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Edited by Adam McLean

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## Editorial

This Hermetic Journal has been established with the spiritual task of assisting in the rediscovery of the wisdom woven into Hermeticism and the particular spiritual discipline of Alchemy.

Ever since the rise of a science founded only upon materialistic considerations, at the mid point of the 17th century, the spiritual science and art of Alchemy has been less and less understood. A century later this gulf between spiritual wisdom and materialism, expressed itself through the industrial revolution, which, destructively transforming the structure of society to meet the needs of a machine driven greed, broke down the traditional folk wisdom and nature rituals which preserved in pre-industrial society a connection of the people with spiritual being.

The twentieth century has brought both negativity and positivity, horrors and wonderful gifts. In the spiritual history of occultism, the twentieth century stands out as the one in which the veil was

withdrawn, the esoteric becoming public knowledge. There never has been a time in the history of Man when so much esoteric knowledge was available publicly, as during our present age, and there has never been a time in the history of Man, when this esoteric wisdom was more necessary to mankind's future development.

What lived behind the initiations into the Mystery Schools of the past, in the exclusive Knighthood of the Holy Grail, in the enclosed space of the Alchemist's laboratory, the closed circle of the ceremonial magician, the Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians, or the tightly held secret of a coven practicing the Old Earth Mystery, must begin to find its way into the exoteric, begin to transform outer society.

Of course, to be realistic, this vision of the rebirth of a society founded upon spiritual wisdom and principles, is for the far distant future, but occultists now, during the closing years of the 20th century, must begin to build the foundations for a new spiritual consciousness. The esoteric knowledge of the past must be transformed through our inner work, and woven into a form which resonates with the evolving soul of humanity.

We cannot return to the world of the the medieval alchemist, nor the knighthood of the Grail, nor the splendour that was Egypt. But the task before us is certain. The writings, the meditative exercises, the profound spiritual impulses embedded in esoteric ideas, must be taken hold of and actively examined. Many fine people are at present involved in this esoteric study and experiment, and perhaps this is the one definite outer manifestation of the New Age.

This Hermetic Journal seeks to align itself with this impulse, and will seek different ways of fostering and sustaining work towards a reassessment of the much misunderstood Western Occult Tradition.

Hermeticism has often been equated with perverse and intentional obscurantism, however it will be the policy of the editor to seek material and contributors who are honestly trying to communicate. The obscuration of meaning in alchemical works is readily understood against the background of restricted thought in the medieval period, but this is not valid today.

Although this Journal will be focussed on Alchemy it will seek to open bridges of understanding to the other facets of the Hermetic Arts, in particular, Magic, Kabbalism and Neo-Pagan ideas.

The editorial policy is completely independent of any particular school or esoteric path, and contributions are sought and welcomed from many different sources.

It is also hoped that the Hermetic Journal can become a vehicle for the promotion and development of interest in occultism, either by putting people in contact or by publicising some activity or group meeting. The Editor will be happy to consider any suggestions in this direction.

This first issue should give an indication of direction and the perspective of the Hermetic Journal, and it is hoped that our subscribers will find in it something of value.

Adam M Lean

# News & Information

The needs of the small number of students of Alchemy for texts in English, cannot of course, be met by the established publishers. The limited edition method of publishing, works for a certain type of text but there is so much spiritually valuable material that financially just would not be a viable investment. Many students and collectors have, through their own hard work translated texts from Latin, German, or French, or unearthed copies of manuscripts from public collections in Libraries. It would be of the greatest help to the furtherance of the study of Alchemy, if some of this material could be pooled and shared amongst those people who could best use it. The Hermetic Journal would like to establish a library of translated material or of alchemical symbols, and invites any information which we could build up into a register of available material, to which people could have access. Given enough interest, it may eventually be possible to make photocopies of these translations. So anyone with any positive suggestions or offers of help with this project please get in touch.

Also Hans Nintzel, 733 Melrose Drive, Richardson, Texas 75080, USA, one of our subscribers, particularly asked me to mention that he would be interested in entering into private exchange arrangements with other collectors, in regard to alchemical texts.

## The MAGICAL CALENDAR of TYCHO BRAHE

Edited by Adam McLean

According to Eliphas Levi, one of the most important documents from the 17th century renaissance of medieval occultism that focussed around the Rosicrucian movement.

Designed by De Bry, the famous engraver who produced the works of Robert Fludd, Michael Maier, etc., the Magical Calendar is a synthesis of occult symbolism and correspondencies and is invaluable as a reference source. In a sense it is the 17th century version of McGregor-Mathers and Crowley's 777, but perhaps even more valued, as it is the compilation of a whole tradition rather than the work of an individual.

This work has been translated by Adam McLean who also provides a commentary and explanation of the complex mass of symbolism.

The Magical Calendar of Tycho Brahe will be produced as a limited edition of 100 bound copies signed and numbered at £12 (\$25).

It will be available from November 1978 and orders may be placed in advance to Megalithic Research Publications, 12 Antigua Street, Edinburgh 1, Scotland.

S A T O R      During excavations at Cirencester in England over the  
A R E P O      past few months, archaeologist Barry Jones unearthed  
T E N E T      at a supposed Roman site, an amphora with the famous  
O P E R A      magical acrostic incised into the clay. He dates this  
R O T A S      find at the end of the 2nd century AD, and seems to  
                 suggest this as evidence of early Christian worship  
going so far as to postulate that the amphora could have been a  
vessel for sacramental wine.

The well known writer Keith Critchlow has recently produced a marvellous film entitled REFLECTION with the assistance of fellow members of R.I.L.K.O. (Research Into Lost Knowledge Organisation), and the financial support of the Arts Council Of Great Britain. The film shows the relationship of the geometry of natural forms to the underlying esoteric sacred geometry of megalithic stone circles and Medieval Cathedrals. A considerable amount of time is devoted to Chartres Cathedral and its mystical maze. The film has many underlying references to the ideas which are the foundation of the Western Occult Tradition. The film is in colour on 16mm stock with sound track (music composed by Mike Oldfield) and lasts 56 mins.

# Transmutation and Resurrection

GARETH KNIGHT ©

There has been much renewed interest of late in the Holy Shroud of Turin which some consider to have been the wrappings about the body of Jesus in the tomb after the Crucifixion. A recent book, "The Turin Shroud" by Ian Wilson traces the history of this relic down the ages (it may at one time have been identical with a mysterious portrait on cloth owned and revered by the Knights Templar) and reviews the current scientific evidence as to its origins. There is particular interest in the way that the image is impressed upon the cloth which is similar to the images of objects that have been impressed on objects as a result of intense atomic radiation as at Hiroshima. If it is truly the shroud about the body of Christ then, it might be argued, this otherwise unexplained image could have been produced by the process of physical resurrection.

According to the New Testament, the Resurrection was pre-figured during the lifetime of Jesus by an event known as the Transfiguration. On this unique occasion three senior disciples, James, John and Peter, witnessed upon a hilltop the body of Jesus become radiant with light. So impressed were they that they fell down on their faces in awe, and even proposed to build commemorative shrines there, for they were aware of the voice of God coming from on high and the figures of other great spiritual teachers of the past. They were instructed not to do so, however, and to say nothing about the occurrence until after the coming passion, though they were not fully aware of the implications of this statement at the time.

The event so portended, and coming after the physical death of Jesus, was the Resurrection, the narratives of which are full of interest. It is necessary to discount on the one hand those stories put about that the resurrection was a physical resuscitation of Jesus who was wounded but not killed; and on the other hand that we are dealing with an astral or etheric body as in a spiritualistic seance.

The physical argument, apart from the fact that it makes the whole significance of the life of Christ meaningless, or at best the biography of a failed religious/ethical/ political reformer, hardly stands up to the recorded facts, of, for example, the centurion making sure Jesus was dead by piercing the chest cavity with a spear. One may remain fairly well assured that a hard bitten centurion, conscious of the punishments inflicted by the Roman army on the incompetent or disloyal, would be unlikely to botch such a job. Also it would make liars of all the disciples who were privy to the fact, and the story of their actions and subsequent lives points to men inspired by an experience of astounding uniqueness rather than conspirators in a mass deception, however well intentioned.

Similarly, the astro-etheric theory does not fit the recorded facts. To begin with, why did the physical body disappear? It would have been irrelevant in the production of any ghost body. Also Jesus appeared in the resurrection body first on the road to Emmaus and conversed, in broad daylight, with two of the disciples. No astral wraith is capable of such solid appearance ; nor capable of joining in a meal as later happened ; nor of allowing Thomas to physically touch the wounds of crucifixion. At the same time, whilst having these solid properties, it was capable of appearing or disappearing at will, and also of being recognisable or not, at will, and later of ascending into the clouds.

Together with the Transfiguration this suggests that what we are reading about here is neither solid physical matter as we know it, nor attenuated matter as is witnessed in certain carefully controlled conditions in the sceance room, but matter in a different form ; matter that is raised to a higher frequency or state of vibration.

This would be in accord with the entire Old Testament tradition of the fall of man from the Paradisal condition. At some primeval time the self-will of man divorcing itself from accord with the Will of God caused the whole of matter to become generally more solid and coarse, into its form as we now know it. Or, looking at it in another way, it might be said that the physical universe as we know it was specially created as a habitation for fallen man. It is said in the Book of Genesis that Adam and Eve made for themselves coats of skin. In a way this might be regarded as a coarsening or solidification of the vehicles of our expression.

However, by the subsequent Incarnation of the Logos, which is a unique event in a specially chosen race and historical environment, not to be confounded with the periodical appearance of unusually gifted wise men or spiritual teachers, the seed was sown for the general restitution or resurrection of the whole fallen body of nature, along with all of mankind, as and when their wills are conformed, in voluntary sacrifice, to the Will of God once again, who now demonstrates himself in Triune form, not only as Creator Originator and Father, but also as Saviour by His Incarnation, and Inspirer, Instructor and Comforter by the Holy Spirit.

The example by which mankind can follow through this process of transmutation is figured in the legends about the Virgin Mary, which carry a mythological truth that is all the more important and valid

in that it is grounded in historical reality.

As she who gave the vehicle for the Incarnation she is the Retort in which the original alchemical Philosopher's Stone is placed along with the ordinary elements of daily life or Prima Materia. As may be gleaned from a number of alchemical manuscripts, the Prima Materia is of the same substance as the Retort, and by the process of accepting the Stone is transmuted.

Thus Mary, as first citizen of a redeemed humanity, is raised back to the Paradisal state, as described in the dogma of her Physical Assumption into Heaven and Coronation there, which is all rather more than colourful Roman Catholic piety and superstition.

