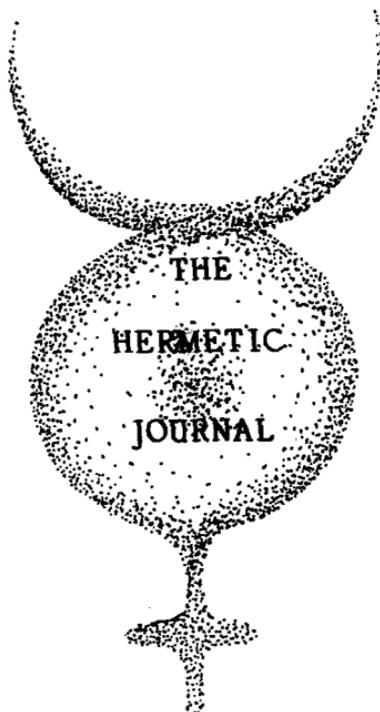


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EDITORIAL

Over the past months there has been a great public concern stirred up by the media focussing on the immanent possibility of nuclear war. Of course, such media attention is engineered by political forces in society - the US presidential election, and various posturings that our rulers feel they need to adopt. Those who are trying to reverse the nuclear weapons policies of their governments, have had to change tactics recently. A simple statement of the immorality of such weapons is no longer effective, and opposition groups have had to try to influence governments by raising the consciousness of ordinary people to an awareness of

the terrible ways in which a nuclear conflict would impact on their individual lives. The protestors no doubt hope that this awareness by individuals of their own lack of safety might eventually through the ballot box impinge upon governmental policies.

I can well understand this move on the part of opposition groups, however, I feel this is costing a high price in terms of the inner security of people's souls. Nuclear weapons might to some politicians seem a way of defending and giving security to the outer material conditions of our way of life and society, but paradoxically, I believe they are destroying our inner security.

The recent screening of two nuclear holocaust films perhaps marked the

consolidation of this impulse to confront the mass public with these views, and recently a number of concerned scientists have, in a public forum looked at the consequences of nuclear war, telling of the terrible possibility of a "nuclear winter", that is, a disruptive change in the climate of the earth perhaps lasting many months or years, initiated by a nuclear war. To the initial destructive power of the weapons, and the long term radiation hazard of the fallout, we have to add constant twilight and extremely low temperatures for an extended period over much of the earth which would not allow plants to grow. This awesome picture of what could happen in the event of nuclear war, is hoped might convince our leaders of the futility of possessing these weapons, however, the more cynical amongst us doubt they will allow even this horrific picture to influence their war games.

But this bleak vision is being constantly pressed into the souls of ordinary people by the media, and I for one, wonder just what it will do there. The picture of the nuclear winter can be paralleled with the Nigredo in the alchemical process - it is in a sense a Cosmic Nigredo. At this particular time, it seems that forces exist in society that wish to press this Nigredo experience deep into people's souls, using the powerful images of film and television. This, I foresee, will give rise to great problems. The Nigredo is a positive transformative soul experience only if one is able to undertake it in a conscious and voluntary way as part of a path of inner development. To be thrown into Nigredo experience, without any sense of its purpose and place within a longer term inner transformation, results only in an entirely negative inner state, an immersion of the soul in depressive darkness. Only when the soul works

alchemically to transform experiences can immersion in the Nigredo become valid. Our society seems determined in many ways to press souls into such a dark hopelessness, through the nuclear winter scenario, the lack of hope for unemployed people, the grim scenes of industrial conflict, the vacuum created by political assassinations, and the awful reality of famine and starvation throughout the world. Collectively, we at present, face a Nigredo, but, I fear, without enough awareness of the inner alchemy of transformation that can see this as part of a process, and so inwardly digest this grim experience. Many souls lacking inner strength will be damaged by this burden, being unable to raise this to a positive current within themselves.

There have been few moments in human affairs when the alchemical picture of transformation of the forces in the soul has been more relevant than now. Only those who can find a spiritual core to their life through which they can transform the negative experiences of the Nigredo will be able to survive this inner battle with their souls intact.

An alchemical view of the potentialities of transformation of forces in the soul is more than ever necessary, and those of us who keep witness to these esoteric ideas should recognise the importance these will have for the future. The alchemy of the soul is one of the most powerful keys to the secret of inwardly confronting the harsh realities of our outer life, and many people may soon have need of the inner strength that such spiritual ideas can bring.

We, who work to preserve such ideas thus have a duty to the future as well as to the past.

Adam McAlea

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Those among my subscribers who regularly purchase the Magnum Opus books may be wondering why I have not published any new volumes over the last six months. I have in fact been extremely busy. A substantial order for my books has meant my having to devote July, August and September almost exclusively to bookbinding and the handcolouring of books. Also the edition of the Mylius emblems has required more work than expected and I have decided to include a great deal of additional material. Once this issue of the Journal is despatched I will be able to get down to the printing and binding of the Mylius volume which thus should be ready in the middle of November.

There are also a number of items in preparation - another volume of Dee material - the Compendium of Hermetic Emblems - The Maier Atalanta Fugiens - The Freher Mystical Manuscripts - among others. So I shall shortly be announcing firm publication dates for more of the Magnum Opus volumes. I have just produced a new Magnum Opus catalogue, so if anyone would like one please send a large stamped addressed envelope (people outside Britain can send International Reply Coupon). Also I would welcome any suggestions as to ways in which I could increase my booksales and Journal subscriptions. Perhaps some of my subscribers may have colleagues or friends they could encourage to take out a sub.

I have recently been able to purchase new printing equipment which should somewhat improve the quality of my printing, and help keep costs down to a reasonable level. So with this new investment I feel sure that I will be able to hold my prices to their present level for the new few years. Such investment is a statement of my commitment to the publishing venture.

I have also been able to purchase a high quality cassette tape recorder and duplicator, and I intend to produce, given sufficient time and energy, some cassette tapes of meditations and possibly lectures or commentaries on hermetic themes. I hope to announce the full details of these early in 1985.

The response to the Rosicrucian Vault Competition has been excellent, the quality of the material submitted has been of a very high standard. I hope to be able to publish most of these contributions in a volume devoted to the Rosicrucian Vault. This will probably be done as number 4 in the Hermetic Research Series, and the earliest such a volume could be produced would be January 1985. The winner of the competition will be announced in the next issue of the Journal.

I am trying to organise a weekend workshop on hermetic ideas to be held in London early in 1985 and had hoped to be able to announce it in this issue, but unfortunately have no firm dates or venues that I can give here, but I will keep my regular subscribers posted on developments.

1985, I feel, will be extremely important for the future of the work being undertaken to revive interest in hermeticism. I wish in the longer term to find some way of opening up my work to allow others to become involved in various ways. I also feel there is a need to create a focus for hermetic studies and serious research into the esoteric Arts and Sciences perhaps in the form of some kind of centre devoted to such matters. The resources and contacts of the Hermetic Journal and the Magnum Opus Sourceworks, could be a basis upon which such a project might be founded.

The death of Frater Albertus on the 14th of July this year both saddened me and came to me as quite a shock. Albert Richard Riedel under his pseudonym Frater Albertus had done more than any other person I know to encourage a wider interest in the possibilities of Physical Alchemy. Of German extraction, he lived all of his adult life in the United States settling down in Salt Lake City in Utah. Having a life long interest in occult ideas, he was involved in various occult groups and movements in the United States, but in 1960 when he was about 50 years old he established the Paracelsus Research Society and published some 'Laboratory Bulletins'. In these Bulletins he outlined his method for researching physical alchemy, in particular what he called the spagyric technique, following indications found in Paracelsus. This involved a sequence of physical alchemical operations which separated, say a plant material, into its three principles, its Salt, Sulphur and Mercury, and then brought them together again and ultimately formed what he called a Vegetable Stone. Frater Albertus saw that these spagyric preparations could be extremely effective as medicines, and as interest in his work developed he was able to set up projects to investigate the medicinal application of these preparations.



However, Albertus will be remembered for the personal tuition, encouragement and inspiration he gave to many individuals, for in 1962 he began to teach his method, initially to a small group of people inspired by his first publications, and eventually developing this teaching into a planned program with a seven year curriculum. His reputation spread to Germany and to Australia and later he travelled widely to further the impulse he had begun. He slipped well into the role of teacher, and had an inspiring, charismatic quality.

As I said before, his death came as quite a shock to me. For over the last few years he had seemed so full of grand plans and new ideas. In 1981 he set up the Paracelsus College and hoped for substantial investments so that this could become established as an accredited college in the US academic environment. I felt he had enormous reserves of energy and much more of his life left to dedicate to his work for alchemy, but perhaps these last few years reveal a desperate struggle he was undertaking to incarnate a solid organisation that could continue his work after his death. Perhaps he sensed that only a few years were left to him to bring this about.

During the last few years of his life he was a rather controversial figure. Creating the College caused intense problems within his organisation which were never really healed. In order to build up enthusiasm for this project he had to promise much and consequently often disappointed some people, and his charismatic style of lecturing did not always win him converts. His style did not seem to especially catch the interest of British esotericists.

However, his work for Alchemy has been of the greatest import. He was able to make people consider physical alchemy as a valid area for research, when this had long been overshadowed by chemistry. He took chemistry on board and showed that modern chemistry could be used as a tool for investigating alchemy. It was a matter of ones perspective as to whether one undertook an operation as an alchemist or as a chemist.

It is sad that Frater Albertus is no longer with us, keeping witness to the validity of a Physical alchemy, and inspiring others to pursue the great work.

HOMO QUADRATUS

Andrew Mouldey ◉

[1]

"One becomes two, two becomes three and out of the third comes the one as the fourth". Jung has described this axiom of Maria Prophetissa as a "leitmotiv" which "runs ... throughout almost the whole lifetime of alchemy, extending over more than seventeen centuries" (1). Few students of alchemy would take issue with Jung on this statement, but opinions tend to divide as to whether the axiom is trinitarian or quaternian in structure. It will come as no surprise that Jung favours the latter view and declares that "the quaternary is muffled and alembicated" in the axiom (2). By contrast, Victor White maintains that the formula is "eminently trinitarian" and it describes "a procession of the other from the one and of the third from them both, as distinct from a complete quaternity" (3).

As I am no numerologist I shall not attempt to pronounce on this controversy but will return to some of the broader implications of the quaternity problem that arose in an earlier paper : 'Microcosmic Reflections' (4). To recapitulate briefly : for Jung, the quaternity symbolizes the self or the wholeness of man, which he regards as being empirically indistinguishable from the imago Dei. On this view the Christian Trinity is one-sided and incomplete because it lacks the fourth principle, namely God's shadow. Jung's provocative and heterodox claims are challenged by Victor White, who argues that ternary symbols are "archetypal images in their own right" rather than failed quaternities. If this is so, the Christian God-image is complete in itself as the Three in One, not a four minus one. Although the self and the imago Dei are distinct archetypes, they interpenetrate through the mediation of Christ who is both the second Person of the Trinity and a symbol of the fourfold self. Thus the Four is "brought into the life of the Three, without the Three in any way becoming four or the four being obliterated by Three, the creature by the Creator" (5).

