

Martin Kriele

A Wall of Mistrust against Valentin Tomberg – an Interview by Eberhard Mannigel with Tomberg's Publisher, Martin Kriele

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As Tomberg's publisher, Martin Kriele voice ought to be heard here. Professor and Doctor of Law Kriele fights for what he sees to be right even if it makes him unpopular. He brings things together that others can't manage to get under one umbrella: he calls himself an anthroposophist and a Catholic. He comments for both *Die Zeit* and *Das Bild*. He vehemently supported recognition of natural medicine and especially anthroposophical medicine) in the Medicine Law of 1976 as well as the American position on Nicaragua (his writings on Nicaragua led to proceedings to expel him from the Social Democrats, which ended when he voluntarily withdrew. His written work smacks of conservatism, yet he represented Willy Brandt in the drafting of the German-German foundation agreement. Eberhard Mannigel visited the colorful public attorney in Cologne and spoke with him about Tomberg, his experiences as a Catholic, and his conflicts with anthroposophists. – The Editor

In the March issue of the paper Die Drei, Munich Waldof teacher Lorenzo Ravagli begins his essay on Catholicism and anthroposophy by paraphrasing Marx with the words, "A specter haunts the last decades of the twentieth century – the specter of anthroposophical Catholicism. Is it real or does it haunt only susceptible souls among our contemporaries?" If seems to me that such "receptive souls can only be found in Dornach because, in the paper Das Goetheanum of September 27th, 1987, Martin Barkhoff, under "Catholicizing of the University of Witten?" wrote, "Peter Koslowski, who has been responsible since 1986 for teaching the general curriculum in Witten, and the recently hired Reinhard Löw must be ranked as the most active spokesmen of Catholic conservatism this side of the bishopric. They are students of professor Spaemann, who stays in close touch in Munich with Cardinal Ratzinger, the leader of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, which is clearly seen as the intellectual focus of Catholic conservatism. He then spoke about the Civitas Society, saying that it was said to have "close" ties to the most prominent instrument of Catholic power, Opus Dei. Further, Das Goetheanum of October 18th, 1987, reported that Dr. Michael Frensch, the editor in chief of Hermetika and who belongs to the Tomberg circle and works toward integrating anthroposophy and Catholicism" has moved to the factory paper Die Kommenden. That has meanwhile sparked a current rumor among members of the Anthroposophical Society that the Catholic Church bought Die Kommenden. And that is only one of the rumors that originated from partial or misunderstood information.

Professor Kriele, how do you as an anthroposophist, a Catholic, and the publisher of Tomberg's work respond to such doings?

First of all, religious freedom prevails in the Anthroposophical Society, as was Rudolf Steiner's wish.

It's Point Four of the Principles of the General Anthroposophical Society provided by Rudolf Steiner.

Yes, and Rudolf Steiner himself held a number of Catholic anthroposophists in high esteem; Karl Schubert, for example, or Father Trinquero, whom he brought with him to the 1923 Christmas meeting. In such a country as the German Federal Republic, about half of the population is Catholic. One ought not then to wonder that quite a few Catholics are also in the Anthroposophical Society. Over the past seventy years, that fact has created no real problem for the Society. Suddenly and for no discernible reason, an unbridled campaign against the Catholic members is now underway.

One gets a strong impression at the Goetheanum that a certain Catholic infiltration or, as it's also called, a kind of returning of anthroposophy into the fold of the Catholic Church is underway or rather planned.

The truth is merely that an interest in the verities announced by Rudolf Steiner abides in the Catholic world. I read somewhere that about 30% of Catholics believe in reincarnation and I know as well that the pope himself has expressed himself cautiously but not disparagingly on that subject.

Blatant Dishonesty

Might many of those 30% incline rather toward Buddhist or Hindu conceptions of reincarnation?

That could be, here and there. In that case, however, it would still be good for them to consider as much anthroposophical thinking as possible. Some have the idea that anthroposophy loses something when its revelations are spread. If I ingest another's cookie, I then have it and the other no longer does. If, however, I ingest another's truths, then the other has them and I do too. If I understand Rudolf Steiner correctly, he brought anthroposophy into the world to spread the truth. What he certainly didn't want was that essential truths should remain the exclusive property of the Anthroposophical Society. I would like, however, to respond a bit to Martin Barkhoff's article in *Das Goetheanum*.

