

## APPENDIX

### Book of Elements

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The formal basis for the collection *Hsieh* is a prototype – a prototype consisting of diverse variables in the language. The variables included are the same as in my previous work *In Nomine*. The variable values of the prototype have been calculated as an average of all such values in the original number of poems included in *In Nomine* (777).

The poems in *Hsieh* attempt, formally speaking, to approach this (ideal) prototype. In such a way, however, that the variable values of the prototype can be spread out over 16 poems (a section), which guarantees at least one such value in each poem (since I operate with 15 variables, the 16th represents a poem where no such values agree), or in such a way that there are seamless transitions in the 16 poetic possibilities of a section (e.g. 3 poems where 2 variable values agree, 1 poem where 4 variable values agree and 1 where 5 variable values agree). In each of the sections in the collection the prototype will thus be realised (and if 16 poems are not used to fulfil the values of the prototype, but only 4 or 5 for example, the surplus places where poems could have been placed are left empty). So the collection comprises 64 prototypes at the formal level. That *Hsieh* consists of 64 sections is due to the fact that the book is related in various ways to *I Ching* or *The Book of Changes*. This book contains 64 hexagrams.

*Hsieh* is related in other ways to *I Ching*, since every poem consists of 12 lines (partly short five-syllable lines and partly long seven-syllable lines) in various combinations. The short lines correspond to yang lines in *I Ching* and the long ones to ying lines. And, as the hexagrams result from the tossing of coins, I let the position of the lines and their length be determined in the same way. So a hexagram (a pattern of lines) is decided by the tossing of a coin. Initially, six lines are determined from the bottom of the poem. The top six lines in each poem represent the transformation as it takes place according to *I Ching*. That the subtitle of the Appendix is 'Book of Elements' is due to the fact that the book also deals in a general sense with the fundamental elements – the linguistic, the physical and the metaphysical. When the book had been completed, I removed a number of poems as I saw fit, thereby allowing a happy blend of chance and necessity.

It should finally be mentioned that the book, in a certain sense, has chosen its own title – by the tossing of a coin – namely hexagram no. 40: *Hsieh*.