

Contents

Editorial.....	1
The Book of Lambsprinck: An Interpretation.....	4
Guido Martens	
Solidified Mercury: An Outline.....	44
D. Lloyd Thomas	
Hargrave Jennings.....	49
Joscelyn Godwin	
The Blacke Toade.....	78
Rafal T. Prinke	
A Conference betwixt Philochrysus and Philadelphus on the Philadelphian Gold.....	91
East of Eden: Biblical Knowing and the Inner.....	113
Elixir within a Kabbalistic Speculum	
Gavin S. Bennett	
[Al]chemical Imagery in the Poetry of.....	121
Garcilaso de la Vega	
Daniel L. Heiple	
Hieronymous Bosch, 'Psychedelic' Art, Alchemy, ...	133
and Bon Religion	
Ezio Albrile	
A Source for Robert Fludd's Sevenfold Rose.....	138
Alchemical Agriculture - A recipe for an.....	140
alchemical fertilizer from an Eighteenth century manuscript	
Seven Illustrations to the Works of Jacob Boehme ...	145
Extracted from a Walton manuscript	
The Glory of Light or a short treatise showing.....	160
Urim and Thummim to be made by Art	
Transcribed from Ms. Ashmole 1415	

Editorial

Over the past five years a number of creative programmers have been working on an extension of computer technology which will in time undoubtedly have a considerable impact upon people's lives. This new idea of creating 'virtual realities' through a computer program, which people can explore and interact with, has been speculated upon by science fiction writers for decades, but only now is the technology and the programming expertise coming together to produce a usable system which works in real time. What makes the experience of 'virtual reality' different from watching television, is that users wear a headset entirely enveloping their visual field providing a three dimensional view into a space which the user feels they are standing inside. Rather than viewing this from the outside as a detached observer, the user feels they are a participant in the virtual action. The equipment also senses body movements (a special glove is used a present) so one can reach out and touch 'things' which only exist in the visual space of the computer generated graphics, as well as being able to walk around and explore images appearing as solid objects. Although many of the people involved in the development of these 'virtual reality' products are only interested in solving the technological problems presented by this application, a number of the programmers at the forefront of its development, are driven by

a vision of extending the human imagination through a symbiotic link with computer programmed 'virtual reality'. They see human imagination as a vast unexplored realm which can be experienced in its fullness when linked up to a virtual reality system.

These programmers seem to be attracted to mythological and esoteric imagery, and would like to build 'inner worlds' in their programs which people could explore. On a superficial examination of this area it might seem that these techniques of creating 'virtual realities' could be of great use to esotericists in pursuing inner journeys and meditative explorations of symbol systems. Indeed, it may be thought by some that these techniques will allow people to accelerate their inner development and enable them to have profound spiritual experiences.

Although the technology is not immediately available today, commercial pressures will no doubt ensure that within the decade a substantial part of the population will probably be using such equipment on a regular basis. People will immerse themselves in this 'virtual reality' as their disenchantment with broadcast television grows.

As hermeticists I believe we have to be aware of these developments and the dangers they could have for inner training and the form of spiritual experience pursued in the hermetic tradition. As hermeticism uses imagery as

keys to explore our inner worlds, it is seductive to believe that 'virtual reality' programs might harness these energies and allow people to experience the symbolism more easily or more completely. When one is offered the opportunity to put on a headset, press the start switch and step into a world of alchemical images, it could be difficult for some to doubt that this is an entirely benign technology we should all eagerly embrace.

However, we must realise at the outset the differences between this 'virtual reality' experience and the inner quest for spiritual experience. In the meditative exercises used in hermeticism we build up series of images within our soul which in a sense we offer up to the spiritual world (or our deepest spiritual being) with the wish that the spirit will resonate with these images and reflect back or weave some pattern into this inner space of our soul, patterns that we recognise as the substance and promptings of spiritual experience.

The 'virtual reality' experience as it is conceived of today, rather cuts one off from this interior contemplative state. It creates an image rich visual environment, which the user can choose to shape or structure within the constraints of the computer graphics programming, but the stance of our soul in this experience is of having images worked upon it from without. In hermetic meditation the soul is reflecting upon itself in a recursive way, the soul turned in upon itself, forming the inner ouroboros. The

'virtual reality' experience will be far removed from the freedom in meditation to allow the image to grow organically in the imagination till it metamorphoses into a form which reflects back the spirit within. 'Virtual reality' experiences will fail to touch upon the metamorphosis of imagery, the alchemical transmutation, that occurs when we allow our imagination to dwell upon itself.

'Virtual reality' will no doubt seduce some people by its promise of allowing us to easily explore the symbolism in our imaginations, however it will be unable to lead to deeper experiences of inner transmutation. There is a danger that those who become accustomed to having images manipulated into their imaginations from without will find their abilities to self-seed and sustain meditative experiences, disturbed and depleted.

I believe it would be folly for hermeticists to hold out any hope that 'virtual reality' might provide a new tool for exploring the inner space of the soul. It will merely provide an outer distraction from the inner peace of the soul. It is yet another fascinating and clever weaving of imagery to tease us in this information rich world and lead us away from contemplating the soul and spirit, which are the root of our humanity.

The technology for finding the spirit within our beings is readily available in the meditative side of the hermetic tradition.

Adam McLean

Report by Nick Kollerstrom on his astrological research.

In the 1990 issue of the Journal, I proposed that dates when gold was purportedly made by alchemists should show an excess of solar aspects, with also possibly an excess of Mercury and Saturn aspects, citing three such moments. Since then I have found four more such dates, from J. Sadoul's *Alchemists and Gold*, K. Doberer's *The Gold Makers* and James Price's account of his alchemic experiments in Guildford. The aspects shown in these seven dates summed together are shown below. They have nearly three times more Sun and Mercury aspects than one would expect by chance, plus twice as many Saturn aspects, supporting my initial claim.

That score is obtained by scoring just the first three aspects, viz., conjunction, opposition and trine, all to 5° orb. (In a survey I have been doing of invention in relation to the planet Uranus, alluded to in my article, these were the aspects used.)

Table 1. Aspects (conj. opp. trine to 5° orb) for 7 'goldmaking' dates.

Planet	Observed	Expected
Sun	16	5.8
Mercury	15	5.8
Saturn	15	7
Moon	5	7

The expected score for Sun and Mercury is less as Sun, Mercury and Venus cannot form trines or oppositions. The Moon scored lowest of the planets.

Table 2. 7 goldmaking dates

Year Date	Alchemist	Metal used	Reference	Aspect score			
				☉	☿	♁	☾
1382 Apr 25 5pm	N. Flamel	Hg	Holmyard, 245	3	4	3	1
1586 Dec 19 (NS)	Kelley	Hg	Dee Diary, 22	2	2	2	0
1602 Mar 13 (NS)	A. Seton	Pb	Sadoul, 119	2	2	2	0
1648 Jan 15	Richthausen	Hg	Holmyard, 129	2	1	2	2
1667 Jan 17 4pm	Helvetius	Pb	Holmyard, 264	2	2	3	0
1701 Oct 1 8pm	Zorn	?	Doberer, 234	2	1	1	2
1782 May 25	J. Price	Hg	Price account	3	3	2	0

As I much hope to locate more such dates, permit me now to communicate my 'Golden Moments' Hypothesis:-

Alchemic 'goldmaking' dates generally show an excess of Sun and Mercury conjunctions, oppositions and trines, at 5° orb. Only witnessed events are scored, and only one date per alchemist may be used. Where there is more than one goldmaking event on record for an alchemist, the first publicly witnessed such event is scored.

The Book of Lambsprinck

An Interpretation

by Guido Martens

Introduction

De Lapide Philosophico of Lambsprinck, an author of which nothing more than his name is known, is one of those rare pearls in the alchemical tradition. It is known that Lambsprinck's treatise was edited in German first, and that it existed in the form of an illustrated manuscript before it was printed. Michael Maier admits in 1617 that he was inspired by the drawings of Lambsprinck, while the first printed edition of *De Lapide* was only made in 1625. It was translated from the German into Latin by Nicolas Barnaud, a physician from the Dauphine. Lucas Jenning edited the text, with the illustrations, which are probably from the hand of Mathieu Merian, in 1625 in the compilation *Museum Hermeticum*. In that same year, Jenning also edited a German version. The next editor of the *Museum Hermeticum*, Hermann a Sande, also included Lambsprinck's treatise. This edition was done in Frankfurt in 1677. It is this edition that was used for our translation and commentary.

Before I begin with a commentary on each figure separately, I want you to look through the pictures globally in their numerical order. You will perceive that in the first ten pictures animals occur, and in the last five only human figures. In this way the whole series is clearly divided into two halves. The first half is still further divided into animals of the water (Fig.1), animals of the earth (Figs. 2, 4 & 5), and animals of the air (Figs. 7 & 8). These three kind of animals are separated from each other by dragons. In fig. 2, a man in full armour fights a furious dragon. This scene forms the transition between fishes and animals of the earth. Picture 6 separates the animals of the

earth from the birds, and shows an 'ourobouros', a winged dragon which bites his own tail. The sequel of the birds is concluded by the scene of the king on his cubic throne, who has the dragon and the fish under his domination. The king concludes in fact the first 'animal' half of the emblem series, and he introduces the second half, where the actors are human figures. He is the crucial figure in the whole series.

Guided by this classification, I have tried to lay out the 15 pictures into a meaningful pattern. The result can be seen overleaf.

I brought different 'layers' into the pattern, which bear analogy with the four elements, plus the 'quinta essentia'. One may indeed distinguish water (fishes), earth (land-animals), air (birds), fire (introduced by the burning salamander); and quinta essentia (introduced by the sick king, who stands for the preparation of the tincture).

A passage through this pattern, from beneath to above, shows the sequence of the different processes which lead to the Philosophers Stone, the final goal of the alchemical work.

The lower half, dominated by animals, stands for the 'lesser work', the preparation of the white stone. The upper half, with the king, his son, and the angel-counsellor, stands for the 'great work' and the preparation of the red stone.

I will explain each of these phases more in detail by means of the separate pictures.

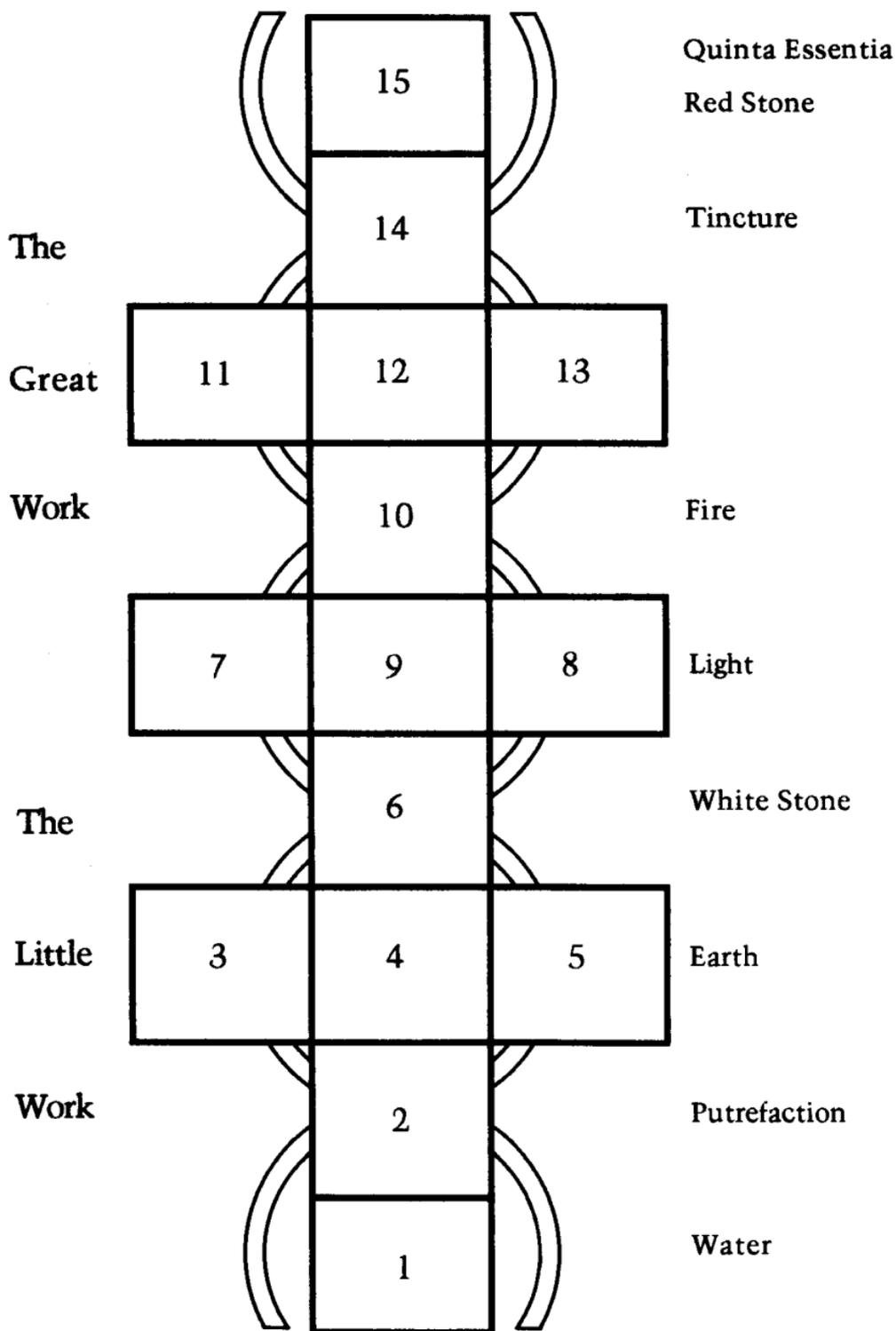
The Four Elements

First, something about the four elements and about the order in which they occur in Lambsprinck's treatise.

The classical way of representing the four elements, for instance as they occur in the *Turba Philosophorum* (the oldest known Latin alchemical text) is a hierarchical classification according to the density of matter.

Fire, hot and dry, is the most volatile element, and stands on top for that reason. Air, hot and humid, is floating, yet heavier than fire. Next comes Water, humid and cold, not floating, but liquid. Last comes Earth, cold and dry, the vast element. Interpreted psychologically, as it appears mostly in later alchemy, under influence of the Rosicrucian Movement: Earth stands for the physical, the bodily processes; Water stands for the emotional and Air for the mental processes, which take place together in the soul; and Fire, finally, stands for the intuitive and spiritual processes of the spirit. Lambsprinck also uses the elements in this sense.

The Quintessence is not a fifth element, in the same way as the other four. It is itself an element that is formed by the coherence of the four ordinary elements; it is a bundling together of their essences, the essence of these essences. In this sense it becomes a strife to



emphasize the unity of all matter throughout these four levels, and to fix it. For alchemy is not aiming towards spiritualization freed from all matter; it aspires towards the perfection of this matter, towards a sublime form of unity within all the riches of nature. The quintessence finally is the Philosophers Stone!

The classification which Lambsprinck uses is somewhat different from the one we called 'classical'. He does not let the process begin with the Earth on the lowest level, but with Water. This goes back to a still older form of thinking. In the earliest mythologies, Water is the primeval situation, the primeval chaos, from which all other things did arise. This is so in the Bible, but also in the creation myths of ancient Egypt and Babylon. In many of these myths, the chaos before creation is represented by a boundless ocean which extends itself in all directions. And in this chaos order is born, in the apparition of land: the primeval hill in Egypt, Mount Meru in India, and many more. And the waters are separated by the air: one part below (the sea), one part above (the sky).

Here, the waters stand for the unconscious, for that which man is no longer able to seize with his powers of consciousness. Above is the spiritual, cosmic unconscious; that which transcends reason and the power of the intuition. Below is the ocean of the instinctive unconscious: beyond the threshold where our sensitivity loses itself in that permanent stream of autonomous processes of the body which regulate our biological balance and which lie under the threshold of awareness.

We are living between those two vast oceans of extension, as far as we are conscious of ourselves as separate beings (as 'I').

The sea is the medium in which man is drowning, perishes and loses his individuality. Consciousness which expands itself into a sea loses every trace of a personal character.

Many of the stories about adventurous sea-travels are symbolical journeys of human consciousness along the edge of its possibilities.

It is in this view of the world that one must understand the use of the four elements in Lambsprinck's treatise.

The Double Character of Mercurius

One can put it that alchemy always was operating on two levels at the same time. On the one side there was experimentation and the practical work in the laboratory; on the other hand the contemplating of the nature of matter, and the interpretation by feeling, of the various experiences which occur in the work.

It is thus possible to approach alchemy in two ways. The first is the extrovert view, which sees alchemy as the primitive precursor of modern chemistry. It has indeed been possible for contemporary researchers to extract some recognizable formulae out of the dark recipes in the old treatises. The second vision is the introvert view.

An alchemist, working in this fashion, was not so much involved in a search for reactions between physical ingredients. He was rather scanning his own reactions on what happened and that is what he wrote down. He used a very particular faculty of knowledge, which rests upon sympathy.

Sympathy must not be understood in the usual meaning of benevolence, but in the etymological sense of 'feeling-community', in the same way as Henri Bergson used the word. There exists a profound and immediate contact between things and ourselves, via the instinctive, more specifically by the sympathetic nervous system. For, each moment, this biological computer has to be able to adapt our organism to all kinds of alterations in its surroundings. And these adaptations are instinctual, by an immediate feeling that escapes our awareness mostly. For reason, that tries to understand things by isolating them and placing them at a distance, is not able to seize those subtle life-processes.

Bergson formulates the distinction between instinct and reason in his work *l'Evolution Creatrice*¹ :

"There are things which only the intellect would be able to search for, but which it will never find by itself. These things could be found by the instinct alone, but the instinct will never search for them. The true method to penetrate to the kernel of life, would thus be a synthesis of intellect and instinct. Out of such a synthesis would the intuition proceed; i.e. the instinct that, disinterested, would be found to be conscious of itself, and would be able to reflect on its object and to expand it towards infinity."

Here is said, in a beautiful way, what, in my opinion, is to be understood by the principles of sulphur and mercur.

Sulphur is (in this particular interpretative framework) the comprehending ability of the intellect, the focussing and the fixation of the object with the attention, and the contemplation on the object with a purpose. Sulphur is thus the principle and the 'light' of concentration.

Mercur is the power of feeling, that rests on sympathy in the sense of 'feeling-community'. It is an immediate contact, a sensing (i.e. an awareness and an appreciation) of the being, or of the nature of the essence of something. This function belongs to the instinct and is, therefore, largely unconscious. Sympathy is directed outwards, it is a feeling which reaches out, isolating nothing, just sensing.

When reading alchemical texts, one is easily confused when they talk about mercury. This is because two different things are meant with it, which are nevertheless closely related to one another. The first is the just mentioned instinctive feeling-capacity, which I call 'Mercur' from now on. The second is the function of the intuition, which I call 'Quicksilver' to distinguish it from the first. This

intuition is, if I keep following Bergson, a synthesis between the intellect, which knows what it is searching for, and the instinct, which is capable of immediate sensing. The Quicksilver then, is an inner situation of intuitive brightness, in which an area of the amorphous instinctive experience, the mercur, is enlightened by the vast beam of purposeful and fixed concentration, the sulphur. This quicksilver is in essence only one, but it has a double nature, expressed in the pairs of 'sulfur & mercur', 'Sol & Luna', 'man & woman', 'fire & water', 'spirit & soul'. The quicksilver is androgynous because it needs to consist out of a certain ability of immediate sensing or awareness (mercur), and out of a vast kernel of comprehension (sulphur), in which and round which a first impression, an inspiration, is centered, fixed (or retained) and is brought to a certain form (sal). Without such a vast kernel of comprehension, in which the attention is focussed, the intuitive brightness would evaporate and would become useless.

This principle of the capturing of inspiration and of the fixing of it in a vast idea, is the principle of the forming of the Philosophers' stone.

In that way mercur and sulphur form the basic ingredients for quicksilver. We will see that this theory is often applied in Lambsprink's treatise.

The instinct is active on many levels of experience, just like the sympathetic nervous system has many centers, which are spread out over the entire body. There is an instinct for self-preservation and survival, for procreation, for digestion, heart-beat, respiration, and also for the higher psychic functions, such as language-automatisms, the apprehension of the meaning of impressions, the conceptualization on an abstract level, etc.

These functions may develop fully into levels of experience of a bright intuitive consciousness, which possess, each on their own, a distinct quality. The passing through all these functions, from low to high, corresponds with the elevation of the metals from lead to gold, and with the generation and the sublimation gradually of the quicksilver. This we will illustrate further on.

I would define Quicksilver as that particular state of brightness we call inspiration. It is an immediate, spontaneous and total reaction to an impression. We experience such a situation with a particular flavour; and this inspires to some creative act of our own: making a drawing, writing a poem, making an invention, or something else.

The adept must learn to control this power to evoke inspiration. With this power he must build, out of his experiences, an inner criterion of genuineness, of 'authenticity', a Philosophical touchstone, on which he can assay the value of new insights. He will also learn that there exist various levels of inspiration, which are equal in intensity, but each of which have a different quality, because they tune in on a particular quality of life.

Before I finish this introduction, I want to add something on the symbol of quicksilver - mercur.

This symbol consists of a Moon, looking upwards, the symbol of the principle of receptivity, which is directed towards the higher realms. This is mercur.

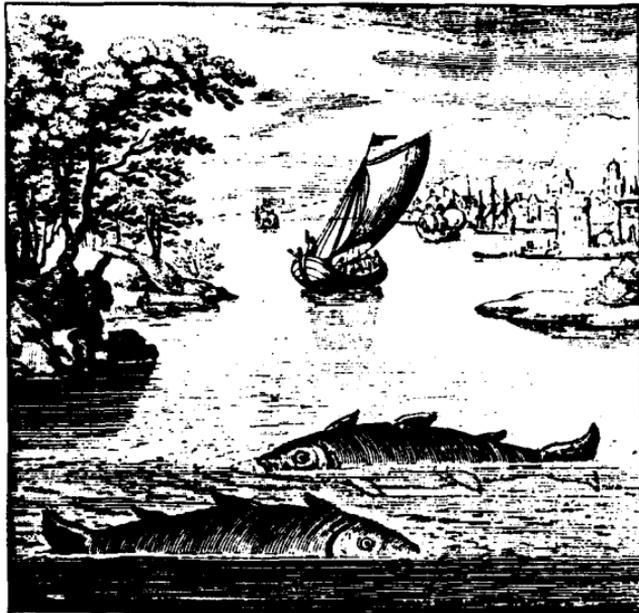
Under the moon is placed a Sun. This is sulphur, the principle of fixation, concentration and understanding: the point of light.

Under the sun is drawn a Cross, the symbol of matter and of the four elements.²

Thus quicksilver (mercur-moon + sulphur-sun) acts upon matter (cross) in the symbol of Mercurius ☿, the messenger between men and gods, between spirit and matter. It is, such as Hermes says in his *Emerald Tablet*:

"That which is below is like that which is above,
And what is above is like that what is below,
In order that the miracles of the One be celebrated."

First Figure



The Sea is the Body, the two Fishes are Soul and Spirit.

The Sages will tell you
That two fishes are in our sea
Without any flesh or bones.
Let them be cooked in their own water;
Then they will become a vast sea...
The two fishes are only one, that is true,

They are two, and nevertheless they are one,
Body, Spirit and Soul...
Cook these three together,
That there may be a very large sea.

The ocean in which the fishes are swimming is the primeval chaos, the condition in which the world is before the creation of land and the separation between the 4 elements earth and air, fire and water. For our consciousness, the ocean is the place in which it is drowned and immersed in the unconscious. This is the area where the habitual sensations pass into purely instinctive reflexes, which play such a prominent part in our physical lives, without our being conscious of it. This very refined feeling- and reaction-apparatus is able to make a much deeper and closer contact with matter than is possible for the habitual senses; for the latter always create a distance between the subject and the object and tend to isolate this out of its environment. The sympathetic nervous system, on the contrary, is adapting the subject as near as possible to its milieu. The ocean, the 'Mare Nostrum', is sometimes called 'our amniotic fluid'.³ It is in this area of the utmost primitive, but very intensive and immediate experiences, so very close to the raw material itself, that one must search for the prima materia.

Only the fish is a living kernel of consciousness in this endless ocean. Somewhere then, one tiny point of consciousness is extant, but it is extremely difficult to find; as difficult as it is to catch the tiny little fish called *echeneis remora* in the oceans and seas of the world. This *echeneis remora* is a small fish which Pliny describes and which the alchemists often take as an example.⁴ It is able to stop suddenly in the middle of the sea, ships that sail at full speed. It has thus a strong fixating and magnetising power: it also attires gold and silver. Besides this, there are the fish-eyes. Fishes don't have eyelids, they never close their eyes. The fish-eyes are symbols for sparks of insight or enlightenment, which glow up suddenly and emerge in the dark reign of the unconscious.⁵ Out of a number of these sparks gold is prepared.

The fish represents the first phase of the manifestation of quicksilver; which I want to interpret as a condition of intuitive brightness which discloses itself in the area of the deepest instincts, that take care of the maintenance of life. It would thus be possible, according to the alchemists, to expand a small kernel of sensitivity within a definite area of the experience, towards a condition of bright consciousness of the total area. Thus, if the fishes (sulphur and mercury) are cooked in their own water, an immense sea -of vivid and clear consciousness in the area of the vital instincts- will be made.

In the Celtic tradition there occurs a fish which fits very well with our theme and which illustrates the intention of Lambsprinck's

first figure. This fish is the Salmon of Wisdom, about which Robert Graves tells the following remarkable story⁶: "Fionn,... was instructed by a Druid with the same name as himself to cook for him a salmon fished from a deep pool of the River Boyne, and forbidden to taste it; but as Fionn was turning the fish over in the pan he burned his thumb, which he put into his mouth and so received the gift of inspiration. For the salmon was a salmon of knowledge, that had fed on nuts fallen from the nine hazels of poetic art." These hazels, which were blooming and bearing fruit at the same time (i.e. have beauty and wisdom at the same time) hang over a holy creek, in which the salmon swims. The salmon had as many bright spots (=fish-eyes!) on their back, as they had swallowed nuts. Every knowledge of the arts and the sciences was connected with the eating of these nuts. The salmon was considered to be one of the oldest animals in the world and is consulted as an oracle in many an Irish legend.

It is no coincidence that the symbol of two fishes, swimming in opposite directions, occurs in the beginning of the series. They represent, as animals living under water, the preparatory stage of the work.⁷ Like the fishes of the zodiac, they close an old circle, before a new round starts with the sign of Aries, which comes next to the fishes. They represent the most primitive form of the human consciousness, which has a deep layer of past experience, which is no longer available to us, because it belongs to an aeon unknown to us. It belongs to the world before we were there, which existed for aeons and aeons and in which myriads of events occurred, on a large scale and on a small scale. Matter, the primeval substance, the primeval chaos, shaped, disintegrated and reshaped itself into existence. All this is recorded in matter, as an ancient wisdom locked up in substance. All this can dimly be felt, sometimes experienced in a form of extasy, but never understood by man. This is the sea in which the fishes of the beginning and the end of the cycle of existence swim (cf. the fish as the Leviathan⁸). The prima materia is full of an ancient wisdom, and something of it is sensed by the fish, which is fed by it. The fish is the innermost primitive beginning of an individual consciousness, and in this way it can be the first teacher of man, or, mythologically speaking, of mankind. This can be seen in some ancient mythologies.

The first example is that of the first incarnation of Vishnu.⁹ Manu, the seventh legislator of mankind, found a tiny little fish in the water for his ablutions. The fish slipped into his hands and asked for protection. It spoke: "I will save you from a delusion which is going to kill all creatures on earth". The little fish grew larger and larger and had to be put into still larger containers, until nothing less than the Ocean could contain it. At this moment Manu recognized the incarnation of Vishnu. The god made Manu build a big ark, much

like Noah. When the rains came Manu embarked with wise men, plants and animals.

One can see the parallel with Lambsprinck's text: the little fish grows and grows until it is as big as the ocean; then it becomes the teacher of man: it tells him how to survive within the drowning conditions of his surroundings.

The second example is the Babylonian saga of *Oannes*.¹⁰ This was a being, half man, half fish. He came from the Egyptian sea, out of the primeval Egg, and appeared near the coast of Babylonia. He had a human head under the head of a fish (which looks very much as a bishop with a mitre), under his tail were attached the feet of a man, of which he also had the voice and the language. During daytime this being lived on land among men, without eating anything. He gave men the knowledge of letters and sciences, and thought them the arts, arithmetics, agriculture. At sunset he retired himself into the waters and passed the night there.

Here we see an other example of a fish, being a primeval teacher of mankind. Meaningful is the fact that during the night he is under water (the unconscious), during daytime he is on land (the conscious), remaining sober. He is half man and half fish, has the nature of both the conscious and the unconscious.

Second Figure



Putrefaction:

The Sage says that a wild beast is in the forest,
Completely surrounded by the blackest dye.
If any man cuts off its head,

It throws all blackness from itself
And shows the most shining white color...

If it is possible to throw any light into the dark areas of the deep instincts, then the consequence is that a sleeping dragon is woken up. This dragon is the guardian of this instinctive domain. A dragon guards a treasure, i.e. the prima materia, the material with which the alchemist must work and which he must refine. Also the dragon itself is valuable, for, according to the alchemical tradition, in the head of the dragon the 'draconites' is formed.¹¹ This is a white dragon-stone which traces poisons and cures all venomous bites.

One should cut off the dragon's head while it sleeps, but nevertheless it has to be sufficiently awake, for the stone only becomes precious if a little bit of the dragon's soul is left in it, and that is the hate of the monster while it feels itself dying. The black beast represents the stage of putrefaction, which is governed by Saturn, the black lead. Saturn is the god of the dead and he is the outermost of the visible planets in our solar system. That makes him the gatekeeper of the underworld. In mythology it is told that Saturn devoured all children that his wife Rhea bore him, immediately after birth, for fear that one of them would dethrone him later. These children are the other planets, or the metals. But with the last, Jupiter, Rhea made Saturn devour a big stone in stead of the child. Thereupon Saturn vomited not only the stone, but also all the other planets. This myth was used cleverly by the alchemists to represent the liberation of their material out of the grip of the primal chaos.¹² I will now try to explain this in a psychological sense.

A newborn child has its senses and physiological functions completely open for all the impressions in his surroundings which act upon him. These are so vivid and so immediate for him, that there is hardly a distinction between himself and his surroundings. When the child grows up and gets older it has to suffer all kinds of frustrations. These are so numerous that it is impossible to digest and assimilate them in time. That's why his immediate sensibility closes itself off, out of anxiety for more pain and frustrations. This closing off is a process that goes on merely on the instinctive level, in the functions of the sympathetic nervous system, about which I spoke before.

When the child has become an adult, there has arisen a latent stress which lies under the threshold of perception, but which has a big influence on his behavior. An adult is usually closed for those fine and subtle experiences and perceptions which otherwise could be a source of joy and inspiration. They slide off on him, so to speak. But they do not vanish into nothingness: they are devoured by the monster in him, even before he has the chance to become aware of this. It is this monster, this dragon of latent stress which the alchemist must slay in himself, so that all this spasmodically stored material, which

consist of rich experiences, is liberated as an enormous source of vitality and libido. Then the other metals are liberated and he is again able to open up himself for the immediate and intense experience of first impressions, on all the levels of experience where the various metals symbolically stand for.

In the black dragon, the lead, is hidden a white stone. This is based upon a simple observation. On the outside, lead is dull and darkish because of the oxidation. If it is cut through, it gleams on the inside. Thus the alchemists say that within the black lead is locked up quicksilver, inspiration, and what matters is that this be liberated.

The dragon makes the transition between water and earth, i.e. it is the gate, or the guardian of that gate between the instinctive unconscious and the conscious.

Third Figure



In the Body (the forest) there is Soul (the stag) and Spirit (the unicorn).

There are two animals in this forest...:
 A great and strong stag... and a unicorn.
 Those two are concealed in the forest,
 But happy shall be called the man
 Who shall snare and capture them...

He that knows how to tame and master them by art,
 To couple them together,
 And to lead them in and out of the forest,
 May justly be called a Master.

Once the intuitive powers are awakened, one must learn to

contain them, to develop them and to raise them to their highest form of perfection.

The stag and the unicorn are both shy animals and they are both difficult to catch.

The stag is not an ordinary one. It is the white hart that is dedicated to Diana, the virgin goddess of the hunt.¹³

Diana's car is pulled by four white harts with golden antlers. The myth tells about her that she had the habit of bathing nude in a pond in the middle of a sacred grove. Acteon, who was hunting with his dogs, tried to spy on her, but was discovered. Diana changed him by magic into a stag, whereupon he was attacked by his own dogs and torn to pieces. This myth is used by alchemists to illustrate one of the dangers of the work.

The Physiologus¹⁴ tells of the hart, that it is the enemy of the snake. When the snake takes refuge from the stag in the holes of the earth, the hart takes water from a spring into its mouth and blows it into the refuge of the snake. This one comes out and is taken by the stag, who kills it by its paws, or eats it. To neutralize the venom of the snake, the hart drinks fresh water, loses his antlers and is reborn to a new life. The theme of the stag drinking from the waters of life, originated with the cry of the Psalmist: "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God".¹⁵ The hart is thus a symbol that stands for spiritual purity and aspiration.

The unicorn¹⁶ is described by Pliny as a ferocious untamable beast, with the head of a deer, the paws of an elephant and the tail of a wild boar. Out of its forehead grows one horn, which is as long as the unicorn itself, and as solid as a sword. In the Physiologus¹⁷ it is told that this wild and untamable animal becomes as meek as a lamb, when a pure virgin sits down at the place where the unicorn usually grazes. The animal, which is irresistibly attracted by the purity of the virgin, lays its head and horn in her lap and falls asleep. Then hunters may come and kill the unicorn. Because of this story the unicorn was adopted in to the Christian iconography as the symbol of the redeemer. The ferocious animal is the jealous and cruel god of the Old Testament which nestles himself in the womb of the pure virgin Maria, and is then born out of her as Jesus Christ.

From the preceding it appears that the stag as well as the unicorn are related to virginal purity. Both are symbols for Mercurius in its pure, volatile and very subtle shape: the pure intuition, the undefiled first impression, which, when it is retained and precipitated, is a very powerful source of inspiration, but which is still very volatile at this stage and difficult to seize.

Within this intuition the stag and the unicorn represent two opposite tendencies. The stag flees away and has to be chased by the hunters (Mercury is called 'cervus fugitivus' by some alchemists, and by a play of words also 'servus fugitivus'¹⁸). The unicorn, on the other

hand, is first decoyed by the virgin and then caught.

Therefore, the stag stands for the soul, the mercur; and the unicorn represents the spirit, the sulphur. The ramified antlers of the white hart symbolize the wide out-reaching sensitivity, the centrifugal tendency, the volatile. The one horn of the unicorn symbolizes the one-pointed concentration of the spirit, the centripetal tendency, the fixating. Together they constitute the two functions which are needed to come at sublime insights: the co-operation between feeling and spirit. Mercurius is now sublimated to a high degree and still very volatile. The important thing will be to let it precipitate in the right way to be able to contain and fix it.

The unicorn, at last, hides at the base of its horn the red stone, as appears in a passage from Eschenbach's *Parzifal*¹⁹:

"We caught the beast called Unicorn
That knows and loves a maiden best
And falls asleep upon her breast;
We took from underneath his horn
The splendid male carbuncle stone
Sparkling against the white skull-bone."

Fourth Figure



Here you behold a great marvel: two lions are joined into one.

The sages do faithfully teach us
That two strong lions, to wit, male and female,
Lurk in a dark and rugged valley.
These the Master must catch,...snare and bind them,
And lead them into the same forest.

(For Spirit and Soul must be united in their Body.)

Alchemical symbolism makes the distinction between the green lion and the red lion. The green lion²⁰ is a universal dissolvent with which all matter can be reduced into the basic elements from which they are composed. Sometimes he is depicted while he is devouring the sun, because he also digests and dissolves gold. The green lion appears to be a volatile product, cold and wet, out of which the mercur is prepared. The red lion²¹ is a purifying fire which burns up all that is ignoble, so that only the valuable remains. The red lion is a fiery sulphur, hot and dry. Out of it is prepared the stone or the elixir.

Again we see emerging here the mercur-sulphur theory. The lioness then is the mercur and the lion the sulphur. Michael Maier gave (in *Atalanta fugiens* embl. XVI), inspired by Lambsprinck's fourth figure, wings to the lioness, and not to the lion. The lion prevents by its tremendous force (fixation by sulphur) the lioness (volatile mercur) to fly away and to be dragged with her. "The lioness", he says²², "comes from a deep valley at the foot of the mountain which is dedicated to Venus, and where only winged lionesses live". This refers clearly to the green lion, for green is the color of copper, the metal of Venus, that is exposed to the air. The lion then, comes from the top of this same mountain and has to be conducted into the valley to unite himself with the lioness.

Why are those lions so deterrent? Simply by their attributes: the green lion dissolves everything and the red lion burns all that is ignoble. In other words: the prima materia, or the psychic material with which one is working, is subjected to a rigorous purification. All matter that does not pass the test is thrown away. Any material, that has not the force to regenerate after dissolution, proves that it has no essential nature of its own. All matter that burns up in the fire is not noble and durable enough to be a metal. In old Flemish is a saying about this: "All that burns does not putrefy!". What then is, in psychological terms, the character of this test?

For that it will be necessary to have a look at the current symbolical meanings of the lion.²³

Considered generally, the lion stands for a great, even invincible force. That is the reason why so many royal houses carry it in their standard. The lion is also vigilant. It is told about him that he sleeps with his eyes open and wakes with his eyes shut. That is why lion-statues are placed as symbolical guardians beside gates. The force of the lion is also a passionate will-power. As king of the animals, the lion strikes with awe: is feared for his force, but also is praised for his sense of righteousness, or rather, sincerity. The lion flies into rage when he perceives insincerity. According to Pliny the lion spares the lives of those of his victims which throw themselves in the dust at his feet; but according to an English tradition he only spares the

noble. The negative side of his force is a tyranny which is the result of self-infatuation: blinded by his ideal, the lion suppresses the others.

Lion and lioness together have a deep sensual and sexual meaning as well. The lioness is all but the symbol for sexual fidelity. It is the force of the lion which makes her stay with him. As a couple they embody the passionate, warm, sensual and even incestuous love. For sometimes it is said that lion and lioness are brother and sister.

With the lions we are in the area of the passions, the temper, the emotions, the will, and the desires. The green and the red lion then represent a purification and the setting up of order in the emotional life. All things the adept wants, longs for, hates, loves, etc., are subjected to a rigorous self-examination against the criterion of the inner sincerity. The result should be that out of two lions is made one. This is represented as a lion with one head and two bodies (mercur and sulphur)²⁴. Out of the open mouth of this hermaphrodite the fons mercurialis takes its rise: the source of the water of life. This means that on the emotional level the passions (lioness) and the will (lion) are brought in balance with each other and are sublimated to a pure longing and a sincere strife for ennobling and perfection.

Fifth Figure



The Body is mortified and rendered white, then joined to Soul and Spirit by being saturated with them.

The wolf comes from the east, the dog from the west...
 Both are descended from the same stock...
 They are full of rage...and kill each other.
 And from them comes a great poison.

But when they are restored to life,
 They are clearly shown to be
 The Great and Precious Medicine...

Inspired by Lambsprinck's fifth figure, Michael Maier took up a very similar emblem in his book *Atalanta Fugiens* (embl.XLVII). The accompanying epigram is as follows²⁵:

The wolf comes from the place where the Sun rises,
 But from where the Sun sinks into the Sea,
 The Dog comes, in raging fury:
 The one bites the other, and the other bites back, in a
 tortuous rage,
 They were both seen furious, with their muzzles wide open.
 They are the stones belonging to each other, which are given
 away for nothing,
 Everywhere, to all, at all times; may you understand them.

The two stones which are given away for nothing are the red and the white stone. The red stone, the wolf, rises in the east and goes down in the west. The wolf, which was dedicated to Apollo, represents the sun, or the sulphur. In alchemy, the grey wolf is also the symbol for antimony, a mythical material which putrefies and dissolves all thing. The white stone, the dog, which rises in the west and goes down in the east, is then the moon. The dog was dedicated to Diana or Selene, the white moon-goddess. Thus the dog, which has a softer character than the wolf, is the symbol for mercur.

Here again is depicted a *coniunctio oppositorum*, the conjunction of opposites. Again, it is sulphur and mercur which have to be united. But the way it happens is now very violent: by murdering each other they come alive anew and they deliver then "the Great and Precious Medicine, the most glorious Remedy upon earth, which refreshes and restores the Sages, who render thanks to God and do praise Him."

Maier says in his discourse on Emblem XLVII²⁶:

"The difference between Sulphur and Mercury is slight,
 as they mutually descend from one another.

The Mercury produces the Sulphur
 and the Sulphur purifies the Mercury."

The ambiguity is again the double meaning of mercur-quicksilver, which is a symbol for intuitive illumination which is yet of a double character: mercur, receptivity and sulphur, understanding.

The dog as a symbol has the meaning of a faithful and courageous guardian of the flock or herd, of the yard and property. It is faithful to its master, but the enemy of all that is a stranger to it. For its faith, the dog is praised, for its slavishness and its undercutting it is despised. Besides, the dog, which copulates in public, symbolizes

despicable sexual promiscuity. The dog, in short, is an accepted phenomenon in human society: once a wild species of animals, which has adapted itself to the way of life in a culture which is essentially alien to it.

