

Foreword

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) provided the world with an unprecedented body of wisdom about important spiritual life-questions covering a very wide range of themes. These are published in some 360 books, and in addition, his work includes: about 100 paintings or drawings, 14 buildings designed in a new organic architectural style, many hundreds of choreographic forms for the new art of movement called eurythmy. In addition, there is the profound pedagogical advice which gave rise to the Steiner schools, as well as pharmaceutical formulae used in anthroposophical medicine, and the practical indications for organic farming which led to bio-dynamic agriculture. His high initiation consciousness allowed him to understand and to teach a profound, cosmic aspect to Christ and the role of various initiates historically in serving the Christ-Impulse. This contribution of Rudolf Steiner resulted in an esoteric Christianity which the world had never before experienced.

The most esoteric work of art ever created through the initiative of Rudolf Steiner is a painting from about 1912, known as the *Triptych Grail*, which depicts many sacred truths of esoteric Christianity. This magnificent work of art, about 2.5 metres in length, is fading from memory today, and yet it is reported, by her niece, Margaretha Hauschka, that Rudolf Steiner intended this painting to be placed inside the Goetheanum for future generations to experience. So it is my hope that through this book, and through making quality reproductions of this painting available, this sacred artwork can live on in the hearts of future generations.

This large artwork was painted by the gifted German artist, Anna May (1864-1954), who was trained by the widely respected Professor Nikolaus Gysis, and who was later married to Thaddeus von Rychter, a painter well-known in Germany, especially in Munich art circles. Rudolf Steiner also regarded her artwork highly, and gave her various artistic tasks, after the completion of the great *Triptych Grail* painting. Her niece, Margaretha Hauschka, reported in the weekly Anthroposophical Society newsletter, *Das Goetheanum*, Anna May received many tasks from Rudolf Steiner. For example, she painted a picture to illustrate the theme of the meditative verse given during a lecture in 1914. This painting was then published in advance, in a format of 12 x 20 cm, with a hand-written copy of the verse included. When members of the Anthroposophical Society took their seats for this lecture of 26. Dec. 1914, they found placed on their seats, a copy of this art print. It was also arranged for this art print to be sent to soldiers in the battlefield as a Christmas gift.¹

In the eye of the soul is reflected the Earth's radiant hope,
Wisdom, devoted to the spirit, in human hearts speaks thus:
The Father's eternal Love did send the Son to the Earth,
who, full of Grace, now bestows on humanity's pathway, the radiance of Heaven.

Anna May gave her great painting the title, "*The Triptych Grail: from Solomon across Golgotha to Christian Rosencreutz*". She referred to this artwork as a 'sketch' because later she painted a larger, but quite different version of it. In 1975, late in her life, Hauschka made available for purchase a poster of the original painting, the sketch. This poster was made from the glass-plate photograph taken of the painting. Sometime before 1918, Anna May painted a different, much larger version of the painting, which lacks the quality of the original painting. This new version was exhibited in the famous Munich Crystal Palace in 1918, between July and September. A photograph of this larger painting were included in the Exhibition catalogue (see Appendix 3 for this image). This larger, decidedly inferior version was also put on exhibition in a private anthroposophical gallery, *Das Reich*, in Munich; this version was photographed in three sections, and these three images were recorded in the Catalogue for this gallery. A copy of the original Catalogue is kept in the Goetheanum library.

Apart from the glass-plate photograph of the sketch, Hauschka also published a two page folded pamphlet about the *Triptych Grail* painting, to be provided with the poster. See Appendix 1 for a

¹ Extracted from Irmgard Marbach's, "*Margareth Hauschka Ein Lebensbild*", Margarethe Hauschka-Schule, 1995, 73087 Boll über Göppingen, Gruibinger Straße 29.