Yes, that was where we started.

The truth of the matter is the following: my friend Kienie, while I was working with him during the years when the Herdecke University was just beginning, had adopted the principle that, if there aren't enough anthroposophists to complete the faculty, we must admit others to make a full education available. I followed him to that extent. After his death, Konrad Schily revised that position. To him, it was less important that one be a dedicated anthroposophist; instead, he asked first about qualifications in their specialties. He said, "We want to get for each department the best, the most competent person"...

He told me that he was lucky to find the anthroposophist Koslowski, who was ready to work at Herdecke.

... and I now find that it's not an especially anthroposophical university, for each naturally seeks the best for his or her department. And I for that reason withdrew from the university at Herdecke. But that's how Koslowski got in there after Diether Lauenstein's departure – not as a Catholic infiltrator but as a well qualified philosopher who happens to be a Catholic.

Martin Barkhoff has now associated Koslowski and Löw together with Spaemann, their teacher, with Cardinal Ratzinger on one hand and with Opus Dei on the other.

My first response to that must be that, if the headline of that article is “Catholicizing of the University of Witten?”, then it's blatantly dishonest. Barkhoff himself states that he's only discussing the usual multiplication of sciences, for which apologies are owed to all of the “important German leaders of industry”. He writes that himself!

Further, Koslowski, Löw, and Spaeman were called conservatives. Whenever the word “conservative” is gratuitously interjected I wonder from which point of view and why.

It even says, “as the most effective spokesmen of Catholic conservatism this side of the bishopric”.

They have published, for example, a book, *Immeasurable Progress*, directing their sarcasm at the development of the atomic bomb, atomic energy, and automation. They are conservative to that extent. Fundamentally, they are ecologists. The connection to Opus Dei, however, is mere fraud. I happen to know that none of them has anything to do with Opus Dei – no connection at all have connections”...

...with the editorializing “close”.

Said by whom exactly? It's garden-variety slander. And it's a dirty trick to connect them with Opus Dei and then depict Opus Dei as semioccult. I know from a philosopher from Münster that Professor Inciarte, who was first on the seniority list at Vienna but was bypassed thanks to a lady socialist minister because he indicated that he belonged to Opus Dei. I called him and engaged him on a variety of issues. I then asked him, “What do you really think of anthroposophy?” He replied, “Why, I first heard of it this year. It was Professor Koslowski of Herdecke who held a lecture on philosophy here, after which we spoke a little. He discussed anthroposophists with great respect: They must be fine people”.

Beautiful. Let's move to the topic of Frensch and Die *Kommenden* and incorporation of anthroposophy into Catholicism.

Frensch once wrote an article in which he opined that science, the church, and anthroposophy should in the future cease contending and instead seek ways of cooperating. That to me is unrealistic but scarcely an assault on anthroposophy.

How anthroposophy could be incorporated into Catholicism is indeed inconceivable.

It's absurd. One does find various esoteric and even anthroposophical works in Catholic bookstores but nothing to compete with anthroposophy. Anthroposophists have earned by their practical efforts much prestige for themselves from agriculture, pediatrics, education especially, and medicine, attracting attention in the widest circles. Catholicism, meanwhile, has become much more open. It's often happened to me that my coreligionists respond not with hostility but with interest when I say that I am an anthroposophist. When, among anthroposophists, I mention that I am a Catholic, however, they act like they were about to cross themselves. It seems to me that those who behave thus are seeing the reality around them not through their own eyes but through those of Rudolf Steiner seventy years hence. Not quite, of course – Steiner himself had positive relations with Catholics. He even on January 30th, 1924 – after the Christmas meeting! – went as far as to say that the Catholic church is the only important institution that truly presents to the world the mystery of the spirit that has veiled itself with sensory impressions (*Mystery Centers of the Middle Ages*, G. 233a); awareness of its role, however, usually being absent. Tombergis striving in his Catholic period is to awaken that understanding and to displace that institution's *egregor* or *doppelganger*. Anthroposophists who orient themselves only by Steiner's explanations of forms of Catholicism of his own time and ignore his favorable expressions mistake the present reality, for example, that the church today recognizes religious freedom as an inalienable human right, for other religions as much as itself. Further, supremacy of the conscience over dogma is now officially taught and also that departure from the church need not rank one among unbelievers.