The wolf is the symbol for voracity, which, as Pliny says, even devours earth when he is hungry.²⁷ With an unbelievable aggressiveness he devours everything that comes on his way. The wolf means sexual voracity too: no woman is safe from him. But the same was also said about women: they are wolves trying to devour the men. If the dog is the guardian of culture, then the wolf is the merciless threat to it.

The dog and the wolf both belong to the reign of the instinctive impulses. This area of experience is still a lot deeper than the passions of the couple of lions. They are very fundamental impulses, which build the basis of the way in which someone functions in society. The dog symbolizes the way in which someone adapts himself to his environment, maybe courageous and faithful, but also slavishly subjected to the ruling standards. The wolf is that part of a person's true nature which revolts against uniformity, his true genuine self in an instinctive shape. The wolf in somebody is capable of stripping of long years of cowardliness and self-deception, but it is a suicidal urge as well. There has to be a balance between those two forces: the adapted way of life of the dog, and the true character of the feelings of the wolf. Hermann Hesse has spun out this theme masterly in the figure of Harry Haller, the 'steppenwolf'.

Sixth Figure



This surely is a great miracle and without any deception,
That in a venomous dragon there should be the great medicine.

The Ourobouros²⁸, the serpent which bites itself in the tail, symbolizes in general a process which is closed in itself; in which the end is a new beginning of the cycle. The dragon thus eats itself, so it disappears; yet it feeds itself with itself, and then it grows again. The ourobouros is also seen as a cycle in the alchemical work. Symbolically it is called one year, yet the duration is in reality much longer. The passing through one such a cycle is one revolution of the wheel, the R O T A. Often more revolutions are necessary before the planned goal is achieved. The cycle starts with the prima materia and finishes with the prima materia, but now in a more perfected form.

The ourobouros is an age-old symbol. In Egypt it was the serpent-demon Apopis, which was circling round the earth. The same is true of Leviathan in the Jewish-Christian tradition: it is the monster that keeps the cosmic waters under control, but it can also cause calamities. In the learning of the gnostics the Leviathan encircles the spheres of the earth and the seven planets, of which the outermost is Saturn.²⁹ By that it encloses the whole material world, which is under the influence of the seven archons or the seven planetary spirits. In this sense the ourobouros has also the meaning of the unity of all matter. It is in this shape that it appears for the first time in an alchemical manuscript (Codex Marcianus, 10th, 11th century). On the inside is the inscription: "En To Pan", "everything [is] one".³⁰

With Lambsprinck the Ourobouros is the symbol for "The Mercury [which] is precipitated or sublimed, dissolved in its own proper water, and then once more coagulated". It is thus the symbol for the purified and perfected matter, as opposed to the ferocious dragon from the second figure, which represented the breaking through of the vital forces out of the matter. The ferocious dragon and the ourobouros have a link to each other: they are the beginning and the end of a cycle in which matter, the element earth, is worked upon. All animals of the third, fourth and fifth figures are animals of the land. One can put it that all that happens from the second till the fifth figure, occurs in the fury which is the result of the fight with the fierce dragon. This process comes to rest in the ourobouros.

The vital forces of the instinctive realm, which are liberated during the fight with the dragon, have caused a particular condition of intuitive brightness (or illumination) which expressed itself on three levels: the mental (stag and unicorn), the emotions (pair of lions), and the instinctual impulses (dog and wolf). The quicksilver revealed itself thus first in its most volatile shape (mental) and became gradually more substantial and precipitated in the lower functions (emotions and instinctual impulses). It meant at the same time the opening and the purification of those functions on which our consciousness has usually a grip: a perfection of matter from high to low.

If the third and the fifth figures are exchanged, a logical scheme

appears of a process of perfection and purifying in an ascending degree. The order then becomes:

1. The fishes: the deepest instincts, the sympathetic nervous system.
2. The ferocious dragon: the liberation of the vital forces.
5. The dog and the wolf: the instinctual impulses.
4. The couple of lions: the feeling life, passions and emotions.
3. Stag and unicorn: the mental functions.
6. Ourobouros: the uniting and mastering of the lower nature of man.

A scheme is shown as it where, of the human body and its different psychic functions. The alchemical work then is a systematic task of the opening and the purifying of an inner dimension. The starting-point is something which is stored in the human being itself, or -as the alchemists say- in nature. The noble and the precious is locked up in matter itself and must be drained from it by the alchemical work.

The Adept then, has released in this dragon-cycle a large amount of vitality out of his prime matter. With that he has purified his lower nature and has been able to behold it in a sublime way.

The result is that his psychic functions are no longer dominated by the heavy pressure of suggestion which is oppressing him from the surrounding world. His inner life has come to a rest and he has reached a certain degree of independence with regard to this world. He has made room and space in his world of experience. He is ready now to experience the pure intuitive forces of the realm of the air.

Seventh Figure



We hear of two birds in the forest,
Yet we must understand them to be only one.

A nest is found in the forest,
In which Hermes has his brood;
One fledgling always strives to fly upward,
The other rejoices to sit quietly in the nest...

Hermes is the legendary ancestor of all esoteric (i.e. hermetic) knowledge which was given to humanity. In ancient Egypt, he appeared as Thot, which brought the hieroglyphic writing to mankind. He was the weigher of the souls at the tribunal of the dead of Osiris and also the keeper of secrets. In the *Corpus Hermeticum*, Hermes Trismegistos is the one who receives knowledge of higher spiritual entities and also the one who passes this knowledge on in dialogues with his pupils or followers. The Hermes of the Greeks became Mercurius with the Romans. Mercurius is the winged god, which is the messenger between gods and men.

Hermes then, is a spiritual principle that connects the higher metaphysical worlds with the lower material world. It is not the knowledge of the gods itself, but indeed a connection towards it, upwards out of the lower spheres. This is symbolized in the mace of Hermes (caduceus) round which are coiling two serpents, from below to above. Hermetism then, is a philosophy, or rather a technique, which has to accomplish the link between the divine world (world of causation) and the human world (world of consequences). Hence we see Hermes often represented in the shape of a bird. In Egypt Thot was depicted as an Ibis-bird. In alchemy it is the Hermes Bird.³¹ It is the bird which flies up towards the spheres of the divine inspiration, and which takes some of it back down below towards the receptive mind of the adept, which uses it to the benefit of himself and his fellow-man.

In the Islamic Sufi tradition, the conference with the birds is something very special. It has to do with a very subtle use which is being made of sounds, rhythms, metaphors and symbols in poetry. Ordinary words may obtain thereby a very profound and multiple meaning, which leaves a deep impression on the psyche. Something, which would otherwise remain insensible, comes along with the words then. Hermes-Mercurius is here not any longer the metal quicksilver, the planet Mercurius, or just a symbol for intuitive illumination. Now he is the bringer of the message of the gods, i.e. of authentic creative powers.

The ouroboros from the sixth figure indicated that the lower bodily and sensitive functions are brought to rest, and that the adept has acquired control over them. In the myth, Siegfried is able to understand the language of the birds, after he has slain a dragon. In

the seventh figure this is symbolized by the snail at the root of the tree. Against the subtle game which is played in the element of the air, in the spheres of the spirit, the ordinary functions of the element earth are as a snail which creeps slowly along the earth. Earth and air are in the theory of the four elements opposites indeed (such as fire and water).

The nest of Hermes is situated high in the top of the tree of life, also called the tree of the philosophers. In this nest, the Hermes-bird has two young: one which is able to fly and one with truncated wings which by necessity has to stay into the nest.³² These two birds, which are only one, are the Hermogene. This means: 'born out of Hermes'. The flying bird is again the volatile mercur, which rises (or is send out) to get inspiration. The bird which stays in the nest is the sulphur, the fixing principle, which takes care that the creative powers do indeed return into the womb of the nest. Here also the two birds together form the principle of the quicksilver, which unfolds itself in the spheres of the element air. Together they shape an intense spiritual tension, a philosophic egg, an atmosphere in which the conference with the birds becomes possible. In this stage of the work, the adept learns to tune in and to guide his intuitive powers consciously.

Eighth Figure



Here are two birds, great and strong,
The body and Spirit; one devours the other.

In India there is a most pleasant wood,
In which two birds are bound together.

One is of a snowy white, the other is red.
 They bite each other, and one is slain
 And devoured by the other.
 Then both are changed into white doves,
 And of the Dove is born a Phoenix,
 Which has left behind blackness and foul death,
 And has regained a more glorious life...

The flying and the sitting bird from the seventh figure form a separatio. The two fighting birds from the eighth figure form the coniunctio which follows it. This is the reunion and unification which precedes the preparation of the Philosophers Stone and which terminates the first part, or the lesser work.

To have a good understanding of what it means that the white bird digests the red one, and that, finally, the red bird takes position above the white one, it is necessary to elucidate something about some gnostic heritage in alchemy. According to gnostic teachings³³, man, with his body, soul and spirit, is constructed by a group of archons, who were malicious pseudo-gods. They also made the whole perceptible world and they pretended to be the only and the highest gods. These archons, which are the demons of the seven planets (and sometimes of the twelve signs of the zodiac as well), each have a physical or psychical function of man under their supervision. All together they made a golem³⁴ - a kind of robot, a man made of clay and earth. But they were not successful in their efforts to arouse him to life. For that purpose they have to seduce the true Lord of the Light (the 'agatodaimon', i.e. the 'good demon') to make him send down a spark of true light into the golem. With a sly trick they succeed, whereupon they lock the principle of the light into the golem which they have made. This one comes to life and begins to move and to propagate. In this way the human species originated, according to gnostic tradition.

If man wants to be liberated from the chains of the seven demons of matter, then he must learn to see in himself the difference between the golem, the instrument, and this tiny unimpeachable spark of true individuality, which he shares with the Agatodaimon. This indestructible piece of consciousness is the unifying little seed, the Philosophical Gold, but also the Hermes Bird, or the Son of the Bird, the Filius Philosophorum.³⁵ The Bird of Hermes is a principle of unity, that is represented as the impregnated nucleus in the middle of the egg, which will develop into the bird itself.

Yet it is typical for the alchemical way of thinking, that, to strive after liberation, it does not adhere to an aversion from the world and to severe asceticism. On the contrary, it strives first to let the principle of unity in the adept develop into a new inner man or filius philosophorum, and then from that, to ennoble and purify matter.

That is to say, their own robot first, and then the little piece of the world on which the adept has any influence.

We can see this situation represented in the eighth figure. The spiritual principle is the red bird, it is active now and gives guidance. The white bird, the body or the golem, is in the subordinate position and is a fine and perfect instrument in the hands of the spiritual principle. In other words, inspiration guides the hands and the senses of the artist, who opens himself as a receptive instrument for the creative forces within. The artist ennobles with his work not only the material with which he is working, but also himself as a human being, i.e. the material from which he is himself composed.

The white doves are symbols of purity and spiritualization. The phoenix, in which they are transformed, is the symbol of the indestructibility of the power of creation. Time and again, the creative principle tears itself away from the creation in which it is brought to expression, is precipitated, and thus is pushed into death. It renews and rejuvenates itself again and again in the adept who follows the footsteps of nature³⁶ and who is able to keep pace with the creative principle which is at work in himself.

Ninth Figure



The Lord of the Forests has recovered his kingdom,
And mounted from the lowest to the highest degree.

With the lord of the forests we come to the end of the series of pictures which represent animals. On the tenth figure occurs, to be sure, the salamander, but this one has a special meaning, as we will see. All animals (except the fishes) are situated in a forest. Moreover,

from the third figure on it was stated that the forest stands for the body. In the forest, and thus in the body, occur certain physiological and psychical processes, which are symbolized by the different animals. The fact that these animals appear each time as two, points of course to the dualistic character of these processes. The duality was expressed by the terms soul and spirit, or mercur and sulphur. But to be true, there is a trinity: body, soul and spirit. The body is yet in the first part of the work, a factor which is only present at the background in a passive way. It is the sea or the forest in which something happens. The body (as a whole) is not yet actively involved in the process of perfection. This will happen only later on. In the eighth figure this is already alluded, as the white bird is there indicated as the body.

In the ninth figure, the various operations which are to happen in the forest, are brought to a good end. The Lord of the Forest has taken a seat on his throne. "None is of a higher birth than I", says the king, but also: "Yet at first I was of ignoble birth, till I was chosen and set on such a high place... And because out of the meanest was made the best, and was mounted to the most glorious throne, and to the state of royal sovereignty; therefore Hermes has called me the Lord of the Forests".

Here is drawn somebody, who has achieved completely a state of individuality. He is the master of the forest, thus of the body and its various functions: he has gained mastery over himself.

This phase is called the first degree of the tincture. It is the coping-stone of the lesser work. The stone which was formed, is the result of a thorough individual inner labour. In the further phases of the process, the projection and the augmentation, he will, on a larger scale, in the world outside him, have to prove and enlarge his power and integrity. The deep resonance which his work has in the world, will be a touchstone for the achieved result.

Until now, the adept was able to comprehend and be receptive to inspiration from a particular source. He could give expression to this in a personal piece of work. In essence this is still a passive occurrence: a reaction to a particular stimulus. Things become different when he comes to action and begins to influence occurrences and situations with his knowledge and experience. This kind of acting is no longer only giving expression to something: it is, by working on causes, determining the consequences. It means 'to reign', such as is proper for a king.

Please note that the king has the dragon for a hassock and the fish for an elbow-rest. He has overcome these stages. The stairs towards his throne have seven steps: one for each of the seven metals: the lowest step is lead, the upper step is gold. During the ascent to the above, the ennobling of the prima materia occurred step by step. The throne itself is placed in a small building which has the shape of a cube. This is the symbol of the matter, of the cubic stone which is

brought to the highest degree of perfection.

Tenth Figure



In all fables we are told
 That the Salamander is born in the fire;
 In the fire it has that food and life
 Which Nature herself has assigned to it.
 It dwells in a great mountain
 Which is encompassed by many flames,...
 Herein the Salamander bathes.
 The third is greater, the fourth brighter than the rest.
 In all these the Salamander washes, and is purified.
 The he hies him to his cave,
 But on the way is caught and pierced
 So that it dies, and yields up its life with its blood.
 But this, too, happens for its good:
 For from its blood it wins immortal life,
 And then death has no more power over it.
 Its blood is the most precious Medicine upon earth...
 For this blood drives away all disease
 In the bodies of metals, of men and of beasts.
 From it the Sages derive their science,
 And through it they attain the Heavenly Gift,
 Which is called the Philosopher's Stone,
 Possessing the power of the whole world...

According to traditional ideas, the salamander lives in the

element of fire, and feeds with fire. Because the salamander is proof against fire, it is the symbol for incombustible sulphur, the stone which is fixated in the red phase. But the salamander is proof against fire because it is very cold itself. It is further told of it that it may be locked up in the middle of a stone. When this stone is broken or melted, the salamander is restored to life again and flees away.

The salamander is the principle of fire, the sulphur, which is locked up in the mountain, in the womb of the earth, in the ores of the diverse metals. This sulphur is liberated from it by the labour of the metallurgist. The sulphur, the inner fire, is sublimated and it goes through the stages of the different metals, from lead to gold.

Here is described a strange energetic process, which is difficult to interpret. About the reign of the philosophical fire, the alchemists always remain vague. It has many resemblances with descriptions which can be found in Tantristic fire-yoga texts. In it is said that a fiery serpent (the Kundalini) is coiled up at the base of the spine (cf. the salamander's cave, deep into the mountain). By certain exercises it is possible that this serpent unrolls itself and raises up along the spine. The serpent Kundalini splits up in two distinct energy-streams, Ida and Pingala, which cross each other on spots where etheric psychic centers (chakras) are situated, which they activate and purify.³⁷ Those two energy-tracks, which one has also recognized in the Caduceus of Hermes, unite themselves at last in the highest psychic center, in the middle of the head, or above the head. There then is reached a kind of uppermost extasy, whereupon the stream of energy goes down again along the spine: the snake, or the salamander flees back to its cave.

But Lambsprinck is telling us that one prevents the salamander to return. It is killed, and in this way the etherical power-stream is blocked on its highest point: a condition of permanent illumination seems to be reached.

I am not pretending that the alchemists knew or practised Tantristic yoga-techniques. I only see a parallel in the symbolism.³⁸

Eleventh Figure



The Father and the Son have linked their hands
 With those of the Guide:
 Know that the three are Body, Soul, and Spirit.

We are now clearly arrived at a new section: all roles from now on are played by human figures.

The father, which we may identify with the Lord of the Forest, has now a son. Father and son embody the antithesis body-spirit (or, salt-sulphur). A third figure completes the trinity: it is the Mercurius Senex, the old man Mercurius, who is shown here with a Phrygian cap (symbol for divinatory power, such as the sybilla) and with angelic wings.

The son, a full-grown Filius Philosophorum, stands in the middle and is pulled in two directions. The father, who stands for the body, tries to tie to himself the son, the spirit, which he loves with all his heart. The 'Mercurius Senex' stands at the left side of the son and tries to persuade him to quit his father and to let him guide and instruct the young man. The son, the spirit, is involved in an inner conflict. He may choose to stop the spiritual growth-process here prematurely and to concentrate on success and the wielding of power. He is now master over the body and will in time succeed his father. But the ultimate goal of the entire Work that has happened until now, is still unknown to him. For that he has to release his father's hand and let himself be guided by the angelic mentor.

Of course, father, son and angelic guide show a great resemblance to the Christian Tri-unity Father-Son-Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the functions are divided in a different way with Lambsprinck. The old

king is the body; not any longer somewhere in the background, as in the first section, but now actively functioning as a unity. The highest level in the lesser work, the old king, is again reduced to the lowest and most passive part, if one can put it this way: it is the body which will have to undergo the changes and which will bear pain and suffering.

Twelfth Figure



Another mountain of India lies in the vessel,
Which the Spirit and the Soul, that is,
The Son and the Guide, have climbed.

The Guide addresses the Son in these words:
Come hither! I will conduct thee everywhere,
To the summit of the loftiest mountain,
That thou mayest understand all wisdom...
The Son hearkened to the words of the Guide,
And ascended upward with him;
There he saw the heavenly throne,
That was beyond measure glorious.
When he had beheld these things,
He remembered his Father with sighing,
Pitied the great sorrow of his Father,
And said: I will return to his breast.

The son (spirit) decides to leave his father (body) and to follow the spiritual guide (soul), who leads him on a high mountain to show him

the greatest wonders. This situation is comparable with the beginning of the *Poimandres*, the first book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a bundle of late-Hellenistic tracts which are attributed to Hermes Trismegistos³⁹:

"Once, when I was meditating all that is, my thoughts where risen to a big height, while the senses of my body where dropped asleep completely, such as happens with someone who, after a heavy meal, or by fatigue of the body, is overcome by a deep sleep. And it seemed to me that I saw a tremendous being, of indefinite width, which called me by my name and spoke to me: 'What do you want to hear and to see, and what is your intention to learn and to know?' I answered: 'Who art thou?' And he: 'I am Poimandres, the pastor of men, the authentic knowing [o teis authentias nous]. I know what you desire and I am with you everywhere'. I answered: 'I want to be instructed on the things which are essential, I want to understand their nature and to know God.' And he: 'Keep tight in your consciousness what you want to know and I will instruct you'. And while he spoke he changed his appearance and at once, in a moment, everything was disclosed to me. And I saw an infinite vision."

This quotation really speaks for itself. The king-father is the body which fell asleep and was made passive. The son is Hermes, the contemplating and concentrating mind, the consciousness which meditates on a theme, a seed-thought (bija in Sanskrit). And the angelic guide is Poimandres, who is at the same time a kind of universal pastor over the human consciousness, and the authentic knowledge, the source of true knowledge which is present in each human being and which reveals ultimate insights to the demanding consciousness. This makes me think of the Indian Brahman, the all-spirit, who is equated to Atman (Atom, Adam, Atmen), the highest self of a man, which is seated in the lotus of the heart.

What then is the content of the vision? In *Poimandres* it is the creation of the worlds of light and darkness. In Lambsprinck's treatise it is an ultimate coniunctio oppositorum; for from the top of their mountain the son and the guide see the sun as well as the moon, the light of the day, together with the dark of the night. But this condition of intense concentration and meditation can only be maintained for a restricted time. If the spirit does not return to the body in time, this will perish. So, the body calls its vital spirits back to itself.

Thirteenth Figure



When the Father saw his Son coming,
 He cried aloud, and said:
 My son, I was dead without thee,
 And lived in great danger of my life.
 I revive at thy return...
 The father took him to his heart,
 And swallowed him out of excessive joy,
 And with his own mouth;
 The great exertion makes the Father sweat.

The theme of the last three figures (13, 14 & 15) is in the first place the logical consequence of what preceded it. In the twelfth figure, the spirit withdrew from the body to behold a vision in a state of deep trance. This is a theme which recurs often in alchemy. In the thirteenth figure, the spirit returns in the body; in the fourteenth the body undergoes the effect of this reunion, and in the fifteenth figure the son is reborn anew, whereupon the final harmony between body, soul and spirit is attained.

What intrigues in the thirteenth figure is, of course, the strange manner in which the father reacts when he sees his son come back: the father eats his son. One could possibly think of Saturn who devoured his children. But the eating or incorporation of a hero, to be reborn afterward in a more splendid shape, is a theme that recurs more often.

One of the best known examples in alchemy is the first vision of Arisleus.⁴⁰ In the vision, Arisleus arrives at the 'rex marinus', the king of the sea. In his realm nothing grows; there is no propagation,

for 'like couples with like'. With the advice of a counsel of philosophers, the king has to make his son Thabritius mate with his daughter Beya: brother with sister. This incestuous copulation is so intense that Thabritius (according to the version in the *Rosarium*⁴¹) disappears completely into the womb of Beya (the sea, the mercur). Later on, he is reborn from her. According to another version, Thabritius is eaten by his father, out of punishment for the incestuous coniunctio. Lambsprinck's representation is based on this version, except, he has replaced the carnal coniunctio by a coniunctio in a spiritual vision.

One can find another instance of such an incorporation in the story of Cerridwen and Gwion, from the Celtic collection the *Mabinogion*.⁴² Cerridwen, a nobleman's wife, had a beautiful daughter and an ugly son. To compensate his ugliness she wanted to make him very intelligent. Hence she went to cook in her cauldron a brew of 'inspiration and knowledge', during a year and a day. Little Gwion, who was of low birth, had to take care of the fire. Towards the end of the cycle, three drops of the brew from the cauldron splashed on his hand. He licked it off and perceived then that he knew everything about the past and the future. As soon as Cerridwen saw this, she wanted to kill Gwion. Quickly he changed himself into a hare, yet she turned herself into a greyhound (earth). He plunged as a fish into the river, and she became an otter (water). He flew up as a small bird, she pursued him as a hawk (air). Finally he became a grain of corn between other grains of corn on the floor of a barn. She took the shape of a chicken and ate him. After she had become a woman again, Cerridwen perceived that she was pregnant with Gwion. She gave birth to him, saw what a beautiful child he was, and did not kill him. Gwion was to become a legendary poet.

The same theme is seen here in a different form: 'side-slip' which has performed a dis-allowed deed, is again swallowed in the 'womb of the old system' and is reborn in a shape which forms a fertile and acceptable synthesis. One could conceive the old king, or Cerridwen and her ugly son, as the old tradition which outlived itself and became barren. The son of the king, or little Gwion, wrests itself from the narrowness of it and goes away to have new experiences. In doing so he breaks severe taboos which are of such an intensity that they can be compared to incestuous sexuality.

After that, the prodigal son returns back into his father's lap. He turns back to the old tradition, but now renews it from the inside, so that it becomes fruitful again and can be continued. In this way a synthesis is reached, because to continue a tradition, paradoxically enough, one has again and again to inject it and to make it revive from totally new points of view. For all materials with which one could work, are couched in the womb of the tradition.

Fourteenth Figure



Here the Father sweats profusely,
While oil and the true tincture
Of the sages flow forth from him.

The return of the son into the father, or, of the spirit into the body, has a very drastic effect on the body. If we may see the journey of the son with the guide to the top of the mountain, and the vision of the ultimate coniunctio oppositorum, as an initiation in the 'highest and at the same time deepest secrets of nature', then the sweating of the father is the precipitation and the acting of a spiritual happening upon a body. This influence is all-pervading; it makes the body of the father soft, and changes it completely into limpid water (tincture).

The father, i.e. the sick body, is still Saturn, whose remnants of black impurities have to be washed away. When a change occurs on a higher psychic level, then the physical body is the last and the slowest to react on it. This is well known in homeopathy: there, the cure of illnesses of the body are coupled to or even preceded by changes on the psychical level. In principle, a complete mastery of the body could be gained from the psychical level.⁴³

The image which Lamsprinck uses, probably comes from the *Duenech-allegory*, which was well known in alchemical circles.⁴⁴ Summarized, it goes as follows:

Duke Duenech was despised by other monarches because of his profound melancholy (Saturn) and his cruel appearance (Mars). He decided to recover or to die and sent for Pharut, the physician. The doctor promised that he would be able to expel the black bile, which caused the melancholy, by a long and difficult curing-process, and to

make prevail the blood with the other excellent temperaments. The doctor put Duenech in a bed with white sheets and gave him clear water, in consequence of which Duenech began to sweat so strongly that the white sheets were completely stained. The black bile had been dissolved in the whole of Duenech's body. Thereupon Pharut prepared another bed which he sealed hermetically, with the duke in it. Duenech changes in color and loses consciousness several times. The treatment goes on until Duenech's palate becomes white. Then, Pharut makes the old monarch revive in a third bath with water and oil, mixed with sulphur. By expelling the black bile, which causes melancholy, the vital forces of the body come back in their entire strength and youth.

The melancholy must be interpreted here as the remnants of the old personality, the petrified traits in someone, which hinder or even prevent his entire transmutation.

Fifteenth Figure



The Father and the Son, triumphing gloriously
 In the splendor of their new Kingdom.
 Upon one throne they sit,
 And the face of the Ancient Master
 Is straightaway seen between them:
 He is arrayed in a crimson robe.

What now, is the result of the entire Great Work?

In our deepest instinctive layers, where the life in us melts itself together with the world around us, the Prima Materia is found (fig.1&2). This is a powerful stream of vitality which, by the special

operations which are performed by the alchemist, transforms itself into Quicksilver: a bright consciousness, which gives him, as a ray full of inspiration, an insight into the matter from which he himself and the world as well is composed.

This principle of the opening of a center of awareness and limpid consciousness is repeated several times. The quicksilver is sublimated on the mental level (fig.3) and precipitates and opens the emotional and feeling life (fig.4) and the reign of the instinctual impulses (fig.5). With that, one part of the work is brought to completion (fig.6). The lower nature of the adept is purified and at the same time he has gained insight and mastery over it. The alchemist needs this control over his will, feeling, and intellectual life to take the next step: the development of a sensitivity and orientation in the area of pure intuition, the realm of the air. Here too, the quicksilver widens itself into a sea of consciousness (fig. 7 & 8).

When the Hermetic Philosopher has gained mastery over this power as well, he is awarded by Hermes with the title 'Lord of the Forest' (fig.9). By then he has gained a complete mastery over himself and over the elements of water, earth and air. This is the end of the first part: The Lesser Work is accomplished; the white stone is prepared.

The Great Work is accomplished in the realm of the fire (fig.10). Fire destroys matter and to get mastery over the fire, the body, the material part, has to be made temporary passive, even apparently dead. In the force of the element of fire a new inner man is generated, a son of the philosophers; and another being of fire, a spiritual guide appears and becomes visible (fig.11). He leads the son of the philosophers towards an initiation in the ultimate coniunctio oppositorum, the supreme insight (fig.12).

The son then, transfers his experiences to the lower part: the body (fig.13) which is completely purified and transformed by this (fig.14).

Finally, the father, the son and the angelic guide; i.e. the body, the spirit and the soul, are seated together on one throne as completely equal partners (fig.15) and they rule together their realm, giving shape together to the symbol of Mercurius ♀.

Thus the Red Stone is prepared.

Needless to say that the great work cannot be accomplished when the lesser work is not first brought to a successful end. The lesser work is the work of an individual man or woman on him- or herself. The great work is a work on a larger scale, which goes beyond the narrow interests of an individual. The individual is tuned in to a larger web of inspiration, which perhaps can be indicated as genius. The Prima Materia, about which I am speaking all the time, has to do with the authentic knowledge, the nous in us. The tuning in on inspiration is a process that can be learned. Nevertheless it cannot be learned anywhere, one has to learn it oneself. Through the

development of an oeuvre, or a life-time-work, the artist of life has to open himself the right channels in himself and he should not be seduced by the call of fame or by the challenge of the gods (which are in this case the big stars which show authority). For whomsoever measures himself with the muses is changed in a croaking raven!

NOTES

(1) Henri Bergson, *L'evolution Creatrice* (in *Oeuvres*, Paris 1963): p. 152 & 178.

(2) Of course there is the relation between the symbol for Mercury, and John Dee's symbol of the Hieroglyphic Monad. Dee also interprets the cross as the four elements and as the elemental world. And because the Latin 'CruX' can be a short form of 'crucible', the cross can also mean the 'Vas Hermetica', under which is placed a fire, in the sign of Aries. Thus the Monad becomes the athanor of the work itself.

(3) Cf. C.G. Jung, *The Practice of Psychotherapy* (New York 1966), p.203. The vessel, which is also called the uterus, contains the 'mare nostrum', in which the 'foetus spagyricus' (the homunculus) is gestated.

(4) The real sources for Lambsprinck's fishes are somewhat more complicated to describe. Lambsprinck says:

"There are two fishes in our sea, without any flesh or bones, let them be cooked in their own water..."

The original source for this fragment must be a quotation from the *Allegoriae super librum Turbae*, a text from the annex to the *Turba Philosophorum*, and which is our earliest source for the alchemical fish symbolism (cf. C.G. Jung, *Aion* (London 1959), p. 126-142, on the symbolism of the fish in alchemy):

"There is in the sea a round fish, lacking bones and cortex, and having in itself a fatness, a wondrous virtue, which, if it is cooked on a slow fire until its fatness and moisture entirely disappear... is saturated with sea-water until it begins to shine (lucescat)". A later recipe repeats this formula, but 'lucescat' became 'candescat' (=begins to warm). This refers probably to Pliny's description of the sea-starfish (book ix, lxxxvi). This fish was said to be hot and burning and to consume as with fire everything it touched in the sea. So here, the fish is a center of light and hotness in the vast sea.

An anonymous French author of the 17th century interprets the mysterious fish as the 'Echeneis Remora', (which was described by Pliny as a fish with a sucker on the top of the head, with which it attached itself to a ship's bottom, and was transported about the world):

"For that which we take, in order to prepare from it the Philosophical work, is naught but that little fish the Echeneis, which has no blood

or spiny bones, and is shut up in that deep mid region of the great universal sea. This little fish is extremely small, alone, and unique in its shape, but the sea is great and vast, and hence it is impossible for those to catch it who do not know in what part of the world it dwells.... Yet none the less, when we speak somewhat in confidence in the ear of a trusted friend, we teach him that hidden secret of the wise, how he can naturally, speedily, and easily catch the little fish called Remora, which is able to hold back the proud vessels of the great Ocean sea (that is the spirit of the world)... But, that I may declare to you the clear light of our unique material, or our virgin soil, and teach you in what wise you may acquire the supreme art of the sons of wisdom, it is needful that I instruct you concerning the magnet of the wise, which has the power of attracting the little fish called Echeneis or Remora from out the center and depth of the sea. If it is caught in accordance with nature, it changes in a natural way first into water and then into earth."

(5) The Fish-eye or 'oculi Piscium':

See the *Dictionnaire Mytho-Hermetique* of Dom A.J. Pernety (Paris 1758). Under 'Yeux de Poisson', Pernety refers to 'the fish Echeneis which swims in the Philosophical sea'.

See also *Mysterium Coniunctionis* of C.G. Jung (London, 1970), p.48 seq. for a detailed discussion on the topic.

(6) See Robert Graves *The White Goddess* (London 1977), p.75. Also J. Evola *Le Mystere du Graal* (Paris 1977), p. 147: "The salmon of wisdom, which burns when hold in the hands, but which, when put in the mouth, reveals all knowledge."

(7) Cf. docte Henri de Lintaut *l'Aurore, suivi de l'Ami de l'Aurore* (Paris, 1978). On p.66 is a drawing of a hand, which has on each finger a symbol which indicates a stage in the work. In the middle of the hand is a fish, which is roasted on a fire. The accompanying text reads "Mercurius noster quem scis", Our mercury, which is hidden. Indeed, when the hand makes a fist, the fish is hidden. The symbol of the fish is repeated on p.94, with the text: "Operation of the fish, containing the first Mercury, only known to genuine philosophers". The commentary adds, that it represents the mercury of the philosophers, the philosophers' stone in its first degree. Again, a reference is made to the Echeneis fish and to Lambsprinck's first figure.

The fish represents the first, and hidden stage of the work.

(8) The fish as Leviathan: many references, for instance: J. Collin de Plancy *Dictionnaire Infernal* (Paris 1863), p.406.

(9) See Alain Danielou *Le Polytheisme Hindou* (Paris 1975), p.258.

(10) See J.Collin de Plancy, op.cit. p.497.

(11) On 'draconites', the 'dragon-stone': see A.J.Pernety, op.cit. p.117; and C.G. Jung *Aion*, op.cit. p.138. Also Martinus Rulandus *A Lexicon of Alchemy* (Frankfurt 1612, tr. E.A.Waite) p. 128-129.

(12) See Pernety op.cit. 'Saturne', p.449-450.

(13) See A.J.Pernety, op.cit. p.110-111.

(14) See Ursula Treu (transl.) *Physiologus, Naturkunde in fruhchristlicher Deutung* (Hanau, 1981), p.56-61.

(15) Ps. 41 (42),2.

(16) On the Unicorn: C.G.Jung *Psychology & Alchemy* (London 1968), makes a thorough study on the symbolism of the unicorn in all kind of cultures, on p. 435-471.

Margaret B. Freeman *The Unicorn Tapestries* (New York 1976), has a well documented study on the unicorn. She makes an historical view and cites all classical authorities. She studies the symbolism of many other animals as well.

Beryl Rowland *Animals with Human Faces, a guide to animal symbolism* (Knoxville, Tennessee, 1973): a well documented guide on animal symbolism.

(17) *Physiologus*, op.cit., p.42-45.

(18) See C.G.Jung *Psychology & Alchemy*, p.437.

(19) Wolfram von Eschenbach *Parzival*, Book IX, lines 1494-1501, translation from Shepard. [Quoted in C.G. Jung *Psychology & Alchemy*, op.cit. p.471].

(20)& (21): A.J.Pernety, op.cit. p.249-251.

(22) H.M.E. De Jong *Michael Maier's Atalanta Fugiens, sources of an alchemical book of emblems*, p.141.

(23) Pliny *Natural History*, transl. H.Rackham (Loeb Classical Library), Book VIII,xix, p.36-37. Beryl Rowland, op.cit. 118 seq.

(24) Some good examples are shown in Stanislas Klossowski de Rola *The Golden Game* (London 1988), p.50 (from Andreas Libavius *Alchymia*, 1606), p.171 & 173 (from Johann Daniel Mylius *Philosophia Reformata*, 1622).

(25) H.M.E. De Jong, op.cit. p.285-286. See also the discourse on p.287. The source for the dog & wolf-theme is Rhazes 'Epistola' (*Theatrum Chemicum*, V, p.633).

(26) H.M.E. De Jong, op.cit. p.287.

(27) Pliny, op.cit. Book VIII,xxiv, transl. p.60-61. Cf. Dante *Divina Commedia*, first canto. Dante meets a she-wolf, which frightens him. It is the symbol of greed, and has here also a political meaning: the pope.

(28) Pernety, op.cit. p.461, under 'serpent qui devore sa queue'. Judy Allen & Jeanne Griffiths *The Book of the Dragon*, p.10; 66; 77.

(29) Hans Leisegang *Die Gnosis* (Stuttgart, 1955), p.20, 168-172, fig. facing p.32.

(30) C.G.Jung, *Psychology & Alchemy*, op.cit. p.293.

(31) On 'Hermes-Bird': see Elias Ashmole *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (London, 1652),p.213-226.

John Read *Prelude To Chemistry* (New York, 1937), p.134: "Some alchemists depicted the existence of a universal primitive matter, known as the Bird of Hermes, which was supposed to emulate the eye of his poetic creator by roving continuously from heaven to earth, and earth to heaven".

(32) C.G. Jung *The Practice of Psychotherapy*, op.cit. p.283: Contains a lot of references to 'the Bird of Hermes', being two birds: one with cut wings, and the other with normal wings.

(33) Kurt Rudolph Gnosis, *The Nature and History of Gnosticism* (San Francisco, 1987), p.94 seq.

(34) Gershom Sholem *Kabbalah*, p.351 seq.: Part II,12: 'Golem'.

(35) C.G. Jung *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, op.cit. p.7-9. Jung comments a quotation from Ostanes: "...The way he speaks of the four luminaries [Mars, Saturn, Moon & Venus] -he does not know how to save himself from them- suggests that he is subject to Heimarmene, the compulsion of the stars; that is, to a transconscious factor beyond the reach of the human will. Apart from this compulsion, the injurious effect of the four planets is due to the fact that each of them exerts its specific influence on man and makes him a diversity of persons, whereas he should be one. It is presumably Hermes who points out to Ostanes that something incorruptible is in his nature which he shares with the Agatodaimon, something divine, obviously the germ of unity. This germ is the gold, the aurum philosophorum, the Bird of Hermes or the son of the bird, who is the same as the Filius Philosophorum..."

C.G. Jung *Aion*, op.cit. p.221. Jung shows the relation between the 'point of unity' with the Bird of Hermes:

"...For Dorn the 'punctum vix intelligibile' is the starting point of creation. Similarly John Dee says that all things originated from the point and the monad. Indeed, God himself is simultaneously both the center and the circumference. In Mylius (Phil. ref. p.131) the point is called the Bird of Hermes. In the *Novum Lumen* it is spirit and fire, the life of the arcane substance, similar to the spark. The conception of the point is more or less the same as that of the Gnostics".

And in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, op.cit. p.45-46:

"The center of nature is 'the point originated by God', the sun-point in the egg. This, a commentary on the Turba says, is the 'germ of the egg in the yolk'. Out of this little point, says Dorn in his *Physica Genesis*, the wisdom of God made with the creative Word the huge machine of the world. The *Consilium coniugii* remarks that the point is the chic (pullus). Mylius adds that this is the bird of Hermes, or the spirit Mercurius..."

A beautiful representation of a 'Hermes Bird' is given in the *Ripley Scrowle*. See Jacques van Lennep *Alchimie* (Bruxelles 1985), p.92-93 & 425-431.

(36) Michael Maier *Atalanta Fugiens* (Oppenheim 1618) Emblem XLII, p.177.

(37) Arthur Avalon *The Serpent Power* (London, 1919).

J.Marques Riviere *Tantric Yoga* (New York, 1970)

(38) In the western tradition a conception of 'psychic centers', which were located in the body, not unlike the chakra-system of Tantrism, must have been known. In the 17th century, Johann Georg Gichtel

published his *Theosophica Practica* (Berlin & Leipzig 1779, orig. ed. 1696), in which is shown a human figure on which are marked seven centers, related with the seven planets. The place of the centers are the navel, or maybe the sex-center (moon), the spleen (mercury), the plexus solaris (venus), the heart (sun), the throat (mars), between the eyes (jupiter) and above the head (a reversed venus-symbol). The centers are joined by a spiral, which begins at the heart. On another human figure, the sex center is marked with 'the world of dark', on the spleen 'Jehova', on the heart 'Jesus', the throat 'Sophia, mirror of God', and on the forehead 'Holy Ghost'.

(39) A.D. Nock & A.J. Festugiere transl. *Corpus Hermeticum* (Paris 1972), tome I, 'Poimandres', p.7.

(40) J.O.Jacobi Mangeti *Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa* (1702), I, p.495 'Aenygma ex visione Arislei Philosophi & Allegoriis Sapientum', Aenygma I.

(41) C.G. Jung *Psychology & Alchemy*, op.cit. p.331.

(42) Robert Graves, op.cit. p.27-28.

(43) George Vithoulkas *The Science of Homeopathy* (New York, 1980)

(44) H.M.E. De Jong, op.cit. p.210-213.

Solidified Mercury

An Outline

D. Lloyd Thomas

Introduction

One of the most remarkable products of Indian alchemy is solidified Mercury, and the skill to make this form of mercury successfully distinguishes the pharmaceutical manufacturer or medical practitioner from individuals who can only be defined as alchemists.

In Indian alchemy, metallic mercury is generally considered to be one of the prime materials of the Art; the southern Siddha School gives equal consideration to a Salt as the Elixir. Mercury has been called the Sperm of Shiva; the greatest of all earthly objects; the king of all medicines (Rasendra); the destroyer of senility and disease; the King of Desire (Kamaraja); the Jewel of Shakti (Shaktibija).

