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12 Antigua Street,  
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Editor : Adam McLean

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## Editorial

It was announced recently that some British researchers had now proven the existence of a "sixth sense" in Man, an innate ability to sense the direction of the Earth's magnetic field. Further, these researchers had identified the organ of this magnetic sense as a special area of magnetically receptive iron deposits found in the thin bony tissue which forms part of the sinuses in the lower forward part of the brain.

So it is now an accepted scientific fact that Man possesses an organ for sensing the direction of the magnetic field, and thus in consequence has a sense of direction, of orientation in space. Thus our inner feelings as we face North, or South, East or West, in turn, subtly alter, and if we are very sensitive to our magnetic organ we could make this experience a conscious one. Thus the hermetic magic of the Medieval and Renaissance, with its insistence upon working with the directions of space, should now be seen by the establishment scientists as an indication of the conscious training in the use of this 'newly discovered' directional sense. Perhaps the ancient hermetic scientists were not too far off the mark after all. Indeed, it is also true that magnetism has held a special place in eso-

tericism, and occultists throughout the ages have indicated that magnetism is sensed in subtle ways by Man. Magnetised rods and preparations have been used in hermetic systems of healing and initiation-consciousness raising procedures for many centuries.

So, at last, establishment science has come around to accepting the existence of a magnetic sense organ, half a millenium or so behind the practitioners of the hermetic sciences, but nevertheless at last this has been "scientifically" proven.

This raises some important questions. What is the special magic bound up in a "scientific proof" ? and why are people so ready to accept it as real, but still willing to deny esoteric facts that are as yet unsupported by "scientific proofs" ?

It would seem to be one of the special characteristics of a scientific proof of such a phenomenon, that a particular material structure can be found which acts as the material foundation for this phenomenon. Further, this material structure or mechanism should be explicable within the terms of existing accepted scientific laws. Thus, the established materialistic science must find the way in which the observed phenomenon is incarnated in a material form, before it becomes an accepted part of the body of scientific knowledge. No amount of investigation, gathering of factual data, statistics, or 'anecdotal' information from people, will be worthwhile in this respect unless the investigator can locate a possible physical-material embodiment of the phenomenon. A few decades ago, Ball Lightning was dismissed as merely 'anecdotal' information, even although a few photographs had been taken of this phenomenon and its effects, however, since the development of a plasma-physical model which might account for the energetics of Ball Lightning, the scientific establish-

ment has come to accept its reality and respectability as a phenomenon. As esotericists, I feel we have some great lessons to learn from this narrowness of Science. Science's limitation of itself to the investigation of the material embodiment of phenomena, make it rigorously inflexible, and indeed far from being in the forefront of knowledge, establishment science in fact lags behind the Esoteric tradition whose practitioners work with phenomena on the etheric as well as the physical-material level. Esoteric scientists, Alchemists and Magicians, have been working with the magnetic sense in Man for half a millenium at least, without needing to know the site of its material embodiment. Indeed, this 'discovery' of Man's magnetic organ by these British scientists, should give students of esotericism considerable heart, in that it shows that what has been accepted fact in esotericism for centuries can become 'scientifically respectable' overnight. One is left wondering just what further occult phenomena could be made 'scientifically respectable', if they were given serious consideration by establishment scientists. and perhaps we should look forward to a not too distant future in which many occult phenomena will be established scientific fact.

Truly, Esoteric Science works at the forward boundary and frontier of human knowledge. The forces it investigates and uses today in healing, self-development, the subtle transformations of Alchemy, the knowledge of the Etheric Forces and their applications in practical realms such as Agriculture, will in time become accepted scientific fact.

Adam McLean

# News & Information

## U.S. AGENT/DISTRIBUTOR FOR MAGNUM OPUS HERMETIC SOURCEWORKS

Due to the difficulties encountered in dealing with Bookstores in the USA I am looking for a U.S. resident to help distribute my books on a part-time basis. There would not be a great deal of work involved as sales are small, but perhaps one would need the equivalent of one day a week in the longer term with a slightly greater commitment of time necessary during the initial few months. This is not a highly profitable business but such an agent can expect to make a little money on the transactions, however, they should be motivated by the wish to help distribute and make available these ancient hermetic works. The agent/distributor would have to make an initial investment in book stocks. Anyone interested in helping with this please contact me as soon as possible and we can discuss the project in detail.

## GERMAN TRANSLATOR

Translators are still required to work translating alchemical/hermetic texts from German into English, for publication in the Magnum Opus Series. Modest payments can be made for this work.

## ALCHEMICAL DICTIONARY

Adam McLean has begun work on a comprehensive Alchemical Dictionary. This should be completed towards the end of 1982. As it is not possible for any one person to have an encyclopaedic knowledge of a subject as vast as Alchemy, I welcome any suggestions from my correspondents for more obscure entries which may escape my knowledge and attention. Such suggestions will help to make the Dictionary more complete, and I will of course give full credit to such contributions.

The Hermetic Journal / Magnum Opus has recently acquired its own printing equipment and a new composer/electronic typewriter which should improve the layout from the next issue. This will also help to keep prices stable as printing costs in the commercial market are constantly increasing. Now I have complete control over the whole process of production, prices can be maintained at a reasonable level. The purchase of this equipment thus completely ensures the long term survival of the Hermetic Journal and the Sourceworks Series.

# Alchemical Principles in Agriculture

## An Outline

Adam McLean ©

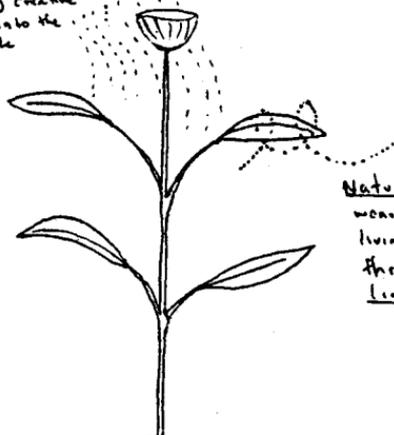
Even a superficial acquaintance with alchemical texts will make us aware of the fact that the ancient alchemists worked with processes analogous to those of agriculture. The alchemists worked with their substances as they would a seed, watching it grow, develop, fruit and seed in their retorts. Their experiments, their workings with Nature, were often pictured as growing like plants or 'trees' within their flasks, and the alchemists were seen as sowing "the Seed of the Stone" in the Primal Material "Earth". Also, the alchemists used terms like 'Putrefaction' and 'Fermentation' to refer to stages of the work which seem to parallel the breaking down of organic material in the compost heap.

These parallels were not just elaborate analogies, but point to the fact that the alchemists were concerned with the same archetypal forces as are at work in the plant kingdom, and it should not be surprising that alchemical ideas throw light upon the inner forces working in the growth of plants, and indeed it is entirely possible that alchemical methods can be applied to agriculture. We have seen the development over the past 50 years of a 'Chemical agriculture' which works only with the physical substances and parameters important for plant growth. The essence of the plant lies in its etheric body, and such a focus upon its physical substance, as is practised by modern 'Chemical agriculture' often produces etherically weak plants, which in turn do not fully nourish our etheric bodies when we consume them. It is my contention that an etheric agriculture can be practised through examining the plant world in the light of alchemical ideas, and applying the alchemical philosophy of the etheric forces in a practical way to the growth of plants. Some of these principles and methods could be usefully applied to a vegetable garden or to large scale agriculture. Perhaps the most important initial step is taken when the gardener or farmer realises the existence and vital importance of the etheric body of the plant for its growth. Once he or she begins to see herself as an alchemist co-operating in various living processes at work in their plants a vital change in perspective will be achieved that can allow the putting into practice some alchemical principles in agriculture.

Let us look initially at the plant's bodies and their relationship to the environment, to the Four Elements. The plant lives at the interface of Earth and Heaven. It works to interweave the two streams of Etheric forces - that which descends from above, the Warmth and Light Ethers, and the Ethers which work from within the Earth planet, the Life Ether and the Transforming Ether (sometimes called the Chemical Ether) (See my article on the Ethers and the Fundamental Forces of Physics in the Hermetic Journal Number 9). The plant roots reach down into the darkness of the Earth, and incorporate the elements earth and water into the plant. These elements are of course found in a non-living or "dead" form in the soil. It is the work of the Nature Spirits in the ethers corresponding to these elements, that releases these substances for the use of the plant body. (The Nature Spirits have often been pictured by those who have 'seen' them as little almost human figures, but this is an act of projection of human form upon what are essentially forces at work in the plant environment.) Above the ground, the sylphs or air elementary spirits, weave air and the light ether into the substance of the leaves of the plant. This occurs physically in photosynthesis. The warmth elementary spirits also work from above, providing currents of warmth that encourage the development and growth of the plant substance. The nature spirits thus lead physical substances outside the plant, "dead" substances, into the plant's body, through a transformation which makes these substances alive. These substances once inside the plant behave in a quite different way from their potentialities outside the plant. They have become etherised. For example, the water in plant sap is, through its incorporation of etheric forces, become creative, formative, everseeking new potential forms in which to weave itself. The inner potential of water to create forms is revealed fully in the plant, in the flow of sap which unfolds a bud, or creates the form of a leaf.

Nature Spirits of Fire/Warmth

Lead currents of creative living warmth into the plant through the warmth ether



Nature Spirits of Air (sylphs)

weave air and light into living substance in the plant through activity on the light ether

Nature Spirits of Earth

(Gnomes) lead dead mineral substance in soil into living substance in plant through activity on the life ether

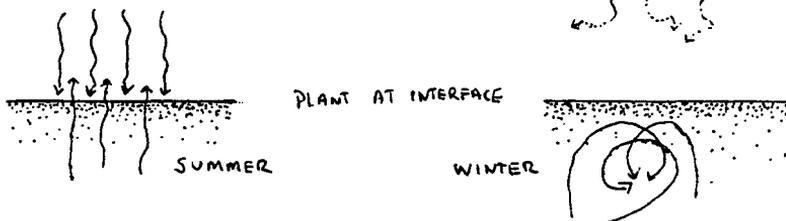
Nature Spirits of Water (nymphs)

lead non living soil water into living sap of plant through their activity on the Transforming (Chemical) Ether

Photosynthesis, the main driving force in the plant's life, occurs through the weaving of light and the carbon dioxide component of the air. This is physically incarnated through the plant pigment Chlorophyll, a complex green substance, that undergoes transformation through the activity of light in the presence of carbon dioxide. It has a bright green colour because it in fact reflects this component of the spectrum, and it is really inwardly red, in that it absorbs the red portion of the light. In Alchemy this has been beautifully pictured in the alchemical symbol of the Green Lion devouring the Sun. Here, the Green Lion of Chlorophyll, devours the energy of the sunlight, and drops of red blood fall to the earth. This is the red light which has been trapped in substance, that portion of the Sun's light that has been incarnated, drawn down into earthly substance, through the activity of the Green Lion, the Chlorophyll in the plant.

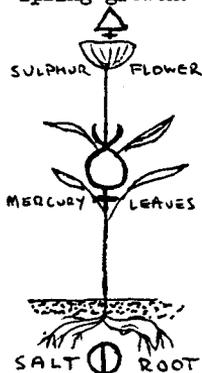


Throughout the cycle of the Seasons, the plant is bathed in turn in streams of etheric forces. In the Summer, the Warmth and Light Ethers, driven primarily by the solar energies, descend down to the Earth's surface and work deeply into the plant's substance, while in the winter these are withdrawn away from the surface of the Earth. In the Summer, the Life and Transforming Ether streams press out of the Earth into the substance of the plant, while in the Winter they turn inwards and develop an inner life in



the Earth. The plant thus lives in this eternal cycle of renewal. We will see later how one must use these inner energies of the ethers in the Earth, the Chthonic Ethers, in the winter to prepare for the coming spring growth.

A further insight into the subtle anatomy of plants is provided by examining their being in the light of the Three Principles - Salt, Mercury and Sulphur. Using these terms in a broad sense, we can see that the root of the plant is its Salt-Organ, being involved in the absorption of dissolved salts from the earth. Its stem and leaves are its Mercury-Organ, the site of the interweaving of air and light into plant substance, and also the breaking down through respiration of plant sugars into energy. This is the place of the two-fold quixotic Mercury flowing here and there, mediating between light and dark, photosynthesis and respiration (Citric Acid Cycle), the katabolic and anabolic polarities of metabolism. The flower, from which develops seed and fruit, is the Sulphur-Organ of the plant, being an expansive light-organ, reaching out into the world. In the Plant, these three principles are found to be incarnated in the three macronutrients necessary for plant growth - POTASSIUM, NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS.



POTASSIUM as a substance, bears the Salt Process in the plant, which is centred in the root but extends throughout the plant. Physically, Potassium works in the plant to assist in the water transport process, and although inadequately explained 'chemically' at present, seems to work through ionic processes in plant cell membranes, making these permeable to water molecules. There are two main channels for fluid transport found in plants, the Xylem, which primarily leads water from the roots to the leaves, and the Phloem, which leads food substances, sugars etc. from the leaves to the rest of the plant.

NITROGEN incarnates the Mercury Process. Its activity is centred in the leaves, being essential to the metabolism of the plant, the photosynthesis and respiration. In terms of plant chemistry, nitrogen is found in many organic ring compounds and amino acids, the essential building blocks for plant proteins, indeed the whole protein chemistry of the plant is dependent upon Nitrogen. This Mercury process, found in the building up and breaking down of complex substances, mediates between the contractive, Earthly, Salt process centred in the roots, and the expansive solar Sulphur process of the flower.

