

# BROSICRUCIAN BEACON



September 2006



# AMORC World Convention - Berlin

16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> August 2007

*The Tempeldom:  
site of the AMORC  
2007 World Convention*



*Imperator Christian Bernard*



*Grand Master Maximilian Neff*

The next *Rosicrucian World Convention* is being hosted by the German Grand Lodge and will be held in Berlin, a city rich in history and architecture. If you are a member of AMORC, you are cordially invited to attend this four-day event which will bring together Rosicrucians from all parts of the world.

The central theme of the Convention will be the history of the Order over the past 400 years and will include presentations on illustrious Rosicrucians of the past such as Giordano Bruno, Robert Fludd, Jan van Ruysbroek, Comenius and others. But the crucial message of the convention will concern Love and how it can be used to create a more caring and sharing society.

The Convention fee is €210, though please note that this does not include accomodation which must be booked separately. Please visit the website [www.amorc-berlin2007.de](http://www.amorc-berlin2007.de) using the password *amorc07* to gain entry. Alternatively write to AMORC, Langestrasse 69, DE-76530, Baden-Baden, GERMANY.

*“From yesterday to today, to tomorrow,  
Love will build the Bridge”*



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# ROSIKRUCIAN BEACON

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## COVER SPREAD

"Pyramid of Light"





*by Christian Bernard, FRC  
Imperator and Chief Executive of AMORC*

**P**EOPLE ARE SOMETIME SURPRISED to discover that Rosicrucians refer to death as *transition*. For Rosicrucians, the word “transition” is preferred to the word *death*, for it designates the “great passage,” the “Great Initiation,” or more precisely the “passage through the threshold of the Great Initiation.”

In the teachings of the *Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis*, the mind is constantly presented with appropriate terminologies which progressively, beyond the mental level, eventually reach the soul personality, that is, the deeper being.

As commonly used, the word “death” alludes to a severance, a cut, a complete breaking



off, an end. Whilst this may relate to physical reality, it is not an accurate description of what occurs on other levels of the being. As mystics we should not only consider the body as a temple sheltering the soul, but also see it as a very useful tool, essential for the evolution of the soul. When the time comes for the soul to shed its material form, it does so in order to reach a new state of being in which it slowly becomes aware of itself. From that moment on, the physical body inevitably follows the process of returning to the dust from which it originated.

If we were made up of a physical body and nothing else, then we could certainly speak of death and a complete end. However, what really matters is the soul-personality which journeys through time in order to evolve itself to ever higher forms of expression. At transition, this soul-personality leaves a dwelling from which it has profited well, and prepares to occupy a new home. To use a common analogy, it could be said that the soul is simply preparing itself for a "change of address," and this change implies that there is a transfer of something between the two residences. The soul takes from its previous dwelling what is most dear and useful whilst leaving behind all that is superfluous and which will no longer be necessary in its new location.

This change of dwelling implies crossing a threshold, which reminds me of a moving ceremony that Rosicrucians know quite well but which I cannot elaborate upon in this article since many readers of this magazine will not be members of the Rosicrucian Order. A part of this ritual is symbolical of the great initiation, namely, transition. At the time of transition, we are indeed on the threshold of what we call the "Master's Temple." We are preparing to enter what is objectively unknown to us, and are about to begin learning something new. What we receive will be in proportion to what we are able to give, serve and love.

At the time of transition, the soul-personality is admitted into the Temple of the Invisible. Symbolically, there is an antechamber to this Temple, and it is in this very antechamber where we wait and adapt ourselves, and learn to be born again into a different and higher state. Eventually we proceed to the threshold chamber

where we balance the good we have done against the errors and misdeeds we have committed. From a Rosicrucian perspective, this period, which is similar to the usual mental introspection we are all familiar with, allows us to engage in a form of reflection based upon the complete truth about ourselves, for we are no longer limited by the imperfections of our physical senses. At that time, we know that what we are experiencing is the unvarnished truth about ourselves, and we can no longer fool ourselves with false reasoning. The consequences of our human experiences are intensely perceived by the soul-personality, though thankfully, this period is relatively short-lived. Then we enter the Temple itself and are, according to a traditional expression, "elevated."

After we have completed the period of adaptation in the spiritual antechamber, and balanced our soul in the threshold chamber, much as the Egyptians understood and interpreted it in their "Book of the Dead," we assess our progress and, depending on the results, make resolutions and plan our future. The soul-personality is fully conscious of the goal it must reach, and with memories of its distant past and of its various experiences on earth, and even maybe in other worlds, it takes the decisions that need to be taken.

Because of the intense desire to reach its goal however, these resolutions often go beyond human possibilities. However, the mission of one whom we could symbolically call the "Master of the Temple of Reflection" consists in bringing these resolutions back to a reasonable and bearable level for our fragile human nature. The cosmic sphere in which the soul was elevated through transition is therefore a place of *preparation* where the soul sets up the itinerary for its next incarnation. To echo the observations of many wise men and women of the past, and according to Rosicrucian tradition, on average 144 years elapse between two incarnations. This period of rest varies, depending on the duration of life on earth, though other factors can also influence the interval.

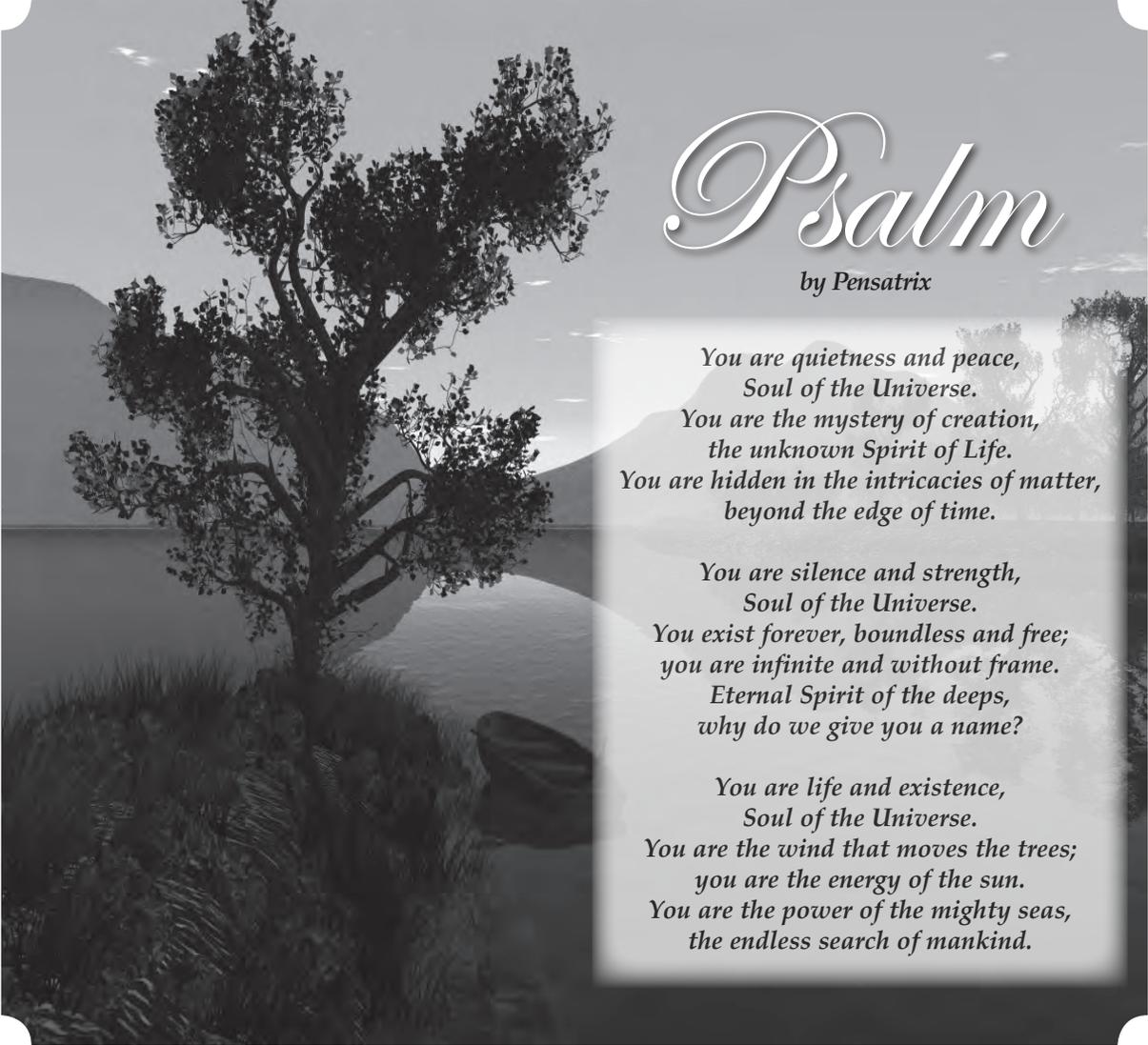
We should always remember that *oblivion* does not exist for the soul-personality. Those it left behind in the world remain forever a part of it, which explains why there is never any real separation. This can be difficult for our intellect to understand as it is accustomed to splitting up



and dividing, whereas the soul, which forgets nothing, includes everything and everyone throughout its journeys through its countless human temples. Of course when the moment of death arrives, the body looks back nostalgically at itself and this is when fear of the unknown and for what the soul-personality will meet on its path, appears above all. The departure is distressing for family and friends too, for human hearts suffer and are deeply affected by such separations. Yet, although we may be overcome with sadness, we should always remember that those who have physically left us have not actually parted from us. If anything, they are even *closer* to us, for we will dwell in them and they in us forever. Although our eyes cannot see them and our ears cannot hear them, they are

with us always. It is often said that we need to “kiss goodbye” to something or other. But with regard to the transition of loved-ones, this does not mean that we should ever forget them, but simply that we should accept something that cannot be changed.

Let us be aware of the briefness of life and truly live the present moment. Let us thank God every day for being fortunate in so many respects, although we no longer see or appreciate the true worth of what we have. Let us always remember to raise our hearts through thanksgiving and gratitude, so that when our time is up and we must leave this world, we have complete peace of mind and know Peace Profound, even if just for a few moments, before everything begins again.



# Psalm

by Pensatrix

*You are quietness and peace,  
Soul of the Universe.  
You are the mystery of creation,  
the unknown Spirit of Life.  
You are hidden in the intricacies of matter,  
beyond the edge of time.*

*You are silence and strength,  
Soul of the Universe.  
You exist forever, boundless and free;  
you are infinite and without frame.  
Eternal Spirit of the deeps,  
why do we give you a name?*

*You are life and existence,  
Soul of the Universe.  
You are the wind that moves the trees;  
you are the energy of the sun.  
You are the power of the mighty seas,  
the endless search of mankind.*



# THE CHÂTEAU D'OMONVILLE



Headquarters of the French-Language Jurisdiction of AMORC



**I**F EUROPE IS THE CRADLE OF Rosicrucianism, France is especially prominent in the history of our Order for it was in one of its cities, Toulouse, where Harvey Spencer Lewis was initiated and invested with his mission of re-starting the Rosicrucian Order's work in North America, after

a long period of dormancy. French philosophers and mystics have been innumerable, and as members of the Rosicrucian Order, whatever our nationality, we are symbolically their heirs.

Although Rosicrucians have been present and active in France since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was at the end of World War II when, under the



aegis of A.M.O.R.C., they could once again fully hold their activities. Since 1993, Serge Toussaint has held the office of Grand Master and he has had much to do since then, for the activities of this jurisdiction are numerous and spread over many countries. Here now is presented in text and pictures an overview of the French Grand Lodge whose headquarters, the Château d'Omonville, are located in the heart of the province of Normandy. For the many who are interested in history, there follows an account of this listed historical building.

### A Potted History

In 1750 in the kingdom of France, in the green heartland of the duchy of Normandy, a beautiful château by the name of Osmonville was built. Today, in the still prosperous and evergreen province of Normandy, there still exists a beautiful château, now called Omonville. Situated in the village of Le Tremblay-Omonville, in the department of Eure, 20 kilometres from Evreux prefecture, the château has been the property of the *Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis* since December 1969. Prior to that time, the headquarters of AMORC for Francophone countries were located on the property of the late Grand Master Jeanne Guesdon, at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges. Although in the days following World War II this property saw a rebirth of Rosicrucian activity in France, it soon became too small, and the acquisition of larger, more appropriate quarters became imperative.

As there is no such thing as chance, it is difficult to say whether it was the Rosicrucian Order that chose this magnificent historical monument, or whether the site attracted the égrégore of the Rosy Cross. However, one thing is certain: the bonds woven day after day, grow stronger with each passing year. The harmony and beauty that prevail here are matched only by the orderliness, cleanliness and organisation which are highly admired not only by Rosicrucians but also by non-members, experts on listed historical monuments, schools, associations and various clubs who visit the château.

The history of the château presents many questions which current historical research may never be able to solve. But it is interesting to note that local tradition, as well as certain archives, mention the construction of several successive wooden castles on the site in the past; most

likely at the time of the early fortified castles which, before being built of stone, were built of wood. Extant archives state that in 1225 Galeran d'Osmonville donated a forest to the Knights Templar of the Commandery of Saint-Etienne-de-Renneville, now the village of Sainte-Colombe-la-Commanderie, situated one kilometre from the Château d'Omonville. This Templar Commandery was one of the most important in Normandy at the time, and it has a most interesting history. Famous Knights stayed there and held counsel and close bonds were established between the Knights Templar and the people of Omonville.

Centuries went by and in 1750 the landowner, Robert-Philibert Le Carpentier Deslongvaux, an ironmaster and the Lord and Baron of Combon du Tremblay, erected the château according to Le Chartier's architectural plans. This architect also planned a section of the famous and impressive Abbey of Bec Hellouin, situated about 15 kilometres from Omonville, which explains the similarity between the sculptured keys of the windows and the interior staircase of Château d'Omonville and of the Abbey. Robert-Philibert and his wife Jeanne-Marguerite Leblond had four children of whom one, Pierre-Jacques Le Carpentier, married Elisabeth du Cotton de Verbois and inherited the château. Pierre-Jacques's son, Hilaire Le Carpentier de Sainte-Opportune, succeeded him and had seven children with his wife, Adelaide de Planterose. The property remained in the family until 1860 when the château was sold to a merchant, Monsieur Le Sage-Maille, who was succeeded by his daughter, Madame Dannel.

