

## **About the DISPLACEMENT or DEVIATION Form**

Silo - Buenos Aires, August 1973

(Transcription by Nestor Tato)

**SEE A COPY OF THE CARDS MENTIONED HERE AT THE END OF THE TEXT.**

If we look at card number 5 of the T cards, we can see in the lower level a caduceus; in the middle level a running cat, and in the highest level, the symbol of Mercury.

This card being one of the ten "individuals," we inquire as to its name, and read that it is called DISPLACEMENT or DEVIATION.

Continuing with our investigation, we find that the individuals are the "dwellings" in the Tree, and that the Tree in turn is a representation (among other things) of the various internal states through which the pilgrim passes in his walk. Then we open the Inner Look. In chapter XIX, we read in point 7 the following: "From failure upon failure you can reach the next abode, called the 'abode of deviation.'"

The text awakens many reflections and many questions in us. Nevertheless, the text is very clear. We notice that our questions arise, above all, from wondering about the relationship between the figures on the card and what is explained. That is to say, what are Mercury and the caduceus doing there? And the cat? And how about the particular characteristics that that "dwelling" has and that is symbolized by those figures?

Fine. Let's go back to the card then and study it. Let's take the middle level, the little animal running, and look carefully. First, we notice that the feline is not still, has not stopped, but is running. What's more, he is running fast. He comes from somewhere and he's definitely going somewhere else and he's going like a shot.

This makes us think of something that was there at one moment and is no longer there in the next. It's as if we were saying: here it comes... it's over! And it already disappeared... This thing that seems exaggeratedly repetitive, is nevertheless, it seems, one of the fundamental characteristics of the symbol: speed, the speed of that transition.

This gives us the idea of a displacement, and a very fast displacement.

As if the symbolized moment were highly mobile and for this very reason, also careful. Let's look at the following: the animal selected is a feline.

Why a feline and not something else? The feline, as we know, is one of the most cunning and careful animals and also the fastest. There is a cat, the cheetah, that is said to be the fastest land animal, since they can reach around 112 km per hour in a race.

We have found then, one of the characteristics of the dwelling: its displacement, the idea of displacement and its displacement as being very fast and careful.

Let's move on. We said earlier, paying attention to the figure, that another of its characteristics is that it comes from somewhere and is going somewhere else. Very good, what about where the figure comes from? We take a look at the Tree and notice that it comes from a path that must inevitably be traveled called Frustration.

In the Inner Look we read the following:

"6.- Your position in the dwelling of the Tendency is adverse: either you let yourself be, and fall, or you take the path of frustration responsibly (arduous, but the-only-one-not-false).

7.- From failure upon failure you can reach the next abode, called “the abode of deviation.”

Fine. We said then that the feline comes fast from somewhere, it comes from a path and having observed on the Tree from which path the feline is coming, we have noticed that this path could be the path of frustration.

When reading the *Inner Look* we have also noticed that there is a reference to that arduous road. Apparently, that reference is very synthetic. There are four or five lines only. There is only talk of an arduous (but uniquely-not-false) going from failure upon failure. However, if we delve a little into the Doctrine on that path, we find that there are different texts that refer very directly to this point. Let's take a look at one of them.

In *Silo and Liberation*, in the chapter called "The Spirit and Oppression," we read:

“The sheep is the spirit of the human being. The powerful man, the one who wants to utilize it. The fence, the watchdogs, and the magician are the assistants of the oppressor.

“To fence in the spirit is to separate it from the world by means of ignorance. To surround it with guards is to keep it docile by using violence and force, instilling it with fear. Finally, to put it to sleep is to degrade the spirit with persuasion and beautiful falsehoods.

“Down through time these three forms of assassination of the spirit have been used... When a man needs neither fences nor guards and conforms with the falsity of his life it is because his spirit has died.

“A man who has degraded himself to such a point is ‘successful.’ He is put forth as an example of work and an example of self-improvement. He receives his salary at the expense of the suffering of others whom he considers incapable. The successful person can become successful only by obeying the master’s commandments, whether the master be called the State, Morality, or Religion....”

