


Rosicrucian Heritage

A wide-angle, high-angle photograph of a savanna landscape. The foreground is dominated by a large, dark brown, jagged rock formation. The middle ground and background consist of a vast expanse of green grass and scattered trees, extending to a hazy horizon under a bright, yellowish sky. The overall scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset.

September 2019, Vol 26 No 2



Find the Deeper You

FOR THOUSANDS of years, philosophers and spiritual leaders have known of the existence of a kernel of perfection residing in every person; manifesting as an 'alter-ego' with supreme confidence, calmness, maturity and wisdom. Rosicrucians call it the 'Inner Master', for it has in abundance all the qualities of refinement, high purpose and spiritual maturity that we would expect of any true Master of life.

You can discover how to access this level of achievement and embark upon the definitive, true direction of your life simply by learning how to contact and regularly commune with your Inner Master. If you are searching for a way of

accomplishing the most fulfilling and rewarding there is, and happiness, peace and justice for all is what you yearn to see in the world, then learn to attune with the Deeper You and learn from its infallible wisdom.

To find out more about the Rosicrucian Order and how it can help you to achieve your most treasured goals, visit our website or contact us for a copy of our introductory booklet "The Mastery of Life."

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CONTENTS

- 2 **Rosicrucian Spiritual Tradition in a Modern World**
- by Claudio Mazzucco
- 10 **Sanctum Musings: Spirituality for Social Justice**
- by Kenneth U Idiodi
- 14 **Choose This Day** - by Paul Layton
- 17 **Mysticism: The Sacred Marriage of
Science and Spirituality** - by Obinna Patrick Ihebor
- 22 **Mysticism in the Evolution of Cultures** - by Peter Bindon
- 28 **Mystics of Aragon** - by Mary Jones
- 37 **Stalactites and Stalagmites** - by Peter I Ogban
- 41 **The Neophyte and Service** - by Raymund Andrea
- 44 **The Two Buddhas** - by Affectator
- 46 **The Afterlife** - by William Hand
- 48 **Friendship** - by Cheryl Rose

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Cover spread

A New Dawn



Rosicrucian Spiritual Tradition in a Modern World

*by Claudio Mazzucco
Imperator of AMORC*

WHATEVER conversation of a philosophical nature we engage in, it is good practice before starting to reflect on the sense and meaning of the words that are about to be used. Taking the word “spirituality” for example, it is important to have a clear vision of its meaning within the context of Rosicrucian philosophy. To achieve this, we are going to use ‘art’ as a means of gaining a clearer understanding, as the language of art touches many levels, awakening glimpses of truth in those who contemplate on it. I will begin with a few extracts from the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson:-



The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know the truth when we see it; let sceptic and scoffer say what they choose.

By the same fire, vital, consecrating, celestial, which burns until it shall dissolve all things into the waves and surges of an ocean of light, we see and know each other, and what spirit each is of.

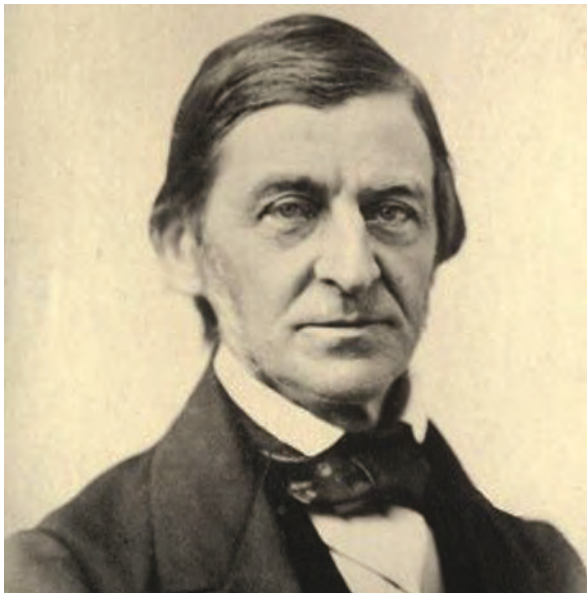
We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul.

When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love

Before the revelations of the soul, Time, Space and Nature shrink away.

Emerson's "Essay IX, The Over-Soul"

Emerson's words awaken in us the idea that whatever we speak of is a vision, not in the sense of something requiring only the eyes to see, but a vision of an inner image which reveals itself to those who know how to search for it. Only those images that follow each thought and human expression make possible a first-hand description of the spiritual experience. They must



Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 - 1882) - American essayist and renowned poet who led the Transcendentalist movement of the mid 19th Century, is fondly remembered for many of his outstandingly beautiful writings.



Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918) was a French a composer, who with Maurice Ravel strongly associated himself with the Impressionistic movement in music of the last 19th and early 20th Century. He was also closely associated with Rosicrucian activity in France.

of necessity always be symbolic, evocative and indirect, always suggesting Truth without ever pronouncing it. This is what Spirituality means to Rosicrucians.

Debussy was a member of a branch of the Rosicrucian tradition founded by Joséphin Péladan towards the end of the 19th Century. I am not going to delve into this as I believe it is more useful to highlight certain aspects of Rosicrucian spirituality so you can conclude for yourself the meaning of Debussy's affiliation to such an initiatic school.

A UNESCO Initiative

In 1996 UNESCO, a branch of the United Nations dedicated to education and the development of human abilities, published a paper of a study carried out by eminent scientists and educators of various nationalities. The study looked at how the development of an individual should be in the 21st Century. Known as the *Delors Report*, this study highlighted four essential points which could be called four fundamental pillars for the education of future generations:



*Learning to do. Learning to know.
Learning to live together. Learning to be.*

From a first analysis of these four points we can conclude that the first two are areas of focus for education, while the third and fourth are elements that each individual develops mainly within the family environment. In fact, this is how things used to be until the beginning of the 20th Century, when the transformation of contemporary society led the family to abdicate, for a variety of reasons, its fundamental role of preparation the individual for life, through the affective and social relationships which are typical of a family nucleus. But the reasons for this change are best dealt with by sociologists and anthropologists. What is of importance to us are however the last two of the points, namely *learning to live together* and *learning to be*.

From a careful analysis it is clear that these two points are essential for humans to be able to express their true potentials and to live harmoniously with others and their environment. The relevance of these two aspects becomes more evident if we look at recent events in the world, particularly with regard to the environment and indeed the very survival of cultural diversity. It is therefore understandable why *'learning to live together'* and *'learning to be'* are such important pillars for human evolution. Without them, we are destined to be plagued indefinitely into the future by constant conflict with others, both internal and external conflict. And we will be incapable of adapting ourselves to the constantly changing conditions of life, not knowing how to maintain a healthy equilibrium with our environment and fellow human beings.

17th Century Transformation

Let us now jump back in time to the early years of the 17th Century, in particular in the Rhineland-Palatinate region of central Germany. The 17th Century as a whole was a dramatic time in European history: it began with the burning of Giordano Bruno, martyr of free thought and a symbol for all who sought their own Truth through personal knowledge and experiences of the Sacred.

Bruno's thoughts spread across Europe, particularly to Britain and Germany, influencing many prominent thinkers. Europe in the 17th Century underwent several periods of great transformation of thought and consciousness, influenced by Copernican theories...; from the profound transformation of scientific thought in the works of Galileo Galilei, Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton and several others, to the discoveries that radically modified the theologically led notion held until then of Man's pre-eminence at the centre of the Universe.



Friedrich V Elector Palatine, and briefly the King of Bohemia.

With navigation and the discovery of the New World just barely 120 years before 1600, the rapid dissemination of philosophical and scientific thought was now possible, thanks to the initial development of the printing press in Gutenberg in the 15th Century, followed by advances in mass-printing techniques. Such were the essential factors leading up to the rapid transformation that took place during the 17th Century.

But with major changes came major crises as well. Northern Europe was under the influence of the Protestant Reformation which introduced the need for followers outside the clergy to become aware of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments without the intermediation of a priesthood. Indeed, Luther had claimed that every Christian should be his or her own priest. And so it happened that over a mere few decades, literacy in northern Europe and Britain had become superior to that of southern Europe. In this context the Palatinate in Germany under Protestant influence, enjoyed a particular form of freedom, for the pre-eminent ruler of the region, Elector Friedrich V of the Holy Roman Empire, was considered 'modern' by many of the learned of the time. Unlike many other powerful leaders, he had an open mind and was receptive to new ideas.

Within a brief period then, the Palatinate became a centre where many cultural and esoteric forms converged, such as the Kabbalistic, alchemical and hermetic currents,





Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I of Britain and Anne of Denmark, reigned briefly as Electress Palatine Queen of Bohemia with her husband Friedrich V Elector Palatine.

as well as mathematicians and scholars of medicine, mechanics and astronomy. He gathered together these areas of learning into a single centre of development for education and knowledge in the broadest sense of the term.

It was during this period when the idea began to develop among the learned of Europe that the world was about to witness the realisation of a Utopia on earth. This was reinforced by the fact that Friedrich V would be marrying Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of King James I of Britain, who, with his military might could have guaranteed the security of the reign of Friedrich. But this did not happen. Regarding the marriage between Friedrich and Elizabeth, the Shakespearean company took to the stage in Germany with various productions in honour of the royal couple. Shakespeare and his company, as will be discussed later, very likely played an important role in the genesis of Rosicrucianism.

The Rosicrucian Manifestos

Within this climate of intellectual, artistic and spiritual rejuvenation, full of new hope, ideas and projects, the first

Rosicrucian Manifesto entitled the *Fama Fraternitatis* ("Fame of the Fraternity") was published in 1614. It was followed in 1615 by the publication of the *Confessio Fraternitatis* ("Confession of the Fraternity"), and in 1616 by the *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*. In 1624 Paris awakens to a display of posters plastered on the walls of the main churches of the city, reading as follows:

We, the Members of the Principal College of the Rosy-Cross, have taken up residence, visible and invisible, in this city, by the grace of the Most High, towards Whom are turned the hearts of the Just.

We demonstrate and teach to speak, without books or signs, to speak the different languages of the countries in which we dwell, to save mankind, our fellow-men, from error and from death.

If someone wishes to see us merely out of curiosity, he will never make contact with us. But if his desire truly brings him to register with our Fraternity, we, who base our judgement on thoughts, will show him the truth of our promises. For this, we do not make known the place of our stay in this city, since the thoughts united to the real desire of the seeker will lead us to him and him to us.



Title page from the 1616 German edition of the combined "Fama Fraternitatis" and "Confessio Fraternitatis."



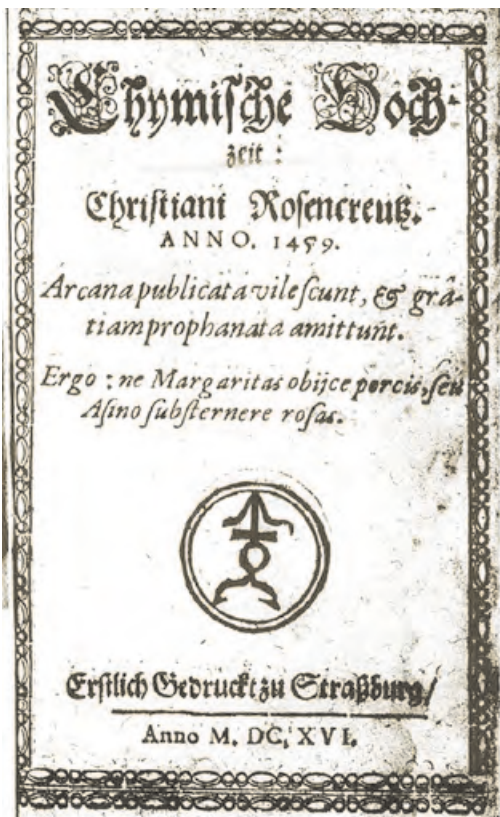
Scholars attribute the first two manifestos to a circle of eminent thinkers at the university of Tübingen, known as “the Tübingen Circle”, while the *Chymical Wedding* is attributed to Johann Valentin Andreae. The *Fama* tells the story of the legendary founder of the Brotherhood of the Rosy-Cross, Christian Rosenkreutz (CRC). It explains how CRC reached a high level of spiritual and philosophical preparation through a long journey that took him as far as the Middle East and possibly southern Arabia, and then by way of North Africa, Spain and France, a return to Germany where CRC created a monastic Order, the Brethren of the Rosy Cross, consisting of only a few individuals.

In essence, the *Fama* not only made people aware of the existence of the Order, it also hoped to bring together the wise men to expand the boundaries of knowledge for the benefit of humanity as a whole. The story is almost certainly an allegory and its message was meant to be understood symbolically, not literally. The very image of CRC is a symbolical one and should be understood within in esoteric, rather than exoteric terms.

The *Confessio* complements and completes the *Fama*. On the one hand emphasised the regeneration of Man



This drawing is believed to be of Johannes Kelpius (1667 - 1708) - done in 1705 - three years before his death at the age of 41. Kelpius was the founder of the first community of Rosicrucians to land in the New World. They settled at Germantown in Pennsylvania.



Title page from the 1616 German edition of the “Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rozenkreutz.”

and society, and on the other hand it highlighted one central point, that the Rosicrucian brethren possessed a philosophical science that enabled such regeneration to occur. It was aimed primarily at seekers who were keen to participate in the work of the Order and for the benefit of humanity.

The *Chymical Wedding* is an allegorical description of an initiatic process with many alchemical references on the transformation of Man. It is about a marriage between a prince and a princess, and as a guest, CRC narrates the events that take place in the castle during the seven days of celebration. There is no need to delve too deeply into the three manifestos here, as it is a topic well catered for by academic research, most of it freely and easily available.

Rather, we will look at the fact that these manifestos gave rise to more than four hundred publications, some of which were highly critical of the brotherhood, while others were commending and humbly requesting admission of their authors. Their impact on the world of culture and thought, was very significant. One has only to think of Isaac Newton, the father of modern physics. When he died, he left in his library 30 books on chemistry and physics, but



130 books on alchemy and hermetic philosophy, among them being were the *Fama* and the *Confessio*.

René Descartes may have travelled to Holland partly to escape persecution in France and to enjoy the greater personal freedoms available in Holland; but another reason was to try and find the Rosicrucians. Spinoza too was associated with the movement. With the Thirty Years' War everything was swept away, leaving behind death and destruction, from which Europe recovered slowly and with much suffering. The Rosicrucian movement was active in Holland and Britain, and in 1693, some Rosicrucians, lead by the Grand Master Johannes Kelpius, crossed the ocean heading for the New World with the intention of building a Utopia as suggested in Francis Bacon's 1627 book "*The New Atlantis*."

Utopia

We are accustomed thinking of a Utopia as being synonymous with fantasy land or unrealistic ideas about some idyllic state. The word "*utopia*" derives from the Greek word "*outopos*", meaning *no place, nowhere* or a *place that does not exist*. In *The Republic*, Plato indicates in a subtle way that "... *Utopia is a form of Ideal Society. Perhaps it is impossible to achieve it on Earth, and yet a wise man must place all his hopes in it.*"

An eminent Sufi thinker once said that for as long as humans seek Jerusalem as a place on a map, there will never be peace in the Holy Land. These words highlight the inherent nature of a Utopia, 'a place that does not exist.' We have been taught that reality is made only of things that can be seen and touched. As the saying goes, we are modern people 'with feet on the ground.' However, at the beginning of the 20th Century, science itself started dismantling this rigid and arid concept of reality and replaced it with a concept more elastic and pliable due to the presence of the human consciousness. And so it is that Rosicrucians have always maintained that 'thoughts are things.' Harmonious thoughts strengthen us and bring us wellbeing; discordant thoughts can lead to our death.