So in the stories of Jesus, the Incarnate Logos, and Mary, the exemplary and redeemed human, we have an alchemical process, of the raising of leaden matter to its pristine golden state. Those familiar with the Qabalistic Tree of Life might express it as a raising of the lowest Sefirah, Malkuth, the Kingdom, to the point across the Abyss represented by Daath, where it falls naturally under the Crown of Kether, giving a balanced Tree diagram, with Yesod, aptly called the Foundation, as its proper base.

Even if one just regards it as mythology, or as psychological projection, the Christian story has much deep teaching to give. To those who are able to accept it in its physical and historical fulness it becomes very much more - a way of life that at the same time is an alchemical process of transmutation, and in no mere allegorical or symbolical way either !

# THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF HOMER



CHAOS CONFUSION.

Volatile Spirit of  
EARTH incorporeal.



Spiritual incorporeal Nitre containing the  
universal Fire without a Basis or  
alkaline Body.

EARTHY acid spirit  
corporeal.



Nitre, or corporified Spiritus Mundi in  
earth.  
Sulphur ♁. Nature, *Male*.

Fixed EARTHY Spirit-  
ual Alkali corporeal.



Sea salt or corporified Spiritus Mundi in  
Water ♀ and salt. Nature, *Female*.

Primary substance  
of all Bodies.



Nitre and salt united.

Regnum Animale.



The most volatile.

Regnum Vegetabile  
sive Acidum.



Between Volatile and Fixed. The  
mediator.

Regnum Minerale.



Fixed. The volatile spirit is here  
downwards.

Pure concentrated  
Fixed EARTHY  
tincture, Extractum  
chaoticum.



The unfermented tincture.

Perfect concentrated  
universal Quintessence.



Fermented and specified with Gold or Sun.  
Lapis philosophorum.



# THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF HOMER

This remarkable late alchemical text was greatly respected by many occultists during the latter part of the 19th century. S.L. McGregor Mathers, the inspiring impulse behind the Order of the Golden Dawn, valued the Aurum Catena most highly and recommended it to the Order members as a source of alchemical inspiration, however as he believed it enshrined powerful cosmic secrets he would not allow any adept below the grade 7<sup>o</sup> = 4<sup>o</sup> (Adeptus Exemptus) to study it.

Madame Blavatsky another great occultist from that period was instrumental in having a translation into English of the Aurum Catena printed in instalment form in her Theosophical journal LUCIFER for 1891. This translation which forms the basis of this series on the Golden Chain of Homer was made much earlier (in 1797) by Sigismund Bacstrom M.D., an enthusiast for the Hermetic Arts, who collected and translated much alchemical material. Bacstrom was initiated into a Societas Rosae Crucis by the Comte de Chazal in 1794, and certainly sought to foster and perpetuate the Alchemical-Rosicrucian traditional wisdom by gathering around him a group of pupils, amongst whom he circulated a number of alchemical texts that he translated into English. Bacstrom, who spent a deal of time in London, was thus an important figure in early 19th century Hermeticism.

The Golden Chain of Homer is ascribed to Anton Joseph Kirchweger, although some authorities consider the authorship uncertain suggesting that this work was written by a Rosicrucian of Utrecht, and that the original manuscript lay in the Imperial Library at Vienna. That as may be, the Aurea Catena was printed under the authorship of Kirchweger, a Doctor of Medicine and Physic at Gmunden in Upper Austria, the first edition dated 1723. The work attracted a great deal of attention and was studied by Goethe during the time he was interested in Alchemy.

The work itself involves a detailed study of the nature of the Elements, the descent out of Chaos into form, out of Primordial Fire into Earthly Material ( and for this reason was of greatest import to Madame Blavatsky, who found many parallels to her own picture of spiritual evolution gained more from eastern sources).

The Golden Chain of ten links, is an archetypal spiritual picture, a kind of "tree of life", spanning the worlds, leading from the heights of spiritual Being, to the hardened earthly form, through a series of ten stages (thus we can see the reason for the Kabbalist Mathers interest in this text). This we can see as a Neoplatonic "Great Chain of Being", and indeed the Aurea Catena is referred to as the Platonic ring. It is a difficult work , being concerned with Cosmic structure or anatomy, but it repays well careful study and contemplation.

We have available the first 9 chapters and these will continue for the next two issues and will be followed in issue number four by an essay on the symbolism and an attempt to indicate something of the profound content of the Aurea Catena.

# The Golden Chain of Homerus.

THAT IS

## A DESCRIPTION OF NATURE AND NATURAL THINGS.

How and from what they are generated and how they are destroyed again, and what that Subject is which generates, destroys, and regenerates things.

*Franchfurt and Lepzic, 1723.*

Translated from the German by SIGISMUND BACSTROM, M.D., 1797.

Revised from the unpublished MSS. by THOMAS HENRY PATTINSON, F.T.S.

## OF THE GENERATION OF THINGS.

### CHAPTER I.

*What Nature is.*

Nature comprehends the invisible and visible creatures of the whole universe. What we call nature especially is the universal Fire or ANIMA MUNDI, filling the whole system of the universe; and therefore it is a universal agent, omnipresent and endowed with an unerring instinct, which manifests itself in Fire and Light. It is the first creature of Divine omnipotence.

Anima Mundi as used here does not mean animal life-principle, manifested or otherwise; but the *cause* of what we understand as the *universal life* principle.

### CHAPTER II.

*How all things proceed therefrom.*

Thus God created first the invisible Fire and endowed it with unerring instinct and a capacity to manifest itself in three principles.

1. In its original most universal state it is perfectly invisible, immaterial, cold, and occupies no space; in this tranquil state it is of no use to us, yet in this unmoved state it is omnipresent.

2. In its second state it is manifested by motion or agitation into *Light*. In this state it was separated out of Chaos, when God said, "Let there be Light, and there was Light". Yet it is still Cold. When gently moved and agitated it manifests Warmth and Heat, as is the case in all frictions, and in fermentations of moist things.

3. When collected in a sufficient quantity and violently agitated it is manifested as a burning Fire. This continues burning as long as it is ~~agitated and has a fit subject to act upon.~~ When that fails it returns to its first state of tranquil universality. In the character of Burning Fire it manifests Heat and Light.

Thus we say in its primary universal state it is perfectly invisible and immaterial.

In its second state of manifestation it is visible as Light.

In its third state of Heat and burning Fire it is visible, hot or burning, and becomes somewhat material; as it occupies room or space whilst in this state.

You have now seen 3 distinct powers of the Universal Spirit. But it possesses still more, and even some inconceivable powers.

We have told you the Universal Spirit is endowed with an unerring instinct. Working by the most simple and nearest way, it has also, besides its already mentioned conspicuous qualities, 2 occult powers, *viz.*, attraction and repulsion, and these two powers are inconceivably great.

We see various instances of it in Thunder and Lightning, in Earthquakes, Hurricanes and in the surprising effects of gunpowder.

When God created this universal Fire he gave it a power to become material, that is to become Vapour, Humidity, Water and Earth, although that fire in its own universal nature is and remains centrally the same. Thus you see the beginning of the 4 Elements. Burning Fire, Vapour and Humidity, mixed with cold Fire, constitutes atmospheric Air, which still more condensed becomes Water, and Water becomes Earth. Originally it was but one element, Fire.

This universal Fire becomes a vapour of immense extent, which by further inspissation becomes chaotic Water, and out of *this* Water the Creator separated the Light, that is separated (*or sub-divided*) the universal invisible Fire into Light. Thus we see that invisible Fire manifested in two principles—*Light* and *Humidity*. Therefore out of Light and (*chaotic*) Water God has created all things.

Water was the first condensation of the universal Fire, which nevertheless in its centre was and remains *Fire*, full of life and activity, and the more so as it was assisted (*or equilibrated*) by its equal the Light, separated out of it as much as was necessary for the creation of all immaterial and material Beings, and in succession of time, for their maintenance.

Of the separated Light we have spoken before.

We have now to consider its first Body, Humidity. Water differs in regard to its Density (*or sub-division*); if rarefied to a certain degree it constitutes Air, that is a predominance of Fire above Water. But if condensed to a certain degree it becomes Humid Water, or Humidity predominating over Fire; nevertheless in Both lies concealed the universal Fire or Spirit of the universe.

As soon as the Air gets deprived of this universal Fire, which animates it and renders it elastic, it becomes immediately putrid, and thereby declines (*precipitates*), becomes Humidity, Earth and Solid. It is the same case with Water, when deprived of Fire or of animated Air, it becomes putrid and condenses still further and becomes Earth.

God has ordained it so that the Universal Spirit, by means of Humidity should work all things, because Humidity mixes easily with everything, by means of which the Spirit can soften, penetrate, generate, destroy and regenerate all things. This Humidity or Water is the Body, the vehicle. But the Spirit or Fire is the operator, the universal agent, the *Animus et Spiritus Mundi*—the all-working spirit and power of God; the universal Germ, the genuine agent, the only agent and fabricator of all natural things.

The universal Fire fills that immense space of the universe between the Heavenly bodies, and as it has a power to become material, it generates a subtle vapour or invisible Humidity, its first passive principle. It causes therein a gentle reaction, and a most subtle fermentation takes place universally, and by this reaction the universal acid is everywhere generated, which we can call nothing else than a most subtle incorporeal *Nitre*; it is inwardly fire and outwardly cold.

Thus this spiritual *Nitre* or universal *Acid* we call the second invisible change of the universal Fire generated out of chaotic invisible *Humidity*; and as this approaches the atmosphere of the Heavenly Bodies it becomes gradually more and more material, until it meet an alkaline passive principle wherein it fixes itself and forms native *Nitre*, so that from universal spiritual *Nitre* it becomes material *Nitre*.

Thus we say not without good reason that the Solar Rays of light are nothing else than a most subtle spiritual *Nitre* which gradually becomes more and more nitrous as it approaches the Earth, but Sea Salt in the ocean, animating the atmosphere with fire or life, and thereby giving elasticity to the air and life and preservation to the water.

We see between the Firmament and our Earth continual Vapour, Clouds, and Fogs, which ascend like a transpiration of the Earth; and are sublimed upwards by the central heat of the Earth.

This chaotic Water and Vapour, contain and are the first matter of all things, and although this appears very simple before our eyes, yet it is twofold, as it contains *Fire* and *Humidity*. The invisible in the visible—the Fire or spirit is the agent and the Water the mother or parent.