Are those concepts expounded by all worthies of the Catholic church?

That's conciliary teaching. It's obligatory.

Such things must originate mostly from circles critical of the church. Are you without unpleasant experiences in this area; having to keep silence against your better judgment, for example?

No, not at all. I don't withhold that I'm an anthroposophist and I must say that it's caused me not the slightest difficulty and even the ultimate arbiter, so to speak, Cardinal Ratzinger, knows me to be an anthroposophist. He is today the ultimate defender of the faith and he took no offense from that.

Is Cardinal Ratzinger really as conservative as is always said, in the sense of dogmatic and narrow minded?

No, not in the least. He's even a part of the progressive wing of the council. He takes a somewhat firm attitude toward two groups: he seeks first to guard the church from infiltration by unalloyed Leninists and second toward academic theologians who at heart no longer believe and are atheists or, as was said in the eighteenth century, deists. In any case, there is today essentially more freedom in the church than in the Anthroposophical Society. I can say that from my own experience.

In so saying, are you referring also to how Valentin Tomberg was treated for decades and even more so today?

Attacks on Tomberg were originally not directed against his Catholicism at all. They began when his studies on the Old Testament were circulated, in 1933. And they oriented themselves primarily against the fact that a great initiate spoke there. There was fear for Rudolf Steiner's uniqueness. Rejection and distrust of Tomberg were so great that he finally faced facts and left the Anthroposophical Society in 1938. He did not enter the church until 1945. The complaint about his Catholicism, therefore, was only appended afterward. The decisive complaint against Tomberg is thus that he appeared to be an initiate.

Let's go back to the 1930s. Where was Tomberg initiated?

Valentin Tomberg came to Rudolf Steiner very early. A letter has just come into my hands that he wrote him as early as 1920.

He had just turned twenty.

Yes and he wrote there, "that I have been meditating since 1917 according to the books *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds...* and *The Threshold of the Spiritual World* and results have not been lacking". He writes further that, in 1917 – at age 17 – he joined the Russian Theosophical Society "but I couldn't go along with the theosophical tendency toward suppressing free thought". He found in anthroposophy, however, "what I missed in theosophy – consideration of the needs of reason and the uniqueness of the individuality". That's how he writes at twenty.

According to what you've just quoted, Rudolf Steiner was Valentin Tomberg's master.

Yes, Rudolf Steiner was the greatest of his teachers. And he never ceased saying so until the end of his life. He left the Anthroposophical Society because he was mistrusted and rejected. But he never separated himself from Rudolf Steiner.

And what about the Russian religious philosopher Vladimir Soloviev's influence on Tomberg? As he writes in the eleventh of his studies on the Old Testament, Rudolf Steiner prompted him to study Soloviev thoroughly. And this study supposedly led him to say that, prior to Rudolf Steiner, there was nothing "that contained such a deep knowledge – grounded in the traditions of history – of his being and mission of Jesus Christ. For example, Soloviev's *Twelve Lectures Concerning Godlike Humanity* are the deepest and most comprehensive about the subject that have been put into thought before Rudolf Steiner". Thus did Tomberg write.

Yes, in many respects, Tomberg refers to Soloviev – for example to the *Story of the Antichrist* – in which he predicts-using poetic license – how the Antichrist will win many Christians to him through corrupting displays of deceptive arts. Tomberg's purpose was to awaken both the wisdom to see through such things and the strength to resist them.

I've heard from an older lady anthroposophist that Rudolf Steiner held Tomberg in great esteem. Could that be attributed to those early letters?

It is possible that resulted from those letters. In any case, it could not have resulted from a meeting. Valentin Tomberg much lamented that. But he was at that time – between 1920-25 – a refugee in Estonia's Tallinn; he was very poor and had to earn his way. Travel was impossible. Later, when it was possible, Rudolf Steiner had already departed to the other side.