This modification allows Victor White to clarify the phenomenology of the imago Dei. Yet, from the metaphysical point of view, the differentiation of self from God-image entails a restriction. The self is now seen as "I" to the imago Dei as "thou" and Jung's perspective is confined by an exoteric, dualistic theology. In order to obviate this limitation we will turn to the trinitarian metaphysics of Meister Eckhart. Our move towards an esoteric, non-dualistic perspective should complement rather than contradict the exoteric position, transcend rather than annul the distinction Victor White has drawn between the God-image and self, Trinity and quaternity.

Christian esotericism views the Trinity in relation to the divine Ground or Godhead from whence it proceeds. In the mystical theology of Meister Eckhart this Ground is identical with the ground of the soul. In other words the

"I-thou" relationship is transcended in the non-duality of the Godhead. With his characteristic boldness, Eckhart goes on to declare that just as the Son proceeds from the Father so is he born in the soul, the Father, who bears the Son in eternity, simultaneously "gives birth to His Son in the soul, in the very same way as he gives birth to him in eternity and no differently. He must do it whether He likes it or not" (6).

The birth of Christ in the soul brings man into participation with the life of the Trinity and the Four is "brought into the life of the Three". But for Eckhart this birth is merely a prelude to the "breaking through" of the soul to the divine Ground beyond all distinctions. Only then can the soul love God as it should and as He is - "a non God, a non spirit, a non image ; rather as He is a sheer pure limpid One, detached from all duality" (7).

[2]

Through the birth of the Son in the soul man enters into a new mode of being, but by 'breaking through' the soul passes beyond being and beyond duality to the Divine ground that is also its own ground. In the first state the division between subject and object, Knower and Known, has not been transcended, but the soul does partake in a mode of knowing that is qualitatively different from ordinary knowledge.

'There is something in the soul that is uncreated and uncreatable. If the whole soul were of such a nature she would be uncreated and uncreatable. This is the Intellect'. (8)

Whereas ordinary knowledge derives from the empirical ego, intellectual intuition proceeds from the ground of the soul or the self. Accordingly the Intellect can be defined as the power of cognition of the Self or God's act of knowing actualized in man.

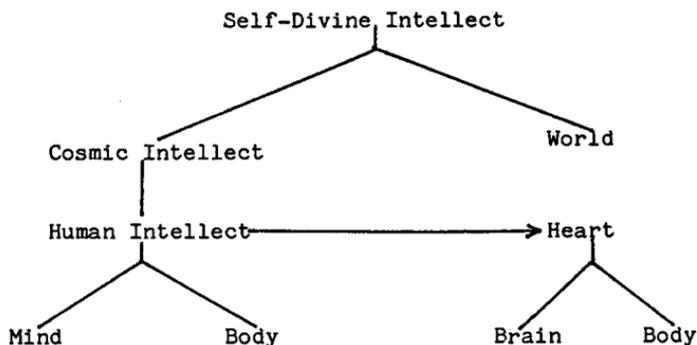
This doctrine has been developed by the metaphysician Frithjof Schuon, who has advanced the thesis of a universal gnosis or perennial philosophy that derives from the Intellect and finds expression in the esoteric teachings that are to be found in all authentic religious traditions, e.g. Neoplatonism, Sufism, Vedanta, Zen. However, because esotericism is only accessible to a minority it needs to be complemented by religious exotericism. Just as the esotericist apprehends truth directly through gnosis, so does the exotericist obtain an indirect cognition through faith. It would take us outside the scope of this essay, and of the Hermetic Journal, to discuss Schuon's thesis of 'the transcendent unity of religions' (9), but we can, at least, consider his account of the Intellect-Self as a cosmological doctrine. *

[* In Jung's Collected Works, "self" is printed with a lower case "s" and I have followed this convention where the psychological term is intended. Accordingly I adopt the upper case for the "Self" of metaphysic (in conformity with Schuon's usage). Whereas the Jungian self is defined as "the centre of the psyche" the Self of the perennial philosophy should be understood as a trans-psyche principle, equivalent to the Atman of Advaita Vedanta or Eckhart's "ground of the soul".

Through his work on the alchemist Dorn, Jung was led to the trans-psyche realm of the Unus-Mundi. See : C.W. 14, 'Mysterium Coniunctionis', VI:9 - here the metaphysics are however muted and in the following section Jung beats a Kantian retreat. Schuon's accusation that Jung reduces the spiritual to the psychic is, in my opinion, precipitate.]

Sacred cosmologies have a common basis in the correspondences between microcosm and macrocosm. From the standpoint of metaphysic, the Intellect that dwells in man as microcosm is also immanent in the macrocosm. Schuon calls the former the "human Intellect" and the latter the "cosmic Intellect", while reserving the term "Divine Intellect" to denote the Self in its transcendence (10).

In his essay on 'The Ternary Aspect of the Human Microcosm', he postulates a correspondence between 'Self-Mind-World' and 'Intellect-mind-body'. 'Self' and 'Mind' in the first triad are equivalent terms for Divine Intellect and cosmic Intellect respectively and, in the second, 'Intellect' denotes the human intellect. This Intellect has its symbolic centre in the heart (12), while the mind or ego has its sensory seat in the brain but identifies with the body as a whole. Both mind and body constitute a bipolarized projection of the human Intellect, whereas the heart-centre is exteriorized by the brain and body. On the macrocosmic level the Self as Divine Intellect divides into cosmic Intellect and the world :

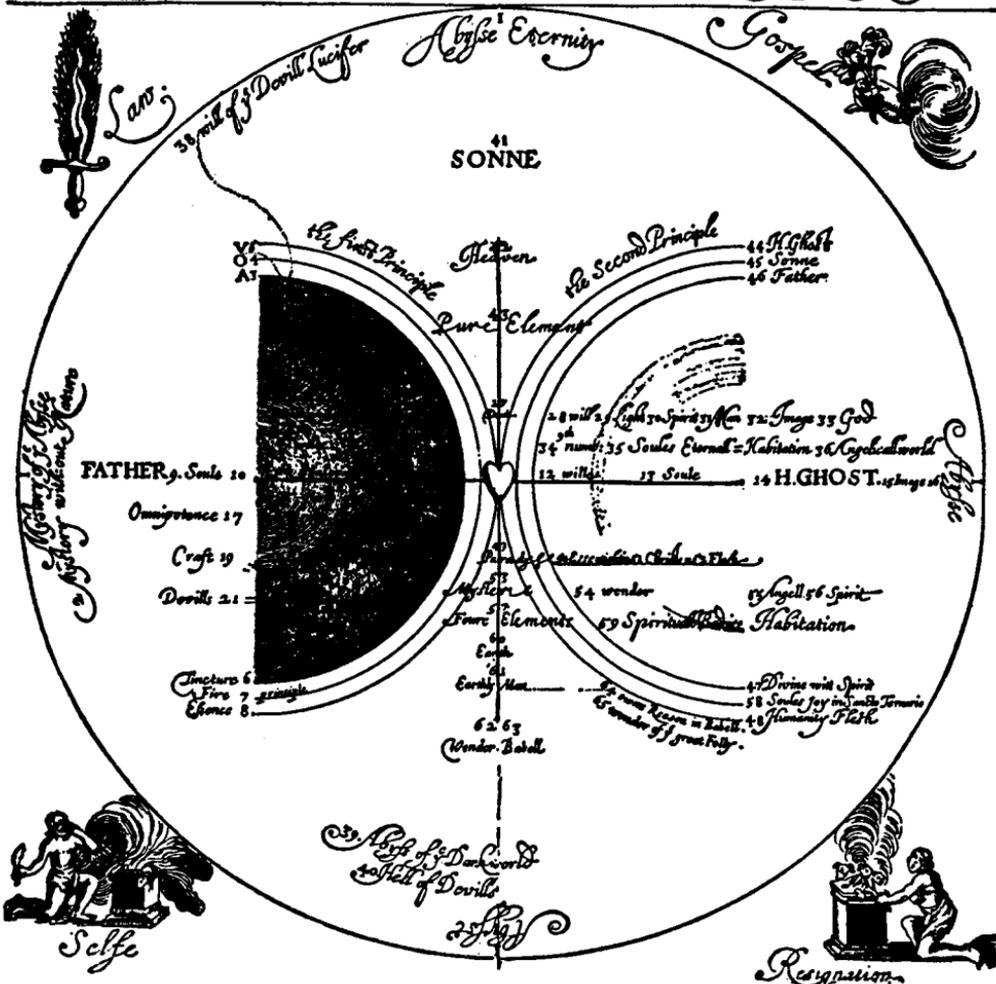


The cosmic Intellect is "the luminous and celestial centre" of the macrocosm. These opposites, says Schuon, constitute the projection of the Self in "existential nothingness" (13), while in the microcosm the mind and body project the human Intellect in the existential periphery which is the Kingdom of alternatives. On both levels, macrocosmic and microcosmic, there is a "fall from non-duality to duality, principle to manifestation". Yet there is nothing fortuitous about this ; man is not "thrown into the world to die", as the existentialists and their gnostic predecessors maintain (14), but projected from a transcendent centre into time and space. Neither is the world the work of an inferior demiurge, rather it is the emanation of the Divine Intellect. Just as man must eventually be withdrawn into the Self from which he is projected, so must the world as manifestation return to the Self as principle :

'Our world is but a furtive and almost accidental coagulation of an immense 'beyond' which one day will burst forth and in which the terrestrial world will be reabsorbed when it has completed its cycle of material coagulation '. (15)

This is no private speculation on the part of Schuon, but a statement of the eschatology of the primordial tradition.

The Philosophique Globe, or Eye of 7 wonders of Eternity, or Looking-Glass of wisdom.



In 'A Study in the Process of Individuation' (16), Jung includes an extraordinary mandala from Jakob Bohme's 'Forty Questions concerning the Soul'. It consists of a quaternity comprised of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, with Earth or Earthly Man as the fourth. The figures are arranged in a cross with the Son and Earthly Man forming respectively the top and bottom of the vertical axis, while the Father and Holy Ghost are situated on the horizontal. At the centre there is a heart flanked by two semi-circles facing away from each other : one on the left symbolizing the Divine Wrath-fire, that on the right, Divine Light and Love.

Jung does not offer a detailed analysis of the diagram but it should be possible in the preceding sections - the Godhead, Trinity and quaternity, the heart as symbolic seat of the Self - and the symbolism of Bohme's mandala. Here the outermost circle, representing the Abyss, corresponds to the uncreated Ground, while the cross, made up of the Father, Son, Holy Ghost and Earthly man, depicts the soul's participation in the life of the Trinity. According to Victor White this interpenetration of the Three in One with the four, Creator and creature, requires the mediation of the Son as second Person in the Trinity and symbol of the self. In Bohme's mandala the incarnate Son is symbolized by the heart at the centre of the quaternity, while for Schuon the Heart-Intellect is personified by Christ :

'If "the Word is made flesh" it is because the Heart-Intellect has penetrated into the night of the body in order to reintegrate 'projected' or separated existence in the unity and peace of pure Being.' (17)

Through this coniunctio the Three in One is, to use Eckhart's expression, "fused but not confused" with the four.