Thought and human consciousness are part of a dimension that is capable of acting upon what we interpret as "reality." And if we think about this honestly a while, how many things from our present experience of reality are none other than the 'pre-reality' thoughts that resided in the minds of enlightened individuals of the past? Utopia is for us therefore an *internal condition*. It is a dream, an aspiration written in the hearts of men, women and children, being the meeting point of the many different phases of reality that exist. Rosicrucians established themselves in the state of Pennsylvania in the late 17th Century, forming a community called "Ephrata,"



Carlos Schwabe's poster from 1892 for the first of Joséphin Péladan's art and music "Salons de la Rose + Croix."

named after the biblical town of Ephrath in the pre-Roman province of Judea. In Ephrata the Rosicrucian community quickly developed printing facilities where important documents, some even about the European colonisation of the Americas, were being printed.

Many soldiers wounded during the American Civil War 170 years later, were cared for by members of this



community; and those who were dying were comforted by readings of inspiring words from books and pamphlets printed by the first Rosicrucians in North America. As already stated, in Europe at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War, the Rosicrucian movement gravitated to the relatively greater freedoms of Britain and Holland. Holland was renowned for its great spirit of religious and philosophical tolerance, while Britain was renowned as the country of Francis Bacon and Shakespeare. It is believed that Bacon had served as Emperor of the Order at some time during the reign of James I, and may have been its custodian during a quiet phase of its existence after the outbreak of hostilities in the Thirty Years' War.

The Shakespeare's plays were made up of a few actors who, if not Rosicrucians themselves, were sympathetic to their ideas, and it has even been suggested that some of the Shakespeare plays were either authored by or influenced by Francis Bacon. A few years after the end of the Thirty Years War the "Invisible College" was formed in England and subsequently became the Royal Society which was founded on principles well known to have originated in the *Fama Fraternitatis*, calling together all wise men for the expansion of knowledge. Isaac Newton was its president for several years, and the Rosicrucian Elias Ashmole was another. It is today one of the most reputable and authoritative scientific societies in the world.

But the Rosicrucians, where did they end up? For a few years they remained in a state of secrecy, or "sub-rosa" remaining "below the rose." Nevertheless, the Order continued its activities in Europe until the end of the 19th Century when it resumed its activities together with the Martinist Order and various Masonic rituals disseminated mainly in France, Germany and Italy.

The Salons Rose-Croix

In 1892 Parisians were invited to public events hosted by what was called the "Salon Rose-Croix." What did this and other 'salons' consist of and what relationship do they have with current Rosicrucians? At the end of 19th Century, the West was astonished in the face of new possibilities offered by industrial science. Science triumphed and people felt that with the advent of the 20th Century, modernity would bring them happiness. Some enlightened minds however..., philosophers, mystics and artists..., were concerned with the prospects offered by this progress. This concern was particularly felt through the Symbolists, a movement that gathered together artists of all disciplines.

Joséphin Péladan, organiser of the *Salons* and allied to the Rosicrucian movement, sided with the Symbolists, he too querying the problem in the following terms: "The

speed of the material world accelerates the interior life. 'But man, endowed with wings, does he not perhaps have the same heart and the same pain?' Péladan placed himself at the meeting point between the symbolist and esoteric movements. As an Artist he positioned himself in the Symbolist movement, and as an Esotericist he presented himself as an initiate of the Rosy-Cross.

His aim was to restore reverence of the Absolute in all its splendour, with Tradition as its base and Beauty an instrument. He saw the Latin civilisation as being in a state of decadence. For him, only the enchantment of art could again save the West from an imminent disaster. He sees art as a tool capable of reversing the trend. The essential activity of the *Order of the Rosy+Cross of the Temple and of the Grail* that he founded, was therefore concerned with the organisation of exhibitions and evenings dedicated to the fine-arts.

The poster made up in shades of blue, evokes the dream. It proposes a hierarchical trinity of humanity, symbolised by three women. The first woman is chained in muddy waters, looking at a stairway that rises towards the light, decorated with white lilies and roses. She represents humanity longing for a better life, but is chained by the material world. The second woman has just liberated herself from her chains and mounts the first step of the

The perfect work is that which brings together all that is perfect, though it is not enough to satisfy the intellect alone.

stairway. This represents an initiate on her or his journey towards enlightenment. The third woman, translucent and radiant with light, receives in her hands a heart descending from the sky. This represents the mastery gained by anyone linked to the Divine. Péladan's theory about art is derived from the Rosicrucian formula: "There is no other Truth but God, there is no other Beauty but God."

Art is a search for God through beauty. In his work "How to Become an Artist", his theory on aesthetic was developed. For him, the mission of art represented the divine order. Art, together with religion, needs to magnify the divine element, enabling others to participate. Its beauty results from the balance between sight and vision. The perfect work is that which brings together all that is perfect, though it is not enough to satisfy the intellect alone.

Péladan assigns Man the status of "artistic animal", believing that there exists in humans an invisible attraction to beauty. This search for beauty is motivated by the nostalgic feelings of the lost harmony that he instinctively seeks in all things. In his book "Idealistic and Mystic Art", he invites the artist to make a reflection. For him,



the true artist is one who possesses the ability to listen through contemplation to the non-material qualities of objects that enable him to capture the celestial influx of “the Word” as the Divine Creator:

Artist..., you know that art descends from heaven, just as life pours from the sun. That there is no masterpiece that is not the reflection of an eternal idea.

You know, painter or poet that which is defined as abstract. There is a little part of God even in a work of art.

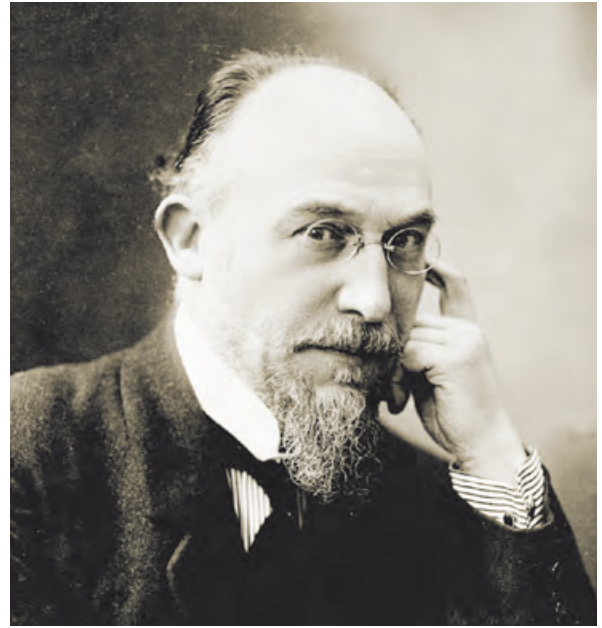
Learn that if you create a perfect form a soul will come to inhabit it. And what a soul, a spark from the Central Fire.

The *Salon* was inaugurated at a special ceremony with music specially composed by Erik Satie, a well-known Rosicrucian of his time. This was the environment in which Debussy lived and I am sure you will draw your own conclusions from the association.

Fortunately, we live today in a time of freedom, made possible by men and women of the past who nurtured a utopian dream. I point to the writings of one of these great people, Jan Amos Comenius, patron of UNESCO and a supporter of the Rosicrucian movement in Europe, whose work re-connects us with the opening words of this article. Modern education is still influenced by the Comenius’ original guiding principles, and these certainly help people to “*learn to do*” and “*learn to know*.” Sadly, few are today interested in “*learning to live together*” and “*learning to be*.” Cultural and human poverty often so widespread, clearly demonstrates this.

Furthermore, we live in an era of our human history where the transcendent has been almost entirely removed from our lives. Although this may reassure some scientists who base even their most private moments purely on things that can be seen and measured, it on the other hand distances them from their true nature, producing the sad results we are witnessing today: a totally unbalanced rapport with the environment; a relationship between individuals which, even when all goes well, is more of a truce than a state of peace..., an incapacity to conceive and dream of a better future.

We believe that “*learning to live together*” and “*learning to be*” are exactly the things that a traditional initiatic Order should be doing. To provide modern people with the appropriate environment and tools they need in order to develop this ability, people are empowered to become better, more mature human beings, capable of evolving and of grasping more profoundly the true meaning of life, namely to prepare oneself to become the architect of one’s own destiny.



Eric Satie (1866 - 1925), well-known French composer and pianist of the late 19th and early 20th Century, is widely believed to have been a member of the Fraternity of the Rose-Croix of France.

Rosicrucianism holds fast to the value of education, in an etymological sense of the word; and it supports the quest for Beauty as a privileged route for reintegration with the Divine. Rosicrucians maintain that this quest is essential, especially in an age such as the present, where the illusion of happiness obtained exclusively through scientific and technological progress without limits, is fast failing.

We, Rosicrucians of the 21st Century, are more than ever convinced that education can truly save humanity from its own entrapments. In an etymological sense of the word, education, as mentioned earlier, ensures that people discover within themselves true knowledge, recognising in their fellow humans, as they recognise in themselves and the universe, Divine nature in action, expressing all the potentiality of the soul that manifests in all people.

We are children of the absolute and carry within us evidence of this inheritance. “*We have rejected that which the beast within us wanted, and we want to find the Man wherever he may have been lost.*” With these words, the French politician and writer André Malraux, was emphasising that the moment has arrived when new answers are needed, and these can only come from a renewed vision of Reality. Rosicrucians believe that an initiatic order in particular, as with art in general, has the purpose of helping people to reach this new vision. Perhaps this is Utopia...? Certainly it is in her that we place all our hopes. Can we do otherwise?





by Kenneth U Idiodi

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Sanctum Musings



Spirituality for Social Justice

Yesterday and today, we have always lived, and still live, in a complex world of mind-boggling diversity. We must realise that it is from the innate spirituality within us that the various numerous religions of the world have emanated.

WHenever we come together for a Rosicrucian conclave we are reminded of how fortunate we are to have become members of the Rosicrucian Order. The activities we participate in during a conclave help to demonstrate many of the profound principles we learn through our membership. These are not abstract lessons; they are lessons that have practical application to our daily lives. And they help us lead better lives. We become healthier, happier, and more peaceful as we sincerely apply the Rosicrucian teachings in our lives.

As practising Rosicrucians we should easily and willingly fit into any society in which we live, for there is nothing weird or strange in what we do as members of AMORC. It is said that the Rosicrucian is 'a walking question mark', which simply means that we have a desire to know the truth about our existence and the universe in which we live. This requires a bold investigation into the natural and spiritual laws governing the universe, and our appreciation of the natural and spiritual laws of the universe helps us to

easily adapt to and blend into any society. With mastery of the laws, we become outstanding, not as misfits in society, but as beacons of light worthy of emulation.

We have formed a global network of human interaction that is unmatched by any other creature on Earth, at least on a physical level.

The gregarious instinct of humankind is the force behind our social interactions. We are born with a need to come together and keep each other company. Our need to interact with one another is so great that we come together to form large complex societies. Each society interacts with other societies to such an extent that currently every society has become directly or indirectly linked with every other society on the planet. We have formed a global network of human interaction that is unmatched by any other creature on Earth, at least on a physical level.

Unfortunately, our societies are fraught with



all kinds of problems such as poverty, ill-health, criminality, terrorism, superstition and discrimination to name just a few. Each problem seems to pave way to one or more other problems. For example poverty increases the potential of criminality. Discrimination could instigate acts of terrorism. And a correlation exists between poor education and poor health. However, in the scheme of things, it so happens that there is one vice that is responsible for most if not all the other societal vices. And this is social injustice. When society denies some people of their fair share of goods and services while others get more than they deserve an imbalance is created in its internal structure. This underlying imbalance manifests outwardly as all kinds of societal ills. The fundamental balance of the society is maintained by justice. Achieving social justice in our interactions requires the kind of understanding that is gained through spiritual development. The Conclave theme *"Spirituality for Social Justice"* is therefore very appropriate as a subject for contemplation in today's world.

An intriguing symbol of justice known as Lady Justice can be found on the premises of every courthouse and judicial institution. Symbols are often used in mystical tradition to convey deep universal truths. Mystical symbols communicate with us at the deepest levels of our consciousness because they are part of the language of our subconscious mind. The study of the symbolism embodied in Lady Justice is worthwhile at this time because it gives us a profound insight into what is required to uphold justice.

Lady Justice is depicted as a trim female figure wearing a toga. She is blindfolded. In her left hand she carries a scale while in her right hand she holds an unsheathed sword. The female figure in the Greco-



An intriguing symbol of justice known as Lady Justice can be found on the premises of every courthouse and judicial institution

Roman attire, the philosopher's toga, is reminiscent of the Ancient Roman goddess Justitia. Within the Roman pantheon Justitia was the goddess of justice; a virtue that every Roman emperor was keen to identify with. The feminine nature is considered to be receptive, nurturing, and subtle. This is opposite and complementary to the masculine nature which is active, driven, and aggressive. Lady Justice appears to be in her prime in health and energy thereby depicting justice as a potent and fundamental force of nature.

The scales she holds in her left hand are the balancing scales of justice. The idea of using scales as a symbol for judgment goes far back in history to the times of Ancient Egypt. Anubis the Ancient Egyptian God of the underworld was believed to be responsible for receiving departed souls in the underworld. He carried a scale which was used to weigh the heart of the departed soul against a feather. This feather was known as the feather of Maat; the Ancient Egyptian word for Truth. Only a heart free of the burdens of falsehood could possibly balance against a feather. The purity of such a heart can be understood from an extract from the Egyptian Book of the Dead known as Confession to Maat. The Egyptian Book of the Dead is a compilation of texts meant to guide the departed souls into the afterlife. A verse from Confession to Maat text says: *"I have not added to the weights of the scales to cheat the seller. I have not misread the pointer of the scales to cheat the buyer."* And after a series of other negations against any evil doing, the confession ends with an affirmation of purity made by saying: *"I am pure, I am pure, I am pure."*

The scales also allude to the universal Law of Karma also known as the law of natural justice or the law of natural compensation. For every action initiated



Anubis attending the mummy of the deceased.



"For whatever we demand, we must offer something of equal worth otherwise we may tip the scale too far in the other direction and still end up with injustice."



by an individual the scale is tipped. The Universe then responds in equal measure returning the scale back to a state of balance. This is why Karmic reactions always perfectly correspond to our actions. And this is the true definition of justice.

The piercing action of justice is symbolised by the unsheathed sword wielded in the right hand of Lady Justice. When retribution comes for our wrong doing it strikes us like the blow of a sword. When we have deeply painful experiences it becomes easier to sympathise with others having similar experiences. As we evolve, we eventually get to a point where we feel the need to protect others from having similarly hurtful experiences. We become like soldiers at the vanguard of the battle for justice. In human affairs we must often fight for justice. The sword of Lady Justice also depicts the combat that is often engaged in for the sake of justice.

Another quality often represented by a sword in esoteric tradition is the force of the mind or mental force. Justice is a mental concept and the sword symbolises the power of thought or the sharp intellect required to administer it effectively. And for justice to be efficaciously administered it is essential that there is no form of bias or favouritism. This quality of lack of bias is symbolised by the blindfold. With the blindfold everyone is reduced to the same status because no one is visually recognisable under the blindfold therefore everyone becomes unknown.