Passing through the disturbances and ravages of the revolution, just like those of the German Occupation much later, the château resisted and some decades ago became the property of Mr. Manceaux, a notary of Pantin and the brother-in-law of the famous composer and musician Francis Poulenc, who found artistic inspiration in this peaceful setting. Mr. Manceaux accomplished a long and meticulous restoration, returning life and lustre to this architectural jewel which had been abandoned for so long and had sustained serious damage in the past, including by fire. Unfortunately, after his death, the château was left deserted for many years, and when AMORC acquired it during the winter of 1969, extensive repairs had to be undertaken.





*The coat of arms on the south frontage.*



*The old music room, now the Emperor's office.*



*The fireplace in the Grand Salon.*

*Sub rosa, the rose  
of silence.*



*The Pompadour boudoir.*



*The lobby.*



*The blue kitchen.*



## The Château Building

Situated in a seven-hectare estate, the château is built of stone, and one can enter the ground floor by ascending a short flight of steps. There are three floors topped by a slate roof. Each wing is extended with a small enclosed courtyard surrounded by handrails, including the outbuildings and a chapel. At first glance, one does not realise that for three quarters of a century, this château remained unfinished, for only the pavilion and right wing had been built in 1750. The left hand structure without a chimney was erected during the reign of Louis-Philippe (1830-1848). The whole section built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century has retained its original wooden panelling. The armorial bearings of the Le Carpentier family were a blue shield with two silver carps shown back to back; and at the top of the shield, was a red stripe decorated with three golden spur rowels. Interestingly enough, the visible coat of arms on the north and south façades has no connection with these armorial bearings.

Inside the château, the old music room displays beautiful waxed wood panelling, giving it an intimate atmosphere. There is also an Aubusson tapestry reproducing the fine episode of Lancret's painting entitled *Old Age*, which is now on display at the National Gallery in London. The marble fireplace is fully fitted with cast-iron plates, the old-fashioned way. Almost every fireback plate in the château is decorated with bas-reliefs in keeping with the symbolism of fire. A small boudoir adjoining the old music room is decorated with wooden panelling from the royal Château de Saint-Hubert, the property of Madame de Pompadour, whose grace pervades the premises.

The next lobby assumes the octagonal shape of the central part of the château. Two huge corner cupboards suggest that this was once used as a dining room during winters. Also outstanding are the period paintings inlaid in wood panelling above the fireplaces and doors.

Below, the "blue" kitchen, named thus because its walls are completely covered with Dutch delftware, once had a huge chimney. Nowadays, the brasses bequeathed by Jeanne Guesdon are kept in this kitchen which remains as a witness to the history of the château.



*The old library on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.*

The first-floor library also has oak panelling. The emblems of Mercury and Minerva, symbolising commerce and the arts, are carved on the four walls, most certainly the work of journeymen. The elaborate parquet floor of an office on the first floor dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and comes from an old château in the province of Touraine. The floor's combination of oak and mahogany is most unusual, and a Maltese cross, made of four different woods, dominates its centre.

So much for the past life of the château itself, which is now registered as an historical monument and whose aura will always bear the stamp of the Rosy Cross.

## Outbuildings

Other ancient outbuildings complete the architectural ensemble dating back mainly to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One of these house *Diffusion Rosicrucienne*, the catalogue sales section of the French Grand Lodge. It aims primarily at making Rosicrucian thought better known through its publications. Up to now, about fifty books have been published and this growing collection includes not only great Rosicrucian classics, but also a number of more recent books resulting from the work of members of the Rose Croix





*The offices of Diffusion Rosicrucienne and the computer department.*

University International (RCUI).

An identical and parallel edifice shelters an impressive heritage: the library. It contains about ten thousands books dedicated mainly to esotericism and spirituality. These books are divided into an old collection (1540-1849) and a modern one (1850 to the present). The library also has a collection of esoteric magazines and of course a lot of Rosicrucian archive material. Although it is not open to the public, it sometimes welcomes researchers who request access to it. Two archivists work there on a permanent basis.

A new building, fitting perfectly into the historical surrounding, was erected on the property in 1978. It shelters several offices, among which are the computer and mail departments, as well as a large warehouse. A little farther, in a place hidden by centuries-old trees, lies the printing house where monographs, bulletins, magazines and various other documents are prepared every day. Just beside this stands another building, the shipping department, and an additional smaller construction is devoted to the production of Rosicrucian incense; about



*The new library.*





*The shipping department.*



*The shipping department.*



*The incense workshop.*



*The printing house.*



*The reception building.*



*The function room.*

thirty thousand boxes of incense are produced there each year.

Among the other outbuildings, a pleasant function room and kitchens allow the Grand Lodge to receive groups. The reception building where visitors are welcomed when they arrive at the château adds to this ensemble. This is also where all incoming telephone calls and the daily mail are first received and dealt with.

## **The Orangery**

One of the focal points of the Grand Lodge is of course the Grand Temple where the ritual of the Council of Solace is performed each day. It is located on the first floor of an ancient outbuilding called "the Orangery." The ground floor of this former orangery was used in the past as a winter garden or a summer lounge. Period mirrors on the northern walls reflect the





*The Orangery.*

light that filters through the many south wall windows. The paved floor and wood panelling are beautiful, and a huge oval table fills the centre of the room now used as a meeting room. The “Knight of the Rose” on watch at the entrance, symbolises the Guardian of the Grand Temple which occupies the pavilion attic. One enters the Temple by ascending a narrow wooden spiral staircase.



*The meeting room.*

## **In the Garden**

Outside the Orangery, there is a formal French-style garden on the northern side of the château, a reduction of Le Nôtre’s creations at Versailles. It is surrounded by rosebushes and sided by two lime-tree groves which shelter the terracotta statues facing each other of Flora and Diana, incarnating the two polarities of nature.

Looking back, one can have a glimpse of the château through a blue gate that opens to the chapel. The latter, which is enclosed in a small courtyard, was erected in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mass was celebrated there for many years and a few people in the village still remember having officiated there as altar boys. It is still arranged as at that time and two small rooms open on the sides of the central choir, one serving as the Emperor’s sanctum, while the other is used by the French Grand Master.

## **Back in the Château**

When leaving the chapel, one can enter the château by climbing a short flight of steps. On the ground floor, one is back into the old music room, now the Emperor’s office. Some other beautiful rooms are used as secretarial offices, but a part of



*The Knight of the Rose.*





*Flora*



*The French-style gardens.*



*Diana*

that level is also available for the Grand Master to receive guests, either in the Grand Salon or in the dining room. One can reach the first floor by ascending a beautiful stone staircase. This is where one will find the Grand Master's office and other departments such as those of the Rose-Croix magazine, the Rosicrucian Forum, Friends of AMORC, and Rosicrucian Travel, as well as the Department of Instruction, the office of the Traditional Martinist Order, that of proofreading, the buying department, and the personnel manager.

The second floor shelters the offices of the membership and accounts departments and one can find a few magnificently decorated bedrooms there as well. There are 53 people in all working for the French Grand Lodge. In addition to these, a further 20 people are



*The dining room.*



*The Chapel.*



*The Grand Salon.*





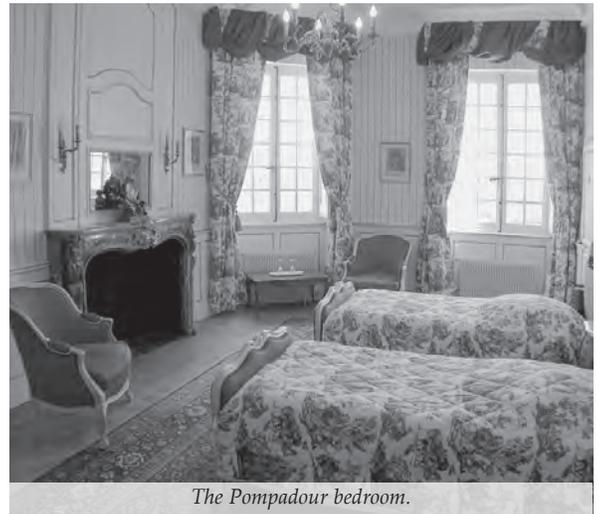
*The freestone staircase.*



*The Napoleon bedroom.*



*The office of the Grand Master.*



*The Pompadour bedroom.*



*The "Egyptian" corridor on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.*

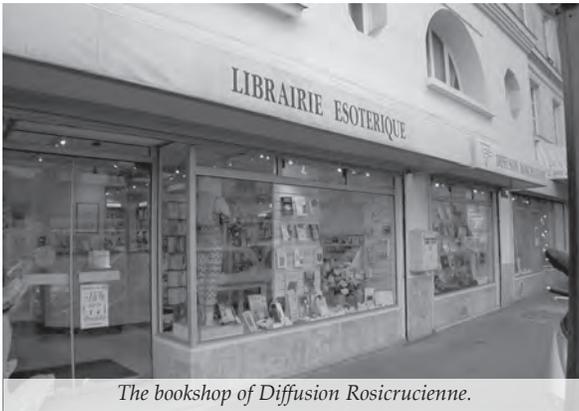


*The Angels bedroom.*

employed in Paris.

Should the opportunity arise for you to go to France, do not hesitate to come to Normandy. It is geographically close to Paris and easily reached by train. It is best of course to contact the French Grand Lodge when planning to come because there are many public holidays in France and





*The bookshop of Diffusion Rosicrucienne.*



*The Zodiac space.*



*Inside the bookshop.*



*The auditorium of Espace Saint-Martin.*



*The Salons de la Rose-Croix.*



*The portal to the Christian Rosenkreutz Temple.*

the premises are closed on weekends. Moreover, the railway station is twenty kilometres from the château.

Here is the e-mail address of the French Grand Lodge: [amorc@rose-croix.org](mailto:amorc@rose-croix.org), and the telephone number: 02 32 35 41 28 from France or +33 232 35 41 28 from abroad.

Should you be planning on visiting Paris, remember to visit the *Espace Saint-Martin*. There, you will find a very interesting bookshop with many Rosicrucian items, but also a variety of other objects and books of

interest. An art gallery called the *Salons de la Rose-Croix* adjoins the bookshop. These salons, perpetuating the activities that the Rosicrucian Order inaugurated at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and pursued in the 1980's, consist of ever-changing exhibitions of paintings and sculptures chosen for their symbolism. On the ground floor of this cultural centre are the premises of the Rosicrucian Lodges of Paris, including a lovely Egyptian-style Temple in the basement. In the upper stories of this large





*The Rosicrucian Domain de Silence at Lachute, Quebec province, Canada.*

building, you will find a very pleasant auditorium and, above all, the biggest and most beautiful Temple in the jurisdiction. It is used for special occasions and can seat up to six hundred people.

### **The Greater Jurisdiction**

We have just referred to the headquarters of the French-language jurisdiction, and therefore to France. However, the activities of this jurisdiction spread far beyond the borders of France and include a great part of the African continent. During the last few decades, beautiful Temples have been built there as well, thanks to the work and devotion of Rosicrucians in those countries.

Rosicrucian activities are maintained everywhere in the world where French is the predominant language, such as in the French West-Indies, French Guiana, on the islands of Reunion and Mauritius, in Madagascar, Haiti, Belgium and Switzerland. There are also several Affiliated Bodies that have been active for quite a long time in the Canadian province of Québec. Here also is the *Rosicrucian Domain of Lachute*, not far from Montreal, where many Rosicrucian activities are enjoyed both in French and English. It is here too in this domain of the French-language jurisdiction located on the North American continent where the meeting of the Supreme Board of Directors of

AMORC is held every year.

Finally, the *Rose Croix University International* (RCUI) is very active in the French-language jurisdiction through the work of about fifty lecturers who make presentations on approximately 250 different subjects. This Grand Lodge is supervising the activities of 61 Lodges, 29 Chapters and 139 Pronaoi, in addition to which there are 78 Pronaoi of Lodges and Chapters.

We hope this overview will serve as an invitation for all Rosicrucians and their friends to come and visit these various domains of the French-language jurisdiction which are, just as all the buildings of AMORC, "*dedicated to Truth and devoted to every Rosicrucian.*"

## *Three Things*

*I have just three things to teach:  
simplicity, patience, compassion.  
These three are your greatest treasures.*

*Lao Tzu (c.600 BCE)*

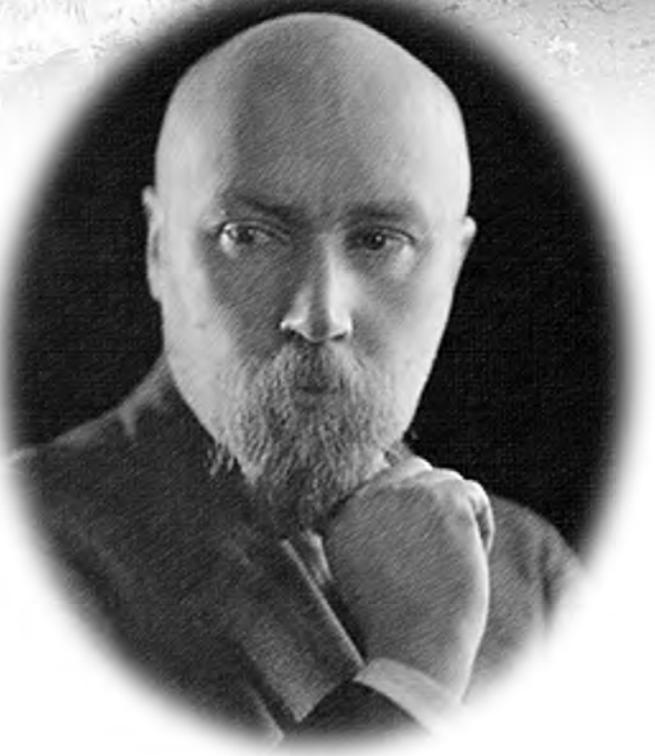




# Nicholas Roerich's Journey to the Altai

by Connie James, SRC

*The March 2006 edition of the Rosicrucian Beacon had an article about Nicholas Roerich, the Roerich Pact and the Banner of Peace. The following is an illustration of one of his journeys into Central Asia.*



**W**OULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHERE our dwelling place is? We have many homes in many lands, and vigilant friends guard our dwellings. Many are travelling with us and in all corners of the world, upon the heights, friendly beacon fires burn. Around them the benevolent traveller will always find a place, and travellers hasten to them.