NOTES

- (1) C.G. Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, C.W. 12, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968, p23
- (2) *Ibid.*, p. 26
- (3) Victor White, Soul and Psyche, Collins and Harvill Press, 1960, pp 106-7.

According to E.J. Holmyard, "... the number four was very little emphasised by the alchemists, three, five and seven being the favoured : apart of course from the four Aristotelian elements". Cited in H.L. Philp, Jung and the Problem of Evil, Rockliff, London, 1958, p. 74

Philp draws on Holmyard's statement to refute Jung's claim that four is the most significant number in alchemy. However, his argument overlooks two considerations :

- (i) Holmyard seems to be referring to occurrences of the number "4" in alchemy rather than geometric and symbolic representations of the quaternity ;
- (ii) Jung's position is not based on statistics. He maintains that four is the most significant number in alchemy from a psychological point of view.

- (4) The Hermetic Journal No 24, Summer 1984, pg 5- 13
- (5) Soul and Psyche, p. 113
- (6) Meister Eckhart : Sermones and Treatises, Vol. II, translated and edited by M. O'C. Walshe, Watkins 1981. Sermon 65, p. 134
- (7) Ibid., Sermon 96, p. 335
- (8) Walshe, Volume I, p. li
- (9) Frithjof Schuon, The Transcendent Unity of Religions, Harper Torchbooks, 1975 (revised edition)
- (10) Frithjof Schuon, Gnosis : Divine Wisdom, Perennial Books, 1978, p. 78
The divine Intellect is "Light and pure Act", the cosmic Intellect "is a receptacle or mirror in relation to God and light in relation to man" and the human Intellect "is a mirror in relation to both of the foregoing and light in relation to the individual soul". (loc. cit.)
- (11) Ibid., Chapter 7
- (12) This Sufi doctrine is treated at length in Martin Ling's What is Sufism ?, Allen and Unwin, 1975, Ch. 5, 'The Heart'
- (13) Schuon, Gnosis : Divine Wisdom, p. 99
- (14) Schuon dissociates the 'gnosis' that finds expression in the perennial philosophy from those religious movements that are labelled 'gnostic'. For the parallels between gnosticism and modern existentialism, see : Hans Jonas, The Gnostic Religion, Beacon Press, Boston, 1963, Ch. 13, 'Gnosticism, Nihilism and Existentialism'
- (15) Schuon, Logic and Transcendence, Harper and Row, 1975, p. 94
- (16) C.G. Jung, Collected Works 9, (i), Section VI, pp 290 ff (see Figure 1, p. 297)
- (17) Schuon, Gnosis : Divine Wisdom, p. 99

[Errata to Andrew Mouldey's previous article "Microcosmic Reflections" in the Hermetic Journal No 24 :-

page 6, para4, line 5 - "...the transformations of the self as totality of the self" should read "...of the self as totality of the psyche."

page 12, para 2, line 1, - "The interpretation of the Three in One and the Four..." should read "The inter-penetration..."

In this new feature intended to continue for the next few issues, I will present in each issue one of the shorter hermetic allegories for the consideration of my readers. Rather than providing a commentary or analysis in advance, I would prefer that readers puzzled over these allegories and tried to come to their own interpretation or experiences through working with these in their own way. Readers are invited to contribute their own ideas on each allegory which I could incorporate in a short interpretative analysis to be included in the following issue.

The first allegory is from Thomas Vaughan's 'Lumen de Lumine' which unusually had included an emblematic plate illustrating the text.

Every man naturally desires a superiority, to have treasures of gold and silver, and to seem great in the eyes of the world. God indeed created all things for the use of man, that he might rule over them and acknowledge therein the singular goodness and omnipotence of God, give Him thanks for His benefits, honor Him and praise Him. But there is no man looks after these things otherwise than by spending his days idly. They would enjoy them without any previous labor and danger; neither do they look for them in that place where God has treasured them up, Who expects also that man should seek for them there, and to those that seek will He give them. But there is not any that labors for a possession in that place, and therefore these riches are not found. For the way to this place - and the place itself - have been unknown for a long time, and it is hidden from the greatest part of the world. But notwithstanding that it be difficult and laborious to discover this way and place, yet the place should be sought after. But it is not the will of God to conceal anything from those that are His; and therefore in this last age - before the final judgement comes - all these things shall be manifested to those that are worthy. As He Himself - though obscurely, lest it should be manifested to the unworthy - has spoken in a certain place, "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed and nothing hidden that shall not be known." We therefore, being moved by the Spirit of God, do declare the will of God to the world, which we have also already performed and published in several languages. But most men either revile or condemn our Manifesto, or else - waiving the Spirit of God - they expect the proposals thereof from us, supposing that we will straightway teach them how to make gold by art, or furnish them with ample treasures, whereby they may live pompously in the face of the world, swagger and make wars, turn usurers, gluttons and drunkards, live unchastely and defile their whole life with several other sins - all of which are contrary to the blessed will of God. These men should have learned from those ten Virgins - whereof five that were foolish and demanded oil for their lamps from those five that were wise - how that the case is much otherwise. It is expedient that every man should labor for this treasure by the assistance of God and his own particular search and industry. But the perverse intentions of these fellows we understand out of their own writings, by the singular grace and revelation of God. We do stop our ears and wrap ourselves, as it were, in clouds to avoid the bellowings and howlings of those men who cry out in vain for gold. And thus indeed it comes about that they brand us with infinite calumnies and slanders, which nevertheless we do not resent; but God in His good time will judge them for it. But after we had known well - though unknown to you - and perceived by your writing how diligent you are to pursue the Holy Scripture and seek the true knowledge of God, we have out of many thousands thought you worthy of some answer; and we signify this much to you by the will of God and the admonition of the Holy Spirit.

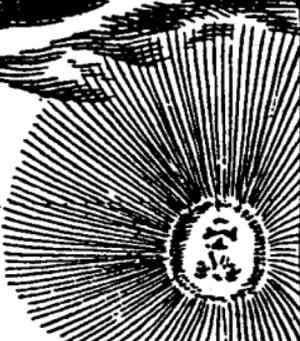


Non nisi Parvulus

Incantatus

Naturæ
Lunæ

Invocatus
Mons
Magorum



There is a Mountain situated in the midst of the earth or center of the world, which is both small and great. It is soft, also above measure hard and stony. It is far off and near at hand, but by the providence of God invisible. In it are hidden the most ample treasures, which the world is not able to value. This mountain - by envy of the devil, who always opposes the glory of God and the happiness of man - is compassed about with very cruel beasts and ravening birds - which make the way thither both difficult and dangerous. And therefore until now - because the time is not yet come - the way thither could not be sought after nor found out. But now at last the way is to be found by those that are worthy - but nonetheless by every man's self-labor and endeavors.

To this Mountain you shall go in a certain night - when it comes - most long and most dark, and see that you prepare yourselves by prayer. Insist upon the way that leads to the Mountain, but ask not of any man where the way lies. Only follow your Guide, who will offer himself to you and will meet you on the way. But you are not to know him. This Guide will bring you to the Mountain at midnight, when all things are silent and dark. It is necessary that you arm yourselves with a resolute, heroic courage, lest you fear those things that will happen, and so fall back. You need no sword nor any other bodily weapons; only call upon God sincerely and heartily.

When you have discovered the Mountain the first miracle that will appear is this: A most vehement and very great wind that will shake the Mountain and shatter the rocks to pieces. You will be encountered also by lions and dragons and other terrible beasts; but fear not any of these things. Be resolute and take heed that you turn not back, for your Guide - who brought you thither - will not suffer any evil to befall you. As for the treasure, it is not yet found, but it is very near.

After this wind will come an earthquake that will overthrow those things which the wind has left, and will make all flat. But be sure that you do not fall off. The earthquake being past, there will follow a fire that will consume the earthly rubbish and disclose the treasure. But as yet you cannot see it.

After these things and near the daybreak there will be a great calm, and you will see the Day-star arise, the dawn will appear, and you will perceive a great treasure. The most important thing in it and the most perfect is a certain exalted Tincture, with which the world - if it served God and were worthy of such gifts - might be touched and turned into most pure gold.

This Tincture being used as your Guide shall teach you will make you young when you are old, and you will perceive no disease in any part of your bodies. By means of this Tincture also you will find pearls of an excellence which cannot be imagined. But do not you arrogate anything to yourselves because of your present power, but be contented with what your Guide shall communicate to you. Praise God perpetually for this His gift, and have a special care that you do not use it for worldly pride, but employ it in such works as are contrary to the world. Use it rightly and enjoy it as if you had it not. Live a temperate life and beware of all sin. Otherwise your Guide will forsake you and you will be deprived of this happiness. For know of a truth: whosoever abuses this Tincture and does not live exemplarily, purely and devoutly before men, will lose this benefit and scarcely any hope will be left of recovering it afterward.

THE SEARCH FOR A SOUND PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS TO ESOTERICISM

Adam McLean ◉

Over the past months here in Britain a television series "the Sea of Faith" seems to have stirred up a degree of controversy. In this series of programmes philosopher Don Cupitt examined, what he recognised as a crisis which has been pressed upon religious faith, through the investigations of philosophers over the past 400 years. He showed how various philosophers in penetrating the contradictions inherent in the naive aspects of our religious faith, have forced us if we are to be intellectually and spiritually honest to reconsider the foundations of our faith. In a sense he was saying that we must grow up philosophically and spiritually, and no longer cling to a naive and childlike view of the spiritual, but be challenged to develop a mature and philosophically consistent spirituality. Of course such views so openly and cogently stated have upset a considerable number of people who felt that their faith and belief was being undermined by their being forced to consider these philosophical insights that Cupitt presented. Of course, to anyone interested in philosophy or the evolution of ideas, such thoughts are part of the philosophical landscape and must be taken into consideration and worked into their world view. We cannot just step back from the investigations of philosophers, the implications of scientific discoveries, and the insights of creative writers, and bury ourselves in a naive and antiquated philosophy.

Although this programme impacted primarily upon the traditional christian religious beliefs prevailing in our society, I think that perhaps esotericists might likewise take Don Cupitt's insights and strictures to heart. The occult traditions we are heir to, are often founded upon similar naive philosophical perceptions as Cupitt seeks to mercilessly excise from Christianity. The fact that esotericism is of little interest to present day philosophers, reflect the reality that its philosophical substratum, its centuries old metaphysical foundations, bears within it philosophical inconsistencies that were pointed out long ago, consequently marking it only of antiquarian interest to the sharp minds of philosophers today.

