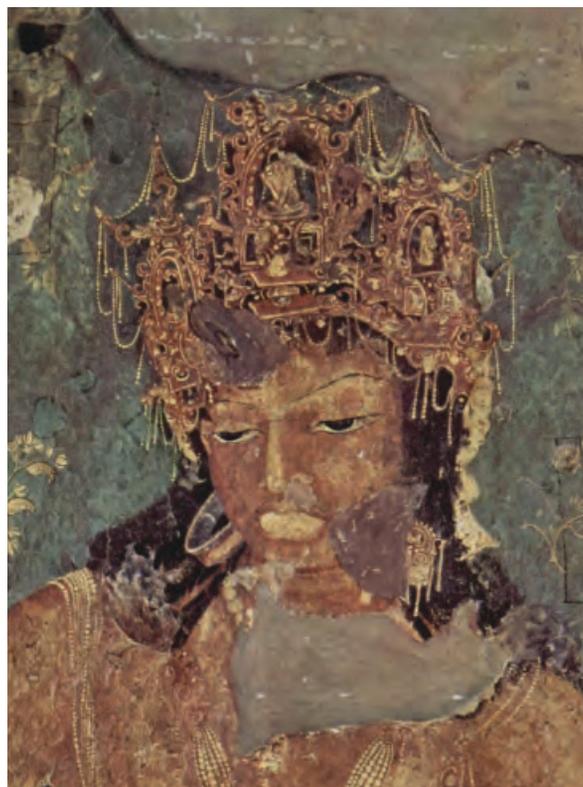
The inside of a Korean Buddhist temple in the capital Seoul.

Each temple offers an early-morning chanting ceremony at 04:00, Zen meditation during the day, a tea ceremony and conversation with a monk, community work, hiking and participating in evening prayers.

I was determined to hear the early morning service, which began at 03:30, and asked my translator to make sure I awoke in time. I sat in the small, quiet temple and observed two monks bowing and chanting and three lay workers performing the 108 deep-bow ceremony which took place after the service. I made an attempt myself but was only able to perform a few deep bows.

Modern Zen and Japan

Japan is a very mountainous country, and over 70% of the country is forested, mountainous and unsuitable for agricultural, industrial or residential use. As a result the habitable zones, mainly located in coastal areas, have extremely high population densities. Indeed, Japan is one of the most densely populated countries in the world; so, with a population of some 126 million people, space and privacy are at a premium. With this lack of privacy, the only sure way of having privacy is to reach within one's innermost being, for only there can one truly be alone.



According to Mahāyāna doctrine, Avalokiteśvara is a bodhisattva who vowed to assist sentient beings in times of difficulty, and to postpone his own 'Buddhahood until he has assisted every sentient being in achieving Nīrvāna. Ajantā Caves, 6th century CE.



by Buddha's teachings, he succeeded in establishing a centralised government during his rule. The Prince was an ardent Buddhist and is traditionally attributed as the author of the '*Sangyō Gisho*', or '*Annotated Commentaries on the Three Sutras*' (the *Lotus*, *Vimalakirti* and the *Queen Srimala* sutras). The first of these commentaries, *Hokke Gisho*, is traditionally dated 615 CE, and therefore traditionally regarded as the first Japanese text, in turn making *Shōtoku* the first Japanese writer. However, it is also said that despite being credited as the founder of Japanese Buddhism, the Prince respected Shintoism and visited Buddhist temples only when done in conjunction with visits to Shinto shrines as well.

As already stated, the central feature of Zen for at least the past millennia and a half is meditation. The tradition holds all notions of doctrine and teachings necessitate the creation of various intellectual creations, and these in turn obscure the transcendent wisdom of each being's innate Buddha nature. The process of rediscovery of one's inner Buddha goes under various terms such as '*introspection*', '*a backward step*', '*turning-about*' or '*turning the eye inward*.'

During seated meditation, practitioners usually assume a lotus position. To regulate the mind, awareness is directed towards counting or becoming aware of one's breathing, and moving the focus of one's attention to an energy centre located below the navel. Often, a square or round cushion is placed on a padded mat and is used to sit on. In other cases, a chair is used and the practice is then called seated *dhyāna*, *zuòchán* in Chinese, and *zazen* in Japanese.

Intensive group meditations are practised at times in some temples, and such gatherings are called *Sesshin*. While the daily routine may require monks to meditate for several hours each day, during the most intensive part of the practice they devote themselves almost exclusively to the practice of seated meditation. The many 30–50 minute long meditation periods are interwoven with rest breaks, meals, and short periods of work that are performed with the same mindfulness. Nightly sleep is kept to seven hours or less. In modern Buddhist practice in Japan, Taiwan and the West, lay students often attend these intensive practice sessions, which are typically 1, 3, 5 or 7 days in length.

At the beginning of the Chinese *Sòng Dynasty* (960-1279), use of the '*kōan*' method became popular. A *kōan*, literally a '*public case*', is a story or dialogue describing an interaction between a Zen master and a student. These anecdotes give a demonstration of the master's insight. *Kōans* emphasise the non-conceptual insight that the Buddhist teachings are pointing to. *Kōans* can be used to provoke the '*great doubt*' and test a student's inner progress.