There's a letter from Marie Steiner dated March 25th, 1936, to a Miss von Dumpff in Estonia; right at the beginning, it states: "I am letting lie a long letter already written-just as I have done with my earlier letters to Tomberg; for I have reread his previous letters and know that he won't change his position. I feel that he is shockingly delusional and arrogant". What could have driven Marie Steiner to such words?

She must have thought that Steiner's uniqueness was in jeopardy

That's expressed quite clearly in the letter as well as the essay that follows.

Again and again, isn't that so? I'll give just one example: she reproaches his "failure to recognize Dr Steiner's unique significance and his self-styled ability merely to continue Steiner's instruction instead of trying to penetrate it with all possible humility and carry it over into life". Elsewhere, Marie Steiner writes, "With Dr Steiner's work, we have enough for a thousand years".

She obviously saw him as the last initiate who could appear, while in Rudolf Steiner's own book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* are the sentences: "however, two things are correct – first, those who earnestly seek higher worlds. I will spare no pain and avoid no barrier in the search for an initiate who can lead them into the higher secrets of the world; on the other hand, they can be equally sure that initiation will find them under all circumstances if serious and worthy striving for knowledge is present". Tomberg quotes that in the first of his studies about the Old Testament in 1933 and then adds: "If every serious and worthy seeker can find an initiate, then initiates must always be there. Had Steiner been the only initiate and were there to be no others after him, the above sentences wouldn't be true. But they are true, despite the fact that the inner conviction of many anthroposophists is presently such that they apparently doubt the truth of these sentences that means, they do not even consider the possibility at all that those possessing knowledge could newly appear. In truth, however, it isn't just a possibility, but a necessity whose realization belongs to the obligations of every anthroposophist to whom reality is more important than personal wishes". Here is an apparent allusion to the fact that Tomberg must have known someone else beside Rudolf Steiner who exerted a great influence on him and who led him onto his markedly Biblical path.

I don't believe so. I believe that Rudolf Steiner was Tomberg's only great teacher. On the other hand, Rudolf Steiner always spoke of the steady stream of initiates whose activity only once – around 1250 – was interrupted. In the Anthroposophical Society, Steiner is certainly an unconditional authority. Only on that issue is he simply not taken seriously. Isn't that remarkable? In addition, I'd like to make another comment: for me and for other friends of Valentin Tomberg, he was an initiate – in fact, a great initiate – but Rudolf Steiner was a greater one. There are, indeed, degrees.

Could one then say that Tomberg was a remarkable esoteric personality? In fact, there was, across the channel, first in Ireland and then in England Dunlop, who was also an initiate. And Rudolf Steiner, when he met him, called him his brother. Tomberg and Dunlop, who was himself ejected from the society in 1935, seem to be of similar quality.

I would say [that Tomberg was] of greater quality. But, if the allergy to initiates after Rudolf Steiner is so great that one neither seeks nor finds them, then that seems to me to be a symptom that anthroposophy is being assimilated not through the consciousness soul but through the intellectual or the sentient soul. One clings to the unquestioned authority of Rudolf Steiner, just as one previously clung to that of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas. And, just as before, one brings one's subjective interests and assumptions along in that one "interprets" some passages and omits others. One thinks when thus viewing the world through the eyes of Rudolf Steiner that one is therefore on the level of the consciousness soul. One characteristic of that soul, however, is that it orients itself not according to personal authorities or subjective wishes but according to the truth. By the way, I don't think it correct to claim a particular authority for Valentin Tomberg, in the sense of being the incarnation of a high being. I wary of that.

You mean the assertion circulating among anthroposophists that Tomberg had himself revered as an incarnation of the Maitreya Buddha?

Valentin Tomberg never said that of himself. I don't think that one should speculate about that. In response, I'd like to quote what Rudolf Steiner himself says about that – in a lecture on the 21st of September 1911 in Milan (Ga 130, *Esoteric Christianity and the Spiritual Guidance of Humanity*), he says, "In this time of intellectuality, I appeal not to your belief in authority but to intellectual examination. And neither will the bodhisattva of the 20th century appeal to some herald who proclaims him as the Maitreya Buddha but to the strength of his own word, and he will stand alone in the world as a human being".