Now, we esotericists can have two reactions to this rejection of an esoteric spirituality by the prevailing philosophical orthodoxy. We could, in turn, reject their rejection as being unrealistic, and in a smug way dismiss contemporary philosophy as being a realm of lofty intellectualisation and linguistic analysis cut off from an awareness of the spiritual, and in our rejection reaffirm our faith in the old principles, the solid ground of our ancient metaphysics. There is a sense in which this could be a valid path to take, but I believe it is essentially a retreat, an avoidance of certain

difficulties, and shows a lack of courage in tackling the great philosophical problems that are incarnating in human thought today. Having a positive and I trust a forward looking view on the continuing relevance of esoteric spirituality, I also feel that if we cut ourselves off from the thrust of contemporary ideas we will fail to carry the esoteric tradition onwards to the future, condemning it to the past. As I have often pointed out before, the alchemists, hermeticists and Rosicrucians of earlier centuries were in the forefront of the philosophy of their own age, not fighting a rearward battle against new ideas, and so must esotericists be in relation to our own age. So I advocate a second approach, that we as esotericists must try to take on board the ideas and insights at the leading edge of contemporary thought and try to see the spiritual significance these have to our esotericism. This may sometimes mean we have to abandon or revise our beliefs and ways of describing the realities we perceive, but only through such constant re-evaluation will esotericism be strengthened. To try to seal off esotericism from being penetrated and changed by the sharpness of contemporary philosophy and scientific developments, would be a profound error, I believe, merely sapping its strength by withdrawing it from the mainstream of creative evolution.

So we must, in my view, try to find channels through which modern philosophy and esoteric spirituality can meet and refresh each other. In this short article it will not be possible to go into any detailed consideration of such matters, but perhaps I can just put forward one point of contact that has in the past few months being insistently pressing itself upon my consciousness. So here I would like us to consider the significance that the metamathematician Kurt Gödel made to modern philosophy and logic through his Undecidability Theorems. The ideas of Gödel, first enunciated in the 1930's are so profound and revolutionary for our view of human thinking, that they deserve much more attention than has to date been paid to them. The implications of Gödel's discoveries have, I believe, a profound, spiritual import, but, since they are couched in the abstruse language of mathematics, the significance of Gödel's ideas are understood only by a few specialist logicians and philosophers of mathematics. However, I hope here to show that they have an import ranging far beyond this seemingly limited sphere.

I first came across Gödel's ideas in 1966 when I was studying mathematics. I had a conventional scholastic background at an ordinary school and did not expect much intellectual stimulation outside the examination syllabus, so like most people I had to educate myself and follow up my own interests. At that time my search for the spiritual core to life, lead me to struggle with philosophy and cosmological speculations, and in particular I began to find in abstract mathematics a realm of intellectual speculation that I sensed lead the human essence far beyond the reflection of sense perceptions in thought, into a realm of pure spiritual form. When I first struggled to understand abstract mathematical structures, such as topological spaces, non-euclidean geometries, set theory and the different types of infinities, which cannot be grasped by modelling or picturing them through images drawn from our outer perceptions, I found initially great difficulties. I could intellectually follow the theorems, the strings of symbols in the mathematics books, but I could not say I knew what the particular mathematical structure I was reading about was in essence. Such understanding would for me usually come much later, even months or years, but then suddenly, in a moment, in a spark of intuition, I would come to know this particular mathematical structure as an entity existing on its level of abstraction and not merely as a formal description in mathematical symbols. These moments were very precious and possessed a numinous quality, as if one had crossed into a world of pure platonic form and encountered and directly touched the archetypes of these

mathematical structures with ones inner being. To me this was a kind of spiritual experience. In talking later to mathematicians and others involved in such abstract studies, I find that these experiences of mine were in no sense unusual. Most people who have struggled with such mathematical abstractions will have come in a similar way to such experiences. If one is to grasp mathematical abstractions that cannot be modelled in outer terms, one will find oneself being lead beyond the sense perceptions of one's soul into a region of intuition where these mathematical ideas exist as abstract objects in their own right. Only in rare moments of intuitive perception can one enter into this realm within one's being.

So for me at that time in my life, abstract mathematics provided exciting encounters with a noumenal reality which lay beyond the senses. I studied these high abstractions initially as formal mathematical systems described though a set of axioms, and deductive procedures for operating upon these axioms to investigate the properties of these structures. Abstract mathematics was strictly formalistic, concerned with the manipulation of symbols and rigorous proof, but as I discovered it was impossible to get very far in understanding what was happening in a particular structure until one had this numinous experience of the mathematical system as an entity, an essential being. I can still recall the moment when I first grasped the difference between the two infinities - the countable infinity of the natural numbers 1,2,3,.....and so on, and the non-denumerable infinity of the number of points on a line or filling a plane, the infinity of the continuum. (The difference between these two infinities \aleph_0 Aleph nought and \mathfrak{c} the infinity of the continuum is fundamental to understanding much of twentieth century mathematics).

Mathematical systems such as non-euclidean geometry, topological spaces, group and set theory, are not useless abstract entities pursued by mathematicians for their own intrinsic interest, but in fact are used by scientists to describe the world. Indeed, the mathematical tools available to physicists determine just how they can formulate their theories. For example, Einstein's theory of relativity arose out of describing the physics of space and time within a mathematical system called a tensor space. In a real sense the Theory of Relativity could not have been expressed until the properties of these abstract mathematical objects called tensors had been worked out.

During the early decades of the twentieth century mathematicians following the leadership of David Hilbert among others, had begun formalising mathematics into rigorously defined axiomatic systems. This programme of formalism intially progressed rapidly and many useful discoveries were made, however, as it developed certain fundamental problems emerged, in the form of strange paradoxes. However, in the fire of enthusiasm for the formalist manifesto, these could be dismissed merely as quirks to be sorted out later. This programme of formalising mathematical thought and thus reducing it to a merely mechanical manipulation of symbols, began to influence other domains of human knowledge, especially working into philosophy, through Bertrand Russell and Alfred Whitehead (their 'Principia Mathematica' sought to provide a formalism for logic) and in the young Ludwig Wittgenstein (his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus tried to indicate the limits that formal languages set to human thinking). In the 1920's and 30's there arose out of this concern with formalisation, the philosophical school of Logical Positivism which rapidly became extremely influential and the accepted philosophical foundation upon which scientific investigation should be undertaken. This logical positivist approach cast a strong shadow into the life sciences as well as physics and chemistry - influencing the establishment of behaviourism in psychology, and the attempt to found the life sciences on molecular biology (the manipulation

of the genetic code of DNA) - but ultimately this impulse derived from the success of the formalisation of mathematical language being transferred and generalised to other domains. This formalism behind the positivist philosophy held that it was only the formal manipulation of the symbols of a language according to its procedural rules that was important and investigatable by the human mind. Any attempt to ascribe any other meaning to an event or theory was a philosophical error. Formal symbol manipulation was to replace meaning as the path to truth. A search for meaning no longer was to be seen as a legitimate realm for human enquiry.

Kurt Gödel in 1931 destroyed for all time that formalist manifesto, through his discovery, description and proof of the existence of undecidable propositions in formal mathematical systems. It is not possible to describe this profoundly important Undecidability Theorem of Gödel in any detail here, suffice it to say that Gödel proved in exact rigorous mathematics that if we set up a mathematical system using the formalist approach, deriving it entirely mechanically from an initial set of axioms by previously defined procedures, then there ultimately could be constructed propositions within this system which could never be proven true or false - absolutely undecidable in fact. It might seem a small thing, but it completely shattered the formalist approach. For what Gödel had discovered was a vast hole in the fabric of formalism. That is to say, one could no longer, in the light of Gödel's discovery and proof, hold to the view that mathematical truth could be entirely described by a formal application of rules of deduction to an initial set of axioms. Mathematical thought was somehow more subtle than this, and could not be reduced to a mere mechanical manipulation of symbols. For Gödel proved that the human mind could think about and describe mathematical objects which could not be proven in a rigorous system. Gödel's work showed that the human mind was capable of thinking on a higher plane than the mathematical formalism, that human consciousness could touch upon a meta-mathematical realm that could not be brought within the formalism.

To Gödel, mathematical objects were not a product of the formalism, the symbols on paper, but were real objects in themselves, that the human mind could touch upon in a realm beyond symbol. They existed in essence, as abstract objects and the symbols were only ways of describing them. The abstract mathematical objects existed first, the symbolic descriptions followed after. Thus in one essay Gödel described mathematics as an empirical science investigating the properties of mathematical structures that existed as abstract objects in their own right.

This might seem very far from esotericism or a spiritual view of the world, but I hope my readers will see that it actually is not. Gödel's discovery brought a new platonism back into mathematics. Mathematical objects in the light of Gödel's work must be seen as existing in a kind of spiritual world of Archetypal platonic form. Gödel saw the search for such truths as a kind of mystical perception of this world of platonic archetype. Regrettably Gödel's work remained entirely in the domain of metamathematics. His Undecidability theorem is so abstruse that few could follow up its consequences, and the prevailing philosophical current which still underlies our own times, remained influenced by the logical positivist view.

However, in the last few years Gödel's work has been rediscovered and reassessed, so hopefully in time a new philosophical current can come into being which can take Gödel's work into itself. I believe that a philosophical system which did have Gödel's work at its heart, would be more open to transcendence and spirituality, even if these had to be recast into a more modern language. So with Gödel a bridge has been built in thought that could provide some linking between esoteric spirituality and philosophical

orthodoxy.

If present day philosophers could grasp the significance of Gödel's work and let it shape their philosophy, integrating this with some of the far reaching implications of quantum theory and fundamental physics, the work on artificial intelligence and the quantum foundation of consciousness, and the cosmological speculation on the nature of time and space, then we might see towards the end of the century a philosophical orthodoxy which was sympathetic to rather than dismissive of spiritual ideas and esoteric principles.

A small beginning of this can be recognised in the work of the philosopher John Searle of Berkeley California, who I note has been invited to give the 1984 Reith lectures here in Britain over the next months. Searle is one of the few philosophers of the present age who dares to suggest that mental events, 'consciousness', should be seen as a legitimate domain for scientific investigation, a realm in itself rather than merely a secretion of the brain and the physical body. Such a recognition will seem a small step to anyone working with esoteric ideas, but it marks a significant step forward for present day philosophy. Let us hope that more can be built upon this foundation and that esoteric spirituality and established philosophy can in time draw closer together and not be essentially antagonistic.

I have decided to depart somewhat from my usual convention of reproducing a woodcut, engraving or design from the hermetic tradition, and instead focus on a painting by William Blake from 1821. This painting known as the Arlington Court picture and only discovered quite recently, is a work of Blake's final years and in a sense encapsulates his view of the evolutionary progress of the human soul which he had outlined in his important Prophetic poems Milton, Urizen, Jerusalem. Blake, of course, had read his way into hermetic material and was familiar with the Neoplatonism popularised by Thomas Taylor, the Kabbalah, and general hermetic ideas. However, Blake preferred to create his own mythology and symbolic material to reflect his own spiritual insights, rather than slavishly adhering to existing systems, and so if we wish to grasp Blake's intentions in depth then we must enter into his own system and try to discover what he intends by the various beings and forces he presents. For the purpose of this short mandala feature, I do not intend to take this path, but rather to apply the same methods I have used before in looking at earlier hermetic engravings, as this painting of Blake is so pure and archetypal that the symbols he uses transcend his own system and link in directly with the symbolic material of hermeticism.

