

except spiritual athletes. But those athletes, filled with meditations and concentrations and asceticism, do not get out either, although they may seem to. They inflate their own spiritual ego (a kind worse than the other one, far more deceptive, because it is garbed in a grain of truth) and their illuminations are simply the luminous discharges of their own accumulated cloud. The logic of it is simple: one does not get out of the circle by the power of the circle, any more than the lotus rises above the mud by the power of the mud. A little bit of sun is needed. And because the ascetics and saints and founders of religions throughout the ages only reached the rarefied realms of the mental bubble, they created one church or another that amazingly resembled the closed system from which they originated, namely, a dogma, a set of rules, the Tables of the Law, a one and only prophet born in the blessed year 000, around whom revolved the beautiful story, forever fixed in the year 000, like the electrons around the nucleus, the stars around the Great Bear, and man around his navel. Or, if they did get out, it was only in spirit, leaving the earth and bodies to their habitual decay. Granted, each new hub was wiser, more luminous, worthy and virtuous than the preceding one, and it did help men, but it changed nothing in the mental circle, as we have seen, for thousands of years—because its light was only the other side of one and the same shadow, the white of the black, the good of evil, the virtue of a frightful misery that grips us all in the depths of our caves.

This implacable duality which assails the whole life of mental man—a life that is only the life of death—is obviously insoluble at the level of the Duality. One might as well fight the right hand with the left. Yet, that is exactly what the human mind has done, without much success, at all levels of its existence, offsetting its heaven with hell,