Nicholas Roerich was a celebrated Russian explorer, author, artist and mystic of the early

20<sup>th</sup> century. He is especially renowned for his striking mystical paintings, many of which he created after his journeys of exploration. Among his many books, one is called: *Altai-Himalaya, A Travel Diary*. It is this diary which inspired me to write this article.

In the Altai Republic of the Russian Federation in southern Siberia, close to where Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China's Xinjiang province meet, lies a mountain called



*Белуха* or Mt. Belukha in English. Anyone who has ever seen this mountain will never forget the beauty of its shining twin peaks. The eastern peak

***According to numerous legends Mt. Belukha is a sacred mountain.***

(4,506 m, 14,784 ft) is higher than the western peak (4,440 m, 14,567 ft). It has even been claimed that Mt. Belukha is *the* symbol of the Altai, from the Mongolian word *alt* meaning “gold.” Since 1998, it has formed part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site known as: *The Golden Mountains of Altai*.

### **Across the Entire Heaven Shone a Rainbow!**

*“And when we crossed Edigol, the broadness of Altai spread before us. It blossomed in all interblending green and blue shades. It became white with distant snow. The grass and the flowers stood the height of a man on horseback.”*

The Altai is an exceptionally beautiful and unspoilt region. Here the trees in the large forests fall on the underbrush only when they die a natural death; they are then gradually covered with thick moss, often becoming an inextricable tangle. At a higher altitude, Siberian birch trees extend like a carpet over the earth. The grasslands are never cut, burned or used for grazing, and in spring there is an explosion of flowers, some of which are species that have by now become quite rare. The region abounds in squirrels, marmots and small rodents. Lynxes, snow leopards, bears and golden eagles lead undisturbed lives here. In the Altai you walk through virgin land on paths that often turn into brooks after snowfalls, wade across torrents and skirt dazzlingly beautiful lakes and tall waterfalls.

Mt. Belukha towers majestically over its surroundings. The slopes of its twin peaks are covered with eternal snow and glaciers for about 70 sq. km. Here lies the source of two rivers, the Biya and the Katun that together form the headwaters of the Siberian river Ob, one of the longest rivers in the world.

According to numerous legends, it is a sacred mountain. Buddhists have claimed that Shambhala, the legendary

country of gods and a paradisiacal realm, was situated here. Nicholas Roerich visited this place to study the roots of Buddhism. According to another widespread belief, Mt. Belukha and Mt. Everest are connected through an energy bridge, and in the Belukha area there is said to be an *omphalos* or “navel of the Earth.”

### **Altai 1926**

*“From the south and from the north, from the east and from the west, they are thinking of the same things. And the same evolutionary process is being impressed upon the world. Consciousness of the new world exists.”*

*Altai-Himalaya, A Travel Diary* is a record of Nicholas Roerich’s journeys by horseback to remote parts of Tibet, Central Asia, Xinjiang and Mongolia between 1924 to 1928. On his travels, apart from his diaries, his paintings of the Himalayas are a transcription of some of the earth’s most magnificent scenery. Wherever he journeyed, Roerich was greeted with honour and sometimes affection. He was a man of original, strong and definite beliefs.

There are places on Earth where we feel comfortable and free. One of these places is the Altai, which, according to Buddhists, is the centre of the Earth while to Russian Orthodox Old Believers, it is considered *Belovodye*. In Russian history, there is a legend about a highly evolved spiritual civilisation called *Belovodye* (“land of the white waters”) that existed in the far north. Roerich believed that *Belovodye* is actually what the Tibetans call “Shambhala.” He offered his own version: according to him, the *Belovodye* legend



*“In the Altai, on the right bank of the Katun River, there is a mountain. Its significance is likened to the world mountain.”*





*"On the 17<sup>th</sup> of August we beheld Belukha. It was so clear and reverberant, truly, another Zvenigorod."*

spoke about *"the realm of supreme knowledge and wisdom as to the deliverance of all future humankind,"* thereby conveying a message common to all religions, as opposed to its Christian meaning. In this context the theory becomes interrelated with the legend of Shambhala. Roerich pointed out the similarities, referring to his conversations with Altaic Old Believers who thought that Belovodye was located south of the Tibetan plateau, in the Himalayas.

### The Mystical Gates

*"Is not our epoch one of the most significant? Are not the most wonderful discoveries approaching for our daily use? And are we not becoming familiar with some of the most subtle energies? Before our very eyes, everything is being transformed. The boundaries of spiritual life are broadening."*

Time and consciousness are such mysterious things. They are difficult for us to understand. When reading this article and looking at the photographs of the area, it is possible to be transported back in time to be with Roerich and relive his experience with him.

Altai means *"The Golden Mountains"* in Mongolian. For many people it is a mysterious and unknown place, and Mt. Belukha is like a huge magnet even today. It always attracts people, towering brightly and solemnly above with its white

snowy peaks among glaciers and mountains. In ancient times it was a place of pilgrimage. According to many, this is the land of bliss and prosperity, where people live free and liberally, where the forests are full of animals and the rivers rich with fish, and where the soil is fertile and people enjoy equal rights. The amazing and beautiful Altai is one of the diamonds in the crown of our Earth. Each year thousands of tourists rush to this place, to experience one of the truly mystical places on the planet.

*"Katun is welcoming. The Blue Mountains are resonant. White is Belukha. The flowers are vivid and the green grasses and cedars are calming. Who has said that Altai is cruel and unapproachable? Whose heart has become fearful of the austere power and beauty."*

Perhaps, one day, you will have the opportunity to travel in the footsteps of Nicholas Roerich, and experience what he experienced, see what he saw, and marvel at the beauty of creation.



*"The Blue Mountains are resonant. White is Mt. Belukha. The flowers are vivid and the green grasses and cedars are calming. Who has said that the Altai is cruel and unapproachable? Whose heart has become fearful of the austere power and beauty?"*



# The Four Candles

*Author Unknown  
contributed by Dini Jacobs, SRC*



**T**he Four Candles burned slowly. Their ambiance was so soft you could hear them speak.

The first candle said, *"I Am Peace, but these days, nobody wants to keep me lit."* Then Peace's flame slowly diminished and went out completely.

The second candle said, *"I Am Faith, but these days, I am no longer indispensable."* Then Faith's flame slowly diminished and went out completely.

Sadly the third candle spoke, *"I Am Love and I haven't the strength to stay lit any longer. People put me aside and don't understand my importance. They even forget to love those who are nearest to them."* And waiting no longer, Love went out completely.

Suddenly, a child entered the room and saw the three candles no longer burning. The child began to cry, *"Why are you not burning? You are supposed to stay lit until the end."*

Then the Fourth Candle spoke gently to the little boy, *"Don't be afraid, for I am Hope, and while I still burn, we can re-light the other candles."* With shining eyes, the child took the Candle of Hope and lit the other three candles.

Never let the Flame of Hope go out of your life. With Hope, no matter how bad things look, Peace, Faith and Love can shine brightly in your life.



# Mystical Illumination

*by Ralph M Lewis, FRC*



**W**HAT IS THE PURPOSE OF mystical philosophy? We must realise that mysticism and its philosophical aspects are not ends in themselves. Mysticism's ideas and teachings are merely instruments to achieve certain specific objectives. In earlier times, the greatest emphasis was placed on the so-called

spiritual values of mysticism; in other words, a full realisation of self and a consciousness of the relationship of that self to God.

Mystical philosophers have long lamented that we have a limited use of our consciousness. We are seen as resorting primarily to objective experiences, our greatest interest being in sensual matters, worldly things and materialism.



Figuratively speaking, our state of existence is therefore one-sided and worldly. Now if we accept that this is basically true, the original question still persists. In other words, what is the purpose of the mystical experience of Oneness, of Cosmic Consciousness?

The answer traditionally given by mystics is *illumination*. This means enlightenment, an influx of a new gnosis or an exalted knowledge; and knowledge is said to be power. But ideas have power only in their application. Unused knowledge is inert and accomplishes nothing. The power of thought manifests only in action, in doing something.

The physical and material side of life is

*The physical and material side of life is not fundamentally evil or corrupt.*

not fundamentally evil or corrupt. This idea is based on obsolete theological notions. Our appetites and passions are part of the necessities of our being. In our growth, sustaining of life and reproducing, we are only conforming to our biological imperatives.

But what about the other aspects of human nature; the abstract side? What about the illumination that mysticism urges us to attain? Must there be a definite cleavage in our nature? Are we to be both sensual and worldly, or seek refuge in mystical experience?

### Inspiration and Creation

One of the basic precepts of mysticism is the unity of Self, namely, the integration of all divergent experiences that our self is capable of having. The subconscious, the psychic self, must however reflect back the illumination it receives to the objective everyday world. The psychic self must energise the objective self. It must arouse inspiration and aspiration to create in the world those things that represent the inner experience. In other words, if mysticism is to have any value, the world must be part of our inner experiences.

Through the ages, every spiritual ideal or philosophical principle that has been accepted as good, was a motivating force to compel us to achieve something higher in our lifetime. It is only in this way that we become a whole being, and not divided against ourselves. Mysticism,

then, can and should be a dynamic, constructive force in the world. False mysticism, on the other hand, is a dream world of pleasant escape from the here and now.

If we have any degree of illumination we confront the problems of the day impersonally and dispassionately. Perhaps the greatest problem of today and past eras is achieving *peace*. Peace is not a matter of passivity and quiescence. In fact, peace must arise out of conflict. However, the battle is basically with the self and not with others. This is the true meaning of *jihad*, an Islamic term that we have become familiar with. Peace begins with the individual, not with groups or people collectively.

We are aggressive beings, motivated by forces, desires and drives. These are essential to us. Life impels itself toward its ends with utter indifference to all else, and we have to realise that. If there is purpose to life, it is for living things simply "to be" and nothing else. We are a product of such organic impulses. If we look at ourselves from the physical, mortal point of view, we are ruthless. Actually, nature itself is not ruthless, for it has not arrived at the moral concepts that humanity has established.

Basically, we have the instinctive inclination to sacrifice anything to satisfy our physical self. Yet it is here that our psychic and rational aspects express themselves.

From the highest intellectual and moral point of view, life is not simply to live or exist. Rather, life is to live *for a purpose* where, in our purposefulness, we distinguish ourselves from the lower animals. But what must that purpose be? It is the collective welfare of all humanity. Such a phrase is not a cliché, although we often hear it. It is the only true example of human

*Perhaps the greatest problem of today and past eras is achieving peace.*

advancement. Individual incentive toward purely personal ends is elementary and primitive. We are being moved solely by life impulses and not by the higher intuition and rationalisation that we have at our disposal.

To accomplish this greater purpose requires self-discipline. In fact, acting this way does not require being less ambitious or less



aggressive; rather, we extend our self-interest. Our actions therefore, are not always limited to the immediate self, but contribute to the ideal of the collective advancement of mankind. In this sense, every one of us is in some small degree every other person's benefactor instead of his competitor.

### Dynamic Mysticism

Our advancement can only be accomplished by an understanding of our emotions and of the self. Firstly, we must establish common ideals that elevate the human race. Secondly, we must be taught how to stimulate certain impulses to contribute to those ideals. We must also learn how to restrain other impulses. This means a study of the practical points in psychology, mental states and rational codes of ethics and behaviour. Peace therefore, is a complex attainment if we are to advance from the primitive forces of the raw life that we see existing today. Remember that peace is primarily a personal attainment. It is nice for us to meet at the United Nations or in all sorts of other groups to consider what mankind is to do. Yet peace cannot be regulated from outside the individual. It must be individually and personally cultivated.

Those with a gleaming of illumination realise that our inclination to resist change is another of our great problems. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus said centuries ago that all is becoming, nothing ever is. Everything is in a state of flux, becoming something else. If things were not becoming, the world, the whole universe, would be static.

Despite changing conditions, we are creatures of habit, and habits are born out of experience and tradition. Experience is a product of time and circumstance; what one period or event makes pleasurable or practical may not be so tomorrow.

### Traditions and Progress

Traditions, on the other hand, are past experiences and customs. They may or may not continue to serve the purpose for which they came into existence. These traditions often become ready-made ways of acting and thinking. Even if such traditions are innocuous and don't trouble us, they often make it difficult for changes or possible advancement to take place.

Tradition acquires an air of reverence of

which it is often not worthy. If a tradition has merit, it is only as a stepping-stone to something better. No tradition is so sacred that it cannot be questioned as to its present value.

Contemporary society is cast out of the mould of its traditions. By holding to such traditions, society has many of the same festering sores that have plagued it for centuries, such as war, crime, poverty, bigotry and intolerance. Moral systems and religious precepts have not stopped these evils.

We are now in a new stage of intellectualism. This is an age of scepticism in which blind faith and unsubstantiated traditions are challenged, resulting in drastic transitions. The old foundation of many religious beliefs, political ideologies, morality and social order are now found wanting. The reaction is one of utter disdain and it is expressed in the nonconformity we see today. All of this leaves us a vacuum in place of an ordered, traditional society. The old is cast aside or is in the process of being cast aside and there is nothing to take its place yet.

True scepticism is of course healthy. It substitutes knowledge for blind faith and

*Yet peace cannot be regulated from outside the individual. It must be individually and personally cultivated.*

unsupported belief. Having found the outside world full of error, many of the younger generation want a new kind of emotional experience. They feel thrown back upon themselves, alienated and searching within for answers. They want new, lasting, guiding experiences, and they abhor old dogmatism. This search for new experiences, alternative answers, is one of the reasons for the recourse to drugs.

### True Illumination

We need to realise that true illumination is not just a different state of consciousness. It is not just supplanting fatigue, anxiety or depression with some kind of momentary ecstasy. True mystical illumination is a matter of rejuvenation of our worldly consciousness. It is a reaching down into the conscious mind of ideas for concepts that will inspire confidence. Mystical illumination compels us to confront life renewed, not to become a hermit or recluse.