The title that Blake gave to this painting, if any, has not been recorded, and later commentators have called it "Regeneration", "The Circle of the Life of Man", "The Cave of the Nymphs", among others. The painting is obviously divided horizontally into two areas on the left and the right, and vertically into three, an upper region, a middle realm and a lower region.

Let us look first at this left/right division. On the left side of the painting we see two figures in the middle ground upon the shore of a wild sea. The crouching male figure wears a red robe while his female companion is dressed in white. He makes a gesture outwards horizontally, while his consort points her left hand heavenwards and her right towards the earth. She seeks to unite the earthly and the heavenly, while he seems to be concerned with the dynamics of the polarities of the middle world, relating the wild unconsciousness of the sea realm with the solidity of consciousness indicated by the land on which they stand. In alchemy these can be paralleled with the Red Man and his White Wife, that must be conjoined through the Great Work to create the red and white tinctures or stones.

Above them in the heavens we see a chariot drawn by four white horses which are attended by four maidens. In this chariot a man sits in a nimbus of flame, but has fallen asleep. Musician spirits attend him but their music does not awaken him. Immediately below these two central figures a man lies drowning in a sea of flames with three female figures helping him on his way. These are obviously that aspect of the triple feminine described in Greek mythology as the Three Fates - Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos - for they hold the skein or thread of his life, Clotho holds the distaff, Lachesis measures the thread, and Atropos on the left holds the shears and is about to cut the thread. Out across the turbulent sea a naked female figure is being borne on the backs of four black horses, attended by a female and a male figure. What Blake could be intending in this left side of the picture is to show the existential state of our souls. For if we devote our souls entirely to the earthly then we ultimately have to yield to the laws of Fate that apply to our outer bodily makeup, and through this facet we can only touch the transitory, ephemeral element of life. The male figure drowning in the sea of fire, looks longingly at his soul partner climbing the steps to his right (we will look at this facet in a moment). High above in the spiritual world our souls are still unconscious, asleep to spiritual potentialities, as we have not yet



developed the ability to remain conscious in the spiritual world. So Blake draws us to the true realm of human transformation, the inner world of the soul. This has two sides to it - the shifting, ever-mobile swell of the tempestuous sea of unconscious forces within our beings, upon which rides the female figure who pictures to us those inspirations and intuitions that come to us from this inner sea. On the other side, there is the dry land, the solid ground in our soul upon which the two main figures can stand. The female element in the soul seeks a union of the above and the below, the spiritual and the material realms in which our souls are constantly immersed, while the male side of the soul seeks rather to still the turbulent waters within the soul and make a more stable connection with this realm, which is both dangerous and yet holds out such promise of insight and intuitions.

On the right side of the painting we see an alternative view of the soul's progress, a more linear and less dynamic one. Here a flight of steps rises from a river or pool at the bottom right of the painting, through a grove of four trees set out like pillars, and ascends a mountain, where at its height is a grotto in which we see angel-like beings bearing upon their head vessels of water. We see a female soul figure in a flaming robe just beginning her ascent of the steps, bearing her bucket drawn from the river or pool. Below her we see another who has failed in her task, fallen asleep with her bucket lying horizontally in the water. As the figure climbs the steps she meets, like her male counterpart seen in the flaming water to her left, three female figures of fate. These bear a net to snare, and cord to bind the soul, however, in this case they seem to be about to let her pass by. When she rises higher she will meet another facet of the triple feminine, the Three Graces who dance their joyful celebration of creative energy in the soul. If she learns to gain from them the essence of their impulse without becoming entirely caught up in their dance, then this soul figure can bear her vessel of water further upwards. She, the soul, will here become winged through the spiritual insight the soul gains from bearing the waters of the lower soul into its own height, so that it is borne above the head, and the intellect is subsidiary to and watered by the inspiration of the spirit.

Thus Blake in this painting points out two paths that lead to the spiritualisation of the soul, and the uniting of the forces of the below with those of the above. In this sense this painting is deeply hermetic in conception and so obviously parallels many of the mandalas we have looked at earlier in this series.

THE ALCHEMICAL EMBLEMS OF MYLIUS

by Adam McLean ◉

I first saw the emblems of Mylius some years ago in John Read's book *Prelude to Chemistry*. Over the past years I have often set this series of twenty eight emblems upon the wall of my study in order to contemplate them, and even now despite their familiarity, I still cannot look at them without inwardly gasping at their boldness in capturing the essential mystery of alchemy through such a strange surrealistic interplay of symbols.

During the last few years they so puzzled, intrigued, mystified, confounded and frustrated me, that contemplating them has helped lead me into the heart of the mystery of alchemical symbolism, and this has led to my decision to publish a book in the *Magnum Opus* series devoted entirely to these emblems in the hope that others may also share in the experiences that can be gained through working with these emblems.

I have decided to publish here an extract from my commentary to the Mylius emblems in order that readers of the *Hermetic Journal* can gain a picture of one way of looking at this rich symbolic material. The symbolism of the emblems is so dense that it can simultaneously support many different interpretations, and it seems that here we have truly multidimensional symbol system.

The Mylius emblems draw upon both George Ripley's *Twelve Gates*, and Basil Valentine's *Twelve Keys*, and emblems 5-16 of the Mylius series of twenty eight engravings form the core of his work being an outline of the twelve alchemical processes. I include here that part of my commentary published in *MOHS 19*, which deals with these twelve processes.

In order to try to grasp the sequence of operations that Mylius describes in his text and which underlies the symbolism of the engravings, I will attempt here to interpret this alchemical process by translating it into the terms of soul alchemy, in order that we can perhaps relate to it in an easier way. Mylius' text, as well as Ripley's *Twelve Gates*, uses almost exclusively the language of physical alchemy, but hints at parallels in the soul. The alchemists of the 15th and 16th centuries came to realisations about the forces working in their souls through their contemplation of natural processes in their retorts. The ways in which matter behaved in their physical work was used metaphorically to describe parallel processes going on in the alchemist's soul through his or her meditative contemplation of their ongoing physical alchemical work. Thus the alchemists used a language derived from their observation of outer material processes in their retorts and crucibles to describe their inner states of being. By the 17th century certain alchemical schools had arisen which did not indeed feel that there was any longer any need to practice physical alchemy as such, but instead used the rich symbolic

descriptive material of their alchemical predecessors as a ground for inner exploration. Mylius, himself, probably worked rather in this way, as did many of the Rosicrucian alchemists and the mystic Jacob Boehme. Thus I feel it entirely in keeping with the spirit of Mylius to approach his system and view it through terms of an inner alchemy which involves experiencing, balancing and transmutating the forces in our souls.

The twelve processes can be seen in fact as being divided into three phases each of four linked stages :-

- I Past - Experiencing how outer forces have structured the inner world
Calcination - Solution - Separation - Conjunction
- II Present - Balancing and Transforming the soul
Putrefaction - Congelation - Cibation - Sublimation
- III Future - Transmutating and Spiritualising how the inner forces can work out into the world
Fermentation - Exaltation - Multiplication - Projection

The first phase is the experiencing in full consciousness of our initial primal state of soul, that which is presented to us from our past, the particular set of soul forces, both the problematic aspects as well as positive soul faculties, we have inherited and had worked into ourselves through our upbringing, and past life experience. The first phase of soul alchemy must be to fully experience, recognise and come to terms with the raw forces that work within us, our prima materia.

The second phase marks the beginning of inner work which seeks to purify these forces and bring about a certain inner balance. This is the phase of the work in which our attendance to the potential transformatory energies of the present moment is essential.

The final phase results when we allow the insights gained into our soul to unite with our essence and transmute our innermost self. This results in a spiritualisation of the soul, when the soul becomes dedicated to a spiritual goal, and has access to enormous inner resources of energy and inspiration. This is the working of the transmutation into our futures.

So let us look at each stage in sequence.

I The First Phase



This begins with Calcination. Physically this is a burning of our prime matter to an ash in a strong fire. In soul alchemy terms this corresponds to allowing the full forces of our emotions to play through that particular part of our soul forces that we have been give through our past background and experience. On the negative side this might be a particular irrational fear, or on the positive side this could be, say for example, a certain aesthetic sensitivity . All this prime material we have to subject to the inner fire of the soul.

Mylius' emblem for calcination shows the operator tending his furnace in a room or laboratory. We note that this is the only emblem out of the series of twenty eight set in an enclosed space, all the others take place in an outer open landscape. Thus this stage is one where we cultivate our inner fire. Also here a lion is seen devouring a snake. The lion is the courageous element in our souls and if we are to go through the calcination we must have the inner courage to take hold of the more murky depths of our soul, here represented by the snake (which is a transformation of the dragon seen in the map of the work sketched out in the fourth emblem).

So we must have the courage to take into our process of transformation, all our unconscious forces and not merely pretend that they do not exist, but rather work to experience and recognise the polarities of the upper and lower soul. We must also be prepared to admit the existence of other polarities working across our beings, and thus the winged figure at the table shows us the Sun and Moon, masculine and feminine archetypes, that work within us, and exemplify this left - right polarity.

On the table itself we see a triangular crucible in which two flowers are set. These are the polarities to be calcined, burnt to ash through the fire of our inner emotion. The alchemist who works inner calcination must develop the ability to turn the emotional energy that forms around certain the inner patterns of our souls, entirely inwards upon itself. This can be accomplished by certain meditative exercises.



Next we have Solution and here the fiery inner energy of calcination must be quenched in water. Thus we see in the figure the flaming man pointing to a flask containing water, for it is into this that he must go to work this stage. The green lion who formerly took into himself the snake of the unconscious forces in our souls, now devours the sun, the light forces of consciousness. The lion of our inner world now holds both polarities within its being. The water of the solution is a certain inner water, an aspect of our inner world, that we

become aware of at this stage. It is this inner water that we unconsciously experience when some pattern of anger or strong emotion suddenly dissolves within us, and we experience a calm wateriness as the emotional charge seems to dissipate and disappear. Emotional energy of course cannot just disappear but can be dissolved in our soul forces. The conscious acquisition of this ability to dissolve emotional charge is the possession of the alchemical *solutio*.

This is not only applied to the heady emotions of, say, anger, but also can be seen in, for example, our ability to dissolve an emotionally charged aesthetic experience, or encounter with some part of nature, and incorporate this into our inner sea, which we can draw upon at some later moment. This is not to be confused with the memory of some event which lingers as pictures in the soul. The experience is dissolved in our inner sea in such a way that only its essence remains. It is this that we can touch upon later, and not merely memory images.