How do you explain Valentin Tomberg's being given the authority of a bodhisattva?

Once again, he never claimed it of himself. I think that one who wants to discuss Valentin Tomberg should study his works and let their content have its effect. If one is then of the opinion that he might be this or that, one shouldn't propagandize about it but keep that quietly to oneself. He works only through what he says. Were he to claim authority, he would be infringing on others' freedom. And Valentin Tomberg respected completely the freedom of every person. I personally experienced that.

You are aware of nothing then that his followers or associates might have said about him to justify reproach:?

Yes, there are those who have asserted such things, like Kermayer in Stuttgart for example.

Who?

Kermayer is an esotericist in Stuttgart. In 1983, he proclaimed Tomberg to be the bodhisattva. And there are others who do that. Now, I don't care for that under any circumstance. It provokes a predictable reaction: Tomberg later left the Anthroposophical Society; seven years later, he entered the Catholic Church. The proposition that he could have been the bodhisattva can't even be objectively considered by some anthroposophists. Instead, they perceive it as an attack because the bodhisattva would then have left the society and become Catholic. That would be so terrible a verdict on the Anthroposophical Society of that time that the average, typical anthroposophist couldn't bear it.

MARTIN KRIELE INTERVIEW PART II

Does that explain for you much of the animosity?

Yes. Casual talk about the bodhisattva leads to an enormously intense reaction that keeps many from reading even one line of Tomberg. And he is for that reason being defamed to an inconceivable extent.

Boycott

That strikingly contradicts the advice of Rudolf Steiner first to crawl inside the mind of another person and try making his or her thoughts one's own in order to understand them. Only then has one the right to confront and evaluate them. That, however, isn't happening here at all.

No reading them is not permitted. One example: in 1983, the Achamoth Press published one of Tomberg's works *The Four Sacrifices of Christ and the Appearance of Christ in the Etheric*. Two years previously, the press had been founded to publish Tomberg's works. And in 1982 – before Tomberg's first book had been published at all – the social-science section at the Goetheanum...

...whose leader is Manfred Schmidt-Brabant...

... held a conference – "An Introduction to Anthroposophical Books" – and one of the issues on the agenda was "Handling Problematical Publications" and it was there that the Achamoth Press was disqualified. Anthroposophical bookstores were requested

not to stock its works. Anthroposophical journals were requested not to publish its ads. And the first book by Tomberg hadn't even been published. The trend is unequivocal: whoever even begins to read Tomberg could become convinced through the power of his words, the depth and truth of his expositions, and his fidelity to Rudolf Steiner; such a reader could then conclude that "Tomberg failed because of anthroposophists' rejection and mistrust and for that reason later defected to the Catholic Church would be a dire symptom of the condition of the Anthroposophical Society of that time". In order to avoid that, every possible thing is being done so that people don't even begin to become aware of Tomberg's works. While I am of the opinion that, in a free life of the spirit, one should leave to the judgment of the individual whether a thing will or won't be read.

Professor Kriele, I'd like to come back to the letter and the memorandum that Marie Steiner wrote concerning Tomberg in 1936, which clearly indicate a desire that everything appearing in the anthroposophical world first be cleared with the Goetheanum...

Yes, precensorship was worse than it ever was in the Catholic Church. Tomberg assessed the situation and eventually withdrew.

Emotional and Unfair

I'd like to come back to the letter and the memorandum not just from historic interest but because both documents, which are published in the book "Marie Steiner: Letters and Documents" (Rudolf Steiner Press), play a major role today in the knee-jerk condemnation of Tomberg; above all, in the form of copies being circulated in the Anthroposophical Society.

Ms. Steiner writes there with such emotion and injustice. Myself, I believe that, from the spiritual world, she has long since understood what an injustice she did to Tomberg but, among those overseeing her literary estate today, there is apparently none who asks whether she would want such wicked slander published. There are incredible things there whose untruth one can recognize through careful study. She says, for example, that Tomberg denies the life-enhancing effect of Steiner's wisdom...

...or that his ambition and conceit have opened the gates to the enemies of the soul...

...while he did nothing but – following his inner mission – bestow valuable knowledge about the Old Testament on us. That's the crime that he committed. It's so monstrous. And the impulse was present even then not to let it be read at all.