PHOSPHORUS (the name means 'light-bearer') is the substance which incarnates the Sulphur Process of the plant, seen in the archetype of the flower. In terms of plant chemistry, Phosphorus is essential to the formation of sugars, the energy storing substances in the plant. These sugars derive from the Photosynthesis in the leaves, and are carried to other parts of the plant to further the growth of the roots and flowers. Phosphorus thus bears the substance for further growth and fruiting of the plant. It is thus important for the development of the flowers, which arise from these sugars, indeed, even the flower pigments are modified plant sugars.

Thus we see the importance of these three plant nutrients, Potassium, Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Regrettably, plant Chemists only recognise the substance as being of importance in plant nutrition, and have not yet been able to grasp, as an alchemical gardener would, that it is the Salt, Sulphur and Mercury processes in the plant that are the bases of plant nutrition, not merely the substances these are incarnated in. Alchemical agriculture works to make these plant processes healthy, rather than merely providing the constant surplus soluble nutrients, which characterises 'Chemical agriculture' today. This surplus of soluble plant nutrients applied as fertiliser outside the plant does great damage to soil structure and the life of micro-organisms in the ecology of the soil. We will look later at possible ways of working alchemically with these processes in agriculture.

Next, we must consider the soil and see if there are any insights that an alchemical viewpoint can throw upon this important aspect of the plant's life. We must picture the plant as a mediator, through its etheric body, between the Earthly and the Coamic. It transforms certain substances, raising them from the Earth through the inner activity of its etheric structure, however, this etheric body is in turn anchored in the substance of the Earth. Thus we can never consider the plant as being entirely a separate entity, but should see it as being continuous with etheric processes at work in the soil. Soil is itself a living substance, and is composed of two basic parts - Humus, derived from vegetable and animal remains, and a mineral fraction, derived from weathered and eroded rocky material. Soil is alive in two ways. Firstly, it should be rich in organic life, micro-organisms, bacteria, fungi, protozoa, which work to break down dead vegetable material into simpler substances, and various higher life forms, worms, nematodes,

soil insects, springtails, etc., which are essential to the complex ecology of the soil. Secondly, the soil is alive in that there are certain inorganic processes at work within it (operating on a long term basis) releasing the so-called micronutrients for the use of plants. These are for example, Silica, Magnesium, Calcium, Iron, Boron, Molybdenum, Manganese, Copper, Zinc, etc. These are required in extremely small quantities for the proper growth of plants. We must come to see the slow release of these substances from the rocky substance in soils as occurring through living processes. Rather than providing these as crop sprays as some farmers have to do, we should instead consider ways in which the Silica process, the Calcium process, etc., can be encouraged. These mineral processes involve etheric organs in the soil formed out of the Transforming (or Chemical) Ether forces.

Thus in a true working with soil, the alchemist-farmer should encourage the development of life in both the Humus - Organic fraction, and these subtle mineral processes working deep into the sub-soil, as only when these both are fully alive will the plant have a satisfactory physical and etheric environment for its full growth.

Now perhaps we might be able to suggest some ways of practically working with plants using alchemical ideas and processes. I can only here give broad indications as to what can be achieved through this approach.

Firstly, we must consider the environment we have available and the relationships between the elements working there, noting whether any particular element seems out of balance or intruding into the domain of another. A balance must be achieved between the elements before the nature spirits or etheric forces activities can also be balanced. We should picture our farm or garden as a kind of retort, an environment within which the living process can unfold. So a proper alchemical picture of the living energies of the land must be inwardly cultivated before we can begin our task. We have further to realise the great currents of etheric forces at work in the Cycle of the Seasons, become aware of their wax and wane, and not try to work against their flow, but use their subtle energies.

We should be aware from our alchemical studies, that the beginning of the work lies in the nigredo, the darkness. If one waits till spring and the increase of the solar light to begin, our work on the land is incomplete, as it is not sustained throughout the whole cycle. During the winter the Earth is alive inwardly, the Chthonic Ethers have become internalised, so then is the time to etherically prepare the Earth for the next years crop. At this time, therefore, one should, having decided upon what crop to sow, spread an etheric essence of that plant upon the plot set aside for this crop. This essence or tincture of the plant is technically a homeopathic dilution of the plant Stone, prepared from the whole plant, flowers, leaves and roots, as this bears the complete etheric pattern of the plant. This etheric pattern will help to prepare the Earth, the release the necessary nutrients that plant will require when it is sown physically in the coming spring. Thus we sow the etheric seed before the physical, spiritually preparing the Earth for the seed.

Also during the winter, the Earth is rich in etheric forces, thus if we place substances in the Earth at this time they will be enlivened by being permeated with these etheric Earth forces. We therefore can prepare at this time powerful etheric medicines for the inorganic processes in the soil, by burying certain minerals in the Earth throughout the winter and allowing them to be permeated by these energies. These should be buried in sealed earthenware or stone pots about a foot or so under the Earth. For the

Silica Process we must take finely powdered rock crystal (quartz), for the Calcium-Magnesium Process, one could use powdered Dolomite, and finely powdered Granites can provide for most of the other trace elements. These should be placed in the Earth soon after August the first (Lammas) for the Northern Hemisphere, and allowed to remain undisturbed until May the first (Beltaine). The exact placing of such substance can be found by dowsing, or by using traditionally marked sites of such etheric energies (see the article on The Alchemy of the Earth Forces in The Hermetic Journal No. 10). Thus these substances being placed in an ether rich organ of the Earth are transformed into etheric medicines to encourage the processes in the organic fraction of the soil, such as the silica, calcium or magnesium process. They should be applied to the land in the summer, and probably the best method is to mix the powder up with water into a thin paste. A small hand held paint brush dipped into this mixture and flicked over the field or garden will be found to be an effective method of spreading the mixture.

Next we should consider composting. The preparation of a compost heap should be a delight to an alchemist and indeed an important exercise. Taking the primal material of vegetable remains, the agricultural alchemist must endeavour to create a process of digestion or an inner fermentation in that substance. It is important that compost be completely digested so that the nutrients become immediately available to the plant during that season. The essence of composting is to accelerate the processes occurring naturally in the humus layer of the soil, so that it can take place in some months rather than a few seasons. To produce a proper digestion, it is important to encourage the workings of the seven planetary forces. These forces operate in all plants and assist in the development of their forms and substances. Thus we see, for example, the Saturn forces operate in the formation of cortices, barks, etc. while the Moon forces work in the flowing of saps, the inner tides of the plant. These planetary forces are thus incorporated in various forms in the dead vegetable matter we wish to use for our compost making, and these forces must be released from their physical embodiment into the etheric. Thus the compost must physically lose the forms of its primal substance and must enter into a state of Chaos, physically - a Hyle - a universal material. The planetary forces are then not embodied in physical form, but the compost bears these forces etherically. The dissolution of these forces can be helped by the use of certain preparations made from plants which bear these planetary energies in particularly focussed ways. For example, nettles incarnate the Mars-Iron forces. Preparations of plants reflecting the seven planetary energies, should therefore be added to the compost heap to aid its dissolution. There is not space here to describe the whole process in detail. A compost heap should be seen as a retort which contains its own inner heat, a furnace or athanor, in which a Digestion through Fermentation of plant substance can with proper control be brought about. The inner potentialities of dead plant substance is raised, through its decay into a uniform compost, on to the etheric level. Compost is etherically active.

Having sketched ways of encouraging the operation of the etheric forces in the mineral and humus fractions of the soil, I would like finally to indicate ways of working to vitalise the etheric bodies of a particular plant or crop. We saw earlier how the alchemical Salt, Mercury and Sulphur forces incarnate in the plant in roots, leaves and flowers, respectively. Essences of these three facets of the plant can be prepared using a spagyric process. From the root, one can prepare an ashy Salt, from the leaves an alcoholic/watery fraction, the Mercury of the plant, and from the flowers an oil can

be obtained, the Sulphur of the plant. These substances properly prepared through alchemical operations become etherically active, they act as "essences" of these plant forces. Thus if a crop is suffering from inadequate root development, it will be of value to apply a homoeopathic dose of the Salt of the plant to correct the balance etherically. Mere application of inorganic fertiliser only works on the physical level and does not produce an etherically strong root force in the crop. Indeed, it is common practice nowadays to over-nitrogenate the soil with soluble nitrates, and this often holds the plants physically at the leafy stage producing an etherically unbalanced development, and an unripe plant.

I have only been able to sketch in this article the bare outlines of ways in which alchemical principles can be applied to Agriculture (although all these could be described at length in great detail). This is one sphere in which the true potentiality of Alchemy has not yet been unfolded, and this spiritual science which many people like to think of as being dead and confined to the past, is in fact a rich and easily tapped source for new impulse in agriculture. Modern 'Chemical Agriculture' ignores the etheric bodies of plants and works only with physical parameters. An Alchemical Agriculture must work always with both the physical and the etheric bodies, and its methods are consequently practical and yet founded upon spiritual considerations. As the food we eat is of vital importance for the proper development of our souls, it should bear within it strong but balanced etheric forces. An Agriculture founded upon Alchemical ways of working, can help us to grow such etherically rich foods.

I believe that the realm of Agriculture is an important one for Alchemy. It is a testing ground in which alchemical methods and philosophy can be vindicated, and the results demonstrated easily to the outer world. I would be willing to help with any impulses to apply these principles in a practical way, and welcome any further correspondence on the matter.

# Man and his Souls

Nicolas N. Tereshchenko ©

Is there such a thing as a human "Soul" ?

An important question which since time immemorial has been asked by many people, caused much argument and even led to actual strife.

Religious people have answered this question in the affirmative, usually also additionally asserting that the Soul is given by "God" to every man and is immortal - this latter claim being made in spite of such clear and unequivocal statements in the "Holy Bible" as : "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4) and "fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body" (Matthew 10:28), for example.

Others, who call themselves materialists, have answered this question in the negative, boldly asserting that there is no such thing as the "soul", and that what is misguidedly called by that term is simply the by-product of the activity of man's material physical body.

If the answer to the question "Have men souls?" is indeed "No!", then no further question arises. But if it is "Yes!", then two further questions become imperative. These are : "What is the Soul?", and "What purpose does it serve?". Possible answers to these questions will be suggested in this paper, but by implication only.

Actually, to start with, the answers "Yes" and "No" are both right. In the various religions and other "philosophies" using this term, the word "Soul" is never adequately and clearly defined, and it is always assumed that all men each have a soul and moreover that all these souls are of the same kind. But this is not the fact, as it is hoped to indicate in this essay. The fact is that some men have a soul, others do not have one ; and even those who do have a soul, have different kinds of "soul".

But what is true, also, is that every man is born with the possibility of acquiring a Soul by his own conscious efforts. It does not, though, grow mechanically and automatically as the body does.

In reality three possibilities exist and there are human souls of three different types, only one of which is truly immortal and deserves fully to be called "Soul". Of the other two, one is called "soul" only by courtesy and habit, while the other one is an incomplete, immature Soul, only on the way of truly becoming one, without any certainty that it ever will.

But before going any further, let us be clear on the following points :

First of all, being male, the author intends to use the male noun "man" and the male pronoun "he" throughout this article with the understanding that whatever applies to a he/man equally applies to a she/woman (God bless her ! May her charms never grow less).

Secondly, will the reader please accept the "technical" terminology used without immediately disagreeing with the meaning given here to some quite common words? I shall try and define every term in so far as I am able to do so, but undoubtedly the very same word used by me with a specific meaning is used quite differently in some other system of thought as valid as mine. Once the meaning of each word as used here is clearly understood, let each reader translate it into his own habitual term or word for the same thing, event or process.

Thirdly, what is set out here is not an invention, phantasy or speculation of my own, but my understanding of the "Truth" about the Soul, based on the study of many religious and other systems, and particularly that of George Ivanovich GURDJIEFF. It is thus not in any way patented or copyright and everyone of you is welcome to adopt it as his own and make use of it if he can.

Every man from the moment of conception of his physical body (made of the same chemical substances as our planet, the Earth, and therefore a "planetary" body) acquires an "essence". Indeed it is probable that what we call "conception" can occur only if and when such an "essence" is available for use at that particular place and moment of time. This essence is an imponderable, impalpable and invisible something which is recognised only by its manifestation, in that it makes the human being not only different from all animals, but also makes the new man, once he is born as a baby, behave in his own individual way. The essence grows and develops just as the body grows and develops, but not at the same rate.

In addition, right from the moment of birth, to his essence is added the result of what happens to the baby, that is, the effect on him of his mother, father, siblings, relatives, family friends and others, the type of house and home he lives in, the society around him, etc. This addition we shall call "personality", and it is clear that though the essence is something which belongs to the man and is wholly his own, the personality is made up of external, environmental things and factors, and thus is not something that is "his very own", but is a patchwork imposed and imprinted on him from outside. Nevertheless, this developing personality greatly affects his behaviour and reactions. Do not forget that the word "persona" is Latin for "mask", being originally applied to the set masks worn by the actors on the stage to indicate the nature of the character they were representing in the play being performed.

As the personality grows, it surrounds and overshadows the essence, which gradually stops growing and finally swoons and becomes dormant, most usually at about the age of four or five years of chronological life time. While thus "asleep", the essence does not develop any further and remains static at whatever stage it has reached, at best, and may even regress right back to where it was at birth.

The personality, on the other hand, takes over all the ways in which the child behaves and acts, and it may be a very successful "life manager" for the man from the purely worldly point of view. Perhaps even the earlier one's essence has gone to sleep, the easier it is to become "someone" in our type of civilization.

While in this state of suspended animation, the essence may even shrivel and die. But this is not at all an impediment to the personality. To the contrary : it is quite possible, indeed most likely, that only those whose essences have died can become such personages as politicians, criminals, customs officers, tax-gatherers, actors and others. It is also highly probable that the overwhelming majority of the people now living on Earth house only essences in deep coma, if not in the process of dying.