True justice is carried out without fear or favour. In justice, there is no mercy hence the common plea

for justice to be tempered with mercy. The blindfold also denotes mastery. When a practice has been carried out many times, we can reach a stage of mastery in which we are able to do the task blindfolded. When the outer vision is covered, the inner vision becomes more active. The blindfold therefore also depicts the awakening of the inner senses and their application in unravelling the mysteries that confound the mortal mind in search for justice.

If we can align ourselves with the principles of justice we will be working in harmony with cosmic laws. And as a result of this we will experience greater balance in our lives.

From the foregoing we can appreciate the profound symbolism of Lady Justice and can apply this knowledge in our lives. If we can align ourselves with the principles of justice we will be working in harmony with cosmic laws. And as a result of this we will experience greater balance in our lives.

The blindfold should remind us to be detached when judging any situation; not allowing sentiment to becloud our judgment. It should also remind us to turn our consciousness inwards to receive inner guidance. The sword should remind us that justice rarely comes to us on a platter of gold. We have to demand for it and fight for our rights. The fight for justice should be more



of a psychological fight than physical or emotional. And we must always remember to be balanced in our demands. For whatever we demand, we must offer something of equal worth otherwise we may tip the scale too far in the other direction and still end up with injustice.

For instance, if we are determined to have a just and egalitarian world, we must work hard on our spirituality in creating it bearing in mind that we are essentially spiritual beings in physical bodies. We must teach our children eternal values through the ages at prenatal and postnatal stages of their development. This way, they will grow up with these values making the next generation much greater than us. In line with Rosicrucian spiritual culture, I quote from an ancient Rosicrucian manuscript titled "Unto Thee I Grant the economy of life" on what parents should teach a child:

*Teach him obedience
and he will bless you.
Teach him modesty,
and he will not be ashamed.
Teach him gratitude,
and he will receive benefits.
Teach him charity,
and he will gain love.
Teach him temperance,
and he will have health.
Teach him prudence,
and fortune will attend him.
Teach him justice,
and he will be honoured by the world.
Teach him diligence,
and his wealth will increase.
Teach him benevolence,
and his mind will be exalted.
Teach him science,
and his life will be useful.
Teach him religion,
and his death will be happy.*

All civilised persons throughout the world condemn extra-judicial killings. Raising children in an atmosphere of incessant killings and hatred, means we have failed abysmally to create an atmosphere of love, tolerance and peace for their upbringing. An atmosphere of hatred and intolerance can never attract justice. We therefore call on the various arms of governments in all countries as well as religious leaders and fellow citizens of our planet to join the moral campaign to stop all acts of terrorism..., killings, banditry, kidnappings, robbery and all acts of violence.



We must teach our children eternal values through the ages at prenatal and postnatal stages of their development. This way, they will grow up with these values making the next generation much greater than us.

When we look around us we find that examples of injustice abound and are hard pressed to find more than a few cases where justice was served. This indicates that there is still a lot of work to be done. It is our sincere hope that this Conclave will inspire all participants to dedicate more time and effort to the establishment of justice and also provide us with some potent techniques that will help achieve this.

Beginning with ourselves, we must realise that in the consciousness of the Divine, religiosity yields to spirituality when at the personal level we think good, speak good and do good always as a way of life. To think good, speak good and do good always is the LAW.

If this is understood and practiced by us individually and collectively, then we can say at last that Religion has become Spirituality. But alas this is not yet so because spirituality does not come from religion; it comes from our soul..., from the innermost recesses of the Divinity within us.



Choose This Day!

by Paul Layton



HAVE YOU READ the words of Robert Frost, in the last verse of *The Road Not Taken*?

I shall be telling this with a sigh, somewhere
ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in
a wood, and I, I took the one less travelled by,
and that has made all the difference.

It deals with my favourite philosophical question:
Choice. What choices do we have and what do we do

with those choices? We can ponder endlessly how
much of life is predetermined, how we are limited
by heredity, intellect, social status, environment or
economics. That's not the issue here; nor do I believe
that it's important. However limited our choices may
be, what matters is what we accomplish through the
choices we make.

Victor Frankl survived the death camps of
World War II, and wrote in his book *Man's Search
for Meaning*:



We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing, the last of the human freedoms: to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

I believe we have a great deal of choice; that most of us do not make the most of these choices and that we tend to live our lives based on other people's decisions and expectations. I believe that, too often, we lack the courage to act on our decisions. Not to decide is to decide. I believe this freedom to choose is one of the most important aspects of our lives, and that to act responsibly on those choices determines the success or failure of our lives.

It's important to differentiate between freedom and license. Make no mistake, this is not the concept of "if it feels good, do it." All choice combines freedom *with* responsibility; they are inseparable. We pay a price for all our decisions and our indecisions, but we've the individual freedom to determine for ourselves when that price is too high.

Each day brings new choices and multiple decisions have to be made. All choices matter and the potential for a better life is all around us. No matter how trivial our choices may seem to be, the decisions we make determine who we become and what the quality of our lives will be. We become in a very real sense the consequences of our choices, or rather our decisions to those choices. So, let me present some areas in which we can exercise our freedom to choose.

We can choose whether or not we believe that all people can develop within themselves an inner core of

Better then to choose light and thereby life, and to do so positively, enthusiastically and above all willingly.

good and sanctity. All living things seek light and through it life; neither plants nor animals can survive long without the beneficial effects of light from our resident star, whether they receive it directly and visually, or indirectly through the energy it provides. And beyond the physical light that we humans absolutely must have in order to survive, lies the *'inner light'* which is equally essential for our survival. That magnificent inner partner to light that we commonly know as *'life'*, and specifically the special form known to mystics as the *Vital Life Force*, this is the ultimate source of our existence, and we must seek it and nurture it wherever it



All living things seek light, and through it life; neither plants nor animals can survive long without the beneficial effects of light.

exists.

Of course we can choose to move into the shadows, away from light and life; but we will in that case eventually die a lonely and unhappy death. Denial of the inner light does not diminish its existence in the warm glow of actuality, and choosing to avoid it, and thereby avoiding life itself, merely changes us for the worse. Better then to choose light and thereby life, and to do so positively, enthusiastically and above all willingly.

We can also choose love. We can choose which people and what creatures matter to us, and then nurture our relationship with them tenderly as treasured parts of our own being. We can choose to make time for the people and animals we love; and where we initially have none to love, we can choose to go out and seek people and animals to care about. Good, lasting relationships require willing commitments by all involved; but we have the upper hand as we know this and must therefore lead the way by bringing love into the lives of all within reach.

We can also choose health, both mental and physical. Again, we choose not from our limitations, but from the freedom we have to dream of a better self. And where we have health conditions that simply cannot be resolved, we focus all our energy on at least maintaining the status quo, and better still, improving our health in those areas that have not been damaged beyond repair. This positive approach of holding on to and treasuring the areas of health we have, is crucial to our wider wellbeing. We can choose not to abuse our bodies through overwork, through alcohol or drug abuse, through overeating, through not exercising, etc., the choice is of course ours. And for those of us who have generally good



health already, we can choose not to whine about the inevitable age-related aches and pains that we know will eventually enter our lives. Choose a positive, can-do attitude therefore towards maintaining your mind and body in as healthy a state as you can.

Remember too that we can choose to surround ourselves with beauty. We can dream of better places, more beautiful surroundings, and then go about creating our little corners of paradise. Even a plant on a windowsill can bring beauty and grace into an otherwise drab existence. For me, each day includes simple pleasures: a walk around the block, a few coins for the beggar on the corner, fresh flowers on the mantelpiece, light streaming through the stained glass windows of my local church, music, candlelight, poetry. So many small things are there just for the taking, even if our circumstances are humble. Seek out therefore the beauty that brings you refinement and happiness.

And finally, we can choose happiness. I know..., how can one be happy if one is daily faced with frustrations and unpleasantness. It isn't easy to be happy, but it is possible. The easiest way of achieving happiness is to choose to be grateful even for the small things in life. Even if you have to pretend to be grateful, do so; for that pretence will, when sincerity is added, turn into genuine gratitude.

This may seem like cold comfort, but please believe me: choosing to experience gratitude, and doing so with sincerity, is one of the most important choices you will ever make. For from that gratitude, no matter how small it is at first, a whole universe of happiness will open up. If someone makes you unhappy, remember that you can choose the opposite state merely by counting your meagre blessings one by one, and amplifying them to the point where happiness returns. So, choose to be happy, and begin the process of by choosing to be grateful.

Each Day, a Choice

We can choose to have fun, to be spontaneous. I have a small magnetic plaque on my fridge which reads: *"Life is not a dress rehearsal."* I take that as meaning that life is serious, it's for real. Yes, I know life is also like a big classroom, and yes we are here to learn our lessons; but we mustn't treat life as though we can repeatedly do a 'undo' as we do on our computer when we've made a mistake. Taking life seriously, even if it's a school in the broader scheme of things, means that we make better choices, and live with the consequences of our choices without a whimper.

In other words, choose to succeed and don't make your choices on the basis that you just want to see how thing will pan out. Don't treat life as a mere dress rehearsal, an experiment. Life's for real, so make proper choices and live with the consequences. We can choose to dream, and



"We can choose to have fun - Life is not a dress rehearsal!"

those dreams must surely be pleasant and bring happiness to us. Create your own ideals, make your own dreams, and then make it come true.

The crucial thing is to actually make choices, and never sit of the fence more than a brief moment as you decide. Have the courage to choose and to live with your choices, no matter how they turn out. You are the 'pilot in command' and there is ultimately no one else who can take responsibility for your life. Remember that proper choosing means selecting the best parts of life and leaving behind the rest. Delete from your life all things that hold you back or keep you in a state of weakness. If someone consistently makes you uncomfortable or unhappy, why are they a part of your life? If the food in a restaurant is poor, or the service slovenly, what so you care what a surly person thinks of you when you leave without tipping? You don't have to answer the phone every time just because it's ringing, and if you don't like your life, look for honourable ways of making it better.


Where unhappiness exists, choose a strategy to change things. The most important step is simply to choose to take that first step out of your dungeon, even if you can't see immediately how to escape. Choose to change things, and accept nothing less than a complete transformation. Make a list of the things that bring you comfort and support, and those that detract you from peace of mind and happiness. I've made some deletions in my life. I no longer make room for plastic flowers in the home, wine in paper cups, chronically negative people bothering me, restaurant meals that cost more than I earn in a day. They're all gone and I haven't missed any of them. Their deletion leaves more time for the things that matter to me, and I pursue happiness without hurting other in the process.

All choices involve consequences, and responsibility for those choices. We have to pay our dues, but what a small price there is for true freedom! We are the sum total of our choices, and our lives are lived out living with the consequences of what we have chosen. Choose life therefore, and make it a happy one!



Mysticism: The Sacred Marriage of Science & Spirituality

by Obinna Patrick Ihebom



THERE IS A huge disconnect between science and spirituality in the world today because our knowledge and educational systems have become too specialised in an incomplete manner. In the last few centuries, as scientific thinking became more dominant in the modern world and information multiplied, people (scientists especially) began to focus on just one area of specialisation, which resulted in fewer people being capable of seeing the big picture of life as a Unity.





Stained glass window art portraying science and religion in harmony and presided (united) by a solitary Angel who personifies Light, Life and Love. Science on the left is embodied by the characters of 'Research, Intuition, Devotion, Labor and Truth, and the halos of the characters for 'Religion to the right show they represent Inspiration, Reverence, Purity, Faith and Hope.

[Stained glass window art titled 'Education' by artist Louis Comfort Tiffany (1890) at [https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tiffany_Education_\(center\).jpg](https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tiffany_Education_(center).jpg)]

Within this same period, religion, an evolving form of spirituality, remained purely faith-based and gave no room for reconciliation of its beliefs and dogmas with scientific inquiry. In huge contrast to these two scenarios however, Mystic Wisdom has strived for several millennia to balance and unite science and spirituality in perfect harmony, to yield a more complete view of life. This union and broader view of life at the core of Mystic Wisdom is based on one major fact – *Everything* in the universe is connected.

Subject-Specific Science

As can be seen today, one could find a mathematics academic genius who knows all the mathematical equations possible, yet is unable to recognize how a simple ratio like the Golden Mean ratio of Pi prevails in creation, from plant growth, to the growth of

the human embryo to even the movement of galaxies. Conversely, a world-renowned botanist could be unable to discern that the growth patterns observable in the plants and trees he or she has been studying for decades follow certain mathematical constants like the Fibonacci sequence.

How do we excuse the geologist who has been studying the rocks of the earth for decades but lacks the conscious realisation of how the vibratory energy of just a grain of silica sand (quartz crystals) can store unbelievable packets of information, i.e. the essence of today's microchip technology? What of the accomplished musician who is unaware of the musical spiral of colour and light frequency, and the specific manner in which musical frequencies like those attuned to 432Hz, for example, affect human brain activity? What do we say of the internationally known archaeologist whose acclaimed deep knowledge of the ancient world can still not reconcile how past civilisations constructed the gigantic megalith structures around the world, often dispelling or evading these enigmas in their many scientific publications?



Today, a well-read geography teacher could be completely unmindful that the Moon's Cycles and its gravitational pull on the Earth create an electromagnetic effect that can influence human brain activity since neurons in the brain function by electromagnetic impulses - a common cause of hyperactive behaviour in people during the full moon. As another example, renowned scholars in biochemistry who have known about body chemicals all their life may not be fully aware of the reasons for secretions of dimethyl triptamine or DMT from the pineal gland during deep meditation, or why heavy doses of it are secreted just as a person transits this world.

How do we explain an astounding physicist with years of teaching the principles of energy who is yet to consciously realise that the vibrational energy at higher levels in the electromagnetic spectrum account for certain aspects of the non-physical worlds? What of medical professionals who discard much-older alternative medical practices like reflexology and reiki as less reliable simply because they do not understand that area of knowledge in human physiology, especially the yet unknown world of the human autonomic nervous system? The widespread disconnect created by this insulated way of scientific thinking is endless, whereas these knowledge areas are all well covered in a wholesome manner within the inquiries of Mystical Wisdom.

Faith-based Religion

Like science, religion today is also not spared from this disconnect that makes it unseeing to the big picture of life. Much of religious truth is purely faith

or belief-based, and religious bias has often dismissed scientific knowledge and only accepted it when it does not interfere with the religious beliefs or when it has been proven empirically beyond all scientific doubt. Sadly, phenomena that are not yet understood are referred to as miracles if it is perceived as benevolent, or considered as something evil if it evokes fear, distrust or uncertainty. This is in contrast to Mystic Wisdom which understands that these unknown phenomena are simply caused by higher scientific laws that science is yet to discover, which is why Mysticism is often called a Sacred Science.

Crystal healing and the intonation of vowel sounds is a good illustration of this disconnect. Ancient peoples like the Mayans and Egyptians used crystalline minerals for healing by placing specific crystals at certain parts of the body (or in a non-contact manner) to promote relief from discomfort or disharmony in the body. In line with modern principles of physics, these practitioners seemed conscious that the elements and minerals in bodily fluids were seeking affinity with similar elements and minerals in the crystals used for such healing practices. Also, it seemed that the specific vibratory frequencies of these crystalline minerals within the immediate environment had some positive influence on the elements or combination of elements in the body which led to normalcy.