Whosoever wishes to arrive at the fountain of Secret Wisdom, let him study this well and let him go with the central point of truth to the circum-

ference, and for ever imprint on his memory, that from Fire and Water, or Spirit enclosed in Humidity, all things in the world are generated, preserved, destroyed, and regenerated.

Whoever comprehends this will find no difficulty in analysing natural things. He may easily volatilize the fixed—and fix the volatile: a putrid subject he may convert into a pleasant smelling one; out of poison he may make a salutary medicine, because he knows that all things proceed from one root, and return to that root. The distinction is external, and regards only the modification of the matter, which is more or less digested or fixed. Therefore the philosophers say that *their matter* is in all things. Yet they select subjects wherein the universal spirit is more abundantly contained, and more concentrated and thus easier to be obtained.

# Competition - 1978

## Announcement

THE HERMETIC JOURNAL in collaboration with ASKIN PUBLISHERS LTD announce an essay competition open to all.

Entrants are required to submit an essay of about 1500 words in length on either of the following subjects :-

- 1) The History of Divinatory Geomancy
- 2) An Interpretation of John Dee's Hieroglyphic Monad

PRIZES : One for each topic, a copy of Henry Cornelius Agrippa's Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy valued at £28.

CLOSING DATE : All entries should be received by 30th Nov 1978

JUDGING : The judging of entries will be made by Stephen Skinner of Askin Publishers whose decision will be final.

The winning entries will be published in the Hermetic Journal No 3.

All correspondence to the Hermetic Journal.



# A Satanist's Diary

BY HUGO L'ESTRANGE

We are pleased to welcome the distinguished adept of the Left Hand Path, Dr Hugo L'Estrange, as a regular contributor, but wish to point out that his views do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of the Hermetic Journal.

I begin this diary at a time when the Black Arts, like all branches of occultism and religion, are undergoing a process of rapid change in response to a changing world - a process which I confess

I view with mixed feelings. Every time I carry out the blood sacrifice or the desecration of a Host I am struck by the rather sad thought that these simple outward tokens of our faith are everywhere coming to be regarded as unnecessary. All over Satandom traditional observances are on the decline. Many black magicians, for example, are dispensing with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer in reverse, the trampling on the crucifix, the ritual deflowering and other such practices. I am told that some have even gone so far as to write the Satanic Pact in red ink instead of blood. Now of course the more rational side of me knows full well that my regret is based on sentimentality and that our Master Below does not stand on ceremony. He really doesn't care a fig how many Lord's Prayers are rattled off backwards or how many virgins are deflowered as long as his followers continue to increase and to get practical results. All the same I cannot help feeling that it would be a great pity and that our faith would lose much of its appeal if the old formal observances were to disappear altogether.

I console myself with the thought that the same developments are taking place to much more damaging effect among our enemies. If your average Christian is to be kept purged of evil he has to be constantly swilling down the castor oil of the Church's absolution, and if he is to remain a faithful servant of the light he must be put through a regular square-bashing routine of religious drill, which, like army drill should ideally be as absurd as possible (Credo quia absurdum, "I believe because it is absurd", as that old plagiarist Saint Augustine put it - actually of course it was Tertullian who said it first) and rooted in tradition rather than reason. Fortunately for us the Christian churches

have lost sight of this fact. Throughout the Christian world doctrines are being watered down to make them less absurd and therefore less convincing, and the traditional drill is becoming slack, with a consequent loss of that robot-like loyalty so vital to Christianity. The last really strong bastion of Christianity, the Catholic Church, which for a long time resisted these changes, is now at last succumbing and in doing so digging its own grave. The abandonment of the Latin mass is but one symptom of the process. And Archbishop Lefèbre and his ilk are actually helping things along by acting like buffoons and making the traditionalist case look ridiculous. Heads the Devil wins, tails God loses !

Witness the recent hubbub over the marriage of Prince Michael of Kent to the Catholic Baroness Marie-Christine von Reibnitz. The Pope made a brave attempt to hold his crumbling kingdom together, but did his flock thank him ? I was almost moved to celebrate by ordering a magnum of Louis Roederer 1928 from the cellar when the Prince of Wales joined the fray - I must confess to boyish dreams of a split between the monarchy and the church. I always have a sneaking sympathy for traditionalists like Monsignor Thomas Winning, who accused the Prince of "advocating a woolly type of Christianity" ; but really, Monsignor, I thought sheep were meant to be woolly!

Another gratifying phenomenon for us is the gulf between religion and science, which first began to appear in about the 17th century and has been widening ever since. This is fortunate because religion and science in partnership would form a formidable enemy to our cause. What is pleasingly ironic about the present situation is

that, while the churches believe themselves to be making their doctrines more acceptable to science by making them more "reasonable", science itself is moving in exactly the opposite direction, namely towards concepts which only a few years ago would have seemed like the ravings of a religious visionary.

Take the good old doctrine of the Virgin Birth. Now today the chances are that a progressive Anglican or even Catholic priest, when speaking to an intelligent person, will say that "between ourselves" he doesn't really believe literally in the Virgin Birth but sees it as a pretty fairy story to keep Italian peasants happy. A pity that he doesn't keep abreast of developments in science as I do. If he did he would know about the discovery that quite a few animal species, including certain types of lizard, are perfectly capable of virgin birth or "parthenogenesis" as the scientists call it. And it is only a very short step from lizards to human beings. In short, there is nothing particularly astonishing about virgin birth, and I am damned if I can see why anyone born in that way should think himself a cut above a lizard, let alone a cut above the whole of humanity. But the point I'm trying to make is that science is moving towards a set of beliefs and a jargon and ritual which have enormous potential for religious exploitation - the concept of "black holes" in space is another example. But fortunately this has escaped the notice of our Christian friends. Talking of black holes reminds me of the description in Jung's VII Sermones ad Mortuos of our Lord the Devil as "the eternal sucking gorge of the void". It has been fashionable among our enemies for so long now to claim that only

God is real and that the Devil is just an illusion, that I take my hat off to the scientists for revealing his Lordship to the public - the more so as they failed to find God in their searches.

The slackening of tradition which I have described is also, as I have said, found in the world of the Left Hand Path, but there it is of minor consequence - even though a few sentimentalists like myself may regret it. No, a more important concern for us as Satanists is to assist man's fundamental instincts in their natural and healthy rebellion against the church.

Recently I have been making my own contribution to the war effort by trying out some new black magical workings. And apropos of this I must tell you about a curious mishap which turned out in the end to have rather amusing and satisfactory results. The other day over breakfast I was jotting down a spell to sow discord and aggressiveness among a particular order of nuns. I absent-mindedly made my jottings - the names of demons and a few magical sigils - over an article on the imminent World Cup match between Germany and Austria. Then I forgot all about it until a couple of days later what should I read in my Evening Standard of June 23, 1978, but the following item about a nun from the order in question :

"A nun belonging to the Merciful Sisters Order sprang at a coach driver at a motorway cafe near Frankfurt and half-strangled him when he cheered Austria's victory".

The Devil works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform !

# Alexander Von Suchten M.D.

## The Sweat on a Philosopher's Brow

MICHAEL JONES ©

A short life of Alexander von Suchten or Sethon appeared in the anonymous LIVES OF THE ALCHEMYSTICAL PHILOSOPHERS, (London 1815). This volume later turned out to have been written by Francis Barrett, author of THE MAGUS. According to Barrett, Alexander was a Scotsman who lived in a mansion near to the seashore, probably at Port Seton, a few miles from Edinburgh. In the summer of 1601, a Dutch sailing ship was wrecked on the coast and Sethon took some of the crew into his house and offered them every hospitality and medical aid. Later he visited the captain, who was among those he rescued, and stayed with him some weeks. In Holland he witnessed several performances of the Great Work, the transmutation of base metal into gold, demonstrated by his host, an Adept. He was naturally bound to secrecy but did confide in a local Dutch doctor to whom he gave a piece of the gold which had been alchemically transformed from lead on 13th March, 1602.

Alexander visited Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Italy, Switzerland, and later Germany, where he is described by a contemporary as having a very spiritual appearance, rather short and very stout, with a beard "in the French style". Jacob Zwinger, a respected German chemist, witnessed how Alexander changed sulphur and lead into gold by simply applying the "powder of projection" from a small packet in his possession. This took place in Basle. Eventually he attracted the attention of Christian II, who imprisoned him in a tower where he was closely guarded by forty soldiers and mercilessly tortured. But he would not give up his secret.

Michael Sendivogius, the apparent author of NOVUM LUMEN CHEMICUM, visited him while he was left in solitary confinement, his torturers having failed, and arranged his escape. Sendivogius sold his own house, bribed the goalers and got them drunk. He then carried Sethon to safety, for he was unable to walk after the torture. Sendivogius had hoped that Alexander would now tell him his secret but was blankly refused. But two years later when Alexander died, his rescuer obtained the remains of the powder.

Sendivogius later married Alexander's widow and according to A.E. Waite in THE SECRET TRADITION IN ALCHEMY (1926) probably stole Alexander's treatises and published them as his own. He also used the powder which had fallen into his hands to perform the Great Work. Eventually it ran out. Another story, however, claims that Sendivogius only assumed to have no real knowledge in order to avoid the fate of his teacher. He pretended to be ill and to be poor so that he would be considered a common trickster. Whatever the truth of the matter is, it is clear that the works attributed to Sendivogius have behind them the teachings and spiritual attainment of Alexander who in his turn was the pupil of the Dutch captain.

Often the legends about the alchemists contain as much alchemy as their own writings. What are we to make of the Dutch ship that is wrecked on the seashore outside Alexander's mansion? It is this twist of fate or act of God which begins the whole sequence. The later alchemists were aware of a connection between what they called the prima materia of their alchemical work and the potent image of the spirit brooding over the waters with the dark earth below described in Genesis. This represented the mysteries of substance and transubstantiation of which they were pupils. Above were the starry waters of the cosmos with the spirit brooding over them and below was the dark earth of alchemy, made up of three mysterious substances or principles, sulphur, salt and mercury.