When the physical (planetary) body of a man whose essence is already dead also dies, this body's constituents return to the Mother Earth from which they were obtained in the first place, unless artificially, unnaturally and criminally prevented from doing this by some procedure such as embalming. It is quite probable that the great Egyptian civilization did perish because of the then prevalent religious practice of preserving dead bodies as intact as possible, preventing them from decaying almost indefinitely. This was an unwarranted interference with the Life-processes of our planet, who is (whether we believe it or not) a Living Being in her own right - but this is not the subject of the present paper and so will not be discussed any further.

The only part left of a man whose essence is dead and whose body is dead is his personality. It is not possible to demonstrate its physical existence (either before or after death), though there have been some experiments performed which suggest that it may have a certain registerable weight/mass. But we do know that during life it existed (as expressed by its manifestations towards others) and our Universe never wastes anything. So this bodyless personality must be used in some way, and is said to serve as "food" for our Earth's satellite, the Moon (just in the same way as the planetary body when dead serves as food-fertiliser for the Earth itself). What exactly this means and how the Moon takes and uses it is not the subject of this essay either. Sometimes, loosely, this personality is described as a "soul", thus creating confusion and introducing apparent inconsistencies.

But to do so is wrong, for from such a man - that is, a man whose essence died during the life of his planetary (physical) body - nothing remains. Dust he was and to dust he returns. These are the people about whom Our Lord and Master Jesus the Christ said ; "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matthew 8:22). They never had a soul of any kind, hence in their case the question "Has man a Soul ?" can and must be answered by a categorical "No".

When the planetary body of a man whose essence is alive but sleeping itself dies, then his personality in the same way goes "to feed the Moon", but his essence wakes up and is now available for rebirth in another body, thus getting a further chance of growing to maturity. Depending on how much this essence has developed before becoming dormant, the new baby will be more "advanced" or "smarter" than others of the same chronological body age. It is said also that in such a case, the essence is actually reborn (in a way incomprehensible and even totally unacceptable to a logical mind) in precisely the same baby, conceived by precisely the same parents at precisely the same time and place as previously (this is what P.D. OUSPENSKY calls "re-currence" and Alice BAILLY "re-iteration") and lives much the same kind of life as before, but with some added potentialities - such as perhaps this time round waking-up before death. It is idle at present to waste time on speculating at length about this, but the possibility exists and should not be forgotten or brushed aside.

Now let us come back to our sleeping essence. It can wake up again during the life of the planetary body. This can happen as the result of some sudden shock, such as a religious conversion, a severe illness or accident, and otherwise. Most frequently this awakening is the result of thinking deeply and often about the meaning of this world, the nature of life, the purpose of mankind on Earth, and other such questions. When a man meditates, concentrates and gives some of his time to the study of this type of subject (usually called "occult" and/or "esoteric"), he develops inside himself something which wakes up the essence and makes it active again. This "something" is sometimes called the "Magnetic Centre". Once awakened, the essence begins to grow again and develop further, but this new growth and development can happen in one of two ways.

It may grow haphazardly and unevenly, now developing in one way, now in another, inconsistently, according to the latest unguided or even misguided efforts by the man who earnestly feels that ordinary everyday life is not enough and that he needs something more, but is ignorant of where and how to get it. Or it may grow and develop in a controlled and disciplined, well balanced way.

This latter only happens in a man who has been lucky enough to have found a genuine Teacher (and - alas! - most of the self-appointed so-called "teachers" are far from being genuine and live in a state of grievous "sin" through misleading their deluded followers) or at least a real "Esoteric School".

An essence to be able to grow when it wakes must be fed, and it uses as food the personality of the man as already formed, all the impressions which enter into him through his sense organs and mind, and also the products of the air he breathes and of the ordinary food he eats. But in order for these foods to be made available in the right form and quantity to the essence, an intermediary must be built first. This intermediary is what is currently called the "Astral" body (not to be confused, as many do, with the "Etheric" body which is present in everyone and is the absolutely necessary force-field around which the planetary substances congregate to build up the outer physical body we see, feel, smell and taste). Such an Astral body begins to develop only in those who have an awakened essence, and continues to develop only while the man consciously and deliberately attends to this sufficiently often. Fortunately, even a few seconds a day of the right effort is enough for such a body to develop in time.

The essence and the new Astral body develop together, though the essence develops much more slowly, at first at least, as certain foods it must have can reach it only through a sufficiently developed Astral body. It can even happen that the Astral body develops fully or almost, but the essence again stops growing and goes back to sleep again. When such a man's planetary body dies, whatever is left of his personality goes to the Moon, as in all cases a personality must do, but his Astral body (being relatively "immortal") with its contained essence, begins to seek a suitable planetary body in which to reincarnate and continue its further growth and development. This may be the explanation for "infant prodigies" as the Astral body preserves all the knowledge, skills and capabilities of its previous host or hosts. Also it may explain some cases of "possession" and the many documented cases who genuinely remember a recent "past life".

It is possible to call such an Astral body a "soul" (let us add: Type 1) and the essence within it may also be quite legitimately called "soul" (in this case let us add: Type 2). But if a suitable body is not found within a certain finite period of time, or if, for one reason or another, no further development of the essence occurs in the new body, then the Astral body ultimately disintegrates and disappears, the essence being liberated to start again afresh in some other body.

In any case, once an essence is awakened and begins to grow again, when it has reached a certain stage, it begins to influence the physiological processes of the planetary body in order to obtain certain substances it needs for further growth. These substances are normally either not made by the man's physical organs (though these are quite capable of manufacturing them when called on to do so) or are manufactured in but very small quantities which are simply wasted in the absence of a growing essence to use them. Once an essence is sufficiently grown up (which happens only if and when the Astral body is fully developed), it can take over at will all the physiological processes of the planetary body, and even introduce new functions or build new organs, not previously existing in the man, if it needs them.

When an essence grows without the assistance and guidance of a Teacher and without the knowledge of how to properly feed and look after an essence, such as is available in Esoteric Schools, it is usually more or less mishappen and incomplete, and may even grow into a lop-sided monster which wastes the man's vital energies, often causing severe physical and/or mental illness. It is therefore potentially dangerous to use effective exercises or techniques, taken from books or other indirect (and perhaps even mistaken or erroneous) sources, on one's own. This particularly applies to unsupervised breathing exercises.

On the other hand, an essence growing under proper direction and as it should grow, is beneficial to the planetary body and not only improves its normal functions and efficiency, but can correct all existing disabilities, including the ageing process. Whether called by this or any other name, growth of essence

(Prima Materia) and its transformation/transmutation into a Soul(Gold) is the real work (Magnum Opus) and goal of all true Alchemy.

Ultimately, the essence uses us all the personality and takes over its functions - which it can perform much better and more efficiently. At this stage it no longer needs the Astral body, but mostly keeps and preserves it as a useful instrument for certain types of manifestations it may wish to indulge in (such as bilocation). Also at this stage it ceases to be an "essence" and becomes truly an Immortal Soul, which can no longer be put to sleep nor regress.

But growing an essence (or rather, growing the Soul of which the essence is the "seed") is not so easy and takes much time. So usually therefore, in fact in the overwhelming majority of cases, a man's planetary body dies before the essence has fully grown and become the Soul. Such an essence within its Astral body does not go to feed the Moon (though any remnant of personality does) or back to sleep, but remains available for a suitable incarnation, either on Earth or perhaps also elsewhere - this point has not been clearly and definitely settled and both views are acceptable. Unfortunately, if the re-incarnating immature Soul developed incorrectly, it may make the man it inhabits a monster such as Hitler or Manson.

It is said though, that in moments of great stress and/or suffering, it is possible for an essence to grow extremely fast, and perhaps even to full maturity, in what by clock time is only a few brief seconds. In such a case, depending on the cause of its accelerated growth and on the "emotional" impact of this cause on the essence during its forcible rapid development, the essence may remain Earth-bound as a Ghost - either just a lost afflicted Soul not knowing what to do, or as a Phantom seeking to redress some wrong, or even as a malignant entity pursuing some goal of vengeance. But also it may - as in the case of Christian Martyrs, for example - acquire all the stature and powers of a "Saint", whatever this state really is.

At any rate, note that if one calls the Astral body a "soul", then man can be said to be a being able to have two souls at the same time - but they are not identical.

Now we come back to the man who has found an Esoteric School and a Teacher, and who consequently has (in one or more "lives") succeeded in achieving the complete normal growth of his essence to its full maturity. Such a man can now be truly said to have an Immortal Soul, the ultimate and final product of his conscious efforts and deliberate conscientious work on his essence. Note that the efforts and work must be deliberate and conscious: a normal mature Soul does not develop accidentally, unconsciously and mechanically. No man is born with a ready-made Soul, but must work at it and deserve it. But every man is, though, born with the seed of a soul, and the capability to grow it. The responsibility to make his essence grow into a Soul or to let it die is his and his alone.

The finished Soul has powers which enable it, if it so wills, to maintain the planetary body in which it is housed alive and fully functioning as long as it likes. But of course, this also makes it in a sense "Earth-bound" and does not allow it to go on and live where and as a Soul really should, in its proper place. What this is, is known only to those Souls who have gone there.

Once a fully grown, mature Soul allows its original planetary body to die, it no longer is subject to reincarnation anywhere, nor can it be compelled to remain on Earth as a ghost. But it is said that the Soul may elect to return to Earth in a planetary body for the purpose of helping other men to develop their own Souls.

Such wholly unselfish Souls then begin to develop further in a new direction (not available to Souls who do not make this voluntary sacrifice spontaneously and of their own free will and accord), and are said to be capable of three successive degrees or grades of "Greatness". These stages in some schools are given the names of Arhat, Boddhisattva and finally Buddha, this

latter being the Ultimate State possible to any Being, whether of human or divine origin. This state of a Soul is equivalent to and indistinguishable from that of the "Supreme Godhead".

Perhaps such really Great Souls as those of a Boddhisattva or the Buddha can even come to Earth whenever necessary without actually incarnating, but still able to offer and give assistance, when they wish to do so, to anyone in need of their help.

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| WU CH'ENG-EN       | Monkey                      |

## A Key to the Letters of the Q.B.L. Violet Smyth ©

The significance of the three letters of the Q.B.L. or Holy Tree of Life is this :-

- Q (Qoph) is the 19th letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, which added together horizontally go thus  $1 + 9 = 10$ , &  $1 + 0 = 1$ .
- B (Beth) is the second letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, it equals 2.
- L (Lamed) is the 12th letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, added together horizontally  $1 + 2 = 3$ .

So we have one, two and three, a trinity, the Triune God (Father, Mother and Child). Qoph is the Father and the King with rod of power. Beth is the Mother and the Queen - the House in which He dwells - Love, Wisdom and Understanding are Her Names. Lamed is Child and Prince of Peace, Perfect expression of Power and Love, Divine Intelligence, Christ Consciousness Who activates on all the planes. Red, Blue and Yellow are Their colours in that order. Next, Orange, Green and Violet. Lastly, Indigo which is the synthesis.

So it can be seen that Q.B.L. is more correct than other variations of the title of This Sacred System. These others do not give the correct enumeration for the Tree of Life and of the Universe, although they may give other meanings in part only of that Tree - Otzchi'im or Yggdrasil "The greatest and best of trees, laved by limpid waters, gnawed at by more serpents than can be dreamed of witless mortals" - so drily remark our Norse Sagas !

It is also interesting to note that there is a clue to the Q.B.L. in Psalm 119. I quote from the Authorised Version the last of the three sections Qoph, Beth and Lamed, viz.,

- v. 152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever.
- v. 16 I will delight myself in thy statutes ; I will not forget thy word.
- v. 96 I have seen an end of all perfection ; but thy commandment is exceeding broad.

If serious meditation is given to the foregoing, a great deal of interesting information can be obtained from it.

# The 'Aurora Consurgens'

AN ALCHEMICAL TEXT ATTRIBUTED TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

Simon Seligman ©

Before describing the 'Aurora Consurgens' I would draw the diligent researcher's attention to a parallel and most illuminating Indian text. This is the 'Saundarya Lahari', a famous tantric work ascribed to Shankaracharya. It is illuminating not only in respect of cross-references between alchemy and tantra in general, but also because of the extraordinary similarity of the two philosophers and the fact that they should both, towards the end of their lives, produce such apparently untypical works which are yet so alike ; for in spirit, in subject matter and sometimes in word, Saundarya Lahari and Aurora Consurgens are almost identical.

Aurora Consurgens :

"For the wise man who heareth the Wise will grow wiser and understand, and understanding this Wisdom lay hold upon her. This is Wisdom, namely the Queen of the South, who is said to have come from the east, like unto the MORNING RISING." (Trans. "AURORA CONSURGENS")

Saundarya Lahari :

"Such are the rare high souled men who worship Thee as Aruna \*, radiant as the morning sunlight, causing the lotus-like minds of great poets to bloom and delighting the Assembly of the Wise ..." (\* Aruna is the colour of Dawn)

Just as Aurora Consurgens speaks from the tradition of speculative alchemy and is so alien to the main body of St. Thomas's work that many scholars refuse to accept his authorship, Saundarya Lahari, which as its name, Torrential Flood of Supreme Beauty, suggests, is a tantric outpouring to the Goddess, is so uncharacteristic of Shankara in both style and content that some authorities wonder how it could ever have been attributed to him. Perhaps the answer in both cases is that there's no smoke without fire and the attribution would never have come about, given the huge stylistic incongruity, unless it were authentic.

That aside, there are so many resemblances between the two saints in their intellectual and spiritual make-up that Shankara has often been called 'the Indian Aquinas', though since the Eastern sage preceded him by at least some four hundred years, Aquinas could perhaps with more justice be called 'the Western Shankara'. Both men were paralleled in China by St. Thomas' great contemporary, Chu Hsi, the neo-Confucian scholar. All three were born at a time of great intellectual and philosophical confusion within their respective cultures and through Herculean efforts of synthesis and systematisation were able to create intellectual structures that broadly speaking, survive until this day.