Certain vowel sounds are also of great beneficial effects to the ailing body based on a similar principle of vibratory harmony with aspects of the human body. As much as these facts are all well covered and established within the scope of mystical wisdom, the picture of a person with crystals around his or her body especially



The seven Liberal Arts depicted in a medieval painting, illustrating the more holistic manner in which learning was received in some older systems. From left to right are Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, Astronomy, Logic, Rhetoric and Grammar. It was thought that these 7 formed the foundation for learning and understanding them unlocked the mysteries of life and the Universe. The first 4 for instance, also called the Quadrivium, focused on Arithmology or the Science of Numbers and taught the many secret manifestations and qualities of numbers in the Universe. In contrast, many modern-day arithmeticians would see numbers as mere quantitative numbers, i.e. nothing beyond their numeric values.

[Medieval painting by Florentine painter Francesco di Stefano 'Pesellino' (1422–1457) at <https://artsbma.org/collection/seven-liberal-arts/>]



which it does not yet know, therefore science is simply the discovery of previously unknown laws or wisdom guiding existence. Scientists must now look keenly at what mystics have claimed for ages and use them as hypothesis for their research – this is how great minds like Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton (who were also students of mystical inquiry) assisted humanity to evolve mathematical formulas for the universal laws that guide creation. In the eyes of mystics, mainstream scientific knowledge is often obsolete because today's mysteries are simply tomorrow's science that were well understood yesterday. For example, a lot of what is celebrated today as scientific discoveries had been known and taught for millennia in the ancient mystery schools of Egypt (Khem as it was called) and the East (Vedic culture).

For the very religious-inclined, we must all try to find a way to reconcile our beliefs with emerging historical facts and scientific discoveries. Our religions can no longer serve us if it ignores emerging facts that should lead us to truth rather than superstition and fear. We must be open-minded enough to understand the world through multiple ranges of possibilities and yet see the Divine order of the Supreme Creator at work. People should be encouraged to ask questions, to practice out-of-the-box thinking and to find logical answers to inquiries about their faith or spirituality and life – the truth will always be our friend, for “*there is no Religion higher than Truth*” as stated by the Theosophical Society.

Spirituality should therefore be scientific and science should be spiritual. The Heart and the Mind should both agree if we are to come to fullness. We must not seek to know everything through our religion or spirituality alone as it could sometimes lead us to fall into ignorance or error. On the other hand, we must not pursue knowledge exclusively through science because scientific thinking today is fragmented and growing, and incapable of seeing the whole. Religion should not be reluctant to inquire into the logical causes of life's mysteries and should not employ blind faith in many matters or accept only those truths that materialist-inclined science can demonstrate. Also, modern-day science should go beyond its sole concern for only the material aspects of creation or for seeking only empirical evidence first before validating various phenomena it has not yet understood. It should learn to be open to the possibilities of non-sensorial laws that are beyond its methods of inquiry.

Knowledge of the world and its mysteries is not beyond the reach of the average person. All that is required is a combination of a questioning, open mind; the unquenching curiosity of a child; an observant temperament to seek the truth diligently; and the will to churn these ingredients in the crucible of silence and meditation. Those who earnestly seek answers to the whys and hows of life become truly blessed, for they are eventually released from the clutches of ignorance, superstition and fear. We should all embrace mystical wisdom because it is a beautiful marriage of science and spirituality that enables us to have a balanced understanding of the world.

Knowledge is not whole until the mind can feel; and Faith not fully grown until the heart can see.

For science without a sacred spirituality is incomplete; and spirituality without a sacred science is not complete.

For the heart and the mind must both agree; if we are to know the Truth that sets us free.

This is the true and noble work for you and for me, to marry science and spirituality and therefrom have the key.

Only then can the mind be truly free and knowledge truly whole; only then can the heart really see and spirituality be fully known.

Image Credits

1. *Science and Religion* -- stained glass window art showing science and religion portrayed to be in harmony and presided/united by a solitary Angel who personifies Light, Life and Love, by artist Louis Comfort Tiffany (1890).
2. *The Seven Liberal Arts* -- painting by Italian painter Domenico di Michelino (1417–1491)
3. *The Seven Liberal Arts as Servants of Theology* -- Unibibliotek Salzburg Artesliberals, c. 1450, a 15th Century painting in Salzburg, Austria.
4. *Golden Rain* -- a Fantasia Painting by Russian contemporary Artist Victor Nizovtsev.



Mysticism in the Evolution of Cultures

by Peter Bindon



ONE OF THE costs we have had to bear as a result of the all-too-fast technological development which followed on from the scientific and industrial revolutions, is the inexorable loss of our links with the earth, and more importantly, our alienation from our spiritual source.

To most of us, and perhaps in every age, progress is looked upon as synonymous with the improvement of material conditions. A civilisation that can produce

laser eye surgery, space travellers, super-fast railways, and atomic fusion is generally regarded as being advanced. But the enlightened few of every period in history have always recognised that true civilisation is something more than mere material development; and that 'something' is spiritualisation. They have recognised that material advancements are only instruments for providing the leisure and opportunity for the development of the spirit. The nearer the human race approaches to the Central



Spirit of the universe, to the Cosmic, the further it will have progressed.

During the rise of materialism, many of the world's cultures deeply repressed or even denied the organic processes that link humans with nature; these processes are birth, reproduction and death. Simultaneously, the spiritual awareness that once provided people with a sense of meaningful belonging to the cosmos was replaced by disbelief in a Cosmic force, or superficial religious activities of decreasing vitality and relevance. Happily, Rosicrucians have maintained their interest in a positive relationship with the Cosmic and are striving to be practical and constructive in offering something to the world that will assist each and every person to advance this spiritual quest. But, you ask, by what mechanism can humankind achieve this goal of advancement?

During the rise of materialism, many of the world's cultures deeply repressed or even denied the organic processes that link humans with nature.

The mechanism that advances civilisation towards spirituality is mysticism, of which Rosicrucians are probably all practitioners. And there are suggestions that outside the Rosicrucian Order an unprecedented renaissance of interest in the psychology of mysticism and the spiritual interrelationships that exist within all beings in the universe are developing among more and more individuals.

What is Mysticism?

So, what is mysticism and what are its origins? The non-theological use of the word 'mystical' in English, meaning "a hidden or secret thing", dates from about 1300 CE and arrives in English from Anglo-French where it is *misterie* (O.Fr. *mistere*). It came into French from the Latin *mysterium*, but its origin was from the Greek *mysterion* meaning "secret rite or doctrine." But mysticism itself is of course much older than this label for it, though it is clear that mysticism implies a relationship to mystery.

Many philosophers refer to mysticism as being either a religious tendency and desire of the human soul towards an intimate union with the Divinity or as a system growing out of such a tendency and desire. These contentions assume that the so-called Divinity, about which they speak, is the absolute and ultimate state of existence. This may or may not be so, but are mysticism and religion inextricably related? I think not. Mystical contemplation and spiritual expression can take place both inside and outside the realm of religious belief and dogma.

Usually a mystical experience is filled with intense feelings and may involve a dialogue or direct encounter with 'ultimate reality', what Rosicrucians term 'the Cosmic.' The 'mystery' here is defining the identity of the something or someone greater than human comprehension that has been encountered during the mystical exercise. In the West, it is only in the last 2,000 years or so that mystical experience has come to mean a direct experience of the divine. And since in theory at least Christianity is a religion of love, the Christian 'mystical' experience is spoken of as a 'spiritual marriage.' For myself, I believe that a successful mystical experience may depend less on the particulars of the given occurrence than on what happens because of it.

Mystical experiences are shaped by culture and tradition. Accounts of their experiences provided by mystics are inevitably influenced by the culture in which they live and by their professed religious tradition. In the first case it is because language and linguistic references and expressions are determined by culture, and in the second instance it is because most religions contain the language that is most called upon when referring to the 'ultimate entity' or the infinite.

In fact it is well-nigh impossible to examine mysticism in popular writings without also encountering religion, so intertwined have the two become since the advent of organised religion in the world. So, Western mystics rarely claim that their experience dissolved them into the being of ultimate reality because Western theism insists that human beings never literally become God, or the divine. On the other hand Eastern mystics often describe the ultimate state of their spiritual experience as involving complete physical and sensory union with what we might call 'Cosmic Consciousness.'

All mystical experiences therefore vary somewhat. Each is unique, but the uniqueness does not diminish or negate the claim for transcendence or touching ultimate reality. And this is despite the comment that the mystical



Re-creation of a Neanderthal burial from Shanidar in the Zagros Mountains.



experience itself is in part a function of what the mystic believes can happen. Many mystics say that speech breaks down and is entirely inadequate to describe their state, that silence is more appropriate, and that even silence cannot adequately describe what happens. This dimension of the mystical experience, although ultimately inseparable from the culture and personality of each mystic, transcends or rises above cultures, and applies to Christians as much as to Aboriginal people. And here lies a difficulty.

Looking Back

What prehistoric humans thought can never be known with certainty, for they could not write it down. The materials they left behind them, like tools, weapons, works of art, burials and the rest, can be interpreted in many ways, but even then we may not arrive at the actual interpretation.

At best, material objects comprise a fragmentary record of the many different human groups who have lived in a variety of physical environments over a period of time far longer than that of recorded history. And even after written records begin to appear, because describing spiritual ecstasy is so difficult, we have few documents that can tell us what previous cultures and civilisations thought about this activity.

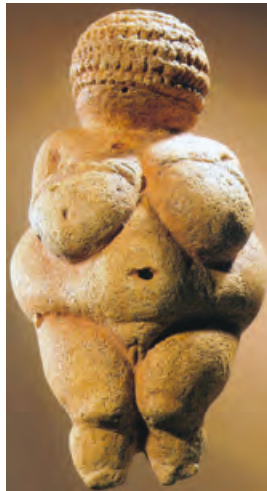
However, some deductions about what our ancestors thought about life and death, the two major concerns they had as we ourselves have, can perhaps be drawn from the burial practices and tools of a group of humans known as Neanderthals. These folk buried their dead with care, indicating their affection for the deceased. They included food and equipment in the graves which suggests they had a belief in an afterworld of some kind, in which the dead were not entirely cut off from the living. It also implies that they understood one factor which distinguishes humans from other animals: an awareness of their own inevitable death. This remains the basis of one of the great mysteries of life. And so, as we do today, they too understood that time passes, and inevitably results in death...; and then...?

In turn, a sense of time implies the concept of order, of events following one another in succession, suggesting that Neanderthals understood the pattern of birth, life and death that underlies human existence: that we are born, live for a time and then die. They must have observed that the same cycle is true of plants and of animals. Perhaps it was this understanding that brought these early humans to the conclusion that behind the order

of nature lay something beyond and above the plants, the animals and even above themselves. After all, the task of the shaman, the person who was perhaps more perceptive or spiritually inclined than others in their group, was to attempt to make contact with that supernatural something that lay beyond human knowledge. We might imagine that these early humans conceived of the supernatural 'something' as a sort of super-human that was in control of the order of nature.

Evidence of some sort of religio-magical cult, dating from about 100,000 BCE, has been found in caves in the European Alps where the skulls of bears had been placed on stone slabs in what looks like a ceremonial arrangement. First, this action suggests that these relics were set apart from the mundane and were considered special in some way. And secondly, it indicates that the cave itself may have been thought of as a sacred place. Does the selection of skulls for this arrangement demonstrate that they thought a creature's head contained the essence of its being? Certainly the intention of the rituals of later bear-hunting peoples was to appease some supernatural power for the killing of a bear, to ensure there would be no decline in the supply of bears for hunting. And so we discover the idea that an animating essence or spirit inhabits all aspects of Nature. The idea that every hill or stream or tree or living thing has a soul is one of the oldest of human beliefs.

People with limited control over their environment are likely to have tried to establish some kind of relationship with their own ancestors, from whom they have inherited such knowledge of the workings of nature as they possess. Their reason for this contact with their ancestors would most likely be to try to gain some control over the powers that give order to Nature. They needed to ensure that food supplies were maintained, that their animals were fruitful and that children were born. No doubt, they also needed to act in some way to appease Nature which sometimes disastrously fails to provide the necessities.



The Venus of Willendorf.

The Upper Paleolithic

In the Upper Palaeolithic period (between about 30,000 to 10,000 BCE), after the arrival on the scene of Homo Sapiens sapiens, as we like to call ourselves, burials become more elaborate and ceremonious, and there is strong evidence of the concern people showed for fertility in the 'Venus figures', small figurines of women, some highly stylised and others comparatively realistic, found in a number



of archaeological contexts across Europe. The swollen pregnant abdomens of many of these figures and their blank, featureless heads suggest that they were not meant to portray particular women but a more abstract idea of 'woman' in general, and especially woman in her role as mother. They may have been worn by women as amulets to ensure fruitfulness and they may have represented a 'Great Mother', the source of all life.

The Upper Palaeolithic is also the time when the magnificent cave art of Europe was produced. If the purpose of this art included a desire to promote fertility among the animal species portrayed, as well as to assist hunting, then we might conclude that the society in which the artists lived, believed in a supernatural order of reality that humans must try to influence in order that they and their quarry are to eat, live and procreate. Perhaps this also implies that these people had ideas of magical symbolism in which a real state of affairs can be influenced in some way through mimicry and simulated situations.

Neanderthals did not wear ornaments, so far as is known, but the later Palaeolithic peoples did. They made necklaces from animal teeth or cowrie shells for instance, and carved bracelets from mammoth tusks. It seems likely that ornaments contained an ingredient of magic, as they have tended to do ever since. The teeth may have carried with them the qualities of the animals from which they came, and in many times and many cultures the cowrie shell has been an emblem of the feminine and fertility.

The Neolithic

The so-called 'Neolithic revolution' which saw the gradual development of the cultivation of crops and breeding of



View of the entrance to Bryn Celli Ddu Neolithic burial site on the Welsh island of Anglesey.

animals, instead of gathering and hunting, originated in Asia in the 9th millennium BCE or earlier, and spread over most of Europe by about 3500 BCE. Our picture now becomes, if anything, even more obscure than before, and the course of the transition from what is known of the Palaeolithic to the religions of societies with written records is not at all clear.

It seems evident that as agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry are gradually established during the Neolithic period, the annual cycle of Nature becomes a dominating factor in human life and a focus of religious and magical attention. Unlike the aggressive hunter, the passive farmer relies more on the slow workings of forces which are still largely beyond human control. The

Unlike the aggressive hunter, the passive farmer relies more on the slow workings of forces which are still largely beyond human control.

perspectives of hunting are relatively short-term and those of farming much longer. The sense of an order behind Nature, of human dependence on it, and of the perils of disorder in the shape of drought, famine, destructive storms, pestilence, may have been strengthened by the longer perspective of farming communities.

There are scattered pieces of evidence confirming that agricultural people worshipped fertility deities. Seedtime and harvest were the two great occasions of the year, and likely to be celebrated with festivals and rites intended to ensure a good crop. And it appears that undertaking ceremonies and performing rituals that would ensure fruitfulness were among the basic concerns of prehistoric humans, and probably represent humanity's earliest religious ceremonies.

The sky also becomes important, because sun, rain and wind affect the growth of crops and because the calendar, which successful agriculture demands, is worked out by reference to events occurring in the sky. Reverence for the sky and its forces may easily have existed long before, though there is no evidence of sky worship in the Palaeolithic. But as we will see, the new emphasis on the sky will bring significant changes to the world.