In the BOOK OF THE THREE FACULTIES by Alexander we find the following passage :

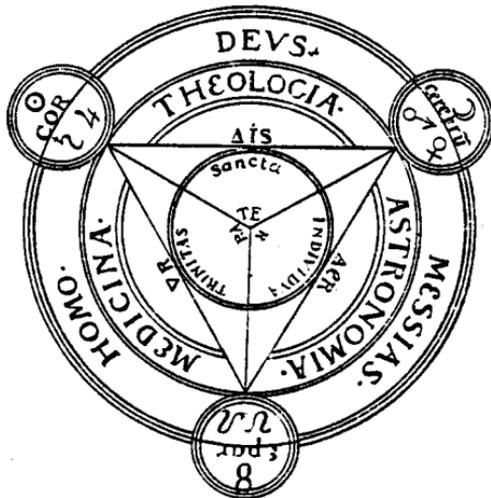
"When man learnt how, out of water, through corruption and generation, these three substances are born, he had not yet found his Creator, whose Spirit brooded over the waters, as the Scriptures say. He therefore takes the three bodies, narrowly examines one after the other, reflects that God is a Spirit, invisible to human eyes and that - since He has created all things - He must be a Living Power. Therefore man takes water, regards it, finds therein nothing but the four elements. Then again taking Sulphur, he finds also therein but the four elements, that is, nothing stable. Lastly he takes Salt - sees there is something more therein than in Water and Sulphur, yea, he finds two things : (1) A Water not different from the former (2) A Sulphur differing from the former, i.e. a Sulphur which burns not. The third thing he found not for it vanished from before his eyes. What should he do? It was gone. Where should he find it? He regarded the Water, the Sulphur, two fine, pure, white substances ; but the third, which had lain among them and joined the two together, was departed, and it was the same he had been seeking. Hence he became very sad, crying day and night unto the Lord, until he found what he sought. But who shall describe how it was found? Or what ears may listen to so great a mystery? Verily, in this is contained the Wisdom of all Celestial and Terrestrial Things! Here is the same mystery as when, in the latter times, the Word was made Flesh, the chosen partakers of which see Heaven open with St. Stephen, and the Son of

Man sitting at God's right hand. And - with St. Paul - they ascend into the Third Heaven. Hence it is permitted to none to reveal it. Through this mystery the Magi have known the Trinity, and the Incarnation of the Word, and have written concerning the same many centuries before the birth of Christ. But woe to the man who shall reveal this secret in any other way than it has already been revealed! Hence I am to be excused for being silent concerning this Arcanum, which God reserves for His beloved, and will in His mercy reveal to those honestly striving for the same." 1

Alexander searched within the essence of the salt for something which links together two opposing tendencies. He was convinced that the salt contained the greatest mystery of all, this was not a wisdom of contemplation but an active power which could transform matter.

In the same book from which I have quoted Alexander describes three great books which contained the Divine knowledge imparted to man after the Fall. This knowledge was not initially a knowledge for contemplation but a knowledge for working "in the sweat of his brow". The BOOK OF ASTRONOMY deals with the mysteries of the Water over which the spirit brooded. The BOOK OF MEDICINE deals with the power of all the things growing out of the earth, and these two are united by a third, the BOOK OF THEOLOGY which deals with the mystery of the Trinity. Those who studied these books were known as "the Magi", the wise teachers of mankind. The spiritual knowledge remained with the Magi and only the books passed to the people. This led to a great deal of misunderstanding. The original Magi died and the books remained. The magical books of the astronomers were severely mutilated as they were passed on. Originally it was not thought that outer sun and moon influenced man, but the sun and moon and planets which adorned the heavens within, where the Creator himself abides. In a similar way, commentaries on the original books of medicine were written and there arose a sect who called themselves physicians. True medicine died out and only the 'signs' remained. These signs are all the herbs and flowers and trees found on the earth but they only point to what is needed for healing. The earth itself, according to Alexander, was given to man by the Magi to teach him the science of medicine. Likewise the theologians have not received their wisdom directly from the Magi or the light of nature, but from theology which has "darkened the secrets of God to the utmost". They claim to be the sole interpreters of God but in fact know nothing. Alexander sees true theology as doing the good, as a magical activity.

"You have Moses and the Prophets, Christ and the Apostles ; hear what they say. They speak not with the mouth alone, but with hands and feet, with fire and water, with silver and gold, with salt, with silk, with velvet, with stone, with black, with white, with red, with yellow, with wax, and with oil, etc. Hear not alone what the mouth says, hear what the water says, what the salt says. They also speak, but another tongue. Learn this, and then Scribes and Pharisees will not be able to lead you astray...." 2



Two testaments, the Old and the New, alone remain from the original magical books of theology. They point to the task of finding God in all creatures. This was the key which joined medicine and astronomy. It was the living spirit of Salt, or magical will, without which the Water of Astronomy and the Sulphur of Medicine remained only doctrinal. It was the living creative spirit that brooded between heaven and earth. We cannot understand theology and unite our thinking and feeling "unless Christ eats and drinks with us, that is, personally with us as one man with another".

In Alexander's book AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURAL PHILOSOPHER'S TINCTURE OF THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS, also included in the GOLDEN CASSET, the process is further revealed. He begins with trying to reach an understanding of the Creation.

"For God having created all creatures and elements out of one thing, viz., water, it follows that He began making two things out of the original one thing. The first He has taken up on high making of it a heavenly water ; the other was gathered below, and by coagulation became earth."

The alchemist had to reproduce this situation in consciousness. What ascends on high, the spiritual water, is called the Eagle. It is a key to the renewal of man. Alexander quotes the Psalm, "Like the eagle shalt thou renew thy youth". It is white, transparent and heavenly. It is neither soul nor body but a universal power of regeneration dispersed through all nature. It is active "in the winds of heaven, in the earth and in the bosom of the wide waters". It is both root and bird and can be found imprisoned in gold.

The other part of the water, the lower part, has become corrupted and dry. It is known as the Lion. The Eagle was hatched out of the body of the Lion, the Lion was a kind of egg and the Eagle, hatched in the warmth, has flown away. It is now a Lion because it is sharp and penetrating. Paracelsus called it "an invisible consuming fire".

In contrast to the Eagle its residue is heavy and descending. It is the natural heat of all living things. It gave birth to the Eagle, and died. It is the principle of Sulphur.

The third principle, the Salt or the spirit brooding over the water is called the "glitter of gold". The earth is gold left in an imperfect state for the alchemist to transform. It is sometimes called "the Lion's blood". This blood has no exit until the body is opened. This golden glitter is so mixed with the earth that it cannot actively work. The task of the alchemist is to release it. This involves a Descent into Hell of the Eagle, but this cannot be accomplished without enduring a process of putrefaction or decay. "There can be no generation with putrefaction", according to the alchemical formula. Gradually the Lion must lose all his heart, blood and strength. As a symbol of Christ, water and blood flow from the wound in the Lion's side. The blood becomes a kind of golden oil if the process is carried on by a gentle fire. Eventually the water and the oil are further purified. They draw near to a pure fountain which is described as the beautiful golden leaves of a golden book. "Here are Adam and Eve naked, for their eyes are opened, and they now see themselves, what was good and bad in their own substance". Still the process is not complete.

Adam the "red man" representing the purified warmth in the Sulphur is to be put into a warm bath where he must sleep. During his sleep the alchemist cuts open his right side so that the beautiful white woman concealed within him may come forth. Later she is brought to him and becomes pregnant. Her firstborn child is the new Adam who if fed with his young mother's milk will bring salvation until "the whole world" will become full of gold, pearls and precious stones. Sometime s this process is described differently and instead of Adam, the red man, a black man who is trapped in the earth is rescued by a young woman who clothes him with a purple robe and teaches him the highest wisdom. She is describes as being "adorned with glorious white wings and golden feathers". She wears pearls on her knees and her head is crowned with gold set with a silver star. She is surrounded by sweet scents and aromas and on her feet she wears golden shoes.

These imaginations are quite transparent for a spiritual process which has its foundation in a separation of two things in order that they may be more deeply qualified and purified, followed by a new synthesis which takes place in the will. The process is repeated again and again in different forms but the pattern remains the same. Consciousness is not allowed to remain within itself but suffers annihilation in order to be reborn as deed. The alchemist in the 16th and 17th century faced the problem of an ever widening gulf between a knowledge of nature poised on the brink of materialism and a religious faith become abstract and impotent. His task was to lay the seeds for an understanding of man in which nature and spirit were again unified. This was the lost salt or philosopher's stone imparted to his true disciples by the Christ. " You are the salt of the earth " !

1. A Golden and Blessed Gasket of Matures<sup>1</sup> Marvels. Alchemical
2. writings collected by Benedictus Figulus 1608 (Vincent Stuart, 1963)

# Divinatory Geomancy – An Hermetic Art

STEPHEN SKINNER ©

Islam, with its strict doctrine of pre-destination, offers fertile ground for the proliferation of systems of divination. One of the oldest of these is Geomancy or 'Ilm Ar-Raml', literally the 'Science of the Sand'. The sand can be used in several different ways ; either purely suggestively by sprinkling it in certain shapes, or more rigidly by drawing a number of lines to derive a geomantic figure as in the geomancy of Ahmad B. 'Ali Zunbul, who lived about 1550, in whose works we find mention of the traditional pedigree of geomancy.

Zunbul states that the angel Gabriel appeared before Idris (the Arabic name for Hermes Trismegistus) and taught him the art of geomancy. In the usual hermetic texts a revelation is bestowed on Hermes who in turn passes it on to his son Tat or to Asklepios (in the case of a more medically inclined Hermetica). Such texts form part of a vast corpus of 'Hermetic Literature', of which the Poimandres is perhaps the best known. From Hermes Trismegistus the chain passes on to the elusive 'Ṭumṭum', allegedly an Indian to whom Hermes taught the art of geomancy. Ṭumṭum appears to belong to legend rather than to history, although his name may be the corruption of an actual personage, not necessarily from India. For Islam, India has the same aura of mystery as Egypt has had for Europe in more recent years : consequently if it was necessary to give a subject greater authority, an Indian source was invoked by Islamic writers. Moslem travellers often made a pilgrimage to India, and "to be an Indian, wise in the interpretation of secrets" was one of the ideals of the Brethren of Purity who obviously influenced Zunbul in his geomancy. Zunbul even claims that Ṭumṭum's geomancy was "in the language of the inhabitants of India". The next person in the chain of descent was Ḥalaf al-Barbarī who travelled to India to study geomancy, where he copied Ṭumṭum's text into Arabic. From his work Abu 'Abdallāh Muḥammad az-Zanātī drew on al-Barbari's work to produce one of the more complete geomancies of the time. Az-Zanātī's dates are not known, but it is suspected that he lived during the 12th or 13th century. In turn Zunbul drew his work from that of Zanātī.

Zunbul's dates are not certain, but as he mentions the Sultan Sulaiman the First(1520 1566), and also that one of his sons died in 1553, it can be assumed that Zunbul flourished circa 1550.