St. Thomas reconciled Aristotelian physics and metaphysics with orthodox Catholicism, and Shankara allied the transcendent vision of the Upanishads with the Vedic orthodoxy of the Mimamsa Schools in his philosophy of non-duality. Both men, through considerable feats of mental gymnastics, were able to unite potentially divergent and mutually opposing trends into a glorious but orthodox intellectual unity. It has to be said that the results of these endeavours were a number of weighty and authoritative but exceedingly boring works, as anyone who has waded through Shankara's *Bashyas* or heard a lecture on St. Thomas' Theory of Knowledge will know only too well.

All this rigid logicity must have taken its toll for both men died young. On the evidence of the two texts in question, however, it seems that at the end of their working lives they both experienced a vision of the sublimity their closely-argued 'rational' works were attempting to portray, and found their previous purely intellectual frame of reference completely inadequate to express what they saw. St. Thomas even declared all he had done before to be "worthless as straw". The *Aurora Consurgens* probably represents his last disquisition, delivered on his deathbed to the monks of St. Mary at Fossanova who had requested that he interpret the *Anticles* for them, shortly after his ecstatic vision in the Chapel of St. Nicholas at Naples.

It is without doubt the most beautiful and moving alchemical treatise I have read and this is to a great extent due to its use of scriptural language to illustrate alchemical allegory :

"All good things came to me with her, that Wisdom of the South, who preacheth abroad, who uttereth her voice on the streets ... saying, come ye to me and be enlightened, and your operations shall not be confounded. Come children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the Science of God."

Central to the treatise, as in *Saundarya Lahari*, is the figure of Wisdom the female *Sapientia* or *Scientia Dei*. She is the "Wisdom of the South" because she is equated with the South Wind, which in turn is a symbol of the Holy Spirit which is fiery and causes exaltation, warming all things in the fire of love, presumably because of that wind's hot and dry nature. Thus in Arabian alchemy, the sublimation process, in which the retort and its contents are heated, is called "the great south wind".

It is interesting to see in *Aurora Consurgens* the genderless Holy Spirit of patristic theology being given a definite feminine aspect, and the solar qualities of hotness and dryness, at first glance male, here thought of as female.

"What the science is and how she cometh into being I will lay bare, and will not hide from you. For she is a gift and a sacrament of God and a divine matter, which deeply and in divers manners was hidden by the wise."

The text is twelve chapters long of which the first five, from which the preceding quotations have been taken, are short and introductory in nature. The concluding seven chapters would appear to contain the bulk of the exposition and come under the following headings :-

- First Parable : Of the Black Earth, Wherein the Seven Planets Took Root
- Second Parable : Of the Flood of Waters and of Death, which the Woman Both Brought in and Put to Flight
- Third Parable : Of the Gate of Brass and Bar of Iron of the Babylonish Captivity
- Fourth Parable : Of the Philosophic Faith Which Consisteth in the Number Three
- Fifth Parable : Of the Treasure House Which Wisdom Built upon a Rock
- Sixth Parable : Of Heaven and Earth and the Arrangement of the Elements
- Seventh Parable : Of the Confabulation of the Lover with the Beloved.

Perhaps a recitation of the Chapter headings would alone be enough to inspire the researcher to a study of the text, which it is the aim of this article to do, but a little more needs to be said by way of comment.

The text is of great beauty, delivering its message in a Biblical idiom (as one would expect of a 13th Century cleric), rather than the more humanistic phraseology of the Renaissance and post-Renaissance works. Yet the references to alchemical processes are quite plain and a later, more 'enlightened', age considered the author to have profaned the scriptures by using Holy Writ to elucidate the Hermetic Art.

However, the author had only used what materials lay to hand, and he had used them supremely well. The learning that he displays alone, apart from other considerations, makes it unlikely that he was anyone other than St. Thomas. Each chapter is in the nature of a rambling discourse, sometimes illogical and incoherent, but never far from the point, in which whole parts of the Scriptures, particularly the Canticles, are spliced and interspersed with sayings of the philosophers with such superlative control of the source material as to make us suspect that a memory system of the kind described by Frances Yates in her book 'The Art of Memory' (where she discusses Aquinas) is at work. Indeed, I think this is the case, and I am sure a lot could be done to elucidate the text by reference to Thomas' own works on Artificial Memory.

Finally, two more quotations should be given from the text in order to illustrate the beauty of the language, and the way in which alchemical and Biblical allegory are intermixed.

From the First Parable :-

"He that believeth and is well baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned. And the signs of those that believe and are well baptised are these : When the King that is in Heaven judgeth over them, they shall be whitened with snow in Selmon and shall bear the wings of a dove covered with silver, and the hinder parts of her back with the paleness of gold. Such shall be unto me a beloved son, behold ye him, beautiful above the sons of men, at whose beauty the sun and the moon wonder. For he is the privilege of love and the heir, in whom men trust and without whom they can do nothing."

And in the Fifth Parable (Of the Treasure House) :-

"Whosoever by his science shall open this house shall find therein an un-failing fount that maketh young. Wherein whoever is baptised, he shall be saved and can no more grow old. Yet alas but few open it who are children and who are wise as children ; but if they who are children shall tell of these things and shall usurp to themselves the seats of the four and twenty elders, doubtless they shall by their rank and dignity open the house, so that face to face and eye to eye they shall look upon the brightness of the sun and moon."

All the foregoing will give an idea of how the text is written, and contains so many familiar allegorical analogies as to need no comment. The work, with its Latin original, is available in the Bollingen Series (of Jung's works), edited and with a commentary by Maria von Franz. Interestingly enough, she subtitles it as 'A Document on the Problem of Opposites in Alchemy'. Given the nature of St. Thomas' conventional philosophical achievement, this is a field in which he would have had considerable experience.

However, I would like to register my disquiet with the Jungian Commentary in this edition, peerless work of scholarship though it is. Often it struggles to find a psychological analogy where one evidently doesn't exist, and places a psychological interpretation where it simply won't fit. This is an error to which Jungians, of all people, should not be prone, that of judging the Greater by the standards of the Lesser ; measuring the Absolute by the Relative, seeking to understand the Irrational in terms of the Rational. It is as if the commentator were trying to clothe the work in garments altogether too small for it. This should warn us against discussing alchemy in anything other than its own terms. I am sure many of you, if you read this extraordinary treatise, will agree.

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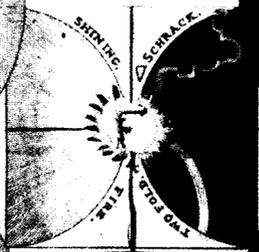
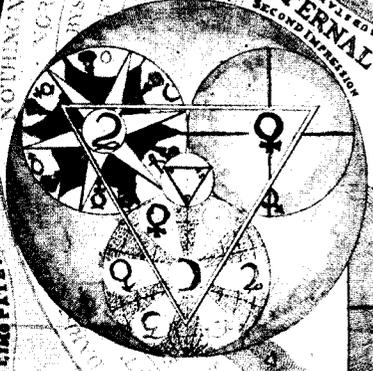
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BYSS AND ABYSS - NOTHING AND ALL - TIME AND ETERNITY.



ETERNAL  
SECOND IMPRESSION

NATURE  
FIRST IMPRESSION



NO PATENT

BREATHE THE SOLAR



WORLD

EXHALATION FROM SPERM

TRINITY

SIC EXILION. ISI PATRIA IS UNIVERSAL

NOTHING NEITHER SEEK  
RENDER ITTING  
VANA VANIS TERRESTRIA TERREMI: NOS AS BURBANUS ET ENIGNE MUS



# Jacob Böehme

Adam McLean ©

Jacob Boehme (1575 - 1624), "The German Theosopher", whose creative life spanned the Rosicrucian period, was a mystic whose insights did much to establish a spiritual interpretation of Alchemy. Boehme, although an unscholared shoemaker, had to high degree a mystical perception of the spiritual worlds, and choose when expressing his inner experiences to cloathe them in alchemical terms.

When Boehme was a young apprentice shoemaker working in his master's shop, he met with a mysterious stranger who had a profound impact upon Boehme's life. Manly Palmer Hall tells the story in this way :-

"One day while tending his master's shoe shop, a mysterious stranger entered who, while he seemed to possess but little of this world's goods, appeared to be most wise and noble in spiritual attainment. The stranger asked the price of a pair of shoes, but young Boehme did not dare to name a figure, for fear that he would displease his master. The stranger insisted and Boehme finally placed a valuation which he felt was all that his master possibly could hope to secure for the shoes. The stranger immediately bought them and departed. A short distance down the street the mysterious stranger stopped and cried out in a loud voice, "Jakob, Jakob, come forth." In amazement and fright, Boehme ran out of the house. The strange man fixed his eyes upon the youth - great eyes which sparkled and seemed filled with divine light. He took the boy's right hand and addressed him as follows : "Jakob, thou art little, but shalt be great, and become another man, such a one as at whom the World shall wonder. Therefore be pious, fear God and reverence His Word. Read diligently the Holy Scriptures, wherein you shall have Comfort and Instruction. For thou must endure much Misery and Poverty and suffer Persecution, but be courageous and persevere for God loves and is gracious to thee". Deeply impressed by the prediction, Boehme became ever more intense in his search for truth. At last his labours were rewarded. For seven days he remained in a mysterious condition during which time the mysteries of the invisible world were revealed to him."

Boehme described his visionary experience as follows :-

"I saw the Being of all Beings, the Ground and the Abyss ; also the birth of the Holy Trinity ; the origin and first state of the world and of all creatures. I saw in myself the three worlds - the Divine or angelic world; the dark world, the original of Nature ; and the external world, as a substance spoken forth out of the two spiritual worlds ... In my inward man I saw it well, as in a great deep ; for I saw right through as into a chaos where everything lay wrapped, but I could not unfold it. Yet from time to time it opened itself within me like a growing plant. For twelve years I carried it about within me, before I could bring it forth in any external form ; till afterwards it fell upon me, like a bursting shower that kills where it lands, as it will. Whatever I could bring into outwardness I wrote down. The work is none of mine ; I am but the Lord's instrument, with which he does what He wills."

With Boehme we reach an important turning point in the evolution of Western Esotericism, in that he indirectly contributed greatly to widening the gap between the purely physical operation of Alchemy and the pursuing of Alchemy as a spiritual-philosophical system. This gulf which existed in germ at the beginning of the 17th century, widened until a purely materialistic chemistry was born in the 18th century. Boehme however drew both upon inner mystical experiences and the practical experiences of the Alchemists of that time, and if we are sensitive to this, we can see in his writings, both ways of uniting praxis and theoria, as well as their separation into two distinct realms. Boehme thus worked to incarnate a Soul Alchemy, and his writings are profound documents of a protestant esotericism which places the burden of inner development squarely upon the soul of the individual. In this protestant esotericism, it is the task of the individual to work to purify and exalt his own soul forces, if he is to achieve the end of the work. Boehme's works are therefore of great import and it is regrettable that nothing of his is currently in print. His mystical insights were expressed through familiar alchemical symbols and some editions of his writings were illustrated with interesting figures. I have chosen here to illustrate some of his ideas through a well known illustration in the William Law edition of 'The Works of Jacob Behmen'.

This illustration, printed overleaf, shows us the stages in the Creation of the World. Creation arise out of the ABYSS, the groundless ocean of Being, which is,

Nothing neither Darkness not Light  
Nothing neither Life nor Death  
Nothing neither High nor Deep  
Nothing neither moving nor stirring  
Nothing neither seeking nor finding  
Nothing neither place nor abode.

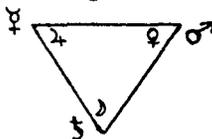
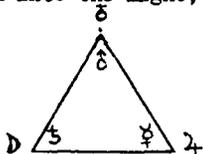
Within this resting ocean of Being, the first stirring is the recognition of the existence of the BYSS or the Absolute Will to Be. Its qualities are,

Will of the Abyss  
Eys of the Deity of No Origin  
Father of All Beings  
Father of All Beginnings  
The Unformed Power  
Father of Eternity

The Byss gazes into the Abyss, the Mirror of the Ultimate and beholds his own being in this, not as Will but as reflecting Wisdom, Eternal Imagination, the Infinite Mother. This is,

The Eternal One without Nature and Creature  
 A Threefold though but One only Breathing  
 Eye of the Abyss, Mirror of Wonders and All Wonder  
 The Outbreathed Mystereium without Nature.

From this Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis arises the initial stage of Creation pictured as the globe at the top centre of the figure. Here the upward pointing triangle of Spirit and downward pointing triangle of Form are still intertwined. At their centre, as a womb, lies the female SOPHIA-Wisdom element, while at the periphery, the male ADONAI-Will forces hold their place. From this world of insubstantiality and inner warmth (temperature), two impressions are taken, which arise from the separation of the two Ternaries. The first is the Dark Negative Ternary 'an unsatisfied hunger and an anxiously eager restlessness' says Boehme. The second is the Light Ternary 'in which Nature has surrendered its independence and is transfigured into the Light, in order to the fashioning of the Eternal Harmonies'.