Most Neolithic societies buried their dead with greater pomp and circumstance than previously, especially those individuals who had been powerful in life. Sometimes, as in megalithic burials in Europe, or pyramid burials in ancient Egypt, constructing the graves involved immense and extravagant toil implying a deep respect for





The Egyptian "Opening of the Mouth" ceremony.

the powers of the dead personage and probably the belief that they influenced the growth of crops from the earth in which they lay buried. Representations of the mother goddess are often found in burial places and she seems clearly connected with the earth.

Humans therefore arrived at a point where they realised they are and always will remain part of a universe. It is a living universe and is animated with what I will call Spirit; and that Spirit lies at the core of existence in the universe. It is a dynamic force which permeates the universe from its centre to its circumference. Each of us has it in ourselves and by it we are being continually acted upon. It burns within us, and we are bathed by its energy. But there are times when this force is peculiarly insistent and urgent within us. And there are times when it presses upon us with urgency from without too. And there are rare occasions when the urge from within and the pressure from without meet and correspond.

Then we have the ecstasy of mystical experience in its fullness as an interaction or connection is established between the individual self and the universal whole and during which the self enters into a new state of being. The most we can guess about what mystical practitioners were enacting or thinking at this point in prehistory is deduced from enigmatic paintings made by the artists of the time in caves and in secluded caverns.

Beginnings of Recorded History

As people began to master new techniques in their material lives, inventions and discoveries were fitted into a religio-magical context, though the people who made these discoveries recorded precious little about their spiritual lives. The discovery of yeast for example, made it possible to bake bread and brew beer, commodities which both had a long history of symbolic connections with the deities and the otherworld. The rise of metallurgy with the development of working in copper, bronze and iron gave



Bronze age necklace mid second millennium BCE.

the smith the uncanny powers of one who was as much magician as craftsman.

The seasonal progression of the agricultural cycles was still disrupted by climatic variability, which less sophisticated people put down to supernatural interference. Although we have some evidence of ceremonies and rituals whose aim was to appease wrathful deities, we know nothing of the spiritual quests of individuals during these chaotic ages.

The advance of towns, states and armies in central Europe, with their male dynasties and priesthoods, tended to diminish the earthly Great Mother's status in

Humans therefore arrived at a point where they realised they are and always will remain part of a universe.

favour of male gods of the sky who came to dominate the civilisations of the ancient world. Egyptian, Greek and Roman stories told of the exploits of the sky-dwelling gods as they created the universe, made humanity, established order, and put down disorder. In far Western Europe the invasions and conquests of warrior peoples, whose deities were gods of the sky, also lessened the influence of the Great Mother.

The Classical World

Although we have little information regarding the attitude of peasants and labourers in ancient Egypt towards mysticism, the fact that they collected many prayers and invocations to be recited over the deceased in his or her coffin or even by the entombed deceased, demonstrates that some of the presumed results of mystical activity were certainly within their understanding.

There is little mysticism in the earliest schools of Greek philosophy, but it becomes important by the time of the philosophical system of Plato. It is especially evident in his theory of the world of ideas, of the origin of the world soul and the human soul, and in his



doctrine of recollection and intuition. The Hellenistic Jewish philosopher from Alexandria, Philo, who lived between 30 BCE and 50 CE, taught that people, by freeing themselves from matter and receiving illumination from the divine, may reach a mystical, ecstatic or prophetic state in which they become absorbed into Divinity. But the most systematic attempt at formulating a philosophical system of a mystical character was that by the Neoplatonic School of Alexandria, especially that of Plotinus, arguably the greatest philosopher-mystic the world has ever known, who lived between 205 and 270 CE.



Page from Plotinus' "Enneads".

In his *Enneads*, Plotinus sets out a system which has as its central idea the concept that there exists a process of ceaseless emanation and out-flowing from the One, the Absolute. He illustrates this concept using metaphors such as the radiation of heat from fire, of cold from snow, fragrance from a flower, or light from the Sun. This theme leads him to the maxim that "good diffuses itself" (*bonum diffusivum sui*), and concludes that entities that have achieved perfection of their own being do not keep that perfection to themselves, but spread it out by generating an external image of their internal activity.

The ultimate goal of human life and of philosophy is to realise the mystical return of the soul to the Divine. Freeing itself from the sensuous world by purification, the human soul ascends by successive steps through the various degrees of the metaphysical order, until it unites itself in communion with the One. Now, I am sure that you recognise some of our present-day Rosicrucian principles in there. It was Plotinus who gave us the image of the Great Chain, used in later times by our own Rosicrucian alchemists and theorists to draw symbolic spherical diagrams of up to twelve concentric spheres representing matter, life, sensation, perception, impulse, images, concepts, logical faculties, creative reason, world soul, nous and the One.

The development of a particularly masculine outlook in cultures occurred over long stretches of time and the details of its advance across the settled world are largely unknown, but there was inexorable continuity in its spread. Admittedly, the Earth Mother of prehistory, in her various local incarnations, did become the ancestress of goddesses of later societies, but it seems that her times were past. It is worth observing that although her world had been uncertain, the new era of the masculine sky gods was no more settled.

Essentially mysticism brought religion to the world. But despite perhaps being the carrier of mystical principle and methods, mysticism is not religion, nor as I have already mentioned is it necessarily religious. Mysticism belongs to the core of most religions and many commenced after their founder experienced a powerful and immediate mediate contact with the spiritual essence, their godhead. However, a lesser number of religions were prepared to allow their adherents to establish this kind of contact with the Cosmic for themselves, but rather kept this task firmly in the hands of a priesthood or appointed leaders.

The Cosmic is also commonly called the One, and you and I are, in some sense, that One. This means that the inmost self of humans is identical with the Absolute, with the unchanging power against which the whole changing universe must be seen. One therefore lives not only with one's own life but also with the life of the whole universe. And this 'universal life' is founded in a changeless Being which is at the same time one's own eternity. It was this understanding which made it possible for the poet Tennyson to say that death was "*an almost laughable impossibility*."

These latter are some of the ideas that we have inherited from those cultures that have proceeded through history before us. We carry their heritage. Some of their ideas and concepts have been discarded as humans came to new understandings of how the many parts of this complex universe fit together. Some ideas and concepts remain relatively unchanged. As Rosicrucians we recognise that the final goal of all mystical experience is connection with that divine infinity which lies beyond matter and mind, but which can transform them. The approach to this ultimate state is through the power of discriminating thought and purified emotions and, as Henry More, one of the Cambridge Platonists stressed: "*God reserves His choicest secrets for the purest minds*."



Henry More



Mystics of Aragón

by Mary Jones

Modern day Zaragoza, capital of Aragón.

ARAGÓN IS today (2014) an Autonomous Community in the north-east of Spain, coextensive with the medieval Kingdom of Aragón. It comprises three provinces: Zaragoza, Huesca and Teruel, with the capital in the ancient city of Zaragoza.

Zaragoza was originally settled by the ancient Iberians¹, later becoming the Roman provincial city Caesaraugusta². In 714 the Berbers and Arabs took

control of the city, renaming it Saraqusta, a corruption of the original Roman name. It grew to become the largest Muslim-controlled city of Northern Spain and was the main city of the Upper March³. From 1018 to 1118 Zaragoza was one of the Taifa⁴ kingdoms, independent Muslim states which emerged in the 11th Century following the implosion of the Caliphate of Córdoba. Unlike the modern image of a Caliphate, this was a multi-ethnic and highly civilised state where there was





Banu Hud Palace



Banu Hud Palace

nature, something we treasure today above all other things: we call it *Love*.

Love is the single, most cohesive power that exists in the universe. It ensures that the highest levels of freedom balanced with the most inclusive forms of justice and equality humans can think of are constantly not far from the forefront of daily thought, daily discussions and daily actions. People throughout the world have this *'way of living'* or *'inner attitude'* as an ideal to be strive towards; for it has demonstrated over and over again countless times its superior status to such an extent that there exists today a worldwide *'group awareness'*, and energy field or égrégoire that has gained traction to such an extent that we find it everywhere represented by ordinary people, from the wealthiest to the poorest.

Of course this group awareness did not emerge in a vacuum. It evolved over many centuries from millions of small good deeds, small good intentions, kind words and acts of compassion. And occasionally it received a brief efflorescence of knowledge (scientific, moral and spiritual) from the life works of a person who embodied in his or her life the very essence of goodness as represented by the spiritual principles embodied in the concepts of *'light, life and love'* so cherished by mystics of all ages. People with a moral and spiritual maturity well beyond that of the average person of his or her age have existed in every era, though we certainly know of only a few of them today. By far the majority we must presume, lived quietly, bettered the lives of their immediate community, and died in anonymity.

In this article I will discuss three such personalities from Aragón who stand out as leading lights in the service of humanity. Of course they were not the only lights of righteousness of their respective eras, but history has ensured that they were the ones written about and therefore recorded for us to read about today. Although they were not saints in the standard sense of the word,

they were far ahead of their times and left legacies that have helped the world to advance itself to higher, more inclusive levels of civilisation. The three I will be briefly discussing are *Ibn Gabirol (Avicbron)*, *Ibn 'Bâjja (Avempace)* and *Miguel Servet*.

Ibn Gabirol / Avicbron (1021 – 1158)

Zaragoza and its surroundings were at one time an important part of Islamic Spain bordering the Caliphate of Al-Andalus⁹. After the dissolution of the Caliphate, Zaragoza became the seat of one of the Taifa kingdoms in the period between 1018 and 1118. It was in 1038 that the clan of the Banu Hud took over the kingdom and led it to the heights of power and glory. The period between the accession to the throne of Al-Mundhir II, of the previous Banu Tujibi clan and the occupation by Alfonso I *'The Battler'*, king of Aragón and Navarre, who made it the new capital of his kingdom in 1118 was one of the most brilliant in its cultural history.

Solomon Ibn Gabirol (c. 1021-1058), known in



Al Andalus & the Christian Kingdoms



*Who could grasp your intensity
In forming the radiance of purity,
From the glow of your glory,
From a rock the rock has hewn,
From the hollow of a clearness withdrawn?*

*You sent the spirit of wisdom along it
And gave it the name of soul,
And formed it out of the fire
Of intellect's ardour
Whose spirit burned on inside it.*

*And you sent it out through the body
To serve it and guard it.
And you watch as it acts like a flame within it,
Though the body isn't consumed,
Which was formed from the spark of soul,
And was brought into being from nothing,
When the Lord came across it in fire.*

the West primarily as Avicbron, was born in Málaga (Málaga in Andalucía, southern Spain's Costa del Sol), but at a very young age moved with his parents to Zaragoza (northern Spain) where he was educated and wrote three parts of his major treatises, as well as poems and some 20 books. His ideas were so important they had a strong and lasting influence on the intellectual life of the city for several centuries. Crucially though, he is remembered as one of the first teachers of Neoplatonism in Europe. His



role has been compared to that of Philo¹⁰ who served as an intermediary between Hellenic philosophy and Judaism. Nearly a thousand years later Ibn Gabirol restored Neoplatonism to Europe.

He was moved first and foremost by the Neoplatonic theological sense that God's reality infuses all things, and by the concomitant ethical and existential ideal of a 'Neoplatonic Return', namely the notion that we must strive through thought, word and deed to reclaim our own truest being and likeness the source of All. Ibn Gabirol's writing in this regard indirectly, though deeply influenced the Church and virtually every spiritual and mystical movement since his time. It wasn't until 1846 however that Avicbron / Ibn Gabirol, formerly believed to have been a Muslim poet, was identified positively as the Jewish scholar and mystic Solomon ben Judah.

Avicbron suffered from delicate health and acute sensitivity, which, combined with the death of his parents at an early age, caused him to mature very early in life. In 1045, aged 24, he wrote in Zaragoza his "*Book on the Improvement of the Moral Qualities of the Soul.*" It is unfortunately the last date recorded from his life which ended 13 years later. As a poet he developed a fresh form of composition of Jewish poetry, creating an authentic school. However, his influence on religious poetry is more personal. Setting an example still emulated today, his religious poems are still used in Jewish ceremonies such as Yom Kippur¹¹ or the Day of Atonement. For part of his life he served as Cantor in a synagogue, and his religious sentiments are embodied in the rational thought, piety, mysticism and asceticism of the Zaragoza school.

Ibn Gabirol's greatest concern was in understanding the nature and purpose of the human being: "*...we must understand what we are [our nature] so that we know how to live [our purpose].*" And like many other Neoplatonists, he explored layers of cosmological and metaphysical realities in an attempt to understand how to live the best human life possible. Sadly only one of his philosophical works "*The Fount of Life*" based on an earlier Neoplatonic Arabic work called "*Fons Vitae*" has come down to us. The chief doctrines of the work may be summarised as follows:

- All created beings are constituted of "*form and matter.*"
- This holds true of both the physical and spiritual worlds, of which the latter is the connecting link between the "*first substance*" (the Godhead) and the "*substance divided into nine categories*" (the physical world).
- Matter and form are eternal and exist everywhere.



The main thesis of *The Fount of Life* is that all that exists is composed of form and matter. One and the same ‘matter’ runs through the whole universe from the highest limits of the spiritual realm down to the lowest limits of the physical world. The further this ‘matter’ is removed from its first source (*the Godhead*), the less spiritual it is. He insists forcefully, over and over again, that this universal matter is the substratum of all that exists, and nothing exists without it. The book, which is heavy going, is written like a Socratic dialogue in a dry and arid style in contrast to his poetry; but it expresses the same meaning ‘*the unease of Man*’ with his descent into gross matter, his transmutation, the



Ibn Bâjja.

longing for union with the one God, absolute and eternal, revealing an insight into the origin of the Universe, providing both a bridge and an avenue of return to God. In this context the ultimate source of the thoughts of Ibn Gabirol are to be found, at least in part, in the writings of Aristotle, Plato and the revised versions of Empedocles¹².

Although based on the works of several philosophers of the classical period of Greek civilisation, *The Fount of Life* is still a unique and very original work, setting out three essential tenets as follows: (a) *the aim of knowledge*, (b) *self-awareness or perception of the world and* (c) *the consciousness of God*. His goal, reflected in consciousness, has to be accompanied by a devout and upright way of life. The pilgrim must continue ascending step by step, through many ever decreasing incarnations, until s/he arrives at the Soul, then arrives at the intellect, and finally attains enlightenment where union with the Divine is accomplished.

Ibn Bâjja embodies in his writings the already well-known concept of the goal of all humankind as being union with the Godhead.

At the beginning of this journey, the substance and nature of God remain a complete mystery to the neophyte and can only be glimpsed by mystical intuition. This concept places the Ibn Gabirol firmly in the strictest interpretations of both the Jewish and Islamic traditions. His enlightened approach, the logical and philosophical path he proposed, will culminate in the final mystical union.

The Fount of Life had a widely diverse influence. His ideas were picked up in the West by Bishop William of Auvergne and Duns Scotus¹³, but the Dominicans Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas consistently rejected them. As a final comment, I will quote one of the sayings collected among his writings: “*I will ride through this life seeking the truth, although I do not know what destiny awaits me.*”

Ibn Bâjja / Avempace (1085? – 1138)

Avempace is the Latinised form of his name Abû Bakr Ibn Bâjja. He was born in Zaragoza towards the end of the 11th Century, probably between

1085 and 1095; the date is uncertain. His grandfather and father were humble silversmiths, far removed from intellectual circles. He developed into an accomplished musician as well as a physician, mathematician, astronomer and philosopher. In the Jewish quarter of Zaragoza a small enclave of high culture had developed before his birth and a great philosophical school existed in which scholars and mystics were prominent. This cultural and mystical flowering is unfortunately hardly remembered today.