In Marie Steiner's expositions of 1936 can probably still be heard the clamor of the battles that she fought since Rudolf Steiner's death against others' real or imagined lust for power and that led in April of 1935 to the Great Dornach Massacre – the ejection of Vorstand members Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede, as well as several other well known anthroposophists and groups in Holland, England, and Germany.

Yes, at that time Marie Steiner endured serious crises. She suffered many attacks and took part in some of her own. Everyone was then in such a state of attack and defense that they were incapable of appreciating what a very quiet, humble, and upright seeker for the truth in Estonia had to say about the preparation of the Christ impulse in the Old Testament. That was the farthest thing from their minds. Their only question was how Rudolf Steiner's uniqueness could be protected. Marie Steiner wasn't the only one making attacks: after circulation of Tomberg's first study on the Old Testament in 1933, there appeared immediately – in the same year – an article against Tomberg by Roman Boos, a vehement assault – and he had read only the introduction! – to the effect that one should read Rudolf Steiner and nothing else. That was the central thought around which everything turned. To someone like Tomberg, the only choice was to leave the society. And I don't have the impression that he would be treated fairly today or welcomed with open arms. I don't publish his work in hopes of effecting an essential change in the condition of the Anthroposophical Society but because I still can't abandon my hope that Rudolf Steiner's expectations for the end of the century will still be fulfilled despite everything. My point of departure is quite modest: there are many sincere young people who are seeking Valentin Tomberg's work and for whom it is certainly meant. I want to make it available for them. I would like it to be accessible for them, because the young aren't responsible for what the prior generation did, nor for what the present generation is doing. My advice to those young people is for the time being not to let yourself be drawn into these conflicts. I only get involved myself to the extent that I am obliged. Otherwise, I just leave these things to themselves; for one's efforts toward spiritual advancement are largely undone when one gets involved in such an atmosphere of wicked gossip, suspicion, and mutual attack.

If one wants the condition of deep silence from which can arise the calm needed for the work...

... as when, on a mirror-smooth lake, the starry heavens are reflected serenely as long as not even the slightest wind disturbs the surface, so can one permit no emotion, wish, judgment, authority, or antipathy to cloud one's preparedness to receive the truth. The spiritual world then can speak, and that capacity is the capacity of the consciousness soul. It is one of the capacities of the consciousness soul and, with that, of course, it isn't exhaustively characterized. Self consciousness also belongs to it and "thinking about thinking". But it is essential for the consciousness soul that the spiritual world expresses itself. And it can only express itself when one is internally so quiet and still that one simply absorbs truth and the whole of one's former view of the world dissolves.

In fact, Rudolf Steiner says that the development of the consciousness soul is only beginning and will continue into the fourth millennium, that we will therefore have to exert ourselves to absorb it through the entire next thousand years. In my life, however, I knew one man in whom the consciousness soul was fully ripe and fully developed. That was Valentin Tomberg!

How then do you explain the fact that he became a target of ill will, mistrust, foul , slander, and recommendations of censorship?

It's difficult to understand. So much wisdom and goodness speaks from Tomberg's works. He works toward effecting so much peace and reconciliation. So much warmth of heart and morality, so much respect for human beings and their freedom emanates from him that it is really very difficult to understand. I'd rather not attribute everything to the opposing powers when human weaknesses that

could be overcome through self discipline are intimately involved. But one thing is clear – that the opposing powers would like to prevent Tomberg's work from appearing anew. And, second, if it does reappear, then a wall of mistrust should become so impassable that no one will occupy oneself with this work any more at all. This tendency can be felt everywhere. You can feel it in the article from Garvelmann in this issue of "Info 3".

And you can feel it in the anticatholicism that is quite unanthroposophical, in the resurfacing of suspicions and innuendoes from that time that now circulate again. Once someone like Tomberg is attacked, mob psychology takes effect. But I've also had the opposite experience; namely, there are those who ask themselves when they observe such an uproar, "What does the other side say?" That's a natural inclination toward justice. They sense that irrational means are being used to convince them. And they're not letting themselves be misled – in relation to neither their sense of justice nor their need for freedom. I think that those are the ones who will further the impulse that Rudolf Steiner established, those who attempt to be fair to Valentin Tomberg, whether they can then appreciate him or not.