Let's pause for a moment in the text and see what it tells us. It speaks of the winner and of the murder of the spirit. But who is this winner? What are his most outstanding characteristics? The text tells us: "a man who has degraded himself to such an extent is a winner..." that is: the winner (the false winner) is a man who has degraded himself, who has evidently degraded something in itself. In the dictionary we read that to degrade something is to strip it of its rank or dignity. Very well, what is it that he has stripped of its rank or dignity, this man known as the false achiever?

What is it that he has degraded in dignity in himself? If we keep reading we see that "... to put someone to sleep it is to degrade the spirit..." that is to say that what this man has done is to deprive his own rank or dignity of his own spirit and of the spirit of other men collaborating with the oppressor. That is to say, the false winner has murdered his spirit, that is, he has "triumphed" over his spirit, degrading it, subduing it, numbing it! That is why this man is a winner and that is why he is a false winner. And this winner uses three forms of subjugation of the spirit: ignorance, fear and numbness obeying the master’s commands, whether the master is called: "State, Morality or Religion..."

But we were studying the path of frustration and going from failure upon failure and what relationship does this have with the winner? Let's continue with the text of the talk: it says

that "the sheep is the spirit of the human being" and that there are some sheep who "recognize themselves as being outside the fence and do not enjoy a winner's benefits." What has happened with these sheep that recognize themselves outside the fence and outside the winner's benefits? It has simply happened that they have refused to degrade and subdue the spirit. And what are the most important, outstanding features of those sheep who have refused to debase their spirit? We read further on that these sheep are "the poor and the sick and the weak and the ones with no future. They are those who have been disappointed in their ideals, truncated in their loves, chastened in their faith, betrayed in their goodness..." They are obviously sheep that have not succeeded, sheep that have failed for not subduing their spirit. And the text ends saying meaningfully: "When you recognize yourself as a failure I will give you solace because then yours will be the spirit and you will (then) discover the need for internal liberation, the need for renunciation, the need to kill desire..."

In another text and also in another context and on a different occasion, we find the study of the concept of failure, already addressed technically. So in Transcendental Meditation we read: "when my reverie nucleus is so powerful that it appears to me as an image in the future (something I want to apprehend, something I want to catch) towards which I've been heading over the years, over the years for a long time, it is very difficult, given this tendency in which I am launched, for someone to make me deviate from it..."

In other words, it seems that there is a very powerful tendency (let's think of the dwelling of the Tendency) in the human being that guides them through the years. That tendency seems to have the characteristic of subjugating everything else that does not agree with yourself. This tendency seems to degrade everything, it overrides everything that presents a possibility that is not the tendency itself.

Curiously, here we find ourselves again in the presence of certain characteristics of that person we call a winner.

However, it happens that there comes a time when we discover that our objectives are not being "fulfilled." There comes a moment in which we see that "our objectives are not going to become reality." A moment in which the "internal emptiness" is felt, the non-fulfillment of our "worries and desires." That moment is precisely the moment when the feeling of failure is felt. And as we saw earlier, continuing with the text, when this tendency exists, "this tendency in which I am launched, it's very difficult for anyone to make me deviate from it." (Let's quickly revisit the name of the dwelling we are studying: displacement or deviation.) Now, in the face of the feeling of failure, it seems that yes, it seems that this is the moment in which the deviation can be brought about.

This is why the text says very significantly: "Only then it is possible to talk to this person in a different way."

Fine. Let's go back to the card. There is the feline moving very quickly and we already know where this displacement comes from, we know the characteristics, the origin of this displacement. Now let's see where it is going, what its destination might be, because it seems that this displacement is so quick that we need to take great care about its destination, otherwise, who knows where we might end up!...