We see from the title of Zunbul's book 'A Treatise on the Solution of Problems', that it intends to be a practical manual of divinatory geomancy. It is the largest of Zunbul's books and is divided into 31 chapters. After outlining the history of geomancy in his preface, Zunbul (in the guise of Hermes Trismegistus or Idris) explains that the 16 figures of geomancy (aṣkāl) are allocated to the 16 houses or mansions (buyūt). Zunbul then outlines these 16 different figures explaining that the primary figure is Via, or in Arabic Tariq (the path or way). This is the primary figure because it contains one dot on each of its four layers : these layers correspond with the four elements, so that reading downwards we have :

- Fire (Nār)
- Air (Hawā)
- Water (Ma)
- Earth (Turāb)

From this basic figure of Via (Tariq), Zunbul states that all the other figures are derived, and are less perfect than this prime figure. Here geomancy, like alchemy, utilized a method of mixing the elements, to form the various figures. Thus if the bottom dot (corresponding to Earth) is removed, and replaced instead by two dots (or by a line in the manuscript), we get the figure 'ataba hāriḡa ∴ which is Cauda Draconis, symbolically consisting of Fire, Air, Water, but not Earth. Likewise for nusra harīḡa, or Fortuna Minor ∴, which consists of Fire and Air but no Water or Earth. The other figures which are listed by Zunbul as in the Table opposite, obey the same rules of elemental construction.

The first four geomantic figures are cast in the usual manner and the remainder worked out by addition till you have a series of 16 figures to place in the houses or mansions (taskīn). This taskīn is then interpreted on the basis of the astrological relationships between figures, and with reference to their elemental constitutions. This division of individual geomantic figures into elements is almost unique to Zunbul's manuscript, and does not seem to have been carried through into later European developments of geomancy, although of course whole individual figures have always had elemental attributions.

In interpretation the most powerful figure is again tariq or via, because it includes all of the four elements. This is quite the reverse of later geomantic interpretations when via, the way, was attributed to the fluctuating moon, and became one of the less powerful figures. Perhaps the nomadic element in Arab life has contributed to the importance of tariq, an importance not relevant in sedentary Europe.

Further qualities are denoted by the position of the dots on the figure, so that from the geomancy of the Indian Tumtum, the first dot equates with minerals, the second with living creatures, the third with plants, and the fourth with inorganic bodies (or ḡamādāt). Time sequences can also be determined from figures by attributing certain numbers of years, months, weeks or days to each figure, so that the length of a life, of a journey, of a dynasty, or of an appointment can be determined by geomantic manipulation.

Geomancy was not only taken by Arab traders south into Africa, but also north through Spain in the eleventh century to Europe, where it

Geomantic Figures and rough meanings	Name of figure		Astrol Corr.
	Arabic	Latin	
1 Way ∴	ṭarīq	via	☾
2 Crowd ∴∴	ḡanā'a	populus	☾
3 Joy ∴∴	ḥayyān/lihyān	laetitia	☿
4 Dragon's head ∴∴	'ataba dāhila	caput draconis	♁
5 Major Fortune ∴∴	nusra ḥarīḡa	fortuna minor	☉
6 Girl ∴∴	naqiyy al-ḥadd	puella	♀
7 Red ∴∴	ḥumra	rubeus	♂
8 Sadness ∴∴	rakīsa ḥarīḡa	tristitia	♃
9 Dragon's Tail ∴∴	'ataba ḥarīḡa	cauda draconis	♁
10 Boy ∴∴	ḡudala/ḡandala	puer	♂
11 Prison ∴∴	'uqla	carcer	♃
12 White ∴∴	bayād	albus	♀
13 Conjunction ∴∴	iḡtimā'	conjunctio	♀
14 Minor Fortune ∴∴	nusra dāhila	fortuna major	☉
15 Grain ∴∴	qabḍ dāhil	acquisitio	☿
16 Loss ∴∴	qabḍ ḥarīḡ	missio	♀

became one of the three or four great European methods of divination, like the Tarot or Astrology. It is also the most easily apprehended of the four elemental modes of divination ; Pyromancy (divination by Fire), Hydromancy (by Water), Aeriomancy (by Air), and Geomancy (by Earth).

Pyromancy is familiar to us all, for who has not stared into an open fire and perceived many figures therein ? The same term applies to vision using candles or any other flames, such as divination from the appearance of a fire in which a sacrifice is consumed.

Hydromancy works rather like the crystal ball, except that the diviner looks for images and visions in the depths of pools or the ebbing and flowing of some natural watercourse or fountain. Omens are also drawn from the contortions of molten wax or lead poured into water, or the washed entrails of sacrificial animals.

Aeriomancy is divination by the shape of clouds, the winds, rainbows and the other phenomena of the sky. It is allied with augury.

Unlike these other methods, Geomancy is like its element, very down to earth, and needs no great natural clairvoyant ability, as does the interpretation of the oracles and omens of the other three 'mancies'. Geomancy is the art of obtaining insight into the present or future by observing the combinations of patterns made in the earth or on paper by a diviner allowing his intuition or 'the spirits of the earth' to control the movements of his wand or pencil.

Having outlined divinatory geomancy in its original form, it is worth while briefly considering the more recent applications of the word to telluric geomancy.

When the Chinese science of divining the presence of the subtle currents in the earth and their effect on man was first investigated by Europeans, the Chinese term feng-shui was translated 'geomancy'. Certainly feng-shui was concerned with the earth, but the appropriation of a word which applied to a divinatory technique to describe this practice, was to say the least very confusing.

Early writers on the strange art of feng-shui called it geomancy for want of a better name, falsely connecting it with the system of divination which is completely different from its Chinese sibling. 'Topomancy' or even 'geoscopy' might have been a better translation of feng-shui which is the art of discovering 'dragon veins', the subtle telluric currents of ch'i which the Chinese supposed affected the propitiousness of any particular site for building or burying.

'Geomancy', in the Chinese sense has also become a popular term for studies of the subtle counterpart of ley alignments and megalithic patterns and structures in Britain, in recent years.

Hartmann, Franz  
Regardie, Dr I

Geomancy, Rider, London 1913

A Practical Guide to Geomantic Divination,

Aquarian, Wellingborough 1972

Skinner, Stephen

Oracle of Geomancy, Warner/Destiny, New York 1977

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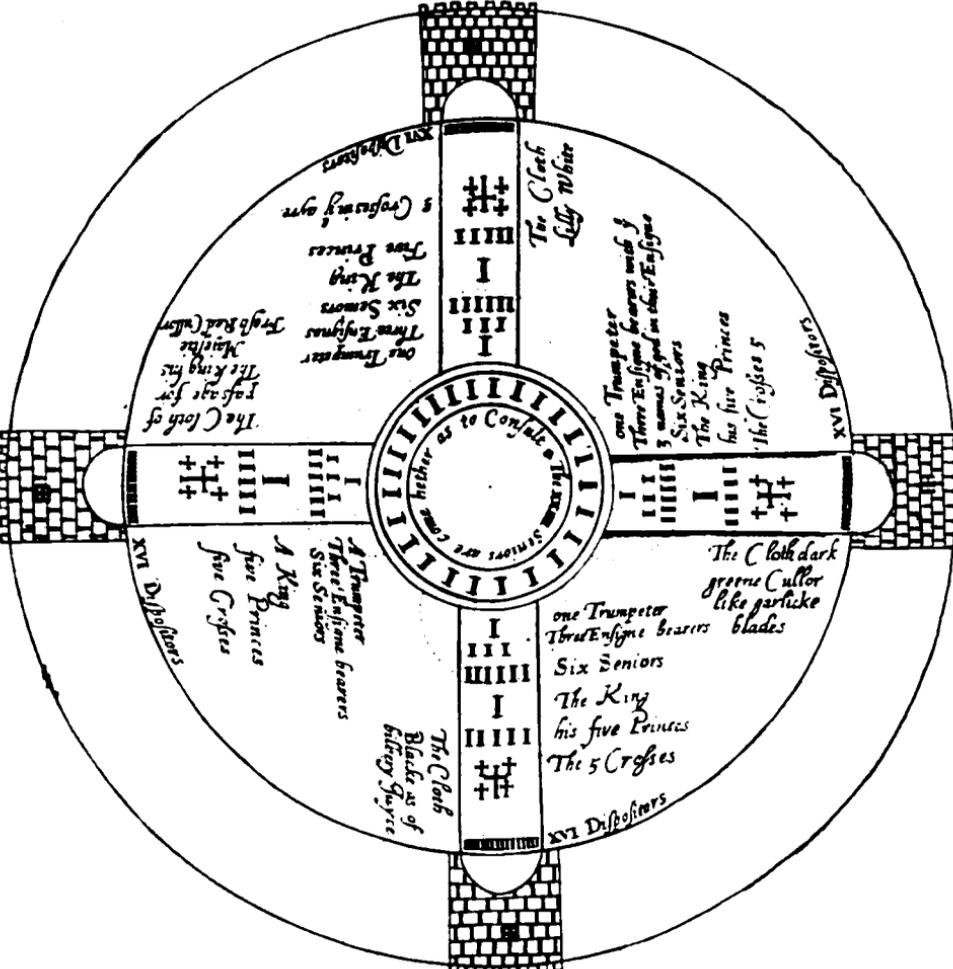
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Septentrio

Occidens



Meridies

Orientis

XVI Dispositio

The Cloth of  
Purple for  
the King his  
Majesty  
Three Ensigns  
Six Seniors  
The King  
Two Princes  
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XVI Dispositio

A Trumpeter  
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XVI Dispositio

# THE VISION OF THE FOUR CASTLES

KELLY AND DEE

## A Vision

East and West, North and South stand four sumptuous and belligerent castles, out of which sound Trumpets thrice. From every Castle, a Cloth, the Sign of Majesty is cast. In the East it is red, like new smitten blood. In the South, lily white. In the West, green garlick-bladed like the skins of many dragons. In the North, hair coloured, black like bilberry juice. Four trumpeters issue forth from the Castles, with trumpets pyramidal, of six cones, wreathed. Three Ensign bearers, with the names of God on their banners, follow them. Seniors, Kings, Princes as train bearers, Angels in four phalanxes, like crosses, all in their order, march to the central court, and range themselves about the ensigns.

## It Vanisheth

The dazzling, shifting formation seems to proceed in a glorious pageant of colour, and then to rest, frozen into a minutely exact phantasticon of harmony. Now for the meaning of this allegory. The Castles are watch towers provided against the Devil, the watchman in each is a mighty Angel. The ensigns publish the redemption of Mankind. The Angels of the Aires, which come out of the Crosses, are to subject whole countries, without armies, in this war waged against the Powers of Darkness.