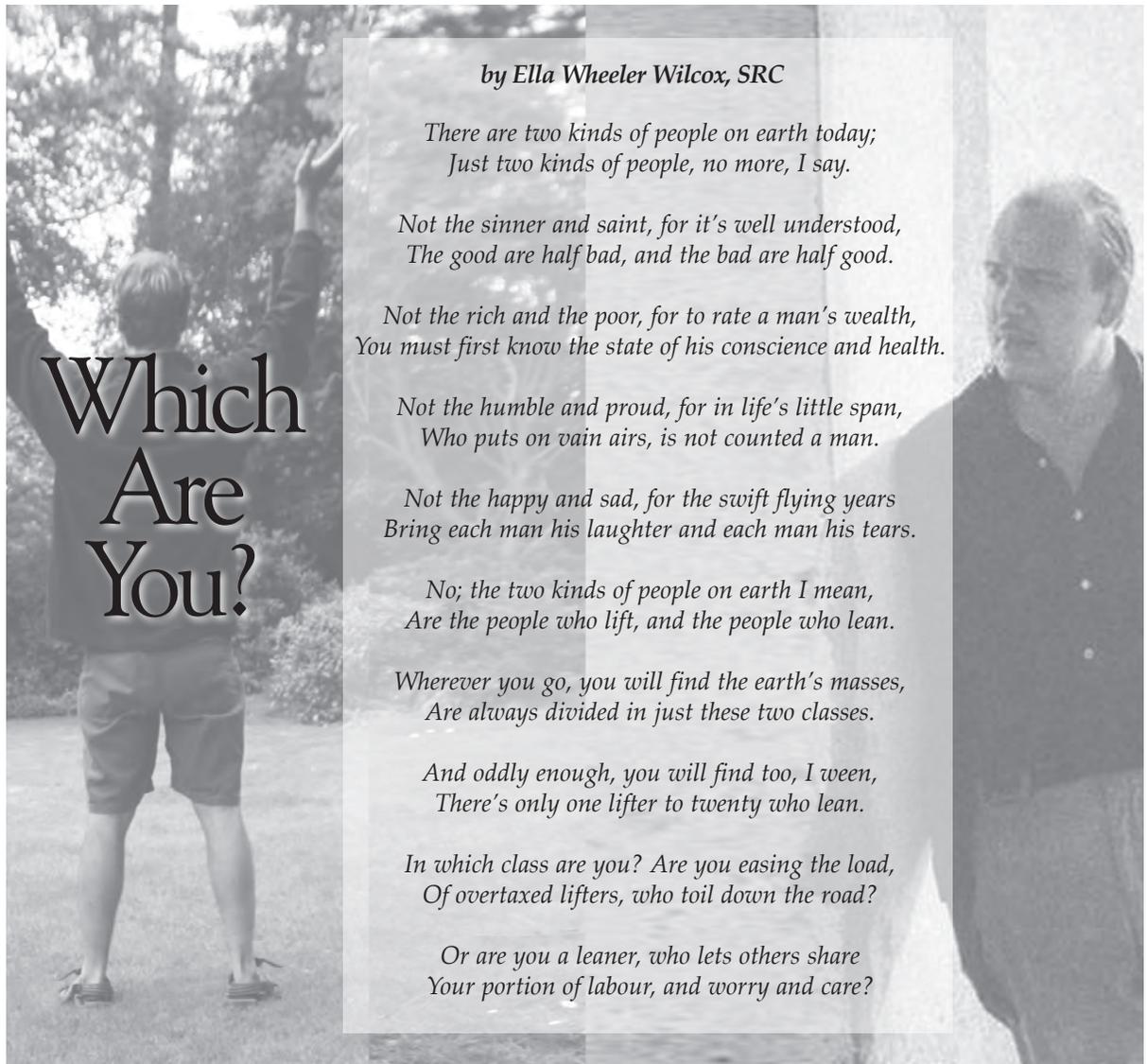


Even today, we can see Brahmin priests sitting on the banks of the river Ganges in India, oblivious to the terrific heat and to all sorts of flies and insects crawling over their faces and hair. These priests are trying to find a world only within themselves; attempting to escape instead of adjusting to the world with whatever illumination they have.

Mystical philosophy plays an important part in world affairs. We need to realise that it is not something that will simply lift us up into a cloud. My father, Dr H Spencer Lewis, would often say: "*Mysticism will lift you up into a cloud, but have your feet on the ground or you are going to come down with an awful bump.*" Of the

most immediate importance, is explaining the real significance of inner experience. Mystical philosophy teaches how the inner experience can be related to the mundane world of today. Every conscious thought or act has a thought behind it. So too, every true advance of humanity must have that psychic motive we term mystical experience.

How often do we realise that our greatest possession is consciousness? Is it the mirror of life? One of the ancient philosophers said: "*Where consciousness is, we are. Where consciousness is not, we are not.*" But this consciousness must be polished to reflect a greater image of reality and the Cosmic.



# Which Are You?

*by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, SRC*

*There are two kinds of people on earth today;  
Just two kinds of people, no more, I say.*

*Not the sinner and saint, for it's well understood,  
The good are half bad, and the bad are half good.*

*Not the rich and the poor, for to rate a man's wealth,  
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.*

*Not the humble and proud, for in life's little span,  
Who puts on vain airs, is not counted a man.*

*Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years  
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.*

*No; the two kinds of people on earth I mean,  
Are the people who lift, and the people who lean.*

*Wherever you go, you will find the earth's masses,  
Are always divided in just these two classes.*

*And oddly enough, you will find too, I ween,  
There's only one lifter to twenty who lean.*

*In which class are you? Are you easing the load,  
Of overtaxed lifters, who toil down the road?*

*Or are you a leaner, who lets others share  
Your portion of labour, and worry and care?*



# Maat and Asha



## Egyptian and Persian Concepts of World Balance

by Bill Anderson, FRC

*To Rosicrucians, the universe is in a state of balance and harmony called by mystics "Cosmic Order," or simply "The Cosmic."*

**T**HROUGHOUT THE 3,000-YEAR PLUS history of ancient Egyptian civilisation, though many things changed, there was a constancy of certain key concepts that lasted throughout the whole of their history. One of these concepts was *Maat*. Rosicrucians will be familiar with *Maat* which means roughly truth, balance and cosmic order.

As the Indo-Iranian tribes swept south into Iran and India, they brought with them a

similar concept called *Asha* in the ancient Persian religion, Zoroastrianism. Without any known contact between the Egyptian and Indo-Iranian civilisations until much later in their history, it is fascinating to speculate on how they both arrived at the same concept.

### Maat as a Principle of Cosmic Order

*Maat* does indeed mean truth, but this is too simple a translation of the Egyptian term. To the



ancient Egyptians, *Maat* represented the principle of Cosmic Order as well as eternal renewal. *Maat* is right order in nature and society, as established by the act of creation, and means, according to the context, that which is right, that which is correct: law, order, justice and truth. It was considered that this state of righteousness had to be preserved and established in all matters great and small.

Originally, *Maat* seems to have been something simple, a concrete geometrical and physical term denoting "straightness" and "evenness." The earliest hieroglyph for it probably represents the base of the pharaoh's throne which may in turn be regarded as a stylised form of the primeval mound, the first piece of earth to appear after the act of creation. This straightness later came to mean "right" and "correct" in an ethical sense. The transference



*If the verdict should be favourable, the deceased is invested with the attribute of Maat and as one who is "true of voice" (maat kheru) is brought before Osiris on his throne.*

***Maat is right order in nature and society.***

of meaning gave the concept its significance and made it a fundamental concept in Egyptian thought and behaviour.

*Maat* originated with creation: it was brought into being by the primordial god and then constantly refreshed or restored by each pharaoh. This is plain from the following two texts: "the sky is at peace, the earth is in joy, for they have heard that Pharaoh will set right in the place



*The dead man's heart, deemed to be the seat of the intellect and will, as well as the life-giving centre of the physical body, is weighed against the symbol of Maat, usually depicted as a feather.*

*of disorder," and "Tutankhamun drove out disorder from the Two Lands and Maat is firmly established in its place; he made lying an abomination and the land is as it was at the first time."*

### **Maat From the First Time. The Act of Creation**

The crucial points are these: *Maat* is equated with the "First Time," namely, with the act of creation. The pharaoh who drives out disorder, is an incarnation of Atum, the primeval god of creation from Heliopolis. The end of disorder goes hand in hand with the establishment of *Maat*: "Maat is great and its effectiveness lasting; it has not been disturbed since the time of Osiris." There is punishment for him who passes over its laws. There is an extant *Hymn to Maat* where emphasis is laid upon its unbroken continuity from the mythical time of Osiris onward and its everlastingness, for *Maat* outlasts human life.

### **Maat in the Judgement of Humans**

There was an aspect of *Maat* as a measure of judgement upon humanity. So important was the concept of *Maat* that it applied not only to religious and ethical matters but to earthly justice as well. As justice, *Maat* was the basis of the Egyptian legal system. The vizier, who was responsible for the administration of justice, was, from the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty onward, called the "priest of Maat." In later times judges wore an image of *Maat* on a chain about their neck. *Maat* also



appears personified in human guise, wearing the headdress of a large single ostrich feather.

The Egyptians believed that during some past golden age, when all aspects of human life were allegedly in harmony, the law instinctively took account of all facets of human conduct, so that justice and ethics were integrated and social justice prevailed. They wrote for instance that in the era of the primordial gods, "*Maat came from heaven and joined those who lived on earth.*" At that time, it was believed, there was no injustice, no pain, no hunger, in short, no everyday problems whatsoever.

The judgement of the dead is dealt with in its most developed form in the *Book of the Dead*. Here the vignettes in the papyrus of Hunefer or the papyrus of Ani accompanying the text show that the dead man's heart, deemed to be the seat of the intellect and will as well as the life-giving centre of the physical body, is weighed against a symbol of *Maat*, usually depicted as a feather, which serves as an ethical standard. The jackal-headed god Anubis, who has become an attendant of Osiris, lord of the *Duat* (the underworld), is master of the balance, and is in control of the pointer; Thoth, the scribe of the gods, records the verdict and announces it. If the verdict should be unfavourable, the person falls victim to the "devourer," a hybrid monster

*In Egypt you were expected to conform to Maat in your speech and actions.*

waiting hungrily nearby. If the verdict should be favourable, the deceased is invested with the attribute of *Maat* and as one who is "true of voice" (*maat kheru*), is brought before Osiris on his throne.

Many statements of innocence were voiced by the deceased before the actual weighing of the heart took place. These are at times referred to as the Negative Confession or the *Confession to Maat*. They correspond to an ideal way of life to which all should aspire, and constitute a moral code that prevailed for millennia in Egypt. Ideally you were expected to conform to *Maat* in your speech and actions. Statements to this effect are to be found among ancient funerary inscriptions. The range of human affairs permeated by these ethical principles was as broad as it could be. It included people's conduct toward their fellow human



*A sacred fire is kept burning continuously in Zoroastrian temples.*

beings, toward the gods and toward society. *Maat* imbued justice with an ethical spirit.

### **Asha**

Zoroastrianism, the religion of the ancient Persians, is a vibrant religion to this day. As a religion it has influenced Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and its effects can be seen both in Neoplatonic philosophy and Muslim Sufi thought.

The vastness of the Eurasian steppes encouraged the Indo-Iranians to conceive their gods as cosmic, not local, divinities. They understood a universal principle known in Avestan (the language of the Zoroastrian texts), as *Asha*, the principle that governs everything, from the workings of nature to human law and all human conduct.

### **The Amesha Spentas**

The ancient *Asha* or *Asha Vahishta*, later known as *Ardvashist* under the Sassanian dynasty (224-637 CE), was one of the divine Heptad of Zoroastrianism, comprising *Ahura Mazda*, the Wise Lord and the six *Amesha Spentas*, the Bounteous or Holy Immortals (archangels), the six aspects of God's own nature, through which all people came to know God. It is through these seven primal emanations that God's will is done. It is through them that we reach God. This doctrine was an ancient, mystical way of looking at reality, and this distinct group of seven play a central role in Zoroastrian myth and ritual. Each *Amesha Spenta* protects and can be represented by one of the seven creations, which Zoroastrians





The figure of Ahura Mazda, the "Wise Lord," sculpted onto a building in ancient Persopolis in modern day Iran.

believe collectively constitute the divine creation. In myth, the Holy Immortals care for and protect their creations, and in the rituals, a token of each creation is present to represent the spiritual presence of that Holy Immortal.

*Asha*, considered as the most beautiful of the Holy Immortals, represents not only the opposite of untruth, but also the divine law and moral order in the world. *Asha* preserves order on earth as he smites disease, death, fiends, sorcerers and all vile creatures. He is truth and cosmic order and is considered to be the closest of the Holy Immortals to God.

*Asha* connotes the eternal, immutable law that governs the universe, and regulates both the spiritual and corporeal worlds. In Zoroastrianism, natural law and divine law are the same. *Asha* constitutes the yardstick for determining right and wrong. He sets normative ethics and provides the standards that apply to all people at all times. He represents absolute values. The assumption is that right deeds produce benefits alike for the author of the action and for society at large. The accrual of benefits to the author of the act is automatic. As with the law of Karma, the law of *Asha* ensures that happy consequences accrue to good acts. An individual reaps what he or she sows.

### Asha is Truth

*Asha* means many related things, and can't be translated by just one English word. You need a whole constellation of words to translate it: righteousness, law, cosmic order, truth and justice. But *Asha* is first and foremost "Truth," the opposite of the "Lie" (*druj*).

The concept encompasses all clear and objective vision, all honesty and unclouded thoughts, words and deeds. Then it is

"Righteousness," which involves a commitment to good actions that build society and lead toward health, peace and good will. These actions are not prescribed, as they are in Jewish or Islamic sacred law, but they will vary as the conditions of history or society vary. The underlying call to right action however, remains the same.

*Asha* is also "Law;" not a prescribed set of commandments, but a description of the laws that rule our lives and the universe around us. *Asha* is impersonal. In Zoroastrianism, *Ahura Mazda* is not the type of God who suspends the laws of reality in order to make a point or to help someone. In Zoroaster's concept of divine governance, there are no suns standing still, miraculous healings, miraculous plagues or deliverances, no resurrections from the dead. In all the *Gathas* (Zoroastrian hymns), there are no miracles or supernatural occurrences; this is astonishing for something composed at least 3,500 years ago. In *Asha*, God set up the laws of reality, both in the natural world and the social world; and he will not break them.