The *Inner Look* says about this goal or these possible goals: "Take care in choosing between the two roads now before you. Either you take the road of Resolution, which carries you to Generation, or you take that of Resentment, which causes you to descend once more toward Regression, toward the refuge of semi-sleep. Here you face another dilemma: Either you choose the labyrinth of conscious life—and you do so with Resolution—or you return to the labyrinth of dark life. There are many who, at this point, unable to surpass themselves, return to the lower kingdoms impelled by resentment. Unfortunate is he who painfully reached the threshold, and could not open the door to the awakening! ... ”

So there are two paths at this crossroads. And this seems to be a serious problem for our little animal. He is sprinting very fast, he passes by very quickly and you have to be very careful. About this aspect of being careful, Transcendental Meditation tells us: "Blessed are those who carry failure in their hearts without resentment and without revenge, because they can evolve." And to finish the study on our feline, let's say that we have also read a phrase full of meaning: "Man must be saved from revenge"...

On the upper part of the card, the symbol of Mercury appears and on the lower part, the caduceus. Since these two aspects are closely related, the caduceus was the most important attribute of Mercury or Hermes, so we thought it would be appropriate to study them together, tracing their psychic characteristics through mythology.

The figure of Mercury, whom from now on we will call Hermes like the Greeks did, is without a doubt one of the richest figures within the Mythology of the Middle East in general, and, as it seems, also of other places.

It is said that the Olympian Zeus, having been considering the creation of man and the problems that this being could pose for him, had to meditate on the appropriate preventions to balance all the systems. In those meditations the most serious problems were obviously related to the future relations between this being and the gods. And this was so because this new species that would populate the earth would have in itself the divine "spark" or the divine "Spirit." "And what a species!...",” said Zeus, smiling mysteriously.

With these musings our Zeus suddenly found himself in the middle of the infinite space between the nebulae and the constellations, retracing step by step one of the far corners of the Milky Way; contemplating the spectacle of myriads of stars beating with a steady and measured pulse.

In order to complete this creation, he told himself, it is necessary to create a suitable messenger between man and the gods... So, suddenly, on his star walk, he glimpsed a small group of seven twinkling stars in the middle of the constellation of Taurus. Among them, the largest and oldest of the group seemed to protect the others like a careful sister. They were the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas, and the eldest star was the nymph Maya. (Note by the way that in antiquity the Pleiades served as a guide for navigators; those are the stars we know as the seven little goats, which appear towards the north as soon as the sun has set.)

Then Zeus knew that Maya would be the right mother to bring this divine messenger into existence. Interestingly, Maya in Sanskrit means illusion, and the mother of Lord Buddha, the

one who recreated in himself the same 32 signs or the 32 paths of the Tree, is also called Maya.

Since Maya knew the needs of the Olympian, she strove to adequately please both god and time, and gave birth to a resplendent and restless child who was placed in the care and training of the four seasons. It is said that "the summer gave him its fertilizing potential and its fruits; the autumn the maturity of its reflections, experience and sagacity; the winter, his imperturbable rigor and the spring his laughter and his compelling eloquence."

Still a child, our Hermes had his first adventure, in which he already demonstrated his abilities. In one part of Greece, there lived a king, Admetus. He had large and beautiful flocks that were in the care of Apollo. One night, the whole place was ruminating peacefully. Observing that everyone was sleeping, the boy cautiously approached the flock in order to seize it. But even though everything was in shadow, he was seen by a shepherd named Bato, the oldest of all the region. Hermes quickly bought his silence by giving him the best calf in the herd and led the animals, making them walk backwards in their own footprints, to hide them in a forest. And Hermes did this in order to fulfill the will of Zeus who at the time of creating him said to himself:

"This form must be able to handle himself skilfully on earth, in the heavens and in the depths. He must have the possibility of being a guide and being able to be contacted no matter what the conditions of his location... He must be a key and a path at the same time, especially at a crossroads. We have to give this form the capacity of transformation and a smiling spirit. This is how this son must be, and with a clear gaze he will be able to reveal the intentions behind the words. Having the ability to give and to take away..."