It would in fact be remarkable if sales of his works were stimulated by the campaign against him.

Yes, Hegel calls that "the ruse of reason".

Occult Traditions

Let's speak briefly about the books by Valentin Tomberg that are presently available to interested readers. There's the small one that you already mentioned – *The Four Sacrifices of Christ and Christ's Reappearance in the Etheric from the Ahamoth Press*. That's another anthroposophical writing. Then, there's *Lazarus, Come Forth from the Herder Press*, a collection of three writings from his time as a Catholic. And, currently, there also comes the four-volume work *Meditations on the Tarot* [the English translation, one volume] that admittedly is under not his name but the pseudonym "*Anonymous d'outré tombe*" – that is, "the anonymous one from beyond the grave" – appearing through the Herder Press.

That book is written not for anthroposophists at all but for French Hermeticists. In other words, its audience is a completely different one. By the way, that's a point that's crucial to much that one must consider if one wants to understand why Tomberg refers to so many authors who are not of Rudolf Steiner's stature...

...Eliphas Levi, for example, about whom Rudolf Steiner speaks in his karma lectures of 1924...

... Levi, Papos, who both stand on a level below Rudolf Steiner. That's the literature that's understood and cherished by French Hermeticists. He refers to what they know best, like Paul in the Areopagus as he spoke to the Greeks.

What do you understand the French Hermeticists to be?

It's a great tradition of esotericists and occultists partly Christian, partly Jewish, that worked both within and without the church. They have fertilized the very heart of French spiritual life

It goes back to the founder of the wisdom teachings of ancient Egypt, Hermes Trismegistus, who was himself one of the two pupils of Zarathustra. Rosicrucianism, however, is also active there. Consider, for example, the Count of St. Germain.

You previously spoke about the possibility of publishing other works by Tomberg. Of which ones were you thinking?

At the Ahamoth Press, the anthroposophical works from the years 1933-1938 are now appearing.

Those are the studies on the Old and the New Testament and the Apocalypse of Saint John...

... also the work on the Foundation-Stone Meditation of Rudolf Steiner, as well as a cycle of seven lectures on the inner development of man. And there's then a whole row of smaller articles on various subjects – lectures, meditations, and esoteric indications and the course on the Lord's Prayer, which I'm not sure should be published. That depends on receptivity and who's out there to read it. In any case, it's important for me to say that it will appear in a small edition from a small publishing house and for a small circle of readers who are interested in deepening anthroposophy in this way. It's not trying to dazzle its way into the Anthroposophical Society in order to propagandize, to seek a wider circle of readers, to split the society, to convert it to Catholicism, or whatever other speculation is circulating.

Does that mean that the Ahamoth Press won't again try to place ads in anthroposophical journals?

Of course, it will try again. But it apparently will be refused again.

Have you ever thought about writing a comprehensive biography of Valentin Tomberg?

In fact, the chairman of the Anthroposophical Society Schmidt-Brabant has just suggested to me that I write such a comprehensive biography. To that end, I would need access to the archives in Dornach among others. I would need to access and publication rights to letters exchanged between Tomberg and leading anthroposophists and other documents. But I don't know whether they will be forthcoming.

In the postscript to *Anthroposophical Studies on the Old Testament*, I've included a short biography that above all shows Tomberg's inner way. That book will be published by the Ahamoth Press in the summer.

Professor Kriele, hearty thanks for this chat.

Publications by Professor Martin Kriele

Criteria of Justice, 1963

The Theory of Winning Rights, Second Edition, 1976

Hobbes and English Jurists, 1970

An Introduction to Civics, Second Edition, 1981

Authority Problems of the Federal Republic, 1977

Human Rights between East and West, Second Edition, 1979

Law and Practical Reason, 1979

Liberation and Political Understanding – a Defense of Human Worth, Second Edition, 1986

Nicaragua—America's Open Wound, a Report, Fourth Edition, 1986

The Global Revolution for Democracy – Why Freedom will Prevail, Second Edition, 1988

Freedom and Liberation – Has Humanity a Hierarchy?, 1968