The law of *Asha* describes what actually happens, not what should happen. It encompasses the law of gravity and all physical laws discoverable by science as well as the laws of consequences governing our own behaviour, which are discoverable by sometimes painful experience. Throw a rock in the air and, if unhindered in

*Asha represents not only the opposite of untruth, but also the divine law and moral order in the world.*

its descent, it will come down: that is *Asha*. Overindulge in alcohol one night and you will wake up with an unpleasant hangover; that is also *Asha*, the law of consequences. If you do wrong, quite often the world itself will punish you, either by its own laws, or by someone taking the law into their own hands. But what of those who do wrong and prosper, who die happily after a life of evil? Then we must look to the world to come, which is also under the rule of *Asha*, where, as Zoroaster states, the "Best Existence" (heaven) is waiting for those who choose good in this world, and where the "Worst Existence" (hell) is reserved for those who have done evil. This "hell" is not eternal, since all things will be purified by the end of time; but it is long enough to purify evildoers.



Therefore, to praise *Asha* as the “best” (Avestan: *vahishta*) is to put yourself in harmony with cosmic order, and to commit yourself to the search for Truth in your spiritual, moral and working life. *Asha* dwells within you, as it does in everyone, and it is divine. Every time you do a righteous deed, no matter how small, you are bringing yourself closer to God through *Asha*.

## Light and Fire Temples

*Asha* is clearly associated with light for it is “most fair, bounteous, immortal, made of light and is all good things.” Truth is also associated with light. The ritual fire in all Zoroastrian temples was associated with *Asha*, as fire was the creation most associated with it. Today, in Zoroastrian Fire temples, the *Bahram* fire, the most sacred of all fires, is necessary to fight the forces of darkness and evil and is regarded as the symbol of truth. In their Fire temples, the Persians did not

worship fire; rather it was a symbol of Light and cosmic Order. Similarly in Rosicrucian temples, this tradition is perpetuated with the vestal flame.

*Asha Vahishta* is the spirit of universal law, which should be the choice of all who wish to be numbered among the *ashavans*: followers of truth or righteousness, the worshipers of the Wise Lord, as opposed to the followers of the lie and unrighteousness. The Lie is the principle of evil. In the *Yasna* ceremony, *Asha* is represented or more accurately, epiphanised, by fire. Fire played a major part in Indo-Iranian religion, and this is an example of Zoroaster’s enthusiasm for retaining elements of his pre-revelation religious upbringing and training. *Asha* is the quality of the divine Heptad which most effectively opposes the demonic druj or “Lie,” the instrument of deceit by which the evil spirit attempts to seduce humanity away from the true path.

## Summary

*Maat* was the order established at the creation. It was the cosmic and rightful order that the Pharaoh and every member of society had to maintain. *Maat* was the heart of Egyptian ethics. The goddess *Maat* was the personification of physical and moral law, order, truth and justice. She was the

highest conception of physical and moral law and order known to the ancient Egyptians. There is a small ruined temple dedicated to *Maat* at Karnak. The temple is inside the Precinct of Montu, the smallest of three enclosures at Karnak. The temple seems to have been built by Queen Hatshepsut, then reconstructed by Tuthmosis III.

The Indo-Iranians believed that there was a natural law that ensured that the sun would maintain its regular movement, the seasons would change and existence would continue in an orderly way. To the Indians this law was



*A modern Fire Temple.*

known as *rta*, to the Persians as *Asha*. Truth, honesty, loyalty and courage were felt to be proper to mankind. It was considered man’s duty to uphold the great cosmic and moral principle, and thereby help to sustain all the good in creation. The Persian Great King or *Shâhanshâh*, was the leader in the great cosmic battle between Truth and the

Lie. He established order and

peace on Earth with the aid of the Wise Lord *Ahura Mazda*. To the ancient Persians, *Asha* is sublime righteousness and justice. It is a universal justice and ideal truth to which we should all aspire, and emanates from the light of the Holy Mind itself. Even today the second month of the Persian year (April-May) is called *Ordibehesht*, a modern version of *Ardevahisht* or *Asha Vahishta*, the spirit of universal law.

To the ancient Egyptians, cosmic order was portrayed as a beautiful young woman, *Maat*, while to the Persians, *Asha* was a beautiful young man. In both lands, the inherent beauty attributed to cosmic order is axiomatic. Both concepts arose independently in different parts of the world: Africa and the Eurasian steppes, yet both had so much in common, a recognition of inherent order to the universe and the right way for people to behave; in other words, what we now call *Karma*.

*As long as I shall be able and strong,  
so long shall I look in quest of truth.*

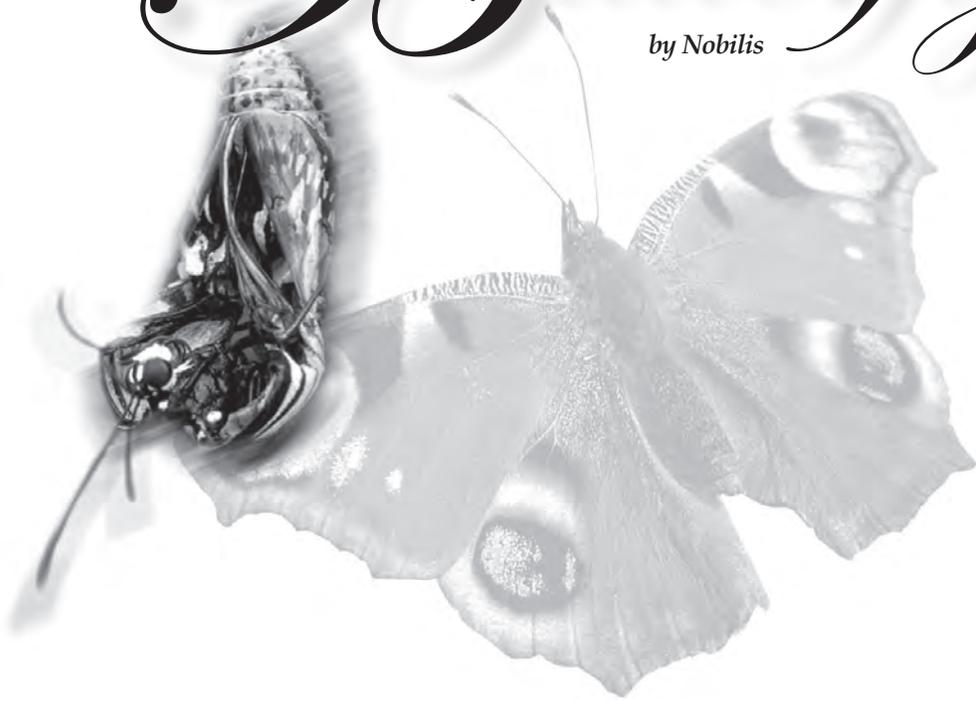
*Truth, shall I see thee, as I continue to acquire  
both good thinking and the way to the Lord?  
(Y28.4-5).*

The *Confession to Maat* is available in A4 or A3 poster format from the Rosicrucian Order.



# The Butterfly

by Nobilis



MELIASAT PATIENTLY OBSERVING THE struggles of a butterfly as it attempted to emerge from its cocoon. At first a small opening appeared at one end and the butterfly struggled and struggled for hours to force its way out. And then it suddenly seemed to stop, as though it could go no further, stuck between two worlds.

Feeling very sorry for its plight, she decided to “help” the butterfly. So, with a pair of small scissors, she snipped the cocoon open and the butterfly emerged. But it was not what she had expected. It had a swollen body and small, shrivelled wings. She continued watching, expecting that at any moment the wings would expand and unfold, thereby completing the transformation so it could fly away.

Unfortunately, this did not happen. In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shrivelled wings. It never managed to fly. What Amelia in her

misguided kindness and haste had not understood was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening was nature’s way of forcing fluid from the butterfly’s body into its wings, thereby expanding them and preparing them for flight.

A struggle such as this is perfectly natural. It is a process of natural law allowing us to experience the worst and best in life. It is not just a test of our physical resolve to overcome obstacles in daily life either, but a direct strengthening of our soul awareness in its quest for spiritual advancement. Of course there are times when everything seems overwhelming or we are caught up in the raw emotion of grief; but such times pass and we can later look back reflectively and often see them from the wider perspective of the human condition.

Daily struggles are a fact of human life, and if we can but see them for what they really are, we will be well on our way to mastering life.



# One Day at a Time



*by Chris R Warnken, FRC*

**I**T HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE majority of people waste half a lifetime in regret over past mistakes or anxiety about the future. In retrospect, we realise the absurdity of this as well as the tremendous waste since we can't go back and change the past. Sooner or later we must realise that life is experienced always and only in

the "eternal now." Philosophers and poets have taught this great principle for centuries, but few people have truly taken this on board.

Pythagoras, an early master of the mystery schools some 2,500 years ago, taught his disciples the futility of worrying over past mistakes. "Leave the mark of the pot upon the ashes!" he said. In other words, wipe out the past and forget it. The



past is history, while today is yet unmade. It is like clay in the hands of a sculptor. Each of us has the privilege of beginning every day with a fresh start, to make of it whatever we will. Whether our past errors bring harm to ourselves or others is now unimportant, to the extent that worry or regret can have no effect at all upon the past. It can cause us to have mental anguish and possibly mental illness that will prevent us from making the most of every present moment.

### Life is a School

We all make mistakes, for we are here to learn. Life is a school of experience. No matter to what degree other humans may inspire us, however much they may seem exemplary and faultless, rest assured that they make mistakes and are learning too, or they would not be here. At best, they have learned to conceal their errors and to keep silent about them. The often quoted biblical phrase of Jesus, "*He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone...*" reminds us that no one is perfect.

Learning is a process of evolvment and there is nothing instantaneous about it. Through a system of practice, trial and error, we are taught

*The most important lesson is to avoid regret or worry over our past imperfection.*

how to reason better and to make more effective decisions. We should strive for perfection even if it seems that we may never reach it; we learn to build and accomplish any human endeavour by the process of trial and error. Observing the causes of failure and striving to avoid those negative causes in the future is part of the learning process. The most important lesson is to avoid regret or worry over our past imperfection while correcting our mistakes.

### The Future

An equally important lesson for us is to reject anxiety over the future. The future is as yet unmade; we must create it. We do not want to mar with our anxieties, doubts and fears, our most beautiful plans for the future before they even manifest. We are creators! We must model our sculpture with confidence, boldness, beauty and perfection. Even if the dreams and plans are imperfect, we can never hope that their

manifestation will be absolutely perfect. If we allow ourselves to be inspired from the perfect Cosmic and confidently strive to duplicate that perfect vision, then perhaps our manifestation may be acceptably near to our ideal. Those who have done so are the true creators in our world.

We should not allow ourselves to be shackled by fate either; mystics and thinkers can never accept the theological doctrine of *predestination*, the idea that God has foreordained every event throughout eternity. The potential for any and all things exists, but as individuals and by our own free will, we must create our own future.

James Russell Lowe, a 19<sup>th</sup> century American essayist wrote, "*Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen.*" Good words of advice; let's do away with fears of the future and live for the now because we do not know what awaits us later in this life. As long as we approach the future with good intent, and in line with our spiritual development, we will feel comfortable and safe in whatever surroundings and environments we happen to be in.

This is the moment to realise equally that death, or transition as Rosicrucians call it, is a bridge to the future. Whenever it comes upon those close to us, it is comforting to truly know that this moment is a "passing through" only and that the essence of those we love are moving on in their inner development toward their next incarnation.

### The Present

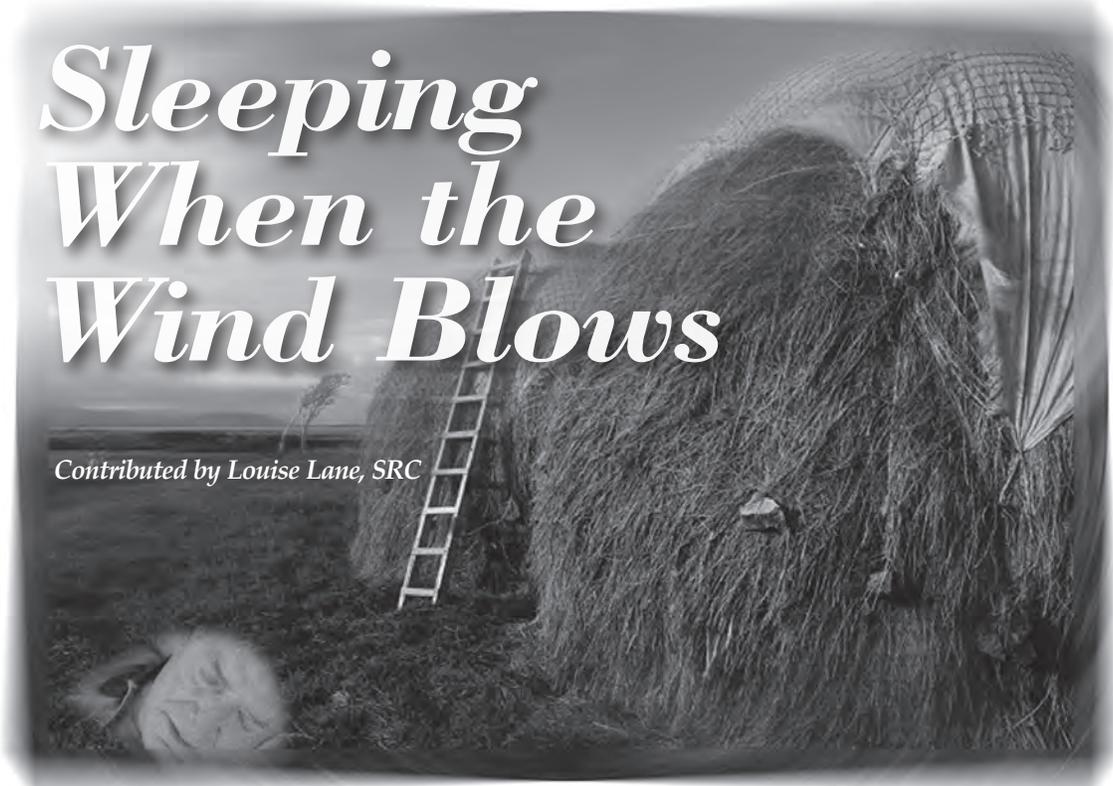
Just as the past is done and the future is beyond our immediate control, so too, the present moment, the now, is not only in our control, it is our own responsibility. As we turn each page in our book of life, the next one before us is blank. The next moment is ours to be used to our best advantage. There are, and always will be, alternatives and choices to make. Admittedly, our choices are at times more advantageous and more attractive, but at least there are almost always several alternatives to choose from.