Solution is the leading of our active inner fire of calcination into a more watery passive realm within our souls. Thus it is that this emblem is pre-sided over by a female figure who holds the sevenfold flower. She points to a spot on the ground where a spring arises. If we are to work the stage of solution we must contact this spring, this inner fountain in our souls, this inner sea in which we can dissolve the ashes of our calcined soul forces. Once these forces have dissolved in the inner sea, there occurs a further process of Separation. If soul development could be so easily achieved merely through the stages of calcination - solution all of humanity would have become adepts long ago and we would not be plagued with unbalanced soul forces. The first two stages do not really produce any actual transformation or change, but merely a movement of emotional charge from one soul level to another. If this process, which goes on unconsciously in most people, is actually experienced by the alchemist in full consciousness, then the possibility lies open for he or she to go further along the path to a true inner encounter and transmutation.



In the separation, the polarities inherent in certain soul patterns reassert themselves, but if here we work consciously with our alchemy, we do not return to the calcination, but experience these forces in archetype becoming separated. In the emblem, winged Mercury holds a caduceus in each hand and stands between the male figure of Mars with his sword and a Diana figure with a hunting hawk upon her wrist. These are of course the active masculine and feminine polarities. The caduceus is a symbol of the interweaving of

the polarities. These must be experienced at this stage as being co-essentially linked. Thus to work separation the alchemist must be able to free his or her self of the tendencies to impress value judgements upon certain of the polarities, seeing them as good or evil, positive or negative, for example. The alchemist must see that what is separating out as polarities in his or her soul are in essence linked together, the powerful rage of a particular jealousy is linked to and is the mirror of some other inner pattern. It is when we allow one of these facets to become free to set out on its own in our souls that deep troubles fall upon us. The alchemical separation provides us with insight into the ways in which our inner forces are interwoven. The next stage which draws the first phase to a close is that of Conjunction. Here that which separated is rejoined together in an alchemical marriage, an inner wedding of soul forces. The two archetypes of male and female are now crowned as King and Queen and this indicates that a degree of conscious rulership has come about in the polarities of the soul. The alchemist who has achieved this stage is not to the same extent at the mercy of unconscious polarities, for now they have some degree of rulership over the alchemist's inner world. The emblem sees them being married against the background of a shower of rain, the fire of the Sun above, so that water meets fire, but with a new phenomenon a rainbow appearing.

This rainbow symbolises the meeting of the fire and water elements in the



soul. It is sometimes in other systems referred to as the stage of the Peacock's Tail. In the foreground a furnace shows us the nature of the work. From a two headed flaming male figure two liquids are being collected in flasks. Thus the masculine fire (work of calcination) in the soul and feminine water (work of solution) in the soul lead to separation and a degree of purification of these forces and thence inevitably to their inner marriage in the conjunction.

Through this phase the alchemist comes to experience the interplay of the various forces in his or her soul and this conscious inner work leads them from an unrefined chaotic primal state to an inner marriage. However these forces are in a real sense still untransformed and have merely been brought to a certain point where further and deeper soul work can take place in the second and central phase of the process. This process of inner discovery though calcination-solution-separation-conjunction can never be exhausted for we bear within us such enormous reserves of unconscious patterns that are being continually stimulated by our ongoing daily life experience. The soul development of alchemy should be seen as a continuing process, indeed a way of living with and making relationship to our souls, rather than a technique which once practised and perfected is done for all time.

The Second Phase

Many people in working through inner development manage to attain to some degree of penetration of the first phase through to the conjunction. It is not too difficult to translate this alchemical picture and see it mirrored in a multiplicity of different esoteric systems, however, the next phase which has to be gone through is very difficult and very few can gain access to it. Systems which work to any extent a dualistic picture of the soul will not be able to penetrate this next phase. Indeed, it is alchemy in particular which seems to hold the secret of this inner process, though it has been experienced in different ways by many mystics throughout the ages.

We begin this phase with a stage of Putrefaction. This is in other terms the alchemical nigredo or blackening. This normally presents the soul with an existential problem which most people shy away from. For all that we seem to have achieved so far through our work with the process of the first phase must be thrown away and instead we have to go through an inner darkness. The bright hope of a linear development of soul forces from calcination through conjunction and so onward and upward to the high plains of the spirit, is now dashed, for such a linear path is an illusion. For we cannot go further until what we have gained in insight really touches our essence, and this can only be accomplished through a phase of inner transformation that begins with us having to step into the black hole within our souls, that deep dark pit where we must lie putrefying our inner forces in order for a true change in their structure to come about. This is the realm of the Black Crow where we are stripped to the skeleton of our being. The comfortable flesh of our souls,

our complacencies with our inner achievements, all the small abilities of soul we have so overblown and exaggerated to ourselves into cosmic dimensions must be cast aside, and we confront our true inner self naked of the padding and vanities of the sheaths of illusions we have worked into our souls throughout the years. This is such a hard task that few dare to go through it consciously. Regrettably, the Nigredo can take hold of people in an unconscious way, when they can gain little soul growth from the process. These poor souls go through all the inner agonies and existential pain but without inner transformation, and they experience a great despair while the creative energies of their souls are regrettably turned in upon themselves. The difference for the practising alchemist undergoing this inner process is that he or she undertakes this voluntarily with the understanding that this is a stage they have to go through. Indeed, the nigredo or putrefaction is not a stage one works through for a period of time and then is completed, but as with the whole process must be continually worked through.



The emblem illustrates the nigredo well enough. We see the skeleton with the black Crow standing upon the black globe with its slow inner fire. This is the black hole within our being we must gaze down into and be prepared to enter. The process is presided over by two winged angelic figures, while the sun and moon archetypes look down from high above. These angelic beings indicate that throughout this process something remains conscious and observant in the soul. The nigredo is not a surrender to emptiness and hopeless darkness

but a conscious voyage into this realm. The angels show that a part of us is there to return to after this inner journey, unlike those who unconsciously enter this realm perhaps in certain stages of mental illness or personal emotional crisis, having no inner watcher left in the soul to learn from this experience. The fact that this process is a hopeful and positive one is subtly hinted at by the engraver who shows a tree trunk regenerating shoots. This tree having lost its grand branches and its trunk, its life descends deep into its roots under the ground, and experiences its inner darkness for a season, but eventually it regenerates the new shoots. So we should view this episode in our inner growth.



The putrefaction must take place through four different fires, that is it must work through an experience of the four elements, or in our soul the hardening earthy structures in our being, the dissolving fluidity of soul fires, the airiness of our beings that seek to rise within us, and the transformative energy of fire itself. These are described in the text.

So the emblem ten, the Four Grades represents a sub-stage of the Putrefaction rather than a stage in itself.

The next stage is the Congelation. In physical alchemy this is seen when the matter in the putrefaction eventually begins to clump together and congeal in a mass at the bottom of the flask. It becomes thick and flows no more. The flowing disturbing energies of the putrefaction become stilled. All that was in the nigredo a distressing flow of inner forces now hardens and gathers together. In a sense we can mirror the Calcination and Putrefaction as being stages of dynamic interflow of energies though in different ways and on different levels. In a similar way, Congelation mirrors Solution. However, it is not a releasing of tension, a dissolving into an inner sea, but the release comes rather through the soul forces hardening and becoming focussed.



Thus congelation arises in our souls when through the painful nigredo we gain a sense of some inner solidity in our beings. We begin to recognise certain root elements in our souls that are unchanging, eternal and fundamental. We touch our soul's skeleton in the nigredo. Now in the congelation we are able to gather these insights together to see our inner solidities. In the emblem a young man is being presented to the winged old man figure by a King. The young man is our own as yet immature soul forces. The King is the archetype of the rulership of

these forces in the soul. The winged figure is the transformative spiritual element within our beings that can move between the body and the soul. They form a triple masculine element within our souls. Behind them an operator stokes his furnace heating a flask within which we see a snake. This echoes the Calcination-Solution pair again, as the Putrefaction-Congelation has taken the work with the snake of the unconscious primal energies of our souls further into the process of inner transmutation.



The next stage is the Cibation or nourishment of the work. What has been congealed in the previous stage must now not be allowed to altogether harden. Where our soul forces harden into rigid patterns and become too given over to the world of form they are not able to reflect spiritual impulses. On the other hand if they become too amorphous, soft without shape, they cannot be a good vehicle for working within the forces of the material world of our bodies. Now at this stage we must walk a difficult path in our inner development. If we

allow our soul forces to become too fluid, too thin, we run the risk of becoming too idealistically spiritual and may at the end of the process be left with a naively unworldly romantic perception of the spiritual, while on the other hand if we let our work, our inner soul forces, dry out too far and become too thickened, we will not be able to remain in touch with the spiritual world, and have a crisis of faith which could degenerate into cynicism. This is perhaps the most difficult of balances the alchemist must undertake.

This stage is under the rulership of the feminine, protective nourishing part of ourselves, and this is indicated in the emblem by the mother nursing an infant. The dragon is here the hardening, rigidifying tendency in the soul, while the birds are here that facet of our souls that would disperse and soar into the spiritual entirely losing touch with the material bodily plane. The work takes place in a triangle meaning it must achieve a balance between the two polarities through the feminine element.



Sublimation brings this central phase of inner transmutation to a close. Now all that we have gained through the past three stages must be elevated to the height of the spiritual and simultaneously hardened. The alchemists found it a paradox that certain substances which existed as solid crystals, when exposed to heat turned directly into vapour which rose in their retort and then redeposited itself as crystals high up in the neck of their flask. A well known example of such a substance is Sal Ammoniac (Ammonium Chloride).

There is nothing particularly mysterious about this property of certain substances, and the reason why they crystallise at the top of the flask is that these parts of the vessels were colder than the lower parts which were under the direct heat. However, alchemists do not look at such matters with the eyes of a physical chemist. To the alchemist this was a strange elevation of the material and fixing of the spirit. In soul alchemy terms, the matter, our particular tone and pattern of soul forces woven through our work in the previous stages of the process, is now capable of being raised in our soul's flask to its heights. Here it borders on the realm of the spirit and is able to capture or bring back into the realm of the soul a reflection of spiritual impulses. Thus the parallels with physical sublimation where the rising vapours become paradoxically crystallised again high in the flask.

In the emblem we see on the right a new resplendent tree which has grown from the blasted tree stump seen in figure nine the Putrefaction. In the heights of its branches spiritual sun fruits can be seen. The King and Queen representing the rulership of the masculine and feminine in the soul, hold a Phoenix and a white Swan respectively. The phoenix is that which is heated in the fire to rise reborn, and the white Swan is the spiritual essence of the sublimation (sometimes this is referred to as the White Stone of the Philosophers). On the left a wolf is shown gazing at a crucible. The grey wolf in Alchemy is the metal Antimony (beloved of Basil Valentine and referred to in the text to the twelve keys which as we have noted was a source for Mylius own work) but can also be Arsenic which are closely related chem-

ically. In fact Arsenic itself sublimates when heated to a dull red heat. Saturn is about to apply his scythe to a triple sun-moon-star plant. Thus a polarity is shown between Saturn the hardening contractive element and the renewing spiritual growth as exemplified in the plant. Those who gain the ability to perform alchemical inner sublimation, "the making sublime" (which should be distinguished from the term used in depth psychology), are able to consciously raise their inner soul forces into such a state that they can reflect the spiritual and indeed continually bring back into their souls life impulses from the spirit.