Upward pointing Triangle of Dark World.  
 Ⓢ, 4, ♀ outwards; Ⓟ, 5, ♀ inwards

Downward pointing Triangle of Light  
 ♀, Ⓜ, 5 outwards; 4, ♀, Ⓟ inwards

Thus are born the Seven Principles which are associated by Boehme with the Planets

- |   |             |   |                    |
|---|-------------|---|--------------------|
| ♄ | Contraction | ☾ | Form               |
| ♃ | Expansion   | ♀ | Inner Intelligence |
| ♁ | Circulation | ♀ | Love               |

The Sun ☉ arises at the meeting point of these two, the Light and the Dark Ternaries, in the Lightning Flash, the Shining Fire, the Twofold Fire that is both Wrath and Love, the Creative spark that is the Son (FILIUS) shown at the centre of the illustration. From this arises the Cosmos as we know it, shown as the celestial globe centred upon the Sun with the Earth Planet at the bottom centre. This Solar World, is the Outbreathed exhalation from Spirit  $\triangle$  and Spirit  $\nabla$  which is called Time in Strife of Vanity.

Boehme's writings most of which, due to repression by orthodox theologians, were only published after his death, are of great length and unfold a vast system of ideas, a web of spiritual thoughts, which arose not out of arid intellectualisation but out of his own living communion with the Spiritual World. In his volumes he reveals an esoteric christianity that surely bears some direct connection with the esoteric stream of Rosicrucianism that was being unfolded contemporary with Boehme.

Boehme was aware of the difficulty of his books and consequently wrote the 'Clavis or Key to his Writings', in the form of a summary of the main ideas in his system, and this short work is now being published in the Magnum Opus Hermetic Sourceworks series.

# The "Confessio" of Heinrich Khunrath

A PARAPHRASED TRANSLATION BY J.B. CRAVEN

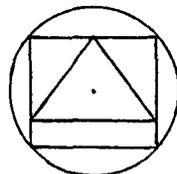
## FINAL PART

### CHAPTER SIX

Magnesia, which is quite common, is called "the Nothing" or the Catholic Chaos of Philosophers. It is a mixture of Earth, Heaven and Water, animated by a Catholic spark - the Light of Nature - from which Nature's Alchemy separated Heaven, Earth and Water and built up their Microcosmos. It is called "Omnia", "the all Thing" of all powers and virtues. Metals grow like vegetables from their own seed - Sulphur, Salt and Mercury - but in a special way. Magnesia above the earth, minerals beneath - Earth, Water, Heaven - Sulphur, Salt, Mercury. This Salt is a permanent, humid, Catholic substance, relating to the Sun and Moon, that is Gold, Silver and other metals. Earth, Water, Heaven, nearly related, but the difference is made by the spark of the different rational seeds of Nature, that is the Soul of the World. The coarseness of the metal is purified by the boiling in the Centre of the Earth. As to this see the prologue in my "Amphitheatre".

But unless the first material is known, all work will be in vain. Avicenna says - learn to know the roots of Metals - start from that. Do not trust entirely to books, but ask aid of God's spirit, to discern good from evil. This is the advice of Hermes. The Master must know more than the writer. Adam's body was taken from the Watery Red Earth, thence that of Eve. Adam brought with him out of Paradise, the Material of the Great Catholic Stone. In his grave it was buried. But this Material brought out of Paradise did not remain Universal - the spark of Nature added to human flesh. A dead body is of no value for the Stone. The "Omnia" is brought into a state of elevation by the outward help of Science and from the peculiar inner fire. Artificial help brings it to perfection. This is the bitter vinegar - the son of the Great World - "es quelles das ist El-i-x-eir Fortitudo", the strongest of all, strong, Gigans, Nature's hero. Senior says, "Omnia sive Res omnes", "Ule, Hyle, Adamah, Terra rubra, luctum, vel limus Terrae, Rubrae Catholicae." This, our Chaos or first Water, from which all natural things have their origin. This unctuous humidity in Water, Air,

Fire, does not waste away, it never devours itself, but remains constantly damp. The foundations of the world were laid by God, yet the centre is not according to mathematical measurements. The common Salt of Wisdom, Nature, Art, is that out of which Our Adam and his Eve come. It is a hermaphrodite, husband and wife at the same time. This is the very old Saturn, the lead of the Wise. It is the greatest miracle in the world. This Lion is green or red as you wish. It is a lily among thorns. In it there are two things, form and material, working and suffering, the transient and the fixed, the dry and the wet, Water as well as Air, rosy coloured blood of the Lion, the white Glory of the Eagle, Sun and Moon, philosophic gold and silver. It is the Androgyne of the Wise, the Green, Blue, servants together with his dear white wife. This white and red double Mercury, man and wife of this art, red - animated blood, takes as his wife the crystal salt of the body of Magnesia - so King and Queen, one body, the Gold of the Philosophers, sown in the exfoliated body of Magnesia, blood and Water, red and white. The Soul of the World is the spark of the Spirit of God. In Our Stone are four things, Earth, Water, Air, Fire - dry, cold, dark and warm, but the fifth thing is the Quintessence - the very Soul of the the World. Many names are used for the One Thing. The Catholic 1,2,3,4, yet one, the great and re-generated Stone of the Wise, when they have united and coagulated, and been made more than perfect - after the separation of their coarseness, and animated by the Quintessence. Thus can the Stone be made. But 1,2,3,4, are universally in our universal Chaos alone, nowhere else, the Stone can come out of nothing else. Its birth is by a circular motion, thus by Circulation of the Quaternary and the new birth, the monad is made perfect, out of the coarseness comes the most pure and subtle substances. When the subject of the Stone is killed, its spirit departs, just as with the human soul and body. St Paul thus says, "I desire to be dissolved", and no death after the resurrection. The art consists in shutting up the Stone, not in the quantity of species, but in the body, soul and spirit of the one thing. triangular in being, it is quadrangular in quality. The secret of the boiling in the philosophic Vase or Vessel is known to very few. Consider the other figure of my "Amphitheatre". The Spirit of truth, the wonderful harmony of the new birth of mankind, and also of Our Stone will be understood by you with astonishment and rejoicing.



The third name is that of "All Things". This can be learned in the Laboratory and Oratory.

In the fourth place - all colours - these are seen in its preparation, especially in the hour of conjunction of soul and body.

In the fifth place, when this is compared with all natural things, it is not to be wondered at. If we say that the material has a spirit, it is true ; if a body, also it is true. If heavenly or divine, this is not unsuitable. The Stone seems of little value, yet it is the most valuable of all things.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

The Mercury of the Wise. It is the Spark of perpetual motion, "Ignis Ruach Elohim, Spiritus Dei, Sanctus, Sanctus". The universal Azoth, the threefold Mercury, not silver or any such thing, only that Mercury of which Philosophers speak. Its is sublimated by the Vitriol and Saltpetre of the Wise. The Hyle Water - The Material Salt. It is Proteus. He had as Orpheus

teaches, the Key to the Sea. The Son of the Lion, and Mother of all the heathen Gods and animals, the material from which all earthly things have origin in their different forms, sometimes in Water, sometimes in Fire, or in a chaotic manner. He that can catch it, if asleep, and keep a firm hold of it, till it, after many changes, is made more than perfect again, and changed back, he will be able to accomplish great things. Its use Cabalistically is hymned by Orpheus in lines beginning :-

"Gestantem claves Pelagi te maxime Protei  
Prisce Voco, a quo naturae primordia primune  
Edita sunt, formas in multas verteri nostri  
Materiam sacram, prudens, venerabilis, atque  
Cuncta sciens, quae sint, fuerant Ventura trahuntur."

This must be considered theosophically, and here learn to realise the universal Proteus, keep it in a philosophical manner, and you will belong to the College of true Philosophers. By this One Primate Material, the Metals, precious and other stones, are brought in a philosophical way to their first thing.

Reduction to the first matter, makes Mercury, through and by Mercurial Water, seven times sublimated. Aromatic like finest wool, snow, scarcely to be felt between the fingers, grey or white grey, also snow white, sharp salted on the tongue - the piercing universal Salt of Nature, yet is so volatile that if it stands in the open air it dissolves away into vapour and disappears, yet it can be changed back into a metallic body. I have had it myself, used it, observed its wonderful workings, not one time but many times. It cures dangerous illnesses, but also procures a long and healthy life. It can be dissolved and drunk, to the disappointment of the devil. It can change metallic gold by fire to a pure spirit. It is the power of Ruach-Elohim. Without its holy fire, no one can arrive in the science. The gold and silver of the Philosophers are living and not metallic. The common metallic gold cannot be made living without the gold of the Philosophers. It is from Magnesia alone. The incombustible red Sulphur of Magnesia is their Sun, called by Hermes - the Spirit of Magnesia, the gum of the Philosophers and their tough slimy gold. Our Sun and Moon, Sulphur and Mercury are drawn from our Catholic Earth. Its is only from this gum that the constant water is made. It is stronger than gold and more valuable. It changes the metallic gold into a spirit. It is a salt penetrating all bodies. Why is red used in wax and in the dress of high degree? He who knows the secret can make all natural things subject to him in a natural manner. God gives this power. The King is made alive by Mercury or by the Catholic Azoth, that is by the Primate Seed of the world, with a universal spark. Here therefore, you have the Sun and the Moon, the Catholic philosophic Gold, Salt and oil incombustible. It is easily and quickly melted in a gentle manner, and flows like wax on a silver tray, and so called the red and white wax or gum, or resin of the Wise, conquering, as Hermes says, all things. But all is given by God, anointing with the oil of gladness, all the wisdom of Nature, all health and wealth are hidden in it. Those sick rise again. All nature lives in Nature, but only in a Catholic manner in this. It is called by Khalid the Babylonian - the Indian Stone. It is the incombustible red and white, the universal tincture from our material seed of the world, fixed as in a rich beautiful jewel. The powers of the Earth and of Ruach-Elohim are collected and shut in together, as in the shining fire. It is the true Moly from whose black root, the flower, white like milk, spoken of by Homer, comes, which Mercury the Interpreter of the other heathen Gods used against the witchcraft of the circles, and the poison of the false alchemists. It is the new born Phoenix of nature, which

comes forth from the ashes. It is the Philosophic Salamander. It is for mankind but also for animals and vegetables. It is Nature in a Catholic bodily manner, in short everything, the natural triune Catholic Massa Magnesia. It is an extract of the whole world, the fasciculus and Synopsis of the whole Nature, the very seed and sperm of the world. PAN Omnia. "Microcosmos Macrocosmi und magnun Pan natura". It the Catholic fermentum, because it is the concrete essence of the whole world, and after preparation through sufficient regeneration and glorification has received power to work universally in all natural things. It is by God's will, the masterpiece of Nature, a putting together of Heaven and Earth and Water, with the Sun of the Great Work - the Saturnal Chaos. Of the first secret work of the Philosophers, very little is to be found in books, it is revealed from mouth to mouth - one to the next - who are found humble, gentle and constant. By the first work of preparation, dissolution and division, its essential parts are dissolved into just and proper parts. Thank God for what he works before you. It is changed into a perfect wax, gummy, melted liquid Salt Stone - "das Chaos Catholicon und Hyleim Mundi, Primordiale in massa Magnesia Philosophorum". Nature alone knows how to divine the special forms from the material and how to introduce a common spark of the fire of Nature into it. You cannot be said to help Nature. It is by Schamim a spark of the Ruach-Elohim, not by any help you can give, only be thankful for the Son of the Great World. Avicenna says Nature has prepared only one material for us, which we cannot put together by our own art. This also says Rosarius ; the Stone is created by Nature, and does not require anything but that one should remove from it what is impure and superfluous.

The Secret Kingdom of Secrets is where the Son of the Great World dwells and is the Salt of Wisdom, the greatest thing of all. This is the awakening fire of the Old Persian, Greek and Roman Wisemen, inner, invisible, a fire of light of Nature, only recognised by its operations, and by the changing colour of our material, and which animates the Azoth of our Mercury. This balsam of Nature is put by God into all natural things. The whole Secret of of the Art is in the common Salt properly prepared. He who knows this Salt in its work, knows the Secret of the Old Wise Men. It is the hidden master power. The Elixir is a powder like a Salt. It is light, easily melted, thus it can be carried in the bodies of the metals - the Soap, Salt, Oil of the Wise.

Some say that the word "alchemy" is derived from the Greek "I melt, pour, make liquid". The whole true art is nothing else but to make the Salt, to dissolve, to fix it. It is "Sal Veneris" - "Vitriolum nostrum", "Spiritus Vitrioli Veneris universalis" - "foecunditatis omnia in Sale Catholico". It is green, but turns into the deepest red, that is the green and red lion. In it is hidden the whole science. "Duenech Viridi" - blessed-green, oil of life, which brings forth all natural things - Sal Elebrod - Borax - whose colour is like blood, and is made from the earth of the lower part of the Olympic Mountain. It cleanses and grows all natural bodies. It is also called - the true Flower of all Salts of the Sea and Earth collected by Nature and placed in Our Chaos. From this our Saturnial Salt, living waters flow, the very water of life. It is living and refreshes the World in a natural manner. In our Magnesia is to be found the Salt Sea of the Great World. In it is the King bathed and made young again. The red and white is the Coral Sea of this Sea. Through this salt in solution are the common metals changed into silver and gold. It can if wished destroy all bodies. From the Saturnian blasted rocks flow the oil of joy, also the honey and incombustible oil, healing and blessing. The open stream washes away all impurities, as Hermes says, it bears in its bosom the dew of

heaven : "Est enim Mundi Majoris ovum Catholicum in aere generatum a spiritualitate Terrae". In the clefts and bowels of the Earth metals are brought forth, the tough fat of metals, and universal dampness, the common hyle. Here is the honey, oil and nectar of the Wise, which refreshes all who drink of it in an alchemical way. Thus the Blood and Water which flow from the Son of the Great World generate animals, vegetables and minerals. Let this blood and water be your guide to the multiplication of metals and for the universal medicine. Keep from human springs of water. Maria has said, "Our King descends from heaven, and the earth receives him with darkness." Hermes says, "The Sun is his father, the Moon his mother."