Kōan inquiry may be practised during seated meditation (*zazen*), walking meditation (*kinhin*), and throughout all the activities of daily life. *Kōan* practice is particularly emphasised by the Japanese Rinzai school, but it also occurs in other schools or branches of Zen. The Zen student's mastery of a given *kōan* is presented to the teacher in a private interview. While there is no unique answer to a *kōan*, practitioners are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the *kōan* and of Zen in general through their responses. The teacher may approve or disapprove of the answer and guide the student in the right direction. The interaction with a Zen-teacher is central to Zen, but makes Zen-practice, at least in the west, vulnerable to both misunderstanding and abuse.

Zen Paradox

Paradoxes abound in Zen Buddhist teachings, almost to the point that the whole edifice upon which it is built was intentionally created to confuse rather than enlighten. But that is far from the truth and there has always been a totally benign and compassionate reason for its approach, which is to coax one into loosening the grip of one's ego and bringing about a penetration of mind into the realm of the True or Formless Self, which in turn is equated with the Buddha. According to Zen master *Kōshō Uchiyama*, when thoughts and fixation on the '*little I*' are transcended, an awakening to a universal, non-dual Self occurs:-

When we let go of thoughts and wake up to the reality of life that is working beyond them, we discover the Self that is a living universal non-dual life [before the separation into two] that pervades all living creatures and all existence.





Grand Master Raul Passos of the Grand Lodge of Southeastern Europe

Grand Lodge of Southeastern Europe

The Grand Lodge of Southeastern Europe covers the Romanian Administration and the countries of Moldova, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Albania, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The Grand Lodge also oversees the Administrations of Russia and Poland.

Born in 1983 in Brazil, recently appointed Grand Master, Fr Raul Passos spent his childhood in Piçarras, on the coast of the state of Santa Catarina. He graduated in Music and concurrently attended the faculty of letters. He completed his master's degree in piano in 2009 at the National University of Music in Bucharest, Romania. In 2010, he started working at the Portuguese Grand Lodge in Curitiba, Brazil as a translator. Fr Passos speaks Portuguese, Romanian, French, English, Italian, Spanish and Russian.

He became a member of AMORC in 2002, having been interested in all forms of spirituality from an early age, especially Eastern philosophies. Within the Order he has served in many offices, as Secretary, Forum Master, Pronaos Master and Heptad Master. In 2016 he was invited by the then Emperor, frater Christian Bernard, to settle in Romania in order to develop the Romanian-speaking Administration of AMORC.

In 2019 he was elected Grand Administrator of that jurisdiction and ritualistically installed by the Emperor, frater Claudio Mazzucco in February 2020. In 2021 he was appointed Delegate of the Supreme Grand Lodge for the countries of Eastern Europe, overseeing the Administrations of Russia and Poland, as well as the expansion of the Order in countries such as Bulgaria and Georgia.

Raul is a Portuguese citizen and lives in Italy with his wife Renata, their son Samuel and their cat Pint.



Grand Master Heverton Guzzi of the Portuguese Grand Lodge

Portuguese Grand Lodge

Born in Brazil in 1977 Fr Heverton Douglas Guzzi graduated in Business Administration and has, until recently, worked in the family business.

Being the son of Rosicrucian parents, he attended the Junior Order of Torchbearers when still a child, and became a full member of AMORC at age 17. He has since then served voluntarily in several offices (Guardian, Master of the Guarulhos Lodge (in São Paulo), Master of the Initiation Team and Grand Councillor.

He is also a member of the Traditional Martinist Order, and here too, he has always collaborated and held various positions such as Master of the Guarulhos Heptade and Provincial Master.

He has always participated in regional and national Conventions with the enthusiasm that characterises every sincere seeker on a genuine mystical path. He enjoys classical music and reading mystical texts, mainly Boehme's works. He is married and has a daughter.



Italian Grand Lodge

Mirko Palomba graduated in Electronic Engineering and obtained a PhD in Telecommunication Engineering and Microelectronics. After several years of university research, he currently works for a large company operating in the Space sector.

He has been a member of the Order since 2009 and has held several different functions as an Officer at the Rome Pronaos. He regularly participates as an Officer in temple degree initiations and Lodge and Grand Lodge activities at the seat of the Italian Grand Lodge at Ornano in central Italy.

Since 2013 he has been an official lecturer of the Order, giving presentations throughout Italy, both in public and for members of AMORC only. Since 2018 he has served as Grand Councillor for the Regions of Sardinia, Calabria, Sicily and Campania.

In 2020, he was appointed Assistant to the Grand Master in charge of all aspects of running the Italian Grand Lodge. He is responsible for the Accademia Rosa-Croce (URCI) and has been a member of the Traditional Martinist Order since 2010. He has a wide-ranging interest in Rosicrucian and Martinist themes, with particular emphasis on the deeper, more mystical aspects of these two Orders. Fr Mirko and his Rosicrucian wife Sr Antonella have two children.



Grand Master Mirko Palomba
of the Italian Grand Lodge

Om
maṇi
padme
hūṃ



A person with long hair, wearing a dark winter coat and pants, is walking away from the camera on a wooden walkway covered in snow. The walkway has a dark wooden railing on both sides. In the background, a large body of water is completely frozen and white with snow. The sky is a warm, golden yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. Bare tree branches are visible in the foreground and background, some framing the scene. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

Gently walking on frozen ground, I
am surrounded by an awesome
silence and beauty that quite
overwhelms me.

How easy it is to feel the presence
of the Divine surrounding me
this day with Light in nature,
Life in being and Love in heart.