Returning to the story, Apollo arrived the next day to look for the herds and not finding them, he inquired about their whereabouts throughout the region to no avail. Nevertheless, a good connoisseur of the region, he approached old Bato's cabin, and promised him that whoever revealed the secret of the robbery would receive two beautiful oxen. Bato falls into the trap, revealing Hermes, and receives as payment not the oxen but being immediately turned into a touchstone as a punishment.

(By the way, the touchstone is used by jewelers to test the purity of the gold and its corresponding grade with a simple procedure. The operator has a multi-pointed star in each of which there is a small piece of gold of different grades (karats). He takes the jewel to be tested and draws a line on the touchstone where some metal particles remain; then he draws another parallel line with the point of the star corresponding to the grade that, it is said, has the jewel.

Immediately a little bit of Aqua Regia is poured over both stripes. If the gold particles that were attached dissolve at the same time, it is a sign that gold corresponds; if not, the procedure is repeated with the other points of the star until finding the corresponding one).

The myth goes on to tell how, having been discovered, our Hermes reflects just for an instant and quickly confronts his brother Apollo, to whom he not only reveals himself as the author of the robbery, but whom he also tells step by step all the details. "But," he tells him, "poor old Bato has paid the consequences. Are you going to punish this child? Look what I have for

you." And instantly he offers as a present a lyre that he had just made out of a tortoise shell so that the sun god could accompany his singing. What else could Apollo do with his little brother than smile and thank him for his gift! ...

As a grown up - the myth continues - Hermes was destined to fulfill his mission on earth. It's not known if that was because man already needed him or because his stay in heaven was so restless that he dedicated himself to stripping the gods of their dearest attributes.

It is said that he stole Venus's magical girdle (Venus...if we take card no. 6, The Tendency, we see that it is presided over by the symbol of this goddess; on the other hand, Hermes was known as a great creator of illusions) and he also stole Mars's sacred spear (The Energy...) and did other misdeeds that, without a doubt precipitated his departure from heaven.

As we can guess, he came into this world very quietly. It was night on earth, then, said Hermes, there is no better hour for what is ours than when the sun sets. Fine. Casting a broad glance, the god located the exact point of his mission and pondered where to start. But he didn't wait long. The roads of antiquity were populated with robbers and thieves and this was his element. Behold, not long after this we find him presiding over assemblies of scoundrels of all types, carefully planning a thousand tricks. Thus, he showered people with gifts and then would unexpectedly take them away.

So, we see him giving and taking. To those who laughed, as he did, the one at misfortunes and failures and losses, he gently woke them up with a touch of the caduceus.

Others, who carried resentment and revenge in their hearts, he also touched, smiling, with the caduceus, inducing in them a deep sleep... That's why he was called the Astute, the Aalaz and the Psychopomp, "or conductor of souls to hell."

It is worth making a clarification here about the human representation of the god that has been preserved over time. On his head, a bonnet (perhaps the alchemists' Phrygian cap?); on his feet two little wings called talars (as a symbol of speed); if he was dressed he was wearing a black and white *c... namen*.<sup>1</sup> (This reminds us of the two paths, the one of ascent and the one of descent; it also reminds us of the legend about his two natures, his androgynous condition. It is said that the Kabbalists in their work of ascent via the paths of the Tree mentally recreated an androgynous figure upon reaching the dwelling of Hermes). And finally, in his hand, he carried the caduceus, a wand that had the virtue of inducing sleep or waking someone up. About this symbol, the legend tells us that its origin was in that brawl with Apollo over the robbery of the estate. Apollo was so pleasantly convinced by his little brother that he gave him a wand of hazelnut which, he told him, had the virtue of breaking with contradictions, of creating peace.