So in a sense Sublimation is the exact opposite of the Putrefaction with which this phase of the inner work began. We descend into the darkness of Putrefaction seemingly cut off from the spiritual in order to go through an existential encounter with our inner darkness, but now with the eventual attainment of the Sublimation we possess the white stone, the ability to ascend a part of our soul's forces to meet that which lives in the spiritual and bring an aspect a reflection of this back into our consciousness.

The Third Phase

The first phase was one of recognising and encountering inner forces, and the second phase is one in which we have to balance and transform our soul so that it can make proper relationship with the spiritual and material, so the third stage is the development of the ability to make this spiritual impulse overt and express it in and through the medium of the outer material world.



We begin with the Fermentation. This is not meant in the sense of brewing beer, but rather in the sense of making a ferment, an aspect of ourselves which is transformative like yeast working in beer or bread. The alchemists were aware of yeast (or ferment) as a living thing, that once sown in grape juice, malted barley or dough, could transform it. So in soul alchemical terms, a ferment is a particular structure in our souls which can become alive and transmutative. In a sense the creative impulse to write a book or compose a piece of music is a

ferment. For often the initial creative experience is a small limited moment, a flash of insight, and impulse which leads to 6 solid months of work upon a manuscript. From such a small seed out of all proportion to the ultimate end, such an enormous directed flow of inner energy can result. The source of these soul seeds is for most people entirely unconscious, indeed, many creative people undergo profound agonies when their source of inspiration dries up, for they have no way of consciously invoking or making contact with this realm within them but are entirely at the mercy of their unconsciousness as a source for their creative impulses. This also applies to certain mystics whose spiritual perception is sporadic and not at all under their conscious control. Often they suffer greatly when they temporarily lose sight of their God, and their spiritual perception deserts them for a while.

In alchemy the task is to gain access to the forces underlying this

process, and not become eternally stuck at the Putrefaction-nigredo stage. We have to develop ferments in our soul, which like living yeast cells once placed in the right environment of soul can come to life, multiply and transmute this into an outpouring of living creative energy.

A soul ferment is thus a kind of inner seed, and we can see clearly in the emblem the old man sowing seeds in the ground of the soul. The old man is linked with our past experience, that which we have formerly worked through and transformed in ourselves. The two figures of Sun and Moon on the ground are in contrast youthful for they are the potential forces of creativity and spiritual insight belonging to our future, which when aroused by the winged woman with the trumpet will come to life and amaze us. This female figure is that part of our souls which reflects the spiritual potentialities to us - our guardian angel in the romantic sense - or perhaps in a less romantic language that reservoir of spiritual insight and impulse we each already possess, but because we fail to listen enough to our inner potentialities are not entirely aware of its scope and intensity. The soul seeds sown by the old man, when met by the trumpet call of the winged feminine, give rise to a new spiritual life in our souls. The soul seeds or ferments are certain inner exercises of soul alchemy which involve sowing arranged and balanced symbols within our inner world in such a way that they begin to grow and develop within us. At a previous stage these would have had to be subjected to the calcination but to the alchemist who has worked through this to fermentation, it is no longer necessary that these be subjected to calcination again. However, those who fail at this stage to attain a mastery of the fermentation will inevitably find themselves being drawn back to the calcination stage. This inability to attain to fermentation would likely be experienced as a feeling of being cut off from one's inner energy, and a sense a negativity and even despair with one's inner work. It is of course most unusual for anyone to move linearly stage by stage through this process attaining to each stage in turn. In practice, we will probably find ourselves failing to attain to a certain stage many times and having to return to previous plateaus of our inner development which we feel more comfortable and integrated with.

Fermentation is the seeding of the soul from below through symbols charged with certain emotional tones, drawn partially from our previous experience of the outer world. This would not be enough in itself to allow spiritual perception to develop fully.



Our soul work must pass to the stage of Exaltation. In this operation of the process it is raised to meet the spiritual, so that the soul seeds may be exalted and spiritualised. Here we must allow our seeds to be subtly changed through this spiritualisation, however, the closer they are to archetype then the nearer they will be to their mirror in the spiritual world. Thus in this emblem of Exaltation we see King and Queen now enthroned on a dais and between them is set a tree with Sun and Moon and seven planets upon it. This is the tree of

life in our souls, here to be seen as the alchemical tree (rather than the Otz

Chaim of the Kabbalists), linking together earth and heaven, its roots interfacing our souls with the world through our outer senses, its high branches linking our souls with the spiritual. This inner tree began with the two plants in the crucible of calcination, through the sevenfold plant borne by the woman presiding over the solution, to the regenerating tree foreshadowed in the putrefaction, which came to fruition in the sublimation, the seeds of which planted in our souls in fermentation, now have given rise to our souls bearing within them the inner tree of life. The King and Queen, archetypal rulers of the polarities, are attended each by seven lions, and below them two of these lions have begun to fuse together in their heads and out of their now one mouth flows a clear water. This is the water of inspiration from the foot of the tree of life. This image has been used in many mythologies, the best example being found in the Norse Legends (Mimir's Well). The Water of Exaltation, the fountain of aqua vita, links it with the earlier stage of Solution, of which it is a higher octave. Here the water does not merely still the soul, but now can stimulate, inspire and move the soul, whose energies are integrated enough to be able to work them through into outer patterns without stirring up dualistic polarities and plunging the soul into inner insecurity and existential fears.



Once the soul seeds have been exalted and spiritualised, they have to be multiplied. Now the alchemist is working towards his or her goal of impressing spiritual perception through their souls out into the world of appearances, into their outer life. The energies of the soul seeds have to go through Multiplication, as we see depicted in the emblem. A great lion feeds his young as does the pelican with her own blood. This inner sacrifice of ones own inner resources of energy to nourish and multiply the spiritual seeds must be undertaken as

a necessary voluntary suffering if the spiritual work is to be expressed outwardly. This emblem is under the guidance of the feminine element for it can be paralleled with growing a child within one's own body. There is here a link with the previous stage of Cibation.

The final stage is that of Projection where at the end of the work that which has been attained spiritually by the alchemist undergoing this process of inner development must be brought out into the world. It is a dangerous process for the soul, for here is the true test of one's spiritual attainment, the acid test as to how it meets the challenge of the world. Many spiritually gifted individuals have hesitated long and drawn back at this point and kept their inner work to themselves, secreted it from the world and their fellow spiritual travellers. However, if they do this they in a sense fail in their work. Only through the projection can the soul see the spiritual work reflected in the mirror of other souls. However, often we see people rush into projection long before they have gone through the whole process, even when they are merely calcining and dissolving their soul currents, they want to project their miserably immature insights into the world. This often result merely in charismatic egoism, for if the soul has not undergone the

second phase and gone through the putrefaction to sublimation then it does not truly sense its own ground, and thus can come to inflate and overblow its importance.

GLIMPSE OF A WESTERN LINEAGE

Alchemy is a process whereby the seven centurms of the psyche which bring consciousness into the material world, (each having a specific focus in the organic body of man and whose radiations each form a definite 'layer' of Life-Awareness') are freed from unconsciousness in Matter. 'Unconsciousness in Matter', fallen Adam, is a condition in which the psychic centurms reflect automatically the situation of consciousness in Matter ; that is the, psychic reflections which we call our experience of 'reality' are centred around our ego or phenomenal self, our reflected self, and its organic survival - however high our ideals, philosophy, and projected 'spiritual self' may appear to be in tender little self-reflective moments. Basically, an ego state is an ego state, a reflection is a reflection, no matter how wonderful, and it is not generally considered practical to identify with a projection of one's Being.

In the Redemption process of Alchemy, each psycho-organic centrum reabsorbs the results of its own involvement in psycho-phenomenal reality, also known as 'everyday life'. That is, it eats its own excreted projections with their long, fecal strands of associative memory scenarios. Each 'centre of gravity of consciousness' re-assimilates the radiations it has 'bled' into Matter, which are said to 'be 'trapped' in Matter, in the physical ethers, that is, external to the psyche, in self-contained circuits which in the psyche appear as individual identities and psycho-emotional-organic postures or 'attitudes'. In short, all states are made conscious, and subjective states, non-existent states, are drawn back through the psyche into consciousness.

By re-absorbing the 'radiations into differentiated-phenomenal-reflection', the illusory, associative-memory 'selves' or complexes are gradually redeemed. The 'light', or energy contained in these forms being freed to return to the Source - so that, in the inner world of the alchemist (which will later unify with his outer world when he becomes Real) a consciousness of 'light' begins to dawn.

This light, in the early stages, goes from very dim at the more material levels, to brighter and clearer as consciousness moves to more ethereal levels of the Life-Field. It is awakened as the Alchemist's sensing-energy feeling-energy is freed from the solar system's planetary-phenomenal-aura, the 'sub-phenomenal' Dragon, with its hypnotic rhythm and constant spitting forth of habit-stimulating impulses. Thus the consciousness of the alchemist changes as his psyche discovers the planetary tree of its reverse reflection in Matter. Now the alchemist can follow his own reflection back through his psyche, or 'inner world', through the seven 'planetary' mirrors of the psyche via the heart to their source, the seven astral lights, the seven lower sephiroth of the world of Yetsirah. The planets, each with its phenomenal representative in the solar system, radiate light which, should it become conscious and collected around an already self-awakened Being, form the real Astral Body.

The symbolism of Alchemy and Magic is adequate for one to find seven centre-of-gravity selves. One may easily discern Saturnian or Mercurial dispositions ; also Venusian poses, Martial stances, and so on, indicate which centrum is dominant in any given life situation. The centurms often operate in concert, rather like random theatre. Theatre may also be used both to act out and expose, and hence transmute, the subjective memory scenarios which are the psychic dominants. Similarly, ritual, or Objective Theatre, may also be used to find the true Macrocosmic reflections.

Here, for those who may be interested in this theme, let us say a few words about the Cabalistic Magical approach. In this process, one trains one's awareness to heighten and arouse when confronted with certain psycho-physical stimuli or impressions. First one becomes skilful in the practice of spotting djinn, or lesser spirits, whose forms are legion, but who radiate from seven main 'postures', each with a definite organic region as its centre of tension. These lesser spirits are attitudes, unconscious behaviours, and adaptive postures which fallen man is constantly unconsciously, unintentionally assuming. Also included are all those wonderful imaginings about one's inner realisations inferred from viewing the transformations of the 'dancing snake'. These phenomena, often induced artificially by rather dubious physical methods, are simply seeing one's projections reflected in one's own brain, enhanced by the untransformed power of imagination. It would be a major error to interpret such phenonema as providing the operant with greater consciousness or a transformed being ; they don't even aid moment to moment awareness in everyday life.