When the Almoravids conquered Zaragoza in 1110, the Almoravid Sultan appointed his brother-in-law as the new governor who, in turn, appointed Ibn Bâjja as Vizier¹⁴, an office he held for three years. Ibn Bâjja composed panegyrics for the new Almoravid governor who rewarded him lavishly. He also wrote poems that pleased him and they both enjoyed music and wine. In 1118 the Aragonese Christians occupied the city after a long blockade and set about persecuting the philosophers and scholars who had not fled. A notable exception were certain Jewish scholars who secretly kept the school.

It is not clear if Ibn Bâjja left before or after the fall of Zaragoza, but we do know he was for a time given sanctuary at the court of the governor of Murcia. However, soon after arriving there in 1118, some powerful and jealous men in the governor’s court conspired against him and soon had him imprisoned. For nearly 20 years until 1136, we have no information on his life. We do know that in 1136, he was in Seville and from there he went on to Almería and Granada, then to Oran¹⁵ and Fez¹⁶. He was assassinated and buried in Fez where his tomb still existed until the 13th Century.



Ibn Bâjja studied the work of Aristotle, Avicenna¹⁷ and Al Farabi¹⁸ in particular. However, the ideas of Aristotle held by Ibn Bâjja were a strongly Neoplatonised version. He reveals a mystical and aesthetic side to his nature that Thomas Aquinas later referred to. Ibn Bâjja is the one philosopher above all others who clearly defined the direction subsequently taken by Hispano-Islamic thought. And he was the first to directly influence Averroes¹⁹, Maimonides²⁰, Albertus Magnus and Ramon Llull among others. His most celebrated works are the “*Rule of the Solitary*”, the “*Epistle of the Farewell Message*” and the “*Epistle of Conjunction of Intellect with Man*.”

Ibn Bâjja embodies in his writings the already well-known concept of the goal of all humankind as being union with the Godhead. To achieve this end, we must perfect our qualities and moral virtues. He introduced four steps to illumination, realised by the passage of three progressive states of consciousness: “*matter*”, “*acquired wisdom*” and “*insight*.” The Godhead contains both the vital life force of the universe and the greatest accumulation of knowledge ever known, with its unique, universal, essential, clear and eternal nature. Here the process of abstracting spiritual ideas and the three states of consciousness can be seen from the work of Aristotle, culminating in the contemplation of pure thought in the fullest meaning of Neoplatonism. Ibn Bâjja affirms that all philosophers agreed that the soul is a substance and portrays Plato as one of his sources:

“Since it was clear to Plato that the soul is assigned to substance, and that substance is predicated on the form and matter which is body, and that the soul cannot be said to be a body..., he fervently defined the soul in its particular aspect. Since he had established that the forms of spheres are souls, he looked for the commonality of all [souls], and found that sense perception is particular to animals, [but] that movement is particular to all, and therefore he defined the soul as ‘something which moves itself.’” (Ibn Bâjja)

In the final stage, ideal mystics, as conceived by Ibn Bâjja, are revealed. However, the image of perfect mystics, although good in principle, always come up against the problem of human society and is frustrated by the historical and political circumstances in which they are obliged to live. This stands in the way of obtaining of what they most desire, their own perfection and Union with the Divine. To provide a solution to this perennial problem, Ibn Bâjja proposed a method for mystics to withdraw individually for a while in solitude from the world, subsequently returning to the community but keeping apart from it, and thereby avoiding being contaminated by its less desirable elements. This idea Kirkegaard²¹ went on to develop several centuries later.

Ibn Bâjja composed a musical piece in Zaragoza, along the lines prescribed by Al-Farabi. He also read the *Encyclopaedia of the Brethren of Purity* and in the same city made the acquaintance of Ibn Al Arif²². The mystical influence of both these sources can be found in his writings and it is likely he was the first person (of intellectual stature) in the West to give detailed commentaries on Aristotle’s ideas. Even today, some aspects of his mystical philosophy would be ideal for people in the West to adopt, for they provide some genuine solutions in combating the effects of the extreme form of materialism and dearth of true spirituality that we face today.

“Spiritual acts render him nobler, and the intellectual acts render him divine and virtuous. The man of wisdom is therefore necessarily a man who is virtuous and divine. Of every kind of activity, he takes up the best only. He shares with every class of men the best states that characterise them. But he stands alone as the one who performs the most excellent and noblest of actions. When he achieves the highest end, that is, when he apprehends simple substantial intelligences that are mentioned in the [Aristotelian] ‘Metaphysics’, the book ‘On the Soul’, and ‘On Sense and the Sensible’, he then becomes one of these intelligences. It would be right to call him simply divine, and he will be free from the mortal sensible qualities, as well from the [particular] spiritual qualities...” (*Rule of the Solitary*, Ibn Bâjja).

Miguel Servet (1511 – 1553)



Miguel Servet, disciple of the liberal sciences and a martyr to free thought, was born on September 1511 in Villanueva de Sixena (or Villanueva de Sigena in Huesca province of northeast Spain). He died in Geneva in 1553, burnt at the stake on the orders of John Calvin²³. He was a Spanish theologian, physician, cartographer and Renaissance humanist, being the first European to correctly describe the function of pulmonary circulation. He was a true polymath, versed in many sciences: mathematics, astronomy, meteorology, geography,



human anatomy, medicine and pharmacology, as well as jurisprudence, languages, poetry and the scholarly study of the Bible in its original languages. Servet was a Hellenist, physician and philosopher who has earned the gratitude of many great minds for his scientific discoveries, his devotion to the sick and the poor and for his indomitable independence of thought and conscience.

There was much going on in Spain during this period to make a serious minded youth thoughtful about questions of religion. Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic²⁴ were on the throne, determined to secure political unity in their new nation by compelling religious uniformity. A spirit of the most intolerant orthodoxy therefore controlled all aspects of life. In 1492, for refusing to deny the faith of their fathers and profess Christianity, 800,000 Jews had been banished from the kingdom. In the same year the Sultanate had been overthrown in Granada, and although for a few years Muslims were tolerated and allowed to continue with their faith, they were soon compelled to choose between converting to Christianity, being burnt at the stake or being driven from Spain.

A matter incomprehensible to the Church at the time, was the Muslim dilemma of having to accept God as a trinity rather than a single, overarching God of all creation. It was the most insurmountable obstacle for Muslims, for it contradicted for them the first and most important article of their faith, the undivided unity of God: that God is one, not three. During Servet's boyhood, some 20,000 men, women and children of all ages, Jewish and Muslim, were burned at the stake for refusing to deny their unitary concept of God. Despite the resistance of the liberty loving Aragonese, the Inquisition was set up among them to root out heresy, and these things must have made a deep impression upon the mind of the young Servet. The brutality and injustice of these events may well have laid the foundation for the main passion of his later life.

He studied the Bible deeply and discovered that the Trinity is not even mentioned in its pages.

At 17 Servet was sent to the most modern university of the time, the University of Toulouse in the South of France. There he indulged his passion for theology, and one idea in particular came to obsess him: the notion of the Holy Trinity as an obstacle for the understanding of three major religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. He studied the Bible deeply and discovered that the Trinity is not even mentioned in its pages. Although less orthodox than Catholic and Protestant Christians, he always firmly believed that any thought, once discussed, has the power to come into existence and remain thereafter as a canon



Isabel the Catholic.

of perceived truth merely because of that first discussion. His theological arguments were heavily criticised by both the Catholics and Protestants of his time as he rejected the threefold image of God as well as the rite of baptism. Interestingly, Toulouse was the centre of Catharism until 200 years before his time, and it is known that many Cathars left the Languedoc region of France and fled to Aragón where they found for a while a measure of protection. Servet's scientific contributions were equally notable, as he was the first to write about the circulation of blood through the body²⁵, which he set out in his book: *Christianismi Restituto* (The Restoration of Christianity) published shortly before his death in 1553. In this work he argued for a more personalised perception of Jesus, as a divine entity willed into being by the God the Father. This concept, the direct precursor of the Unitarian movement, brought him into conflict with both Catholics and Protestants, forcing him to publish an article revising his ideas scarcely a year later.

In 1536, he returned to Paris to continue his medical studies. It was a wise decision, for he began to make a name for himself as a doctor and went on to discover that blood oxygenation takes place in the lungs and not in the heart.



But he made one small mistake by drawing a connection between medicine and astrology, and that was enough to have him expelled from the university. Although the inquisition absolved him of guilt, he was condemned by the parliament of Paris. So he returned to Lyon to practise medicine. His fame reached the archbishop of Vienne²⁶, for whom he would even serve as a personal physician.

In Vienne he earned fame and fortune as a doctor and an editor. He even had time to rekindle an old and fateful friendship and started corresponding with John Calvin on the topic of the Holy Trinity. The situation was much different than the days in Paris. Calvin had become a top religious leader and would not accept criticism of his own ideas. Calvin had sent Servet a copy of one his books, and when Servet returned it loaded with corrections, Calvin cut off the correspondence and announced that if Servet ever showed up in Geneva, he wouldn't leave the city alive.

In 1546 Servet sent a copy of his most important work, the *Christianismi Restituto* to Calvin. On reading it, the outraged Calvin denounced Servet to the Inquisition at Lyon, and Servet had to hastily take flight. On a fateful leg of his journey to Italy via Geneva, he was detected, arrested and condemned to be burnt at the stake. His death provoked a furious outburst on the part of the Protestant population over the pronouncement of the death penalty on the grounds of heresy. How could Calvin, such an outspoken enemy of Catholicism, be in league with the Inquisition?

Over time, the historical figure of Servet has begun to gain recognition (the University Hospital of Zaragoza bears his name and there's a foundation named after him) and his role as a humanist has increasingly become known.

Reflections by Servet:

- *“Faith lights the lamp which only the oil of love can ignite.”*
- *“The divine has come down to mankind so that mankind can ascend to the divine.”*
- *“If I love someone in an affectionate manner, I am dependent on her, she surrenders herself to me and leads wherever she wills.”*
- *“The tendency to trust impostors and godless men and not ourselves, is an inherent part of the human condition, as none can recognise his own faults.”*
- *“Nothing separates me from God but a still, small voice or a ray of sunshine.”*

Quotes about Servet

- *“This man is wise and I think without any doubt he teaches the truth; but he falls into the clutches of the devil. Take care this does not happen to you.”* -- William Farel, executioner and the right hand of John Calvin during Servet's execution.
- *“To kill a man does not defeat a doctrine but only kills the man himself.”* -- Sebastian Castellion, French humanist on the execution of Servet.
- *“Miguel Servet, geographer, physician, physiologist has earned the gratitude of mankind for his scientific discoveries, his dedication to the sick and the poor, his indomitable independence of thought, his intelligence and his conscience. His convictions are irrefutable. He gave his life in the cause of truth.”* -- From an inscription engraved on the monument erected in 1908 in the French town of Annemasse, 5 kilometres from Servet's place of execution.

Footnotes

1. Iberians, were one of a prehistoric people of southern and eastern Spain who later gave their name to the whole peninsula. Waves of migrating Celtic peoples from the 8th to 6th Century BCE* onward settled heavily in northern and central Spain, penetrated Portugal and Galicia, but left the much earlier immigrant population of Bronze Age Indo-European people of the south and east intact.
2. The Roman emperor Augustus founded a city called Caesaraugusta to settle army veterans from the Cantabrian wars (northern Spain). The foundation date is not known, but it is believed to lie between 25 and 12 BCE. The city did not suffer the usual decline so common throughout the last centuries of the Roman empire and was captured peacefully by the Goths in the 5th Century CE.
3. The three frontier regions of Muslim Spain were the Upper March, around Zaragoza, the Middle March around Toledo and the Lower March to the north of Lisbon.
4. A Taifa was an independent Muslim-ruled principality, usually an emirate or petty kingdom, though there was one oligarchy, of which a number formed in the Al-Andalus after the final collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba in 1031.
5. El Cid: Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar (c. 1043 – 1099) was a Castilian nobleman and military leader in medieval Spain. He was called El Cid (the Lord) by the Moors and El Campeador (the Champion) by Christians, and is a national hero of Spain. He was born in Vivar del Cid, a town near the city of Burgos. He found work fighting for the Muslim rulers of Zaragoza, whom he protected from the domination of Aragón and Barcelona, further bolstering his military record and reputation as a leader.



6. Castile: The Kingdom of Castile was one of the medieval Christian kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula.
7. The Almoravids were a Berber dynasty of Morocco, who formed an empire in the 11th Century stretching over the western Maghreb and Al-Andalus. Their capital was Marrakesh, a city they founded in 1062.
8. The Common Era abbreviated as CE, is an alternative naming of the calendar era, Anno Domini, abbreviated AD. BCE is the abbreviation for Before the Common Era, an alternative to Before Christ, abbreviated BC.
9. Al-Andalus: also known as Muslim Spain or Islamic Iberia, was a medieval Muslim cultural domain and territory occupying at its peak most of what are today Spain and Portugal. At its greatest geographical extent, in the 8th Century, southern France (Septimania) was briefly under its control. The name more generally describes parts of the Iberian Peninsula governed by Muslims (given the generic name of Moors) at various times between 711 and 1492.
10. Philo of Alexandria (c. 25 BCE – c. 50 CE), also called Philo Judaeus, was a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher who lived in Alexandria in the Roman province of Egypt. He used philosophical allegory to attempt to fuse and harmonise Greek philosophy with Jewish belief. His method followed the practices of both Jewish exegesis and Stoic philosophy.
11. Yom Kippur also known as Day of Atonement, is the holiest day of the year in Judaism. Its central themes are atonement and repentance.
12. Empedocles (c. 490 – c. 430 BC) was a Greek pre-Socratic philosopher and a citizen of Agrigento, a Greek city in Sicily. His philosophy is best known for being the originator of the cosmogenic theory of the four Classical elements: *Fire*, *Air*, *Water* and *Earth*. He also proposed powers called *Love* and *Strife* (the two sides of the much earlier concept of a primordial binary dualism) which would act as forces to bring about the mixture and separation of these elements. His speculations were part of a wider history of the universe which also dealt with the origin and development of life. Influenced by the Pythagoreans, he supported the doctrine of reincarnation. Empedocles is generally considered the last Greek philosopher to record his ideas in verse. Some of his work survives, more than in the case of any other Presocratic philosopher.
13. Duns Scotus or John Duns, commonly called Scotus or Duns Scotus as well (c. 1266 – 1308), is generally considered to be one of the three most important philosopher-theologians of the High Middle Ages
14. A Vizier is a high-ranking political advisor or minister.
15. Oran is a major city on the north-western Mediterranean coast of Algeria, and the second largest city of the country. Located near the north-western corner of Algeria, 268 miles (432 kilometres) from the capital Algiers, it is a major port and the commercial, industrial and educational centre of western Algeria.
16. Fez is the third largest city of Morocco, and was the capital of Morocco until 1925. It is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Al-Qarawiyyin, founded in 859 CE, is the oldest continuously functioning madrasa in the world. The city has been called the 'Mecca of the West' and the 'Athens of Africa'.
17. Avicenna: (c. 980 – 1037) was a Persian polymath who is regarded as one of the most significant thinkers and writers of the Islamic Golden Age. Of the 450 works he is known to have written, around 240 have survived, including 150 on philosophy and 40 on medicine.
18. Al-Farabi (c. 872 – between 950/951), was a renowned scientist and philosopher of the Islamic Golden Age. He was also a cosmologist, logician and musician, representing the multidisciplinary approach of Muslim scientists.
19. Averroes (1126 –1198) is the Latinised form of Ibn Rushd. He was a medieval Andalusian Muslim polymath. He wrote on logic, Aristotelian and Islamic philosophy, theology, psychology, political and Andalusian classical music theory, geography, mathematics and the medieval sciences of medicine, astronomy, physics and celestial mechanics. Averroes was born in Córdoba, in present-day Spain, and died at Marrakesh in present-day Morocco.
20. Moses Maimonides was a preeminent medieval Spanish, Sephardic Jewish philosopher, astronomer and one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars and physicians of the Middle Ages. He was born in Córdoba under the Almoravid Empire in 1135 or 1138, and died in Egypt in 1204. He was also a rabbi, physician and philosopher in Morocco and Egypt.
21. Søren Kierkegaard (1813 – 1855) was a Danish philosopher, theologian, poet, social critic, and religious author who is widely considered to be the first existentialist philosopher.
22. Ibn al-Arif (born 1088 in Almeria and died 1141 in Ceuta) was a famous Andalusian Sufi.
23. John Calvin born Jehan Cauvin (1509 – 1564) was an influential French theologian and pastor during the Protestant Reformation. He was a principal figure in the development of the system of Christian theology later called Calvinism. Originally trained as a humanist lawyer, he broke from the Roman Catholic Church around 1530. After religious tensions provoked a violent uprising against Protestants in France, Calvin fled to Geneva in Switzerland.
24. The "*Catholic Monarchs*" is the joint title used in history for Queen Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand II of Aragón. Ferdinand and Isabella are noted as the premier monarchs of the newly united Spain at the dawn of the modern era. Their primary goal was to conquer the Muslim kingdom of Granada and completing the Christian reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula.
25. William Harvey is credited with the first detailed study of the pulmonary circulation of the blood, but Servet came before him at least in understanding that blood circulated.
26. Vienne is a commune in south-eastern France, located 20 miles (32 kilometres) south of Lyon, on the river Rhône.