That's how Hermes quickly puts the wand into action at the first opportunity he gets. Suddenly, he sees that two snakes are fighting furiously with each other and when he places

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<sup>1</sup> The word is incomplete because the text covers the page from side to side, without space to bind. It coincides with the hole in the folder. I associated it immediately with "clinamen" because two letters are missing. But the encyclopedia says that Hermes wore a tunic and a chlamys (a fine woolen cape). Anyway, the association with "clinamen" is curious because that is, coincidentally, the deviation of the atom that originates new causal chains. (see Wikipedia, Nestor Tato)

the wand between them, they meekly put an end to the fight and gently twist themselves around the wand until their heads are facing each other. Hermes sets them with a golden nail and behold, the caduceus is born, an imperishable symbol of the tree.

We read that a very ancient form of the cult of Hermes was represented by a simple stone mound at the side of the road, almost always at the crossroads. There travelers devoutly dropped a pebble as they passed by as a sign in remembrance of the god. Hence, he was also known as the "God of the crossroads."

He was also known as the god of the wind (of Pnuma), and not only do we find him as a mocker, but the legends also often offer us depictions as a shepherd and god of the flocks. They are preserved ...images of Hermes driving sheep or carrying a ram on his shoulders. This reminds us of similar images of Christ, who is well known to us as "the good shepherd." As the traveling god that he was, it is said that he walked from region to region pacifying and civilizing at his pace. Some called him the Liberator because of this.

His universality is very great. We find him in many cultures. Among the Egyptians as Hermes Thoth. Among the Thracians he was known as ODIOS, of the crossroads. Wotan among the Germans. Gigon, for the Syrians. Enoch of the Ethiopian-Hebrews. Why not also the Magician-sorcerer of the Mayas.

We have seen that among the Hindus, he was known as Pushan. Of Pushan it is said that he knows and shows the routes that he guides according to them. He helps to redirect what is wrong, rediscover what was lost and is a guide for the dead to the beyond. What has caught our attention the most is the fact that among the innumerable sacrifices that the Hindus rendered to their gods, Pushan received his on the doorstep.

In short, our Hermes is very vast. Let us cite merely his relations with Alchemy and his status as Father, protector, creator and even "prima materia" of the Work. Likewise with Astrology. In some places it is said that he is the inventor of the Alphabet and of Music.

To end our examination, we will relate a dream that was told to us by a friend, W.B., who very beautifully and meaningfully synthesized the most outstanding characteristics of Hermes and of our overall object of study. The dream goes like this:

"I was on my way to my day job. So I get on an approaching train, but suddenly notice that it is going in a direction that is opposite to its destination. The train leaves the city and arrives at the station in a distant town.

Very restless, I get off the train and strive to find something that will get me closer to my usual destination, but the only thing I find is a kind of embankment that I must climb. This is how I do it: I start to climb with more and more difficulty and in the end I climb four-legged, as if the most important thing were to get to the top. Here the landscape of the dream changes: the train station disappears and everything becomes brighter. It is then that I finish climbing and, having arrived tired and almost fainting at the top without any hope, I find myself facing a beautiful plain or valley where venerable old men with long beards are walking and talking.

I call them and ask for help to approach them, but they don't respond. Some of them look at me... and they keep on doing what they're doing.

So, exhausted, I am contemplating this spectacle and making useless efforts to communicate, when suddenly, unexpectedly, I feel something like a strong wind that passes almost touching me and rises very quickly above my head.

I look up and there I see, framed against the sky, a god, very beautifully formed, rosie and resplendent. The god has fine blond hair like gold, half covered by a kind of gray helmet, and wings on its feet. There, against the background of the sky, pausing in that blue space, he looks at me smiling and imperturbable with one leg lifted as if he were about to run.

It is then that I realize that I have a white cord in my hand, and immediately another figure appears flying, perhaps a little more robust than the first, who passes me, takes the end of the cord and tosses it upwards with certainty. Now the god graciously takes the end and rises, lifting me at the other end. Frightened by the ascent but holding on tight, I rise while heavenly music plays, and then I wake up."

Fine. This is as far as we've gotten with the dream and with our investigation of the DISPLACEMENT or DEVIATION form.





DISPLACEMENT OR DEVIATION	TENDENCY
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Translation by Trudi Richards and Fernando Aranguiz - January 2023