Mercury is considered as a supreme aid to enlightenment. "There is nothing greater in this world than emancipation of the soul, which is obtained by means of wisdom, viz. stopping of respiration (as practiced by the Yogis), and extinction of the passions. Neither of these can be attained without a strong and healthy physique. Now, mercury and air are the two things which can sustain the body. Mercury, in a state of swoon removes diseases, and, when dead, sustains the body in a healthy condition. Both air and mercury, if bound and rendered incapable of movement, render the body light enough to move in the atmosphere."¹ More subsequently about the power of mercury to enable the adept to move in space.

Alchemy and Medicine in India

Alchemy is common to all the great traditional civilizations, and it is thus no surprise that Indian Alchemy also considers mercury to

be so highly important. Unlike other branches of the Art, however, where relatively little is known about the working and application of the metal, Indian Alchemy still teaches and applies techniques by which mercury, after being purified by a series of procedures ("swooning" and "killing") can be used with complete safety as a physical medicine and, in a highly refined form, as a spiritual medicine.

The main officially recognised non-allopathic medical systems current in India - the Ayurvedic, Siddha and Unani systems - all contain elements that have an "alchemical" flavour.²

The Art of Metallurgy

According to tradition, the disciple in the Art of Metallurgy must be devoted to Shiva (the Universal Soul) and his preceptor, have a virtuous character and be endowed with intelligence. Following the analogy of mercury as the seed of all metals and the Sperm of Shiva, the male disciple³ aspiring to work with mercury should practice the retention of semen. The grounds for this are 'technical' rather than moral, since the interaction between man and metal requires the finest possible tuning of the alchemist's senses and inner strength.⁴ In Chinese 'external' alchemy, mercury is used as an elixir, while in 'internal' alchemy the transformation takes place first and foremost in the adept's own body. "Without this interior strength or interior electricity, an alchemist is no alchemist, but merely an ordinary cook."⁵

Besides having excellent interior qualities, the alchemist should also have considerable material resources from the start; quite apart from the rare metals and plants required, the traditional accessories mentioned in *Ocean of Hindu Chemistry and Alchemy* include assistants (who must also be virtuous and learned), numerous implements, and a laboratory with several rooms, storerooms and a garden.

Solidified Mercury

While a technically competent person can make the simpler forms of vegetable preparations, the metallic medicines in the Ayurvedic and Siddha pharmacopoeia require special skill; for the higher degrees of 'spiritual' medicine such as solidified mercury, the knowledge is passed on from preceptor to disciple by initiation.⁶

According to the texts of the Tamil sage Bogar, the mercury undergoes repeated processing (up to 120 times) together with plants and alkaloids, and sometimes with other metals and gemstones.⁷

This mercury is used to make a number of objects, including

cups, discs and lingams, but the most common form is a ball or rasamani (mercury jewel), pierced so that it can be worn on a string (traditionally a red silk cord).

The solidified mercury retains its unique lustre in which the mirror or chrome-like appearance of the raw metal seems to be transformed into a crystalline texture. The mercury content of the sphere can easily be tested by the patina that appears on gold when rubbed with the sphere. Solidified mercury becomes harder, and according to the alchemists, more potent with increasingly lengthy treatment. A rasamani in its earlier stages, though solid, is somewhat brittle, and quickly shows signs of wear at the point where the string rubs against the hole. A more highly refined rasamani stands up to wear; it can be placed in warm milk, which then brings great benefits when drunk. An even more highly refined form takes many months of processing, and according to tradition can be safely placed in the mouth to give great resistance to fatigue and illness.⁸

Healing effects of solidified mercury

Mercury, considered to be the seed of all metals, is considered to have the power of adjusting any imbalance in the humours of the body, which in the Indian system are fire (*pitta*), air (*vayu*) and humidity (*kaphas*). Drinking milk or pure water in which the mercury ball has been placed for a time can be used as a remedy for physical weakness. Taking milk kept overnight in a mercury cup, or wearing a mercury amulet around the waist, is considered to strengthen male sexual potential.⁹

Wearing the mercury on a string, generally on the area affected or on a key point, can be used to regulate blood pressure, cardiac weakness or localized pain; since the 'animated' solidified mercury has heating properties, it can be used particularly for complaints involving excess *kaphas*, the element of cold and humidity, such as arthritis and rheumatism or slow digestion. One remedy given for eye complaints is to gaze for a time at the reflection of sunlight sparkling in the mercury ball. The mercury ball is most often worn on a string over or near the organ, gland or chakra which the wearer wishes to strengthen.¹⁰

Solidified mercury and the subtle body

Solidified mercury is said to act primarily on and through the subtle body; once physical health and strength (and perhaps longevity, though not for its own sake) are ensured, the adept or alchemist will continue to pursue the goal of spiritual development. "In India, solidified mercury is much sought after by people who practise yoga, since the metal has a surprising effect on the etheric body. It

stimulates the primordial energy called Kundalini, which is the source of life in every individual, and therefore activates the different spiritual centres called chakras. As a result, some people have occult or psychic experiences by using solidified mercury... This all depends on preferences and natural tendencies gradually awakened by contact with the vibrations of the mercury."¹¹ In India, the rasamani is also used in conjunction with ritual practices for developing the powers or qualities associated with the different chakras.

This power the mercury is considered to have of increasing etheric vibrations, means that it can improve the qualities of the user according to the stage of development reached.

One of the powers attributed to mercury is that of space travel, which can be interpreted as 'astral travel', an experience of the subtle body, or, more literally, of physical transmutation where "a man places a type of this mercury in his mouth, and the weight of his body is immediately eliminated, allowing him to move freely through space. Another type of mercury confers the power of invisibility, since the powerful vibrations of this mercury will change the atomic structure of man's body; the slower vibrations of his physical body would be greatly accelerated, thus dissolving the solidity of flesh and bone, making him ethereal." This form of mercury cannot be made, Muriel points out, until the alchemist "knows the secret of the liquefying of diamonds and mica, amalgamating them with special mercury. Many so-called miracles can be performed with the help of mercury. All of these supernatural manifestations can actually be explained and easily understood in the light of modern physics."¹²

Thus it is that in our own day and age a major branch of alchemy is alive and well, available, with discretion, to those who care to investigate it further. Yet again, Mercury with his Philosophical virtue, is able to convey gifts commensurate to the devotion of the seeker.

Notes

1 Bhudeb Mookerjee, *Rasa-Jala-Nidhi or Ocean of Hindu Chemistry, Medicine and Alchemy*, Second edition, Varanasi, 1984, Vol. I, p. 32. This unique work in five volumes is a treatise covering the many stages of the alchemical processing of mercury and other metals, including rare material on the use of mica and precious stones.

See also O.P. Jaggi, *Yogic and Tantric Medicine*, Delhi, 1979, p.150.

2 Despite the advances in the science of physics, it is hard to predict when chemistry will begin to widen its analysis to admit that something more than given compounds, alloys and so on are created with the alchemical operations involving the repeated heating,

pounding and soaking of substances using relatively simple equipment; the conceptual hurdle to be crossed is, of course, to admit the special role of the operator.

3 Women, too, can become proficient in mercurial alchemy. Mookerjee, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 20.

4 "The body of yogis and highly evolved individuals, although externally similar to other bodies, is actually quite different, since God, the Divine Alchemist, transforms them in his laboratory. A surprising transformation takes place; after a life of discipline, the seminal fluid rises up internally, and in the divine cauldron heated by the fire of digestion, is changed into pure energy reaching the higher centres and the brain". Petri Murien, *Les Innombrables Pouvoirs de l'Océan de Mercure*, Guy Trédaniel, Paris 1986, p. 29. Petri Murien is probably the only European to be initiated to the art of solidifying mercury.

5 Murien, op. cit., p. 30.

6 "The Siddha kalpa (rejuvenation) drugs are based on alchemical processes - processes that can transmute base metals into gold. As this noble art of alchemy is intended only for obtaining salvation, it should not be indiscriminately broadcast to all or be practiced by all for material gains or advantages." A. Shanmuga Velan, *Siddhar's Science of Longevity and Kalpa Medicine of India*, Madras, 1963, p. 97.

7 N. Kandaswamy Pillai, *History of Siddha Medicine*, Madras, 1979, p. 329. According to Tamil texts, the sage Bogar is also associated with China, where mercury mines are found.

8 The origin of any mercury products should be carefully ascertained before use; even in India, the form of mercury which can be placed in the mouth is not easy to obtain. In reply to the diffidence to the use of mercury on principle, however, the widespread use of mercury amalgam (definitely not alchemical) in dentistry, as Murien points out, is considered acceptable (Murien, op. cit., p.44).

9 Velan, op. cit., p. 121. Murien (op. cit., p. 54) specifies that the rasamani is useful in conserving sexual energies.

10 Murien, op. cit., pp. 49-54.

11 Murien, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

12 Murien, op. cit., pp. 37-38. If and when science and alchemy do join hands, there are sure to be momentous consequences for civilization.

Hargrave Jennings

Joscelyn Godwin

Ever since the *Westminster Review* called his *The Rosicrucians, their Rites and Mysteries* "the most absurd book it has ever been our fortune...to review,"¹ and A. E. Waite poured scorn over his "ill-digested erudition," poor Hargrave Jennings has had a very bad press. The previous owner of my copy of *The Rosicrucians* has written on it: "Rubbish, as far as I can make out," a sentiment echoed by every discriminating or scholarly reader who has leafed through this disconcerting volume. The situation is scarcely improved by the "very unwholesome undercurrent" (as the same reviewer calls it) which manifests in *The Rosicrucians* as an interest in sexuality, both symbolic and physiological. The historian, however, cannot dismiss Jennings so readily. First, he occupies a crucial place in that no-man's land of the mid-nineteenth century, as a harbinger of the great occult revival of the 1880s. Second, he is an unrecognized pioneer in the exploration of oriental metaphysics and the reconciliation of East with West. Those are two good reasons to study him; and more may appear in the course of this article.

The contributor of the entry on Hargrave Jennings to the *Dictionary of National Biography* has little more to offer than a bibliography, and surmises that he was born in 1817. He himself tells us that his family circumstances were "not poor, though not overwhelmingly rich." He grew up in the West End of London, and as a child would accompany his mother to church at St. James's, Picadilly. Here is his own character-sketch:²

I was always a strange, moody, unaccountable child; fond of solitude--drawing all my mental nutriment from reading--setting with indomitable perseverance to the perusal of every book which fell in my way; and studying and restudying my favourite authors with loving pertinacity. I grew very superstitious, contemplative, and fanciful. The faculty of 'marvellousness' was largely

developed in me very early. I read works of imagination with avidity. The town became filled to me with phantom romance-pictures. I led a life quite out of my real life.

As a result, Hargrave Jennings would later claim than from his childhood he had been fully acquainted with everything about Spiritualism that was "reliable and philosophical."³ A precocious writer, at the age of fifteen he contributed a series of sea-sketches to the *Metropolitan Magazine*, whose editor, the novelist Captain Marryat, was amazed when he learned how young their author was.⁴ It is hard to say what, if any, was Jennings's profession. The *DNB* says that he was for many years secretary to Colonel James Henry Mapleson, manager of various Italian opera companies in London from 1858-1887,⁵ but he finds no mention in Mapleson's chatty *Memoirs*.⁶ Nevertheless, Jennings must have been well-connected socially, to judge from the dedication of his *St. George* (1853),⁷ a "Poetic History of the Champion of England." The work is inscribed (significantly enough, in view of the theories of *The Rosicrucians*) to the "Knights of St. George, or of the Garter." Since the printer of the work is styled "Bookseller to the Queen," the dedication can hardly have been made without proper permission from someone in the Order.

There is some sparse biographical material on Jennings in the works of R. Swinburne Clymer, founder of one of the American Rosicrucian orders, but it would be imprudent to repeat it without corroboration from surer sources, especially anything concerning Jennings's putative position in some Rosicrucian order, and his initiation thereto of Paschal Beverly Randolph, the American mulatto medium and writer on sexual magic. Jennings does make one guarded allusion to Randolph, in a letter of 1887: "I first knew Randolph the American 35 years ago, he was, physically, a very remarkable man."⁸ Likewise, it has not been possible, up to the time of writing, to find the sources of the interesting connections proposed by Peter Tompkins.⁹ In short, Jennings still awaits his biographer, and the disinterment of his letters, if any still exist. We can add that in 1854 he was living in Harewood Square, Regent's Park.¹⁰ His brother¹¹ lived at Ambassador's Court, St. James's Palace, and Jennings would himself use this address in later life.¹² Whether or not he actually lived in such a desirable locale, he died there on 11 March 1890. There has been no sign of the reminiscences he is supposed to have completed shortly before his death.

Although his early publications were fictional and topical,¹³ Jennings was claiming as early as 1858 a "lifelong devotion to metaphysics" and "years of research and reading" in preparation for his first philosophical book, *The Indian Religions*.¹⁴ Stated to be "by

an Indian missionary," it was written to criticize and correct the lack of understanding of the Orient, especially as shown in an essay on Buddhism published in the London *Times* in the Spring of 1857, and, more generally, in the climate following on the Indian Mutiny of May-September 1857. Among the books Jennings lists as having consulted "in the attainment of the following philosophical results"¹⁵ are the works of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, J. B. van Helmont, and Swedenborg (all in English); Thomas Taylor's translation of Plato; recent books on magnetism and spiritualism; Catherine Crowe's *The Night Side of Nature* and Ennemoser's *History of Magic*; the *Asiatic Journal* and *Asiatic Researches*, and Ward's *The Religion of the Hindoos*.

The author of these *Times* articles, published on April 17 and 20, was in fact F. Max Müller, and this was practically his first venture into Buddhist studies. Müller thought the Buddhist aspiration to a Nirvana of utter annihilation little short of insane, but allowed that individuals, through not understanding it properly, had triumphed over the madness of its metaphysics. Jennings thought the anonymous author woefully ignorant in thinking Buddhism atheistic, whereas in point of fact: "We, in this religion, stand face to face with an Antiquity when men, even in our own suspicion - in our own granting - were very greatly more near God."¹⁶ (The awkwardness of style always appears when Jennings is speaking of matters close to his heart.) He goes on: "Brahminism may be considered to be the starred and decorated, and the human-marked child of its inexpressibly sublimely descended parent, Buddhism".¹⁷ A very early anticipation of the Theosophic teaching that the primordial wisdom of mankind lies in a pre-Gautama, esoteric Buddhism. This wisdom is metaphysical in nature, and it stretched Hargrave Jennings's powers of expression to the utmost as he strove to explain it to his audience of 1858:

In the theory of the Buddhist philosophers, life being an accident, *something* has passed on and is passing on, behind to make it so. And this unknown, moveless, passionless REST, in which life should be impossible, being *form* or the Pythagorean number, is their *Nirvanâ*, or non-existence.¹⁸

This, he says, is the Buddhists' "much-belied abyss of atheism," misunderstood because the West can only conceive of God as a being; whereas the ultimate, in Buddhism, is beyond being or, as Jennings elsewhere calls it, "sublime 'Non-Being'".¹⁹ There were few Western minds in the mid-nineteenth century capable of entertaining the conception of God as a "spiritual gulf of nothingness,"²⁰ or of Non-Being as metaphysically prior to Being. Nor were there many willing to follow him into the mentalistic territory which had, admittedly, been cultivated by a few Western philosophers such as Bishop

Berkeley:

But the mistake that is made, in the objections to Buddhism, is just this, that the objectors will insist upon starting upon the premiss that life is real. Ideas, by which we converse with that outside, are all which we are. And these are not real things, but mere delusive lights of the master phantom-light of intelligence.²¹

The ideas in question are not even held in the mind of God, as they are in Bishop Berkeley's philosophy, and, in a sense, in Plato, but are delusions dependent on the greater delusion of Being itself. Jennings, with the Buddhists, is radical in his mentalism:

Take the human mind from the world and it exists no longer. The human mind is the world. It makes it.

Space is nothing, for we know it only by that which is in it.

Time is nothing. It is simply a question begged, and a delusion settled, to make things exist. That is, it is necessary for man and the 'visible' to be possible. Space and time are simply power: the very existence of which is a confession of limit and proof of want of power.²²

Given the nullity of the universe in the face of Nirvana, there are still certain laws, or habits, to which the great illusion is obedient. What Jennings calls "the master phantom-light of intelligence" is elsewhere alluded to as Nature, or the soul of the world, or "final conceivable mechanical intelligence."²³ It works through the opposites, or complementaries, such as Light and Darkness, Life and Death.

Darkness and Light are brother and sister... Light is darkness, indeed, wrought visible, and is the soul of matter; the fiercer the deeper we go out of our sensations. Thus Light, itself, is no less material than all other visible things.²⁴

Since God is nothingness, any idea we have of "him" is bound to lead us into delusion. In many places, Jennings condemns human reason as a deceiver, because it makes us form ideas about the formless, and erects itself as a substitute for direct intuition. If there is a devil in his theology, it is Reason.

Divinity must be complete and clear (out of idea), and therefore nothing... Thus the human *reason* infallibly, under all its various heavenly deceits and just the more successfully according to its perfection, leads FROM God, and the idea of God (which is not God) is the very opposite of God, and being the very opposite of God, it must be the Evil-Principle.²⁵

So how are we to know the unknowable, non-existent Absolute? Only, it seems, through the direct replacement of our consciousness by the inconceivable:

...he is only ultimately and really possible in the divine immediate possession, or in the supernatural *trampling* on Idea, and (to the world) madness or ecstasy. We can never rise to Him. He must descend to us... He is only possible in thus snatching us out of the world, or out of ourselves.²⁶

Failing the mystical assimilation to the Absolute which he struggles to describe here, Jennings seems to have nothing better to offer than to seek God in "miracle." He understands miracles not as God's occasional contravention of the laws of nature, but as the multifarious phenomena that contradict the petty reasoned order of the illusory thought-world. Hargrave Jennings evidently saw the breaking-down of the over-rational mind as the necessary first step towards the assimilation of the Buddhist world-view, and to the experiences that may follow.

In the remainder of the book, Jennings is unsparing in his tirades against the British in India and their "hundred years of inexpressible misrule" which he holds responsible for the Mutiny.²⁷ He castigates the "proselytizing colonels" who bully the natives into conversion and the general insensitivity to the religious rites of the Hindus, asking how the British would like their own religion to be treated like that.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the boldness and originality of *The Indian Religions*, coming as it did twenty years before Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia* (1879) presented Buddhism to the public in a glow of admiration. At mid-century, the knowledge of Buddhism in Europe and America was still at a very elementary stage. For example, the American Transcendentalists, whose admiration for Hindu doctrines was based on the ample source material provided by Sir William Jones and others, found Buddhism chilly and negative by comparison.²⁸ Even those who knew the subject best, the French scholars Eugène Burnouf and Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, painted Buddhism as a gloomy religion of negation, and Nirvana as nothing more or less than extinction; then exclaimed with astonishment that a third of the world's population could be so stupid as to embrace such a faith. Barthélemy was the sort of scholar who could say of his chosen subject: "The Buddha was one of those naïve and blind thinkers who, starting from Being to end up with Nothing, are unaware of the crushing weight of this unbearable contradiction."²⁹ Max Müller was simply following in the footsteps of his French masters. Jennings stands alone in his realization that, in order to understand Buddhism as a reality, one's mind must be disburdened from every prejudice of rationality. If he has had any predecessors in

the West, they are the theologians of the Thrice-Unknown Darkness: Dionysius the Areopagite, Meister Eckhart, Jakob Boehme.

Jennings's next book would be directed at sapping the foundations of rationalism by forcing attention to the inexplicable and the supernatural. The idea for the book, called *Curious Things of the Outside World*, was conceived in 1851.³⁰ It was begun in October 1858 and worked on up to "the present" (the Preface, where Jennings tells us this, is dated 28 November 1860), except for the interval of December 1859 to March 1860 when the author was "otherwise occupied."³¹ *Curious Things*, in two volumes, is a philosophical treatise prefaced by a collection of ghost stories and tales of the supernatural such as were popular at the time, as witness the better-known works of Crowe, Christmas, Ennemoser, and Owen.³² Jennings says that his purpose in presenting these instances of miracle and anomaly is to show:

That there is an universal connection in nature, and a mutual reciprocity in sympathetical and anti-pathetical contrasts, but which cannot be perceived by the waking senses...That a spiritual communion exists between man and man, and therefore also between man and superior beings...That in science nothing yet is certain, or fixed, respecting nature and spirit, the soul or body, or the possibility, or probability, of reciprocal influence.³³

Evidently we have moved from the metaphysics of *The Indian Religions* to cosmological theory, and Hargrave Jennings is already writing like a Rosicrucian, with the characteristic world-view based on Hermetic correspondences. His own enthusiasm is evident when he summarizes the doctrines of the Gnostics:

Those souls, or divine possibilities, which, in their reception of the Light, are enabled to clear themselves of the fogs of the worlds of being, will, at the dissolution of their sense-bodies, transcend into the Pleroma. The souls that are unable to *illuminate* themselves out of it, continue in the deceits, and therefore thralldom, of Matter - however beautiful or grand be it: - and they remain under the sceptre of the King of the Visible, and will, at death, transmigrate into other bodies, losing all trace of their previous stages - the nature of which are alone known to God - until, in purification, they really AWAKE. At last - in their escape into the *Pleromae*, or state of the eternal Matterless Light - they triumph over *its imitation* and over *its master*, this King of Bright Shadows, Devil, or Great Demiurgus. This is the pure Transmigration of Pythagoras, and the Bhuddism [sic] which, in its truer or falser forms, prevails over all the East. And will be found, indeed to be the foundation and parent of all religions.³⁴

Hargrave Jennings envisages the destiny of the human being as a dual path, leading either to the dissolution of self in the Pleroma (the Nirvana of *The Indian Religions*), or else to a purifying series of reincarnations in the world of the diabolical Demiurge which have the same end-result. He is correct in saying that this is the doctrine of Buddhism, which envisages transmigrations around the Wheel of Existence that can be arrested only by dissolution of the ego while in the human state. It also appears to have been the teaching of the Orphics, and hence of the Pythagoreans, as well as of some Gnostic schools. Such a view of human destiny is of course contrary to the teachings of Catholic and Protestant churches alike, since it leaves little room, or necessity, for vicarious salvation. Nor could anything be more different from the sentimentality of Jennings's contemporaries the Spiritualists, obsessed as they were by the apparent proof of personal survival. Indeed, the "presumed Spiritual Disclosures" which followed the Hydesville rappings of 1848 were, in Jennings's view, nothing more than a reflection from the minds of the living, and had done much harm in discrediting the general subject of supernaturalism.³⁵

Since *The Indian Religions* had been published pseudonymously and in a small edition, it was natural for Hargrave Jennings to make use of it in his more extensive (though scarcely more ambitious) work. Consequently, in the second volume of *Curious Things*, he repeats verbatim the crucial passages on Buddhist metaphysics in *The Indian Religions*, from which the above extracts are mostly taken. But the intervening years had brought him new knowledge: he attributes these doctrines to "the mystic Buddhists and their modern successors the Rosicrucians."³⁶ By now he had discovered Robert Fludd's *Mosaical Philosophy*; he knew the history of the Rosicrucian manifestos and the importance of Johann Valentin Andreae; and he could cite the Rosicrucian manuscripts of Dr. Rudd, "who appears to have been an adept," in the British Museum (Harleian Mss. 6481-6)--but without any evidence that he had looked at them. He gives much disorganized information on these and on the "Fire-Philosophers," whom he calls a fanatical late-sixteenth century sect, active in almost all the countries of Europe.³⁷ (What he means are the alchemists and Paracelsians.) I cannot believe that Jennings had discovered all this source-material on Renaissance magic and the early Rosicrucians on his own initiative: his subsequent work never shows him to have been a serious researcher in libraries, always a compiler from secondary sources. It seems far more likely that in 1858, Jennings penetrated circles in which these things were studied, and which we will treat below.

The explanation of the work's odd subtitle, "Last Fire," follows. Whatever it was for the old Rosicrucians and alchemists, fire had become for Jennings a polyvalent symbol. Possibly he himself was not

always clear as to whether he meant by it the Non-Being or Nirvana in which all things become annihilate ("Fire turns things into real NOTHING"³⁸); or "the fiery soul of the world - or the Binding Magnetism- which as the *last* of the physical, and the last possible thing to be known, Zoroaster, the supposed founder of the Religion of Fire, elevated into a god to be worshipped."³⁹ In *The Indian Religions* it was the former, as in Buddhism Non-Being is the supreme and only reality. But all the elaborations which fill several erudite chapters of *Curious Things* are in the spirit of the second interpretation, that is, of Fire as the first creative impulse that brings a universe out of nothingness--which one may as well call God.

Having once posited Fire (or its companion, Light) as the first principle of all religions and mythologies, a vast field for comparative study opened up before our philosopher, because these symbols are found wherever one looks--so long as one knows to look beneath the surface.⁴⁰ As he neared the conclusion of *Curious Things*, Jennings commended to the reader a "special group of books" that share this approach to comparative religion. They were Godfrey Higgins' *The Celtic Druids* and *Anacalypsis*, and Sir William Drummond's *Oedipus Judaicus*. Evidently Jennings was as unaware of these sources as he was of the Rosicrucian literature when drawing up his booklist at the start of *The Indian Religions*, but in his subsequent books he never failed to mention them with great respect. Jennings even cites as the "keynote" of the second volume of *Curious Things* a "well-supported though surprising assertion" that is taken verbatim from Higgins:⁴¹

That extraordinary race, the Buddhists of Upper India (of whom the Phoenician Canaanite, Melchizedek, was a priest), *who built the Pyramids, Stonehenge, Carnac, etc.*, can be shewn to have founded all the ancient mythologies of the World, which, however varied and corrupted in recent times, were originally ONE, and that ONE founded on principles sublime, beautiful, and true!⁴²

Jennings says that the basis of his work is the recognition that every religion has an exoteric and an esoteric half, and concludes by admitting that, in order to show the inner side of his supernaturalism, the title of the present work ought to have run:

"Curious Things of the Outside World. Concerning that, also, which is to be understood in the Divinity of Fire. By Hargrave Jennings, F.R.C. (Rosicrucian); Author of *The Indian Religions*. Towards the Philosophical Substantiation of their Sublime groundwork, Buddhism."⁴³

The styling of himself, in 1860, as "F.R.C." (=Frater Rosae Crucis)

is tantalizing. Was it merely to be taken as a statement of spiritual allegiance, or was there some actual order which Hargrave Jennings had joined since completing *The Indian Religions* in 1857 or early 1858? Was it his discovery of a new field for research and for the confirmation of his eclectic philosophy that prompted him in October 1858 to get to work on his seven-year old project? There is no easy answer to these questions, only a couple of hints towards the end of *Curious Things*.

First, Jennings assures the "guardians of the more recondite and secret philosophical knowledge, of whom, in the societies - abroad and at home - there are a greater number, even in these days, that the uninitiated might suppose,"⁴⁴ that he has not made unguarded disclosures. This is evidently meant to convey the impression that Jennings himself is initiated and possesses knowledge that he is sworn not to reveal.

Second, Jennings suggest a novel interpretation of what the old alchemists meant by the "Philosophers' Stone," namely that it might have signified the "magic mirror, or translucent spirit-seeing crystal, in which impossible-seeming things are disclosed."⁴⁵

I believe that everything points to an acquaintance with the brilliant and versatile young scholar, Kenneth Mackenzie (1833-86). Mackenzie was active in London in the late 1850s as a Member of the Royal Asiatic Society and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He did know of the Renaissance "fire-philosophers," and would later write a report on Dr. Rudd's manuscripts⁴⁶. Mackenzie also knew the people who were currently using crystal-gazing for occult research, notably the veteran occultist William Hockley, and the astrologer "Zadkiel" (Lieut. Morrison) and his circle in London.⁴⁷ Finally, Mackenzie gloried in the creation of secret esoteric orders, of more or less tenuous existence, and would have been the natural person to plant in Jennings's mind the idea which would obsess him to the end of his days: that of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross as an invisible coterie of adepts whom one might hope, but never expect, to meet.

Hargrave Jennings could certainly call himself a "Rosicrucian" if he wanted to after October 1870, in which month he was admitted to the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia.⁴⁸ But since the S.R.I.A. was founded in 1866, one has to look elsewhere for any "Rosicrucian" adherence in 1860. One possibility is that Jennings was holder of the 18th degree, called "Rose Croix," of the Ancient and Accepted Rite of Freemasonry. Apparently this degree, which claims a Templar origin, was worked very seriously in the 1820s in the "Jerusalem Conclave" (or "Encampment") of Manchester and in Nottingham:⁴⁹ in Manchester, it included a play of Christian Rosencreuz's resuscitation.⁵⁰ After a temporary suppression, the Manchester conclave was revived in 1851.⁵¹ Its earlier activities are probably the

source of the reference to modern Templars and Rosicrucians in Higgins' *Anacalypsis*.⁵²

According to Westcott's *History of the S.R.I.A.*, Kenneth Mackenzie had, during his youth in Germany, been in touch with German adepts who claimed a descent from previous generations of Rosicrucians (probably offshoots of the Gold- und Rosenkreuz). These, says Westcott, had admitted Mackenzie to some grades of their system, and had permitted him to attempt the formation of a group of Masonic students in England.⁵³ Westcott quotes a letter from the Rev. T. F. Ravenshaw, Grand Chaplain of England and one of the earliest members of the S.R.I.A., to the effect that the German fraternity also permitted distinguished members to confer Rosicrucian grades on suitable persons.⁵⁴ Who knows what orders Mackenzie amused himself by bestowing on suitable candidates? Again, Westcott says that a certain Venetian ambassador to England in the eighteenth century had conferred Rosicrucian grades and knowledge on English students, which were in turn handed on to others. One of the last of these was William Henry White, Grand Secretary of English Freemasonry from 1810 to 1857. On White's retirement, the relevant papers came into the possession of Robert Wentworth Little, who founded the S.R.I.A. in 1866.⁵⁵

I am unable, at the time of writing, either to confirm or deny Hargrave Jennings's relations with the Jerusalem Conclave of Manchester, with Kenneth Mackenzie, or with R. W. Little; but these are three possible routes by which he might have come to style himself "F.R.C." in 1860. As R. A. Gilbert has pointed out to me,⁵⁶ if Jennings had had any more impressive "Rosicrucian" credentials, he would not have failed to trumpet the fact to the members of the S.R.I.A. as soon as that scholarly, rather than initiatic society was founded. There seems little doubt that he was acquainted with the circles of "proto-Rosicrucians" and crystal-gazers which numbered among them Mackenzie, Morrison, Frederick Hockley, Francis and George Irwin, and John Yarker.⁵⁷

The English Rosicrucians, that is, the members of the S.R.I.A., do not seem to have been certain how to respond to Hargrave Jennings's next major book, *The Rosicrucians, Their Rites and Mysteries*, published in 1870 after having purportedly been twenty years in the writing.⁵⁸ John Yarker, in the Preface (dated 8 November 1871) to his *Notes on the Scientific and Religious Mysteries of Antiquity*, is careful to say that "the whole [of Yarker's book was] in manuscript before the appearance of a recent work on the *Rosicrucians*,"⁵⁹ yet he later quotes from it.⁶⁰ The S.R.I.A.'s journal, *The Rosicrucian*, never gave Jennings's book a proper review. A very short one appeared in 1875, saying that the book was "more suggestive than positive," and that Jennings must keep the truth disguised; the notice was followed

by the reprint of an article from *The Gentleman's Magazine* on the Order of the Garter⁶¹ which, in the context, was a deliberate affront to Jennings, who had devoted so much of his book to his own theories on the Garter and its origins.

How does one respond to *The Rosicrucians, Their Rites and Mysteries*? First, with exasperation at the slapdash way in which Jennings throws together his facts and fantasies. (Some of this is explicable, though not excusable, by the wholesale transfer of several chapters from *Curious Things*.) Second, with pity for a writer so often reduced to incoherence when he comes to express his deepest philosophy. Third, with disgust at the poor standards of scholarship set by this much-reprinted work, which have been the curse of historical writing on esotericism to this day. Yet there is also an engaging side to this author as he progresses on his lonely intellectual adventure with minimal support, moral or financial, from anyone.⁶²

The Rosicrucians is impossible to summarize or describe except by saying that the one thing it is definitely not, is the history of the Rosicrucians promised in the Preface. Nor are any rites or mysteries described within its pages. Its torrent of information serves primarily to frame the theory of sexual symbolism that Hargrave Jennings had derived from reading Godfrey Higgins, and hinted at in *Curious Things*.⁶³ This now becomes the point at which all religions and mythologies meet. But there is also a practical dimension to this teaching. Here is a passage from the earlier work, taken over verbatim into *The Rosicrucians*, in which Jennings seems to be fumbling towards a description of sexual intercourse practised as a mystical exercise:⁶⁴

The hollow world in which that essence of things, called Fire, plays, in its escape, in violent agitation,--to us, combustion,--is deep down inside of us: that is, deep-sunk inside of the time-stages, of which rings of being (subsidiences of spirit) we are, in the flesh,--that is, in the human show of things,--in the OUTER. It is exceedingly difficult, through language, to make this idea intelligible; but it is the real mystic dogma of the ancient Guebres, or the Fire-Believers, the successors of the Buddhists, or, more properly, Bhuddists.

What is explosion? It is the lancing into the layers of worlds, whereinto we force, through turning the edges out and driving through; in surprisal of the reluctant, lazy, and secret nature, exposing the hidden, magically microscopical stores of things, passed inwards out of the accumulated rings of worlds, out of the (within) supernaturally buried wealth, rolled in, of the past, in the procession of Being. What is smoke but the disrupted vapour-world to the started soul-fire? The truth is, say the Fire-Philosophers, in the rousing of fire we suddenly come upon

Nature, and start her violently out of her ambush of things, evoking her secretest and immortal face to us. Therefore is this knowledge not to be known generally of man; and it is to be assumed as the safest in the disbelief of it: that disbelief being as the magic casket in which it is locked. The keys are only for the Gods, or for godlike spirits.

This is the true view of the religion of the leaders of the ancient Fire-Believers, and of the modern *Illuminati*.

By 1870, Jennings had discovered the other work of "phallic" scholarship from the 1830s, written synchronously with *Anacalypsis* but independently of it: Henry O'Brien's *The Round Towers of Ireland* (1834). O'Brien had interpreted the enigmatic towers as being phallic symbols, and the religion of the ancient Irish as Buddhism, "*Budh* signifying, indiscriminately, Sun and Lingam."⁶⁵ No matter: it was all Rosicrucianism to Jennings, and it clarified the equations he had been trying to enunciate, namely that all religions derive from the original worship of mankind, which was of the one primordial energy that brings the universe out of Nirvana. This had been symbolized variously as Light, as Fire, as the Sun, and as the procreative power of the male, hence by the phallus or (since these writers preferred the Sanskrit term) lingam. Phallic worship, in short, is offered to God the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and only in our so-called civilization does it seem indecent. This, through many circumlocutions, is the theme of *The Rosicrucians*.

The original proponent of this theory was the antiquarian Richard Payne Knight, in his elegant and learned deistical work, *Discourse on the Worship of Priapus* (1786).⁶⁶ This had been reissued by Hotten, publisher of *The Rosicrucians*, only five years previously;⁶⁷ so that it is unthinkable that Jennings, though he does not cite it here, was ignorant of it. Payne Knight's interpretation of ancient religion has the Deity "both male and female...both active and passive in procreation."⁶⁸ Both Higgins and O'Brien make much of the schism that they believe to have occurred in ancient times between the devotees of the male aspect of God and those of the female, making them lingam and yoni worshippers, respectively. To the latter sect these authors attribute names such as Ionia in Greece, and the isle of Iona in Scotland.⁶⁹

Priority in bringing such ideas before a slightly wider public than could know the rare works of Knight, Higgins, or O'Brien must go not to Jennings but to the Liverpool physician Thomas Inman, who in 1868 published a weighty two-volume work whose title, *Ancient Faiths embodied in Ancient Names*, conceals its wholehearted devotion to the lingam-yoni theory of comparative religion. Jennings, too, enthusiastically embraced the sexual theory in its dualistic form, so that when he was not seeing lingams in towers, steeples, and

vertical lines, he was detecting yonis in moons, discs, and horizontals--and all this, while Siegmund Freud was but a schoolboy! But while his predecessors were scholarly Deists, or, in the case of Inman, complete sceptics, Hargrave Jennings was both mystically and practically inclined.

The most surprising revelation of *The Rosicrucians*, concerns the origin and purpose of the Order of the Garter. With circumlocutious delicacy, Jennings informs the alert reader that what the Countess of Salisbury dropped on 19 January 1344 was not a garter, but the belt holding her menstrual napkin; whereupon King Edward III silenced the onlookers by picking up the embarrassing object, uttering the immortal words "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*". The purpose in founding an order of chivalry to immortalize an eminently forgettable event was as follows:

It was in honour of Woman, and to raise into dignity the expression of the condemned 'means'...which is her mark and betrayal, but which produced the world in producing Man, and which saved it in the person of the Redeemer, 'born of Woman.' It is to glorify typically and mystically this 'fleshly vehicle,' that the Order of the 'Garter'--or 'Garder'--that keeps it was instituted.⁷⁰

In so doing, King Edward was, according to Jennings, reviving the chivalry of King Arthur, whose Round Table, with its 26-fold division into alternating red and white sectors, symbolized "the same object as that enclosed by the mythic garter"⁷¹ and ruled by the 13 full and 13 new moons of the year. Both chivalric orders were devoted to the feminine aspect of Divinity, which is not shamed but glorified in the physicality of woman.

One cannot exaggerate the boldness of Hargrave Jennings in airing such thoughts, hardly more acceptable today than they were in the Victorian era, but bearing witness to an underground current of awe (and male envy) for the magical power of the menstruating woman that can be traced in folklore, chivalry and myth.⁷² But can one ever forgive him for his pun on the Garter motto: "*Yoni soit...*"?⁷³

After being given full rein in *The Rosicrucians*, Jennings's erudition was next applied to the special case of Christianity, and lent, in particular, to the High Church side in the current debate over the place of ritual in the Church of England. *Live Lights or Dead Lights* (1873) was written "in conjunction with two members of the Church of England," and ostensibly treats the question of whether there should be candles on the altar of a church, or whether that object is merely to be treated as a table commemorative of the Last Supper. Jennings's "fire-philosophy" comes into its own here, as the altar candles "typify Immortal Light, the great fiery 'Idea' which annihilates matter and crushes it to light."⁷⁴ Once again, the central statement of the book is couched in almost incomprehensible

language; but he seems here to be contrasting, in Gnostic fashion, the true God with the deceptive lights of creation by a demonic power.

It was the meaning of the Great Sacrifice on Calvary, to which those lights on the altar and before the altar rise in mystic, glorious, fiery attestation--fire seeking its fellow-flame through the farthest limits of the terrestrial [sic] and the celestial worlds--that there shall be no ultimate ruin or darkness; that there shall be no LAST DEATH; that the swathes of dissolution and of blackness shall be consumed; that the great false lights of the devil or Lucifer (thence named as 'Light-Bringer' or 'Matter-Bringer,') shall be extinguished in the greater master-light or GOD'S LIGHT. That light which is 'dark in its own excess,' because it extinguishes the man's means of seeing it, and puts out the smaller in the greater. In this stormful warfare of St. Michael, (and of the Saviour), the Gates of Hell shall literally be broken-up, and light shall flow through all!⁷⁵

Live Lights develops many of the ideas of *The Rosicrucians* on Christian symbolism, particularly that of church architecture in East and West. Sexual symbolism is there, too (the twin candles being, for example, the "cleft" through which the Sun of Righteousness appears), but put in such a way that the innocent reader could easily miss it. Some of the interpretations are strangely anticipatory of René Guénon's *Symbolism of the Cross*, for example: "The axis of the world, and the axis metaphysical of 'possibility,' are the true cross."⁷⁶ But the conclusions of the book are starkly at variance with such an approach, for they are nothing less than a defence of the Personal God, which one would have thought as far as possible from the ideas of divinity that have filled Jennings's work so far. Perhaps it was his two collaborators who insisted on saying that, since the essence of Christianity is that man is made in the image of deity, therefore God must be personal, like ourselves; and on ending the book with the words: "We think we have thus demonstrated the necessity of the 'Personal God'."⁷⁷

In the same year, 1873, Jennings published another work with Christian associations, *One of the Thirty*.⁷⁸ Calling himself only the Editor, he tells of the misfortunes that befell those individuals, from 33 C.E. to the present, into whose hands passed one of the silver shekels for which Judas Iscariot sold Jesus. It is a collection of short stories in historical settings, some prosaic, others bizarre and romantic "in the best German tradition." One would have no difficulty in recognizing Jennings's own style and interests, particularly his love of London and of the sea. However, the book is one of those teasing productions to which the Victorians were prone, in which the author tries to dissemble his authorship. The story Jennings tells in his Epilogue, with much circumstantial evidence to

persuade the reader of its truth, is that in 1854 he became friendly with an old German gentleman, Mr. Böhler, owner of a curiosity shop and guardian of the silver coin in question. Later he met Böhler's uncle, Mr. Carrodus, resident of Greenwich and habitu  of the British Museum: a man of indeterminate age who, in his conversations, would tell of distant historical events just as if he had been an eyewitness. About the first of March 1870, Carrodus told Jennings that he was going to Paris, and gave him power of attorney to deal with his effects. A letter from Paris, dated 10 June 1870, was his only subsequent communication, instructing Jennings to dispose of the property and to publish the manuscript of *One of the Thirty*. Carrodus had apparently begun it in June 1856, in London, and written off and on ever since.⁷⁹

In Carrodus' letter to his "dear friend H. J.," he says that his book has been commended by "those worthy ones... of whom you little dream"; he refers to the accounts in encyclopedias of a "Brotherhood which is supposed to have existed, and which preferred singular claims adjudged to be of the most preposterous kind." Carrodus has been in search of traces of this Society for a long lifetime and in most countries of the world; he does not know if he will succeed in finding them before he dies. Jennings adds the notes: "Remarkable events followed in France after this date; as all the world knows" [the Franco-Prussian War began on July 19]; and: "The reader will remember the *red-crosses* which swept through Western Europe during the latter part of the year 1870 (sign of the R.C.?) and which were to be encountered at every corner even in London, although so unlikely to have such strange marks displayed in it."