## CHAPTER EIGHT

The only Catholic Stone is Ruach-Elohim, a wonderful Catholic spark of fire, which yet moved on the water. God is a fire. He became Salt in the Virgin body of the Great World, yet was born in a natural way. Restored after temptation by the evil One, a Saviour of the Great World, by whom all is in a natural way restored. A true image of the Messiah was seen in the Old Patriarchs. He came 1597 years ago, and has washed away the sins of the human race in the lesser World by sacraments and miracles. He is himself the Stone, which the false builders and seductive teachers threw away, now in Zion, the Precious Corner Stone. On that rock he built the Church. From it come food and drink. Happy is he who knows and understands both Stones and is not depressed at their outward miserable form. The Catholic and Great Stone of Christ is in appearance miserable and poor, "Of vile aspect". Next to His Son, God teaches us in the book of Nature, for by its harmony the very stones cry out. The only true religion is that of Christ. The conversion of the Jews, Turks, is to be sought. Bernard says, the art is a special gift of God, and in its Truth might compel even a bad boy who saw it, to love God, and come away from bad habits. And in this age, today, the teaching of Nature is much needed. O! Lord, in thy Light we can see light and not fumble about in foolish ways. The healing power of the Stone is pleasant, all diseases may be cured by this universal medicine. The whole Christian Religion is a pure and healthy light, and the Book of Nature is its living picture. "Summa, Lapis Philosophorum Catholicus magnus est speculum mysteriorum Dei, et Gaza Secretorum luminis Naturae totius locupletissima". Solomon, Hermes and Morien are quoted, the latter addressed King Khalid, "Oh King, if you give your whole kingdom, you could not pay for it according to what it is worth." By the Catholic alchemical Science the Stone is perfected. It is very red, that is the Holy Adamah, in whose Paradise is Lignum Vitae, and at Bethel a heavenly Tabernacle, and House of the Lord for Mankind. There rests the Spirit of the Wisdom of God, the Sabbath of Sabbaths, the Heavenly Jerusalem. The divine Plato shows that, "Deum in ignea essentia esse". The same is shown and believed by the Brachmans of India : "Urim ignis - El Deus fortis adsit, Ruach-Elohim Huchmah - El."

## CHAPTER NINE

Silver and Gold are sown like corn. This is done by the Universal Virtue of the Catholic fiery spirit, which putting forth sparks, the seed grows from these, bringing forth to perfection the metal's seed. But a suitable field is required. Like brings forth like, Man = Man, Lions = Lions, each from their seed according to the order and constitution of God. If quickened in Silver, then is the Silvery nature, in Gold, golden - white or red. But how can the metals be increased? As Rhases says, they

are reduced first to the primal form. The return is made to the Mother body, then are they born again from primate Water and Spirit. It is possible that the metals in the earth have grown from Mercury and Sulphur. From the Mercury of the Philosophers they come, and they may be reduced again to it. All must be decayed, except its Mercury, the bonds are loosened by which it is bound, by the thing by which it originates. The living Mercury is the material of all metals - aqua foetida, from which, by which and with which is prepared the Elixir, both in its beginning and its end. Rosarius says, no true mixtures can be brought to pass except by our Copper, that is hermetic Copper and Magnesia. Our Mercury then changes itself into all natures in which it is mixed, and out of this arise new and special mixtures of Sol and Luna. Alanus adds, and quite rightly, that there is nothing more necessary for our mastery or perfection, only the decaying of the body in the philosophic Water, because Our Mercury is the Green Lion, now green, now red. It destroys Silver and Gold. He who understands how to destroy the metallic Gold, so that there is no more metal, has discovered a great secret, but such destruction cannot take place in an easier or better way than by the Catholic Primate Material of all Metals. Hard Gold which has been melted by fire, cannot be fermented without the first Material to dissolve the metallic gold. Let us then take the material from which Gold comes, then the Gold becomes by means of Science the true fermentation of the Philosophers.

Metals then take their origin from Aqua Victuosa. Alanus says, that the Stone is made from one thing, and that their is only one method of perfecting it. The Water which is alive is called by a thousand names. Nothing can be done without Primate Material. It is the Salt of the Wise, the Azoth or living Mercury, and here and nowhere else is the key to be found. Without, the doors of knowledge are closed. It is in vain to work in metals without the fire of Nature. It is a perpetual force of Nature, and by it are the dead metals made alive, and increased. But Nature cannot be forced. She commands, and as workers we must obey. To raise the red and white roses in the Paradise of Alchemy, we must set to work early.

The little pieces of Gold which are brought out of Silver by common Sulphur, either by being dissolved in Saltpetre or otherwise brought forth, are only the Separation of Gold already in the silver mass. From Antimony gold may be extracted, as from the crude Antimony brought from Hungary, which has little bright spots in it, and these which are Gold, can be separated by the Aqua Regia. Otherwise making of Gold and Silver from Antimony is nonsense. Same with Tin ore, the metal of Jupiter. These are only bits of Silver and Gold lying in the metallic lump. Otherwise Tin cannot bring forth Silver and Gold. In some soaps will be found pure Gold, which is then melted with little parts of Tin. Yet separation with Tin was undertaken by Sigismund Wan, a citizen of Wonsidel for the use of the town in 1467. He built a rich hospital - Caspar Brusch - still existing. This is not by transmutation but by extraction. Some tell us that at one time they succeeded in making very small parts of Silver and Gold, but only by the smallest grain, which falling to the ground could not be found again. The transmutation takes place thus - Silver may be found after Gold has been abstracted, as the Seaparating Water - Saltpetre not purified is too strong and destroys the Silver. Many such mistakes.

As long as these simple people, who do not understand the processes of Nature, have materials in which are silver and gold, this Science is possible to them, but when their materials come to an end, all is over with them. Constellations and heavenly influences are necessary helps. But as Rhasis says, the Stone may be prepared at any time of the year. As in Gen-

esis no specified time can be set. God's own heaven, which is Himself, influences Him in His wonderful process. But natural Alchemy considers its medicine of more value, than to allow it to be used for inferior purposes. One part is a part of its whole, and a particular part of its universal part. If you have a loaf, you can cut off pieces, if a pear tree, you can shake off many pears. Thus if you have the universal, you can receive true particular parts from it. The Alchemist lies who says that this one or that one knows something certain in the Science, and at this place or that they are working a certain increase, yet not coming from the universal root. Have such persons experience of White or Red ? I have never met such persons or known such to be true. They are false alchemists who say such things. Transmutation and separation are quite different things.

#### CHAPTER TEN

There are many hundred books full of receipts of sophistical foolishness. Nature and daily experience teach us that there is no other receipt for the Stone, and no other Sulphur, Azoth, Antimony, or other metals, Salt or Vinegar, than those in the Catholic Magnesia. There is only One Universal Solvent. No other Tincture is of any use. God put a ring through death's nose, now dumb as a fish. Albert of Carmal tells us to look for the Science from God, not from evil spirits. Stupid men once tried to banish the devil as a worker in Quicksilver, and put him in a glass, to qualify the same, so that the Stone of the Wise would grow out of it. What took place ? He came at their invitation, but in such a form that they had to run away, else they would indeed have found out what kind of worker he was. One experienced, told me what happened to him, and the Answer which he received. No. Soul or Body must not be given to sin, for desire of Wisdom. Hermes says : "My Son, before all fear God". Morien says : "We cannot know or accomplish anything in this Science without God's help". Senior says : "If you work in fear of God, you will see the secret of our Stone and will learn its power." Alphidius : "Thou canst not have this Science till purified by God, and God gave you an upright heart". Alanus : "Rest and have peace in God, if you have these, you will have the science". Rosarius : " Secret of Alchemy - a gift of the Holy Spirit". Geber : "You must not change the vessel, nor open it, God must protect the same unbroken". Pandolphus : "Take what is worthy, put it in its vessel, and pray to God that He may let you see the Stone of the Wise". So with many others.

#### CONCLUSION

The writer's daily wish, that God's spirit may dwell in him, taking God as his teacher in Laboratory and Oratory.

So have I said by the help of Ruach-Elohim  
Heinrich Khunrath of Lelpsig.

A Doctor of both medicines and living at Hamburg.

# De Cabala Alchymica

OR

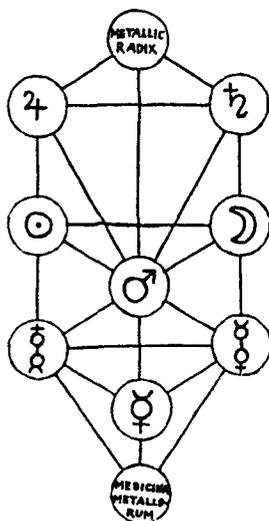
THE ALCHEMICAL TREE OF LIFE

Rafał T. Prinke ©

The diagram known as the Tree of Life, the central glyph of the Qabalah, has been accepted by most occultists of the Western Tradition as the "map" of their magical universe. The system proved to be very flexible and useful for many purposes. It served as a kind of matrix for unifying the teachings of the Qabalah, astrology, magic, geomancy, the Tarot, etc., as well as a number of mythologies. The sephiroth and the paths were related to the planets, the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, the Tarot cards, the geomantic figures, various magical images and gods of different pantheons. The best set of tabularised correspondences based on this system is perhaps Crowley's 777 (various editions) or its extended version Magickian's Desk Reference (B.S.T. Publishing 1978). Both of them, however, have very little to say concerning the relation of the Tree of Life and the alchemical process.

The only schemes of the alchemical Tree of Life I know about are derived from the Zoharatic text known as Aesh Metzareph and formed a part of the Golden Dawn teachings, being incorporated in its Knowledge Lectures. The same two patterns were later included in 777 and were also published in its original G.D. graphic form in Yeats and the Occult, Edited by G.M. Harper (MacMillan 1975). One of them, which is called "Alchemical Metals" in 777 (column CXIII), is shown opposite.

The correspondences seem very strange, to say the least. First of all, there is no Venus/Copper, which means that there are only six metals instead of the alchemical seven. Brass is included, which is not a metal, and also some strange substance called "Hermaphroditical brass". Kether is related to the Metallic Radix (or Root), which is presumably the same as "the seed of metals" known in alchemical



literature, while Malkuth corresponds to Mercurius Philosophorum (in the G.D. diagram) or to Medicina Metallorum (in 777). On the whole this scheme does not seem to be of great value. The second one, however, is much more interesting. Crowley calls it "Alchemical Tree of Life" (column CXII in 777).

The planetary attributions of the sephiroth correspond almost exactly to the stages of the Magnum Opus as given by G.O. Mebes in his Encyclopedic Course of Occultism (St. Petersburg 1912).

1. The Kingdom of Mercury (green)
2. The Kingdom of Saturn (black)
3. The Kingdom of Jupiter (brown)
4. The Kingdom of Diana (white)
5. The Kingdom of Venus (red)
6. The Kingdom of Mars (orange and different colours)
7. The Kingdom of Apollo (purple)

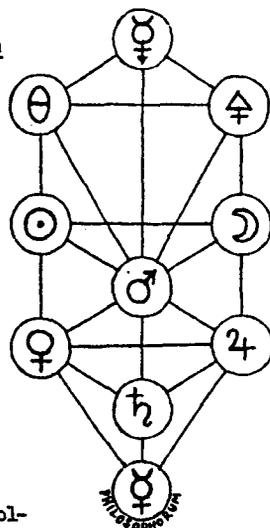
Very similar stages were given by Dom A.J. Pernety, with the only difference of placing Mercury between Jupiter and Luna (Diana) instead of at the beginning. Also Pernety gives somewhat different colours corresponding to each stage but the usual sequence of black-white-red is maintained.

If we accept the sequence of G.O.Mebes (and it seems more correct, as the first phase is green symbolising the Materia Prima, which should precede the black phase of putrefaction, given as the first one by Pernety), the alchemical Tree from Aesh Metzareph confirms it. The first four "Kingdoms" (Mercury through Diana), leading to the preparation of Tinctura Alba, correspond to the sephiroth Malkuth, Yesod, Netzach and Chesed, which may be "climbed" one after the other. The next three stages (Venus, Mars, Apollo) are less easy to explain in terms of the Tree of Life, but this may also be the reason for so many different lists of the phases of the Great Work given in alchemical tracts.

Another interesting feature of this scheme is the male-female polarity, which is here maintained both horizontally and vertically. Starting from the neutral Malkuth/Mercury there are male Jupiter, female Luna/Diana and male Sulphur on the Pillar of Mercy, and female Venus, male Sun/Apollo and female Salt on the Pillar of Severity. Horizontally there are three pairs of opposites : Venus-Jupiter, Sol-Luna, Salt-Sulphur. The Middle Pillar is neutral : Mercury and Saturn are asexual, while Mercurius Philosophorum at Kether is bi-sexual. The only difficulty seems to be with Mars at Tiphareth, but in spite of its astrological connotations, the mythological Ares/Mars was not interested in the matters of sex.

Another interesting thing about this arrangement is that the "classical" progress of the Magnum Opus takes place on the Middle Pillar. Starting with the green Materia Prima at Malkuth, we go to Caput Corvi at Yesod, and to Cauda Pavonis at Tiphareth. Then it is possible to choose either the direct path to Leo Rubeus (Sol/Apollo) or the other path leading to Aquila Alba (Luna/Diana) and only then to Leo Rubeus.

The supernal triad of Kether, Chokmah and Binah does not seem to be connected with the Great Work itself but rather represents what might be



called "the archetypal metal", i.e. the three principles of which every metal consists.

It is also possible to accept the usual astrological correspondences of the Tree of Life and replace the planets by the corresponding metals. This was done by Robert Turner in his article in Monolith (Spring 1967) (I know it only from the criticism by Ithell Colquhoun in her The Sword of Wisdom, Neville Spearman 1975) but the conclusions were doubtful. Moreover the question of the astrological attributions is not clear at all: there are several schemes that differ considerably from the generally accepted one (c.f. for example that by Athanasius Kircher).