As the Magician learns to recognise these 'spirits', which personify his unconscious radiations into matter, a new possibility avails itself. The 'spirits' are anticipated, spotted, and drawn back to their source of radiation ; the energy pattern of the 'posture' made conscious through the sensing/feeling/seeing. It is exactly this moment when the involuntary evocation of lesser spirits may turn into the voluntary invocation of angels. At the moment a lesser spirit is discerned, the magician is aroused with a start, having prepared himself to recognise the djinn, who are now in his service to remind him of his Divine Purpose, or Debt to the Moment. At that moment he remembers his Being and its Source, and can assume a true position, reflecting the Macrocosm.

The Archangels of the seven planets, or Seven 'Eyes' of Divine Providence, are internalised through prayer, meditation and ritual work. The magician learns to assume a posture, feeling-tone, sense, idea-crystal of the angelic mirror, which, it time, constellates itself in his psyche. In this way, the seven planetary angels become prayer attunements, or hymns, carefully re-created in the magician into a precise psycho-alchemical blend until they become crystallised as 'prayer positions'. This occurs when a multi-level concentration of one's faculties is set in motion, focussing on the Divine attributes of the angelic mirror. When the correct 'blending' of one's conjured awareness occurs, one turns to the highest possible remembrance and acknowledgement of Source. Should one's operation be acceptable, a certain interchange with a higher octave occurs, which 'sets' the impression of the prayer-position, or 'angelic-attractor' into the memory apparatus of the magician. Now 'they' can begin to reveal 'their' secrets to the magician as he enters into 'their' consciousness. Now, too, a Way of Prayer opens. It is, above all in these matters, important not to lose sight of the Unity of the Source of Creation. To do so would render one's position precarious when working in this way.

As one has a deeper 'familiarity' with the correct, macrocosmic attunements of his seven psycho-organic centurms, the appearance of lesser spirits in

ordinary life become wake-up signals to the watchful magician. They are absorbed, and their energy used as a force of invocation to attract both his own presence of consciousness and its appropriate 'frequency' or 'attunement'. He remembers himself, he remembers Source, and he assumes an attitude of prayer, or angelic countenance. He 'takes his place in the face of God'. Hence, his daily life is a continual opportunity for Macrocosmic Prayer, that is, for making a consciousness channel between worlds. This activity has a rather open-ended spectrum of possible operations, called in Cabala Unifications, all depending on any given particular Moment.

The organic centurms of the body are intended to reflect reflexively the light of the psyche and the external light, or the Light of Nature ; but, in fallen man, the serpent produces phenomenal identification with complex multi-object memory. This is through the fragmentation of Adam which takes place in the serpent's vibrational field, the seven most material levels of Creation, which function as a self-contained hypnotic echo-chamber, trapping man's consciousness in a pseudo-identity - an identity based upon an illusory, non-existential individuality inferred as consciousness looks down on its apparently separate organic body and gets stupified by the reverberations of its own cerebral cortex.

As the seven organic centurms are disentangled from 'Self-swallowing-subjectivity', through awakening the Internal Witness or Real here-and-now Presence, and detaching the Witness from its psycho-physical momentum, a dying of the reflected self occurs, with its attendant suffering. Should one stay with the process, in time the inner world, or psyche, begins to glow with a new light, as the centurms begin to reflect their source symbolised in the allegorical solar system. Now it becomes possible, through breath, the proper processing of food, and intentional attention, to absorb the liberated light of the planets, which manifests as an inner-glow feeling light which illuminates the psyche, in order to form the real Astral Body.

In Cabala, the outer light in the phenomenal world is recognised only as the centurms are freed from the serpent-of-organic-reverberations also known as the Mass Mind. This outer light, the Light of Nature, we absorb through direct, unified sensing of the Outer World, for which process the spinal brain is eminently suited. The process of re-attuning the seven psycho-organic centurms to Source, via the seven planets, belongs to the domain of Magic. This completes the Astral Body so that now the inner light of one's own energy field can reflect the real spiritual world behind the apparently separate objects of the organic world.

This inner light, which forms the real Astral Body, or clarified inner-feeling field, is called in Cabala the Light of Mercy. It is really the beginning of Adoration of the Throne, the Source-of-All-Living, number 8. The revelation of the Cabala comes from the Light of Wisdom ; and, for the Cabala to channel properly, the Light of Nature and the Light of Mercy must form a unified field, number seven, the Hebrew letter ayin. This is the Returning Light, the Word coming back to itself from Matter, which must be freed from the pulsations of the serpent, as symbolised in Moses' Victory over the serpent. Then these lights, 'outer' and 'inner' align with Source, an 'upward' attunement, and Cabala is transmuted as Pure Thought from the Third, or Real, World of Creation. At the seven, as the lights align, they unify, which results in a clarification as they neutralise each other, and the infinite Eight appears.

A method, then, in shorthand notation, is presence of consciousness in direct, multi-faceted yet undifferentiated, organic sensing, joined to glow of inner feeling, turned through the silent, receptive yet highly focussed mind, towards Source. Sustained periods in this state, provided no individual

associations of any kind are indulged in during these periods, are called in Sanskrit 'Samadhi' and are advisable - whether one wants to understand some Mysteries, (in which case one must have deeply seeded one or more of the symbolic languages that reveal the hidden meaning of scriptures, such as Cabala, Tarot, Alchemy, Magic, etc.) or if, perhaps, one wishes to attain to the Friendship of God. In the latter case, humility is suggested. Also selfless yearning.

The Cabalistic symbol system is designed as a tool through which to cognise the facets of the unified Jewel of the True Creation, the Real World, a World simultaneous, complete, Unified and non-temporal. It is the Astral Body of Light which must become conscious in order to open for us the possibility of receiving the Cabala ; for the Cabala, the reception of the Divine Mind, must be received as Pure Thought, Light Seeds - not 'thinking'. Pure Thought is Ideas issuing from an intentional, Cosmic Source. The reception of Pure Thought necessitates a numinous field as an attractor-matrix, focussed by the presence of attention. In the early stages, this results in seeing of the inner meaning of the teaching on an entirely new level, where previous, borrowed conceptual interpretations have no relevance. Here we are talking Cosmic Memory, one of the lower facets of which is referred to in popular language as telepathy. We ordinarily very rarely think for ourselves.

The difference between the reception of Real Thought and ordinary 'thinking' is that Real Thought results in Objective Knowledge (Daat on the Tree of Life). Objective Knowledge can be applied practically by anyone who should happen to find themselves in an Awake State, (though these states do not occur very often of their own volition, that is, without petition) and not just through the imagination. The application is to the Great Work of Awakening God in Matter through Humanity, Cosmic Alchemy. It includes Macrocosmic Prayer, or Lawful Interaction with the higher Worlds in order to rectify them. This all depends on the increasing tuning of the Light of Human Consciousness, as Consciousness-of-Light-Spirit-Pneuma, in these material levels of the Life-Field.

Should enough incarnate Beings attain deeply to Clear Light Consciousness, this could result in a tremendous clarification of the picture for Humanity ; which occurrence, whether a 'small shot', or the long awaited 'Big Blast', has been referred to mythologically as Messiah. The Soul of the Messiah awakens in the collective hind-brain consciousness of Humanity and the Serpent is restored to the Real World of Creation, his skin or shells shed to reveal the Light of Creation. The light pearls of the Body of God, of the garment of the Shekinah, are drawn together and reunited with the fabric of consciousness-life as clear-light awareness moments.

When unified, the seven centurms are each 'tinged' with Love. As a well known modern song has it, " 'I'll tell you everything I've learned'...and 'Love' is all he said."

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NOS : BOOK OF THE RESURRECTION by Miguel Serrano
 Translated by Gela Jabobson Routledge & Kegan Paul
 1984, 190 pp, PB, £5.95

Miguel Serrano sees Nos as the culmination of his work, a hermetic autobiography based on Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return rather than on the idea of resurrection. It is a continuation of EI/Ella: Book of Magic Love, and in this new book Serrano goes beyond the search for the androgynous to find a new unity of self and soul. NOS is WE, when the one becomes more than one (as in the Tibetan Tulku and the Indian Boddhisattva), when man becomes one with his soul or anima to become EL/ELLA, when woman becomes one with her soul or animus to become ELLA/EL. The absolute man and absolute woman. In telling this integrated, symbolic tale, the author draws on many different traditions : the myths and initiations of the troubadours, the Grail legend, alchemy, Amerindian legends, and the ideas of Jung. Jung once told Serrano : 'Only the poet will understand me.' This book is Serrano's poetic continuation of Jung's work.

- from sleeve notes

ALCHEMY : Papers Towards a Radical Metaphysics, by Charles Poncé
 North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, Ca. USA, 124pp, PB

The only other book by Charles Poncé I have seen is his Kabbalah published in Britain by Garnstone Press (and now regrettably out of print), and this was such an excellent survey of the subject that I looked forward to reading other material by this author. I understood that he had a substantial work on alchemy in preparation for Shambhalla Publications, however I have heard nothing of this book being yet published. This present volume is a series of six essays, some based on lectures :- In Praise of Bombast - Paracelsus and the Wound - Saturn and the Art of Seeing - An Alchemical Allegory : Notes Towards an Understanding of Genesis - Woman, the Feminine, and Alchemy - On the Androgyne.

An extract from his Preface will give us a picture of his approach. "Each of these papers deals with issues and images central to traditional alchemical concerns. Some approach alchemy from a psychological perspective, others from a mythological, and yet others from a metaphysical. That is, three dialects or voices are employed, each nonetheless of the same language... I would have liked to have been able to tell you what the new metaphysic might be, but all I can imagine is that we flounder at the tail end of an aeon whose metaphysic sinks into itself... History appears to inform us that apocalyptic fears arise at times of great transition. Every great change is first experienced as a death unless there is available a metaphysic that sees in such endings images of regeneration and rebirth. No such metaphysic appears to be presently available. But alchemy, that metaphysic shelved with the advent of science, the art which strove to transform endings into births (which itself was put to an untimely death because of misunderstanding) might give us as clue. It is with such hope that these imaginings are offered."

An excellent little book which will be of great value to anyone interested in alchemy. I do hope that Charles Poncé will be able to continue with his research and writing and that we shall see many more works with this depth of insight from his pen.

ARKANA

Routledge and Kegan Paul have always had a reputation for excellence in the field of esoteric and alternative philosophies, publishing the complete works of Jung and many other classics in the field of personal and spiritual growth. Their list of books for Mind, Body and Spirit has been growing steadily over the last few years and is now one of the most impressive lists of serious books for this area in the world.

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The Magical Arts, by Richard Cavendish, £4.95

Views from the Real World, by G I Gurdjieff, £4.50

A New Model of the Universe, by P D Ouspensky, £5.95

I look forward to new publications under this imprint and hope that this series will prosper as it certainly seems to be making worthy esoteric books available to the wider public at very reasonable prices.