The figure of Carrodus is obviously modeled, partly on that of the Comte de Saint-Germain, and partly on Jennings himself as the lifelong seeker for the Brotherhood, who may well have started in 1856 to write the stories of *One of the Thirty*. The whole editorial fiction (as I take it to be) is designed to open the reader's mind to the possibility of Rosicrucians existing here and now. Böhler, on the other hand, may have been a real person, since a letter from him to an unidentified correspondent, dated from Stratford, 21 April 1886, is printed in *The Letters of Hargrave Jennings*.⁸⁰ In this incoherent and ungrammatical letter, Böhler seems to be planning to strike facsimiles of the silver shekel, which hardly seems to accord with his philanthropic character, considering the damage that the original is shown to have done!

One of the Thirty, according to the Epilogue, carries the banal moral of "the native clinging curse which rests upon money as mere money" and the terrible retribution for undue greed of it.⁸¹ Its message is:

that the Gospel is TRUE and not philosophical only, and that the eternal mission of the SAVIOUR and the miraculous narrative of

HIS LIFE ON EARTH are at once real, and vital, and exact; though not perhaps meant in the senses which are involved when reason sets in to examine:--for men, through reason, will never find out the things of God.⁸²

Elsewhere, the author proclaims his belief in "a real, personal God who can both see me on my knees and hear me," admitting that this is "childlike and therefore ridiculous in this Neo-Platonic and Neo-Christianised (or non-Christianised) age."⁸³ The squib against Neoplatonism is telling; was it aimed at the S.R.I.A. members who were beginning to take an interest in Thomas Taylor? Jennings has evidently shelved, for the present, the philosophical attitudes of *The Indian Religions*, while his anti-rationalism now takes the elementary form of Christian pietism.

The only other new book that Jennings published in the 1870s was *The Obelisk*,⁸⁴ a short occasional work celebrating the arrival in London of "Cleopatra's Needle." It is dated October 1877, when the monument was floating somewhere in the Bay of Biscay, having been mislaid on its way from Alexandria. Jennings writes of the origins of obelisks among the iconoclastic Shepherd-Kings of Egypt, worshippers of the Sun whose rays the obelisk symbolizes; of the various needles already set up in Europe; and of the ubiquity of similar forms already to be found in London, thanks to the Masonic fraternity. He concludes with a rhapsody on London's two sacred stones from the East: the Stone of Scone in the Coronation Chair, and its larger brother, soon to arrive. Later he would complain that the obelisk should have been set up, not on the Embankment, but in front of St. Paul's Cathedral.⁸⁵

Jennings's lively sense of London and its life, and his emotional involvement with the capital, come out in the mixture of "serious sermons" and "interesting narratives" that he brought out in 1883 under the title *The Childishness and Brutality of the Time*.⁸⁶ Chapters on newspapers, life insurance, advertising, drama, opera, lawyers, fashion, and the American penchant for novel machines show that he was anything but an unworldly scholar, while the bitter title indicates his general attitude to an England which, he says, "is governed by the three selfish classes: the Jews, Lawyers, and Publicans."⁸⁷ He fills up this book of over 300 pages with a long narrative of a supernatural experience at sea, and a philosophical Appendix on the "strange Buddhistic idea of the nonexistence of everything," in which he reiterates the findings of *The Indian Religions*:

The deeply metaphysical Buddhists, too, have originated in their humiliating, although very profound, reveries the idea the *Man is asleep*; by which we mean...that the Human Race is buried in a

dream of many thousand years' duration--that nothing is real, because there is nothing really real at the back of anything to make it real.⁸⁸

In 1880 there appeared, to a very select audience, the first of a number of books acknowledged by or attributed to Jennings, some of whose titles are so similar as to warrant a list here. Certain of them form part of what was called by the reticent publisher (George Redway) the "Nature Worship and Mystical Series"; otherwise the "Phallic Series," intended to comprise ten volumes in editions of about 200 copies.

Phallic Worship: a description of the mysteries of the sex worship of the ancients, with the history of the masculine cross; an account of primitive symbolism, Hebrew phallicism, Bacchic festivals, sexual rites, and the mysteries of the ancient faiths. No author. [London:] printed for private circulation, 1880. 72 pages. 2nd ed. 1886. 3rd ed. 1891. Cover title: *The Masculine Cross*.⁸⁹

Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial, Heathen and Christian; its connexion with the Rosicrucians and the Gnostics and its foundation in Buddhism. With an Essay on Mystic Anatomy. By Hargrave Jennings. London: George Redway/New York, J. W. Bouton, 1884. 298 pages.

Illustrations of Phallicism. Consisting of ten plates or remains of ancient art with descriptions. No author. [London: Redway], 1885. [Given free by the publisher to subscribers to the previous work]

Phallism; a description of the worship of lingam-yoni in various parts of the world, and in different ages, with an account of ancient and modern crosses, particularly of the crux ansata (or handled cross) and other symbols connected with the mysteries of sex worship. No author. London: privately printed, 1889. Cover title: *Crux ansata*. 85 pages. 2nd ed., 1892. No.1 in series.⁹⁰

Phallic Objects, monuments and remains; illustrations of the rise and development of the phallic idea (sex worship) and its embodiment in works of nature and art. No author. N.p.: privately printed, 1889. 76 pp. No.3 in series.

Fish, Flowers and Fire as elements and deities in the phallic faiths and worship of the ancient religions of Greece, Babylon, Rome, India, etc. with illustrative myths and legends. No author. London: privately printed [for] A. Reader, Orange Street, Red Lion Square, 1890. 97 pages. No.5 in series.

Phallic Miscellanies; facts and phases of ancient and modern sex worship, as illustrated chiefly in the religions of India, an appendix of additional and explanatory matter to the volumes Phallism and Nature Worship. By the author of "Phallicism." N.p.: privately printed, 1891. 102 pp. No.6 (?) in series.

Nature Worship. An account of phallic faiths and practices

ancient and modern, including, the adoration of the male and female powers in various nations and the Sacti Puja of Indian Gnosticism. By the author of "Phallicism." N.p.: privately printed, 1891. 105 pages. No.7 in series.

Archaic Cup and Ring Marks, or Archaic Rock Inscriptions: announced in series, acknowledged as "our book" in *Nature Worship*, p.33, but not recorded as published.

Mysteries of the Rosie Cross, likewise announced but probably not published.

Of these, *Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial*, with its supplementary *Illustrations of Phallicism*, is by far the largest, the most important, and the only one published under Hargrave Jennings's name.⁹¹ *Phallic Miscellanies* and *Nature Worship* are evidently his, too. I have doubts about the others because, while they draw on Jennings's usual sources (Knight, Dulaure, Higgins, O'Brien, Inman, Forlong), their style does not remotely resemble his. How, for instance, could he have written *Fish, Flowers and Fire* without a single allusion to his "fire philosophy"? Remembering that in the Prefaces to the second and third editions of *The Rosicrucians*, Jennings refers to that work's "Authors" in the plural, I wonder whether he might have been merely a collaborator. In any case, the most noteworthy thing about this series of short, elegantly produced, and semi-scholarly studies is their cold and sober nature. If any of their subscribers were in search of pornographic stimulation, they must have been sorely disappointed.

Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial was Jennings's last major work, and it is his best, gathering most of what was of value in all his preceding ones. He claims, a little ingenuously, that all the facts and theories in it were first brought forward in *The Indian Religions*, and that others have since enlarged ignorantly on them, introducing the "phallic theory" of all religions,⁹² but he amply pays out Thomas Inman and General Forlong for their supposed borrowings by drawing many pages at the end of the book from their works. More seriously, he complains that other writers on the subject (not excepting his revered Godfrey Higgins) are destructive to faith and religion,⁹³ whereas he, Jennings, regards religion as true and the present book as constructive of Christian belief.⁹⁴

A long quotation is merited here in order to show how the metaphysical ideas of *The Indian Religions* were still alive in Jennings's mind:

The very root and foundation of the Buddhistic theosophic ideas is the impossibility of any phases or forms of being, or recognition, existing otherwise than as evil. All the mistakes of the theologians are derived from their reluctance to admit the

idea that *Nirwan*, or *Nirwana*, of the Buddhists means annihilation, or absorption into nothing, which, in truth, the real Buddhism teaches. But this *substratum*, or ground principle of Buddhism, "annihilation," is not to be taken in the way which these erroneous construers of Buddhism suppose. The broad outline of the Buddhist philosophy is a proposition, that all comprehensible existence, that all forms, phases, or formularies of existence, all emotion of any kind, stir, or sense of individuality--the *cogito, ergo sum*, of Descartes; that everything, in fact, is only good or bad relatively; that in reality, apart from manifestation or acceptance of the thing, there is *nothing either good or evil*; being only good or evil in man's necessitated self-delusion: that all life, particularly human life, is a parade of *phenomena*, of whatever character the movement operating may be. It will follow, conclusively, that extrication, rescue, or permanent and perfect deliverance out of this Masquerade of Being, totally different to what it seems, is Heaven; and that this state of bliss is attainable by the perfect Bhuddists [sic], in withdrawing out of being by repeated purifications, assisted by the multitudinous spirits, into that *Nirwana* which these abstruse fantastic religionists deem the blessed state of ultimate, never-ending rhapsody of perfect quiet, clear of all stimulus of consciousness. This is an ecstatic state, impossible of deviation, or change. It is the last Light, the *Pleroma*, or fulness of everything. It may, doubtless, be true, that the philosophy of Buddhism is a shadowy philosophy; but this is the true intent and purpose of it; and, we think, just as clearly stated.⁹⁵

So far, so good; but how does this fit with the Christian phallicism propounded elsewhere? Apparently through the same transition that we noticed in Jennings's earlier work, namely from the negative Absolute of Nirvana to the positive Absolute of the source of all worlds. In order to explain the latter, he turns to the Gnostics, as philosophers who were aware of the "greater Divinities who vouchsafed the 'Sensible Existence,'" i.e., the cosmocratic gods. Jennings adds that this is to be understood in the Buddhistic sense, "Buddhism being the first, and the foundation of all the theologies, taking its stand (for earth, and for earthly comprehension) on Phallicism--celestial in the first instance, terrestrial eventually; and witnessed to in the architectural monuments of the whole world, in all ages, and amidst all peoples."⁹⁶ Now he is back on the firm ground of his theory of sexual symbolism as the place where all religions and mythologies unite, with its natural corollary: that human sexual intercourse, and the parts of the body concerned, is nothing shameful or indecent, but a replication in the microcosm of the macrocosmic act. Many pages of *Phallicism*, as one might expect, are devoted to this theme and its extensions. But these do not explain

passages like the following one on St. Michael and St. George:

This idea and representative notion is that of the all-powerful champion--childlike in his "virgin innocence"--so powerful that this God-filled innocence (the Seraphim "know most," the Cherubim "love most") can shatter the world (articulated--so to use the word--in the magic of Lucifer, but condemned), in opposition to the artful constructions, won out of the permission of the Supreme--artful constructions ("this side life")--of the magnificent apostate, the mighty rebel, but yet, at the same time, the "Light-bringer," the Lucifer--the "Morning Star," the "Son of the Morning"--the very highest title "out of heaven," for in heaven it cannot be, but out of heaven it is everything. In an apparently incredible side of his character--for let the reader carefully remark that qualities are of no sex--this Archangel Saint Michael is the invincible sexless, celestial "Energy"--to dignify him by his grand characteristic--the invincible "Virgin Combatant" clothed--(and yet suddenly interposes a stupendous mystery, a mystery which lies at the very root of true Buddhism and Gnosticism, for both, in their radical metaphysical bases, are the same)--clothed, and at the same time armed, in the denying mail of the Gnostic "refusal to create." ⁹⁷

It takes a patient reader to decipher this, but the pages that follow give the clue. Here Jennings discourses on the magical qualities of virginity (clairvoyance, for instance, and a certain invulnerability) and on the consequences of its loss; yet, he says, when maidenhood is maintained too long it is "attended with unutterable mischiefs"⁹⁸ that are Nature's revenge for the denial of her purposes. Everything in creation encourages men and women to have sexual intercourse as innocently as the animals do; and the universality of sexual symbolism in art and architecture is a recognition of this. But something has also imposed on the human race a guilt or at least an embarrassment about sex. Most people live in a state of perpetual tension between the forces of desire and prohibition. Monks, ascetics, and also, in Jennings's opinion, the Brothers of the Rosy Cross seek to obey only the latter, mastering their passions; and their way of life, though contrary to nature, has always been esteemed the holiest.⁹⁹ The confusing paragraph quoted above names the Archangel Michael and Saint George as models of the virginal type which refuses to create; Lucifer as the patron of those who consent to do so through sexual activity.

In these "strange contradictory theosophic speculations," as he himself calls them,¹⁰⁰ Hargrave Jennings is striving to express the paradoxical existence of two paths of Gnosis, the negative and the positive. The first rejects creation, seeing everything manifested as a sham and an evil, and finds its goal exclusively in the Non-Being of

Nirvana. The second accepts creation as holy and aims at unity with its Creator.

Since Jennings repeatedly invokes the names of Robert Fludd and Jacob Boehme when trying to explain his philosophy, it is possible that he got his ideas from these great metaphysical writers and exponents of a theology in which God is both negative and positive, both dark and light. To sum it up in a few words, God's darkness, or non-creative aspect, in which the Deity is enwrapped in itself, spells extinction to all creation. This is Nirvana. God's light, on the other hand, is the first emanated or ejaculated substance, from which the universe is made. This is the origin of phallicism. Each point of view has its devotees.¹⁰¹

Jennings deserves credit for wrestling with these ultimate questions of metaphysics, in comparison to which the concerns of most nineteenth-century philosophers seem rather trivial. However, just as the average Victorian lived in tension between sexual desire and social inhibition, so the philosopher and spiritual aspirant may experience the tug of negative and positive Gnosis in a way that colours every department of life. (This is only to be expected since, to use theistic language, God must feel it, too!) The psychological pressure caused by these contrary forces can plunge one into a black, world-rejecting melancholy, or else into a riot of life-enhancing experiences--notably sex, drink, and drugs.

Hargrave Jennings knew both sides, without a doubt. On the positive side, he did more than anyone of his time to remove sexual taboos and to restore the worship of Priapus, the god of joyful creation, to its rightful and by no means un-Christian place. On the negative side, he manifested the all too common form of a curmudgeonly rejection of everyone else. One can see this in the series of letters that Jennings wrote to Robert Fryar, the Bath publisher, between 1879 and 1887.¹⁰² Here is a list of those whom he mentions specifically with contempt, disapproval or mistrust:

The American advertisers of Magic Mirrors, and American mediums in general (letter of 12 Aug. 1881)

P. B. Randolph (7 Dec. 1883)

Modern Theosophy and Spiritualism; Moncure S. Conway; W. Oxley; Henry Melville; Gerald Massey (26 Apr. 1884)

Women in general; Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland (18 Aug., 1885)

A. E. Waite; A. P. Sinnett; H. S. Olcott; H. P. Blavatsky; Eliphas Levi; Emma Hardinge Britten; Richard Proctor; Petrie and all the "Anglo-Israel" tribe; Major-General Forlong; Rev. George Ouseley (10 Aug. 1887)

If all these were worthless, who was left? Only Hargrave Jennings, apparently. It is embarrassing to read the many passages in the letters in which he praises his own works, particularly *The Rosicrucians*

("the only book of real authority in English, upon this surpassing sect"¹⁰³); or makes claims such as: "I think you will admit that I am entitled to be considered by every one as the first authority in England on the Cabala, &c." (17 Apr. 1886)

John Yarker, in his Introduction to the letters, takes issue with Jennings's negativity, singling out the modern Theosophists for defence on the grounds that:

...they have popularized the old secret wisdom of the East; enabled us to compare it with ancient Neoplatonism, and with writers of the School of Paracelsus, thus simplifying for the ordinary reader the difficulties of the veiled style of both ancient and modern authors upon these all-important doctrines, and so enabling us to see that the Platonist, the Vedantin, and the Paracelsian held pretty much the same opinions upon the arcane doctrine.¹⁰⁴

This is a certainly less wide of the mark than Jennings's view: that the Buddhists, Gnostics, and Rosicrucians held identical philosophies. But Yarker continues, revealingly:

Apparently however it is this very opening-up of the mysteries of the occult theology that Mr. Jennings opposes ethically in these Letters.¹⁰⁵

The correspondence with Fryar started when the publisher wrote to Hargrave Jennings in 1879, with questions on subjects treated in *The Rosicrucians*. It developed as Fryar asked for an opinion of the Americans who were advertising magic mirrors--probably the publishers of Randolph's works. Jennings's contempt for the latter did not prevent Fryar from issuing, in 1884/5, Thomas Welton's *Mental Magic*, with Fryar's long appendix in which Randolph is fulsomely praised. The correspondents were more unanimous in their shared interest in erotica: in 1883 Fryar lent his set of the *Situations gracieuses* of Giulio Romano for Jennings to compare with his own. (There are hints in *Phallicism*¹⁰⁶ that these twelve positions for sexual intercourse were linked with the magical determination of horoscopes.) After a few exchanges, Fryar asked Jennings to write a preface to a new edition of the *Corpus Hermeticum* in John Everard's English translation, a proposal which was accepted on 25 February 1884 after a suitable fee had been agreed upon. Jennings was upset the following year to learn that Fryar was issuing a companion volume containing the remaining Hermetic texts under the care of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, entitled *The Virgin of the World*. He wrote: "I do not approve of women having anything whatever to do with these extraordinary and exclusively profound subjects--quite beyond their hope of comprehension in the correct way..."¹⁰⁷ Fryar's

poor judgment made Jennings hesitate about collaborating on an edition of the *Comte de Gabalis*, attributed to the Abbé Montfaucon de Villars; he wrote that he, Jennings, was the "only man in England who knows how to use" this book, and paired it with another, whose apparently unique copy was in his possession: *Disputatis Nova contra Mulieres, qua probatur, eas Homines, non esse* (1595).¹⁰⁸ He considered these texts precious "for various reasons which no one in England (nor in any other country either, for the matter of that) probably can understand except myself."¹⁰⁹

One can see why Robert Fryar never seems to have acceded to Jennings's repeated urgings to come up from Bath for a face-to-face meeting in London. In his old age, at least, our philosopher must have been a cantankerous person to deal with.

In 1887 there appeared the first original work of Arthur Edward Waite, entitled *The Real History of the Rosicrucians* and pointedly bound in format, colours, and decoration almost identical to those of Jennings's 1870 *Rosicrucians*. Waite disposed of his predecessor in the following terms:

This book, however, so far from affording any information on the questions its professes to deal with, "keeps guard over" the secrets of the Fraternity, and is simply a mass of ill-digested erudition concerning Phallicism and Fire-Worship, the Round Towers of Ireland and Serpent Symbolism, offered with a charlatanic assumption of secret knowledge as an exposition of Rosicrucian philosophy.¹¹⁰

At the end of *The Real History*, Waite notes that while his book was in press, Jennings had issued a third edition of *The Rosicrucians* in two imposing and handsome volumes, with new but wholly irrelevant materials and "not one syllable of additional information on its ostensible subject," justifying further his criticisms of its eccentric author.¹¹¹ This is quite true; but as I hope to have shown in this article, there are things in Jennings's work that would have deserved Waite's attention if he had not been so incensed by its dismal literary and scholarly quality.

From Jennings's point of view, his last years were crowned with success. The new edition of his most famous book swept up much of what was worth keeping from *Curious Things of the Outside World*, and a second edition of *The Indian Religions* (1890) took care of the rest. *Phallicism* contained the best of his thought since 1870, while the little volumes of the "Nature Worship and Mystical Series" elaborated on various of its strands. He had handed on his web of arcane and confusing erudition, to tease the curious and please those Brothers of the Rosy Cross whom, he insisted to the end, he had never met. He died at his brother's residence in St. James's Palace on 11 March 1890, aged about 72.

1. *The Westminster Review*, N.S., Vol. 56 (1879), p.256; cited in A. E. Waite, *The Real History of the Rosicrucians* (London, 1887).
2. These biographical details are from *One of the Thirty* (see Note 68 below), pp.341-2.
3. *Letters of Hargrave Jennings* (see below, Note 101), p.14.
4. The story is told in Jennings's *The Childishness and Brutality of the Time* (see Note 85 below), pp.viii-ix.
5. Jennings is credited in the DNB with *The Opera; or Views before and peeps behind the curtain* (London, 1847), but I have not been able to locate this book anywhere.
6. Latest ed. by Harold Rosenthal, *The Mapleson Memoirs*, New York: Appleton-Century, 1966.
7. *St. George. A Miniature Romance*. (London: W. N. Wright, 1853).
8. *Letters of Hargrave Jennings*, p.44 (10 August 1887). Punctuation sic. Clymer has the two of them introduced in 1861, by William Gifford Palgrave, a character well worth investigating but who was in India from 1847-1853, hence unavailable at the time Jennings mentions. See *The Book of Rosicruciae* (Quakertown: Philosophical Publishing Co., 1948), Vol.III, p.181.
9. Tompkins, *The Magic of Obelisks* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), pp.413f.
10. *One of the Thirty*, p.344.
11. The DNB calls his brother F. W. Jennings; F. Boase, *Modern English Biography* (Truro, 1897), Edward Lawrence Jennings.
12. In his letters to Fryar (see Note 101 below).
13. They include: *My Marine Memorandum Book*, 3 vols., 1845; *The Ship of Glass, a Romance, with Atcherley, a Novel*, 3 vols., 1846; *Pebblestones by Peregrine* (supposedly edited by Jennings; never located), 1853; *War in London or Peace in London*, 1859.
14. *The Indian Religions, or, Results of the Mysterious Buddhism*, "by an Indian Missionary" (London: T. C. Newby, 1858). Jennings acknowledged its authorship on the title-pages of *Curious Things* (see below, Note 30) and of all his subsequent books.
15. *Indian Religions*, 1858, pp.vii-xi.
16. *Ibid.*, p.34.
17. The citations from *The Indian Religions* up to this point have been of portions not taken on into the second edition of 1890. But since the latter is much easier to find, and is also reprinted by Health Research, I cite it from here onwards. This quotation is from p.21.
18. *Ibid.*, p.32.
19. *Ibid.*, p.68.
20. *Ibid.*, p.49.
21. *Loc. cit.*
22. *Ibid.*, p.35.
23. *Loc. cit.*
24. *Ibid.*, p.62.

25. Ibid., p.51.
26. Loc. cit.
27. Jennings's anti-British tirade covers pp.138-167. This, with the list of books consulted and most of the references to current events, were removed from the 1890 edition.
28. Brooks Wright, *Interpreter of Buddhism to the West: Sir Edwin Arnold* (NY: Bookman Assocs., 1957), p.90.
29. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, *Le Bouddha et sa religion* (Paris: Didier, 1866, after the 1st ed. of 1858), p.xxii.
30. See *Curious Things of the Outside World. Last Fire* (London: T. & W. Boone, 1861), Vol.II, p.362. The second and greatly enlarged edition of *The Indian Religions* (London: Redway, 1890) incorporated several chapters of *Curious Things*. Other chapters of *Curious Things* were included in *The Rosicrucians, Their Rites and Mysteries* (London: Hotten, 1870). Further borrowings exist between the various editions of *The Rosicrucians* (2nd, 1879; 3rd in 2 vols., 1887; 4th, n.d.) and *Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial* (London: Redway, 1884). These four books are Jennings' major works. *Curious Things* is extremely rare, the British Library having lost the first volume, and I am grateful to the Library of Congress for their generosity in lending out their own copy when none other is available in the USA.
31. Perhaps in writing a "dissertation on the origin and purpose of the Pyramids of Egypt," which he says he did in 1860 (*The Rosicrucians*, p.214). The work appears to have been unpublished.
32. Catherine Crowe, *The Night-Side of Nature* (1848); Henry Christmas, *The Cradle of the Twin Giants* (1849); Joseph Ennemoser, *History of Magic* (English trans. 1854); Robert Dale Owen, *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* (1860).
33. These are three of the eight Conclusions of *Curious Things*, Vol.I, pp.276-8.
34. Ibid., Vol.I, pp.296-7.
35. Ibid., Vol.I, pp.11-12. On the prevalence of this view, see J. Godwin, "The Hidden Hand, pt. 1: The Provocation of the Hydesville Phenomena," in *Theosophical History*, Vol.III, no.2 (1990).
36. Ibid., Vol.II, p.95.
37. Ibid., Vol.II, pp.126-32.
38. Ibid., Vol.II, p.148.
39. Ibid., Vol.II, p.300; also in *The Indian Religions*, 1890 ed., p.176.
40. See Chapters 10-12 of *The Rosicrucians*, 1870 ed., and Chs. 18-23 of *The Indian Religions*, 1890 ed., which reproduce *Curious Things*, Vol.II, pp.152-345.
41. *The Celtic Druids* (London, 1829), "New Preface," unpaginated.
42. Ibid., Vol.II, pp.361-2.
43. Ibid., Vol.II, p.346. Jennings eventually used the second sentence of this citation as a subtitle to the 1890 edition of *The Indian Religions*.

44. Ibid., Vol.II, pp.352-3.
45. Ibid., Vol.II, p.360.
46. R. H. Mackenzie, "Rosicrucian Visions of Angels vouchsafed to Dr. Rudd" [from Harleian Mss. 6481-6], in *The Rosicrucian*, Vol.II, No.22 (November 1873), pp.65ff.
47. On Morrison, see Ellic Howe, *Astrology, A Recent History* (New York: Walker & Co., 1967; British ed. entitled *Urania's Children*), pp.33-50. *One of the Thirty*, p.139, illustrates a crystal with the names of the Archangels, in which the author "saw very strange things."
48. See William Wynn Westcott, *History of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (London: privately printed, 1900), p.29. Peter Tompkins (*The Magic of Obelisks*, p.413) has Jennings as a founder member of the S.R.I.A., but this is not borne out by the available documents.
49. See John Yarker, *Notes on the Orders of the Temple and St. John and the Jerusalem Encampment*, Manchester (Manchester, Guardian Steam-Printing Works, 1869), p.30.
50. See John Yarker, "Origin, Aim, and Object of the Society of the Rosy Cross," in *The Rosicrucian*, Vol.II, No.14 (April 1879), pp.90-96.
51. Yarker, *Notes on the Orders of the Temple*, p.36.
52. See *Anacalypsis*, Vol.II, p.723. Higgins adds that he himself has never joined these orders, so as not to be bound by oaths, and that they have become exclusively Christian in nature.
53. Westcott, op. cit., p.6.
54. Ibid., p.7.
55. Loc. cit.
56. Letter from R. A. Gilbert, 1 October 1990.
57. See Yarker, "Origin," p.93, on his own experiments with crystallogomancy. It was Craft Masonry, he says, that first led him to the occult literature.
58. Note in *Obelisks*, verso of title-page, where the dates 1850 to 1870 are given. In the *Letters* (see Note 101 below), p.42, Jennings says that *The Rosicrucians* was written in 1868-9 (letter of 10 Aug. 1887).
59. John Yarker, Jun., *Notes on the Scientific and Religious Mysteries of Antiquity; the Gnosis and Secret Schools of the Middle Ages; Modern Rosicrucianism; and the Various Rites and Degrees of Free and Accepted Masonry* (London: John Hogg, 1872), p.3.
60. Ibid., p.94.
61. Anonymous review in *The Rosicrucian*, N.S., Vol.I, No.1 (January 1875), p.7; article on the Garter on pp.8-9.
62. An example of the kind of writing alluded to, Michael Howard's *The Occult Conspiracy* (Rochester, Vt.: Destiny Books, 1989), mentions (p.108) that Jennings in 1870 petitioned Bulwer Lytton unsuccessfully for a librarian's job, to provide more stable

employment. No source is given for this interesting allegation.

63. See *Curious Things*, Vol.II, p.347, where Jennings says that he would like to quote for his epigraph Higgins' *Anacalypsis* "on the ubiquity of Tauric, Phallic Doctrines."

64. *Curious Things*, Vol.II, Ch.viii; *The Rosicrucians*, pp.81f.

65. Henry O'Brien, *The Round Towers of Ireland, or The History of the Tuath-de-danaans* (1st ed. 1834). New ed. (London: W. Thacker, 1898), p.112.

66. P. Knight, *An Account of the Remains of the Worship of Priapus, lately existing at Isernia, in the Kingdom of Naples...to which is added, A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connexion with the mystic Theology of the Ancients* (London: T. Spilsbury, 1786).

67. *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus...to which is added an Essay on the Worship of the Generative Powers during the Middle Ages of Western Europe* [by Thomas Wright]. London: J. C. Hotten, 1865.

68. Edition of 1865, p.35.

69. Fabre d'Olivet seems to have come to the same conclusions independently; see his *Histoire philosophique du genre humain* (2 vols., Paris, 1824), which hinges on this schism. The idea appeared first, I believe, in Francis Wilford's contributions to the *Asiatic Researches*.

70. *The Rosicrucians*, p.310.

71. *Ibid.*, p.311.

72. Information from an unpublished lecture by the Rabelais scholar, Claude Gaignebet, Cerisy-la-Salle, 28 June 1987.

73. Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove can; see their treatment of this event in *The Wise Wound. Menstruation and Everywoman* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1980), p.181.

74. *Live Lights or Dead Lights. (Altar or Table?)* (2nd ed. [1st not known], London: John Hodges, 1873), unpaginated Introduction.

75. *Ibid.*, p.155.

76. *Ibid.*, p.57.

77. *Ibid.*, p.199.

78. *One of the Thirty: A Strange History, Now for the First Time Told*. Edited by Hargrave Jennings. London: J. C. Hotten, nd [1873]. Oddly enough, Jennings dates this book 1860 in his letter to Fryar of 26 April 1884 (ed. cit., p.25).

79. *Ibid.*, p.357.

80. See Note 101 below.

81. *One of the Thirty*, p.337.

82. *Ibid.*, p.331.

83. *Ibid.*, p.123.

84. *The Obelisk. Notices of the Origin, Purpose, and History of Obelisks*. London: John Bursill, 1877.

85. *Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial* (London: Redway, 1884),

- p.40.
86. *The Childishness and Brutality of the Time. Some plain truths in plain language.* London: Vizetelly & Co., 1883.
87. *Ibid.*, p.80.
88. *Ibid.*, p.326.
89. This should not be confused with two entirely different books: (1) *The Masculine Cross and ancient sex worship* by Sha Rocco. New York: Asa K. Butts & Co., 1874. Copyright 1873 by Abisha S. Hudson. 65 pages. Reprinted as *Sex mythology, including an account of the masculine cross.* London: privately printed, 1898. 64 pages. Modern reprint by Health Research. (2) *The Masculine Cross, or a History of ancient and modern crosses and their connection with the mysteries of sex worship; also an account of the kindred phases of phallic faiths and practices.* No author. London: privately printed, 1891. 100 pages. No.8 (?) in the "Phallic Series". The American National Union Catalogue attributes all three works to Hudson.
90. To add to the the confusion, this is called in the series prospectus *Phallicism*, but published as *Phallism*. For completeness, here follow the titles in the "Phallic Series" not attributed to Jennings: No.2, *Ophiolatreia* (1889), No.4, *Cultus Arborum* (1890), and *The Masculine Cross, or a History...* (1891; see previous note).
91. It was published in an edition of 500 copies (note in preface to *Nature Worship*).
92. *Phallicism*, p.ix.
93. *Ibid.*, p.xxvi.
94. *Ibid.*, p.xvii.
95. *Ibid.*, pp.50-1. This extract appears, out of all context, in the course of a chapter on sacred prostitution.
96. *Ibid.*, p.164.
97. *Ibid.*, pp.212-3. H. P. Blavatsky would write much about this "refusal to create" in her *Secret Doctrine* (1888).
98. *Ibid.*, p.218.
99. *Ibid.*, pp.230-1.
100. *Ibid.*, p.213.
101. Many of the ideas of *Phallicism*, and some exact passages, were reproduced in the fourth edition of *The Rosicrucians*, the last one prepared by Jennings himself (see p.413 of that book).
102. *The Letters of Hargrave Jennings...Forming the unabridged Correspondence with the Editor of the Bath Occult Reprints, between 1879 and 1887.* Edited by Invictus; Introduction by John Yarker. Bath: Robert H. Fryar, 1895. 100 copies, printed only for subscribers.
103. *Letters*, p.17 (12 Dec. 1883).
104. *Letters*, p.9.
105. *Loc. cit.*
106. *Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial*, pp.106-7.

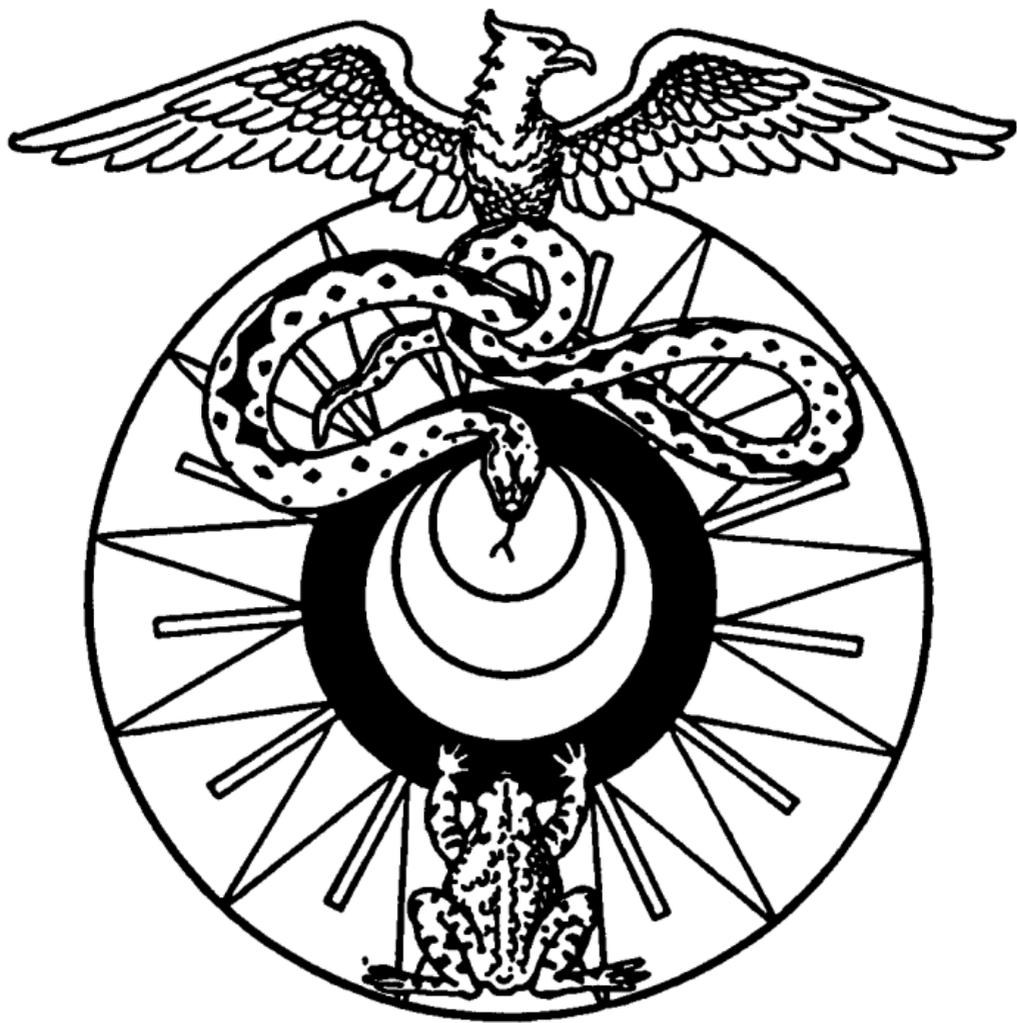
107. *Letters*, p.33 (18 Aug., 1885).

108. "New dispute against women, by which it is proved that they are not human beings." See also *The Rosicrucians*, 4th ed., p.416.

109. *Letters*, pp.34-5 (18 Aug. 1885).

110. E. Waite, *The Real History of the Rosicrucians* (London: Redway, 1887), pp.2-3.

111. *Ibid.*, p.433.



Hunting the Blacke Toade

Some aspects of alchemical symbolism

Rafal T. Prinke

The study of alchemical symbolism is in many respects similar to that of Christian symbolism in works of art and literature. The major difference, however, is that the key to the latter is well known while the key to alchemy has been lost¹. Its re-discovery is not a matter of a single insight but rather of a meticulous and long-lasting comparative study of surviving texts and iconography. It is now fairly obvious that there were several 'schools' of symbolism within European alchemy, sometimes overlapping, sometimes borrowing individual symbols from other systems, or even distorting the ideas of earlier writers. These schools should be clearly defined along with the kind of symbols used by them. Even though such 'perfect' definitions may not reflect any actual alchemical works, it would be very useful for reference in any future studies, as well as for the analysis of chronological and geographical spreading of alchemical ideas. Some of such widely defined groups of symbolism and differences between them can be easily seen but have not been properly described yet.

Many scholars stress the fact that most alchemical notions, such as the Philosophers' Stone or the Materia Prima, are denoted by a wide range of names and symbols, and give long lists of examples. But a really helpful kind of 'alchemical dictionary' would be to analyze particular clearly defined symbols as used by different alchemical authors and find out their various meanings. A full study of this kind is obviously beyond the possibilities of any individual researcher so I decided to make a small beginning by an attempt to clarify the symbol of the Toad. I chose it because it is not as common as the Lion or the Eagle, and therefore requires less research, but at the same time it is quite distinct and well defined.

Any symbol appearing in an alchemical treatise should be studied from two points of view:

1. Its meaning in other symbolic systems of the period or earlier.
2. Its context in different alchemical treatises.

In the first case care must be taken not to refer to symbolism of the ancient Egyptians or Chinese, as over-enthusiastic occultists tend to do, but rather stick to medieval and renaissance Europe, with possible classical symbols that may have been known there. In the second case the special points to note would be the frequency (and therefore importance) of the symbol in question, whether it appears at the beginning or at the end of the process described, whether it is in a group of three, four, seven, or some other number of symbols, etc.

One of the earliest appearances of the Toad symbol in alchemical literature and iconography seems to be that in the works of George Ripley, in which it plays a very prominent, or even central, part. His short poem *The Vision* ² describes an alchemical process veiled in symbols. The Toad first drinks "juice of Grapes" until it is so filled up that "casts its Venom" and "begins to swell" as a result of poisoning. Then the Toad dies in its "Cave" and the usual sequence of colour changes follows: black, various colours, white and red. Thus the Venom is changed into powerful Medicine.

The famous *Ripley Scrowle* has not been available to me in its entirety but from several published fragments ³ it seems that it presents a similar, though considerably extended, process of the Toad undergoing various chemical changes. It reappears in various points of this symbolic road, clearly suggesting continuity. In some versions the Toad is also the final symbol of the Philosophers' Stone ⁴.

It would, therefore, appear that the Toad is here used as the symbol of the First Matter of the Great Work (as different from the cosmological *Prima Materia*), which is worked upon until the Stone is obtained. The symbolic sense of choosing this symbol finds confirmation in the fact that toad was believed by Ripley's contemporaries to be a venomous animal, highly repugnant, but containing a stone of great value in its head. That stone has the power of curing bites and is an antidote against poison. This common belief found its way to Shakespeare's *As You Like It*:

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

Another English author wrote in 1569: "There is to be found in the heads of old and great toads a stone they call borax or stelon, which being used in a ring gives a forewarning against venom" ⁵.



one of the best of the world's silver - a great quantity of the best silver

Eirenaeus Philalethes in his commentary to Ripley's *Vision* says that the Toad symbolizes gold. This view may have been influenced by Michael Sendivogius's statement that the Philosophers' Stone is nothing else but "gold digested to the highest degree" ⁶, especially as Philalethes was his admirer and adopted his pseudonym of Cosmopolita. As we do not know the First Matter of Ripley, it is difficult to say whether Eirenaeus Philalethes is right. Ripley himself in his most famous work *The Twelve Gates*, which is less symbolic and uses early chemical terminology, remarks in the first Gate (Calcination):

The head of the crow that token call we,
 and some men call it the crow's bill.
 Some call it the ashes of Hermes tree,
 Our toad of the earth that eateth his fill,
 and thus they name after their will.
 Some name it by which it is mortificate,
 The spirit of the earth with venom intoxicate. ⁷

The Toad is therefore clearly identified here as the stage of Nigredo or Raven's Head, but also connected with earth. Interestingly in the ninth Gate (Fermentation, which is the same as Digestion) Ripley says:

Earth is gold, and so is the soul also,
 Not common gold, but ours thus elementate. ⁸

It is, therefore, clear that in Ripley's works the Toad symbolized the First Matter of the Great Work that was obtained in its first stage of Calcination or Nigredo. It may be gold but then the choice of the symbol would appear strange - it should rather be something base and vulgar. It is often said of the First Matter that it can be found everywhere but fools cannot see it, and this opinion would fit the Toad symbol much better. For instance, the anonymous author of the poem *Hunting the Greene Lyon* says:

And choose what thou shalt finde of meanest price:
 Leave sophisters, and following my advice,
 Be not deluded; for the truth is one,
 'Tis not in many things, this is Our Stone:
 At first appearing in a garb defiled,
 And, to deal plainly, it is Saturn's childe.
 His price is meane, his venom very great
 His constitution cold, devoid of heat. ⁹

This aspect of the toad symbol in medieval imagery is also

stressed by the medieval writer Catelanus when he says that unicorns live in caves "amid toads and other noxious, loathy reptiles" ¹⁰.

The Toad as a symbol of only one phase in the alchemical process appears also in another poem by Ripley:

The showers cease, the dews, which fell
 For six weeks, do not rise;
 The ugly toad, that did so swell,
 With swelling, bursts and dies. ¹¹

This is clearly the same chemical process as in his *Vision*, where almost exactly the same words are used:

A Toad full Ruddy I saw, did drink the juice of Grapes so fast,
 Till over-charged with the broth, his Bowels all to brast:
 And after that, from poyson'd Bulk he cast his Venom fell,
 For Grief and Pain whereof his Members all began to swell.

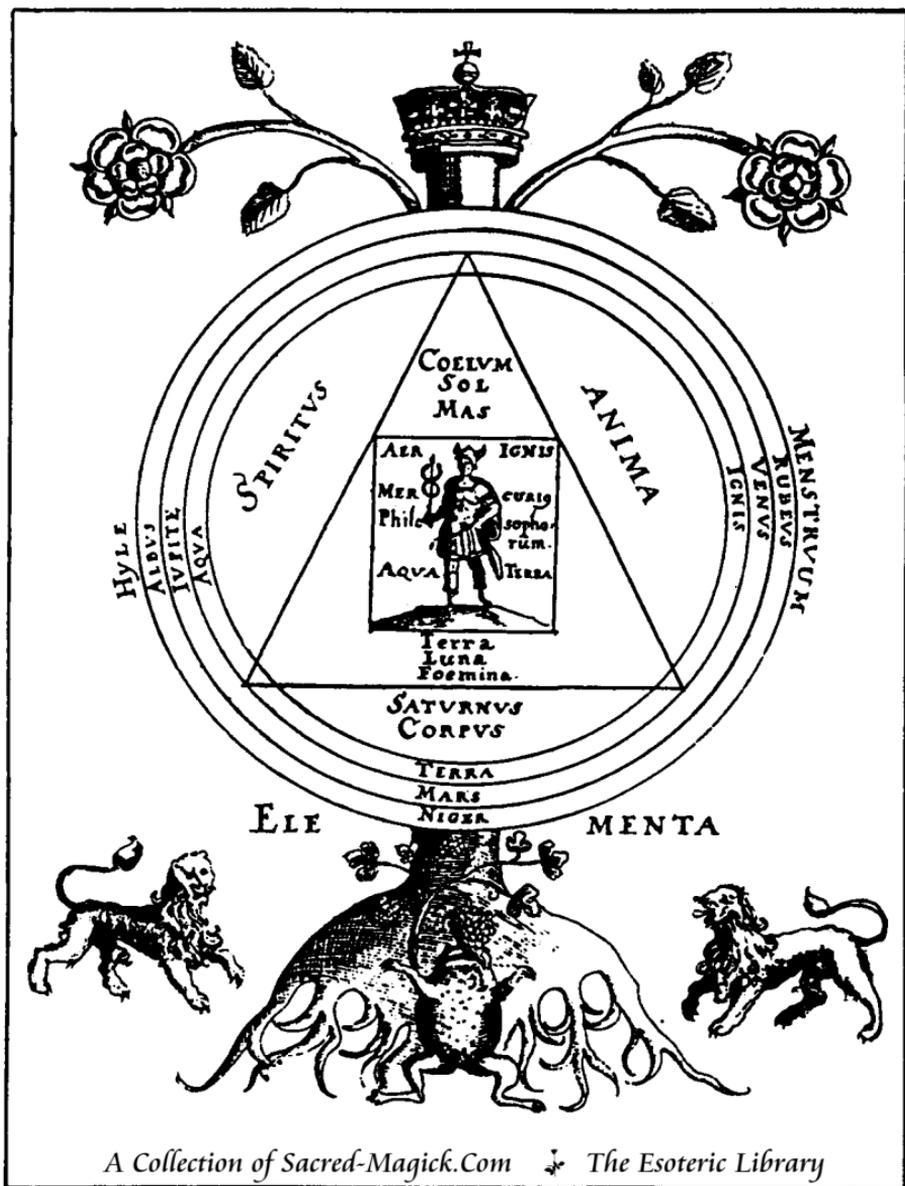
Another of the early English alchemists, Bloomfield, in his *Camp of Philosophy* lists the Toad as one of the names of the Elixir or Philosophers' Stone itself:

Our great Elixir most high of price,
 Our Azot, our Basiliske, and our Adrop, our Cocatrice.
 Some call it also a substance exuberate,
 Some call it Mercury of metalline essence,
 Some limus deserti from his body evacuate,
 Some the Eagle flying fro' the north with violence,
 Some call it a Toade for his great vehemence,
 But few or none at all doe name it in its kinde,
 It is a privy quintessence; keep it well in minde. ¹²

Mary Anne Atwood interprets all these names as reflecting the Stone on various stages of the Great Work: "being sublimed at first, it is called a serpent, dragon, or green lion, on account of its strength and crude vitality, which putrefying, becomes a stronger poison, and their venomous toad; which afterwards appearing calcined by its proper fire, is called magnesia and lead of the wise". ¹³

It can be summed up, therefore, that in the English alchemical tradition the Toad is a symbol of the First Matter of the Work, which is Saturnine in nature (which does not have to mean lead but any substance associated with Saturn). Sometimes it refers only to the phase of Putrefaction or Caput Corvi, on account of its Saturnine symbolism ('Regnum Saturni'), sometimes also to the Philosophers' Stone itself, as the "jewel" hidden in the Toad's head (i.e. in the First Matter). This kind of symbolism seems to have been continued by

later alchemists in England, through continuous interest in the works of Ripley displayed by such authors as Elias Ashmole, Eirenaeus Philalates, or Samuel Norton, the grandchild of Ripley's supposed apprentice Thomas Norton.



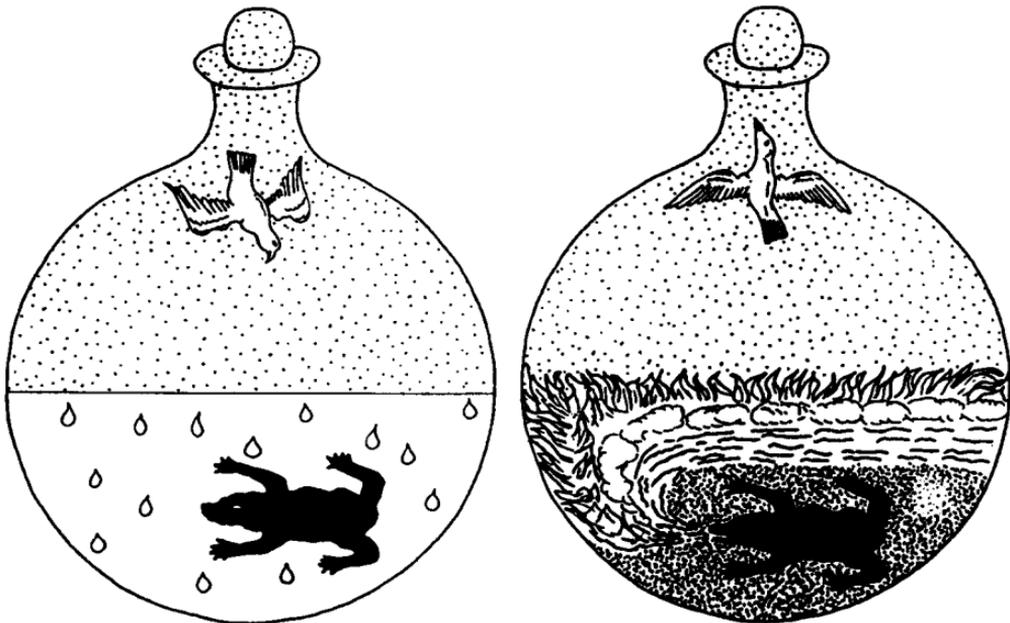
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One of the interesting tree diagrams in Norton's *Mercurius Redivivus* presents the Toad at the roots of the Tree of the Great Work, with two lions at its sides. The Toad reaches for the Grapes above it, thus clearly referring to Ripley's imagery from his *Vision*.



The well known illustration from Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* shows the Toad at the bottom of the symbolic process, probably indicating its beginning. It is interesting that it joins the male and female figures, as if it symbolized the power of attraction with some sexual overtones. The whole figure is entitled "Spiritus, Anima, Corpus", of which the Corpus or Body is the male-female pair. The whole possible sexual aspect of alchemy is still completely unknown and waiting to be explained but it may be interesting to note that Thomas Vaughan, who illustrated Ashmole's collection, made numerous sexual references in his own alchemical works, especially *Aula Lucis*. In his notebooks Vaughan explained how he had made the "oil of Halcali" with the help of his wife. According to A.E. Waite this oil is the First Matter which connects it with our Toad symbol.¹⁴

The sexual symbolism of the Toad can also be found outside alchemy, which strengthens our argument. On the great painting of Hieronymus Bosch *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, on its right wing, there is a figure of a woman with a toad on her breast which symbolizes the sin of debauchery.¹⁵ A sculpture in Strasbourg entitled *The Seducer of Unfaithful Virgins* depicts snakes and toads climbing up a handsome youth's back while he holds forth an apple.¹⁶ So the toad may be understood to symbolize the power of sexual instinct, the force of attraction of the opposites, which in the official morality was seen as something loathsome and vulgar.



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A work that would seem to spring from a totally different tradition, *The Crowning of Nature* ¹⁷, uses the Toad symbol in two of the 67 figures. These are numbers 17 Fermentation and 18 Separation of the Elements. The text accompanying the pictures, however, strongly resembles the Ripleyan ideas: "But by the Toad, here understand the sphere of Saturn swelling with tincture, or his heaven to be great and impregnate therewith, and by and by ready to bring forth, which by the ejection of the four elements appears most plainly in the next Chapter." ¹⁸ The Saturnine nature of the First Matter (or Chemical Subject, as it is called here) is confirmed in figure 2 and its text, which agrees with our conclusion reached above. Ripley's "casting of Venom" by the Toad is paralleled here in figure 18. In both cases the White Dove is above the Toad, probably signifying the volatile nature of the "incture" or Ripley's Juice of Grapes.



The 18th century published version of the series (without text) produced by Johann Conrad Barchusen¹⁹ has some additional figures, extending the set to 78. Plate 1 also utilizes the Toad symbol in connection with those of the Pelican, the Lion, and the Salamander, surrounding the Mercury of the Philosophers. Adam McLean interprets the whole as representing the four elements²⁰ but it is not quite obvious, as the bird at the top is clearly the Pelican, usually not a symbol of the Air. It is also difficult to see any obvious connection of the Lion with the Water. It is true that there are the standard triangle symbols of two of the elements beside the Lion and the Toad but in that case the symbolism of this plate would not be uniform with the symbolism of the whole series and would have to be treated as a later addition. On the other hand the creatures can be seen as representing the phases of the Great Work. In the original *Crowning of Nature* these are found in the following series of plates:

Green Lion	7-8
Toad	17-18
Pelican	37
Salamander	41-55 and 58
Angel/Stone	66-67

Seen in this light the first plate from Barchusen is a summary of the whole process of the Great Work and thus an integral part of the series. The only objection may be that the very important symbol of the Dove appearing on plates 10-36 is not included. It seems, however, (and is supported by the accompanying text) that the Dove is only the indication of the direction in which the Spirit (or the volatile principle) goes at any stage.



Of the 17th century Rosicrucian heirs to the alchemical tradition I found only two who used the Toad symbol. The less important in this context is Johann Daniel Mylius. In the very numerous engravings found in his works the Toad appears only on the title page of *Opus Medico-Chymicum*, inside the triangle of Air, chained to the Eagle above it. It probably refers to the volatile (and therefore "aerial" principle of solid bodies or, otherwise, to "fixing of the volatile". It is interesting that the same image of "bird above toad" appeared in *The Crowning of Nature* but without the chain joining them. In the text of the latter, however, mention is made about fixing the Elements cast forth by the Toad until they are inseparable. Some shift of meaning must have occurred between the two uses of this kind of symbolism.



The most striking thing, however, is that Michael Maier has exactly the same symbol in one half of his personal coat-of-arms as displayed on his portrait in *Atalanta Fugiens*, and that he used it also as the main symbolic emblem of Avicenna in *Symbola Aureae Mensae* where it is clearly explained as Fixing the Volatile.



Maier used the Toad symbol in a different context again in *Atalanta Fugiens* in emblem 5, where it is placed by a man on a woman's breast. The epigram to this emblem is in many ways similar to Ripley's *Vision*:

To woman's breast apply the chilly toad,
 So that it drinks her milk, just like a child.
 Then let it swell into a massive growth,
 And let the woman sicken, and then die.
 You make from this a noble medicine,
 Which drives the poison from the human heart. 21

In this case the Toad drinks Virgin's Milk instead of Juice of Grapes, which may be just different terminology. However, it is the woman who dies, not the Toad. The sexual interpretation can also have been intended as a woman with a toad on her breast is identical with the symbol of debauchery or sexual attraction used by Bosch.

The above cases of Toad symbolism in alchemy are probably very incomplete but even on this basis it can be concluded that there definitely is some continuity in its used from the 15th to the 17th centuries, although occasional shifts in meaning are also noticeable. These may possibly be due to the simultaneous shift from physical alchemy of Ripley and his contemporaries (i.e. probably describing actual chemical processes) to the highly spiritualized (and possibly

incorporating the sexual aspect) alchemy of the 17th century Rosicrucian Enlightenment.

Notes:

1. Some scholars believe they have discovered that 'key' but as the spectrum ranges from highly symbolic explanations of C.G. Jung (that are rather a presentation of his own system of psychoanalysis with the help of alchemical imagery) to strictly chemical ones of chemistry historians, it is difficult to accept such claims.
2. Reprinted with the commentary by Eirenaeus Philalethes from his *Ripley Redivivus* in *The Secret Art of Alchemy* by Stanislas Klossowski de Rola, p.23-30.
3. For example in Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*, ill. 196, Klossowski de Rola's *The Secret Art of Alchemy*, pl. 65, Powell's *Alchemy, the Ancient Science*, p.66.
4. Manly P. Hall, *Meditation Symbols in Eastern and Western Mysticism*, Los Angeles, 1988, p.203.
5. For general discussion of toad symbolism see the article by E.A. Armstrong in *Man, Myth and Magic* p.2856.
6. In 'Tenth Treatise' - see *Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy*, Llanerch Enterprises, 1989, p.116.
7. Quoted after *In Pursuit of Gold* by Lapidus, Weiser 1976, p.99.
8. *Ibid.*, p.126.
9. Quoted by Mary Ann Atwood in *A Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery* p.317 (apparently from Ashmole's collection *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* but I could not verify it).
10. Quoted after Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*, p.437.
11. Quoted by Mary Ann Atwood in *A Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery* p.406, from *Ripley Redivivus*.
12. Quoted by Mary Ann Atwood in *A Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery* p.94, from Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*.
13. *Ibid.*
14. See Colin Wilson, *Mysteries*, Panther 1979, p.433-35. His discussion is based on Kenneth Roxroth's introduction to *The Works of Thomas Vaughan*, University Books, New York, 1968.
15. Anna Boczkowska, *Tryumf Luny i Wenus*, Krakow, 1980, p.63.
16. *Man, Myth and Magic* p.2856.
17. Edited and published by Adam McLean, Edinburgh, 1980.
18. *Ibid.*, p.40.
19. *Elementa Chemicæ*, 1718.
20. *The Crowning of Nature*, op.cit., p.127.
21. The translation is by Joscelyn Godwin from Adam McLean's edition, Tysoe, 1987, p.85.

A Conference betwixt Philochrysus and Philadelphus

[This extract is taken from The Theosophical Transactions of the Philadelphian Society. This short lived magazine (4 issues appeared during 1697) was edited by Francis Lee, the son-in-law of the English mystic Jane Lead who was the major figure behind the Philadelphian Society. Most of the articles in this magazine were published without credit or else given pseudonymous authors. Among these is this interesting dialogue which discusses the idea of the spiritual or Philadelphian gold. - Editor.]

Philochrysus: This was upon me to ask you. You may remember then that you told me how the description of your city which we then read, was more literal, than is easy to be believed, and withal more mystical than it is possible for the wisest of mortals to comprehend. And in particular you told me that it was built first of true and substantial Gold; secondly of fine Gold; thirdly of transparent or glassy Gold; and fourthly of living Gold.

I desire now that you would answer me to all these particulars in order. Do you then say that this city is built of true Gold, and that it is not only metaphorically said to be built of Gold? Is it as real and substantial, is it as visible and palpable, and has it as many good qualities as this which I have now in my hand?

Philadelphus: Yes, Philochrysus, I can assure you that it is built of true and not metaphorical Gold, as some would have it only to be. This Gold, I say, is no less real and substantial, and no less visible and palpable to its inhabitants and has as many, yea more, good qualities that that which you hold in your hand, and seem so pleased with. I know that this is a strange language, and I shall have much ado to

make myself understood by you but in any degree. Because I must speak of that which you have never seen, or handled; though others have both seen and handled of it, and you also may come in time to do the same. So that it will be almost as hard a matter for one that is born blind to understand the philosophy of colours, or one born deaf the nature and distinction of sounds, as for you to comprehend what I am about to say of a certain substance that is visible to some but not to you, palpable to some but not to you; and which therefore you have no kind of apprehension of.

Philochrysus: I promise to be very attentive. Do me the favour but to satisfy me as far as you can.

Philadelphus: Well, I will endeavour your satisfaction, after that you shall have answered me a question or two that I have to propose to you.

Philochrysus: I am very ready to do it.

Philadelphus: Why do ye believe that piece of Gold which ye showed me, to be true, real and substantial, and not shadowy, figurative and accidental?

Philochrysus: Why do I believe so? I am not such a stranger to the truth, as not to be able to distinguish it from a shadow. A shadow will fly from me if I go to catch at it, but this I can grasp fast enough. A shadow depends on the substance, and on the position of the Sun which casts it. It has no figure but from the substance, and that is always very faint and weak; it cannot be touched, it has no ponderosity, no light, no power in it. But this is ponderous, bright and powerful. You see me touch it, and its figure is not faint or weak but vivid and strong, without depending upon anything else. Wherever I move it, and whatever the position of it may be to the Sun or light, it still retains the same shape and the same substance. And now I have it fast, I dare venture its flying away.

Philadelphus: I see you are well satisfied with yourself. But pray tell me, how would you give a description of it, to satisfy another that had never seen it, or perhaps never heard of it; or if ever heard of it, yet not otherwise than as a figurative sound to please children with, or as a rattle, a picture, a shadow, a name without substance, without reality? How would you make it to be understood to a Philosopher, and how to a merchant that is no philosopher, supposing them both to be strangers to the nature and use of this sovereign metal?

Philochrysus: Truly, Philadelphus, you begin to puzzle me. And besides I cannot see whither all your windings and turnings will at last lead me. Indeed, it would be a difficult matter to resolve satisfactorily either a Philosopher or a merchant concerning this dear precious metal, if they have not some manner of notice of it beforehand. But since it is not unlawful to make such a supposition, I am ready also to make such an answer as I can.

I would therefore endeavour to satisfy them, by making use of such ideas, images and conceptions which they are already acquainted with; and by compounding them and dividing them, I would strive to frame in the inquirer an idea, image and conception hereof, which might approach as near as possible to the truth. As for instance, if I were to discourse with a philosopher, whom I will suppose to live in the remotest part of Tartary, or in some dark corner near to the Northern Pole where mines of Gold were never so much as heard of, and no name even found for it in the language of the country. I would think in the first place what to call it, that he might in some sort apprehend me, while I am discoursing with him. Now because some Copper mines may be near to him, and he may have both seen and handled and also tried several experiments upon this metal, therefore I will call it fine Copper or perhaps fine Brass, if this be likewise known to him. Then because I must speak to him in his own terms, and he has used himself to those of Mercury and Sulphur, I will tell him this fine Copper is compounded of a pure Mercurial Water and a pure Sulphureous earth, exactly proportioned and duly matured and concocted by the Sun-beams in some proper matrix or vessel.

Next I will, as far as I am able, show him the difference, both in quantity and quality, of the compounding principles of this fine Copper, and of his Copper. Whereupon I tell him that the Mercurial Water, which enters into the composition of this fine Copper, is not only more subtle, defecated and pure, than that which is in that Gothic Copper of his, but also that it is there in a much greater quantity. Likewise I tell him that the quantity of the Brimstone or Sulphureous Earth, which enters into the composition of the Gothic copper is greater than that which is in this fine (which I call for distinction the Peruvian) Copper, but that in the former it is more coarse than in the latter. Herein lies the main difference of the Peruvian and the Gothic Copper (which I must make my philosopher understand) as to the composition of the principles both in the one and the other. Which are both essentially the same, but diversified as well according to quality as quantity. He must then confess to me, that the Mercury in the Gothic Copper must needs be originally infected and poisoned, and that there must be a defect in its proportion: as likewise that the coarseness, the superfluity and the combustibleness of its Sulphur are no inconsiderable impediments to the perfection of this metal. And he will grant me to this, I believe, though he never have seen the fine metal of Peru, that there may be such a Copper there found as I do describe, if there may be but a Mercury, or water of Life, freed from its original infection and poison, and then fitly adapted and conjoined with a proper Sulphur that shall be pure and of an incombustible nature, so as not to diminish in the severest fires.

However perhaps he will maintain, that I ought not altogether to despise the Sulphureous Earth of his Gothick Copper; for that though

it were not so pure, fixed and permanent as that of the other, yet it was of the very same essence and nature with it, and therefore also might possibly come to be in like manner purified and made incombustible.

And when I have brought him thus far, then I may speak unto him of the several properties of our fine copper, and leave him to compare them with those of that coarse sort which which is only known to him. And here if I could give him an exact calculation of the weight of a cubical inch of the Peruvian Copper, comparing it with a cubical inch of the Gothick and showing the preponderancy of that above this, I should settle in him a just idea as to one property of it. Another property is purity and clarity, which I must in the next place give him to understand by deduction from such ideas or conceptions which he has already admitted. A third is its tincture, and here as I must heighten that idea which he has entertained on one side, so I must lessen it on the other, that this man may exactly quadrate with the original. A fourth and main property which I am to tell him of is Fixation, or the immortality and indefectibility of the tincture, life or soul of this metallic body. Besides all which I may in the fifth place discourse to him of the extreme ductability or rarefaction of it; if it might not be too prodigious for his belief; and sixthly, of its medicinal uses and qualities, which would afford me a great variety of matters to entertain him with.

And thus I shall have in some degree satisfied my Tartarian or my Gothick Philosopher, that the fine Copper of Peru is not metaphorical or symbolical, as his poor country men, who have never seen it, would persuade him: but that it is as truly, really and substantially of a metallic nature and consistence, as that which he daily handles for such. And he now begins to understand how this fine copper, which I otherwise call Gold, is compounded of the same (yet better graduated) principles, with a more exact proportion than his, and that it is not metaphorically, but really a metallic substance, more ponderous, and brighter than the other, also of a bitter (though not so deep) Tincture, more fixed and ductile, and lastly more proper for human bodies, to be used internally or externally, when prepared according to Art.

So I take my leave of my Philosopher, and go next to my merchant. Here I shall not have so much to do, as with the former. I need only to mind him in brief of the several properties about which I discoursed my philosopher, and then declare unto him the great and excellent use thereof in commerce, so as more than four hundred times to answer the other in common valuation, and often more than five hundred.

Philadelphus: Tis enough, I find you like well the subject that you are upon, but hope it will serve to lead you into one that is far better. Of all that you have now said, nothing will be found to be in vain, when I shall come to examine you. The tables may come perhaps to

be turned upon yourself. Wherefore let me persuade you to try thoroughly, whether that be indeed gold, which you believe to be so. But since you have been pleased to satisfy me as to what I demanded, I am now most ready to satisfy you, as to what was propounded; only I must first premise two or three things that I may be understood by you. Wherefore be now attentive and consider well what I am about to say.

Philochrysus. I will be sure Sir, to attend your motion, for I begin to be very jealous, that you have been carrying on all this while some plot to undermine me. But pray let us hear your premises, and I promise to make the best use of all the ears and eyes which I have.

Philadelphus: The first thing that I wish then to premise is this, *That the Divine Blessing was originally spoken forth upon the whole Creation of God.* Or as some would rather choose to express it - It was outspoken into the Creation, that is, by a real, vital and essential infusion engrafted into it. So that whatever come out of the hands of God was good. No evil should ever be derived from the Divine Being, who notwithstanding the supreme liberty of Will, is necessitated when He acts, to act according to Goodness. No sin nor death, no barrenness or drought, no weakness or disproportion could at all proceed from him. Wherefore he rejoicing, as it were, in the works of his hands, pronounced them both severally and universally to be good, yea very good, as considered in their whole system, and harmonious union with each other.

Philochrysus: I must grant that you say. But I would fain see to what purpose It will serve you.

Philadelphus: You may yet, before we part.

Philochrysus: I cannot deny but that God blessed the whole Creation and that all the works of his hands are good. Make your best of it.

Philadelphus: The second thing that I have to premise is but as a corollary from the former, and is strengthened by universal experience. It is this, *The Works of the Creation are not Now in the same State, as they were when they first came out of the hands of God,* or as when the Divine Blessing was pronounced upon them, or outspoken onto them, yet with this limitation, *so far as they are within our Sphere or Orb.* For experience doth at this day too sufficiently attest that the creatures, whether they be of the animal, vegetable or mineral kingdom, cannot be all said to be good, howsoever they be considered, either separately by themselves, or conjunctly in harmony with the rest. And whatever may be pleaded on their behalf by some acute philosophers and divines, that all the creatures are, even at this day, good; though not positively, yet relatively, and with respect both to their present constitution and the constitution of the world in general, it is evident, to me at least, if

either the undoubted records of scripture, or the natural light of reason may judge of the appeal, that all that they can say will, if it prove any thing, certainly conduce to the very overturning of the positive goodness of the Divine Being, and the introducing in the room thereof a certain relative, hypothetical and imaginary goodness, and to the building up a very odd and irregular system of the Universe.

This if it were necessary, I might at large deduce through several particulars, proving the absurdity and inconsistency of such a supposition, that has been taken up of late by some men of name, and by them too much authorised to the dishonour of God, though they might not perhaps design it so, as I am apt both to hope and believe. But this would lead me out very far and keep me too long from the resolution of the question in hand. However, Philochrysus, if at any other time you think it worth your while to demand a particular satisfaction as to this point, I shall be most willing to give it to you.

Philochrysus: I thank you, Philadelphus. At present I am well enough satisfied in this matter; yea so much as I have often with my self admired, even when bit by a flea, how any could be serious in pleading for the perfection of the present constitution of the World of Nature, as if it never had been better, or was never to be better; but after it shall have lasted out such a term, that it must return back again into its primitive state of nothingness; by the most dreadful dissolution through Fire. This their catastrophe of Our World, I must confess, did never very well please me; but did always stick.

Philadelphus: Its is then granted by you that the present constitution of this terrestrial world in which we live, is not so perfect and good as it was originally brought forth by God, and that it may, by the gift of god, recover again its original constitution.

Philochrysus: It is granted.

Philadelphus: Well! Answer me now this one question. Which do you now think best deserves to be called by this or that name, that which is most perfect in its kind, and that which comes up most really to the true and original frame of its nature, or that which falls short of it, and is very Imperfect as to its kind?

As for instance, you take two sheep, or two horses, and of these let one be placed at the right hand and the other at the left. Suppose now the the horse at the right hand to have all the most excellent features and proportions of an horse, and that at the left to have none of them at all, but to be very mean and despicable. Suppose also the sheep at the right hand, to be very plump and fat, and to wear a Golden Fleece upon its back, and that at the left to be lean, deformed and leprous. Will you hereupon say that the horse at the left hand is a real horse, but that at the right a metaphorical one? Or that the sheep at the left is a true sheep, but not that at the right? And will you not rather say that these by approaching nearer to the perfection of their nature, and

to the original integrity and beauty in which they were first both brought forth from the Divine exemplar, do less deserve to be called figurative or allegorical than the other.

Philochrysus: So indeed it seems to me, if either of these may be called a figurative sheep, or a figurative horse, it must be the left-handed ones, who come not up to the primitive constitution of their nature, into which the divine blessing was spoken, but have fallen under the curse, and suffered the depravation of their first pure form, according to the supposition that is granted you. And if any one had ever seen such an other but such lean and deformed sheep, or such ill conditioned and disproportioned jakes, verily I say should much condemn his rashness, if he should say there were no other, but positively conclude these to be the best of the kind, and that above them are but hypothetical metaphors, or poetical expressions of somewhat transcending nature. Yea I should be a little angry if he should be so obstinate as to stand out against the authentic relations of ocular witness, or go to oblige me to deny my own senses, because his have not had the same experience which mine also had.

Philadelphus: Suppose also that you have two bushels of wheat, the one whereof is half full of chaff, the other perfectly cleansed, the one blighted, the other large grained and sound. Would you say that the blighted and chaffy corn is only real and substantial, but the sound and the cleansed to be no more than a metaphor or a shadow. I believe not.

Suppose once more that you have two pips of Spanish wine, the one natural and unsophisticated, clean and sprightly, the other pipe sophisticated and filled up half with water: and that you have tasted only of the latter. Would you say that this only is true wine, and not the other?

Philochrysus: No, Philadelphus, I think I should not so far expose my own judgment. And though I should not have tasted of the finest wine, yet would I not say there is no better than that I have tasted; and assert that what I am told of the other is only fancy or figure.

Philadelphus: Now my dear Philochrysus, Hold to your words. For I see two pieces of gold, the one as at your right hand, the other is at your left, the one celestial gold, the other terrestrial gold, like as there are bodies celestial and bodied terrestrial. The gold of your left hand you see and handle, and say therefore that it is substantial. The gold of the right hand you see not neither can you handle, and conclude therefore that it is shadowy. The reason whereof is this. The former has a peculiar virtue in it to blind that eye by which the former Gold may be discerned, and to induce such a paralytic numbness and deadness on all one part of the man that has a lust after it, that he cannot possibly feel or handle the other till his disease be first removed from him. But as for me, that Gold which you call substantial, I should of the two rather choose to call shadowy Gold,

and that which you think to be shadowy and figurative, I must call substantial and real, on far greater reasons than you have produced to move me to the contrary.

Philochrysus: I cannot but believe my senses. You shall not easily persuade me out of them. For if they deceive me, I can be certain of nothing.

Philadelphus: Be not afraid: you may keep your senses still for me. Since the senses deceive none; but it is the judgment which is made upon them that may be erroneous. Take care therefore that you judge not amiss, and think that to be in the object itself which is nothing but an impression produced by it upon the sensory. But tell me, do you ever dream?

Philochrysus: Yes I do.

Philadelphus: You may then remember how you thought that you have seen, felt and handled various objects which have vanished away as soon as you awakened.

Philochrysus: I do. And particularly I call to mind, how I have sometime thought myself to be rolling among bags of gold. So that it has been no small trouble to me to find myself undeceived in the morning.

Philadelphus: Forget not this. The application will not be difficult, and very nearly concerns you, my friend. Philochrysus, you are in a dream at this very instant, and you will certainly find yourself undeceived in the morning, when your senses that are now locked up in sleep shall recover themselves.

Philochrysus: In a dream say you? Nay, then the whole world is a dream. All that I do is dream and fancy, and whatever I behold or handle is but a shadow. Will you make all the world beside yourself to be in a dream? Will you make all the hurly-burlies in it, all the traffickings, negotiations, and wars, with all manner of transactions, private and public, civil and religious, to be nothing more but the sportive imaginations of the night? Will you make nothing to be real or substantial of what is seen, felt, heard or understood by us poor mortals? Sure, Philadelphus, you are no sceptic.

Philadelphus: No, I am an eclectic. But yet I have found the good of scepticism, as to many things that you believe. And if it go not too far, it is the foundation of all solid knowledge, natural, political or divine. Wherefore, however strange it may appear to you, it is not very far from the truth, to say that this world, with all that is in it, is but a dream or a shadow when compared with the invisible worlds. I am afraid to press you too much with these matters, and therefore I only said *it is not very far from the truth to say so*, but the indubitable records wherein manifestly the finger of God, would bear me out, if I should say that it is the very truth itself. Search into these and you will find enough to open your eyes and let you see that

the form of this World passeth away, and that all that belongs to it is no more than as a vision of the might, which flies away with the day break. My thoughts have been formerly the same with yours: the poisoned cup from the hand of the Fair Harlot, whom I have mentioned to you, cast me into a deep sleep. And in it I remember, I had just the same dreams which you have now. I thought terrestrial gold was as substantial as you imagine it to be, and of the celestial gold I had no manner of apprehension; but was contented to look on it as a figure and not as a substance. But I was roused out of my sleep by a swift messenger out of the Heavenly Philadelphia, upon which all the enchanted scenes of the night immediately fled away, and I awakened recovering the senses which had been before chained up, and then I quickly perceived my errors. Ah! Philochrysus! Awake! Awake! There stands now at your right hand one of the citizens of that beautiful city, who holds before him a medal made of the same gold, which he would present to you, if you would but suffer your eyes to be opened, and would not hold so fast the shadow.

Philochrysus: What mean you to do with me? Oh! A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more of this worlds, and then I awake. Disturb me not.

Philadelphus: He talks in his sleep. Ho! Ho! Philochrysus. You will not yet be awakened I find. I will therefore for a little time grant you your hearts desire, and this once, suppose that you are not asleep while you sleep, but that your dream is a reality, and all the conclusions that you have made from the exercise of your outward senses to be true. For by parity of reason (even granting what you say) as you do conclude the terrestrial gold to be true, real and substantial, I do conclude the celestial to be so, and much more so. If you plead sensation for yours, I know those that plead it for ours, and that deserve as much (at least) to be believed as any that you bring. But lest you might not so readily believe or apprehend perhaps the witnesses that I could produce, I will proceed with you as you would do with your Goth or Tartar, that had never heard of the gold mines of Peru. Wherefore I must needs tell you that if the Peruvian gold be true gold, then the Philadelphian gold deserves also of right so to be called, yea is much better qualified of the two to bear this name, as it is more perfect in its kind, and as it more nearly approaches then the former to the true and original frame of pure and undefiled nature, exactly compounded according to the divine exemplar, and duly concocted in the bowels of the everlasting mountains, the mountains of the Sun and the Mountains of the Moon. Whence, supposing the difference of Philadelphia and Peruvian Gold to be, as the difference of Peruvian and Gothic Copper; this will not hinder but that the Philadelphia Gold, both according to the greater purity of its constituent principles (as without the least alloy of the curse) and the most exact proportion of then, may well deserve to be looked on no

less real than the Peruvian.

Philochrysus: If it be so, pray dear Philadelphus, give me some of it, that I may make a proof.

Philadelphus: You are not yet out of your dream, you know not what you say. For you neither understand what manner of Gold this is, neither who it is that can give it. It may be called to you by a thousand names, but I do assure you that it is true and proved gold. And let me tell you that your gold, or the false brass of Peru, is not constituted of Principles altogether pure and defected, but mixed with some close and inherent imperfections. Neither are the proportions adjusted according to perfect Nature, but only according to the perfect constitution of this terrestrial orb. The curse that has entered into the whole lower Creation has also entered into this, and it is not a perfect metal, except with respect to the lapsed and broken frame of this our Earth.

Philochrysus: Hah! Philadelphus! I am wondering where you will run at last. I am not so much in a dream, but I can laugh at these amusements of yours. Did ever any before deny Gold to be a perfect metal?

Philadelphus: Mistake me not. I do not deny it to be a perfect metal with respect to the present order of things in their Fallen State. But I do positively aver that it is not a perfect metal with respect to that primitive and original order of Beings which proceeded immediately from God through His Word, wherein and whereby they subsist; but that it partakes of the curse, as well as all the other subjects of the mineral or metallic kingdom, though not in the same degree. Now there is an Inherent curse, and there is also an Adherent Curse, and of both of these it more or less participates.

Philochrysus: Pray what do you mean by an Inherent Curse, and how do you appropriate it to the Terrestrial Gold.

Philadelphus: Know what is the Blessing and you cannot fail to know what is the Curse in Nature. There is an Inherent Blessing in every creature, and there is also an Adherent Blessing. Without the former God could never have pronounced them good, and without the latter they could never have been serviceable to man, or to the rest of their fellow creatures. A privation, or loss, in either of these kinds, is called the Curse. And as it has diverse degrees and is variously specified, so takes it up diverse names, as Death, Darkness, Hades, Sheol, the Turba, the Left Hand, the Seed of the Serpent, the Mist out of the Earth, Lilith, Arimanius, Poison, the Blood of the Old Dragon, the Prisons, the North, and many others.

The benediction now of both kinds may be lessened, hidden or removed either in part or in whole. The Adherent Benediction may possibly admit of a total remove and separation, but the inherent can never do this without the destruction and annihilation of the subject

wherein it is. Whence though it may be hid, yet can it never be separated without the entire disunion of its constituent and vital principles. Which are not perishable, but endure the same, notwithstanding all the cortices, veils, and coverings, wherewith they may be overcast or oppressed, and which are said to be under the presidentship of so many evil Angels.

Behold then here is Wisdom to take away the Inherent Curse from the creature, and to cause the disappeared Blessing to reappear, and exert forth itself. Now shall you understand how this curse is to be appropriated to the terrestrial Gold, and how the contrary Blessing is to be predicated of the celestial. But in the first place you are to take notice, that as the inherent is here less than in any other subjects of the the same Kingdom and Order, so the Adherent Curse is greater. In the second place you are to observe that the primary and Radical principles being (as to us) invisible in themselves, the secondary and elementary, which may be made visible, can be here only examined into.

In the third place, I am now to acquaint you that these elementary principles, which I call also *Spermatical*, as I call the former *Seminal*, are vastly different in the state of pure and of corrupt Nature.

For in pure nature there is found a bright living crystalline water, full of spirit, power and energy; but in Nature corrupted there is a water that is opposite to this, being without Light, Life, or purity, without spirituality or strength, and void of all benign efficacy. Wherefore as a stagnated pool remote from the sun beams, or as a dead insipid phlegm, is not to be regarded or valued, so likewise there is found a bright, living and crystalline earth (such as hath been, and such as will be, and such as is even at this time, when it appears not, except to some few) which is sometimes compared to fine silver, and is called the Salt of the Earth. And in this Blessed earth is locked up the Spirit, Energy and Seed of the Mineral and vegetable kingdoms in their purest constitution, yea and of the animal too. For that it contains in itself the Fire of Nature, by which the wheel of her Magia, according to all the seven forms and spirits is set to work.

On the contrary there is a dull, dead and opaceous earth that is mixed more or less with all terrestrial subjects, and that may by Art be separated from them. This is the *Curse of the Earth* which must be taken away and dissolved, before the Blessed and new Earth can appear, wherefore it is called the Damned Earth.

Philochrysus: I hope you will not say that there is any of what the Chymists call Damned Earth in this our Gold. For I cannot bear the thought of it. Pray therefore explain yourself here a little.

Philadelphus: It is you yourself that make the particular application, for I did not. And indeed, Sir, I was almost afraid to touch you so near the quick. But if your Gold, Philochrysus, be a terrestrial subject (which you will scarce deny) then I am sure it must have

some share of this Damned earth in it. For the Curse has not a command to stop when it came to a mine of Gold, but like a leaven it passed through and through, and infected the whole earth, and all that belonged to it. There might not indeed so much of it here abide as elsewhere, and therefore I said there was less of the Inherent Curse in this, than in any other subject of the same kingdom or order. Yet there is some, and that too very considerable, if either reason or experience may be allowed to pass the judgment. But this would lead us too far into a Philosophical disquisition.

Let it suffice at present to consider whether what a vulgar and ordinary artist may be able to give an ocular demonstration of in the greatest part of earthly subjects, an expert master may not be as able to give the same in All?

Wherefore be not angry, dear sir, at what I have asserted, but learn to bear the thought of what will be so much your disappointment, as to let you see the fair idol of your heart is not so lovely as you have imagined it to be, and that it is not all true gold that glisters in your hand.

There is a Damned Earth *Terra Damnata et Maledicta* that cleaves so fast to it, as is not (easily) to be separated by the refiners art. And I am informed from credible testimonies, that whosoever shall be understanding in heart and skillful in hand, to separate this vile earth from the precious Solar Earth in the body of Terrestrial Gold, shall find the quantity of the former (however small when compared to the inferior metals) to exceed the other. And if what is related concerning the degradation of Gold by an eminent and curious eye-witness of this nation, whom all the philosophical and Christian world stands obliged to (and who had this generous and noble design to vindicate Religion from all sectarian polity or partiality, and to establish it upon solid and immutable grounds, be true; and if also the daily experiments) made even in ordinary laboratories of the possibility of its supergradation and Exaltation, by losing in its weight, and so possessing an higher Tincture and Clarity, may deserve any credit: Then is it certain that it may still arrive to an higher degree both of Fixation and Purity, than it could ever meet with in the Bowels of the Accursed earth.

But whether this can ever be quite set free from its Inherent Curse or no, is not so material to our present purpose. However there is a vein, I can assure you, of Paradisical Gold, which not having been with it infected, is by Moses pronounced to be good, (Genesis 2, 12). And yet even this is no more to be compared with the Philadelphian or Sionitical Gold, than the Peruvian is with it. Hereby you may, in part I hope apprehend what is meant both by the Blessing and the Curse, which are inherent in this Metallic body.

Philochrysus: I do, I think, pretty well understand you. But pray what do you mean by an Adherent Curse, and how is that to be

appropriated to the Terrestrial Gold?

Philadelphus: The Adherent Curse is that which adheres or cleaves to the Creature, by external application, and not by Internal Constitution, or composition. And here by external application I mean not barely any outward abuse of the same whatever, but also (and chiefly) any degree of adhesion of the Human Soul to it, how intrinsic soever, and the more intrinsic still the more dangerous, it being foreign, incongruous, and extrinsic both to the Soul, and to the creature which she seeks to cleave as to her blessing. Now though your terrestrial Gold has indeed not so much of the inherent, yet has it far more of the Adherent Curse, which is much the worst of the two. And though it should be never so perfect as to its composition, that avails not if this other Curse sticks to it. Yea, on the contrary, this will be so much the greater and the heavier, as in the case of the Tartarization [2 Peter, 2, 4.] of those angels who kept not their first estate of adhesion to the Original Beauty and Goodness, and in that of the Golden Calf of Israel, concerning which the Jews have to this very day a celebrated proverb, that no punishment is ever inflicted upon them in which there is not some portion of this calf. And I fear the same may be justly applicable not to them alone. What Evil of Sin is there in the whole world that is not perpetrated for the sake of it? And what Evil of pain, or dreadful judgments by the Divine nemesis have not already been pulled down upon particular persons, upon families and upon whole kingdoms? Behold, and consider the times of old; what examples all histories both sacred and profane doth give you. To conclude, how many are there that for the sake of this, labour the greatest part of their lives in the very fire, who at length reap nought but smoke and dross, in the room of those Golden Mountains which they hereby imagined to themselves? And how many weary themselves all their lives for very vanity, while being deceived with the false show of an adhering blessing, they find only misery and repentance; who, had they taken but half that pains to discover the Paradisical or Philadelphian mine of Gold, would never have been left in such plunges at the last? Behold all this proceeds from its Adherent Curse. Remember, prithee Philochrysus, the dying aphorism of the richest Subject of the world at that time, as well as the best politician, and the most faithful servant; which famous aphorism is, I suppose, not unknown to you.

Philochrysus: You mean, I know the saying of that great man, which he left in his legacy to posterity: *Had I but taken but half that pains to serve my God, as I took to serve my Prince, he would not now have deserted me.*

Philadelphus: I do so. And withal I assure you, my good friend, that if you were but half as diligent in seeking after the celestial, as you are in seeking after the terrestrial Gold, you would be experimentally convinced that I have spoken nothing to you all this while but the

very Truth, and you would find yourself possessed of *substance* instead of vanity.

Philochrysus: I am at a loss. I know not what to make of that which you say. Disturb me not out of my sleep. For I would rather dream on at the old rate, than be molested. Have pity on me, and depart from me. For I am Philochrysus. I am a lover of that what you have contemptibly nick-named *terrestrial Gold*. The which to me is a *Celestial substance*. But you will hardly allow it to be a substance at all, that so you may the more exalt the Gold (as you call it) of your own country, which I must call imaginary. Tell me not then that mine is vanity, or the shadow only of a substance. Neither speak to me of labouring for smoke and dross. I know what is substance, I thank my stars, and I can distinguish between what is true and what is counterfeit. Mine hath been tried in the Fire, and weighed in the balance. It hath stood in the one, and in the other hath been found to have its just weight. Can you also pretend to this?

Philadelphus: Yes, more than pretend. Mine is indeed *Gold tried in the Fire*, and it has been also weighed in the balance as well as yours. And let me tell you besides, that your gold shall never be able to endure this fire-trial, but shall fly away in it as lead and dross. And one grain of the Gold of my City if put into the balance will preponderate this whole room full of yours. Whence the Crown that is mad out of this Gold is called emphatically a *weight of Glory* and an *Hyperbolical or excessive weight*, yea a far exceeding and Hyperbolically Hyperbolical weight [2 Corinthians 4,17.] So far exceeds the celestial Gold in preponderosity the terrestrial Gold when weighed together, as no hyperbole can reach. It exceeds in like manner in clarity and lustre, in fixation and permanency, in the superexcellency of its Tincture, in ductibility and divisibility, and in all manner of medicinal uses both for Spirit, Soul and Body, all which it revives, exhilarates and perfects. And in the last place all the merchandise of your World is not to be compared with it. This alone can truly and really and lastingly make you rich. It would not be difficult to particularize each of these, and to show hereby the reality and substantiality of this Gold that I plead for, not only equally with, but far above that which is dug out of the Earth. But all that can be said hereupon, would but serve so much the more to exasperate you if you comprehend it not, or will not attend to it. In vain therefore would it be for me to give you (at present) a particular description of its several properties, as also of its constituent principles and the manner of their union. I must wait to do that till those senses which are fallen asleep in you shall come to be awakened. But I am therefore sent that I might rouse you out of your sleep. Forgive me that I thus wake you. O Philochrysus! what has become of the eye-salve of Sophia? Arise and anoint your eyes.

Philochrysus: Hold! I think I now begin to see. I must confess that

I can now see the possibility of what you drive at, but that it is actually so, I cannot yet perceive. I remember I was once a little acquainted with one that might possibly be of your society, and I did hear him exclaim from the pulpit in this manner: "Think ye, ye shall be set up as pillars in the Temple of God to uphold it? or that you shall be full of gold in you pockets, of the finest gold tried in the Fire, like the rich men of the Earth? and to ruffle it in silks, and fine raiment as those in princes' courts? Do you think that these things are here meant in these promises made to the Seven Churches? No, No, dream of no such things, for I say there is not one word true according to the letter.

Philadelphus: I do say that every word, every syllable, every letter is true, and that there are real and substantial pillars in the Temple of God, real and substantial Gold in the City of God, and real and substantial raiment worn by the citizens thereof. And yet at the same time, I do assert that there is no Word, syllable or letter true, if strictly taken according to that low idea which the natural man has fixed to these words. For as much as there is a more than hyperbolical excess in the difference of one from the other. As each property by itself considered will manifest. And if you are convinced of the possibility (at least) of what I have said, you must acknowledge the actual existence hereof. For that there can be no other reason invented whereby you deny it, but its impossibility and inconsistency.

Philochrysus: I resign therefore, and yield to you, that the City of Philadelphia may be built of true, real and substantial Gold, which has nothing of the curse either Inherent or Adherent sticking to it, according to the sense that the describer means, or that you explain, though not according to that which the natural man would have.

Philadelphus: You comprehend me right. I shall therefore proceed. I said then, in the second place, that it is built of fine Gold, much more fine and higher graduated than any you can ever have seen. This you may in part already understand by what has been said hitherto. But here I shall much more stand in need of words whereby to express myself.

Philochrysus: I long greatly to hear you speak distinctly of this Superfine and supergraduated Gold. I shall not forget what you have said. Therefore proceed on.

Philadelphus: You need but remember your Gothic philosopher. Consider also that there is a twofold body, There is a material and elementary body, and there is an spiritual and a heavenly body. The one is gross, the other fine.

Philochrysus: I can understand perfectly what you mean by the former, but the notion of an immaterial body seems to me the very same contradiction as that of an immaterial substance seemed to an

eminent asserter of materialism called Philautus. If you had but him to deal with, he would make work, I believe, with your non-elementary and spiritual body.

Philadelphus: It may be so. But I never feared the strength of reasoning in Philautus, though I know him pretty well, and all his principles whether in Philosophy, Divinity or politics are opposite to mine. He is the express character of the natural man throughout, and in his works everywhere you have the most lively image of the Fallen State of Nature, whereof great advantage may be made by the wise, it being no where that I know so deeply and philosophically handled. This indeed he mistakes for the true and original State of Nature; but herein he speaks well enough, and true enough, as a natural or animal Man, and without deviating, most exactly follows his principles wherever they lead him. On the other side the most learned and profound of all his answerers very admirably both describes and demonstrates the true and original state of Nature, such as it was, and such as it shall be again, but not such as it is at present. As for Philautus he is not dead, but lives in his disciples, and will live as long as the present corrupt state of Nature shall remain upon the Earth. For the Psyche in man is never able to penetrate beyond the image; only the pure spirit of Sophia can reach to the life, which is so imaged out in discourse. Hence he who had only the Psyche, was not able to distinguish betwixt the one and the other, but he took them both to be the same. So finding in the origination of several languages that a Spirit was imaged forth or signified by *Breath*, he presently concludes that the Spirit and Breath were one and the same, and consequently that all Spirits (as such) were material and corporeal beings. he in the like manner, finding in the verbal image of substance was expressed that which *stands under*, or props up somewhat, entertained immediately a most gross and sensible conception hereof, and tied it down to matter. So then nothing could be a greater absurdity to him, or a more manifest contradiction, than to believe an immaterial substance, that is an immaterial matter. Now among those who have a great and just abhorrence for his sentiments, all are not set free themselves from the very same method of argumentation, as from a numerous induction of instances might be verified if need were.

Wherefore I shall only beg of you what is highly necessary in order to your understanding of what I speak, and to your passing a judgment thereupon, that you content not yourself with the lax and popular sense of a word, as that which is generally very equivocal, but that you seek out the strict and close idea that is to be affixed to it, for the removal of all ambiguity in the terms, and the distinction of the image from its original, or (as the Schools would rather speak) of the *Signum from Signatum*, the sign from the thing signified.

Philochrysus: It is very just what you require, Philadelphus. None can gainsay this method, after what the celebrated author of *An*

Essay on Human Understanding, together with a French philosopher of the first magnitude, have written on it, shall be looked into. Wherefore tell me in the first place, what you mean by *Substance*?

Philadelphus: Hereby I understand *that which hath both Essence and Existence, being created by God, and made capable of bearing up, or supporting various modes of Being.*

Philochrysus: What do you mean by *Body*?

Philadelphus: Hereby I understand *a substance that is extended, and is capable of various modes of Extension.* Two of which modes are penetrability and impenetrability.

Philochrysus: Is penetrability then a mode of extension? I always thought that all matter was impenetrable.

Philadelphus: True. All *Matter* is impenetrable, but all *body* is not. And penetrability is as much a mode of extension as impenetrability. For where there is no co-extension there is no penetration, and where there is no penetration there can be no life. Without therefore all Nature were dead, it remains that extended substances may be penetrated. Now there are extended substances, or rather one extended substance (of which I may speak to you hereafter) which can penetrate others, but which cannot be penetrated by any. There are also extended substances which can penetrate others by co-extension, and which may themselves also be penetrated by others. lastly there are extended substances or bodies which cannot penetrate others, but which may be penetrated by them. Thus by the outward light of this world, which is a body of the second order, the Earth may be penetrated, which can neither penetrate it or any other substance.

Philochrysus: What do you mean by *Matter*?

Philadelphus: Hereby I understand *a body that is impenetrable, and divisible, and which is capable of various modes of division.* So that all *Matter* is *Body*, but all *Body* is not *Matter*. By impenetrable I mean not that which cannot be at all penetrated, but I mean that which is not to be penetrated by any thing of its own order, and which itself can penetrate nothing.

Philochrysus: How can the same *Body* be impenetrable and divisible?

Philadelphus: Because it is impenetrable, therefore it is divisible into parts. For if it could be penetrated, then would there be no need of division, or separation of the parts? Wherefore that which is penetrable is also indivisible, or rather indiscerpible, and consequently incorruptible.

Philochrysus: I comprehend your meaning. And now I conceive what is your notion of an immaterial or Spiritual *Body* called likewise a *Non-elementary* (which is a *Quintessential*) or heavenly *Body*; Namely, that it is *an extended substance, penetrable, penetrative, indivisible, indiscerpible, and incorruptible.* As on the contrary your

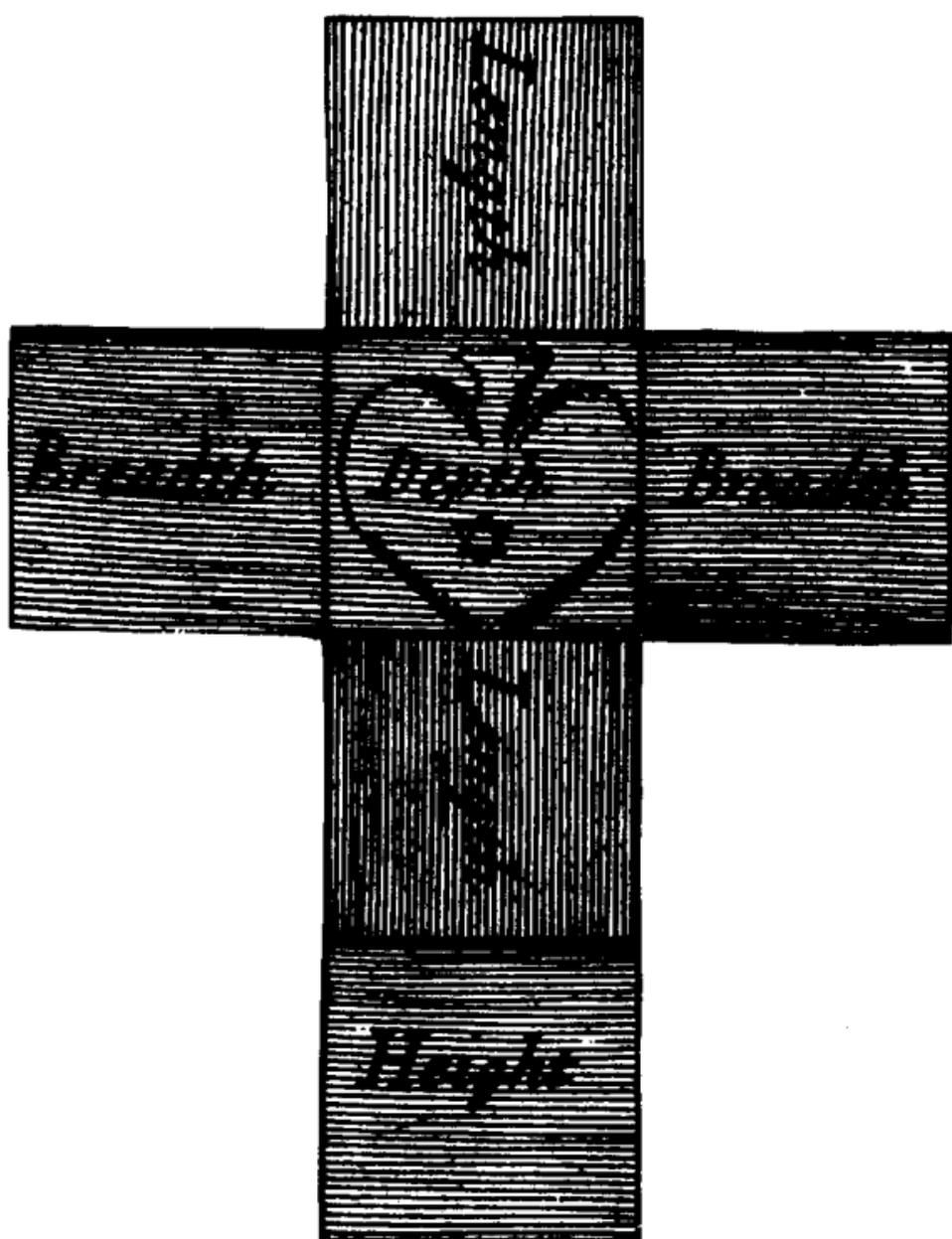
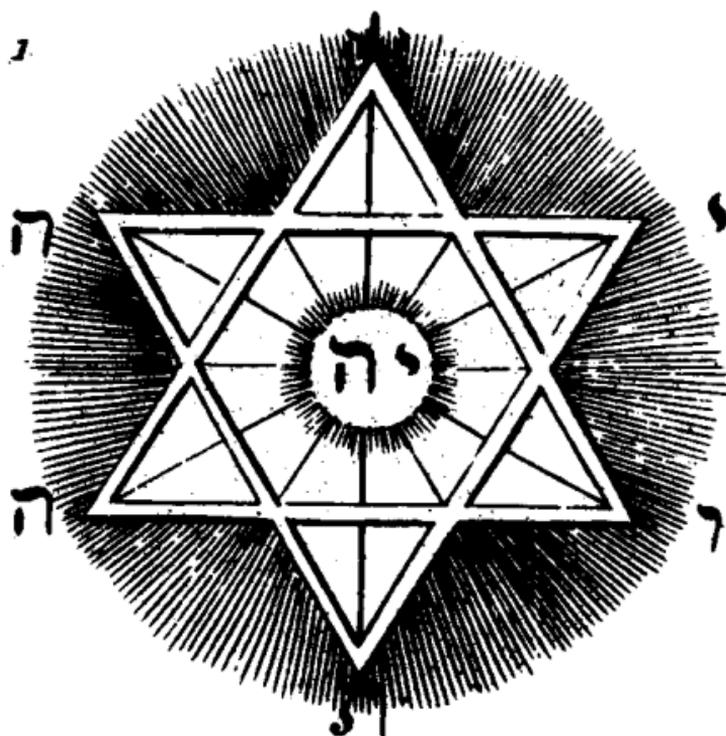
notion of a material and elementary body must be this, that it is *an extended substance, impenetrable, penetrated, divisible, discernible and corruptible*. I begin consequently to understand a little your notion of Material and Spiritual, of Elementary and Heavenly Gold, and why you call the one gross and the other fine Gold. But notwithstanding that I conceive how the Material and Elementary Gold is an extended Substance which is impenetrable to all terrestrial bodies, and may be penetrated by the Celestial, which is also divisible into parts, yea Discernible into the minutest atoms, yet can I not easily yield that it should be corruptible.

Philadelphus: All that is compounded of Elements must be more or less corruptible. And though certain elementary bodies may have arrived at some degree of incorruptibility, yet it is but a degree, it being impossible for them to be ever perfectly freed from corruption, but by a dissolution and a resuscitation. For this is a most assured maxim, *that all things must be perfected upon the cross and all things must be tried by Fire* Without passing through the Cross there is no resurrection, without passing through the Fire there is no Fixation or Incorruption, no Purification or Spiritualization. Hence the messenger of the Covenant of Immortality is by a certain prophet compared to a *refiners Fire*, who saith of him that he *shall purify the Priesthood and purge them as Gold* that they may rightly offer the sacrifice of Minha to Jehovah. Hence also a great and wise King saith, *the word* (or outflowing emanation of the Lord is refined; and again he cries out *Thy Word is exceedingly refined* most fine and pure. And likewise this very Word of the Lord or the Word the Lord saith to the shepherds of Israel: *I will refine them as Silver is refined, and will try them as Gold is tried*. And elsewhere he saith, *I have refined thee melted thee down, and then brought thee out of the furnace*. For this cause the precious Sons of Zion are compared to fine gold, and the Angelical man who appeared to Daniel had his loins *Girded with fine Gold of Ophir*. From this also an account may be given why the Altar of Incense was made of refined Gold, together with the Ark and the Cherubims, also why Wisdom's oracle is so often compared to fine Gold; and lastly why the Shulamite describes both the head and the feet of her beloved to be as of fine Gold, that is such an indivisible, indiscernible and incorruptible substance, as being extended is therefore a body, and as possessing all the properties of the material and gross Gold, is therefore a spiritual body, or immaterial and celestial gold.

Philochrysus: I must confess that I have always taken a *spiritual body* to be a contradiction in terms, for I never heard otherwise before but that Spirit and Body were contraries. But now I begin to mistrust that I have not been used rightly to apply ideas to words.

Stella Magorum

Fig. 1

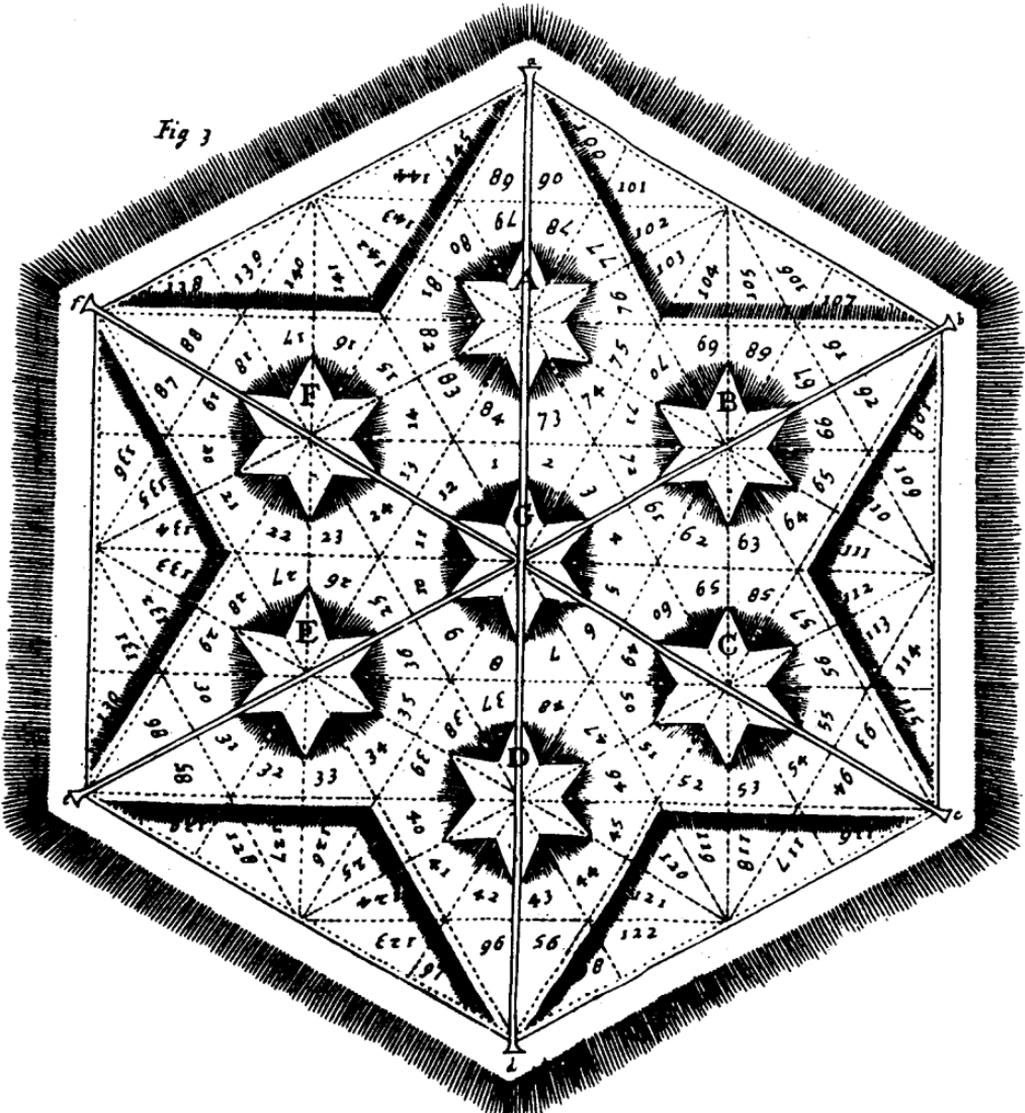


Philadelphus: Your diffidence is well grounded. For I do not find that Spirit and Body are anywhere opposed as contraries in those writings which command the greatest authority and deference above all others to them. I find indeed frequently *spirit* and *flesh* to be set as opposites, but *spirit* and *body* never. Nay I find it there expressly asserted that *there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body*. And so in like manner there is a natural Gold and there is a spiritual, which surpasseth the former, as the spiritual Body of the Resurrection doth this Natural and Elementary body which we now wear about us. Moreover the same highly mystic author tells those who being immersed in the flesh had no notion of a Spiritual or Heavenly Body, any more than you had, Philochrysus: *There are also Celestial Bodies* (of a spiritual and heavenly property) *and Bodies Terrestrial* (of a material and earthly property as common gold *but the Glory of the Celestial is one, and the glory of the Terrestrial is another*; that is, the glory of the Philadelphian Gold differs from the glory of the Peruvian, as far as heaven is from Earth.

Philochrysus: You extremely amaze me, good Philadelphus, to tell me that the City from whence you are named is built of such fine gold. But pray now go on, if you are not weary, to satisfy me in the third place, whether it be built of Transparent and Glassy Gold.

Philadelphus: Be not over hasty, but take time to meditate upon what I (through the assistance of the Good Spirit) have freely communicated to you. Neither have I done yet with the former, for I am not yet come to the top of the ladder with you. Perhaps your head may be giddy in endeavouring to reach it at this present. Wherefore though I cannot be ever weary of discoursing these matters, yet I will now take my leave of you with one parallel instance, which you may digest against we meet the next time. Consider what difference there is betwixt the faeces of any terrestrial subject, from which the spirit is separated, and the Spirit itself of that very subject (which is a Spiritual Body) when seven times rectified; and hereby as in a glass you may discern how far that Gross and Earthly Gold I am speaking of, wherewith the Holy City of my brethren is built. In the meanwhile I shall leave with you this Hieroglyphical figure of a star being the mark of this Gold, and also of the city, showing its constituent parts the Water and Fire of the Philadelphians; its manifold and wonderful properties, how it is formed, and how it is made to multiply itself.

Fig 3



An Explication of the Figures.

Figure 1 Represents *Wisdom's Star*, or the *Star of the Wise Men*. The generation whereof is showed to be from the Sun, which is seen in the midst of it, flowing forth as from the centre of the Divine Name JAH, which expresseth Love and also Wisdom. From this Central Sun flow 12 beams, corresponding with the 12 stones of the New Jerusalem, and with the 12 Patriarchs and Apostles. these are contained as within the Body of the Star itself, which consists of two triangles, the one called the Fiery and Masculine, the other the Watery and feminine Trigon. These triangles intersecting make six angles in the circumference, which may be called by so many planetary names, but here are distinguished by Hebrew letters. These six angles with the Sun at the centre answer to the 7 stars in Christ's right hand. They are comprehended as within the Name of Jehovah, and of Alpha and Omega standing in the main circle. The four letters of the first keep the 4 angles of the base and counterbase, the two letters of the other, the 2 cusps superior and inferior. From the superior cusp of Aleph or Alpha to the inferior cusp of Thau or Omega, is let down a perpendicular line or canal, passing through the centre of new JAH, and so thereby communicating with all the Divine Rays or Emanations, to the utmost circumference of the Creation. The Trigon of Aleph, Vau and He represents also the Urim, and the Trigon of Jod, He and Thau figures out the Thummin.

Figure 2 Represents the Mystery of the Cross, according to the dimensions of a Cube. In the depth whereof is supposed to be the Heart of Christ, and from the Centre thereof the Star, figure 1, is seen to arise.

Figure 3 Represents the New Jerusalem made up of this Cubical Cross in a Twelfefold multiplication, with which the numbers 144 do agree. G, F, E, D, C, B, A, are the 7 stars of Wisdom, conformable to that Star figure 1, which are contained within the Great Star of a b c d e f, which is one with the first, ab, af, dc, de, may be the 4 perpendicular sides of a Cube: bc and fe the 2 horizontal. ad is the grand canal passing from the alpha to the Omega, which is intersected by two other be and fc.

East of Eden
Biblical Knowing and the Inner
Elixir
within a Kabbalistic Speculum
By Gavin S. Bennett

"And Adam Knew Eve"¹

Since the first mystical coupling of the Supernal Masculine and Feminine² as the differentiation of divine Thought and its Reflection coming forth into "garments of skin",³ exiled man and woman seeking return have been cursed with ambivalent attitudes⁴ towards gendered divine and human interrelation.

Matriarchy, raped and overcome by Patriarchy, remains the dark anima within the collective male unconscious, whilst the distorted animus of the divine Feminine battles within itself in souls unknown. "I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed."⁵

Vows of silence become perverse if one's spiritual communication is given no active outlet. Yet restrictive practice is necessary. Is not Geburah's Feminine root the nurturer of Assiah's doing? Yet how can we actively limit our gender without perversion of its possibility?

"So he drove out the man; and he stationed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of the sword turning itself to keep the way of the tree of life."⁶

In the same manner that man has disavowed God in the cut and thrust of his hasty assault on Gaia, "God has repudiated man.

Although this act of repudiation is a punishment, at the same time it provides a way to salvation".⁷ Likewise does that which guards the Tree of Life, protecting it, not just to bar entry but to preserve it for the prepared man's return, also indicate a particular way to salvation. "The double-edged sword represents the insignia of the garden of Eden since the fall of Adam, when good and evil began to merge. These forces were no longer rigorously separated... the fall of man brought confusion into moral ideas and man's earthly abode was placed under the sign of the angel who holds in store either the key to paradise or the sword of hell".⁸ In Yetziratic Yesod the Cherubim, the Strong Foundation of ♂, the genital root, is reflective and illusory, to return it must revert its attention to above, that ♀ becomes ♂ and the whole ascends into the One, uncoiling as Kundalini, rather than putting forth its curling stroke to spit into self satisfaction. Having capitalised the Self through elevating self centredness, persistent effort is needed to acquire some level of holistic constancy within this elevation.

When all is properly equilibrated Tiphareth gives balance to Yesod which in turn stabilises the earth. But until Knowledge, Daath, is acquired the remnants of self within Self battle with the Whole. "Thus Adam alternated between various colours, good and bad, commotion and rest, judgement and mercy, life and death: never constant in one, through the influence of that place, which is therefore called 'the flame of a sword which turns every way', from this side to that, from good to evil, from mercy to judgement, from peace to war."⁹

"It is now clear why the terms of the Hebrew language are also often variable, and can be declined either in the masculine or in the feminine gender."¹⁰ In Hebrew, the letter י on Path 17 (leading the Son back into the Mother when ♀ finds the Supernal receptive half ♂, breasts of its primary gender) as י״ is feminine. Attracted by the Left pull of "that place" ♂ it expresses its othersidedness in masculinity as the sword י״ in its flame aspect. Path 17 in microcosmic man passes over the right shoulder where Geburah as the root of the arm guides the 'weapon' י״ or 'membrum virile' into the way of the 'fornicator, lecher' or 'womaniser'. Rather than 'to be armed', 'to adorn' or 'to ornament' the Mother, he seeks 'to lie' with any woman 'to be lain'.¹¹

However, the flame of the sword is the reflection of Light upon its blade, and if polished clean of the dust of denser moralities, facing east ["it was 'toward the east that man had been placed' originally"¹²] we may begin to discern a middle way between the extreme restriction or the paradoxical 'freedom' of celibacy¹³ and the natural excessive tendency of unrestrained sexual expression when its 'sin' is given the magnitude of the original if its purpose is not

procreative.¹⁴

Adam אדם cannot be complete without Eve (ח) to lead the 'mist' דם back into the Waters ה. The mist is the Fruitfulness ט of Air א.¹⁵ In the esoterics of Taoism the vital essence of Breath may be identified with the Air א. Its coursing through the 'blood' דם is held to be of greatest benefit only if the control of one's breathing is coupled with the control of the Seed's ' going forth. "If ignorance of the sexual art causes frequent losses of sperm to occur, it will be difficult to have sufficient energy to circulate the breaths."¹⁶

"My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed..."¹⁷

The intimate relationship between Air's א Essence and the Seed ' of Union is hinted at numerically in the idea of the א=1 as Unity and ' =10 as Unity going forth in multiplicity ("be fruitful and multiply"¹⁸) or in the 10's seeking to return the one to the Crown and the Nought to the Unknowable Source. The א and ' apart from initialling the Atziluthic God Names of the Sephiroth א and א¹⁹ and therefore expressing states of ultimate Being are extendably synonymous with what Fludd termed the Lesser and Greater Alephs.

"God (alpha), or the Lesser Aleph of the uncreated darkness, or potency, reveals itself for the world's creation by changing to light, or act. God (omega), or the Greater Aleph emerging from dark earth or the created darkness reveals itself to men for the world's salvation."²⁰

To gain control over the Breath and its Seed is to gain control over Creation itself. "What the inner elixir tries to achieve is as nearly as possible a perfect co-ordination of one's body and soul".²¹ "Out of Zion, the perfection of Beauty"²² "the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge".²³ "The inner elixir (of the roots and the fountain) is mainly to do with the mind... We achieve ejaculation control mainly through the mind, and we learn how to breathe correctly... mainly through the mind. But of course not only the mind."²⁴

Let us turn our mind again to Adam. אדם clearly states that the Fruit of the Air is in the Feminine Waters. These lead us into the Hodic sphere of mental control. But how does Adam the Primordial Man become אדם the 'man' of Unified Fire below? The Air, א, and the Seed ' are the vital links. Their use or abuse ultimately produces Guilt ח, the spent Fire or burn out of mental dissipation, or the elevation of the Name אש (Fire and Water, Yang and Yin in total harmony) as man's אדם completion combines with that of Adam אדם. By a process of directional return, אדם becomes Feminine in relation to אדם, the Name ascends and the "Seed (א) shall possess the gate (ח) of

his enemies"²⁵ the enclosure of Eve, and the Serpent coupling in Love, awash in the Feminine Waters (מים) uniting by elemental rarification the נ of man's breath and the Source of it's First Differentiation of Exhalation and Inhalation נ. The Greater and the Lesser are One.

How does Eve חוה, put forth the Vision, the Reception of Fire, the 'woman' אשה to which man relates, and how does the 'man' איש seeking to become absorbed into Adam's ultimate Beginning relate to this? Again through Breath and Seed. By conjugal coupling below the enclosure ח of Eve is opened and as man איש and woman אשה unite Divine and human 'Fire' אש intermingle as Breath burns into breath and ח is reborn above and below, and ו and ח extend the Intimacy. If the ו of the membrum can but return the Seed ו that seeps from its end whereupon it becomes the ו then the possibilities become endless. But where does the Seed go? It must be held back and its power directed not outwards ו but retained inwards ׀ as the 'hook' hangs onto rather than the 'peg' drives into extension.

Celibacy advocates sublimation of energies that the Infinite may be slowly attained. Indulgence jerks heated time into explosive motion. Taoist and Tantric practice intends to mimic Infinity in the possibility of endless excitation, "to reverse the act of Genesis and stare straight into the continuing act of creation".²⁶

The radical Tao states that "the more one makes love, the more one benefits from the harmony of Yin and Yang: and the less one ejaculates, the less one loses the benefits of this harmony".²⁷ "A man should discover and master his own ideal ejaculatory frequency. And this should not be more than two or three times in ten coitions."²⁸

On the Tree the ② or ③ out of the 10 is indicative of a truly transcendental relationship. Even if we can never gain sufficient knowledge of control to Understand its Wisdom (sadly the flux of the manifested universe is imperfection) then at the very least learning that honour and respect must be accorded the Feminine above and below is no mean feat. For the days of Her desire being for her husband that he shall rule over her²⁹ are short lived and his filling and subduing of the earth³⁰ must cease in its rapacious savagery.

"If you say, Behold we did not know this, does not He who weighs hearts comprehend? and does He who guards your soul not know? And will He not repay every man according to his action?"³¹ If not He then surely She!

Notes

- 1 *Genesis* 4: 1, King James Version trans.
- 2 In the constant congress of Chokmah and Binah ' unites with ך to produce, on Path 18 (ח) ך, the enclosure or womb of the 'Living' Eve ךח. The Son ך Sefirah ם, or the 6 Sephiroth preceding ם, the Daughter ך and She herself result from this going forth. The Son and the Daughter as ך 6 and ך 5, if reunited in the returning soul give of ם, Daath or Knowledge, whereby Eve's Speech (ך in the *Sepher Yetzirah*) becomes heard (ך is 'Hearing' in the *Sepher Yetzirah*) in Vision (ך is 'Sight' in the *Sepher Yetzirah*). [Using Knut Stenring's 1923 translation, Ktav, 1970 rpt.]
- 3 *Genesis* 3:21. "...knowing ם 'good' ם and 'evil' ם" (v.22). Jewish Publication Society trans. *Tanakh - The Holy Scriptures*, Philadelphia, 1988.
- 4 "Go thee one way or other, either on the right hand or on the left, whithersoever thy face is set." (*Ezekiel* 21: 16, K.J.V.).
- 5 *Genesis* 3:15. Revised Standard Version trans. This address was given by אלהים ךח in Binah to the Serpent ם on Path 19 between Right and Left, ם and ם. The mediating Serpent "was more subtil than any beast" (*Genesis* 3:1, K.J.V.) being more infinite in this when its tail and mouth meet beyond its pointed ambivalence. It can be personified as Eve herself [see Chapter 12 of my *Paths of the Stars - Kabbalistic Astrology* (in progress)] or as the exiled coiled female Kundalini becoming male as phallus like it rises penetrating each Chakra. "It (her seed) shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (*Genesis* 3:15, K.J.V.). The heel, the anal root or base chakra, Malkuth, puts the externally erected phallus forward up to Yesod, the Foundation of Central ascent, as if it were the sensing feminine tail of the Serpent. As such, in true Yin/Yang harmonics, if the tail is to return to the mouth of emotionally balanced consciousness in man, to the receptive ם on Path 27, the Seed ' within open Life (*Sepher Yetzirah*) ם must limit its external emissions. How much more so if it aspires towards the Infinite. Eve's Speech and the mouth as male Dominion (ם, *Sepher Yetzirah*) are not compatible. The latter must learn that the Groom's Reception is what raises the Bride's spirits.
- 6 *Genesis* 3:24, trans. Rabbi A.M. Silberman, Rev. M. Rosenbaum, *Chumash with Targum Onkelos, Hapthoroth and Rashi's Commentary*. (Vol. 1, *Berashith*), Silbermann Family/Feldheim, Jerusalem, 1984.
- 7 Rabbi Elie Munk, *The Call of the Torah - An Anthology of Interpretation and Commentary on the Five Books of Moses*, (Vol.1, *Genesis Part 1*), Feldheim, Jerusalem, 1980, p. 101.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p.103.
- 9 *Zohar* III 107b, trans. Maurice Simon, Harry Sperling, Soncino,

London, 1978 rpt., 1934 orig., Vol. V, p.145.

10 Munk, op. cit., p.103.

11 All translations of יין from Reuben Alcalay, *The Complete Hebrew-English Dictionary*, Massada, Jerusalem, n.d., p.663.

12 Munk, op. cit., p.101. ref. *Genesis* 2:8.

13 See Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve and the Serpent*, Penguin, London, 1990, p.78 and elsewhere.

14 This latter expresses an extreme Augustinian Christian view still engrained in Western consciousness. However, the Hebrew root חטא, translatable as 'sin', is not only related to cleansing and purification but extends into 'missing the mark'. Eve ח by way of the Serpent ט is returned to the Supreme Root א the target of all aspiration.

15 *Sepher Yetzirah*.

16 *Alchemy, Medicine and Religion in the China of A.D. 320 - The Nei P'ien of Ko Hung (Pao - p'u tzu)*, translated and edited by James R. Ware, Dover, New York, 1981, p.105.

17 *Isaiah* 59:21, K.J.V.

18 *Genesis* 1:28. K.J.V. From this extension י as ט (by *Sepher Yetziratic* association) we are shown the way of return: "Be fruitful and Unite".

19 אהיה and יהיה.

20 Translation of the scrolls in the Great Monochord diagram, Joscelyn Godwin, *Robert Fludd - Hermetic Philosopher and Surveyor of Two Worlds*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1979, p.52.

21 Jolan Chang, *The Tao of Love and Sex - The Ancient Chinese Way to Ecstasy*, Wildwood, London, 1981 rpt., p.27.

22 *Psalms* 50:2, K.J.V.

23 *Job* 37:16, K.J.V.

24 Chang, op. cit., p.27 (in parentheses p.93).

25 *Genesis* 22:17, K.J.V.

26 Philip Rawson, *Tantra - The Indian Cult of Ecstasy*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1989 rpt. p.14, in description of the act of meditating on the Sri Yantra, the well known interlacing of red and white Shakti-Shiva triangles which operates on a ♀ frequency. The alchemical Blood of the Red Lion and the Tears of the White Eagle may be equated with the דם 'blood' 'red' אדם, receiving the Seed of Air א in the 'ground' אדם of interrelating Feminine and Masculine Being that is analogous to the א ♀'s Whiteness and ח ♂'s Redness on the Kabbalistic Queen Scale of Sephirothic colour visualisation.

27 Chang, op.cit., p.44.

28 *Ibid.*, p.21, citing the 7th century physician, Li Tung Hsuan, *Tung Hsuan Tzu*, Chapter 12.

29 *Genesis* 3:16.

30 *Genesis* 1:28.

31 *Proverbs* 24:12, translation from *Malbim on Mishley - The Book of Proverbs in English and Hebrew with the Commentary of Rabbi*

Meir Leibush Malbim, abridged and adapted in English by Rabbi Charles Wengrov based on an original draft by Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg, Feldheim, Jerusalem, 1982, p.249.