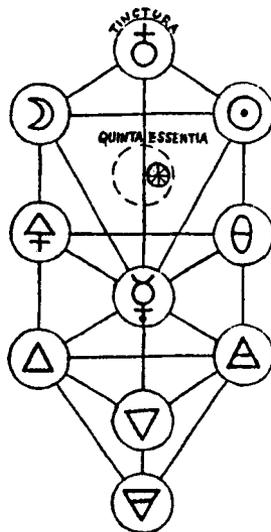
I would like to propose two other schemes, one relating the principles of the hermetic philosophy to the Tree of Life, the other concerned with the processes of the Magnum Opus.

A German edition of the collected works of Michael Sendivogius entitled Tripus Chemicus Sendivogianus (Strassburg 1628) contains a table added by the editor and presenting a synthesis of the hermetic philosophy as taught by that great Polish alchemist. The table is the following:

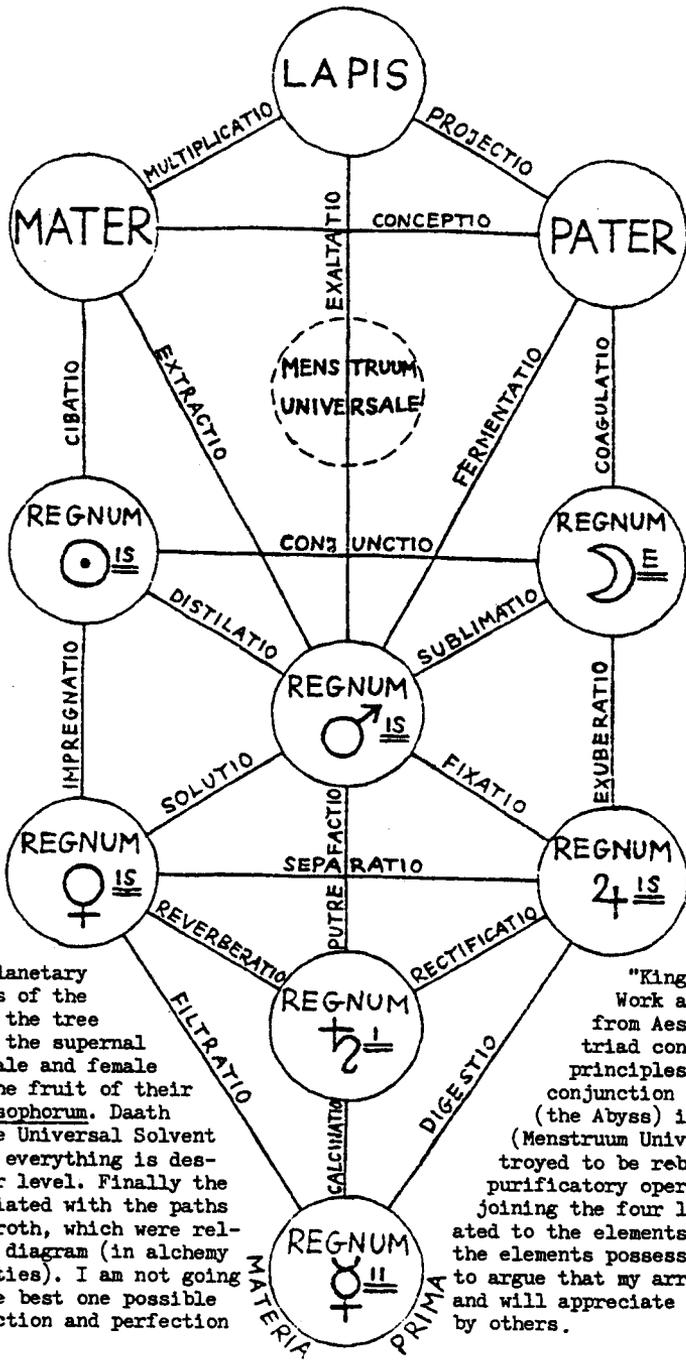
Four elements	Three beginnings	Two seeds	One fruit
Fire	Sulphur	male	
Air	Salt		Tincture
Water	Mercury	female	
Earth			
From God	From Nature	From Metals	From the Art

This arrangement may be related to the Tree of Life in the following manner. The elements are attributed to the four lower sephiroth in the ascending order, i.e. from Earth to Fire. Mercurius Philosophorum is sometimes called the Messiah, Lamb, Salvator, etc., so its placing at Tiphareth is in accordance with the usual meaning of that sephira. The male and female seeds or principles are attributed to Chokmah and Binah also in accordance with the Qabalistic theory, and their conjunction forms the tincture at Kether. I have also added Quinta Essentia at Daath.

Coming back to the "Alchemical Tree of Life" from Aesh Metzareph, if we accept that the sephiroth represent phases of the Magnum Opus, then the paths should be related to its operations or processes. It is well known that one of the finest sets of alchemical art, Splendor Solis by Solomon Trismosin, consists of 22 beautiful pictures, the number of which is identical with that of the paths and the Hebrew letters. However, only some of them represent specific processes, the others either showing the stages of the Work or being just general emblems of the Art. In this situation I attempted to assign to the paths the names of various alchemical operations known from many sources and in many versions. I arrived at the following diagram.



# TRANSMUTATIO



The planetary stages of the as in the tree while the supernal the male and female and the fruit of their Philosophorum. Daath to the Universal Solvent which everything is des-higher level. Finally the associated with the paths sephiroth, which were re-l above diagram (in alchemy qualities). I am not going is the best one possible correction and perfection

"Kingdoms" or Work are the same from Aesh Metzareph triad consists of principles (or seeds) conjunction - Lapis (the Abyss) is related (Menstruum Universale) in troyed to be reborn on a purificatory operations are joining the four lowest ated to the elements in the the elements possess purifying to argue that my arrangement and will appreciate its possible by others.

# Working with Practical Alchemy No.1

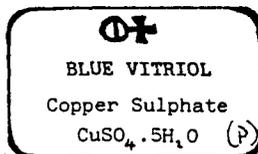
Over the past three years of the Hermetic Journal, the Hermetic Meditation regular feature has provided an introductory series of meditative exercises, which have allowed us to approach the work of Alchemy in a state of inner preparedness. These exercises, the inner work within the retort of the Soul, and the work with the internalising of external natural processes, will have given birth, at least in germ, to inner soul organs which we can now use for the alchemical observation of substance. Thus our Hermetic Meditation feature is here metamorphosed into Working with Practical Alchemy, and this will continue over the next few issues, providing an introductory course for the Alchemical working with substance. All of the experiments/exercises outlined here will be, in fact, explorations of our relationship with substances and processes, that will in time give rise to inwardly forming an alchemical view of substance rather than a material chemical perspective. Thus it is the observation of the experiment that is important here, our relationship with the substances and processes in the flask, rather than the end product of the experiment. At present no subtle transformations are involved merely simple chemical experiments. The essence, however, of this phase of the work is that we inwardly relate to the substances and processes through meditation, in a sense making these live within us, and our work with the Hermetic Meditations will be found to have been of great value as preparation for this task. We, as alchemists, must learn to truly experience substance, to see the different ways in which different types of matter and processes within this matter behave, and in this way to approach the essence of substance. We will take substances and experience them with our outer senses, their smell, colour, form, etc., and we must try always to bear something of their essence into our inner world, so that we connect with the being of a substance. Thus we can inwardly encounter the etheric/spiritual body of a substance as well as its material embodiment. We shall also experience various alchemical processes - SOLUTION, SUBLIMATION, DISTILLATION, etc., and see the ways in which these transform matter, subtly changing its essence and form. All this will be introductory, but in time will lead us to more subtle work.

## THE BASIC SUBSTANCES

We should try to obtain a wide range of the fundamental substances that were known and were of interest to the early alchemists. For our initial experiments we will need the following (large crystals rather than powder).

SODA		Sodium Carbonate	$\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3 \cdot 10\text{H}_2\text{O}$	Cs	Cr
LYE, ALKALI		Sodium Hydroxide	NaOH	Cs	Cr P
BLUE VITRIOL		Copper (Cupric) Sulphate	$\text{CuSO}_4 \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$		P
GREEN VITRIOL		Iron (Ferrous) Sulphate	$\text{FeSO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$		P
WHITE VITRIOL		Zinc Sulphate	$\text{ZnSO}_4 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$		P
VOLATILE ALKALIEK		Ammonia	NH OH	Cs	Cr P

As some of these substances are caustic (Cs), Corrosive (Cr) or poisonous (P) (I will not initially include any very dangerous poisons) we have to observe certain sensible precautions when handling these. We must keep our substances away from food, secure in clear, labelled and sealed glass bottles, on a shelf or locked away from the prying hands of children. It is preferable to have a secure room one can set aside as a laboratory, but with proper precautions these simple experiments can be carried



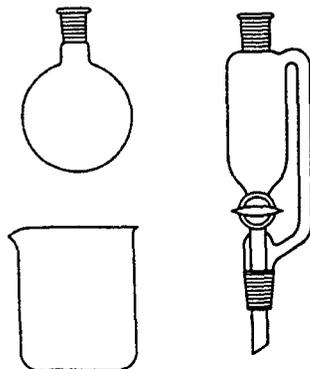
out in less ideal conditions.

So we must respect our substances. Few of these occur in their present form on the Earth, but are here found purified and concentrated. Thus their focussed power is strong and we should not treat them lightly, for if treated with respect, they can reveal to us much of the spiritual forces bound up in their concentrated material form. Some of these are readily available, but for others one will have to visit a laboratory supplier.

### THE BASIC APPARATUS

Next, we require some items of laboratory equipment. It is best to use the 'Quickfit' or ground glass jointed apparatus, as this is most easy to assemble. We require for our first experiments an initial modest outlay :-

Stand and Clamps  
100ml and 250ml Round Bottomed Flasks  
Spatulas and tweezers  
Eye Droppers  
Dropping Funnel with pressure equalising tube  
100ml Beakers  
Ground glass stoppers to fit above  
Watch glasses  
Funnels  
Small spirit lamp



Make sure that the bore of all equipment is compatible and interchangeable and try to obtain as wide a bore as possible (24mm, say) as this facilitates the placing of substances in our flasks.

### INITIAL EXPERIMENTS

Our initial experiments will be those of Solution (alchemical symbol  $\text{—}\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{—}}$ ) and Precipitation ( $\text{—}\overset{\curvearrowleft}{\text{—}}$ ) and thus we are investigating the interface of the Solid and Liquid phases, of how substance moves from an Earth form to a Water form and vice versa.

As our observation of the experiments is of prime import, it is best if we can focus clearly on the flask, and the isolation of this from background can readily be obtained by conducting the experiments in a dark room, with the flask illuminated from below by a torch or other device (this should be secured in a fixed position rather than hand-held). I have used my own design of colour analyser for this purpose and it might be of help to others if they could make a similar device. This consists of three primary coloured bulbs each with a separate dimmer switch to enable a precise control of the colour illuminating the flask. (For those interested a detailed plan/circuit diagram of this colour analyser can be obtained by sending a S.A.E. to the Hermetic Journal). However, although of great value for observation this is not entirely necessary for experimentation. A small torch with pieces of coloured cellophane or "coloured theatrical gels" placed over the lens is almost as useful. It is however best to have the flask lit from below.

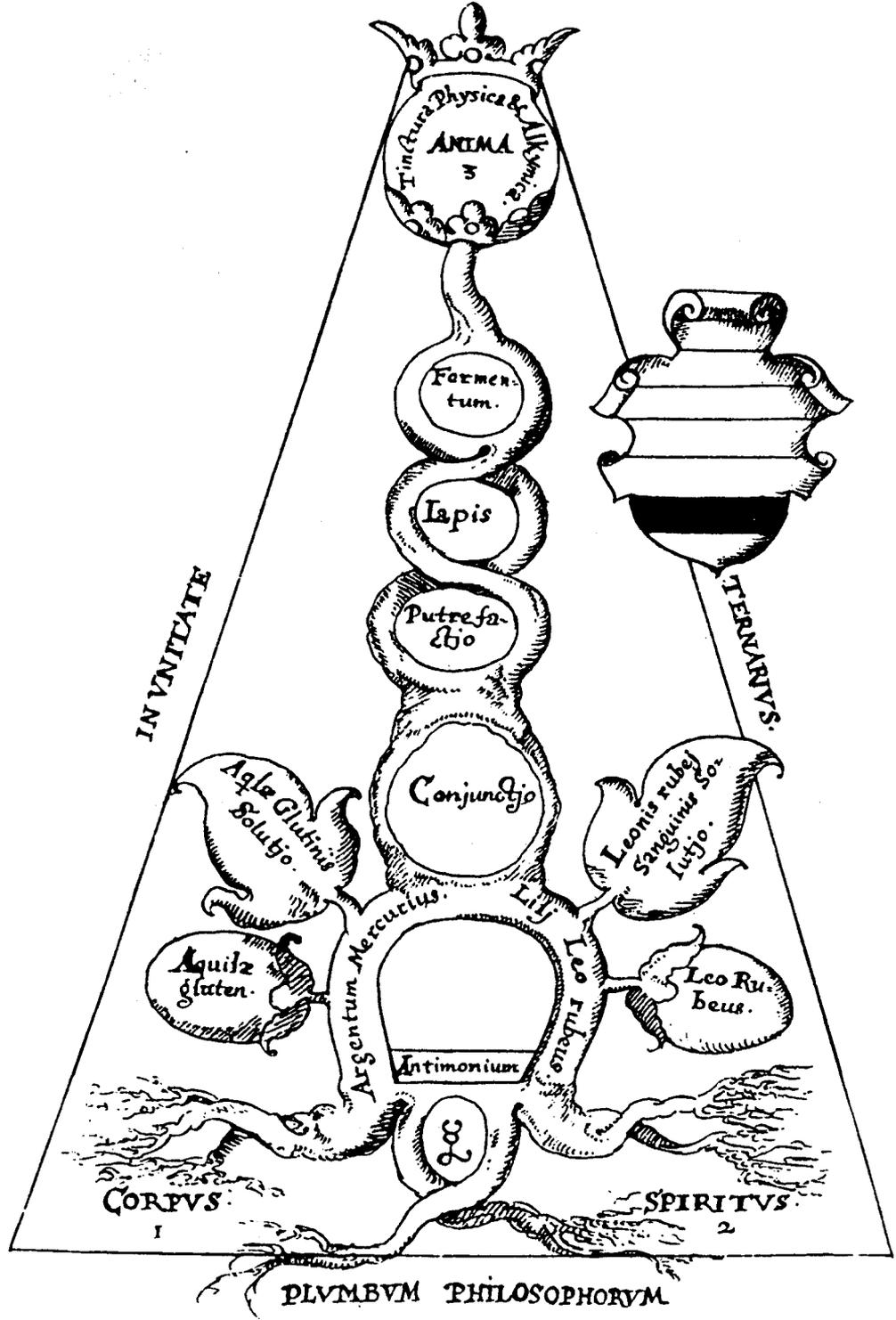
Fill a 100ml round bottomed flask, held in the clamp and stand, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  full of pure water, and place into this a few crystals of one of our substances (always use tongs, tweezers or a spatula to handle chemicals). Observe minutely the way in which the substance dissolves. One might for example, see streams of coloured liquid rising from the crystals, or a denser layer of liquid forming at the surface of the crystals may descend in the flask forming a layer at the bottom. Use illumination from the bottom and observe the changes using different colours of light. In some experiments, gently heat the base of the flask (the flask must not be sealed when this is done). Use a spirit lamp (not a candle as this will only soot up the base of the flask). The colour analyser uses three 60 watt and can generate some considerable heat on its own. One will see convection current forming in the flask, and dissolved material will be carried upwards and mix through the whole solute. Meditate upon this phenomenon, using the technique outlined in Hermetic Meditation No 10, bearing the experience into one's inner world, inwardly picturing it, and allowing this inner picture to take on its own life. Return outwardly to the experiment in progress, and absorbing with one's senses the continuing events in the flask, then inwardly digest these again.

### PRECIPITATIONS —

Here we will examine the ways in which the soluble salts of the metals can be made to precipitate themselves from solution through the addition of a solution of Sodium Hydroxide, Carbonate or Ammonia. These precipitates consist chemically of metal Hydroxides, Carbonates or basic Carbonates, and in the case of Copper and Zinc, complex ammonium compounds are formed. Make up a solution of one of our vitriols in a beaker, and also another solution of one of our reagents Lye or Soda (Ammonia is of course obtainable as a liquid solution). The precise strengths of these solutions will be left to the investigator to experiment with (begin say with a 10% volume for volume solution).

For our first experiment, place the solution of the metal salt in the 100 ml round bottomed flask, held in a clamp, to about  $\frac{1}{2}$  full. Then fit the dropping funnel (one with pressure equalising tube) to the flask, and with the stopcock closed, place one of our reagents into this funnel. (Alternatively one could use an eye dropper, picking up a small quantity of the reagent at a time, to drop into the open flask). Turn the stopcock gently, and allow a single drop of reagent (say Carbonate) to fall into the metal say Copper Sulphate - Blue Vitriol solution). Examine the precipitate formed in different coloured lights, and at the same time add further drops of Carbonate to the flask. Try to inwardly picture how the clear solution becomes instantly materialised into the precipitate (Water immediately becoming Earth). The precipitate will begin to rise and fall in the flask on convection currents. Allow this to become pictured inwardly though meditation. The clear solution holding in potential this precipitate of insoluble metal carbonate. (In the case of Copper, this is the basis Carbonate, which is chemically identical with Malachite - the green precious gemstone - the formation of Malachite in the Earth probably took place in a similar manner).

Run with the Hydroxide precipitates (the experiments in which Lye solution is run into the metal salt) of Iron and Copper, in particular, one will note a gradual colour change through the oxidation of these. Oxidation is a process which further Earths substances (as in the rusting process), bringing them into a more stable state. Its opposite - Reduction - produces a more potentially reactive binding of unstable energies (valencies in potential) in the substance.



INVINITATE

TERRARVS.

CORPVS

SPIRITVS

PLVMBVM PHILOSOPHORVM

This mandala is found as a figure in a manuscript translation of George Ripley's 'Marrow of Alchemy', dated to the mid-seventeenth century.

This mandala takes the form of a Tree of the Soul and shows the interweaving of two archetypal energies along a vertical axis. The essence of this figure would appear to parallel the eastern esotericism of the inner architecture of the Soul as the Chakras, the centres of subtle energy, found along the spine. These Chakras in eastern esotericism are described as having currents of soul energy, the IDA (lunar) and PINGALA (solar) NADI'S, entwined around them, and a central channel, the SUSHUMNA, wherein moves the Kundalini energy. This mandala pictures this archetypal reality in alchemical terms.

At the bottom of the illustration we see a horseshoe shaped form, like the pelvic bones in man. This is the site of the basal chakra, MULADHARA. It has four roots, and bears four growths (2 leaves and 2 fruits). Two of its roots lie in the CORPUS (body) and SPIRITUS (spirit). Thus the roots of the soul tree of man's being take their nourishment both from his bodily and spiritual nature. Another two roots twine around the symbol of Mercury, the living Quicksilver of the Soul, the Kundalini energy, and these roots reach down into the LEAD OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, the deep dark realm of the unconscious forces and impulses in the soul. This quixotic Mercury, paradoxically uniting the Lunar ☾ and Solar ☼ and earthly +, the spiritual and the material, is also pictured by another ambivalent substance, Antimony, the metal which is also a non-metal (a metalloid). The four petals of the Muladhara, are shown here as the two fruits - The Gluten of the White Eagle, and the Red Lion; and the leaves which bear the soluble flowing aspect of these archetypes - the Solution of the Eagle's Gluten, and the Solution of the Blood of the Red Lion. These are the two soul tinctures of the lunar and solar currents, the incarnation of these soul energies in soul substance, the Gluten of the Eagle corresponding to the Ida (Lunar) energies, and the Blood of the Red Lion to the Pingala (Solar) energies.

These two energies are polarised in the Muladhara but become united in the next and higher chakra, the Sexual centre (in eastern esotericism SVADISHTHANA), and we see this alchemically as the CONJUNCTION. Through alchemy we can find, whether we are physically male or female, both the male and female, solar and lunar currents in out beings, and our sexual centre is an area of our being where these two currents can be inwardly united.

The next chakra is that of the solar plexus centre (MANIPURA CHAKRA). This inner organ of the Soul has the task of digesting the distorted soul energies, and thus we find it here indicated as the site of the alchemical PUTREFACTION. We often become uncomfortably aware of this solar plexus centre when we have disturbed soul energies, as these are felt physically in that soul organ.

The next chakra above this is the Heart Centre (ANAHATA CHAKRA), the central organ of this line of chakras in the soul. It is the site of the Philosophers' Stone (the LAPIS). If the Stone is incarnated here in the Soul, that individual has then a solid foundation upon which to build the subtle architecture of his inner being.

Above this we find the Throat Chakra (VISUDDHA) in which lies the Alchemical FERMENT. This is that subtle substance which brings creative life into the soul forces. It provides the seething, bubbling, creatively outgoing soul energies. This is incarnated in Man's voice, in his word organ, which is the main channel for his creative expression, though this ferment works on other levels of creative work.

Above this is the TINCTURE, which resides in the Brow Centre. This, the

two petalled lotus (Ajna Chakra) of eastern esotericism, integrates the two soul currents Ida and Pingala, and as we see in this figure, at this point the two trunks of the soul tree finally fuse together. This Brow Chakra is the seat of the soul of an enlightened human being, who thus has the ability to tincture all he touches with his soul.

Finally, the Crown at the top of the diagram, illustrates the Crown Chakra (Sahasrara), the soul organ through which the enlightened being perceives and unites with the Cosmic, thus uniting the Cosmic with the inner potential of the Earthly, the PHILOSOPHIC LEAD.

## Reviews

**THE BOOK OF SPLENDOURS** by Eliphas Levi, with Appendix  
by Papus and a Foreword by R.A. Gilbert  
Aquarian Press, 1981 PB 191pp £3.50

**THE GREAT SECRET or OCCULTISM UNVEILED** by Eliphas Levi  
Aquarian Press, 1981 PB 188pp £3.50

These two books by Levi, issued in the *Studies in Hermetic Tradition* series of the Aquarian Press, provide us with two diverse though complimentary examples of the writings of this extremely versatile and influential magician, whose ideas are still relevant today, over a century after his death. In **THE BOOK OF SPLENDOURS** we see the Levi we all know so well, commenting upon the *Idra Rabba* book of the *Zohar*, which Mather's made well known through his translation produced some decades later. Levi's commentary here is of great value. This book also includes an interesting series of essays by Levi on the Temple legends of Hiram and Solomon, that, of course, underlies Freemasonry, together with a series of Lessons on the Qabalah. The book concludes with an extended essay on the Doctrine of Eliphas Levi written by Papus, one of Levi's foremost disciples. The other book in this series, **THE GREAT SECRET or Occultism Unveiled**, reveals another facet of Levi's personality and style. This is not a technical treatise on Qabalah, or a commentary on some ancient magical text, but a passionate, strongly argued book on the relevance of occult ideas to his times (and by implication to the present day). Levi ranges over many ideas Divination, Magnetism, evocation, the power of the priesthood in the Church, however, the thread which runs through this work, 'the Great Secret' that Levi tries to press upon us, is an awareness of the existence of polarity, and that synthesising these polarities is the task of the evolving human soul. These two works are a valuable addition to the published material of this great 19th Century magician, who had such a profound influence on Western Occultism.

**THE BOOK OF PRACTICAL CANDLE MAGIC** by Leo Vinci  
Aquarian Press, Wellingborough, Northants., 1981  
PB 128pp £2.95

An excellent guide to the use of candles in ritual. Leo Vinci, who has already written a fine book on **INCENSE** for the Aquarian Press series, outlines here a series of simple rituals using candles, and advocates that the practitioner should, as an integral part of this magical action, make his own candles. To this end, he includes an opening section on Candle making, including moulded and dip-coated candles, the adding of perfumes, essential oils in the wax, and the making of coloured candles. He introduces a simple ritual for anointing candles used in ritual, and includes a long and full section on the Importance of Colour in ritual. Practical suggestions on the ritual use of candles constitute the remainder of the book, which includes Angelic planetary workings, the polarities of Dark and Light in a Lilith ritual, and most interestingly the author has taken a Roman Catholic ritual indulgence 'the Novena', penetrated to the spiritual archetype of this ritual, and synthesised a fascinating, Magical or Mystical Novena ritual, an elaborate and elevated, though in essence, simple ritual form. Leo Vinci does not hold to hardened fixed opinions, but his book is full of suggestions and further indications for alternative methods of working. The essence and attraction of candle Magic lies in its simplicity and approachability, and the fact that candles are an easy and direct means of focussing consciousness and inner energies. This book certainly provides the basic knowledge and encouragement for people who wish to find a direct and tangible means of focussing spiritual energies in their daily life.

**THE SALAMANDER TALES** by Fred Gettings  
Floris Books, 21 Napier Road, Edinburgh HB 94pp £3.95  
with illustrations by the author

This is essentially a book of fairy stories for children, though I suspect it will be of interest to many adults, as unlike the standard over-sentimentalised stories worked out of the imagination of professional writers, this little work arises out of an awareness of certain esoteric ideas. The author, Fred Gettings, is an acknowledged authority on the symbolism of the Western tradition particularly as revealed in the visual arts, and this charming little book is a new departure for him. These stories have woven into them esoteric ideas on the nature spirits and the evolution of the Earth's substance, but this has been done in such a delightful manner that the writing, through humour and characterisation, transcends the didactic 'teaching story' style that less able writers can easily fall into. There are genuine occult truths woven into the imaginative pictures of the stories, and I suspect that parents who have an awareness of this esoteric content will have a great deal of fun reading these to their children. Fred Gettings has here touched upon the essence of the storytelling of ancient times, being able to wrap serious ideas in such charming stories and one hopes that in time he may be able to develop further this method of working allegorically with esoteric ideas in a more extended work, as he is such a good storyteller.

These experiments should be repeated in reverse, i.e. dropping the metal salts, in turn, into a flask containing solutions of Sodium Carbonate or Hydroxide or Ammonia.

Finally, as another variant, one can place large crystals of metal salts into solutions of Carbonate, Hydroxide or Ammonia, and examine the growth of precipitate on the surface. And this can also be done in reverse, adding crystals of Carbonate and Hydroxide to the vitriols in solution.

The essence of these experiments is to acquaint the alchemical experimenter with the process of Solution and Precipitation, and Nothing will have been achieved unless the experimenter undertakes to meditate upon the experiences, working with this inwardly. It is the cultivation of an inner experience of what is revealed in the changes in our flask, that constitutes the work of this type of Soul Alchemy. One must lead the outer changes in the flask, into one's soul and let this pattern structure one's inner experience. In this way, one touches upon the inner meaning of Solution or Precipitation. One cannot discover this by mental work alone, nor merely as the results of experiments, but only through connecting these two realms, uniting *Theoria* with *Praxis*.

These initial experiments (some 17 in all) should keep us busy over the next few months and provide a starting point and basis for working alchemically with substance.