In this series of elementary meditative exercises, no special postures are required but that in which one is most comfortable, nor are any special breathing rhythms used. Meditation should be undertaken when one is not too tired, and the best situation is probably lying down in a quiet nearly dark room, and it is essential to have privacy and no possibility of being disturbed.

## THE PHILOSOPHIC EGG OR RETORT

In the first part of the meditation begin to explore the way in which one's inward being connects with the outward world. Follow out in consciousness, say, one's hearing of a slight sound, feel one's consciousness raying out towards the source of the sound, then return inwards. Allow oneself to become aware of one's body posture, a small discomfort perhaps, feel through one's sense of touch how one connects with the physical world, and then allow one's consciousness to withdraw and follow this back inwards. Continue this with all the senses using the impulses that come to one through the sense organs in a natural way; do not try to force or repress these realities, but follow these outwards and allow oneself to return inward. One will begin to feel an awareness growing of the relationship between one's inner being and one's perception, and when this arises naturally in the meditation, begin to inwardly form a picture of this awareness, as an Egg or Flask-Retort. Picture one's being as a flask. The outside world can only enter through the walls of the flask, the shell of the egg. Let one's consciousness look outwards through the walls of the flask into the sense world, and be able to return inward to one's soul egg.

As the meditation continues, one will find arising quite naturally, sudden images, jumbled thoughts, daily worries. In this exercise, do not try to repress these or avert one's consciousness from them, but allow each of them in turn, to develop, grow to fruition, and then watch them dissolve and their energy dissipate. These images, emotional impulses arise out of our unconsciousness, the raw energy of our inner life, the background of our being. Picture this in the meditation as the most inward content of the flask or egg, a deep interior darkness out of which these impulses unconsciously stir. Allow one's being to sink inwards, to immerse oneself in the inner contents of the flask, then return to the surface.

One must now begin to bring these two parts of the exercise together, picturing one's being as the egg or retort, a dynamic boundary between the multiplicity of outer perception, and inward streaming unconscious activity. In this meditative exercise, one's soul touches upon the two seas in which one's being has no firm foundation, and through this inner touching, begins to contact that solid ground of the soul, which lies between these two realms. Thus one begins to grow a space within, a space in which one can work surely with the soul.

This is a very simple meditation, and to the intellect it may seem trivial, but exercises such as this are essential in developing a contact with the ground space of the soul, the Retort, or Philosophic Egg in which inner development can occur. If one will persevere with it, one can use this exercise as a method of opening and closing a more extended meditative working.

# THE SCIENCE OF AYURVEDA :

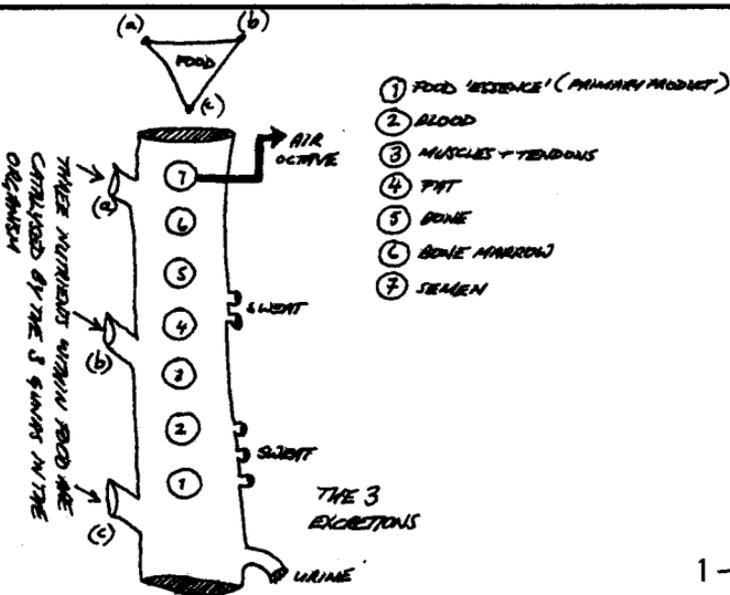
## A HINDU ALCHEMY

BY SRI LOKANATH

Ayurveda — the Indian Medical Science — is one of the eighteen limbs of Vedanta, and is therefore a cornerstone of Hinduism. In its doctrine and practice many curious correspondences with the alchemical science are to be found, particularly that branch which originated in the Indian sub-continent. Ayurveda ( lit. 'longevity knowledge' ) is still a flourishing and much used science. The otherwise very secular-minded government of India has established a university for its study, and throughout India can be found temples to which are attached the practitioners of the medical Shastra.

The theory of this still existing alchemy is found in the Tri-dosha (Three Substances) and Sapta-Dhaatu (Seven Bodily Elements). Hindu medicine holds that man is nourished by breath and by impressions as well as by food and water. For a substance to be food for the organism it must contain the three Doshas, which correspond to the three Gunas — Rajas, Sattvas and Tamas, and to the Western Sulphur, Mercury and Salt.

In the alimentary canal there are said to be three points at which each of the three nutrients become acceptable and accepted by the organism. The first of these is at the tongue (saliva), the second in the stomach, and the third in the lower intestine. What is nutrient in the matter introduced as food is extracted and goes to form the first of the seven Bodily Elements or Dhaatus. The remainder is excreted as the three Malas. All this can be conveniently summarized in the diagram.



The highest of the nutrients in the first Dhaatu becomes food for the next part of the food chain in each individual. This process continues until the highest Element in the body, Semen, is produced by this gradual taking up of the higher elements of each substance.

It is at this point that Breath as Food Substance enters the chain, and transforms the highest of the first octave into the lowest element of the next octave, that of Breath. From the highest element of this octave comes the lowest element of the next, or Impression Octave.

For it is a fundamental tenet of the Ayurvedic School that what reaches us as sound, touch, colour, odour etc., are actual physical substances which have their place in the food factory. At this point it is necessary to point out that the Russian George Gurdjieff has alluded to this process at great length ( see 'In Search of the Miraculous' by Ouspensky) and many followers of Gurdjieff have claimed originality for the concept of the Food Factory. The literature of Ayurveda, however, gives the lie to these claims.

Each of these Three Elements in Man's being is assigned a Yantra, or mechanism, through which it particularly functions. These Yantras are the Nervous System (Vaata Yantra), the Circulatory System (Pitta Yantra) and the Kapha Yantra, which consists of all fluid other than that comprised in the Blood System.

Food is said to be 'cooked' by each of the physiological fires or Agnis, which in this respect are compared to little Suns which burn up and transform the nutrient matter into its constituent parts for use in the organism. And as Ayurveda is closely linked to and considered a part of Vedanta (along with Astrology, Grammar, etc) then spiritual regeneration along with transmutation of the body into its highest possible form is also part of its provenance.

Although alchemy in the Western World is due for a revival, it remains in India a practical reality. Whilst Western Science moves towards assimilating the Universe through accumulating facts, the Hindu Rishis of Antiquity realised that the Law of Three embraced all manifest existence. This view of the Universe regards Man himself as an element or octave in the Universal Food-Chain, and every other substance as living and capable of transmutation. This view is true to Man's pattern, and to the possibilities for real Alchemy.

Literature on Ayurveda is difficult to come by in English translation, but the interested reader is referred to 'Ayurveda Siksha' in 4 volumes, edited by Dr. A. Lakshmi Pathi and printed by Shri Dhanvantari Press, Bezwada. Other references to the subject may be found in 'Agni Purana', 'Garuda Purana' and other general works on Hinduism.

Man's transformation was the subject of interest for the Nath Siddhas, wise men of whom Dattatreya was the first or Adiguru. The Naths were and are Wise Men who originated Hatha and Laya Yoga. To this day they practice Alchemy, and succeed in transmuting the body into its highest elements. But perhaps more of this later !

**HIS HOLINESS THE ENGLISH PATRIARCH**  
**SHRI DADAJI GURUDEV MAHENDRANATH**  
**THE AQUARIAN MERLIN AND PARAMAHAMSA**



5000 YEARS OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND  
ESOTERIC WISDOM HAVE GONE INTO  
THE MAGICK CAULDRON TO PRODUCE  
TWILIGHT YOGA THE ETERNAL ANGLO-  
INDIAN SCIENCE.

A COSMIC CONDENSATION OF HIGHER YOGA, SPIRITUAL ALCHEMY,  
MERLIN MAGICK AND THE WESTERN ESOTERIC TRADITION;  
SHRI DATTATREYA AND CH'AN MEDITATION AND THE MILAREPA  
MADNESS OF THE BHUTANESE LAMAS WITH THEIR HIMALAYAN  
MOUNTAIN MAGICK AND YOGA; OCCULT TANTRIK TRADITION AND  
INITIATION INTO THE SECRET RITES OF THE GODDESS WITH THE  
SHADOW RITES OF THE CULT OF THE NAKED NATHAS; PLUS THE  
YOGA MAGICK RITUALS AND DIVINATION OF THE I CHING ORACLE  
OF TRANSFORMATIONS.

# THE GLYPHS OF THE PLANETS

ADAM MCLEAN ©

The planetary symbols which are familiar to nearly everyone today, have a remarkably long history. These well known symbols are found in the earliest preserved documents, and any attempt to identify their point of origin will lead us to the doors of the Ancient Mystery Schools.

A symbol can only remain integral if it has an inner life, if it unites in a living way, idea and form, otherwise twenty five centuries is plenty time for symbols to undergo drastic metamorphoses at the whims of contemporary changes in society. Only look at how the english language has changed over the last thousand years.

The planetary symbols thus have this inner strength, for the wise men of the Mysteries wove the archetypal spiritual content into these glyphs, in a way which united idea and form. The symbols in their archetypal simplicity could not change or be modified without losing their essence, the inner connection with their meaning.

Thus if we can touch upon the inner structure of these symbols something will be revealed to us of the spiritual forces of the planets.

## THE EXOTERIC INTERPRETATION OF THE GLYPHS

This rather limited view of the planetary glyphs arises out of trying to understand the forms of the symbols through the parallel between the planets and the corresponding Greek-Roman God archetypes.

 becomes  the reaping hook or sickle of SATURN-CHRONOS

 becomes  the thunderbolt of JUPITER-ZEUS

 becomes  the spear of MARS-ARES

 remains  the Sun

 becomes  the looking glass of VENUS-APHRODITE

 becomes  the caduceus of MERCURY-HERMES

 remains  the Moon

These pictures - sickle, thunderbolt, looking-glass etc. may have a certain value as individual memory images but do not provide us with a deep interpretation of the glyphs. They lead us always back to the single symbol, they do not build bridges between these archetypal forms, but emphasise the individuality of the image. There arises a degree of inner frustration to the occultist who works with this exoteric interpretation, as he cannot deny intuitively that the seven glyphs form a united whole, but this picture does not lead to a grasp of that wholeness.