As the Hindu poet Kalidasa said, "*Look to this day! For it is life, the very life of life. In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of your existence!*" Let's clear away the debris and barriers of both past and future, and confidently grasp in our hands our dream for today..., for our most basic freedom is to live one day at a time.



# *Sleeping When the Wind Blows*

*Contributed by Louise Lane, SRC*



FARMER, WHO OWNED LAND ALONG a particular part of the coast that had a reputation for fierce and unpredictable weather, was constantly advertising for hired hands. Many were reluctant to work on his farm since they dreaded the awful storms that raged across the sea, wreaking havoc to the buildings and crops, and making working there arduous at the best of times.

Predictably, as the farmer was interviewing applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals once he had outlined the position to them. Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer; "Are you a good farm hand?" the farmer asked him. "Well, I can sleep when the wind blows" answered the little man. Although puzzled by this answer, and since the man was willing to accept the job despite the conditions, the farmer, desperate for help, hired him. The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk and the farmer felt satisfied with his work.

Then one night the wind began to howling in from the sea. As it gained momentum the farmer jumped out of bed and grabbing a lantern,

rushed next door to the hired hand's sleeping quarters. He shook the little man and yelled, "Get up quickly! A storm is coming! Tie things down before they blow away!" The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, "There's no need. I told you, I can sleep when the wind blows?"

Enraged by this response, the farmer was tempted to throw him out on the spot but there was no time, so he hurried outside to prepare for the storm. To his amazement he found that all of the haystacks had been covered with tarpaulins, the cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coops and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down. Nothing could blow away.

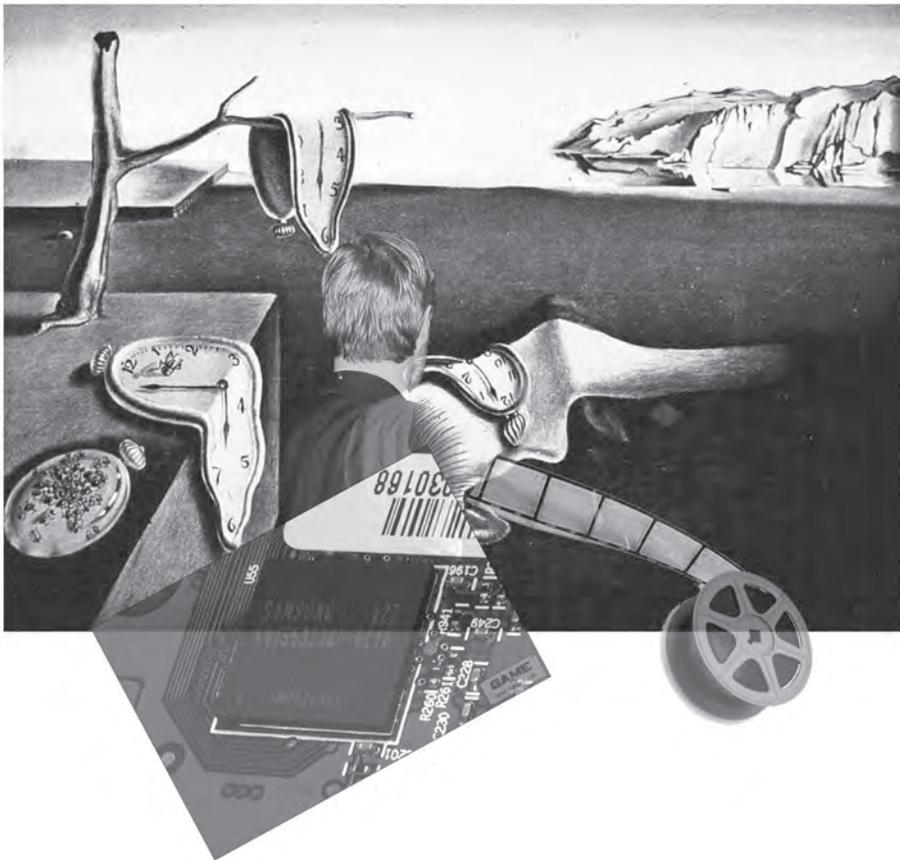
It then dawned on the farmer what his hired hand had meant with his intriguing statement, so he returned to his bed to also sleep while the wind blew.

One word sums up the subject of this tale and that is preparedness. Being prepared spiritually, mentally and physically, allows us to meet all of life's adversities with nothing to fear. Can you sleep when the wind blows through your life?



# The Art of Memory

by John Michael Greer



**N**OWADAYS, SURROUNDED AS WE are with dozens of ways to make up for the weaknesses of human memory, there is one thing that is still easy to forget: that life wasn't always quite so simple. In the Middle Ages, most of our modern methods of collecting and storing information hadn't even been imagined.

Forget about microfilm, memory chips and similar high-tech approaches; less complex devices like filing cabinets and index cards were completely unknown in medieval times, and even paper, the bottom line of modern information storage, was unheard of in the West. Rather, parchment made from sheepskins was used, a material so expensive that it was often





*The spatial arrangement of visual images in an architectural setting, in this case between the separate pillars, allowed an accurate recall of all those images at a later time.*

laboriously scraped clean after short-term uses so that something else could be written on the same sheet.

Still, limits on material resources tend to bring out the more resourceful qualities of human nature. With few ways to replace or supplement memory, the educated looked instead for ways to amplify it, to learn how to use its strengths and work around its weaknesses. In the process, they made use of one of the most remarkable facets of medieval and Renaissance culture: the *Art of Memory*.

### The Origins of the Art

The ancient Greek poet Simonides of Keos (556-468 BCE), according to legend, invented the Art of Memory when he was hired to recite verses at a banquet. In the usual fashion of the time, he started off with a few lines in honour of the gods, in this case Castor and Pollux, before settling down to the serious business of praising his host. The host, piqued at this diversion of flattery, gave Simonides half the amount agreed upon and told him he could get the rest from the deities he had praised.

Shortly thereafter, a servant came up to Simonides and told him that two young men on horseback had come to the door, asking for him. The poet went outside but no one was there. As he stood looking around in puzzlement the roof of the banquet hall collapsed behind him, crushing the arrogant host and all his dinner guests. Castor and Pollux, traditionally pictured

as two young horsemen, had indeed paid their half of the fee.

Such stories were commonplace in ancient Greek literature, but this one has an unexpected moral. When the bodies of the dead were recovered, the story continues, they were so mangled that not even the victims' families could work out who was who. Simonides found, however, that he could picture the banquet hall in his mind's eye and remember the order in which the guests had been sitting. This allowed him to identify the dead, and as he pondered his ability for memorisation, it gave him the key to the Art of Memory.

That key is the use of *visual images* in an ordered, spatial arrangement. Human memory recalls concrete images far more easily than abstract ideas, and it remembers an ordered chain of associations more accurately than a random assortment. Just as Simonides could remember the guests at the ill-fated banquet by picturing them in the setting of the banquet hall, masters of the Art of Memory in the centuries that followed turned the information they wished to remember into striking visual images and arranged them against fixed architectural backgrounds in order to memorise them quickly and effectively.

These methods, which became part of the standard training for orators and scholars

*He could picture the banquet hall in his mind's eye and remember the order in which the guests had been sitting.*

in ancient Greece and Rome, spread widely and reached dizzying levels of efficiency. It's recorded of one famous practitioner, the Roman orator Hortensius, that he sat through a day-long auction and then recounted from memory the item, purchaser and price for every sale of the day.

Textbooks of rhetoric generally included a discussion of the Art of Memory and it was by way of several of these books that the Art survived the collapse of the Roman Empire.

During the Middle Ages, these techniques





*A Memory Garden.*

were revived and brought into widespread use. The practice of the Art of Memory was seen as an act of prudence, one of the seven cardinal virtues, and monks and friars, especially members of the Dominican Order, were encouraged to put it to work in countless ways. Later still, with the coming of the Renaissance, the Art of Memory became a common accomplishment of the educated.

In the hands of Renaissance practitioners like Giordano Bruno (1548-1600 CE), the traditional methods of memory gave rise to new and intricate systems. The arrival of printing and of cheap plentiful paper barely cut into its popularity and it was only with the coming of 17<sup>th</sup> century rationalism and the advent of true scientific enquiry that it finally fell into obscurity.

### **The Methods of the Art**

The techniques of the Art of Memory may seem strange to modern people, a measure of the difference between modern and medieval ways of thought, between our current habits of thinking in abstract, verbal and mathematical terms, and

the more symbolic, concrete and experiential consciousness of an age when written documents were few and visual images had a far more important role in communication. The idea of representing slander, for example, by the image of a woman being bitten by a snake that issues from her own mouth, may seem bizarre nowadays, yet symbolic images of exactly this kind played a central part in medieval language and art, and in the Art of Memory as well.

In using the Art, the information to be remembered was turned into a striking symbolic image. That image might be beautiful, repulsive, hilarious or even shocking, but it had to be *memorable* and it had to contain a clear reference to the information being memorised. Puns, double meanings and every kind of wordplay, could be put to use in this connection. Another common habit was to devise an alphabet of images using either the shapes or the names of objects to refer to each letter of the alphabet. Thus a figure representing a word beginning with the letter V might stand in front of a forked tree or carry a fox (in Latin, *vulpes*) under its arm.

Each of these images was then placed in order against a known setting, usually the inside of a familiar building. Students would commit as many buildings to memory as they could, and use each one to store a different sort of information. Each building would be divided up into loci or “places,” which were specific spots where a memory image could be put. Every fifth place might be marked with a Roman numeral V or a hand, every tenth one with an X. As a point

*The Art of Memory became a common accomplishment of the educated.*

of fact, it's from the use of the Art of Memory in rhetoric that we still say “in the first place” when going over the points of an argument. So, once the images were placed in their settings, the practitioner of the Art simply had to walk through the building in his imagination, taking note of the figures there and recalling their meanings.

As the Art spread through medieval and Renaissance culture, this architectural approach remained the most common way to recall places, though other systems came into use as well. Some masters of the Art took the heavens as



their architectural memory, placing figures on the different planetary spheres and the constellations. Others worked out ways of creating imaginary buildings for memory use or developed complex systems of rotating circles in which every position

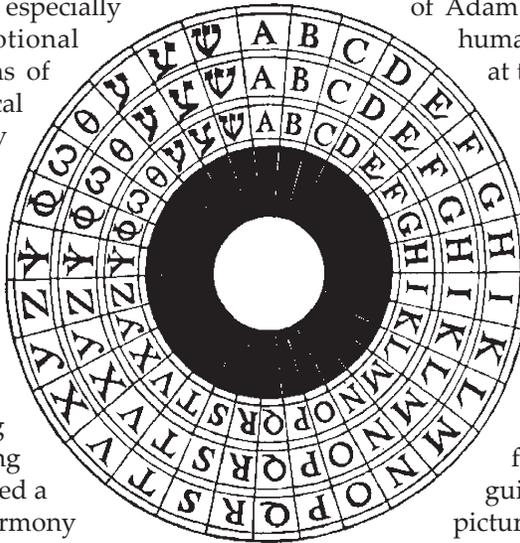
decides to begin with that.

First is the nominative case. He thinks of white-haired Brother Martin, easily the abbey's most devout monk, beginning the sign of the cross, "In Nomine..." That forms his first memory image; he imagines Brother Martin on his knees in the first entrance, eyes turned up to Heaven, to fix the picture in his imagination.

*This architectural approach remained the most common way to recall places.*

created a different set of loci.

All these techniques may seem to us rather strange or even pointless, but the mind recalls images better than ideas, especially images with an emotional charge. Memory uses chains of association rather than logical order to connect one memory with another (such as mnemonic tricks like string tied around a finger), and memory follows rhythms and repetitive formulae. It's for this reason that poetry and music are much easier to remember than prose. By combining all these factors with training and practice, the Art produced a memory that worked in harmony with its own strengths to make the most of its own potential.



*Giordano Bruno's memory wheel.*

Next is the genitive case. The first image that comes to mind makes Brother Anselm turn bright red; he murmurs a prayer against sinful thoughts, and replaces it with a picture of Adam and Eve, the progenitors of humankind. This image he places at the second entrance.

The next two, the dative and accusative cases, are easy enough. Dative makes him think of the great calendar of saint's days in the abbey library. To suggest the initial letter, he puts this in the arms of thin and weakly Brother Daniel, who staggers under the burden. That makes him feel guilty, although not quite guilty enough to change the picture, and so for the accusative case he uses a lurid picture of the Devil, the accuser of humankind, pointing a clawed finger at him as if to remind him of his sins. And so on...

### **An Example of the Art**

To make sense of these strange techniques, it is useful to look over the shoulder of a student of the Art as he begins the construction of a set of memory places and images.

Imagine then young Brother Anselm as he stands one evening in the cloistered garden of the Abbey of St. Quilibet. A novice, he has just started the arduous task of learning Latin. The Art of Memory is also part of the curriculum and he has resolved to use memory to make learning Latin easier.

He turns slowly around, staring at the old gray stone of the cloister arches, the tiled roofs above, the herbs and flowers all about, committing the whole image to memory. There are seven entrances to the garden; a Latin noun can take seven different cases, and remembering all of them has bedevilled his early lessons. He

He runs through the images once again in his imagination, making sure he has remembered all of them, and then leaves the garden in time for Vespers. Every day thereafter, he walks through his growing collection of memory places in his imagination, noting the images to make sure that

*A little experience with the Art can make a startling difference to us all.*

each one still calls its meaning to his mind. With practice, he finds that the images remain clear and meaningful for months at a time, even if he leaves them unvisited; he also finds that if he wants to use the seven entrances for something else, the seven cardinal virtues, for example, all he needs to do is construct different images in those places



and visit that portion of his inner kingdom. By that time, though, he will be well on his way to mastering the Art.

### The Uses of the Art

In today's world of terabyte hard disks and million-volume research libraries, learning the Art of Memory may seem about as relevant as studying the best way to make clay tablets for writing. Still, the Art of Memory is one of the best ways there is to enter into the spirit and consciousness of the Middle Ages. To practice the Art even a little, is to venture back into a world where living memory was the chief means of information storage, where imagery and spoken language made up the fabric of human communication, and where one person could quite literally store the sum total of human knowledge in his or her own head.

It also has its practical side. The methods of the Art of Memory work so much better than ordinary rote memorisation, that even a little experience with the Art can make a startling difference. Anything from shopping lists to class notes can be remembered quickly and efficiently, and you aren't likely to leave your memory at home when you go to take a final exam! So sit

yourself down, close your eyes, and start putting to use this popular Medieval practice.



Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), being skilled in Renaissance rhetoric, devised memory systems of the utmost complexity.

## True Knowledge

*The best treasure that a man can attain unto in this world is true knowledge; even the knowledge of himself: For man is the great mystery of God, the microcosm, or complete abridgement of the whole universe: he is the mirandum Dei opus, God's masterpiece, a living emblem and hieroglyph of eternity and time; and therefore to know whence he is, and what his temporal and eternal being and well-being are, must needs be that one necessary thing, to which all our chief study should aim, and in comparison of which all the wealth of the world is but dross, and a loss to us.*

**Jacob Boehme** 1574-1625

From his *Signaturum Rerum* ("The Signature of all Things")



# Aspects of Spiritual Evolverment

*by Affectator*

**L**IFE AND FORM ARE AN EXTENSION of God's essence through the human soul. Being an eternal part of God, the soul possesses attributes of God's divinity. Soul has the natural power to expand and elevate human consciousness toward an ultimate union with

its source. Just as the five organic senses enable our intellect to develop the material side of life on earth, the soul, as a divine faculty, enables us to reach to the celestial heights and receive knowledge of the Divine, with its universal laws and omniscience.

Since it is through "soul expansion" that



we eventually attain Cosmic Consciousness, the belief in the existence of one universal God constitutes the very beginning of spiritual development. We must recognise that by its nature, the soul is God within the human body, and we must allow it the freedom to unfold. Moreover, in order to stimulate the soul's unfoldment, we must establish a spiritual living ideal, supported by continuous mental effort.

The ideal most conducive to spiritual attainment is one that allows us to elevate our Soul, Mind and Body simultaneously in order to ultimately merge with God. God is the highest plane in the universal order, and is ever seeking to express more of his Light and Life through humanity. The *first* point of the spiritual ideal is

*Belief in the existence of one universal God constitutes the very beginning of spiritual development.*

therefore trying, or just aspiring, to unite with God and to serve in accordance with the original plan.

The *second* point is acknowledging the divine nature of the soul and permitting it the freedom to evolve unobstructed. This is done by voluntarily purging the mind of erroneous beliefs, as the continuing enlightenment of the evolving soul within reveals these errors to the intellect.

The *third* point of the ideal entails the intellectual responsibility of putting the "physical house" in order by cultivating proper living, thinking and eating habits. This is to maintain a clear mind and good physical health.

### **The Sublimation Process**

Good physical health of course, is only part of the task, and developing our psychic and spiritual sides is just as important. In doing so, the sympathetic nervous system and the psychic centres within the body, which serve as the natural channels for the expression of the soul, would be brought to greater activity and a higher vibration.

When development has reached a point where the nervous system and psychic centres are able to resonate in sympathy with the

vibratory rates of the soul, the intellect becomes fully conscious of the actual spiritual force, the complementary body, within the form of flesh.

Eventually, after conscientiously adhering to the practice of this ideal, and continuously living in line with the nobler ways of living and thinking engendered by the soul, there is a union of the soul with the intellect. When these two forms of consciousness merge, we are aware of being enfolded by an invisible living intelligence and become immersed in the divine wisdom and creative thinking that enables us to grasp cosmic truths, intellectually and spiritually.

### **Feeding the Physical Body**

Being illumined by the light of the soul brings us into a keener awareness of the body's nutritional needs. Since we might say that the cells composing the various organic tissues serve to house the divine life essence, we need to maintain those cells in a healthy state.

Intuition prompts us to eat specific foods at certain times to correct various mineral and vitamin deficiencies. At other times there is a distinct need for food supplements in addition to the normal diet. When our inner needs are satisfied, this food therapy is discontinued until some other combination of foods and supplements is made known.

Following such a course of nutrition, the body is gradually rejuvenated, both internally and externally. There is a return of muscular flexibility and vitality along with an increase in stamina and endurance. It is only natural that in regaining youthfulness to a very large degree, along with mental development, the mind also becomes more expansive and keener in outlook, coupled with more logical and creative thinking.

### **Nurturing Nonattachment**

However, the harmonising of the Soul, Mind and Body is only the initial step in the ascent into the highest plane of God's consciousness. In the mystical process, the body is gradually conditioned to receive and withstand the higher and finer rates of cosmic vibrations yet to come.

The intellect gradually becomes spiritualised by the soul essence. Thus it is



able to translate correctly the cosmic impulses into words that it can understand. Just as the neophyte at the outset of the spiritual journey has to develop in order to gain attunement with the Soul, this ascending into progressive planes of higher and higher rates of cosmic vibrations requires a lot of time and practice and repeatedly entering deep states of contemplation.

*The intellect gradually becomes spiritualised by the soul essence.*

Here, at the Cosmic Portal, the aspirant to Cosmic Consciousness is faced with the important task of readjusting values in the universal scale from God down to the material plane. The speed and extent of subsequent soul unfolding depends on the order in which we place those values. It is axiomatic that God and the Soul should be given top position, and that non-attachment to worldly things be developed.

Ancient mystics taught the principle of renunciation of the world in favour of God as the highest and most desirable value in all creation. When God is given the highest position and is established as the ideal, that same ideal eliminates mental and emotional inhibitions. The soul is then released to continue unfolding toward its natural divine affinity.

### **The Reality of Renunciation**

The principle of renouncing the world does not necessarily mean living in seclusion from the world and refraining from finding pleasure and relaxation. Renunciation in the truest mystical sense is the refusal to harbour or be swayed by greed, selfishness, hate, jealousy, cruelty, dishonesty, deceit, conceit and vanity. Materially speaking, it is to own and use the great array of aids to better living for comfort and expediency rather than using them as status symbols to impress people.

The principle also applies to the popular tendency toward hero worship, or of making celebrities into demigods. There is a world of difference between enjoying and giving credit for an excellent performance, and viewing

personalities as perfect superbeings to be set on pedestals. As aspirants on the path of spiritual attainment, we can't afford to allow such mental and emotional obsessions to become masters of our lives. To fall prey to such practices disrupts the union of the soul and intellect by lowering the mental vibrations. The soul's thrust is eternally on an upward curve to the highest purity, and it can't be pulled downward without experiencing very unpleasant repercussions.

### **Mental and Emotional Maturity**

Renunciation of the world does not relinquish our responsibility to the rest of humanity. In exchange for cosmic illumination we advance into mental and emotional maturity through constant application of our analytical powers to know what is right, in accordance with divine universal principles. Through enlightenment by our own experiences, we must also assume the task of responsibly pointing out what is right or wrong to those who come into contact with us.

The task of attaining self-maturity and helping others to start on the same process engenders never-ending mental activity and intellectual alertness in the effort to analyse whether a given situation is in line or in opposition to basic principles.

Yet, the reward for such painstaking efforts is the gradual growth into mental adulthood where the emotions are mastered and prevented from interfering with reason.

As a flower shows all of its inherent form and beautiful colours at maturity, the human mind does likewise. Only in this state of maturity of mind is the illumination of Cosmic

*The soul's thrust is eternally on an upward curve to the highest purity.*

Consciousness able to flow into us and we are able to hold the beautiful and indescribable Heavenly Light. And Cosmic Consciousness, the peak of human spiritual attainment while on earth, is the most worthy reward in the personal achievement of mental and emotional maturity.





# An Open Mind

by Nathan Squires

**A**N OPEN MIND IMPLIES AN ELEMENT of doubt which will not necessarily be in line with those who are sure of their convictions. Certainty and assurance belong either to complete knowledge or to complete ignorance. Those who are sure through ignorance and who blindly follow an authoritarian creed, may not be prepared to cast an open mind because their superiors might disapprove or because they secretly fear that their own assurance may be shaken. For the uncertain ones though, the safest principle is: *Keep an open mind.* When in doubt, make the assumption that seems most plausible and most fruitful; then proceed as if it were true. As you go along, observe the consequences of your assumption and correct it as the need arises.

To make an analogy, let's say, for example, that you are following a wilderness trail, trying to find your way to human habitation. Late in the afternoon, you arrive at an unmarked fork in the

road. You study the landmarks and terrain as best you can; then you choose the most likely fork in the road and go on without hesitation as if you were certain of being on the right way to your destination.

Meanwhile, keep your eyes open. Does the trail broaden? Do you see recent footprints? Do you smell the smoke of a distant campfire? If so, proceed with growing confidence. Does the trail peter out? Does it lead to a steep ravine, to an impassable ledge? In such cases, heed the warning signs; return to the crossroads and try the other fork.

## Ancient Assumptions

This kind of experimental attitude, which is indispensable to us in situations such as the analogy above, has brought about the great advance of western science. This may be illustrated by the evolution of the science of astronomy.

In the night sky all stars appear to describe



circular arcs around one polar star, which in the northern hemisphere is located in Ursa Minor or the "Little Bear." The stars seem fixed to a rigid celestial sphere that rotates daily around the polar axis. Ancient astronomers were justified in assuming the reality of such a revolving firmament. Unfortunately, this belief became dogma, a religious tenet that assigned this circular motion, being perfect, as universal throughout the heavenly realms. The ancients knew, of course, that not all the stars were fixed. The sun, moon and the five visible planets deviated periodically from their daily cycle: The sun completed one turn, following its path around the Zodiacal belt in a year, the Moon orbited the Earth in a month; and the other planets seemed to move in less regular paths and periods.

Since the planets were regarded as divinities or as manifestations of divine qualities, ancient astronomy was bound to ascribe this circular

*Make the assumption that seems most plausible and then proceed as if it were true.*

motion to them. It was therefore declared that each planet was fixed to a separate crystal sphere, and that the spheres revolved within each other, generating celestial harmony by their friction. In order to account for the different inclinations and irregularities of the planetary orbits, astronomy had to invent circles within circles and loops within loops.

These astronomical ideas remained for centuries as certain and self evident truths until the arrival on the scene of the Polish astronomer and mathematician, Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543 CE) who dramatically shattered the assumption that the sun rather than the earth was the centre of our planetary system. Following on from that was Kepler's mathematical theory of elliptical planetary orbits, Newton's postulation of universal gravitation, Einstein's theory of Relativity, quantum mechanics and string theory.

There is no need to elaborate however once the point is understood; for science advances by open-mindedness and stagnates by dogmatism. Progress consists in the continuous re-evaluation and reshaping of beliefs and theories. And the same open-minded attitude so vital to material science applies to our mystical search for our

own personal philosophy.

## Personal Beliefs

Each one of us must blaze our own trail; find our own way, even when others may join us in the search. Our individual beliefs must be put to the test in living as if they were true and heeding the results. It would be a slow process in one lifetime to explore experimentally every conceivable philosophy or religious practice. Fortunately, highways of religious and mystical belief have been mapped and are being followed by millions. We can therefore observe progress without having to read each individual path for ourselves.

In the western world, the attitude now prevalent is cynical materialism. In spite of all protestations by clergy, teachers and politicians, society behaves as if it no longer believes in a God or a Spirit. Not only physical effects, but also pleasure and pain, and joy and sorrow are explained by material laws. Human actions are regarded as chemical reactions. This is all fine and in keeping with scientific enquiry but not enough credence is given to the mystical and spiritual aspects of these discoveries. Accordingly, a large proportion of the population acts as if moral law were an exploded fiction and nothing but sensual pleasures and the means to procure them mattered.

We see now with the advent of 24 hour television and access to the internet where such a road leads: drug addiction, divorce, crime; and everything else from neurotic children to strikes and inefficiency in the workplace; to international conflict and genocide. It is time to give the Spirit its due, to live as if the Spirit were the *Prime Mover*. The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC has already produced a Manifesto to address these and many other issues that are extant in the world today.<sup>1</sup>

If an Eternal Spirit is the force behind the sustenance of life, why do all living things die? If Spirit is perfection, why is there such disharmony, with all its cruelty and suffering? One explanation is that such benevolence is opposed by a destructive evil. The tempter, the snake, the destroyer, plays an important role in religions based on a belief in a personal god and followers of these religions strive to align themselves with the forces of creation and of harmony. They choose to love their Creator and



their fellow creatures; but the path is forked, there are choices.

### A Simple Choice

Perhaps, on the face of it, the choice is a simple one; who is the happier and more useful man: a Francis of Assisi who loves all, or a Chingiz Khan who despises those who serve him?

Let's act as if we were aligned with the forces of good, but keep an open mind concerning the nature of it. How often has it been demonstrated that when belief turns into dogmatic certainty, even monks meek and loving turn into inquisitors and torturers. Both forks of this road lead to dilemmas and impasses; one-sided worship of matter or of Spirit, of evil or of presumed good.

There is a more mystical path, unknown to the masses although pointed out by the wise. Those that tread it regard life and death, joy and sorrow, good and evil as related polarities, as crests and troughs in the eternally pulsating ocean of existence. The same Spirit remains unmoved in its Oneness, yet partakes of division, suffering and death by entering its own creation.

Many religions teach a creed based on the Incarnation and Passion of their gods. In Egyptian lore, Osiris was treacherously slain and dismembered. In Greek myths, Dionysus Zagreus and Orpheus were torn to shreds and devoured. In Christianity, God the Son is crucified and his flesh and blood transformed into the sacramental Host to be consumed by the faithful.

Those who understand the dual meaning of these symbols may accept life wholeheartedly, being grateful for its pleasures, beauty and harmony, and submitting without bitterness to its cruel sufferings. In the midst of individual passion, they strive to be aware of the Spirit which quickens and sustains and is the eternal essence of their consciousness.

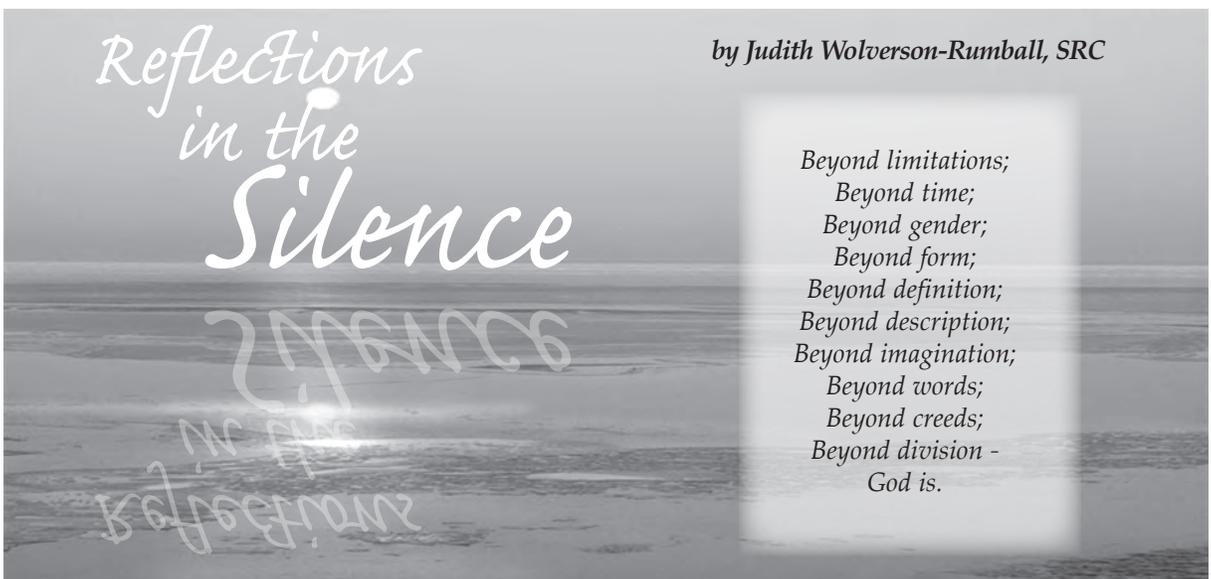
Acknowledging this same Spirit in every living being, grain of sand and beam of light, they love their fellow creatures as themselves in

*In the western world, the attitude now prevalent is cynical materialism.*

other garb. But they refrain from imposing their convictions on others.

We can't stay life's journey, nor avoid perplexity at its forks and crossroads. Some follow the highroads of established religions and mystery schools; some feel impelled to blaze their own trails. Whichever be our path, let us march firmly as if it were the right one for us. Let us keep an open mind and have the courage to retrace our steps when we find we have gone astray. Above all, let us respect the rights of others to follow their own ways to their own ideal of salvation.

1. A copy of the *Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis* can be obtained by writing to or calling the UK headquarters of AMORC, the details of which are on p.2 of this issue. Alternatively, visit the website: [www.amorc.org.uk](http://www.amorc.org.uk)



# The Spiritual Well



*by Robert E Daniels, FRC*

**W**E ARE ALL AWARE THAT WE are living in particularly difficult times. Communications today make us swiftly aware of the turmoil and strife which exist in many parts of the world, and it is natural that we, as Rosicrucians, who have ideals for a better society, one where people can live in peace and harmony, should be deeply concerned with the present problems

of mankind and the obvious drift and decline of our present and valued way of life.

People are beginning to question whether or not society is moving in the right direction. Although there is a growing interest in esotericism on the part of an increasing number of people, the world still regards those who are interested in mysticism and the occult as dreamers with an unrealistic outlook on life. It



is a part of the price we must pay for our ideals, to be criticized by those who have little or no understanding of our studies or philosophy.

To many misinformed or uninformed people, we are dreamers, seeking an escape from the normal responsibilities of life. But the study of mysticism is not an escape from

*The study of mysticism is not an escape from life.*

life. Rather, we, as Rosicrucian students, are confronted with many obstacles which stand in the way of reaching our ideals. But by meeting these obstacles head on, which in the main are our own shortcomings and deficiencies, we will have the opportunity to ascend the spiral of our own personal development.

We strive unsuccessfully to find more than a handful of leaders of character who can show the way to greater and more meaningful values. There are very few men and women today that can be justifiably called great. Paging through history however, we see how at various times men and women of remarkable insight and genius emerged and brought long-lasting inspiration to humanity. They were writers, artists, philosophers and of course mystics of the highest calibre. They taught the world how to think and have moved human hearts and minds by the unselfish power and compassion they demonstrated.

### **The Highest Ideals**

If there is anything that we need today to give us a proper perspective of the mystical life, it is the inspiration of those whose lives exemplified the highest ideals of human attainment. There is nothing so helpful for acquiring a true perspective of life and of our place in it, than the study and review of the works of the great thinkers of the past. Knowledge and experience alone lead to a proper perspective of life, and knowledge and experience alone will bring that peace of mind which is so necessary in these conflicting and disturbing times.

When we are dedicated to our best conduct and when we strive to achieve a greater degree of mystical development, we come into harmony and cooperation on the psychic plane with many others of like thoughts and interests. There

is a companionship on the higher planes of consciousness that we are not always aware of. Another thought we should consider is that when we study the works of these great luminaries of the past, whether they were mystics or not, by our own devotion to their work, a bond is formed between us, which leads to much insight and inspiration. The works of many writers and artists reveal this fact. By devoting ourselves to the inspired works of these great thinkers and innovators, we can experience an intuitive understanding of their thoughts and ideals.

It is only natural that, under the pressures of modern daily living, we sometimes feel out of harmony with our present way of life. There is a conflict between the ideal path envisaged by our studies and the environment in which we live. Our lesson here is to adjust to all the circumstances which confront us. We must not avoid, but penetrate these problems more deeply and endeavour to view them from an impersonal point of view. We thereby gain insight and strength from such experiences, for this is the way of advancement. We so often cut off the very experiences or opportunities for advancement, under the misconception that these antagonisms have nothing to do with mystical or spiritual evolution. The truth is however that from such experiences our character is developed, resulting in a greater understanding of life and its broader purpose.

Our association with others creates many of our difficulties. But these problems can teach us much. By standing detached and apart from others periodically, we can come to understand

*We exercise the spiritual will to achieve some useful purpose.*

what these obstacles really mean, and we *must* learn to adjust to them. For in our service to others, it is imperative that we understand the problems of life before we attempt to serve the needs of others.

### **Using Knowledge**

When one first enters on the path of spiritual enlightenment, there is usually no great difficulty in accumulating a great deal of knowledge about mystical principles and beliefs. The assimilation



of facts usually proceeds at a fairly rapid pace. But there comes a time in the mystical and spiritual development of each of us, when we have to reflect upon what such knowledge can do for us and how it can be *used* in our daily affairs for the benefit of ourselves and others.

This is where we meet an important test, because our consciousness has begun to expand and attune itself with the higher levels of inner consciousness. It is at this time that we begin to feel the need to exercise the spiritual will and to find the best method to express all we know in achieving some really useful purpose. At this stage of our development we really begin to think and act for ourselves. Up to this time, we have been privileged to receive guidance and instruction from others in a purely intellectual sense, but the use of that knowledge now becomes our own responsibility.

Through this knowledge that we have gained, we begin to realise that there is a deeper fount of knowledge which lies within the inner self. We discover that knowledge and truth are always present in the higher reaches of consciousness and that all we need do is become aware of it. This is where our greatest difficulty lies, for one of the most important laws we have to realise is that the light and life of the soul within us will only reveal itself through a concentrated and determined effort. We have to learn to acquire relentlessness in the will and compassion in the heart in order to draw forth from within ourselves the greater light of truth which we desire.

### Learning from Others

Those whose hearts and minds are set upon the highest accomplishments of the mystical life will accept the condition that frustration and strife are necessary elements for the most rapid development and highest mystical attainment. Most of our difficulties and the problems of the world at the present time are not problems of the mind, but of the emotional nature of man. The spiritual suffering of the world has not decreased with the advent of science, quite the opposite. It is more prevalent today than ever before; all the more reason for us to gain knowledge and understanding so that we may render practical *service* for the benefit of humanity. We need practical and inspired thinking to carry us through life so that we may attain the

lofty ideals which we have envisaged. That is why we should seek knowledge and experience which will give us a deeper understanding of the meaning of life. Life is a test and a challenge and we have to meet that challenge with all the insight we have gained.

Within each one of us there is a great source of wisdom and knowledge, but we have to draw upon this source with persistent effort in all our endeavours. If we demand little from ourselves, little will be given. This is only saying that we

*If we demand little from ourselves, little will be given.*

should try to rise to the occasion when we are faced with problems and difficulties and we can often be surprised at what we can accomplish by a little more effort on our part. It should be a constant practice of ours to demand more from ourselves and a little less from others, for in this lies one of the secrets of our advancement. By interrogating ourselves as to what we know and what we believe, we will reveal the extent of our knowledge and understanding in all aspects of life. By seeking the guidance of the inner self and applying ourselves to study and meditation on the important issues of life with a relentlessness of will, the way will be revealed as to how, with a compassionate heart, we may best serve the cosmic powers to which we have pledged our hearts and minds.

When we study the lives and works of the great thinkers of the past, we see in their works the inspiration for the gradual enlightenment of mankind. It is with pride that we see how many notable Rosicrucians are to be found in the ranks of these great men and women who pledged themselves to seek the truth, and found inspiration by undertaking a voyage of discovery into the realms of the inner spiritual self. Humanity today awaits the guidance of those who, with vision and understanding for the real needs of humankind, will come to the fore and lead the way to the accomplishments of our innermost ideals. This is what we are pledged to. By the light of our own understanding, we will work with others to help guide humanity to a sane, practical, and more spiritual way of life that is in harmony with the Cosmic and which will prove to be a blessing to all mankind.



# Robert E Daniels

8 Feb 1929 – 18 May 2006



WE ANNOUNCE WITH REGRET that Grand Master emeritus, Robert E Daniels, born in England on 8 February 1929, passed through transition on 18 May 2006 in New York.

He was Grand Master of the English and Spanish jurisdictions for seven years from September 1977 to September 1984, when he retired.

Bob joined the Rosicrucian Order in 1951

after completing his National Service in the Royal Marines. From the start, he knew that the Order was right for him. He followed the teachings to the letter from day one and spent many hours in constant study and practice in Rosicrucian techniques. There can be no doubt that this made him the man so many of us admired. He had a disposition of great patience, compassion and understanding, and practised what he preached:



love and compassion for everyone, regardless of colour or creed. His dedicated service to the Order and his profound knowledge of the teachings singled him out for high office at an early stage.

Shortly after joining the Order, Bob became involved with other active members in the UK and worked diligently to promote the teachings; a service much needed at the time. He was a founder member of the Joseph Priestley Chapter in the north of England and subsequently served in its administration. He moved from York with his parents to London while in his 20s and there joined the Francis Bacon Chapter where he served in several administrative positions, including that of Master.

While in his early 30's Bob was invited by the Supreme Grand Lodge in the USA to set up an administrative office for the purpose of distributing monographs and other literature to members in the UK and Africa. This office was set up in Bognor Regis and Bob created in the same building a wonderful temple that was much patronised. Soon his organising skills and knowledge of printing, which was his trade, resulted in an invitation to take up work at the Grand Lodge in the USA. For some years he worked on the printed matter that the English

Grand Lodge distributed throughout the world, whilst having an oversight of the office in England and some African countries, particularly Nigeria. Within a few years he became head of the printing section by his appointment as Grand Treasurer. In that capacity he travelled frequently to many countries, lecturing and overseeing the work of various administrations.

Bob succeeded Chris Warnken on his retirement from office as Grand Master and in that office he became responsible to the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC for all affiliated bodies in English and Spanish speaking countries and for the Department of Instruction. He travelled extensively for many years before retiring. Many will best remember him for his inspiring monthly articles in the Rosicrucian Digest. These uplifting messages encapsulated the essence of the teachings of the Order in a simple and direct way.

Bob suffered a stroke in his latter years and his mind was affected. He was confined to hospital in New York and due to his condition was unable to communicate with his many friends throughout the world. He passed through transition peacefully, and will be remembered fondly as one of the leading lights of his generation.

## Who We Really Are

The great teachings unanimously emphasise that all peace, wisdom and joy in the universe are already within us; we don't have to gain, develop or attain them. We're like a child standing in a beautiful park with his eyes shut tight. We don't need to imagine trees, flowers, deer, birds and sky; we merely need to open our eyes and realise what is already here, who we really are.

Anonymous





ADMITTEDLY life isn't a perfumed rose garden all the time. Yet, for some it almost could be. For such people, everything seems to flow so harmoniously, and whilst not necessarily materially wealthy, they radiate an inner wealth of achievement, happiness and peace of mind which is the envy of all. So how do they do it?

Well, the one thing they all seem to have in common is both the courage and ability to take charge of their destiny by *actively directing* their lives! Examining their *needs* rather than their *wants*, and *true values* rather than *passing fads*, such people realise that more than anything else, they need to rely upon their *own insights* rather than those of others. They come to their *own conclusions* rather than accept the conclusions of others. And above all, they take their *own decisions* in everything and for better or worse, *are happy to live with the consequences!*

The *Rosicrucian Order AMORC* assists people to find within themselves their own, personal "*higher wisdom*," something which exists as a potential in all human beings. Developing this inner understanding can lead to what sages and avatars of all ages have referred to simply as "*Illumination*," describing it in often embellished terms as a state of joy, perfection and achievement beyond our fondest hopes.

Gaining this knowledge and experience is not something one can read about and learn from books; it involves a *series of practical steps* one needs to follow in order to master one's daily thoughts, words and actions. Instruction in these steps and their related techniques is what the *Rosicrucian Order AMORC* is about. Its approach to inner development has brought happiness, peace and success into the affairs of thousands of people in the past, and you too can benefit from it.

To find out more, write to the address below, requesting a *free* copy of the Rosicrucian introductory booklet entitled "*The Mastery of Life*." There is a whole lot more to life than meets the eye, and mastering your life is much closer than you think.

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