Stalactites and Stalagmites

by Peter I Ogban

OCCASIONALLY, natural elements demonstrate the archetypes of Creation, the relationship that exists between God and humanity, and between our spiritual and worldly natures. Stalactites and stalagmites are some of these natural elements that veil the knowledge of the principles of creation and regeneration. It is for us to search nature for these relationships for our material and spiritual wellbeing. Thus, in a book published in England in 1751 entitled “*Unto Thee I Grant the Economy of Life*” we read:

The noblest employment of the mind of man, is in the study of the works of his Creator. To him whom the science of nature delights, every object brings a proof of God; everything that proves it, gives cause for adoration.

And from Benjamin Franklin’s writings we have...

...resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

And finally, Democritus is credited to have said that...

...everything is always becoming.

Stalactite, Stalagmite and the Cave

The Encarta Dictionaries defines a stalactite as a conical hanging pillar in a limestone cave that has gradually built up as a deposit from groundwater seeping through the cave’s roof. The dictionary also defines a stalagmite as a conical pillar in a limestone cave that is gradually built



upward from the floor as a deposit from groundwater seeping through and dripping from the cave's ceiling. Thus, stalactites and stalagmites are underground geologic features that develop mostly in limestone bedrock which may straddle unsaturated and saturated zones of the geomorphic substratum.

Caves, in which stalactites and stalagmites form, are in turn formed in terrains underlain by soluble rocks such as limestone, dolomite and gypsum. They are natural subterranean chambers in the limestone which are joined to the land surface by a system of interconnected shafts and galleries. The formation of caves is a geomorphological process. They can form through tectonic widening of joints in the limestone, corrosion by water and hydraulic action along joint planes in the unsaturated zone within the limestone, or through solution in the saturated zone. The most important processes of cave formation are solution and erosion by underground streams.

Stalactites and stalagmites are formed by the dissolution of the limestone, evaporation of water, and precipitation of calcium carbonate on the ceiling, walls and floor of the caves. The water, a solution of water and carbon dioxide to form the weak carbonic acid, infiltrates and percolates through crevices and fissures and reacts with the limestone to form the geomorphologic features. As the calcium carbonate is precipitated, the portion hanging on the ceiling constitutes the stalactite while that deposited on the floor is the stalagmite.

With time, the stalactite grows toward the stalagmite as the latter grows in the opposite direction to join and form a continuous column or pillar from the ceiling of the cave to its floor. In two dimensions, the conical shape appears triangular. The caves thus become the womb for the gestation of the earth features. Apparently, stalactites and stalagmites have a developmental life cycle as follows...

1. **Conception:** the accumulated parent material - limestone, dolomite and gypsum, and water solution.
2. **Inception:** when traces of the geometric forms appear as the solution percolates into the substratum through crevices and fissures and calcium carbonate is precipitated on the ceiling, walls and floor.
3. **Growth and development:** when the conical/triangular stalactites and stalagmites have formed.

4. **Maturity:** when the stalactites and stalagmites have merged and perhaps encrustations appear on their surfaces
5. **Death:** which is the destruction of the structure and or cave by geomorphologic events such as collapse through earthquakes or subsidence.

The caves are thus the receptacle which provides the favourable sub-surface physical and chemical environment for nurturing the geologic formations.

Symbolism of Stalactites and Stalagmites

Symbols, which can be natural, artificial or mystical, are representations which make hidden meanings apparent; they are the epiphany of mystery. Gilbert Durand said that symbolism entails a decreasing entropy of language, a growing order, an augmentation of information and comprehension, as it crosses different levels of reality. The origin of symbols dates from the dawn of human consciousness when symbols were used, in one form or another, to communicate long before the development of language.

Natural symbols are derived from our relationship with our environment and are therefore easily understood and verified. The commonest example of natural symbols is smoke and fire. Artificial symbols develop from people's abstract thinking, and correspond to some conventions, but are restricted in their application, such as two snakes intertwined on a vertical staff used by pharmacists. Mystical symbols incorporate principles and laws, ideas or universal truths and knowledge that have their origin



Two snakes intertwined on a vertical staff are an example of an artificial symbol used by pharmacists.



in humanity's spirituality. For instance, the idea of a beginning or unity can be represented by the dot. Thus, symbols have the power to communicate to the individual their full meaning. They are also an economy of language, one that all humanity can come to understand.

As said, both stalactites and stalagmites have the structure of a cone or triangle. They develop in a cave, their receptacle or natural alchemical laboratory where the solvent water (the active agent) reacts with limestone (the passive agent) to produce the characteristic features after the dross, including carbon dioxide, has been eliminated or made available for other transformations and uses; matter being energy in the making, etc.

The stalactites are inverted with the apex pointing downward, depicting the materialisation of the creative force or energy. This triangle is an index of the loss of the kinetics of the creative principles, the slowing down of their vibratory rate from the pristine state to materialisation. In humanity, it corresponds to static conditions, rest or the dark night and mental confusion which precede illumination, the dawn of enlightenment, new ideas and breakthroughs. The stalagmites, on the other hand, symbolise the spiritualised or regenerated matter, the regenerated person who is devoted to noble ideas and elevated consciousness.

Stalactites and stalagmites demonstrate the operation of known laws. Their inception, growth and development are catalysed by decompositional forces, with water or the weak carbonic acid as the main agent, while their growth toward each other and merger manifest the action

The human soul is a replica, a holograph of the Universal Soul.

of the attractive or pseudo-gravitational forces. The development and joining of the underground features are facilitated by the cohesive or intra-particulate force which annuls the repulsive electrical force within the stalactite and stalagmite and between them, and the adhesive or inter-particulate and structural forces between the stalactite and stalagmite, all of which aid the bonding and stabilisation of the combined geologic feature from the ceiling to the floor of the cave.

Thus, the merger occurs because growth in opposite directions has continued uninterrupted by disruptive forces such as the collapse of the stalactite. To the aspiring mystic, it symbolises the relaxation of the predominant



When the stalactites and stalagmites join, inter-penetrating each other, are interlaced or conjugated, they form the column from below with that from above in what may be called constructive interaction.

influence of the outer sensual self, its resistance to the attunement with, and unfolding of, the potentials of the inner self. It represents the apparent death of the outer self and heightened desire for psychic awakening and mystic consciousness, enlightenment and atonement with the reality within. Having harmonised the outer self and the inner self, both now merge into one as it was in the beginning.

The geomorphologic features symbolise the law of duality and correspondences. Their growth and development indicate the urge toward primordial unity; the urge to unite is innate in all beings, organic and inorganic and animate and inanimate. They exhibit the hermetic axiom of: *As above so below and as below so above*; that which is above is never separated from that which is below, that which is above is always interacting with that which is below and vice versa, obeying the law of non-separability between the invisible and visible realms.

The human soul is a replica, a holograph of the Universal Soul. They inter-penetrate one another allowing the stream of light to flow from the infinite Source to its receptacle, humanity in the terrestrial world. The conciliatory Force of God reaches down to impregnate all that is below with the life force and consciousness, in proportion to the quality of our thoughts, consciousness and evolving spirituality. In the process, we nourish divinity by our receptivity, and ascending thoughts and consciousness, the stalagmite, while the Divine nourishes us through the infusion of light, life and love, the stalactite, and the unity established being the ultimate desire of spiritual evolution. In the Aquarian Gospel of Jesus, the great Master is credited as saying...

...the land of Greece was doubly blessed; a part of the earth where its great beating heart throws heavenward etheric waves that meet



the ethers from above; where spirit-light and understanding, like the stars of night, shine forth, demonstrated by the fertility of the Grecian minds in science, philosophy and arts.

When the stalactites and stalagmites join, interpenetrating each other, are interlaced or conjugated, they form the column from below with that from above in what may be called constructive interaction. That is, one pillar stretching from the floor to the ceiling of the cave, like the vertical arm of the Rosy Cross, represents the accomplished student who has integrated his or her will with that of the finer elements of his or her being, of the universe, represented by the ability to transcend most of the challenges of life, symbolised by the horizontal arm of the Rosy Cross.

The student of the Rosicrucian philosophy has mastered the virtues and sensual desires, and the oppositions in life. Secular life is not an obstacle to the pursuit of noblest ideals which shine forth in every activity. The student realises that the opposition between material and spiritual ideals has been transformed into a harmonious relationship and his or her being has become the fertile ground for the intercourse between the soul and body; the earth body is ready for union with its celestial or spiritual counterpart. The pillar or column symbolises this union; the mind and consciousness of the student ascending toward the invisible in pursuit of illumination, further knowledge and greater understanding of the mysteries. In attunement, the student has attained the resonance of vibrations with those of the Cosmic; he or she has crossed the threshold and is a companion of light, which manifest throughout, taking on the hues of his or her inner personality. At this point it is realised that he or she is truly the image of the Creator.

In the conjugal state, stalactites and stalagmites are the union of the fiery positive earth-bound force with the receptive negative upward force, the alchemical polar opposites, to produce their reconciliatory matter, the new seed, germ, symbolising extra-generation or universal creation. It further indicates the emergence of new ideas, the fertility of the mind, expanded consciousness and refined attitude and behaviour which are indices of the gradual mastery of self and life. It demonstrates the law which states that when opposite polarities are brought together under favourable conditions, engendered by a body and mind purified of ignorance and shed of any prejudices, they obey the law of conservation of energy in which neither mass nor energy

is annihilated, and produce a third condition, an effect, which is generative and subsequently becomes the first cause of another effect or series of triangular cause and effect relationships, the rule in daily life.

Conclusion

Thus, it can be said that the stalactite and stalagmite offer an opportunity for understanding the unknown. They represent humanity separated from its spiritual self. In that state, we are subjected to the severity of the vicissitudes of life.

Like the Biblical prodigal son, we wade through the crucible of life during which we may realise our mistakes, learn lessons and willingly desire to shed our personality of the errors that have held us captive from our inner guide. However, their reciprocal growth ensures that we, the stalagmite, gradually responds to the desire of the spiritual self, the stalactite for reconciliation and reunion of the former with the latter.

The conjugal stalactite and stalagmite not only depict the reintegration of the earthly humanity with the dictates of the inner personality, it also symbolises the accomplished person in his or her celestial state, with a quickened consciousness and an unbroken intimate relationship between the desires of the spiritual self and the material needs, and the harmony of life. He or she also realises the importance of the Rosicrucian teachings to the re-establishment of harmony with the psychic self for creating the regenerated being, and happiness and peace in life while incarnated on earth. May we ever strive to learn from nature and realise and benefit from the omnipresence of God in and around us.



Stalactites and stalagmites are the union of the fiery positive earth-bound force with the receptive negative upward force, the alchemical polar opposites, to produce their reconciliatory matter, the new seed, germ, symbolising extra-generation or universal creation.



The Neophyte & Service

by *Raymund Andrea*
(1882 - 1975)

Adapted and abridged from “*The Neophyte and Service*”: Chapter 3 of “*The Technique of the Disciple*” by former Rosicrucian English Grand Master *Raymund Andrea*.

ONE OF the reasons why the discipline of the Path has been called a “hard school” is because the ordinary motives for action have to be reversed and given more impersonal direction. As a neophyte, you must think in terms of others as well as yourself. You may find it difficult to wholeheartedly accept the condition of pledging yourself to service as soon as you enter thoroughly upon self-development. This is not just the case with the neophyte; it is often the same for those who have been seeking advancement on the Path for many years.

When it is suggested they should throw their influence into other lives, they fail to see any connection between self-development and an interest in the development of others. They imagine that the law of service does not apply until they themselves are well advanced on the Path. They can scarcely be blamed for this, for many schools of occult education do not give much emphasis to the importance of service to others. Instead, they concentrate almost exclusively on methods of self-development or self-importance, with personal power as the sole objective.



If you are thinking only in terms of the material plane, this is to some extent legitimate and achievable. Indeed, it is possible to make some spiritual progress without any special consideration of service to others: but only within very narrow limits. In the progress of a person of any commendable quality, the time comes when this kind of exclusive programme becomes a most unsatisfactory affair. Psychic development is quite compatible with a selfish attitude towards life, and indeed has been put to improper use, and examples of this are well documented. Soul development however, is impossible on such terms. Study well the two Paths! They run very close to each other up to a critical point, beyond which they separate forever. It is at this point that the true Path resolves itself into the narrow and flaming way of service.

Why must the neophyte learn to serve? Because the [Inner] Master whom he or she aspires to know is perfected in service. You cannot have intimate association with the Master in world work until you have learned, through long probation, to likewise serve, and to serve efficiently. However, service is not necessarily of a spiritual character. We receive a hint of this from the Master when he says: *"...Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty."* That is characteristic of the teaching of the Master. He points you back to first principles, to the place where you now stand, and bids you to be productive in that place.

Why must the neophyte learn to serve? Because the [Inner] Master whom he or she aspires to know is perfected in service.

That may not be very inviting for some of us. Perhaps we were looking for something important at the beginning, something different from the occupation of the average person. Maybe we were expecting to be noticed as a remarkable character in some way... How typical this attitude of mind is, not only in spiritual quests, but in many walks of life! Yet, only a generation ago, our noble-minded ancestors were not possessed with this narrow-minded spirit. Neither were Masters who belonged to an ancient and classic humanity. To them, the masks, mummeries and triumphs of our day would have passed for nothing. They stand as an inspiring example of reality, durability and self-effacement which makes our little ambitions and desire for effect unworthy of serious notice. Small wonder is it that the Master has to wait! To wait, even through incarnations, for us to awaken



You can lord it over others to your heart's content on the physical and mental planes if you have cultivated force to that end; but not on the spiritual plane.

from this sleep of the senses. Small wonder that we are compelled to open our own eyes, just where we are, and shake off the hypnotic sleep of unreality and false values that hang heavy about us.

Surely our affection for the Master grows most as we realise more and more the infinite patience shown towards the children of the Path during this awakening process. This can only be a patience grounded upon supernal wisdom and perfect compassion. Sometimes, we might be of that turn of mind where we lust for power over our fellow human beings. Perhaps the objective in our studies is to win the reputation of being a notable character. This attitude slays the soul for real achievement. It is forbidden ground, and the person who treads such ground is soon lost in the swamp of illusion. Such a person has a long way to go before he or she can hope to lord it over the souls of other people.

You can lord it over others to your heart's content on the physical and mental planes if you have cultivated force to that end; but not on the spiritual plane. A greater and purified force is required on that level. This, you will only gain when the objectionable voice of personal superiority has been made dumb through probation. As long as the personal voice speaks, you are on the mental plane, and your service will be ineffectual because it emanates from that plane. It will be service activated largely by self-interest, and will pass with others for what it is worth.

Service on the Path means service because you want to and must serve. If that ideal carries with it too strong a note of self-effacement, it is not the ideal that is wrong but your conception of the work before you. As the saying goes: *"There is a price for everything worth having."* The Path of spiritual revelation is an individual one, and every step on it has to be cut by our own hands and trodden by our own feet. This is not an arbitrary law made by our





The athlete is not made by a detailed study of anatomy and reflection on the development of the physical body.

teachers. It is an unalterable condition in the sphere of the Masters, that to receive, you must give. It is a severe and mortifying condition for the personality that loves to grasp and live for itself. However, there is no other way for you to gain even a preliminary measure of true self-knowledge, and to gain even the minor initiations of the Path. You must recognise the fact that service equals development.

Service may not necessarily be occult in character. Pause for a moment and think about that. When you recognise in fullness your innate gifts, you will determine your mission in life. Years may pass in different spheres before your gifts are recognised. One of the most striking results of service is the peculiar power of its discipline in initiating you into the sphere of the soul, and unfolding faculties unperceived until now; faculties you may have only dimly recognised and partially expressed. The awakening of the soul may lead you in many directions and into many walks of life. Remember, the disciples of the Master are just as likely to be found engaged in political, social and economic fields, as in spiritual and religious.

Surprisingly, faith plays a large part in our unfoldment and use of power.

You will not find more powerful examples of this than if you study the history of the Rosicrucian fraternity. Their influence can be traced throughout the civilised world in literature, art and science, in church and state, in mystical illumination and in occult achievements. That being so, as neophytes, we should enter upon our training with an open mind about the line of service that the studies will eventually disclose as fittest for us. As the training goes forward, one thing is certain: *that which you can do best*

will be brought into prominence and matured. Furthermore, it will not be long before you find ways and means of applying your abilities along lines which are satisfactory to yourself and also of value to the world.

There may be some who pause here, as a shadow of disappointment settles upon them on meeting so strong an emphasis upon service as the key to high development. One can only feel complete sympathy with this. After all, many of us enter upon our studies with hopeful ambition for personal conquest. However, we must remember that each of us is now passing into the domain of an exact science, the technique of which consists

of unchangeable laws of thought and principles of action. Such laws cannot be ignored without consequences. The act of service on the Path releases the power of the soul.

Unfoldment is not dependant only upon our absorbing of the material in the studies. The athlete is not made by a detailed study of anatomy and reflection on the development of the physical body. The athlete must translate this information into muscular training and scientific body building, as well as a range of mental adjustments specifically geared towards the physical feats he or she wishes to accomplish. It is the same with the neophyte, with you and I. The forces we seek to know and manipulate are resident within us, and exist around us. What we need is the key to enable us to tap into these infinite forces that await the call of the will to bring them into active use.

Surprisingly, faith plays a large part in our unfoldment and use of power. We will obtain many hints of this in times of emergency and stress if we are aware of our deeper nature. The steady and continuous effort to serve in any way that circumstances afford the least opportunity, will teach us far more than any detailed study of the spiritual life. You will have no idea of what you are capable until you rise confidently in the event of human need and you compel the response of the soul's innate power in meeting it. There is no room for the lukewarm neophyte on the Path. The demands of life have no room for this.

On the Path, men and women of action are needed. There are enough cults and societies in existence which will afford the lackadaisical ample hospitality to dream life away. The student we have in mind must leave these things to those who need them: only then will you be of some use in the world, and then others will emulate your example.



The Two Buddhas

by *Affectator*



THE TWO BUDDHAS ON MY bookcase are priceless objects in more ways than one. Others see them as *objets d'art*, but I see them differently. For me, they recall an incident I will never forget.

As I look at them, I still see the loving eyes of the monk staring into mine as he handed them to me so many years ago when I was a young man. When I tell you how they came into my possession, you will understand why I call them my object lesson, for what I learned from them has lasted me my lifetime.

In 1936 I was working as a junior radio officer aboard a large passenger liner on a round-the-world cruise. We arrived at anchorage early one morning in the harbour

of Colombo in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), surrounded by green hills and white colonial houses.

Four of us were bound for Kandy, located in the centre of the island. We set off in a rickety old truck, driving through steaming jungle on roads full of holes and ditches. Finally, we had to change to rickshaws, for only those pulling the rickshaws were able to sidestep the holes in the road. In Kandy the sun was beating down unmercifully. In spite of the intolerable heat we were determined to make our rounds and take pictures.

I first visited a snake temple. There in the middle of a large room was a circular altar raised about a foot off the floor. Small trees had been fastened to it and their branches were festooned with different kinds of snakes. A few people



knelt, prayed, and bowed themselves out of the temple.

Attracted by a multi-coloured snake coiled on a low branch near the floor, I stooped to get a better look when I felt a fanning sensation on my right ear coupled with a hissing sound. Without straightening up, I turned my head and found myself looking into the beady eyes of a brownish-coloured snake whose rapier-like tongue was just brushing my ear. It opened its mouth to show its wicked looking fangs.

Looking around furtively and seeing that no one was around the room, I quickly put it in my pocket...

I never remember leaving that temple; but seconds later I found myself in another, one that was located diagonally across the street. Here the altar stretched across the whole room. It was dotted with small Buddhas of various types. The one person there soon left and I was alone gazing around at the magnificent carvings. Then, out of the corner of my eye, a bright silver Buddha caught my attention, and without knowing why, even to this day, a sudden desire came over me to take it.

Looking around furtively and seeing that no one was around the room, I quickly put it in my pocket, thinking

a donation in the altar box would more than compensate. I turned to make the donation when it seemed from nowhere the curious figure of a white-robed monk appeared before me.

"Greetings, my son," he said, bowing low and smiling, his eyes looking straight into mine. "*I hope you have found our humble temple uplifting.*" "Yes, I have," I managed to stammer, glancing at the altar where the little Buddha had been. I hoped the monk had not noticed my guilty glance or the figure's absence. He bent over and picked up a golden-hued Buddha, which had been next to the one I had taken. I knew then that he was already aware that I had taken the bright silver Buddha.

He held the golden Buddha a few moments, then handed it to me, saying, "*Here, my son, won't you please take this one also? The one you have symbolises honesty; this one symbolises truth. You really should have them both.*"

Shamefaced, I took the silver Buddha from my pocket and offered to return it. He shook his head slowly. "*No, my son, accept these as a present from me. I have a feeling that your possessing these will cultivate their qualities in you.*"

Looking at the two little Buddhas on my bookcase now, I can still remember those words and hear the quiet, measured tones of the voice. And indeed my life, since that eventful encounter, did change and I am eternally grateful for the meeting with such a wise sage.



I turned my head and found myself looking into the beady eyes of a brownish-coloured snake whose rapier-like tongue was just brushing my ear. It opened its mouth to show its wicked looking fangs.



A man with a large afro is shown in profile, looking upwards. In the background, there is a glowing pink orb with white energy lines radiating from it, set against a dark purple and blue background.

The Afterlife

Would scientifically proving its existence change the world?

by *William Hand*

ASK MANY people in the street whether they believe in an afterlife and you'll get a variety of responses. Generally though they will fall into three categories:

1. *Those who believe in an afterlife, or the survival of at least some form of consciousness.*
2. *Those who don't know or aren't prepared to say.*
3. *Those who dismiss the whole notion of an afterlife or consciousness after death as complete nonsense.*

All of the above is down to belief and, in the case of

religious people, faith. But what if science could prove, beyond all reasonable doubt, that a form of consciousness survives bodily death? Would the world change, and if so how? It's this question that I would like to explore in this short article.

Although it's being challenged, the standard mainstream view of science is that once the body dies, particularly the brain, consciousness closes down for good and that's it. No more awareness, no more individuality, just a state of nothingness that's extremely hard for a



conscious mind to imagine. It's this unimaginable state that causes some people to fear bodily death so much that they refuse even to mention it in normal conversation. The mainstream view also helps to promulgate a materialistic outlook on life in which one has a relatively short time in which to do all one wants to, and one therefore lives life to the full.

There's nothing wrong in living life and achieving of course, but unfortunately that drive causes some people to strive to acquire things at the expense of other people. If you think you have a finite amount of time to do all you want to, is it any surprise that some people will take any action necessary to achieve their goals? Even if it means other people will suffer?

This approach suits powerful individuals down to the ground. If you can keep putting out the message through media outlets that the body is everything and it will all end when you die, then you can take advantage of the urgency with which people will strive to get perceived advantages. I'm not talking about a conspiracy here, just natural behaviours in a materialistic framework. Unfortunately these behaviours can lead to war, conflict, suppression, excessive use of world resources, etc.

Consciousness

Of course there are many in the world today who take an agnostic stance on the survival of consciousness. For them it's a matter for religion and they generally take the view that they will live their life as best they can and then discover whether they survive or not when death comes. However, if death really is the end, they'll never know it! This is certainly a balanced view and in my experience probably the most dominant, despite the position of mainstream science and most of the world's mainstream media. However, the arrival of the Internet in recent years has certainly opened up enquiring minds to numerous possibilities on the subject of death.

Returning to the first group, namely those who believe completely in life after death, for people in this group, death is a transition from one state of existence to another. However, the expected form of the afterlife varies greatly according to religious faith. For many Christians one remains 'asleep' until the 'day of judgement.' For Hindus reincarnation is on offer. The Spiritualist churches speak of the departed as though they were always around us, 'in another room.' The common thread running through these beliefs is that the state of existence after bodily death will be different to that experienced here on Earth.

The Rosicrucian view was succinctly expressed by the first Imperator of the AMORC Dr Harvey Spencer Lewis in his book "*Mansions of the Soul*", where he put forward

in great detail how consciousness and personality survive bodily death in a spiritual realm awaiting reincarnation. This process according to Dr Lewis operates using natural cyclical laws. Therefore, we can see that within this broad group the afterlife is accepted, though its manifestation varies widely, and sadly it's often a source of unnecessary argument and conflict. Because of this it's perhaps understandable that the whole possibility of survival is dismissed as nonsense by many people.

The only way to convince the whole world (or at least 99% of it) that survival of consciousness is true, is to prove it scientifically beyond all reasonable doubt. In science no negative can be proven. It's not possible to prove that there is no afterlife since that would require an infinite number of avenues to be explored. However it only requires a finite number of pieces of good reproducible evidence to prove that it does exist. So the onus is very much on willing scientists to prove survival of consciousness. As I write this piece, there are many scientists around the world seeking to do just that, and exceptional progress is being made, often in the face of harsh treatment from sceptics and lack of funding from established grant systems. This new evidence will be the topic for future articles.

Proof

So I now return to the main theme of this article. If science could prove the afterlife exists beyond reasonable doubt, what then? Firstly by proving it, its form of manifestation would be established and religious faiths would have to adapt to the new findings in much the same way the medieval church adapted to the scientific discoveries in the Renaissance. Secondly the peoples of the world would have to adapt to a different vision of life, a life which does not end with the death of the body but continues to offer opportunities afterwards.

People would learn that killing or harming others has consequences for themselves above and beyond material justice. It's possible that the world would, even for this reason alone, become a more relaxed and happier place with fewer wars and a deeper appreciation of the need to take care of our planet. Who would continue trashing our beautiful planet if they knew they would still be around to witness the consequences for their children decades later? So to summarise: scientifically proving the existence of some form of afterlife would I believe undoubtedly make the world a far better place than it is now. Good food for thought; let's start thinking!

Reference

1. "*Mansions of the Soul*" by H S Lewis is available from *The Rosicrucian Collection* online store at <https://www.amorc.org.uk>.



Friendship



by Cheryl Rose

ONE OF THE greatest assets we can have is true friendship...., friendship we've earned with a few precious individuals we trust implicitly with everything, including life itself. The dictionary definition of friendship is: *"Showing kindly interest and goodwill; the state of being friends."* For those fortunate enough to have true friendships, this description seems quite inadequate. Be they husband and wife, or people brought together through school, employment or clubs, real friends are those loving souls to whom you can tell all and share everything without shame. They come to your aid without question or hesitation, always ready to lend an ear, and in whose presence all masks are discarded.

The lifestyle of a friend need not be in full harmony with our own, for in a true friendship, there is always an intangible 'something,' an attraction, a sense of caring that transcends physical, outer circumstances of the individuals concerned. Take magnetism as an example. Slowly move a magnet and a piece of iron together; at a certain point, the magnet is close enough to the piece of iron that the force of attraction between the two overcomes the friction of the iron on the table, and it comes flying straight to the magnet. The magnet seems to be doing all the work.

Now take two magnets and align them so the north pole of the one faces the south pole of the other. There is an attraction from both magnets. Both are doing 'work' as they pull each other together. Polarity attraction manifests in what Rosicrucians call the *"law of the triangle"*, for as two opposing conditions come together, a third condition is created. The two opposing conditions have united into a third condition which may be completely different from either of the two initial conditions. And this in a way is the way it is with every true friendship.

When two people with opposing though complementary auras meet, a state of harmony is created

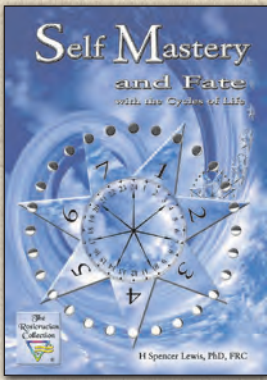
between them, their auras link up with each other, and a new unit of life emerges. Although still two separate individuals, their combined thoughts and intentions create an *égrégoire* which is tantamount to a new living creature. The union manifests in a great and lifelong friendship. Before they met and their vibrations blended together, their vibrations did no great service. One is reminded of the Zen Buddhist Koan: *"What is the sound of one hand clapping?"*

Once established, the friendship grows as the years go by, much as a child grows up to adulthood. With each side of the 'friendship *égrégoire*' contributing his or her love, ideas, caring and harmony, the bond strengthens further and forms a bond that is the envy of all who see it. It is an example for others to follow, and many yearn for such completion. Think of what a better place the world would be, if more such friendships could be created.

Taken at a deeper level, is it possible that our very best friend is already bonded with us, just not that visible at the moment? