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MYSTICISM - SCIENCE - THE ARTS

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VOLUME 1 - NO. 2



Experience Cosmic Consciousness

The Rosicrucian Order

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Rosicrucian Beacon Online

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An online
English Language Magazine
published by the English Grand
Lodge for Europe, the Middle
East and Africa of the
ROSICRUCIAN ORDER at

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Crowborough
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UNITED KINGDOM

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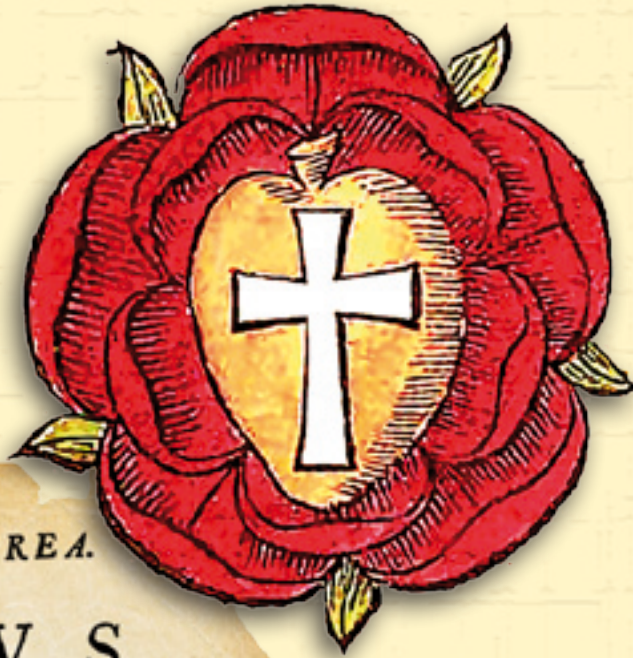
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The Laws of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross

by Amelia



THEMIS AUREA.
THE
L A W S
OF THE
FRATERNITY
OF THE
ROSIE CROSSE.

Written in Latin by Count
MICHAEL MAIERUS,
And now in English for the Infor-
mation of those who seek after
the knowledge of that Honourable
and mysterious Society of wife
and renowned Philosophers.

—*Quæ non fecimus ipsi
Vix ea nostra voco*—

Whereto is annexed an Epistle to
the Fraternity in Latine, from some
here in ENGLAND.

LONDON,
Printed for N. Brooke at the Angel in
Cornhill: 1656.

First Law

That none of them should profess any other thing, than to cure the sick and that gratis.

Second Law

None of the posterity should be constrained to wear one certain kind of habit but therein to follow the custom of the country.

Third Law

That every year upon the day C, they should meet together at the house Sancti Spiritus, or write the cause of his absence.

Fourth Law

Every Brother should look about for a worthy person, who after his decease might succeed him.

Fifth Law

The word R.C. should be their seal, mark and character.

Sixth Law

The Fraternity should remain secret one hundred years.

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The Laws of the Fraternity were first set in print by Michael Maier in 1618 in Latin. The title page of the English translation, printed in 1656, is illustrated opposite.

THESE ARE THE SIX TRADITIONAL LAWS of the Rosicrucians. By these six articles, the Rosicrucian brethren bound themselves, one to another, to keep their agreement, their mystical contract.

The six laws appeared in print for the first time in 1614 within the text of a book that bore the title: *The Fama Fraternitatis of the Meritorious Order of the Rosy Cross* and these laws were addressed to the learned in general and the Governors of Europe. The Latin words *Fama Fraternitatis* are translated, simply and directly, as the “fame (or reputation) of the fraternity (or brotherhood).” In a broader and better sense, the word “fama” means legend, the mystical story that surrounds and protects the truth within. “Fraternitatis” can also mean an association or an assembly, just as the term *ecclesia* (assembly) used by the Greeks, and subsequently by the Romans, came to mean

a church. The best definition of the title *Fama Fraternitatis* is probably, the “Legend of the Order.”

When it was first published in 1614 in Kassel, Germany, it fulfilled that title in that it recited the mythical origin of our Order. It told about the life and works of the founder CRC, Christian Rosenkreutz, as well as the creation of the Order and of the six laws that were their articles of association.

First Law

The First Law is the most important, for it states their purpose: “That none of them should profess any other thing, than to cure the sick and that gratis.” To take this first law literally would be to imply that the Order was an early 17th century medical association. This clearly was not the case, although then as now, the healing of disease and the comforting of the sick is among the highest of human professions.

We are given the insights necessary to interpret this first law by an examination of another book that was published as a companion text to the Fama. This book, entitled the “Universal Reformation,” was a fairly literal translation excerpted from a larger work previously published by an Italian humanist, Traiano Boccalini. Many historians of the Rosicrucian movement have considered the Universal Reformation to be unrelated to the movement since it was essentially

an amusing satire of an attempt by Apollo to improve the conditions of the age through the assistance of the wise men of both ancient and contemporary times. In this satire, the condition of humanity is symbolised as being a disease ridden old man. In an attempt to heal this sick man, this corrupt humanity, Apollo calls together seven wise men to a meeting on Mount Parnassus and there they debate the cause of mankind’s infirmities and possible cures.



Title page of *De Raggvagli di Parnaso (News-sheet from Parnassus)* by Traiano Boccalini (1556-1613).

Though most historians consider the Universal Reformation to be coincidental with the Fama but not really germane to a study of the Order, many consider it to be absolutely essential to an understanding of what the Order intended to accomplish. By the beginning of the 17th century, the “learned of Europe” (to whom the Fama was addressed) were waiting for a great general reformation far more radical than that accomplished by Martin Luther and the majority of Protestant Europe. This was to be a reformation that not only continued the moral improvement of mankind as advocated by the Protestant reformers but was to extend past the religious element into the realms of art, science, literature and education. The excesses that Luther had found in the Universal Church and had attacked so vehemently were paralleled in all other avenues of human endeavour. Science in particular was hampered by the oppressive authority of Aristotle; astronomy had been retarded by the 1,600 year old authority of Claudius Ptolemy. The Copernican theory of a sun-centred universe was under attack by both Catholic and Protestant forces that used certain Biblical passages in an attempt to maintain an earth-centred view of time and space.

Being, as it was, in the vanguard of this anticipated reformation, the Rosicrucian Order gained considerable publicity and prominence. It became the lens that focused the hopes and dreams of an oppressed society into a movement that nurtured the legitimate aspirations of much of Europe.

Since the vast majority of people lived in such distressing conditions, their lot was sometimes represented by the symbol of a diseased old man, and it was incumbent on everyone to become a “doctor of the heart” and a “physician of the soul.” The universal panacea for such a diseased condition as mankind existed in was the ancient and, unfortunately, little used Christian concept of *caritas*, that special

charity and concern which allows for freedom of religion, freedom of expression and freedom of the individual mind to soar to the limits of its particular abilities.

So, all of us are obliged to honour this first and most important of the laws of the Order; to

“The Rosicrucian Order focussed the hopes and dreams of an oppressed society into a movement that nurtured universal reformation.”

heal whatever “sickness” we encounter, whether it resides in a loved one, a friend, or permeates society as a whole. We are obliged to do so gratis, free of charge, and we should seek no personal

advantage for being of assistance to those around us in our society. More than that, the Latin word *gratis* is closely related to another Latin word, *gratia*, meaning “grace.” In the Christian tradition, grace is a gift from God given freely to those who are worthy of receiving it. If we open ourselves to it, the “Divine spirit” will operate through us. This energy, which we might style as the God of our Heart, uses our human condition as a lens by which the Cosmic Mind can focus on correcting the infirmities of humanity.

Each of us can make an impact on the world and the Master within will guide us along that path. We should all act as physicians and start with those nearest and dearest to us. But first we must act as is suggested in the Universal Reformation: cleanse our own soul “from all fallacies, hidden vice, hatred and counterfeit love.” Physician, heal thyself... and then heal others.

Because of its primacy and its relevance to the 21st century, we have dwelt considerably more on the first law than the five that follow. Let us now briefly look at them.

Second Law

The Second Law states: “None of the posterity should be constrained to wear one certain kind of habit but therein to follow the custom of the country.” On the simplest level, we conduct ourselves, as do all members of whatever society we live in, to do the work as outlined in the First Law within the

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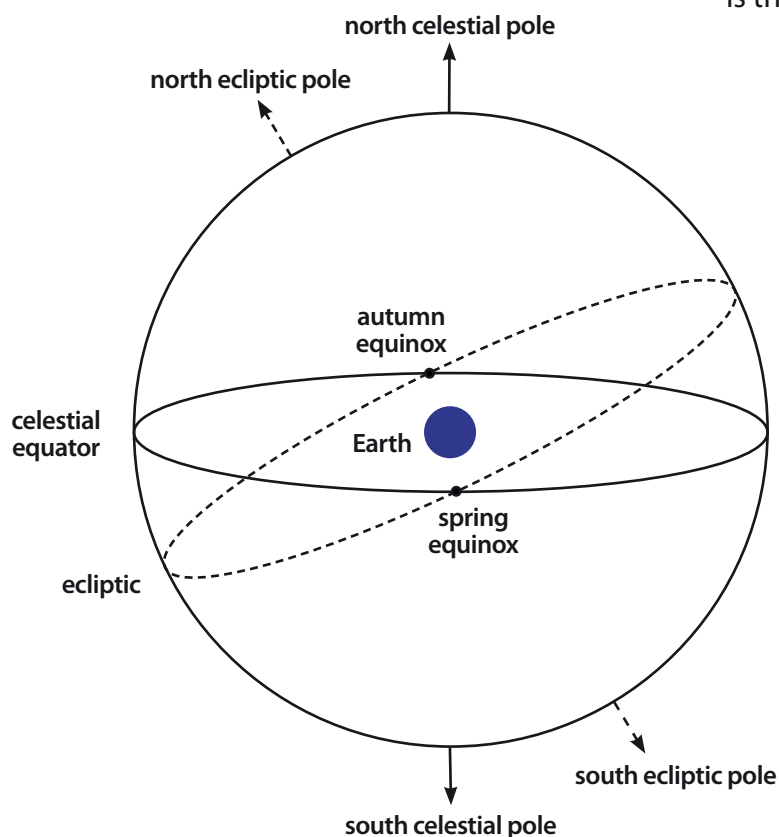
context of our particular and individual society. Our works manifest within the cultural context of the society in which we live. We do not walk about in saffron robes, nor do we shave our heads, nor do we profess to eat only ritualistically cleansed food. We are ordinary people on the outside, drive ordinary cars and hold down ordinary jobs. But on the inside, we are very different from the average man and woman, for we have a different direction in life, a transcendent purpose and goal.

Third Law

The Third Law says: *“That every year upon the day C, they should meet together at the house Sancti Spiritus, or write the cause of his absence.”* This term, “the day C,” has been variously interpreted as the day of Corpus Christi, the day that the body of Christ was taken intact into heaven according to Christian tradition. It has also been interpreted as Christmas Day. Neither is correct, for the day “C” goes back to pre-Christian Rome where the calendar was divided into two sets of dates called *fas* and *nefas*. *Fas* refers to what is permitted, while that of *nefas* to what is not permitted. On a *nefas* day certain business activities were not allowed

and these “holy days” were indicated by the use of the letter C.

More directly, the Latin letter “C” conceals its equivalent Greek letter which looks very much like our English letter X. This X, composed of two crossed lines, represents a celestial crossing point. It symbolises the crossing in space of the Sun’s apparent pathway in the sky called the *ecliptic* and that of the *celestial equator*, the imaginary extension into space of our world’s own equator. The Sun moving northward on the ecliptic crosses the celestial equator on the first day of the northern hemispheric spring, namely, the spring or vernal equinox. This is the day “C”, the day on which the Rosicrucian Order celebrates the New Year. Rosicrucians do so at the house called *Sancti Spiritus*, the house of the Holy Spirit. The Latin words “Sancti Spiritus” ([of the] Holy Spirit) are qualified by their endings, which place them grammatically in what is called the genitive case, indicating ownership or possession. Just as Rosicrucians say their Supreme Temple is owned or possessed by the Rosicrucian Order, so the endings indicate that the Holy Spirit is possessed by something or someone. God alone possesses the Holy Spirit and its residence, and this house is the Earth upon which we dwell.



The Celestial Sphere is the term used to describe the superimposition of the earth co-ordinates, latitude and longitude, against the observers sky. These are called “declination” and “right ascension” respectively. Since the earth’s pole is tilted at an angle to the plane of the sun, it follows that there will occur two opposite crossing points of the ecliptic (the sun’s path against the sky) with that of the celestial equator. These are known as the vernal (spring) and autumnal equinoxes.

Fourth Law

The Fourth Law states: "Every Brother should look about for a worthy person, who after his decease might succeed him." On its basic level and in its time, this law referred to the transmission of ideas and the work by a one to one arrangement of Master and student. In its broader, modern-day connotation, one could say that the dissemination of the Order's ideals by whatever means, would satisfy this law. Were it to have remained a one to one relationship through the centuries, the Order could not possibly have become the international organisation it is today.

Fifth Law

The Fifth Law: "The word R.C. should be their seal, mark and character." The letters "R.C." in this instance do not refer to the word "Rosicrucian." They do however form a seal of the Rosicrucians' work, marking their efforts and characterising their aspirations. A leading Rosicrucian at the time of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, Michael Maier, wrote a commentary, *Themis Aurea*, 1618, on the laws and stated that the letters "R.C." refer to both Caesar and to Pegasus the flying horse. Julius Caesar, in the year 45 BCE, revised the calendar of Rome and gave us what is known as the Julian Calendar which, with modifications (notably the Gregorian) is still in use today. The reference to Pegasus is one of those trivial bits of history that gives us insight into the thinking of the people of that time.

Behind the ecliptic, i.e. the Sun's apparent path through the sky during the year, are placed twelve constellations collectively called the "Zodiac." One of these, Pisces (the two fish), is associated with the vernal or spring equinox in our epoch of time.¹ Between the two fish or the constellation of Pisces and slightly above them, is the constellation of Pegasus. In the Greek myth concerning Pegasus, it is said that the winged horse flew down near the Earth and one of his hooves struck the ground on a mountaintop and from this

Maier was born in Rendsburg, Holstein, in 1568. He studied philosophy and medicine at Rostock (1587), Frankfurt (Oder) (M.A. 1592), and Padua. He attained in 1596 a doctorate in medicine at Basel, and returned to Rostock to practice the medical profession. He also briefly (c. 1601) practised in Königsberg and Danzig. Around this time he became interested in alchemy...



a spring erupted to water the land. The mountain that Pegasus struck was called Mount Parnassus, the very place where Apollo held his meeting of the wise men as recounted in the Universal Reformation.

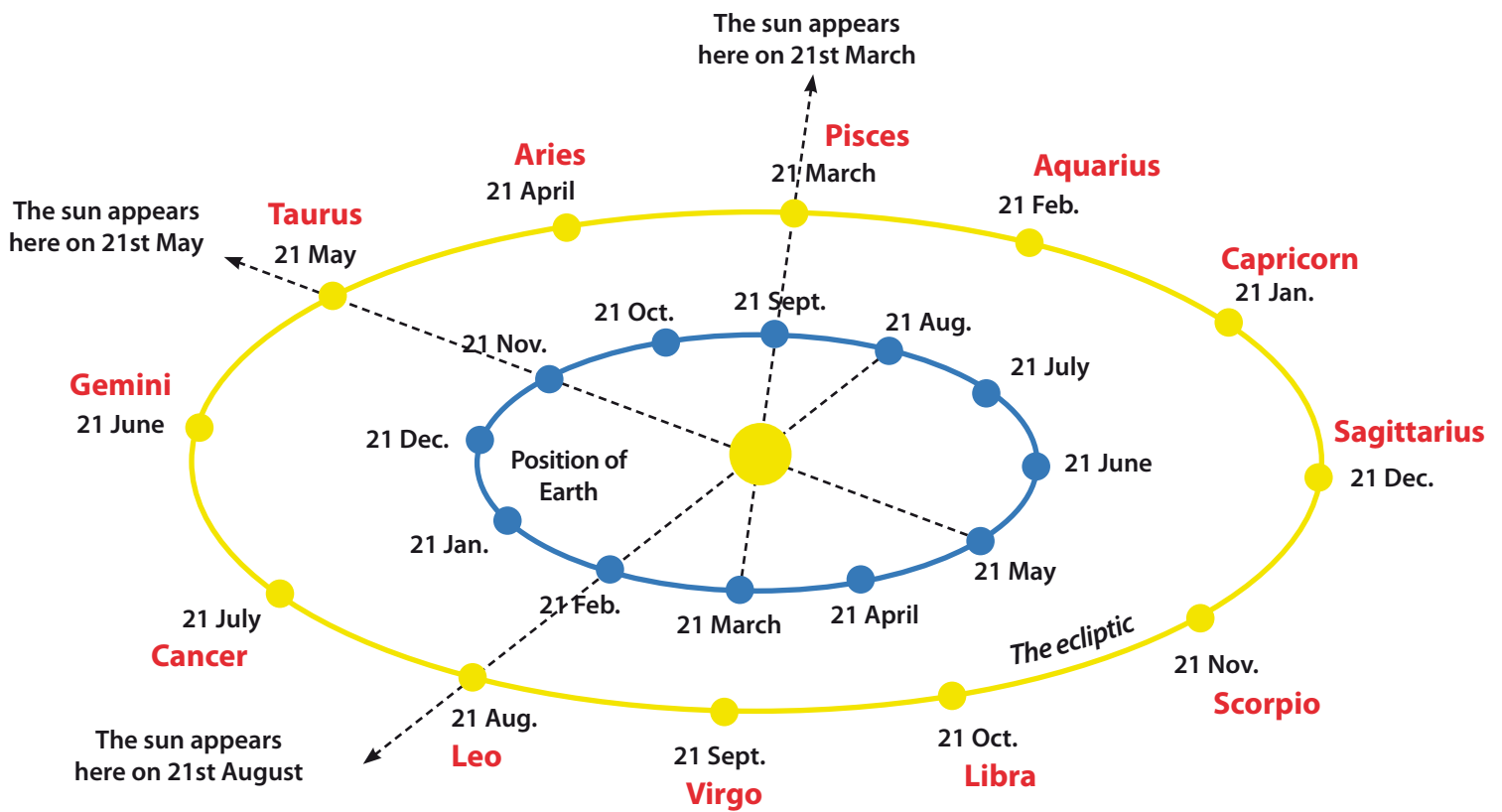
In the sky, if one were to consult a chart of the heavens, one would find that one of Pegasus' front hooves stands just above the point where the vernal equinox occurred in 1614, the date of the publication of the *Fama*. The spring of water that erupted caused by Pegasus' hoof stands for the springtime rains. Michael Maier alludes to that point of time that heralds the reappearance of the Rosicrucian fraternity.

Maier has therefore given us the Macrocosmic co-ordinates. Yet, according to the hermetic axiom "as above, so below," we must still seek a further explanation on the Microcosmic, that is human, level. Remember that by the early 17th century, Europe had developed for centuries within the confines of a very strict and authoritarian Christian tradition. The Church had been dominant for well over a thousand years and the new phenomenon which we today call Protestantism, was ill-defined. The Rosicrucian movement occurred at the time of this Protestant phenomenon but was not truly a part of it. To use a modern label, we might style the movement more as a Gnostic type of Christianity than Protestantism or Catholicism.

We read the letters R.C. from left to right as is common in the Latin method. However, if we reverse the letters and read from right to left i.e. C.R., and substitute the Latin letters for their Greek equivalents, that is the letter



The Chi-Rho figure



Chi ("X") for C and Rho ("P") for R, we arrive at the traditional Greek monogram for Christ.

In a veiled form, the writers of the Fama were expressing their inherent Christian background. This Christianity was not what we would style as either Catholic or Protestant but nearer to an early Gnostic type such as that expressed by Origen or Eusebius, both of whom recognised the Christian phenomenon as being of an antiquity that predated the appearance of Jesus and both of whom had their writings condemned as heretical a few centuries after their time. This Gnostic type of Christianity placed Christ not on a cross as a separate being but squarely within each individual.

Today, Rosicrucians use a broader term that transcends any dogma by referring to the "God of our Hearts" or to the "Master Within." Labels, though interesting, are not as important as the truth they represent. To a greater or lesser degree, each of us has an element of the divine resident within us at all times, no matter what our belief system is.

Sixth Law

The Sixth Law states: "The Fraternity should remain secret one hundred years." Whilst it sounds pretty

Behind the ecliptic, i.e. the Sun's apparent path through the sky during the year, are placed twelve constellations collectively called the "Zodiac." One of these, Pisces (the two fish), is associated with the vernal or spring equinox in our epoch of time. (Diagram adapted from http://elfindingpolaris.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/sun_in_zodiac.jpg)

straightforward, actually it is not. The Order should remain not secret but secreted, held like a treasury in our hearts, protected as something of great value and not for just 100 years, but forever. The reference to "100" is a play on words, because the German word *Großhundert* or "Great Hundred" in the original text actually means "120." This was the period of time that Frater Christian Rosenkreutz remained hidden in the Rosicrucian Vault until its discovery in the year 1604.

These then are the laws of the brethren of the Rosy Cross, then as now.

Endnotes

1. For centuries, Astrology has been based on the coincidence of the position of the constellation of Aries at the point where the celestial equator and ecliptic intersect. This is known as the vernal (or spring) equinox. However, due to the celestial motion we call "precession of the equinoxes" caused by a wobble of the earth's axis, one full circle being around 26,000 years, the constellation of Pisces is now positioned at the celestial equator/ecliptic intersection.



Realising Our Divine Nature

by Dennis Kwiatkowski

AS STUDENTS ON THE PATH, we often fail to realise just how far we have progressed in our journey on the path of perfection. All too often, we fail to realise just how great a change has taken place in our consciousness. This is because we judge ourselves from a personal standpoint, in terms of the future, in terms of what we have yet to accomplish, in terms of what we have yet to overcome. Such an assessment is rarely objective or detached, and our own evaluation of our progress may be wholly incomplete and inaccurate.

Furthermore, as has often been stated, that one word of encouragement we have given another, that one kind smile we have extended, that one thoughtful act we have done, that one

ray of hope we have generated, may be the very thing that sets into motion an entire series of events in a person's life which sets him or her on the road to self-mastery.

Naturally, we consciously endeavour to improve, refine and perfect our personality, to build a bridge between the objective and the subconscious, to have a conscious realisation of our unity with all things and of the Divine Consciousness within us. This is our real nature, our true state of being, and our first estate.

One of the first things we must do to attain this oneness is to truly learn to love ourselves. Each of us is a beautiful expression of Cosmic Love. No matter that there is still much work that has to be done. No matter that there is still a change that

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must take place in our consciousness. Each of us, even as we are at this very moment, is expressing the wonderful nature of the Cosmic itself.

The Love Within

This is not egoism, or a form of flattery or self-deception. It is a realisation of the fact that before we can merge with the totality of the Universal, we must first have a realisation of that Divine Love and perfection within us. We must first love ourselves. No guilt, no hang-ups, no fretting over what isn't. Just a realisation of what is: that we are a part of Universal Love, that we are worthy of love, and that we are lovable.

It is helpful to note that one of the many obstacles that hold us back in this attainment and in our forward progress is the emotion of fear. It is one of the most insidious and enslaving of emotions. And yet, what do we fear? We fear failure. We fear the unknown; we fear new and unfamiliar circumstances. All of these fears bind us. They shackle us. They chain us down and keep us from accomplishing our goals and in some cases, from accomplishing anything worthwhile at all. But, as students on the Path, we know that fear can be erased.

Fear of failing is erased by succeeding. Fear of the unknown is eradicated when something becomes known to us and understandable to us. Fear of a new experience is obliterated by facing that experience and by undergoing new experiences. So, we gain not only new experience but also new knowledge. The unknown then becomes the known and failure becomes success.

Sometimes we become discouraged because we attempt to do the impossible, too much at one time; we bite off too big a chunk, so to speak. Discouraged, we frequently stop trying to succeed or to accomplish anything at all. This must be avoided. We must continue to strive in areas where we can gain some leeway. To quote from one of the books published by AMORC, *Cares*

That Infest: "We must not let the things we can't do, keep us from doing the things we can."

Our Noble Attempts

Further, we have within us talents and abilities we haven't dreamed of, and continually accomplish more good than that of which we are aware. All too often, we are our own worst critics; we feel that if we have failed in something for the time being, nothing has been accomplished. What we do not realise is that our very act of striving, our efforts, our noble attempts are a force which radiates outward and which gives strength and hope to people around us and elsewhere who are inspired by our efforts.

Each time we pick ourselves up and try again, we generate a bit of help to those who perhaps, do not have the strength to try again, or who do not have the determination that we have. The

"We must realise that before we can merge with the totality of the Universal, we must first have a realisation of that Divine Love and perfection within us."

power that is established by our striving affects the entire universe for the better just as surely as a stone plunging into a pond cannot do other than, through the ripples

that it causes, affect the entire pond. So, even if we do not accomplish all that we wish, we become a constructive force in the universe just by being ourselves.

In addition to this, each of us is important, each of us is special. We each possess a talent that we can do perhaps better than anyone else and which harmonises beautifully in the scheme of things. We each have something to contribute. Our very presence is important. Each of us would be sorely missed if we were not here.

We are admonished to be aware of the Sacred Light that we carry, and we do carry this Light. Fear prevents it from radiating. To radiate Light does not require trauma and tribulation, only a bit of effort, effort which will establish a pattern that will ensure future happiness. After all, we are meant to overcome and master all of the situations that presently cause us fear.

As individuals, we may be only drops in the great blue Cosmic Sea, but some of the drops sparkle. Some of them do indeed sparkle as we allow ourselves to be ourselves, to realise our Divine Nature, To sparkle, we add to the power and force of the Cosmos itself. We add lustre and motion to the beauty of a boundless sea. A sea without sparkle and motion is stagnant, bland, dull and lifeless. Your particular sparkle is exactly what is needed. We must remember that the good we can accomplish is virtually unlimited. Our bit of

striving, our smile, our kindness, our perseverance can in degrees, uplift all of mankind. Whenever we attempt the noble, we have the support of the entire universe and there is no fearful condition that will not yield to our efforts.

An old Rosicrucian dictum states: "*If you dare to do, you will be given the power to do.*"

Finally, our individual efforts and sparkle add not only our contribution; they increase the beauty, brilliance and grandeur, of an already magnificent and infinite Cosmic Ocean.

Four Ways to Acquire Virtue

IN FAR OFF DAYS IN INDIA people were much concerned with lucky omens, good luck signs for their welfare and especially with auspicious performances for gaining blessings.

Questioned on such matters, Gautama the Buddha pointed out that the best performance for acquiring blessings was not to keep company with fools but to associate with the wise and to honour those worthy of honour. He also recommended the support of one's parents; the cherishing of one's wife and children; proficiency in handicraft; acquiring profound knowledge; and paying strict attention to social behaviour and speech.

To those prepared for further instruction, Gautama offered the practice known as the "Four Brahma Viharas," or the "Four Divine Abidings," which are:

1. Loving kindness
2. Compassion
3. Gladness
4. Equanimity of the mind

Loving kindness succeeds when ill-will and hostility subside and selfish affection and greed no longer masquerade as friends.

Compassion succeeds when cruelty and grief no longer produce sorrow.

Gladness succeeds when the joy for the success of others is shared and aversion and boredom have subsided.

Equanimity succeeds when any tendency to resentment or indifference has subsided and the equality in all beings can be seen.

Those who are consciously developing their spirituality will see how the practice of these Four Divine Abidings will bring about the bliss of insight here on the earth plane and will also prepare them for the existence on the cosmic plane of consciousness where the opportunity for divine service to humanity is immeasurable.

by Pensatrix



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Bringing Light to the World

by Bill Anderson

MY FIRST INTRODUCTION to the spiritual native cultures of the Pacific Northwest of Canada and the USA was when I happened to catch a TV programme that was showing a Canadian film from the early 20th century. The scene showed a canoe, full of native people, heading towards the shore in front of a native village. In the prow of the canoe was someone impersonating a bear, moving realistically and accompanied by the sound of hauntingly spiritual native chanting. Years later it is still engraved in my memory. Listening to those chants had awakened something deep within me and I felt compelled to find out more about the remarkable culture portrayed in the film. As I continued my research the more I became

impressed with the profound spirituality of their lives, and a remarkable concordance with the Rosicrucian philosophy.

Primordial Myth Time

The Northwest Coast native cultures, that began long before the Greek and Roman civilisations of Europe, possessed an art, songs and material culture imbued with human, animal and supernatural beings who were created somewhere at the edge of the universe in a primordial myth time, reminiscent of the “Dreamtime” of the Australian Aborigines. Images known as *petroglyphs*, chipped into stone, were used by generations of native teachers to record their history, foretell events and transmit knowledge to the young. Like the instructional Rosicrucian monographs, they taught the mysteries of the universe and strategies for dealing with life.

Myths can be interpreted from a variety of perspectives. On the one hand they tell stories that explain natural phenomena, such as how the world was made, how plants and animals came to be the way they are, and how humans should behave in caring for the Earth and each other. On another level, myths are a rich source of insight



Raven stealing the sun: a typical example of indigenous art.



An example of petroglyphs from mid-west America.

into society and the human condition. Although these stories may not seem real, they describe truths that are universal for all humanity. Myths have meaning because they represent archetypes, patterns of life and thought that are universally valid. Today, there is a growing interest in looking at myths to uncover their hidden meaning. The stories reflect underlying psychological and spiritual processes at work in the human psyche. They are said to be the collective dreams of society which influence people’s behaviour, attitudes and daily lives.

An underlying principle shared by all indigenous cultures is that all things and all life are connected: the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual. All worlds are seen as interdependent rather than as separate entities. Life is perceived as eternal, and death is but a pause in the continual cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Re-enacting myths was an important way in which native people experienced the wisdom and power of their ancestors. As old myths were retold, new ones continued to be created. Those that had universal benefit survived to instruct, delight and respond to the deep human need to be connected to something greater than themselves.

In the Pacific Northwest of British Columbia and Alaska, “Raven” was the culture hero, the trickster, transformer and most important of all creatures. Raven put the sun and moon in the sky, created the rivers and lakes, brought plants and animals to the land, and released humans into the world by opening a giant clamshell. He

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gave people fire and brought light to the Earth by stealing it from the "Spirit of the Sky World," just like the ancient Greek myth of Prometheus. Although Raven brought life into the world, he is not the Creator who conceived the universe out of chaos. Capable of doing both helpful and harmful deeds, Raven taught humans important skills as well as causing them trouble through mischievous antics. He is a paradox, an embodiment of the creative tensions that exist between two opposites.

Spiritual Belief in Daily Life

From south to north, the Pacific Northwest tribes of present-day British Columbia and Alaska were the Coast Salish, *Nuu-Chah-Nulth* (formerly known as the "Nootka"), the *Kwakwaka'wakw* (formerly known as the "Kwakiutl") the *Nuxalk* (formerly known as the "Bella Coola"), the *Haida*, the *Tsimshian* and the *Tlingit*. Each of these tribes had a distinct language group, and within each group there were many dialects. Language is an important key to the understanding of legends, religion, artistic expressions and lifestyle of traditional cultures. For all the native communities on the coast, maintaining a relationship with the spirit world was a priority and the history of each family was rooted in encounters between ancestors and spirit beings.

Traditional native villages were often built on the narrow coastal plain only a few steps from the sea. Behind the villages were mountains, places associated with wisdom and power, and rain forests, both of which provided many of the necessities of life. The people of the coast were seafarers who travelled between villages in their canoes, sometimes even as far south as California. There was one myth told about Raven's magic canoe that could shrink to

Typical coastal village around 1900; archaeological evidence extends the existence of these habitations thousands of years into the past.

(Source: <http://www.sfu.ca/brc/virtualvillage/>)

the size of a pine needle or expand to hold the entire universe.

The practice of shamanism is as old as human consciousness itself, and is manifested in a variety of different forms in many of the world's indigenous cultures. In part, the role of a shaman is to intervene with the spirit world, heal the sick, find lost souls, predict the weather and the future, and ensure the success of hunting expeditions and other community endeavours. From a young age, the hunters learned how to kill without causing unnecessary suffering. They prepared for the hunt by purifying themselves in ritual sweat baths while the shamans communicated with the spirits that controlled the animals, asking for their release so they would present themselves to be caught by the hunters. Ritual songs were sung over the dead animals, and thanks were given for the food they provided.

The mainstay of their diet was fish, primarily salmon. When the native people ate them, they believed they were consuming their souls. They were taught that humans must also show their gratitude and respect for them by performing dance or song rituals as a means of reciprocity or payment. Can we discern here a form of Karma in action? Rituals were an expression of gratitude, acknowledging a debt to the Creator and to all the creatures that contributed to sustaining life on Earth, just as Rosicrucians give thanks for the food they eat and hope that it will sustain all those who are in need.





Large cedar trees were required to build the Haida house. Once the trees had been felled they were rolled onto large canoes and took to the place of house construction. The logs were cut into planks while others excavated the floor in preparation for the build.

Haida houses were rectangular and between 25 and 33 metres long by 17 metres wide. Sometimes Haida houses had smoke holes in the top that had a board propped up to protect the opening from rain and snow.

© Museum of Anthropology (Source: <http://www.besttourism.com/medias/dfp/9495>)

The same respect was shown to trees that were felled for building, clothing and medicinal purposes. Trees they believed, like animals, possessed souls and were therefore living beings. When taking the leaves, bark, wood and roots from trees for human use, native people followed ritual practices that demonstrated their deep appreciation for the glory of trees and the spiritual bond that existed between them and the trees.

Sacred Geometry

The *Haida* of the Queen Charlotte Islands and southern Alaska built traditional houses which had a central hearth and four corner posts that represented the four corners of the world. Here there are similarities to our Rosicrucian Lodges with their four geographical stations. Two invisible lines can be drawn through the hearth, one from the back to the front of the house and the second from one side to the other. These intersecting lines are seen as the axes of the world. The line that runs from the back to the front of the house continues out into the ocean, joining all the houses at a common point in the sea. At the back of the house, this line continues up into the mountains, joining the sky world to the sea world. The line that runs from side to side travels around the world, joining

all the houses of the same lineage together. In addition to the horizontal world axis, totem poles and the smoke that rises from the hearth were seen as vertical axes.

Smoke rising from the central fire carried messages to the upper world. In many indigenous cultures, smoke, which is both visible yet intangible, is seen as an important means of communicating with the spirit world. Through ceremony, ritual burning of tobacco over an open fire and smoking ritual pipes, prayers were sent skywards through the medium of the smoke, asking the spirits to intercede on behalf of humankind, and creating a momentary unity between two worlds. The central fire that heats and lights the home was humanity's first altar, the primordial *Shekinah*.

The Sisiutl Myth

Doorways symbolise the concept of transformation. According to native accounts, in distant myth time, human beings and animals lived together, spoke the same language and were able to transform themselves from one form of life to another. For example, Raven could change into a human being who in turn could be transformed into numerous other creatures. According to legend, the *Sisiutl*, who is similar to the Rosicrucian concept of the

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“Guardian of the Threshold” struck terror in human hearts. He was a soul searcher who saw from both front and back. He was continually searching for truth and seeking people who could not control their fear and who did not yet know the truth. If people did not know how to deal with fear, they could be killed or turned into stone.

The Sisiutl myth taught the importance of staring fear in the face. They believed that if you fled from fear, your soul would spin aimlessly without direction. But if you stood firm, the Sisiutl would attach his face to yours, and when his second face turned to do the same, he saw his own face and truth was revealed. So it is with humans. When we see the other half of ourselves, our shadow side, we see truth and fear dissipates.

The Dual World

As stated previously, totem poles were perceived as visible axes analogous to the Great Tree found in other cultures such as the Maya. They were seen as lines of communication that allowed humans and spirits to meet. The union of humans and spirits can, it was believed, guide, empower, heal and purify humankind.

A recurring theme in native art and literature is *duality*: the dynamic tension between opposites that brings about transformation and wholeness. “Thunderbird the Lord of the Upper World,” and “Killer Whale Lord of the Undersea World,” were pitted against one another, representing the conflicting forces of the upper world and the underworld. Raven embodied the cosmic struggle between light and darkness, creating the possibility of union between two equals.

Another central belief was that all life is connected, the visible and invisible, a belief that

Sisiutl is symbolic of wetness and fluidity representing at the same time tears, blood, sea, and rain. This fluidity also represents changes in life; death, decay and rebirth.

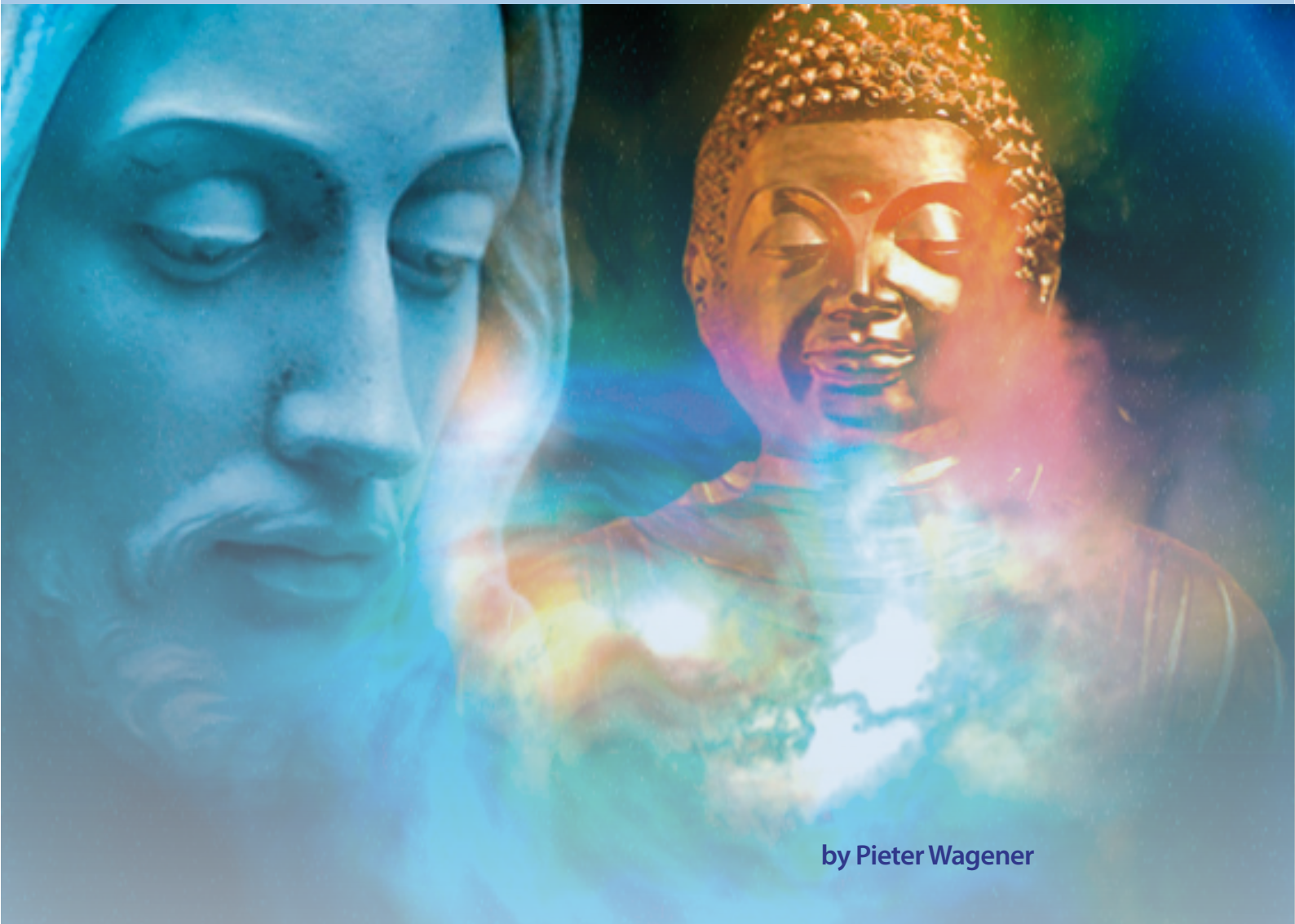
exhorted humans to continue communicating with the spirit world by performing rituals in order to maintain the cycle of life, death and rebirth. The two opposing figures, Thunderbird and Killer Whale, symbolised the notion of duality, a dynamic tension that acts as a catalyst, making the irrational union of opposites possible.

Although these native peoples lived in what we might regard as the “Stone Age,” the more we learn about their lives and beliefs, the more we come to question our own pre-conceptions. In the culture and life of these people we pass over a threshold into a completely new world, a new universe and a new way of looking at things.



*Thunderbird and Killer Whale
(Source: <http://www.stickam.com>)*

WHAT IS A MASTER?



by Pieter Wagener

THE CONCEPT OF A “MASTER” was popularised towards the end of the nineteenth century by the Theosophical Society under HP Blavatsky. A book, *The Mahatma Letters* by A P Sinnett, also a member of the Society, created an image of superhuman beings in the minds of generations of members of the Society, and these perceptions have now become part of modern mystical lore.

A universal aphorism, “When the student is ready, the Master will appear,” became a beacon for many aspirants on the mystical path. Another saying, “Seek the Master within,” is perhaps a more realistic and less frustrating instruction. However, what everyone does agree upon is the role of a

Master as teacher, specifically teaching the path to cosmic enlightenment.

The term “Master” has a long history, dating back to the Egyptian dynasties through to the Essenes, the mystics of the Middle Ages, the esoteric societies of the nineteenth century, up to the organisations of the present time. A Master was considered as a worker of miracles, raising the dead, curing the sick, materialising objects and appearing in the spirit to disciples. Many of the descriptions appear fanciful, but their enduring lore, appearing in the legends of many diverse peoples, must lend some credibility to their claims. One must also wonder

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whether an unusual occurrence in the past was only considered as magical if there was no rational explanation for it at that time. Electrical discharge from an ancient electrolytic cell, such as the Ark of the Covenant as some have claimed, must have been considered an act of God.

The twentieth century brought a significant change in our outlook on mystical matters: We now want to understand things in a scientific manner. The Godlike qualities of the Masters of the past could perhaps now be seen as qualities explainable by modern science. This will not detract from the stature of a Master. On the contrary, it will be a greater inspiration to know that their exalted state can be understood and attained in a natural manner.

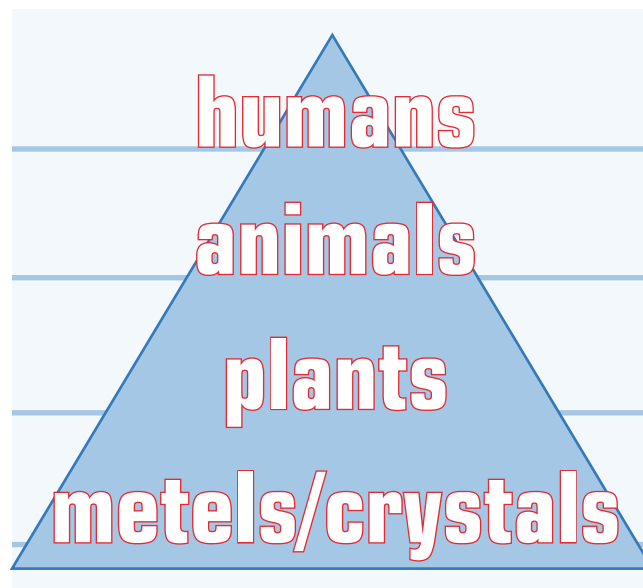
Modern science has given us two related disciplines to help us understand the nature of a Master. The first is the *theory of evolution*, and related to it, the *principles of neuroscience*. Most humans consider themselves separate from the universal evolution that permeates every aspect of nature; from primitive unicellular amoebas to homo sapiens, the ultimate in evolution..., or so we believe!

Levels of Consciousness

From our vantage point we can broadly discern four distinct levels of evolution, with some overlapping in between. Each one is characterised by a consciousness and a corresponding physical form. Modern science tells us that consciousness is related to some electromagnetic or neurological properties of an organism's nervous system.

Literally at rock bottom on the evolutionary scale are the *metals* and *crystals* whose electrochemical qualities can be regarded as a primitive form of consciousness. Certain metals even exhibit rudimentary forms of memory.

Reaching out from the soil is the next level, that of *plants*. Partly in the ground, partly rising to the sky, modern science has revealed electrochemical processes in plants that can be regarded as a primitive, vegetative form of consciousness. Plants even have the ability to communicate with one another, especially if



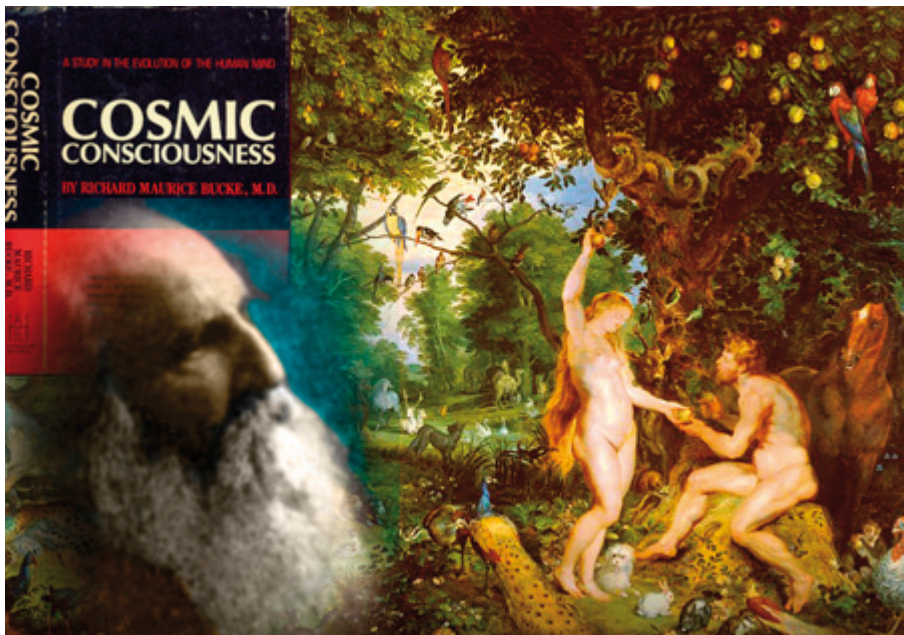
Evolutionary levels of consciousness.

being attacked by predators.

Next is the *animal* kingdom. Freed from the soil, they are still constrained to move horizontally to the earth. Even the early ancestors of birds, in the form of lizards, were constrained to the surface of the earth. Here we have vastly increased neurological activity, heating the body and enhancing its consciousness.

Then, according to conventional science, we reach the pinnacle of evolution: *humankind*. Its outer form has become vertical and with its brain it has become dominant in the evolutionary chain. Its brain has also given it a special form of consciousness, that of self. This self-consciousness has however separated us in our minds from the universal consciousness that permeates all of creation. We are not even aware of the myriads of little bundles of consciousness that keep the body going.

Do these steps of evolution not remind us of the outer coverings of man (Adam) in the Garden of Eden? First, he was created from the soil, then covered in leaves and finally animal skin. And after attaining self-consciousness by eating from the "Tree of Knowledge" he left the Garden of Eden, thereby losing his realisation of the universal consciousness. In terms of ourselves only by again reaching that universal consciousness, collectively and individually, will we return to the Garden, but now with a conscious realisation of God.



In his book, Cosmic Consciousness (1901), Maurice Bucke posits levels of consciousness, culminating in what he describes as “cosmic consciousness.” This consciousness, experienced momentarily, brings an exalted sense of union with all of creation, serenity and a feeling of eternity.

How does all this fit in with our modern concept of evolution? Evolution is a process whereby an organism adapts to a hostile environment. Conventional wisdom states that this occurs by mutation of cells, the robust surviving the perils of their environment. However, could not organisms by some primitive will also select, or direct, their evolution? This, the “Lamarckian” viewpoint, is unpopular with mainstream science, but studies during the 1980’s of the *Escherichia coli* bacterium have shown that this could be possible.

Cosmic Consciousness

But is man still subject to some hostile environment to which he needs to adapt in order to survive? His brain, after all, has given him dominance over the physical world. But has this same brain not become his greatest liability? Is anxiety not a greater threat to humans now and in recent history than any other pathological cause? Stress impairs the immune system and makes the body vulnerable to infections and other ailments such as cancer. And what about the many people who seek refuge in a “Garden of Eden” induced artificially by medication and drugs?

The control of anxiety lies at the root of many religions. Have the great Teachers of these religions not shown us how to reach serenity by

a development and control of our consciousness, to re-enter the Garden of Eden and commune with God, and reach this God-like consciousness amidst the demands of our human society?

This state of consciousness has become well-known through its popularisation during the past century. Its originator, the distinguished psychiatrist Richard Maurice Bucke (1837-1902), identifies in his book, *Cosmic Consciousness* (1901), levels of consciousness, culminating in what he describes as “cosmic consciousness.” This consciousness, experienced momentarily, brings an exalted sense of union with all of creation, serenity and a feeling of eternity. At the same time a brilliant light is experienced internally. Its result is a heightened level of creativity, making these “enlightened” ones very practical, self-assured people in everyday, mundane life.

There is however another aspect to this experience that is rarely mentioned, namely, the aspect of Will. Our everyday life is governed by the will of our self-consciousness. We are not aware of the will that keeps our heart beating or those of the white blood cells that rush to combat foreign intrusions into our body. Neither are we aware of the will that makes trees, insects and grass grow and which makes them compete with other entities on the evolutionary battleground. We sometimes refer to this will as instinct.

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One of the realisations of cosmic consciousness is a momentary attunement with this universal, subconscious will, or so to say, with the will of God. This realisation never leaves the memory of those experiencing it. They remain assured that the will of God will henceforth guide their mundane wills and shall, when needed, protect them.

In mystical lore it is claimed that the experience of cosmic consciousness is the ultimate aim on the mystical path. It is however, just the beginning on another scale of consciousness.

Development of the Cosmic Master

In this new environment, enlightened people face similar difficulties to those of the first amphibians that struggled onto land. Having tasted union with the consciousness of creation and its will, such enlightened ones now face the task of reaching this union voluntarily and on a continual basis; not as hermits, but immersed in the rigours of daily life. In this striving they become more aware and attuned to the will of creation and move delicately balanced between the will of the self and the universal will. Gradually such persons find themselves in partnership with God, creating apparent miracles by blending their human will with that of God.

These miracles follow natural law, albeit mysterious to us. True Cosmic Masters are "in development," works in progress like all living

things. After long effort, they are able to voluntarily raise their consciousness to a cosmic level, and attuning with the power of the cosmic will, they directly participate in the processes of creation. It is this ability on the cosmic threshold that makes humankind unique on the evolutionary scale.

The union with God brings inescapable responsibilities. Although such people are raised above the norms and human-conceived laws of society, and have earned the right to "do what thou wilt," they are now constrained by universal law. On this borderline, they are however still influenced by the will of the self in order to survive the rigours of daily, earthly life. Knowing now what is good (the absence of which is evil), the penalty for disobedience of the cosmic ordinances is hardly imaginable.

Cosmic Masters have survived those tests, and their actions are in accordance with the will of God. But by inhabiting a human body, each Master still remains frail to the imperfections of

"By inhabiting a human body the Cosmic Master still remains frail to the imperfections of its consciousness and its will."

its consciousness and its will. It is the realisation of this duality that engenders the sympathy, if not pity, for a struggling humanity.

Cosmic Masters are part of nature and achieve all according to natural law. They will in all likelihood appear more normal, mundane and boring than most other people, for they have no need for worldly excitement. We may only faintly discern such persons. A deeper recognition however, is only attained if our own consciousness is attuned towards theirs. But often their consciousness merely rubs off on us in passing, leaving puzzlement, but also a strange, ethereal joy.

The fanciful beliefs in the power of Masters will disappear in the coming years. These enlightened beings, acting in accordance with the Will of the Cosmic, still remain hampered by

One of the realisations of cosmic consciousness is a momentary attunement with this universal, subconscious will, or so to say, with the will of God.



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the need to reside in physical bodies. Although each body, a part of nature, is in a better condition than most, it still remains subject to the inevitable laws of growth and decay. But Masters, veritable *Magister Templi*, have such control of their physical bodies, particularly their nervous systems, that their conservation beyond the average life-span appears miraculous to others. A Master's body survives as long as the Cosmic intended it to, and its function is not curtailed by the abuses of ordinary humankind.

Cosmic Brotherhood

No reference to Masters can be made without mentioning the *Great White Brotherhood*, or "GWB." This body is held in awe as the Elders of humanity, omniscient and omnipotent. Like all other creatures, the members of this body do not have a separate existence from us. On the contrary, attaining Cosmic Consciousness has made them more part of nature than anything else. The instinct that pervades all creatures has merged into a conscious realisation in their minds. In the same way that animals (us included) have a communal instinct, their enlightened or awakened instinct has become the égrégora of the GWB, causing them to remain in communion with one another at all times and to act accordingly. Acting against this communal Will results in an automatic severance of the cosmic bond and to be "cast from heaven."

Some mystery remains however. By what mechanism does the soul personality of a Master survive the demise of his or her earthly vehicle? And how does a Master have access to the impressions of the ancient past, not only of him or herself, but also of others? One can only surmise that some future science of genetics will answer those questions.

A future science will also give a neurological explanation for the inner light experienced with cosmic consciousness and its transformation of the nervous system to accommodate a higher level of consciousness. The faith in such a science brings an assurance of eternal life and consciousness, and a hope for embattled humanity.



The Praying Hands

by Anonymous

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SEVERAL CENTURIES AGO in a prosperous German town lived a family with eighteen children. To keep food on the table for this large family, the father and head of the household, an unimportant goldsmith, worked eighteen hours a day at his trade and any other paying chore he could find in the neighbourhood.

Despite the fact that life looked rather bleak, two of the older boys had a dream. They wanted to pursue their talent for art, but they knew that their father would never be financially able to send both of them to study as apprentices in town. After many long discussions at night in their crowded bedroom, the two boys finally worked out a pact. They would toss a coin. Whichever one lost would go down into the nearby mines and with his earnings, support his brother while he was taught his profession. When that brother had completed his studies after four years, he would support the other in his learning with sales of his artwork.

They tossed a coin one Sunday morning after church. The eldest won the toss and was sent at the age of fifteen to work and learn from a well-known painter in the city. Meanwhile, the younger brother went down into the dangerous mines and, for the next four years financed his brother's studies.

Having served his apprenticeship the young artist returned home and the family held a festive dinner to celebrate the completion of his training. After a long and memorable meal, punctuated with music and laughter, the older boy rose from his honoured position at the head of the table to drink a toast to his beloved brother for the years of sacrifice that had enabled him to fulfil his ambition. His closing words were: *"And now, blessed brother of mine, it is your turn. You will now go to pursue your dream, and I will take care of you."*

All heads turned in eager expectation to the other end of the table where the younger brother sat. Tears were streaming down his face. Shaking his lowered head from side to side he sobbed and repeated over and over *"No, no, no."*

Rising, he wiped the tears from his cheeks, and glancing down the long table at the faces he

loved, he held his hands close to his right cheek and softly said: *"No, brother, I cannot pursue my dream. It is too late for me. Look what four years in the mines have done to my hands! The bones in every finger have been smashed at least once, and lately I have been suffering from arthritis so badly in my right hand that I cannot even hold a glass to return your toast, much less make delicate lines on parchment or canvas with a pen or brush. For me it is too late."*

More than 450 years have now passed. The older boy's hundreds of masterful portraits, pen and silver-point sketches, watercolours, charcoals, woodcuts and copper engravings hang in every great museum in the world. Like most people, you are probably familiar with only one of these works. You may even have a reproduction of it hanging in your home or office.

To pay homage to all that he had sacrificed, this famous artist had painstakingly drawn his brother's abused hands with palms together and thin fingers stretched skyward. He called his powerful drawing simply *Hands*, but the entire world almost immediately opened their hearts to his great masterpiece and renamed his tribute of love *"The Praying Hands."*

Postscript

This is a very touching story that would be made more poignant if it had any basis in historical fact. The actual title of this picture is *Hands of an Apostle* (1508) and is a highly finished preliminary study for an altarpiece commissioned by a wealthy Frankfurt merchant and executed by Albrecht Dürer, a well-known Northern Renaissance artist. He may possibly have used his brother's hands as a basis for this picture but there is no evidence to support this in the way that the story relates.

However, the above tale does make a marvellous parable and no matter that it is a fabrication, it serves at least as an illustration of the need we have of others and at best of an individual's sacrifice for another without material reward, a principle that lies at the heart of the Rosicrucian way.



Woman as a Modern Mystic

by Judy Child

IN THIS MODERN WORLD women live with change, uncertainty and a fair amount of highs and lows; but if a woman is a mystic, she can meet these challenges with confidence and enthusiasm. The old realities that used to define women's lives have been fading for decades, and new realities are gradually coming into focus. The old images were accepted as universal truths for aeons of time and they structured consciousness at all levels of human experience. For most of our history only an occasional voice questioned the assumptions underlying those truths. Today however, our awareness of the feminine is changing fundamentally and as a result, women's choices are no longer defined by specific images of what it means to be a woman.

Women often describe their change of consciousness in terms of choice. They are waking up to a whole new realisation of themselves and the world around them but the process of change works gradually until a moment when some personal event focuses the process in

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consciousness. Choice means responsibility, and particularly responsibility for self. The ramifications of choice affect every area of a woman's life as well as the lives of those around her. The old images no longer resonate with her experience, or guide her to self-understanding. For whatever reasons, this change in consciousness has begun with women, and women are searching for new images in the depths of their own experience. Such issues are not abstractions but the very essence of their everyday realities.

A fundamental part of women's search for new images is the search for knowledge and for ways to understand and explain their experience. Knowledge evolves through the creative processes of imagination. As human beings we build on what has gone before, even though we may change direction and expand the limits of what we see, or accept a new idea that radically alters our perspective. When women search through history for the foundations of their identity as human beings they find that history is recorded almost exclusively by men, about men and for men, because this is simply the natural consequence of the old images of masculinity and femininity and the resulting socio-cultural norms.

Finding Her Own Perspective

However, in order to take her place in the ongoing evolutionary process, a woman has to translate what she learns from the past into her own perspective. A man's experience of becoming an individual personality, a whole human being, is not an adequate model for a woman in her own quest for identity. Instead, as more and more women commit themselves to the ideal of wholeness, a model of feminine individuality is rapidly emerging from their experience.

Many women are drawn to a mystical path of one sort or another in their search for self-knowledge and self-understanding, and

the experience of self-transcendence releases their potential to see beyond appearances. A woman who chooses a mystical path chooses to align herself with powerful forces for good. She commits herself to strength of purpose in service to the ideals of what Rosicrucians term "Light, Life and Love." And most of all, she learns to value what she knows, and is willing to share that knowledge. In times past, women nurtured others primarily with physical care and emotional support. Today, women are learning to nurture consciousness, both in themselves and others.

The Mystical Approach

The Rosicrucian philosophy emphasises the practical application of mystical principles. For a woman facing the complexities and ambiguities of modern life, these principles can be of inestimable value. For instance, the development of a strong

"Many women are drawn to a mystical path of one sort or another in their search for self-knowledge and self-understanding."

relationship with one's inner self accelerates personal growth as well as bringing gifts of illumination and guidance. The ideal of self-mastery extends

one's sense of responsibility to a truly inclusive and compassionate level of experience. Visualisation, concentration, contemplation and meditation are powerful tools for achieving clarity of understanding and purpose. Self-examination provides the inner discipline that frees the creative imagination. Perhaps most important, mysticism honours both emotional sensitivity and clarity of consciousness. Mysticism is a conceptual and experiential framework that enhances and supports a woman's journey toward wholeness.

A typical recurring dilemma for women is deciding how to stand up for themselves in difficult situations, such as a fundamental difference of opinion between a woman and her husband about disciplining their child. How can a woman be true to herself, act with integrity and still do her best to resolve the situation to everyone's benefit? Mystical principles can be

applied to this kind of dilemma, as well as to many others, with confidence in the outcome.

Mystical Principles

First, mysticism teaches a woman to value her own experience. What she knows to be true for her is the basis of her knowledge, as it is for everyone. Of course, the broader her range of experience and education, the greater her confidence in what she knows. Mysticism teaches her to learn from every aspect of her life, to value the challenges her life has brought her. Mystical principles help a woman build a solid foundation of knowledge that she can rely on, for it is based on inner authority.

Second, mysticism teaches a woman that knowledge brings responsibility. If she simply gives in to a difficult situation, she denies the truth both to herself and to the others involved. Mysticism teaches her to accept responsibility for herself and her actions. For a woman, this is often a double-edged sword. As she learns self-mastery, she also learns the boundaries of choice. If she denies self, she denies choice. Therefore, her responsibility is to the truth of the situation as she sees it.

Third, mystical principles orient a woman's life to service, not in the sense of denying her own life for others, but in the sense of developing her highest potentials in the service of humanity. However she understands the ideals that guide her life as they give her the strength to rise above her own personal involvement and see the situation with clarity and compassion, so she can actively participate in finding the best possible solution to the problem. Therefore, mysticism teaches a woman to stand up for herself in a difficult situation by valuing her own experience, expressing her views honestly, and working toward a creative resolution for all concerned.

Being a woman and a mystic has always required a deep commitment to self-knowledge and service to others. However, in this time of profound change for women, she finds herself called upon to explore new dimensions of life and consciousness. In her own personal quest for self-knowledge and her place in the world, she is helping to create new images of the feminine that will guide others into the future. And as she moves into the uncharted waters of feminine individuality mystical principles can be of great value to her.



*There is no need for temples,
no need for complicated philosophies.
My brain and my heart are my temples;
my philosophy is kindness.*

Dalai Lama

THE MYSTICAL SPIRAL

by Dini Jacobs

THE SYMBOL OF THE SPIRAL, which has been used as a mystical representation of energy flow since ancient times, can be found on artefacts of many different cultures. Spirals have been found on pre-dynastic ceramics of Egypt, engraved onto the stone walls of temples, as well as on the megaliths and stone circles of Western Europe, in the Americas and the Orient. They are still being used by religions and mystical organisations today and are widely used as mystical symbols.

Being too geometrically fundamental to be meaningless, it was long felt that the spiral had to have a specific purpose. Research and experiments brought to light that it represented the path traced by the sun over a quarter of a year. From the day of the spring equinox until the summer solstice, the track formed an ever tightening, clockwise spiral, loosening after the summer solstice and returning to its starting point at the next equinox, while in the winter it formed a loose anti-clockwise spiral in the same manner,

tightening up to the winter solstice and returning by the spring equinox to its original starting point.

From this double spiral, which is common to many ancient cultures, a three-spiral symbol developed; each spiral representing three months. The combination of the three spirals is thought to be a representation of the gestation period of the human embryo.

Some formations in nature, although of varying constitution, follow identical mathematical formulae. The spiral movement can be found in many forms in both the macrocosm, where the

Ceramic pot from the ancient Egyptian Nagada II period (Gerzean culture c.3400 BCE) with spiral pattern.

(Photograph by Jon Bodsworth: http://www.oocities.org/unforbidden_geology/ancient_egyptian_stone_vase_making.html)

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best-known examples are the beautiful spiral galaxies, with arms of stars sweeping out in graceful curves, to the microcosm, to the many shapes and cycles in nature and in the human body. Spirals are the natural curve of life and universal growth, ever increasing, yet never covering the same ground. They seem to be inevitable in nature, and are the perfect symbols of change and growth, of order within chaos, of opposites, which are nevertheless the same.

The Greeks knew the significance of the organisation of things both physical and non-physical. Their word 'kosmos' means 'order,' and is reflected in the idea that matter exists because of and consists of its own movement and organisation. In other words, matter is vibrations. We can think here of the movement of electrons around the nucleus of an atom, the vibrations of atoms in molecules, the rhythmic movement of molecules in strands of DNA, etc.

Similarly, the construction and development of the human consciousness is the continuous refining of its own organisation, the ordering of its individual microcosm. In this aspect the spiral symbolises the progress of the soul towards eternal life.

The simple two-dimensional spiral has some remarkable properties. It both comes from, and returns to its source, defining and illuminating what has already happened, and leading inevitably to new discoveries. Spirals are explanations of the past and prophecies of the future.

In the four-dimensional world of space-time, the spiral may be viewed as a vortex, forming around a low-pressure area, exerting pressure either upwards or downwards. The double vortex, mirrors itself through its own centre, combining the inward and outward directions of movement.

Humankind is at the centre of a double vortex. The upward spiral represents the spiritualisation of human consciousness; the downward spiral symbolises the materialisation of the human body and its evolution in the physical realm, thereby creating the whole being, the "living soul."

When we meditate, whether in a temple or on a chair at home, we are attempting to attune

our consciousness with the Divine Mind. We could at such times visualise our consciousness as spiralling upwards, in ever widening circles, until the width of the vortex encompasses the whole of Creation. At that point we will have reached a "holding point" in our ascent, a state of mind known to Rosicrucians as the Celestial Sanctum.

Closely related to the spiral is the *labyrinth*, which is actually a spiral doubling up on itself. The Hopi Indians call the labyrinth the "Mother Earth" symbol and liken it to their own underground sanctuaries, the Kivas. It was supposedly from here that the Hopi emerged from the preceding world. All the lines and passages within the maze form the universal plan of the Creator, that all people must follow on the Road of Life.

The earliest known labyrinth was found in Egypt and dates back to the 19th century BCE. But the most famous one is of course the labyrinth of Minoan Crete, remembered through the mythological tale of Ariadne's thread.

As the labyrinth creates and dissolves, expands and contracts, so it conceals and reveals. It is the Cosmic to those who know the way, chaos to those who lose it. In the words of William Blake:

*I give you the end of the golden string,
only wind it into a ball.
It will lead you in at Heaven's Gate,
built in Jerusalem's wall.*

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WHEREAS LIFE IS NOT ALWAYS A PERFUMED ROSE GARDEN, one can't help but notice how for some, it almost could be. For them, everything seems to flow so harmoniously, and whilst not necessarily materially wealthy, they radiate an inner wealth of happiness and peace which is the envy of all. So how do they do it?

Well, one thing they all seem to have in common is that they long ago dared to take charge of their destiny! Examining *needs* rather than *wants*, and true *values* rather than *passing fads*, such people realised that more than anything else, what they needed to learn was to rely upon their *own insights* rather than those of others, come to their *own conclusions* rather than accept the conclusions of others, and above all, to take their *own decisions* in life and for better or worse, *live with the consequences of their own actions*.

The *Rosicrucian Order* assists people to find within themselves their own, personal "*higher wisdom*," something which exists as a potential in all human beings. Developing this inner understanding can lead to what sages and avatars of all ages have referred to simply as "*Illumination*," a pure state of joy, perfection and achievement beyond our fondest hopes.

Gaining this knowledge and experience is not merely an academic exercise, it is a *series of practical steps* needed in order to gain first proficiency and eventually mastery over our daily thoughts and actions. Instruction in the steps necessary to reach these goals is what the *Rosicrucian Order* has to offer. Its approach to inner development has brought happiness, peace and success into the affairs of thousands of people in the past and you too can benefit from it if you wish.

To find out more about the *Rosicrucian Order* and its unique system of inner development, write to the address below, requesting a free copy of the introductory booklet entitled "*The Mastery of Life*" or, alternatively, download it from here. Find out..., it could be the valuable turning point in your life.

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