*A Collection of Sacred-Magick.Com* † *The Esoteric Library*

## THE ESOTERIC INTERPRETATION OF THE GLYPHS

The esoteric view requires us to work with the glyphs alchemically, to pursue the parallel between the planets and the seven metals, for out of this interpretation arises the essential wholeness of these symbols.

♄	Saturn	Lead	♄	♃	♂	♁	♁	♀	♁	♁	♁
♃	Jupiter	Tin	♃	♃	♃	♃	♃	♀	♁	♁	♁
♂	Mars	Iron	♂	♂	♂	♂	♂	♀	♁	♁	♁
♁	Sun	Gold	♁	♁	♁	♁	♁	♀	♁	♁	♁
♀	Venus	Copper	♂	♂	♂	♂	♂	♀	♁	♁	♁
♁	Mercury	Mercury	♁	♁	♁	♁	♁	♀	♁	♁	♁
♁	Moon	Silver	♁	♁	♁	♁	♁	♀	♁	♁	♁

We will see that these seven symbols are composed of three simple units combined in various ways



Sun  
Disc



Moon  
Crescent

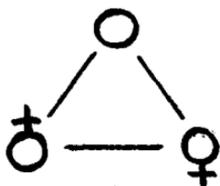


Earth  
Cross

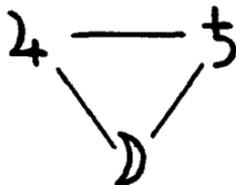
and we have two simple Sun and Moon, four doubles Mars, Venus, Saturn and Jupiter, with Mercury as a triple symbol.

Also we have two groups of related metals

Sun  
Group



Moon  
Group



The Sun forces, the outward raying cosmic life forces, we find on the earth in metallic form as gold. Gold is the earthly representative of the Sun, and as a pure metal reflects as a warm yellow, it almost has an inner glow of life, and as befits the noblest of the metals, it is the sole metal that will not tarnish, that is not affected by the elements. It has however in its pure state a great softness, being not completely chained in form, and indeed it can be beaten to the thinnest fragile leaf and still remains golden, reflecting light.

In iron we find the cosmic gold forces have been overcome by the earth forces. Iron is outwardly entirely earthly in nature, dominated by the earth cross. Think only of the significance of iron in the development of modern materialistic civilisation. The machine could not truly become incarnated without iron, thus the industrial revolution and the descent into materialism, is vitally connected with the cosmic destiny of this Mars element. Outwardly, iron is given up to the earth nature but inwardly it still contains the solar forces, as inner life forces, and in this way can be made to mimic life, to produce machines that have the appearance of independent life. Iron has so little nobility, that in its pure state it is most susceptible to rusting, giving itself completely up to the elements. The gold forces are held down by the earthly cross.

In copper we have the opposite to iron. The solar forces dominate and raise the earthly cross upwards away somewhat from the earth. Thus copper can still reveal a golden glow, somewhat richer and more earthly than that of gold. Copper is likewise a soft metal in pure form and if it is to be used for implements it is normally alloyed with other metals in brass or bronze, in order to combat its tendency not to hold form. Inwardly its earthly nature (lower cross) is raised a little from the earth realm, making copper as a metal open to receiving and holding supra-earthly forces such as electricity, and in this way complements iron which holds magnetism. Thus when copper and iron are brought together in a particular spacial construction, we have the electric motor and generator, the means of harnessing the electrical forces. Thus the lower members of the gold triad, create the possibility of mimicing the cosmic solar life forces, in their earthly shadow as electrical energy.

There is much more one can learn from this understanding of the relationship of Sun, Mars, Venus — Gold, Iron, Copper.

This trinity is echoed in our second group - the Moon group.

Silver, the moon metal, with its white lustre, its more solid hardness than gold, spiritually is more receptive. Silver receives (think of the use of crystals of silver salts in photography to hold and perpetuate an image of the light that falls upon it) and reflects its cold hard light. It is not so noble a metal as gold and tarnishes relatively easily.

In saturn - lead we find the silver metallic nature immersed in the earth, crucified in the earth forces. Lead is a soft metal which tarnishes very easily to a dull grey, the most given up to material forces of all the metals. It has so little inner life force that it will not even ring when struck, and can be melted, gives up its solid form, at the temperature of a candle flame. One of its most important virtues arises out of its earthly nature, that is its ability to absorb harmful radiations such as X-rays and nuclear radiations.

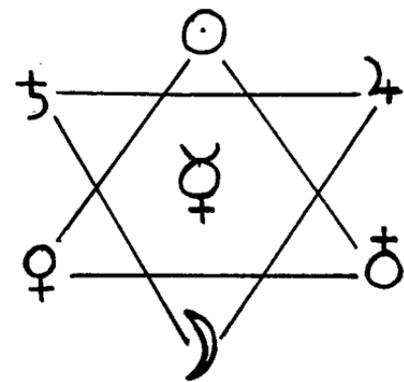
Tin the Jupiter metal is closer to silver than lead. The moon crescent triumphs over the earthly cross. Tin has a certain hardness compared with lead and does not tarnish easily, thus it can appear as if a precious metal and has been used to make jewelry. In comparison to lead tin has an inner strength which gives the tone and quality of sound to the alloy used in making bells, and organ pipes. It forms a particularly harmonious relationship with copper in bronze.

Mercury, the triple metal unites the three ☉, ☽, ♃, but remains in the realm of the fluid. Mercury to the alchemists is an embodiment of the three forces, which has not quite descended into substance-form. The solar and lunar forces dominate the earthly cross, thus mercury as a metal still remains in connection with the archetypal cosmic forces, which brought the metallic nature into being. Thus it is that the alchemists found in Mercury a substance which contains all the forces, all the possibilities of transformation.

Thus we can see something of the way in which the alchemists found wisdom through concentrated investigation of the individual properties of the metals and how these reflect a spiritual foundation. The metals are part of the cosmos brought to earth. There are many other facets of their properties which we could have pursued in this article, melting points, chemical valencies, atomic weights and numbers, and these indications may suggest further lines of investigation to the reader.

We can form the diagram, showing the two interlaced triangles of the solar metals, and their reflection the lunar metals, with Mercury the triple synthesis at the centre. This diagram brings together something of the esoteric content woven into the planetary glyphs.

In the planetary glyphs we have enfolded a profound picture of the relationship between earth and cosmos mirrored in the metallic nature. The picture presented here can be used to investigate other realms of occultism and has implications for astrology, ceremonial magical workings, and the kabbalah.



For example, there is a certain esoteric connection preserved through the glyphs between copper ♀ and sunrise, iron ♂ and sunset and between tin ♃ and moonrise, lead ♁ and moonset, which can be used in alechemical meditation exercises and in ritual magical forms.

I would like to append to this short essay an extract from the teachings of the Reformed Rosy and Golden Cross, a late 17th century Rosicrucian-Alchemical Lodge, which will show that the picture I have presented here was certainly nothing new to the ancient Alchemists.

## THE REFORMED ROSY AND GOLDEN CROSS

(extracted from A.E.Waite - Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross)



The crescent denotes its lunar part, which is feminine and volatile in nature. This is the Spiritus Mercurii.

The medial circle has no point at the centre, signifying the immature state of mercurial sulphur solis. This is the Anima Mundi of Quicksilver.

The cross of the Base represents the volatile body of this metallic substance. It is the water of Quicksilver, otherwise Aqua Permanens.

It is also the Sal Centrale and Menstruum Naturale.

Quicksilver is an immature metal, an extremely volatile ens, separated from a fixed state as pole from pole.



Mars is in correspondence with iron and the sign showing an arrow emerging sideways from a circle, signifies that the Sal Martis is celestial rather than terrestrial, while its cross or sign of corrosion has been broken up into an open angle symbolising fire. Thus the inward nature of iron is fiery, active and magnetically attractive which indicates its place in Hermetic operations. In the Work, the task before the Adept is to purify the externally adherent Celestial Salt from the Terrestrial Sulphur and locate it within the circle.



The sign indicates that copper is an imperfect metal, for the point of perfection within the circle from which gold cannot err has been removed from the circle of Venus and has changed into the cross.

This cross signifies the corrosive salts which render copper of a perishable nature. Whosoever can purify these salts will reduce the cross to a point and if he can place that point again in the circle, he will see the sun at its meridian instead of the morning star, and possess a treasure of gold instead of venusian copper.



The sign bears witness to the great immaturity of tin. The crescent indicates that it is essentially of lunar nature, while the cross which is the sign of the Sal Centrale et fundamentum subjecti, points out that the earth of this metal is mercurial and lunar, the salt arsenical and the sulphur volatile. It follows that the corpus totum can be brought with considerable faculty to a state of liquifaction.



The salt of lead is mercurial and lunar as also pure and celestial, while the sulphur is terrestrial and solar. It is said that

(a) the pars Salis liquifies all bodies but can neither fix nor render them volatile

(b) the pars Sulphuris devours all metals - gold and silver excepted - penetrating them by the help of Vulcan like lightning, purifying and imparting the highest splendour but again leaving them.

(d) that Mercury is coagulated by the fumus Saturni, while vitrum Saturni renders it fixed and fire proof.

The corpus Saturni is actually a conglomerated and exsiccated Mercury and can easily be changed back thereto.

The Hermetic Secret of Saturn is formulated as follows

- (a) Salt, Sulphur, Mercury
- (b) Separate these Three Principles in Subjectum Saturni
- (c) Make out of the Salt a Menstruum
- (d) Dissolve the Mercury therein
- (e) Fix it by the principium of Sulphur



Whosoever can perform this operation conjoins the two crescents in the character of Saturn, inserts the cross therein, concentrates the cross to a point within the circle and transmutes ☿ to ☉.

☾ The point within the circle denotes the state of perfection. The Character of the Moon. The circle is broken and the missing half is put inward but the point is still in the vicinity. Silver is like unto gold, as woman is like unto man; but gold as the male part is hot and dry, while silver, the female part, is moist and cold. The imperfection of silver is indicated by the ease with which it blackens, but gold is free of this failing. Gold is the Child of the Sun, while Silver is the Daughter of the Moon.

The Hermetic Arcanum is this : Communicate the male Sperma Solis to the female matrix of the Moon, or in other words turn the light inwards and draw out the inward half circle. The Artist who does so kindles an independent fire and transmutes ☾ to ☉.

☉ Gold is Principium Solis and the end of all metals, the great intent of Nature in the work of mines. The Character of the Sun and Gold is that of eternity. The point within the circle of eternity denotes Divinity :- but when the symbol denotes the metal the connotation is imperishable and pure being. The Son of the Sun is the product of profoundly concentrated fire.



In each issue we will feature a alchemical mandala together with some commentary and indications on its use in meditation.

At the centre of all true mandalas is a space into which Man must place his consciousness and integrate the symbolism arrayed around this centre. The mandala before us from the Hermetic Museum an early 17th century book was used as an aid to meditation on the first seven mystical numbers.

The number one is found in the totality, the wholeness of the symbol which arises out of the alchemist consciously placing himself at the centre.

The number two is found in the figures of the King and Queen. The Sun King is mounted upon a lion which stands on a small hillock. He carries a sceptre and shield. The Moon Queen is mounted on a whale or dolphin swimming upon the sea. Here we have the male and female archetypes.

The number three appears as the large triangle of Spiritus, Anima, Corpus. The Spirit is connected to the Moon, the Soul with the Solar forces, and the Body with the cube of the Earth surrounded by the five other planets, i.e. saturn, jupiter, mars, venus and mercury.

The number four forms the corners of the diagram, with, at the top, the salamander of the element Fire, the bird of the Air element, and at the lower corners of the square the Water and Earth elements.

The number five forms the pentangle of the alchemist's body, his right foot on the earth, left foot in the water, his left hand holds a feather symbolising air, his right a torch or candle of fire, and above his head the two wings indicate the quintessence, the fifth element, or the spirit.

The number six arises out of the outer triangle of the number three in combination with the inner triangle of Sulphur ♁, Mercury ♀, and Salt □. Salt corresponds to the cube of the earth, sulphur to the solar forces of the soul, and mercury to the lunar spirit.

The number seven the final number in this series is indicated in three ways in the structure of this mandala -

by the seven fold star of the planets

by the VITRIOL acrostic of seven words Visita Interiora Terrae Rectif-  
ando Invenies Occultum Lapidem i.e. 'visit the interior of the earth,  
in purifying you discover the hidden stone'

by the series of seven circles within the angles of the heptagram, which contain a representation of the alchemical process as a cycle from a death stage through a metamorphosis to a final resurrection.

The alchemist working through meditation upon this symbol, begins to structure his inner being so that these seven mystical numbers and their interrelationships, stand before his soul simultaneously. He therefore creates within the ground of his being an independence from a rigid system, an ability to structure his thought and awareness through all systems.

# Reviews

## THE FOURTH BOOK OF OCCULT PHILOSOPHY

Of Henry Cornelius Agrippa

Limited Edition of 500 numbered copies.

Askin Publishers Ltd, 16 Ennismore Avenue,  
London W4. £28 240pp

A much needed facsimile reprint of the very famous Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy, by Henry Cornelius Agrippa, which was translated into English and published by Robert Turner in 1655. This edition has been prepared by Askin Publishers in a well bound limited edition, as Volume 4 in their well known and much respected Source Works of Medieval and Renaissance Magic Series. It consists of 6 short treatises on various aspects of practical magic and divination, and includes two works by Agrippa, 'Of Geomancy' and the 'Fourth Book', from which this collection gets its title. Stephen Skinner argues in his excellent introduction against the widespread belief amongst academic authorities denying the authenticity of this work, however, the serious occultist has but to glance at these pages to appreciate the esoteric value of these writings. It is very gratifying to see, for example, the complete text of the Heptameron of Peter of Abano. Agrippa's Of Geomancy is of course the classic source work on the subject, but Gerard of Cremona's system linking Astrology and Geomancy is not so well known, but none the less valuable. Agrippa's Fourth Book of Occult Philosophy also entitled Of Magical Ceremonies, is remarkable in that it tries to lead one to an understanding of the means of constructing a magical ritual, rather than presenting a closed system of rigid instruction, especially valuable are the indications on the construction of sigils. This work will repay intensive study. Also included in this compendium is a work entitled The Nature of Spirits, in the form of a dialogue much information is related as to the nature of the spiritual world and the Beings therein. The last treatise the Arbatel of Magick is a truly remarkable text in the form of seven sets of seven aphorisms, and contains the seven Olympian Planetary Sigils of Aratron, Bethor, Phaleg, etc., and a description of these entities. Aphorism 39, in particular, provides a most clear statement of the nature of the Magick Art and the responsibilities of the magician. This book is essential source material to the serious occultist, we have no hesitation in commending it to the reader, and we hope that Askin's will continue to provide this service of reprinting such historically and esoterically important material.

## THE SWORN BOOK OF HONOURIUS THE MAGICIAN

Edited and translated by Daniel J. Driscoll

Limited Edition 450 copies signed and numbered.

Heptangle Books, Box 283 Berkeley Heights,  
New Jersey, USA. \$ 20.

Daniel J. Driscoll has done occultism a great service in translating and making publically available the Sworn Book of Honourius the Magician, prepared from the two known manuscripts in the British Library, Sloane MS 313 and Royal MS 17A xlii. The book itself is well presented, set in old English style text which preserves an atmosphere of antiquity,

migrated to 'Justice'. The 'Lovers' seems completely unconvincing, with a female figure chained to a rock at the mercy of a sea dragon, and about to be rescued by some heroic Michael figure descending from the clouds. Some of these divergencies correspond to the descriptions of the Tarot cards in Regardie's Golden Dawn, and there seems to be some points of connection between this pack and the published examples of the line drawn original Golden Dawn Tarot cards found in the papers of W.B. Yeats. Robert Wang and Israel Regardie have certainly produced a magnificent set of Tarot cards with powerful images and wonderful use of colour, but it seems questionable as to whether they have produced the set of cards used originally by members of the Golden Dawn School. The pack used in the order of the Golden Dawn was copied by the members for their own use, from line drawn originals by Mathers, whereas the Wang-Regardie designs rely not so much on the form of the images as on the artistic merit of the production, particularly in regard to colour. Perhaps the publication of this pack will inspire someone to get hold of a complete set of the manuscript originals. This pack is destined to be a source of controversy among occultists and Tarot scholars, and it is well worth obtaining a copy of the deck if you still can, as it seems that the edition was fully subscribed.

THE NECRONOMICON Edited with an introduction  
by Simon. Barnes Graphics 1977  
Distr. Askins Publishers  
Limited edition 666 copies £34 Ordinary edition £18.50

H.P. Lovecraft wrote many stories around a common theme, the 'Cthulhu Mythos', and inspired other authors eg. Robert Bloch and recently Colin Wilson, to enter his mythology. Central to the Cthulhu Mythos were a number of fearful ancient magical texts among them the Necronomicon of the Mad Arab, Abdul Alhazred, of which H.P. Lovecraft wrote a supposed history of the manuscript. The Editor of the book we have before us claims it to be a translation of this ancient collection of magical texts, taken from an original manuscript which mysteriously fell into his hands and seems to be no longer available. The work itself is a grimoire, parts of it having great beauty of poetic expression and coherence of structure, the description of entities, sigils, the Conjunction of the Watcher (Holy Guardian Angel ? ) have great power of expression and if they were contrived, the author certainly has great understanding of how to create a magical system. The purity and coherence of structure and some stylistic points lead one to seriously doubt its authenticity, together with the rather heavy handed attempt in the introduction to surround the book in a mystery - mythos. This book's claim to authenticity will obviously be a point of controversy among occultists, and is certainly a collectors item well worth possessing. Followers of Crowley will find his name often in the introduction and may detect something of his style in the translation. The Hermetic Journal would welcome any other opinions, comment, or further information on this fascinating book.

while remaining easily readable. In the fine introductory essay, the editor establishes the date of this work in the latter part of the 13th century. This work should not be confused with the Grimoire of Pope Honourius III, which is found in Waite's Book of Ceremonial Magic. The Sworn Book of Honourius is itself a grimoire, and in this lies its immense value to occultists, for although many grimoires are fearful books that purport to take one along the razor's edge of good and evil forces and beings, this work is of the purest magic. In the descriptions of the preparations for the ritual working, we see a series of spiritual exercises, a lifetimes work.

Two technical matters which will be of great interest to occultists, are firstly, this manuscript provides a further source for the planetary archangelic sigils, which are consistent with the other known references, such as the Heptameron of Peter of Abano, and secondly a most important figure appears in this work called the Seal Of God. This magical diagram is directly related to John Dee's Seal of Aemeth, and being definitely earlier must have been a source which Dee drew upon in constructing his great Enochian Seal. A great deal can be learned by studying these two diagrams together, and all serious students of John Dee's Enochian system should get access to this diagram. There may be other facets of this book which will throw light on Dee's magical system.

All together this is a most important publication, and we look forward to other work which we hope Daniel J. Driscoll will bring forward to the public.

THE GOLDEN DAWN TAROT based upon the esoteric designs of the Secret Order of the Golden Dawn. Illustrated by Robert Wang under the direction of Israel Regardie. Limited edition of 500 packs, signed and numbered.

At last this much publicised tarot pack is available, of which many exaggerated claims, as to its esoteric significance have been made, and its connection with the tarot pack circulated amongst the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn members in the late 1890's. Now we can assess its worth on its appearance rather than on the myth which has grown around it. The Minor Arcana - the numeral cards are of rather conventional design, reminding one of medieval woodcut tarots in their simplicity, with none of the elaborate symbolic value of the Waite deck; the court cards, however, have an intricate interweaving of symbolism which involves the use of colour and the appearance of symbolic objects with various reflections of the four Holy Living Creatures, Bull, Lion, Eagle, and Man. Although the court cards do form a unified group, reflecting the elements and magical weapons, and have a definite esoteric value, the minor arcana is rather disappointing in this regard. It is to the major arcana we turn in the hope of some deep insight into the nature of the great archetypal patterns of the Tarot. The numbering at least is esoteric, with Fool 0, and Strength and Justice transposed (as in the Waite deck) from the early medieval order. The designs are well executed, the colour having a certain translucency, and we are a great distance away from the hard sharp forms of a medieval woodcut pack, in terms of artistic style. The symbolic content, however, breaks completely from the Waite deck, in for example the 'Fool', in which is portrayed a young male child reaching up to touch the blossom on a tree with his right hand, while in his left hand he holds the lead of a large dog which stands behind him. Similarly, it is strange to find that the 'Hierophant' holds a small scroll instead of the 'High Priestess', who is also bereft of the two pillars Joachim and Boaz, which seem to have