Secret Knowledge and the Union of the Returned Seed

by a Man of Letters

Central to the Elevated Man Adam אדם is the ד of דעה Daath, Knowledge. As the Foundation, Yesod יסוד, the membrum, gives back its Seed י in Union, so the 'secret' סוד ends in the Beginning of Daath דעה.¹

The Serpent is revealed at the deep mythical level of pre-square letter Hebrew, in that the Canaanite-Phoenician return of ה, the Elemental Cross X, and ו, the Eye O of God or of the Membrum of the World, combine to form O or ה. Thus דעה's Fruitful going forth is revealed as 'rejection and expulsion'² until it is turned around to become a secret sense of strength and enlightening purposes.³ Such are the Fruits of the Serpent.

As Kundalini rises the returning Seed י seeks the remainder of Adam אדם, after the Fruit ד of the Tree has yielded Knowledge. The Mother אה then becomes the 'formidable' איה Kali who must be known by the Light Aleph, of which ה is the fullest expression.⁴ The return of the extended י impregnates the Dark Aleph that drawn back out of the 'terrible' איה Mother the Seed re-extends as the Hand of Light within the Depths of Knowledge. Thus does the brightness of the 'well-to-do, a man of substance' אטיד come forth in riches, 'affluent'⁵ in total experience.

"I am dark yet comely, maidens of Jerusalem... Comely as Solomon's curtains."⁶

Notes

1 In the diagrammatic work of Z'evi ben Shimon Halevi [see *A Kabbalistic Universe*, Rider, London 1977, p. xii, *Adam and the Kabbalistic Tree*, Rider, London, 1974 (rpt. 1978) p.324] the overlay of Yesod and Daath as transition points from World to World exemplifies gendered relationships as a blossoming of levels.

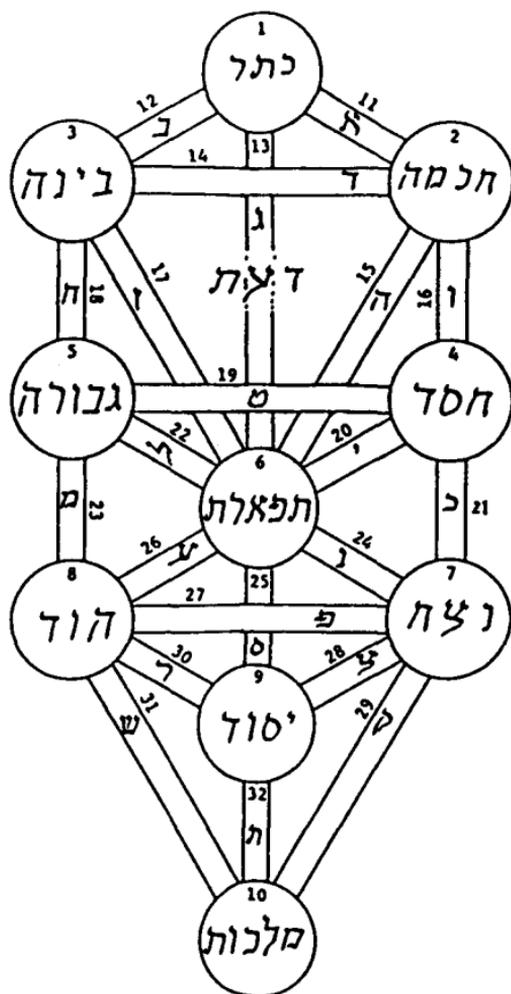
2 In the Arabic equivalent of the unused Hebrew root **שד**. See Fabre d'Olivet, *The Hebraic Tongue Restored and the True Meaning of the Hebrew Words Re-established and Proved by their Radical Analysis*, translated by Nayan Louise Redfield, Weiser, 1981 rpt., p.321.

3 In Hebrew again an unseen, unused root **שד** in the Arabic equivalent "seems to indicate a thing strong and capable of resistance". D'Olivet, *ibid.*, p.357.

4 The **י** and the tail of **ת** are both hidden in the First **א** "declaring the end from the beginning" (*Isaiah 46:10*, K.J.V.).

5 All definitions of **אמיד** 'rich', from Reuben Alcalay, *The Complete Hebrew-English Dictionary*, Massada, Jerusalem, n.d., p.109.

6 *Song of Songs 1:5*, translation from Leon Feldman, *Rabbi Abraham ben Isaac ha-Levi TaMaKH Commentary on the Song of Songs based on Mss and Early Printings*, Van Gorcum, Assen, Netherlands, 1970, p.63.



[Al]chemical Imagery in the Poetry of Garcilaso de la Vega

Daniel L. Heiple

Most historians divide the study of alchemy into two areas: the practical attempts to create gold in alchemical laboratories and the mystical striving for spiritual perfection by the alchemical adept. This division overlooks a third branch of alchemy in which it was the accepted physical theory of the formation of metals in the earth. Alchemy as a practice with the intention of producing gold attempted to hasten in the laboratory the same method which it was believed the earth used for creating gold. The mystical aspects of alchemy became more important in the nineteenth century when writers on alchemy, faced with the success of modern scientific theory, attempted to reaffirm the validity of alchemy. They achieved this defense by emphasizing the spiritual aspects of alchemy over the purely physical and chemical. They maintained that the alchemist had always been striving for spiritual purification and the creation of gold had been only a metaphor for the real aim of the alchemical process. Claiming that alchemy had always been an occult metaphysical science and denying its practical results, they not only misrepresented the historical reality of alchemy, but they also overlooked the important fact that alchemical theories had served during the Middle Ages and Renaissance as one of the basic theories of physical science.

Much of the theoretical background to alchemical practice comes from the philosophy of Aristotle, who maintained that all objects are composed of matter and a form that resides in the object. All matter, called primal matter, is the same for all substances and things. The differentiating principles come from the form. In his treatise on generation and corruption, Aristotle described how all creatures and things could change their form of being through death and transformation into another being. Death occurs when the inherent form abandons the matter and allows it through corruption to return to the state of primal matter. A new being is generated from the corrupted mass when this matter is infused with a new form.

All things in nature were considered to have a life of their own, or were considered to experience a growth and death analagous to the life processes. According to Aristotle, metals were formed from vapors coagulated in the earth. In later alchemical theory, the higher metals were thought to be formed in the earth from the lower metals or from different mixtures of sulphur and mercury. Each metal had a life span, at the end of which it would release its form, return to primal matter through corruption, and a new form would be infused and a higher metal would be generated. Gold, which was thought incorruptible and immutable, was the final and perfected transformation. It was thought that gold grew in the earth like a living being, like some strange fungus or algaic growth. Shumaker reports that in the Renaissance some mines were closed down in order to allow more gold to grow and thus increase the harvest (195). The *Compositum de compositis*, attributed to Albert the Great, indicates that impurities in ore are proof of the different rates and conditions of maturation: "Por eso en las minas se hallan metales diferentes, lo que procede de la purificación y digestión variables de sus principios" (Anónimo 27). [Therefore in the mines different metales are found, which proceed from the variable purification and digestion of their beginnings.]

Alchemical laboratory processes were thought to be an acceleration of these natural processes. Instead of a mountain or deep cave, the chemical flask became the place of the transformations. Various metals, usually mercury, placed in the flask were corrupted by the action of sulphur, and were reconstituted with the seed of gold in hopes of generating gold in the laboratory.

The table of the hierarchy of the seven metals, and their correspondence to the seven planets is analogous to our periodic table of the elements (as adapted from Coudert 56):

Gold	Sun
Silver	Moon
Tin	Jupiter
Mercury	Mercury
Copper	Venus
Iron	Mars
Lead	Saturn

Both charts order our understanding of the natural elements, and from them we conceive of possible combinations and chemical processes in order to create new substances.

These Aristotelian ideas were introduced into Europe by the Arabs, the inheritors of Greek scientific research and speculation. The Romans usually conceived of gold deposits as the result of melted metals coagulating in the earth. Pliny describes a number of methods of mining and the corruption that gold causes in society, but he does not mention gold as forming in the earth. Likewise, Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636) in his *Etymologiae* presents metals as deposits in the earth:

...fundido y convertido en líquido, corrieron a los hoyos que había en la tierra y tomaron la figura de aquel lugar en que cayeron....
(403)

[...melted and converted into liquid, they ran to the pockets which existed in the earth and they took the form of the place where the poured....]

Isidore refers several times to alloys, but never to transformations of one metal into another nor of a process of the creation of the metals.

Vincent of Beauvais (c. 1190-1264) in his encyclopedic *Speculum majus* (c. 1250) does not synthesize these Latin and Arabic traditions, but treats each of the metals twice, once in order to remain faithful to the Latin tradition of metals deposited in the earth and again to treat the recently introduced theories of the creation of metals. In Book XV of the *Speculum doctrinale*, citing as his source a book called *On the Nature of Things*, he describes seven metals. In this section in which he complies with the Latin tradition, he treats the problems of mining and the medicinal qualities of metals. Previously in Book XI he had treated the metals "and their creation." In this section he cites Avicenna and describes each of the metals, instead of being

found, as being created in the earth from a type of mercury (called *aurum vivum*) and sulphur. Gold is made "in the bowels of the earth with great heat from the sun, from beautiful mercury with a red, clear sulphur, without any stones, cooked for a hundred years or longer" [Aurum enim sit in ventre terrae, cum calore magno solis, de auro vivo pulchro, cum sulphore rubicundo, claro, absque lapidus, cocto in centum annis & amplius] (1057). The "lesser" metals differ only that in the mercury and sulphur are of an inferior quality: lead, the lowest of the metals being cooked from "a gross thick mercury and a heavy, corrupted, crude and little cooked sulphur" [de auro vivo grosso, ac spisso, & de sulphure pessimo ac mixto, crudo, parum cocto] (1057). Vincent does not synthesize these two traditions, but strangely enough seems to consider them so alien to each other that they enter into his treatise in two different books. His treatise does document, however, that theories of alchemy had begun to become part of accepted scientific knowledge.

The treatise on stones and metals published in Spain in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, and attributed to Bartholomeo the Englishman, produces a clearer synthesis. The author quotes Isidore concerning the etymologies of the words, but Aristotle concerning the creation of the metals:

Pero según Aristóteles en el libro de los metauros: dize que el oro así como los otros metales materialmente es engendrado [del] sulfre subtil & vermejo: & del azogue subtil & blanco/ y más viene en su composición la sequedad & solitud del asufre que no del ayre aguoso del azogue: y por esto el oro es más pesante que la plata/ en cuya composición entra más de azogue que del açufre blanco. (Aiii)

[But according to Aristotle in the book of meteors, he says that gold like other metals is materially engendered [from] a subtle red sulphur and from a subtle white quicksilver, and the dryness and care of the sulphur enter more into their composition than the watery air of the quicksilver, and therefore gold is heavier than silver into whose composition there enters more quicksilver than white sulphur.]

Bartholomeo has omitted Isidore's commentaries on discovery and mining and incorporated the Arabic alchemical theory of the creation of metals from sulphur and mercury.

Alchemical imagery in literary works other than hermetic poetry is fairly rare. The Spanish Renaissance poet Garcilaso de la Vega (1501-36) seems to have been well acquainted with the physical

theories of the formation of the metals. In his poetry he refers to alchemical processes in two different poems. In his Third Eclogue he explicitly refers to the creation of gold in the Tagus River. Pliny had remarked that the Tagus River was famous for its gold-carrying sands, but he had not stated, as Garcilaso does, they were grown in the bottom of the river:

del oro que'l felice Tajo embía,
apurado después de bien cernidas
las menudas arenas do se cría. (106-8)

[from the gold that the felicitous Tagus sends,
made pure afterwards from the well sifted
tiny grains of sand where it is grown.]

These lines reflect the scientific explanation that alchemical processes were considered to exist in nature as well as in the laboratory.

In this paper I will focus on the alchemical imagery found in the fourth stanza of Garcilaso's *Canción IV*. Written in dense allegories the poem has not found a receptive audience among modern critics. Hayward Keniston concluded that "the composition seems to-day over-subtle and artificial" (191). Margot Arce de Vázquez also expressed dissatisfaction with the poem, finding it "un conjunto exagerado y retorcido" [an exaggerated and twisted mixture] (131), resulting from "un imperfecto dominio de los elementos poéticos" [an imperfect mastery of the poetic elements] (135). Rafael Lapesa also found it lacked unity, and concluded that the imperfection resulted from a conflict between Garcilaso's native Hispanic formation and the new Petrarchan modes that the poet was trying to dominate: "A nuestro modo de ver, en la canción IV no hay sólo conflicto psicológico, sino también artístico" [In our opinion, in the Fourth *Canción* there is not only a psychological conflict, but also an artistic one] (76).

In marked contrast to modern critical reservations are the enthusiastic praises showered on the poem by the early commentators Fernando de Herrera (1580) and Tomás Tamayo de Vargas (1622). Herrera found it unique in Garcilaso's poetry, a noble dramatization of the conflict of reason and appetite:

Sola esta canción muestra el ingenio, erudición y grandeza de espíritu de G.L.; ... es tan generosa y noble y afectuosa y llena de sentimientos, que oso decir que ninguna de las estimadas de Italia

le hace ventaja, y que pocas merecen igualdad con ella. (Gallego Morell 402)

[This song alone shows Garcilaso's genius, erudition and greatness of spirit; ... it is so magnanimous, noble, amorous and full of sentiment that I dare say that none of the highly regarded songs from Italy are superior to it, and that few deserve equality with it.]

Herrera's praises are exceeded only by those of Tamayo:

La IV es tal que, a mi ver, no tienen todas las lenguas juntas cosa más culta: y así es la primera de las obras de Garci-Lasso. (Gallego Morell 612)

[The fourth [song] is such that, in my opinion, none of the languages have anything more learned: and thus it is the most outstanding of the works of Garci-Lasso.]

The differences of opinion between modern critics and the Golden Age commentators could not be more striking. The disparity of judgment is so great and the praise of the commentators is so extreme that it must derive from more than counterreformation morality. Obviously the critics and commentators start from different aesthetic bases. Herrera praises Garcilaso's erudition. Tamayo praises the complexity of the philosophical thought and Garcilaso's ability to reduce it to clarity. The revealing references to Garcilaso's intelligence and wit mark the difference of aesthetic bias. Modern critics praise the sincerity of Garcilaso's sentiment, and for them, poetry must express feeling. They find the dense allegorical *Canción IV* to be an unsatisfactory work of art, and search for reasons to explain its alleged defects. Herrera and Tamayo reveal that at the basis of their praise is the appreciation of the intellectual values of poetry.

Garcilaso's *Canción IV* describes the process of falling in love and the subsequent suffering and conflict of desires and passions facing the courtly lover. Since love is an interior mental process which has few exterior marks, Garcilaso must find a way to describe its effects, and he chose a series of allegories to recreate the process and make it manifest in the poem. The first three stanzas conceive of the process of falling in love in two separate allegories: first is the concept of the lover as a primitive barbarian who abandons civilization and the second is a joust between reason and appetite. The first stanza of the poem presents the lover dragged by his hair like a captured barbarian, dragged to the enemy camp by the wild thoughts that serve to

primitivize his being. The recently revived ideas (from Vitruvius and Lucretius) of human evolution from primitivism clash sharply with the traditional Christian explanation of creation in paradise. Stanzas 2 and 3 turn to an allegorical joust or duel in which the poet maliciously wishes for his appetite to dominate his much beleaguered reason.

The fourth stanza describes the same process of falling in love, but employing scientific terminology and allegories from medicine and chemistry that evoke profound mythological resonances:

Los ojos, cuya lumbre bien pudiera tornar clara la noche tenebrosa y escurecer el sol a mediodía, me convirtieron luego en otra cosa, en bolviéndose a mí la vez primera	65
con la calor del rayo que salía de su vista, que'n mí se difundía; y de mis ojos la abundante vena de lágrimas, al sol que me inflamava, no menos ayudava	70
a hazer mi natura en todo agena de lo que era primero. Corromperse sentí el sosiego y libertad passada, y el mal de que muriendo está engendrarse, y en tierra sus raizes ahondarse	75
tanto quanto su cima levantada sobre qualquier altura haze verse; el fruto que d'aquí suele cogerse mil es amargo, alguna vez sabroso, mas mortífero siempre y ponçonofo.	80 (194-6)

[Her eyes, whose light could well turn the murky night clear and obscure the sun at midday, suddenly converted me into another thing, when they turned to me for the first time	65
with the heat from the ray that came from her sight, which was spread through me; and from my eyes the abundant flow of tears, with the sun which inflamed me, did not help less	70
to make my nature completely different from what it first was. I felt	

my peace and past liberty corrupted,
 and the sickness from which I am dying was engendered,
 and in the earth its roots descended to depths 75
 equal to its raised peak above the earth
 made visible from any height;
 the fruit that from here is ever picked
 is a thousand times bitter, once tasty,
 but always deadly and poisonous.] 80

The fourth stanza begins with a reference to the beauty of the beloved's eyes, a very rare instance of praise of the mistress's beauty in Garcilaso's poetry (Lapesa 75). A closer reading reveals that the passage does not serve simply as praise of the beloved, but is introduced into the poem to serve the ends of allegory. The power of the eyes to turn dark night into day and to shadow the noonday sun seems very Petrarchan, but the finality of the comparison is not praise, as it is in Petrarch, but a scientific description of the transformation of the lover's physiology. The power and heat from her eyes are a force that transforms his elemental being: "me conviertieron luego en otra cosa" [they suddenly converted me into a different thing] (64). The heat emanating from the luminous eyes, "la calor del rayo" (66), combined with his tears, produces a fundamental change in his humoral composition. The secretion of tears produces a drying of the body and the heat from the suns of the mistress's eyes effect a change of the humors in his body. Basic humoral medicine posited a body and its functions, called natural things, which were effected by food, drink, sleep, eliminations, etc., called non-natural things. Diseases which could result from an excess of one of the humors were called counternatural things (Heiple 66). The action of the humors was simple. A cold draft caused a chill in the body producing phlegm, and a condition we still call in English a "cold" or in Spanish "resfriado." In this poem, Garcilaso alleges that the heat from the mistress's eyes served to burn his humors. This would produce an ash-like humor called "melancholia adusta," or burnt melancholy, considered to be especially pernicious in causing depression (Babb 21-2; 33-7). Combined with the weeping which would dry out his body, a cold dry humor -- melancholia -- would come to predominate. Each of the effects "ayudara / a hazer mi natura en todo agena / de lo que era primero" [would help to make my nature completely different from what it first was] (70-2).

The word that finishes line 72, "Corromperse," moves the argument from the discipline of medicine to physics, in this case to the theories of transmutations which were believed to occur as a

natural process in nature and which alchemists hoped to reproduce at accelerated pace in the laboratory. The earth, like a huge chemical flask, slowly nurtured and produced gold, the most perfect of metals, from chemical mutations. Important among the alchemical steps were corruption and generation, referred to by Garcilaso in line 72, "corromperse," and in line 74, "engendrarse." These concepts come from Aristotle's treatise titled *On Generation and Corruption*, where he explains the natural life processes of all materials and how death and corruption produced new material from which new life forms can be engendered. In alchemy, it was necessary to produce a corruption of the elements in the flask to their basic constituents of matter and form from which the alchemist could recombine them into a higher level of perfection with new forms. Gold would be produced from the generation of new life from the corruption and destruction of lesser metals. Generation was variously conceived of in alchemical symbolism. It could result from the metaphorical copulation of the elements. Also prominent in these theories was the generation of the philosophical tree, which is obviously the allegory which Garcilaso employs in lines 75-80. Alison Coudert describes the importance of this image:

The image of the tree was ideally suited for the philosopher's stone as well, for, like a tree, it continually bore new fruit. 'Our stone,' writes Nicholas Flamel, 'turned into a true and pure tree, to bud abundantly, and afterwards to bring forth infinite little sprigs and branches.' In the *De Alchimia*, a tree grows out of the body of a dead man lying in his coffin. The coffin symbolizes the alchemical vessel, and the corpse, the seed which must die before it can germinate. ... Seeing trees in alchemical vessels is not as absurd as it might appear. Issac Newton, a meticulous alchemical experimenter, saw almost exactly what Flamel had seen. (121-4)

From the corruption of "el sosiego y libertad passada" [peace and past liberty] (73) was produced the sickness which grew in him like a tree. Garcilaso's allegory of the tree recalls the Biblical trees in Paradise. Garcilaso clearly refers to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and not the tree of life, since the fruit from the tree produces a deadly poison, an evil that at one time was thought to be desirable, but upon tasting proves to be the undoing of humankind. The allegory of the tree of good and evil fits perfectly into the symbolism of the poem. It allows the poet to use an alchemical metaphor to finish off his humoral description of falling in love, and the tree itself produces a series of comparisons that add depth to the allegory. The

fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil seemed to be a good to God's creatures who were tempted, but turned out to be evil and produced death and pain in the world. The sexual implications in the Biblical allegory have long been present in Western thought. The eating of the fruit from the tree has been conceived of as the sexual act, an interpretation suggested by the shame that Adam and Eve felt after the act and the need to cover their sexual organs. In the same way Garcilaso's love -- even though not a physical act -- produced a change in him and an awareness of sexuality. The theme of shame, already introduced in the poem, is fully developed in the sixth stanza with the myth of Mars, Venus and Vulcan.

The fruit from the tree of good and evil engendered a sickness in the world, and distempered the elements and produced seasons and death. It was humankind's primal loss of innocence from which it would never recover. The Biblical injunction makes clear that the expulsion from paradise produced pain and death, which had not existed previously. In his allegorical religious dramas, Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1660-81) always presents the effects of the eating of the fruit in Paradise as a poisoning of human nature which will produce death. The allegorical tree, representing good and evil, which turns out to be apparent good and real evil, is a perfect symbol for the ambiguous concept of love that Garcilaso is developing. From the primal corruption of innocence and generation of evil comes sensual love which is an incurable sickness leading to suffering and death, resulting from the chemical imbalances in the body.

The shift in allegory has allowed Garcilaso to return to the concept of primitivism, the moment of the expulsion from paradise. Garcilaso does not mention paradise, but concentrates on the description of the fruit from the tree that seems to be beneficial, but produces sickness and death. Courtly love, not sexual love, produces a fall from grace, the sickness and suffering and death that corrupt the lover. Not only is love a primitive element in society, as seen in the beginning stanzas, but it is also related to that other concept of creation, the golden age from which Adam and Eve fell. In either conception of human development, love is the primitive destabilizing element. Garcilaso has referred to two theories of human development and posits love as a key destabilizing element in each.

This stanza illustrates the use of allegory in this poem. Lapesa adduces as a criticism of the poem its multiple allegories which overlap (73). Whether one appreciates allegory or not is a different question from understanding its nature and particular powers. Garcilaso's allegories are a *tour de force* of subtlety and interaction.

The nature of allegory is such that the fable is the element that produces interest and movement in the literary work, but the structure of the fable depends on the hidden meaning, the matter beneath the cortex (Fletcher 181-2). For this reason, the surface allegory can shift, end or overlap without producing a major break in the sense of the poem. Garcilaso is a real virtuoso in allegorical subtlety. The fourth stanza describes in essence the same process covered in the first three stanzas. While the previous stanzas described love as a mental process in which the mind is returned to a primitive state, this stanza describes it as a physical process, employing metaphors and symbols from medicine and alchemy. Alchemical symbolism provides the link between physical science and myth. Even the description of the beauty of the mistress's eyes forms part of the allegorical chemical process. The first allegory of primitivism comes to interact with the new myth of the fall from paradise. Two contrary myths of the creation and evolution of the human species are employed to describe the same mental process.

Garcilaso's *Canción IV* occupies a curious and awkward place in literary history. Praised by the early commentators and found full of faults in the twentieth century, it has suffered more than most works from the changing fashions of taste in literary modes. The subtle interaction of allegory and poetic sensitivity make the poem one that could be appreciated by a reader instructed in the profound interplay of ideas in the poem. The use of medicine and science, as well as history and myth, to describe the effects of love on the psyche make it a fascinating work, and one that incidentally reveals the often overlooked confluence of occult sciences and reputable scientific theories in the Renaissance.

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Hieronymous Bosch 'Psychedelic' Art, Alchemy, and Bon Religion.

Ezio Albrile

Art takes into its province all the devices which man has invented in order to comprehend himself and the environment which he inhabits. Mythology, religion, philosophy and science have continued to be transformed into aesthetic images, ever since those first unknown artists painted their amazing forms in the caves of Altamira.. Now, many years ago in the later Middle Ages, long before the beginning of the 'Psychedelic Revolution' which flowed from the experiments of Timothy Leary and his friends with the LSD, there was a painter who distinguished himself for his bizarre visions of reality, Hieronymus Bosch (1450?-1516). Indeed, his pictorial work wasn't addressed to describing an external realism, but on the contrary it was addressed to incorporate aspects of spiritual wisdom and inner experiences into his paintings.

The painting of Hieronymous Bosch is an enigmatic mixture of good and evil, light and darkness, which he performs in his strange, dreamlike vision. One cannot ignore the hints of alchemical and spiritual investigation implicit in this oneiric perception of reality, that suggests the same alchemical procedures described by Carl Gustav Jung in his works. Bosch's preoccupation to represent man or demons contained in crystal spheres or in broken egg-shell like forms (see for instance the 'Garden of Earthly Delights') can be related to the alchemist's obsession with his *vas mirabile*, his *matrix*, or his furnaces (*athanor*).



Section of an engraving by Pieter Breugel the Elder based on the imagery of Hieronymus Bosch

The practice of alchemy was more than a rudimentary form of chemistry. In seeking to transform base metals into gold, the alchemists were actually attempting to transcend time and to attain a higher state of consciousness similar to that sought by the Chinese Taoists and Indian Yogis. Accepting the doctrine that the microcosm of the human body contained all the elements of the macrocosm of the whole universe, they believed that in working on the earthly matter they were actually working on themselves. If they could change base metal into gold, they could transform themselves into purely spiritual beings, by the transmutation of the *prima materia*, the dragon of the abyss, that finally was identical to the unconscious contents of the psyche. So, the spiritual focus of the Bosch's work it's this eternal strain, that bring to the *mysterium tremendum* like a mystical path suspended between the sublime and the depravation.

Bosch has recreated in his paintings the same oneiric processes which were peculiar to the alchemists' dreams; these paintings were a sort of miniature worlds, that were used as objects of meditation, as symbols of the soteriological structure of cosmos. Also, one can find another parallel to Bosch's imaginative activity in an ancient cult of the Far East: the Tibetan Bon religion. It is a known fact, that the 'votaries of the Bon' (Bon-po) religion of Tibet, in their ritual circumambulation, walk with their left hand towards the venerated objects (*gYon-skor* and *Ye-ses-skor*). There are exceptions to this rule, however, in other Far East's religions: for example, among Tibetan Buddhists, where the Samvara divinity is concerned (*bDe-mc'og*), it is the practice to walk around the holy places with the left hand towards them, whereas generally in Tibetan Buddhism (Lamaism) the sanctuary is on the right hand (*gYas-skor*) in circumambulation. In the same way, the Bon-po turn their prayer-wheels towards the left, and the same habit obtains in the Tendai and Shingon sects of Japanese Buddhism who rotate such wheels, known by the name of "wheel of the blessed life after death" (*gosho-guruma*), from East to West, which is from right to left, and from above downwards.

The Bon-po custom of keeping the left hand towards the objects of veneration, like many other aspects of their behaviour, is based on a very ancient tradition.

Going back to the times of the Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians, we find that stairways and ramps, for instance in stepped towers (*zikkurat*), bend first to the right and then to the left; it is a feature that still survived in Asia Minor in the monumental constructions of the Sasanid age. The mantles, too, worn by Sumerians priests were wrapped round them in a leftward direction. This fact probably is related with the orbit of the Moon, and at any rate the leftward-tending circumambulation of the Bon-po (*Bon-skor*) is also called lunar circumambulation by them.

Returning to the bizarre paintings of Hieronymous Bosch, we are thinking to the odd figures like demons, monsters, or animals,

especially those whose habitat is in water, that are of a hybrid sort and the offspring of the painter's imagination. These imaginary figures reveal a distant resemblance to similar diabolical beings in Bon paintings, though there is no need to invoke some sort of relation between these two forms of representations. In the celebrated painting on wood illustrating the 'Seven Deadly Sins', which has also become famous under the title 'Table of Wisdom', according to the important work by Wilhelm Fraenger (*The Millenium of Hieronymus Bosch. Outlines of a new interpretation*, Chicago, 1951), the person who commissioned this painting was Jacob the Almaengien, who had founded a 'Brotherhood of the Free Spirit'. This was an initiatory fraternity, markedly erotic and adamitic, which in its idealization of sexuality, set up spiritualized eroticism against the sensuality condemned by the leaders of the Christian Church. The characteristics of this male and female fraternity of *homines intelligentiae* recall Gnostic, Philonic-Neopythagorean, and Orphic traditions and also a soteriological doctrine akin to that of the Jewish-Christian Ebionites.

The 'Seven Deadly Sins', in the sect's concepts, had to be circumambulated from right to left. This direction was indicated also by the Bon-po as the way of wisdom. As the way of salvation it is not only the way of virtue, but also that the purification, whereas circumambulation in a clockwise direction is deemed the path of depravation, of beings of the underworld and hell, just as formerly the Babylonians had looked upon the left as the bad, and the right as the good path. Similarly, and this is also embodied in the teachings on Orphic gold plates containing texts from a kind of 'book of the dead', the dead person must walk in a right-hand direction in order to become identified ultimately with the divine world. In walking around the table of mysteries, the 'Table of Wisdom', a table with seven compartments that have to be passed through with the left hand towards the *Salvator Mundi* placed by Bosch in the centre of the table, the initiate thus accomplishes the gnostic journey of the soul, a journey which also signifying catharsis, just like the Bon votary who still in our own times circumambulates the sanctuary in an anti-clockwise manner intent upon salvation. So, 'Gnosis' is here intended as "knowledge of the way" (*gnosis hodou*), of the path that, representing the journey and catharsis of the soul in the cult of after death leads to redemption, to union with the metaphysical basis of life, or with the divine world.

In a different way, the gnostic idea of the soul's journey has survived in Tibet as a gradual catharsis, as a distant echo of ancient oriental traditions, in the motif of the crystal mountain of the *Gesar epic* and in the mythology of the *Shambhala*. But while the original meaning of this motif in the *Gesar epic* was soon misunderstood and interpreted in a quite different fashion, in the mythology of *Shambhala* it is, at least to some extent, still alive at the present

time. The difficult path towards the fabulous castle, *Kalapa*, which is situated at glacier level in the centre of Sambhala, is a path reserved for the wise one in the realm of Tantric knowledge (*sadhaka*). It is matched genetically by the ascent towards the castle of the Grail, *Munsalvatsche*, of the *Parzival* saga with its still recognizable Manichaeian traditions, that by way of the Jewish-Gnostic Mandaean (and also by the gnostic Sabians of Harran) converge in the legend about the priest-king John with his palace resembling a Babylonian *zikkurat*.

These soteriological perspectives, between east and west, help us to understand the deep significance of Bosch's paintings, which can be hermeneutically assimilated to an initiatory path towards the inner man, and the conquest of eternal life.



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A Source for Robert Fludd's Sevenfold Rose

The rose symbol from the titlepage of his *Summum Bonum*, published at Frankfort in 1629, has become well known as a Rosicrucian symbol. It has a sevenfold symmetry, seven layers of petals and its stem is formed in the shape of a cross. However, it appears that this design was not entirely an original conception for Fludd's book, as the engraver, Matthieu Merian, had used a similar grouping of symbols 14 years earlier in a emblem book which he illustrated.



I show above emblem 21 from *Iacobi à Bruck Angermundt Cogn. Si. Emblemata Moralia & Bellica, Argentorati Per Iacobum ab Heyden Iconographum Anno MDCXV. M Merian Incidebat*. What is original in the reworking for Fludd's book is the cross shaped form of the rose stem and the sevenfold symmetry of the rose. This shows very clearly that Merian and the publishers of Fludd's book, while drawing on symbolism from the emblem tradition, nevertheless intended to give this symbol definite and unambiguous Rosicrucian associations.

- Adam McLean



Alchemical Agriculture

A Recipe for an alchemical fertilizer from an Eighteenth Century Manuscript No. 274 in the Ferguson Collection.

A fructifying alias vegetable Liquor.

1. All, or any sort of wood, whether it be the whole tree, or whether it be the boughs, branches, or leaves, etc. Also thou mayest take all, or any sort of woods. Moreover, any sort of turf may do.
2. But principally Oak, Ash, Apple tree, Pear tree, Plum tree, Cherry tree, Whitethorn, Sloe trees, Beech Trees, Elms.
Also all sorts of thistles, but principally bean stalks and bean shells, and fern etc.
3. To every cartload of any of the above mentioned vegetables (whether green or dry, but green is best) take viii bushels of ☿ and ii bushels of common ☉, and of Man's ☐ as much as is required.
4. Also have in readiness as much as is required of man's ☐. N.B. And then proceed thus.
5. Put any of the aforementioned vegetables described at Rx 1 into the ✨ and intermix therewith something dry, for the benefit of kindling the same: and then kindle these; so will the smoke as it ascends, condense in the △ [vapours] into an acid liquor.
6. Now whilst these are thus preparing thou mayest take an opportunity to prepare the ☿ and ☉ and ☐ at fig 3 as followeth. N.B. Mix the ☿ and ☉ together (the ☿ being first pounded) and then temper them with the ☉ to such a consistency, as to make up into balls of about the size of a goose egg, which keep for further use.
7. When the vegetables at fig 5 are kindled, and the ✨ begins to be

hot, then cast in now and then some of the balls at fig 6 even so many as the magnitude of the Δ and \times can contain, so as not to extinguish the Δ , but that they may be well burnt with the vegetables, etc.

N.B. When thou perceivest the balls to be well burnt, i.e. when they are of a white heat through, then thou must stir up the Δ , to cause the \rightarrow [ashes] to fall down with the other \rightarrow , which when they are thoroughly burnt (as that they will be if they lie long enough in the \rightarrow hole), they must be kept carefully, etc. N.B. Thus thou must continue the burning of the vegetables, and balls, even till all the intended quantity is thus burnt, etc. N.B. Then keep the acid liquor carefully also.

8. Then take the \rightarrow at fig 7 and if they are in lumps, or cakes, then pound them: and then spread them in a shed as is so covered as to keep out the rain, but not the air.

9. Then imbibe the \rightarrow at fig 8 with some of the acid liquor at fig 7 even till they are of the consistency of pap and then let them dry.

They must be often stirred in the drying.

And when they are pretty dry, then imbibe with some more of the acid liquor, and then let it dry again.

Reiterate these imbibings and dryings so often, even till all the said liquor is drunk up, and the \rightarrow remain pretty dry, etc.

10. Then imbibe with the \square at fig 4 and let it dry as was done above.

Then imbibe, and let it dry again.

This operation of Imbibing and drying, must be 5 times more repeated, i.e. 7 times in all.

When all this is done, then let these imbibed \rightarrow lie to be vivified, or animated from the air, which they will be in about a philosophical month, etc.

They must be often stirred in this time.

11. Then put these prepared \rightarrow into a tub, etc, of a fair size, and put boiling ∇ thereon, and so stir all well together, till all is well mixed: and then let all stand to settle, and then stir again, etc.

And this expect pretty often within the space of xii hours and then let it settle, and when all is very clear, then do the clear part and keep it for use.

And then put on more boiling ∇ and so proceed as above.

This operation of putting on of boiling ∇ and stirring and settling and de must be so often repeated, even till the \rightarrow will give, or the ∇ extract no more \textcircled{D} .

The sign of this may be known as followeth, take a little of the said lixivium, in a proper vessel, and ... evaporate the humidity, and the \textcircled{D} will remain.

But when by this trial no more $\text{\textcircled{D}}$ (or at leastwise but little) remains, then leave off, for the work is finished.

So having put all these liquors together, thou must keep them carefully for use.

12. The sediment, or thick and muddy matter as will remain after the extract is made, must also be kept, to put to the roots of all sorts of trees, for it will make them very fruitful; yea much more fruitful than the best of common things, etc.

13. Of the way and means of using this fructifying liquor, etc.

1. Make choice of the worst barren land as thee hast (excepting such sort as is overflowed with water) and then plough it S.A.

But if it be such land as cannot be ploughed then it may be digged.

2. Then harrow it S.A.

3. Then water it with the watering cart described at Rx ii S.A.

The best way will be to water three times over the first year, intermitting a day between each watering.

About a hogshead of this liquor will serve for an acre, i.e. a hogshead for each watering.

4. Then soak thy wheat, rye, barley, oats, peas, beans, or any other grain, in this liquor, for xii hours, and then draw the liquor therefrom, and put it to the other at fig 7.

Then spread the grain on a floor, in a dry place, that it may be somewhat dried, which will be in about xxiv hours.

5. Then sow this prepared grain S.A. And afterwards harrow it S.A.

Thus by this means, through the Lord's assistance, thou wilt have thy barren land made fruitful; yea more fruitfuller, than the best of land can be made, by the common way of dunging.

Besides, this method is abundantly more commodious and nice, than the common way of dunging, and is a deal more easier done.

Again, it is abundantly more profitable than the common way of dunging.

1. Because a hogshead of this liquor will go further that 20 loads of dung.

2. Because that if (as is before directed) thou waterst thy land 3 times over the first year.

And once over the second year.

And once over the third year (all which then for 4 years after, there needs no watering must be granted by the conscientious and ingenious) to be very easily done, so that by this means thy land will be so impregnated, as to become its own magnet, as will magnetically attract from the air, the fructifying, animating, nitrous particles, to such a degree as to qualify the seed sown therein that every particle thereof may be put into such motion, that the seminating, germinating property will so grow and increase, that the owner thereof will have great cause to praise God, and return Him true and hearty thanks for his goodness and declare the wonders as He hath

done for the Children of Men: when he experimentally seeth how that from so little cost, labour, and trouble, so great an increase is had, quite different from common method; so that there need not be any barren land in England, or elsewhere, if this be rightly put into practice: excepting as before excepted, viz, watery ground, etc. for that except other means can be used to carry it off, will wash away the virtue of the fructifying liquor.

Notes

Guide to symbols in the text.

⊕	Nitre, possibly saltpeter
⓪	Salt
□	Urine
✕	Furnace with distilling apparatus
△	Air, vapour
▽	Water
→	Ash, calx

The main ingredients of this fertiliser recipe would appear to be wood ash (which is rich in soluble potash), with the distillate of wood saps; saltpeter or nitre (rich in nitrogen in the form of nitrates); and urine (which has significant amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus). This is distilled together and concentrated through the alchemical process and then made into a soluble fertiliser which is to be watered over the land or used as a pre-germination treatment for seeds. This results in a surprisingly modern formula for an artificial fertiliser. There is no evidence for this fertiliser having ever been used in practice, though directions in the recipe seem practical enough, and were probably based on the author having actually performed the experiment, rather than merely on theoretical speculations. This eighteenth century manuscript must be one of the earliest attempts to formulate a working artificial fertiliser. I have not come across any similar formulations in my study of alchemical manuscript material in Great Britain. - Adam McLean

Seven Illustrations to the Works of Jacob Boehme

[I recently found among the manuscript collection of the eccentric nineteenth century writer Christopher Walton in Dr Williams's Library in London, a translation of the commentary material on the beautiful engraved plates from the Gichtel collected works in German of Jacob Boehme. In this edition, each of Boehme's works is prefaced by a full page engraving. In the introductory material at the beginning of the 1722 edition, short descriptions and commentaries are given. I here publish seven of the illustrations together with the commentaries in English. — Adam McLean]

An explanation of the first general figure, which is prefixed to all the theosophic writings of Jacob Böhmen Teutonic Philosopher.

The black half circle on the left hand is the principle of the Dark World, the subtle at the right that of the Light-World: the middle circle in the form of a clockwork, is the outward mystery of the Creation of this World, or the Third Principle. The seven circles round it, of which the uppermost appears as a glorious Sun have different significations: as the 7 Spirits of God or the 7 Properties of Nature. The 7 Days of the Creation of the World, together with the Sabbath. The 7 Seals: The 7 Trines: and the 7 petitions in the Lord's Prayer, etc.

So also the 12 numbers of the hours are taken notice of, of which this is to be observed: the number I without the circle which stands uppermost on the top of the hour-circle, denotes first the Divine Unity as the Beginning of all Beings, or, the majesty with the crown and sceptre, without alteration or mobility and imperceptible to the Creature, because it is a Spirit.

Secondly doth it denote the first single man Adam whom God in a glorified Light Body, or in paradisaical property had created, and according to Böhme made him to have dominion over all creatures, and put all things under his feet. But because he hath forsaken the Unity of God or true Wisdom and lusted after the knowledge mixed

with Good and Evil, the Spirit of the visible Nature hath laid hold on him, and introduced him into the changeable wheel of Time and Vanity, that he is fallen down from his high station and dignity, as the Spirit of this World, to this hour and to the end of Time in all the hour circles of the World publicly represents indeed by this character I, although the same by nobody be considered or understood.

Thirdly, it denotes the name IESUS, or ye highest Love of the Unity of God, who hath given himself into the death of fallen Man, and hath born him again to Life, and recovered the lost Kingdom of Men, he is ascended into Heaven, hath taken again possession of the Royal Palace of Paradise, ruleth now in the Spirit of believers, and will rule with them when Time shall be no more, as their King and Divine monarch of Peace, to all Eternity.

Fourthly, there are more other explications of the types of Christ, among the Patriarchs, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Joseph, etc. which in their proper places of this author may be found.

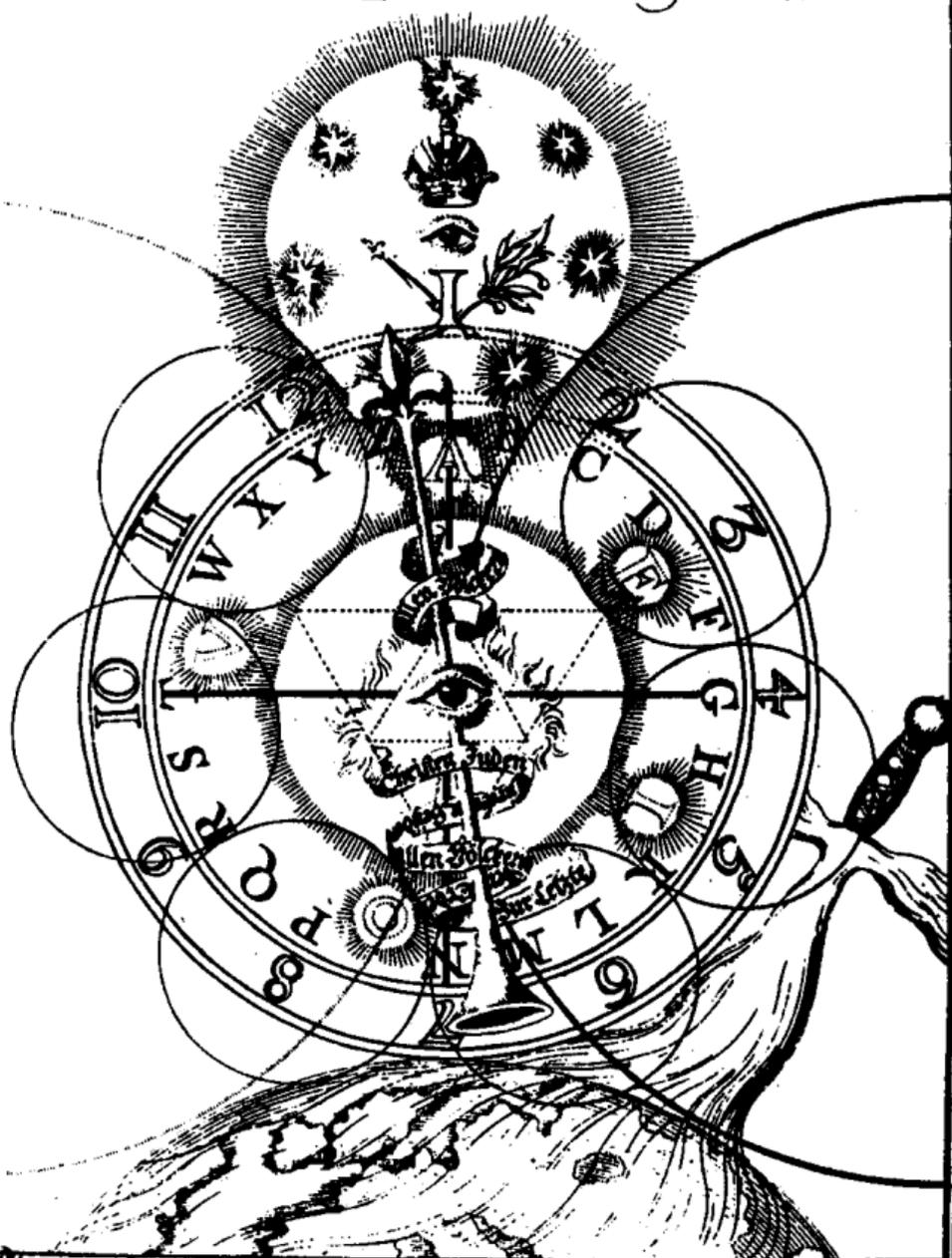
The following circle at the left hand downward, where the numbers 2 and 3, are enclosed is separated from the superior glorious circle, so that it doth not touch the same, and this, together with the following circles denotes already the duality of the divided properties of the fallen human nature, viz., the activity of malice as may be seen in Cain the second Man who exalted himself out of Pride, Ambition, and Envy, above the third Man, his brother Abel and killed him: Thus hath this generation taken possession of the Word by the Sword of Vengeance and is through all ages grown more and more fruitful in the curse of the Earth.

But that the rays of the supremest circle still do penetrate this second circle, denotes the engraved Word of Grace, in the Covenant of the promise of a bruiser of the Serpent's head, viz., the holy and pious mind of Abel, and of all the following Holy Patriarchs, Teachers and Prophets.

The eye in the centre and midst in the dial within a fiery triangle, surrounded with a threefold watery triangle, and with a glance denotes the eye of God, as also the eye of Man in ternario sancto, through which God seeth, and Man manifesteth the Mysteries of God and of his Will, according to the condition of this present age; how near the Time is at an end, how now the seventh trumpet sounds, that the Mystery of the Kingdom of God shall be finished and manifested, Babel swallowed up by the Fire-Sword of the Turba, and all the curse of vanity consumed. The alphabet on the inside of the hour circle denotes the now opened language of Nature, of which here nothing more is to say, as also nothing of many other particulars, because they are by the author himself explained sufficiently.

The German words about the trumpet are in English these: 'To all Nations: To Christians, Jews, Turks and Heathens: To all the Nations of the Earth, this Trumpet sounds for the last Time'.

Des Gottseligen Hoherleuchteten
IACOB BÖHMEN
Teutonici Philosophi
Alle Theosophische Schrifften.



Gedruckt zu Amsterdam im Jahr 1682.

To the First Book, Aurora.

When a double morning-redness appears at midnight, and two Suns rise together, then a great and glorious day is at hand, and the Bridegroom is upon the Way.

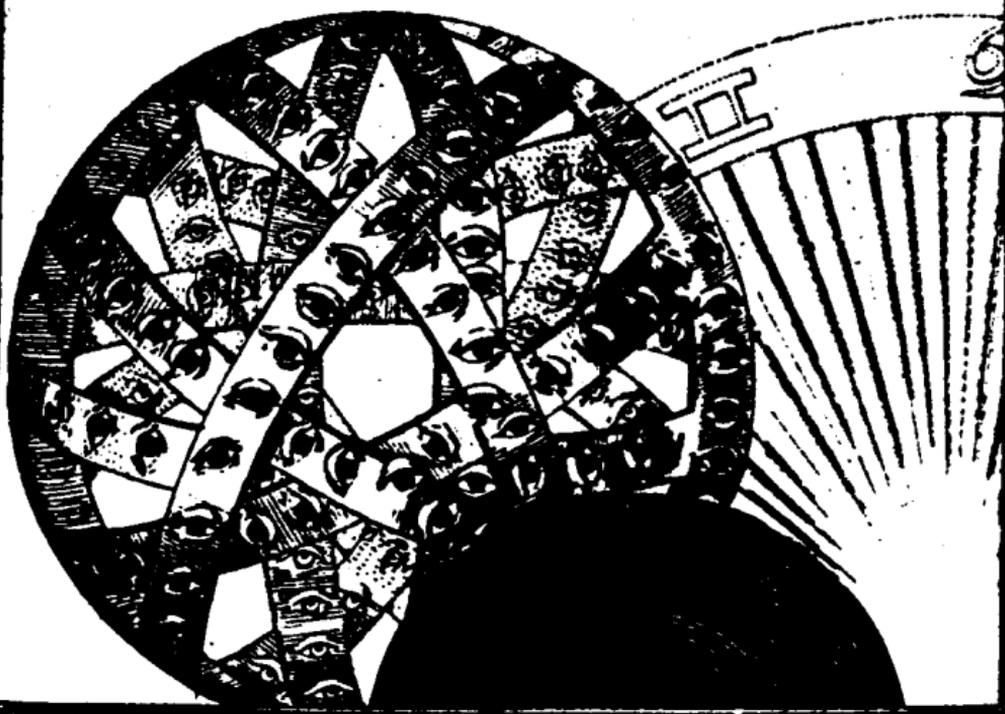
Six days are appointed for labour and affliction, during which that life and power may be preserved we may indeed breath, but not rest till the evening of the 6th day is past, nor rejoice till the seventh is begun.

And before this seventh cometh, all the six days work from the first to the last are gathered, and set before the Eyes of the Lord, who searcheth narrowly, and examineth every thing, to discover what is spoiled, forgotten and neglected, that He may retribute to every one according to his labour; for all what in the 6 days is wrought must on the 7th be exposed to public view.

But that no body in his days work may be driven on too hastily, the Lord measureth the short time of the Earth with the compass of the heavens, He lets the Sun stand still a whole day, he maketh hours to be years, and prolongs our short afflictions with His longanimity, that He may promote us in all things to perfect works, and increase our joy on the sabbath.

Therefore lets He betimes proclaim about this midnight, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh go ye out to meet him: That every one, according to his station, may be ready and prepared, the servants in watchfulness, with their usury gained for their master & and virgins with their lamps trimmed, when the Lord and Bridegroom cometh: all must be ready and prepared: for that he on the Sabbath day will gather wood, or buy oil, when the Bridegroom in his castle is shut up; and celebrates his nuptial feast, he shall be stoned to death, and be cast out into darkness, where there is howling and gnashing of teeth'. But to prevent this, He warneth earnestly and saith: 'What I say unto you I say unto you all. Watch'. And see ye wise and simple ones, what this morning redness, or Aurora declareth to you.

AURORA



To the Three Principles.

About the morning-redness the day separates itself from the night, and each of them is known according to its own nature and power; for nothing can be manifested without a contrariety. No image appears in a clear glass, if not the one side thereof be obscured, who can speak of joy, if he never felt any anguish. And who can discourse of peace, if he knows nothing of war.

Thus contrariety is a manifestation of the equality, which in the Still Eternity dwelleth in itself, insensibly, without light, without darkness, without joy and without anxiety.

But how cometh contrariety into the uniform, equal and Still Eternity which knoweth, and hath, or possesseth nothing else but itself.

When a thing is desired which is not at hand then that desire causeth anguish and woe. Thus a life which is hid and secret affords no joy: and if then the Solitary Eternity hath nothing without itself, it seeketh within itself, the pleasure of it's own manifestation, for Power, Might, and Glory; nay all things lay in it's own bosom. The Darkness and the Light come both out of one ground through the Word according to the Scripture: 'I am the Lord and there is none else, I form the Light and create Darkness, I make Peace and create evil, I the Lord do all these things, that they may know from the rising of the sun and from the West, that there is none besides me'. (Isaiah 45,6.)

And therefore the all-uniform liberty divides itself and yet remaineth also an undivided Soft Unity. It seeketh light and virtue, and maketh itself in the desire anxious and dark. And thus bringeth it forth out of Darkness into Light, for the Darkness raiseth up the Fire; and the Fire produceth the Light, and the Light manifests the wonders of Wisdom in images and figures, which it had out of it's own soft liberty, out of the mirror of Wisdom and wonders introduced into the dark-Desire, and which had been hid therein.

All which, though divine revelation, out of the deepest depth is declared in this book.

Die Belassenheit.



The Threefold Life.

Everything by its form, being and property declareth the intellect and power of its Maker. If we now consider the great and wonderful structure of the visible firmament, and of the Earth, the observe their motions, and take notice of the manifold operations of their power or properties, and contemplate the great variety of the bodies of creatures, how they are hard and soft, gross and subtle, obscure and glistening, thick and clear, heavy and light, we then find the twofold Mother of the manifestation of God, the Darkness and the Light, which out of all their powers and wonders that were sealed have breathed forth, and formed, and made themselves visible with the firmament, stars and elements, and all the palpable creatures, wherein every thing, Life and Death, Good and Evil are together. This is the third life besides those two that are hid, and is called Time in the strife of Vanity.

Here appears the Wisdom, in which the Holy Ghost hath manifested the Divine Powers and images of angels and men, everywhere through sun, moon and stars, through gold, silver, and brass and precious stones, through pleasant colours, and odours, nay through all the good part in all the creatures, especially through man in his understanding, love, justice, benevolence, meekness, chastity, knowledge of God, modesty, skillfulness and virtue.

Here also manifests itself the dark hellish property, through frost, harshness, earth, blackness, poison and stink in all creatures: in man through malice, hatred, folly, anger, lewdness, impiety, brutality and vice.

So this world standeth in a mixed, temporal life, between Light and Darkness, as being actually a mirror of them both, in which the wonders of Eternity in forms of trine are manifested through the Word, as St John saith, 'All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made'.

As the deep declaration thereof in the Divine Light may be seen, in this book of the Threefold Life.

Dreyfaches Leben



To the Book of Predestination.

The first Original of all things is but a will, A and Ω , a beginningless Beginning, and endless End, which by its anxious sharpness of the dark desire, manifesteth itself with its exit in power, light, joy, glory and wonders of wisdom, and breathed forth itself in forms, figures and likenesses, through angels and men, for contemplation of itself.

So is the Created Will of man, a likeness of the Eternal uncreated Will of God, hath fire out of the Fire of God, and Light out of his Light in himself for to manifest his Wonders, and is, after his Creation, his own little god and judge: What he wills and chooseth is his Fiat, which he himself, prepareth for him and judgeth him according to his choice.

Which testimony is in his work and formation, in the Good with light, power and joy in the knowledge of God, virtue and praises; in the Evil with darkness, malice and anxiety in impiety, sins and vices. But seeing that the human Will, through the fall into this corrupt nature, with the temptation of vanity, is in itself so loaded and seduced, that man, even ignorantly chooses the evil, Death is the separator, and the Word of Life which was made flesh, standeth as a looking glass in the middle and giveth power, light and knowledge that man may depart from the pollution, like as the Sun giveth to the vegetables of the Earth: Whosoever now will lay hold on it by repentance, he is laid hold on, and today (that is in that same instant of merciful Light) through death, which the Will, in sin through temptation hath taken in, [is] introduced into Paradise.

But he who maliciously despiseth and mocketh that Grace, to him the Word is dumb, and worketh no promise of life, in his perverse Will, because he loves to be hardened, and chooses death.

Thus the election of Grace is understood in the actual desire after Grace, according to the Word Rev:22 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of Life freely'. And again: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still'. For in the Will lieth the greatest power and the choosing of Good and Evil, which from Divine revelation, in the highest profundity and clearness is made out in this book.

In this figure, the word Will stands forward and backward. The right hand lays hold on the 'WELL' and the left on the word 'WO'.

From the Sun downwards, and upon the Earth, underneath the Lilly and the Thistle are words to this purpose. 'One only Sun no more, one influencing power. And so one sap, brings forth a thistle and a flower.'

Upon the cross on the right hand is written upwards 'Repentance', and downwards 'Remission'; and on the cross on the left, downwards is written 'Malice', and upwards 'Hardening'.

Braden Mag.

ELI WILLE

W O H T



aus einem Saad

Erkenntnis für
den Menschen

Setzt die
den Menschen

Quite below at the right, - 'Come to the Mercy-Seat', and at the left - 'Go to the burning Heat'.

To the Regeneration.

The † is the generation of all things, and the † is also the regeneration, but to reason this is foolishness and a strange paradox, because reason being born out of the constellation, and the friendly sunshine, cannot see nor know that eternal death, which is in its own root. But he who feeleth the sting thereof is made sensible of his great danger, and cries with David anxiously 'Out of the Deep, Lord, Glory to thee'. For he seeth that his Will is perverse, inclined to sin and malice, and rebellious unto God, and therefore he crieth to him for a regeneration of his Will.

But nobody seeth nor feeleth that death, if he searcheth not his own soul, and examineth not his own mind, and considereth not narrowly the shape of his own Will, to find out who formeth and moveth it, whether good or evil works therein, and which of them has the predominion.

For here is the band of Eternity, here is the greatest power, here either God or perdition must be made manifest, here either the Light must joyfully shine in Divine virtues, or the fire must torment and crucify the soul in the darkness in the eternal death, in hellish vices. For two contrary things can by no means be consistent together, God and Mammon, Christ and Belial, the Lamb with 7 eyes, and the Dragon with 7 heads. The emnity must of all necessity be destroyed and entirely taken away either by a reconciliation in obedience, or by an eternal separation.

Therefore hath God set the †, the power of the Ternary in Christ crucified, to be the regeneration of a new Divine Will in the Light, and the separation of the Evil Will into the Darkness: that we in Him out of the New Birth, may work out virtues, good fruits of the Holy Ghost: or else we produce but vices and sins out of the fleshly birth, in evil works, which remain in death and darkness. For where no good will is, there is the power of darkness in the fire, and the soul is become a monster, which can bring forth no good works.

See therefore how the regeneration out of Divine revelation is taught in this little treatise.

In this figure the names of the seven eyes in the light upon the watery triangle, are, in the middle of the uppermost line, the 'Body of Christ', on both sides 'Chastity' and 'Wisdom', and further downwards 'Meekness', and 'Humility', 'Mercifulness' and 'Benevolence'.

And the names of the seven flaming crosses below in the darkness, upon the fiery triangle, are in the middle place of the undermost line, 'Flesh', on both sides 'Lasciviousness' and 'Cunningness', and further upwards 'Anger' and 'Pride', 'Covetousness' and 'Envy'.

Die Sied angebuht.

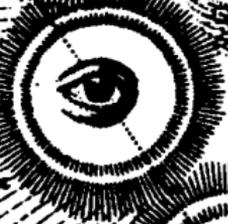
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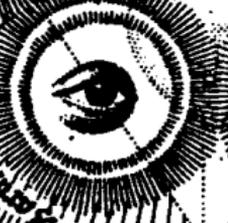


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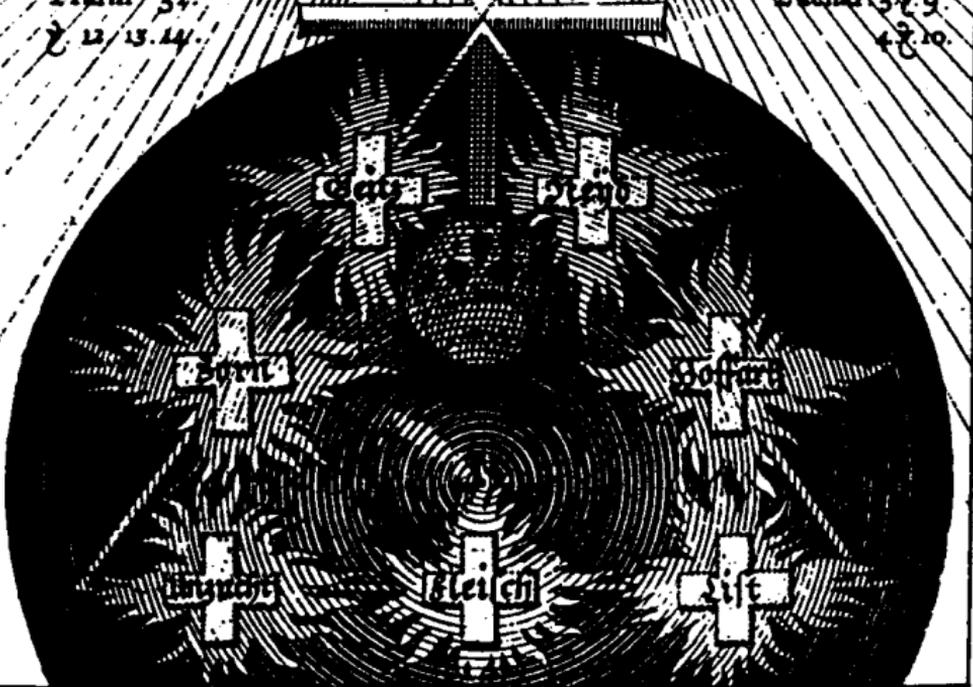
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Pfalz 54
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The Forty Questions of the Soul.

Without a black ground no fine odiferous flower can be manifested, and no gold without a dark hard stone and a poisonous vapour; also no light without darkness. For this is the only way and manner of the manifestation of all the wonders of God.

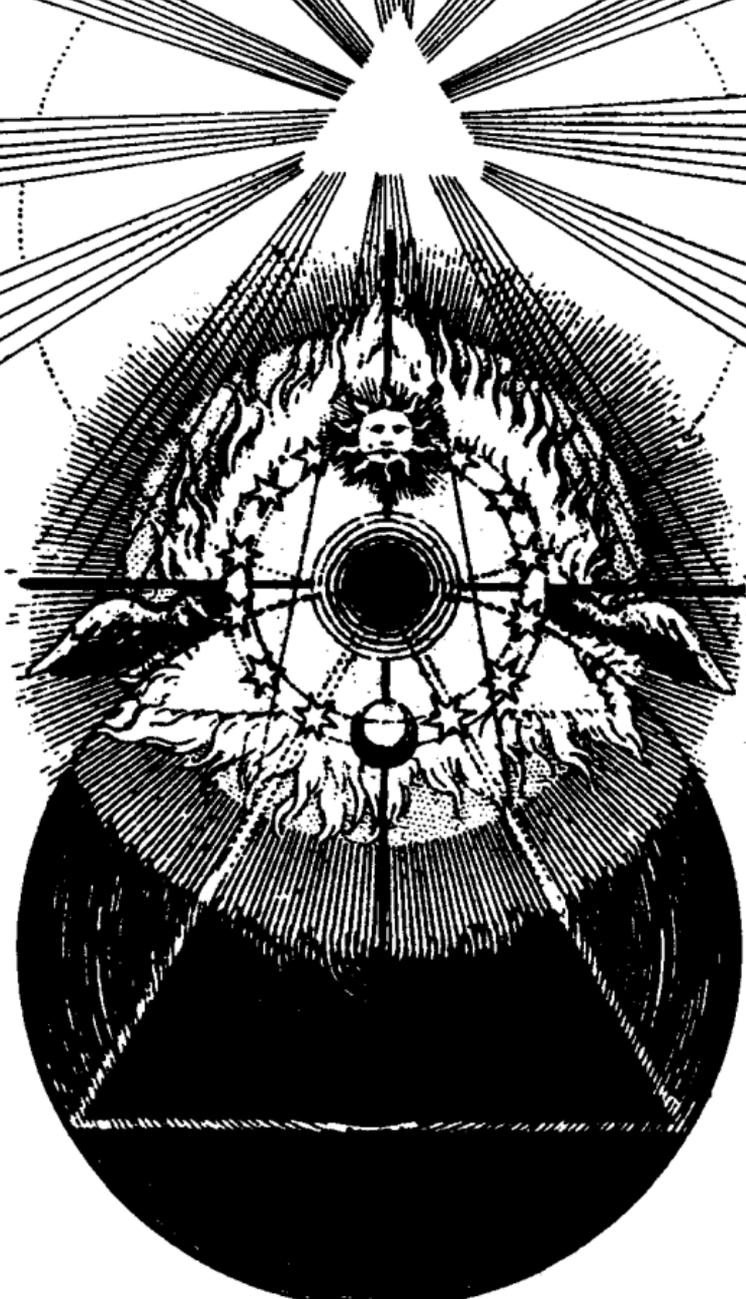
So also, my dear Soul, hath God formed thee, that thou shouldest be a God, his likeness, his image, and his heir, and shouldest manifest the wonders of his Kingdom. But envy hath persecuted thee because thou was in thine infancy dressed in white silk, and crowned with a crown. And though he who persecuted thee was of greater strength, yet was he afraid of thy power, and therefore hypocritically he addressed himself to thine associate who bordered upon his country, that he through him did cast thee down and poisoned thy life.

Oh! hadst thou left this fellow with his Sun, Moon and Star light in the condition of a servant, in which the supreme wisdom hath placed him thou wouldst still be in honour and rest; but because thou hast loved him too much, and trusted him with thy secret treasure, he hath raised up his wings even over the cross, and hath conquered thee, that thou alas! art made his servant and must grind in his mill.

Now thy power is gone, thy honour is turned into ignominy, and thy beauty lieth as a abomination in the dust. Also they powers, and they memory are debilitated by age, toil and labour in the mill, so that thou knowest no more thyself, neither from whence thou comest, nor what the shape of thy youth hath been.

But thy God and Father who hath begotten thee is in his mercy mindful of thy affliction, and therefore he sendeth now to thee his messenger, who declares thy primitive glory, and that he soon will send fire to burn the corn in the field, and a strong wind to pull down the mill. The millstones will he break, and make an end of thy labour, then shall thy first shape and power be renewed, and they honour and joy and security be double, that thou shalt shout for joy and sing; my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour.

10. Fragen von der Seele



The Glory of Light

or

a short treatise showing Urim and
Thummim
to be made by Art, and are the same
with the Universal Spirit corporate
and fixed.

Transcribed from Ms. Ashmole 1415. f61-70.

[Urim and Thummim are esoteric items, which though often speculated and theorised about, remain entirely obscure. They are often described as jewels in the breastplate of the High Priest of the ancient Jews, however this does not entirely explain their mystery. I was delighted when I found this manuscript in Ashmole's hand, which appears to be a translation into English of an unidentified text. In it the Urim and Thummim seem to be described as alchemically prepared ever-burning lights. This piece echoes MS. Ashmole 1408, described in Hermetic Journal 1990, page 163.]

Noble Sir:

Although things merely intellectual are most excellent; yet to know rare things out of use, is held little better than to know nothing, and it is now held a miracle. Also because weak things require the stronger support, I present this invention to you whose long experience hath enabled [you] to discern betwixt good and evil when you come into an artificer's shop and find many instruments appear, of you know not the use, yet you think not the worse of them

that cut your fingers, knowing the artist useth them to perfect[ion], and their speculations are compared to Rachel and Leah for beauty and perfection. Heretofore many worthy men manifested the possibility of squaring the circle, which is not yet done, because in ardua virtuis, and I do desire to hold good correspondence with the Lawers, because they hold Reason to be the soul of the Law, and thereby essences are made manifest by themselves. The victory and regal power of pure sulphur which turns four into one brings perfect peace and shows the quadrate perfection, toward that which it is, is meant to do you service.

The truth seems buried because it brings forth little fruit but it is great and prevaieth to make all things manifest, so far as is possible to all men, for in common sense and reason all agree, in mysteries never; so that we may not speak of Science without knowledge, which breaks the Gates of Brass and cuts asunder the Bars of Iron, before the Eyes of understanding, that the Treasure of Darkness may be opened and the bright and fiery sword discovered, which turns every way to keep transgressors out of Paradise. For if we consider wherein the celestial and terrestrial bodies agree, we shall find something objective in the inferior bodies, whereby they communicate their Celestial virtue and influence, which excellent Art doth imitate to produce a glorious substance of commixed forms, and of clearness, virtue and beauty beyond expression. The Mathematicians say the Celestial influences do hold and govern every natural body, and by many virtues collect a quantity, subsisting without shadow; for the real virtues affect to be specificate, and as living fire gives light to other things, so this central substance of Celestial virtue or form of metals is the subject of this short discourse.

That Urim and Thummim were given on the Mount cannot be proved, yet [that] they are potential from the Creation may appear, for they were substances whose name and essence did predicate each other being convertible terms: the name and essence one, the words signify light and perfection, knowledge and holiness, also manifestation and truth; even as science and essence make one perfection. It is likely they were before the Law given, for the Almighty commanded Noah to make a clear light in the Ark, which some take for a window, others for the arching and bowing of the upper deck a cubit (Gen 8,22), but sith [since] the text saith Day and Night shall no more cease, it seems it did then cease, and whether there were one or many windows is uncertain. But when the windows of Heaven were opened, and the air darkened by pouring out rain, the Sun not giving his light, but prohibited the generative spirit of the creatures in the Ark, what exterior clearness could be expected. Therefore some of the Rabbins say the Hebrew word Zohar, which the Chaldee translates Neher, is not found in the scripture but in this place, so that like the word it seemeth to be a rare light, and that

which is generally doubted to be, the Creator commanded Noah to make by Art. Other Hebrew Doctors say it was a precious stone hung in the midst of the Ark, which gave light to all living creatures therein, this the greatest carbuncle could not do, nor any precious stone that is only natural, but the Universal spirit fixed in a transparent body shines like the Sun in glory, and gives sufficient light for all the room to unveil by. Therefore it is most probable this was the light that God commanded Noah to make, to give light to all living creatures, for it is of perpetual durance.

And whereas Tubal Cain is said to be a perfect Master of every artificer in brass and iron, which some hold doth contain the whole and perfect decoction of the metallic virtue, wherein the central virtue is most abundant, and makes the happy more admired, who walks in the midst of the stones of fire (Ezech: 28,16), for where there are two things of our nature the chief is to be understood, therefore in the mention [mansion?] of fire, pure fire is preferred.

The scarlet veil in the Temple seemed ever moving and signified pure fire generative and moving, which [when] fixed in clear bodies is Urim and Thummim, although essences are not without great difficulty made manifest by themselves, yet the clear vision thereof makes the possibility unquestionable, as at Elisha's prayer his servant saw the horses and chariots of fire about his master, which before he saw not, so are these apparent when the invisible is made visible.

Some think that Urim and Thummim were not artificial because they are said in the text (Exod 28, 30) to be put into the Breastplate, but not to be made, but this point may be cleared by observing the several kinds of making, as betwixt those things made with hands, and those things that are only made visible by effect, for when Nature and habitual virtue meet together the perfection is more absolute by a kind of new generation, as the pure \diamond of metals by an inward power doth purge itself by ebullition, not by the first and remote causes but by the second and nearer, whereof the Philosophers saith the secret of all secrets is such a disposition which cannot be perfected with hands, for it is a transmutation of natural things from one thing to another. Also it is said the Artist taketh impure spirits and by sublimation, Nature and Art, cleanseth them into bodies pure and fixed, so that the bodily nature doth eternally predominate, and being more than perfect doth give perfection to other things. Now that these perfections have their beginnings from two lights, both the text and the ancient philosophers make plain, but ignorance and the matter of the elements are the iron gates which must be cut in pieces before the invisible be made visible, for the natural Urim and Thummim the philosophers affirm what they have seen and done, and that they did nothing save that they knew before, so that a perfect knowledge is especially requisite to make a perfect Art. Therefore we are now to consider the means to attain this end.

The Lord gave Bazael wisdom, understanding and knowledge

(Exod 31, 34), there are the means, for gold is dissolved by wisdom in contrition, assation and fire; the end is directed to invent works in gold, silver and brass; which is not to be understood according to the sound of words but according to the intent of all distillation to extract the inward [perfection] and manifest the central virtue, for where the perfection of the matter is glorious, the perfection of the form must be more glorious.

The Sun and Moon are as the parents of all inferior bodies and those things which come nearest in virtue and temperature are more excellent, The Sun's motion and virtue doth vivify all inferior bodies, and the pure form of the Terrestrial Sun is said to be all fire, and therewith doth the Celestial Sun communicate most virtue. Therefore the uncorrupted quality of pure \diamond being digested in external heat hath also regal power over all inferior bodies, for the Sun doth infuse his influence into all things, but especially into Gold, and these natural bodies do now show forth their virtues, until they be made spiritual.

One of the Rabbins saith they made in the Second Temple Urim and Thummim, to the end they might make up all the 8 ornaments, although they did not enquire by them, because the Holy Ghost was not there, and any Priest that spake not by the Holy Ghost, and on whom the Divine Majesty rested not, they inquire not by him. So it is with sacramental bread, which hath no signification before consecration, but these man have the Spirit of Bezalael, and made the natural and spiritual bodies, which sovereign natural tincture some say so purifieth and causeth the radical humour so to abound, that the children in the fourth generation (yea some say in the tenth) shall perceive the effect of such present health of their ancestors. The two stones which uphold man's life is natural heat and radical moisture which requireth all care to observe equal proportion and mixture like a lamp, where neither the flame nor the oil must surpass, lest the oil is exhausted or the flame suffocated, for there is a possibility and aptness in nature to attain eternity, seeing natural desires are never altogether frustrated, and this aptness extending itself to immortality as it was before the Fall and shall be after the Resurrection, but there is one term of Nature appointed after the Fall and another by the corruption of parents, for these are perfect terminative and privative ends, the hart and eagle renew their young, so that it is possible for Man to attain that which is not denied to unreasonable creature. Others say that if you had once finished this work and should live but 1000 years, you might give what you will and when you will without danger of diminution, as a man that hath fire may give to his neighbour without hurt to himself. Marcus Varro said there was much more in the Flamens Ceremonies than they understood; Vesta signified pure Earth and internal fire, of whom it is said Earth undergoeth the name and so doth Fire. Vesta is both. Thus is shown forth in a work by fire.

Philosophy is nothing but the study of wisdom considered in a created nature, as well subject to sense as invisible, and consequently material; and wisdom's central body is the shadow of wisdom's central essence, and the moral interpretation can never excuse the real effect from ocular demonstration, but where Reason hath experience, Faith hath no merit, and without faith there is no knowledge of any excellent thing, for the end of Faith is understanding.

The Rabbins hold every natural beginning to be either matter or the cause of matter viz., the four elements. Others are of the opinion the Creator made one pure matter of which he made the four Elements, but here beginnings must be well understood, for there are beginnings of preparation, and beginnings of composition, and beginnings of operation, for the Artist was commanded to devise works in gold, that is from the object to the possibility, for if the matter be glorious the form must be more glorious, and though the spiritual nature be more operative, yet the bodily nature must predominate eternally, so that to make the corporeal spiritual, and the spiritual corporeal is the whole scope of this intention, yet the spirit is not first but the natural, for corruption must put on incorruption, and mortality immortality, for that which is of greatest duration and most abundant in virtue doth most excell in glory and beauty, and so is fittest to make Urim and Thummim, for power and honour in his sanctuary.

But because greatest things are not done by strength or habit of fingering, as also because the intellect doth so far excel the sense, this is a work of a second intention, and the beginning upon the virtue of the Elements, that is a pure bright and clear water of putrefaction for the perfection of every Art (properly so-called) requires a new birth, as that which is sown is not quickened except it die: but here death is taken for mutation, not for rotting under the clods, now therefore we must take the key of Art, and consider the secret of every thing is the life, therefore life is a vapour, and in vapour is placed the wonders of Art, whatsoever hath heat agitating and moving in itself, by the internal transmutation is said to live: This life the Artist seeks to destroy and restore an eternal life, with glory and beauty. This vapour is called the vegetable spirit because it is of the degree of heat with the hottest vegetable, and being decocted until it shines like the brightest steel ye shall see great and marvellous secrets, not by separation of elements by themselves but by predomination and victory of that pure fire, which like the celestial Sun enters not materially, but by help of Elemental fire, sends forth his influence and impression of form. Here we must observe differences of perfections, for although you have the fountain of complete white, yet you are not near your chief delight, which is the Fountain of Life and Centre of the Heart, the Universal Spirit, which lives in the radical humidity, and doth naturally vivificate, and is the masculine

seed of the celestial Sol.

Here is that rule made good. Except you sow gold in gold you do nothing. Therefore we must take heed what we understand by gold. Whereof there are 3 sorts - vulgar, chymicall and Divine; which is therefore so called because it is a special gift of God. The Theosophists are persuaded by exact diet, and by certain forms of prayers, at certain times to obtain the Angel of the Sun, to be their guide and director.

The Philosophers advise to take the like matter above earth that nature hath under the earth. Others to search the most precious treasure from a vile thing, all which is easily agreed if rightly understood, for in the lines following the same author saith the vile thing is from the sperm of the gold cast into the matrix of Mercury by a prime conjunction. Others affirm Azoth and ignis to be sufficient for this high perfection. The which Azoth amongst the Germans is Silver, with the Macedonians Iron, with the Greeks Mercury, with the Hebrews Tin, with the Tartars brass, with the Arabians Saturn, and with the Indians it is taken for Gold. All which being ends in Nature are potential in one composition, and by the duel of Spirits, the celestial Gold obtaineth victory over all the rest, and it is made though not without hands a body shining like the Sun in glory which is called *Ens omnis privationis exps* or Thummim.

This is the king that made the pure (Thummim) clear bright fountain, and of it was made himself, the fair woman so loving the red man, she became one with him, and yielded him all glory, who by his regal power and sovereign quality reigneth over the fourfold nature eternally, but if any shall understand either common or chemical gold to be the subject of this sacred body, he is much mistaken for a glorious spirit will not appear save in a body of his own kind.

Although fine maurchett be made of the purest meal, yet wheat is not excluded, and so bread is not properly said to be of the second and nearer causes rather than of the remote, notwithstanding that which is made by effect in a successive course, is as clean as that which is made with hands.

After we fell from unity we groan under the burden of division, but 3 makes up the union, first temporary, and after eternally fixed, he that knows a thing fully must know that it was, is, and shall be, so to know the several parts of a successive course is not a small thing, neither the how and little.

In the right use of the creature, Air turned into Water by his proper mixture, becomes wood, and the same wood by water is turned into a stone. A spring in Italy called Clytumnus, makes oxen white that drink of it, and a water in Bretia makes sheep black that drink of it, and the river in Hungary turns iron into copper. What excellent things may be obtained by habitual virtue, or what power when nature and art make one perfection, who is able to express. That

reverend martyr Johannes Rupercissa affirmeth the exalted quintessence upon the breaking of the glass sendeth forth such fragrant scents that it doth not only delight these that enter into the house, but even the birds that fly by will sit on the threshold so ravished with delight, that they may take them with their hands. And if you desire by art to have thing of admirable sweetness and odour you will take a subject of like quality to exalt unto such excellency, the proper quality of fire and air is sweetness, it is but appropriate in Earth and Water, what bodies shall we find where these are most abundant to be wrought upon.

As the celestial bodies work qualities in other things yet have none in themselves, so the metallic bodies give no tincture, yet are most abundant in tincture. Air is cause of life, Mercury is a [coacted] Air, aetherial and truly homogeneal which doth after a sort congeal and fix. It is called a crude gold, and gold a fixed and mature Mercury, and although the crude quality be cold and dry yet the internal and aetherial spirit is held hot and dry, and [soever] held for the excellency of his temperature that it is all fire or like to it, whereby it is dissolved, howsoever it is at large perceived these bodies are most abundant in pure fire and air, whose proper quality is sweetness. Therefore these are the fittest subjects to make the most precious perfume in the world, and considering clearness and brightness is the centre of each thing and these bodies have both centre and superficies clear and bright, when they are purified by art, and the bodies made spiritual, and those spirits incorporate again, they must necessarily be bodies of greatest or clearest light and perfection, as one compareth a glorified body to a clear lantern with a taper in it saying "the more a man excellet in virtue, the greater or lesser was the taper".

But the work cannot be manifest without the destruction of the exterior form, and the restitution of a better, which is the glorious substances of Urim and Thummim, which in their being and physical use, preserves the temple of Man's body incorruptible.

Some observe not a like difference between liquefaction and solution, but all corrosives or violent operations Nature hates, because there can be no true generation but of like natures. Neither can you have the precious sperms without father and mother, and although one vessel is sufficient to perfect the infant in the womb, yet Nature hath provided several breasts to nourish it, and different means to exalt it to the strength of a man. How gold should be burnt which the fire could not consume, is questionable; but every exaltation of this sovereign spirit adds tenfold power and virtue.

Then take one part of this spirit, which is become as insensible dust, and [when] cast upon molten gold it turns all into powder which being drunk in white wine, openeth the understanding, increaseth wisdom, and strengtheneth the memory, for here is the vein of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge.

The truth of every thing is said to be his incorrupted nature, for

nothing shall rest eternally visible at the last fire, but that which is of pure virtue and essential purity. Truth and science is not led by chance or fortune, but the spirit of God guides by the hand of Reason, and it seems the prophets approve of these stones of fire, some mentioning the stone of darkness, and as it were fire turned up, others the stone of tyme [sic], and Ezekiel the stone of fire attained by wisdom, which he differeth from the natural precious stones, as pure fire from common fire.

Therefore let modesty allow that possible whereof he understands not terminations and degrees, neither refuse the waters of Shiloh because they go slowly, for they that wade in deepest waters cannot go fast.

To obtain the treasures of Nature, ye must only follow Nature who gives not like time to every generation. But as the mare hath ten months, the elephant hath three or as some say nine years and 50 before conjunction, be patient therefore in a work of nature, for thereunto only is promised victory and the chief errors in art are hastiness and dullness.

Hidden Door (Gnomic Verse)

One for water, one for fire.
 Two to make a magic lyre,
 Three to make a silver crown,
 Four to bring the stardust down;
 Five to make a kingly bed
 Where true lovers lie a-wed,
 Six to make the serpent's eye,
 Seven is the starry sky;
 Eight to make the maidens sing,
 Nine gives best of everything;
 Ten to end the thing begun,
 Eleven stands upon the sun;
 Twelve is still a diamond stone,
 Thirteen emerald alone,
 Fourteen is the Holy Pair,
 Fifteen mounts the spiral stair;
 Sixteen travels on alone,
 Seventeen is nearer home;
 Eighteen makes the eagle fly,
 Nineteen rides the towers by;
 Twenty is a golden lark,
 Twenty-one the blackest dark;
 Twenty-two is barely shown,
 Twenty-three a crystal throne;
 Twenty-four a maiden fair,
 Twenty-five her lover dear;
 Twenty-six has fiery eyes,
 Twenty-seven a soul that dies;
 Twenty-eight a different path,
 Twenty-nine a rod and staff;
 Thirty is a coral shore,
 Thirty-one the hidden door.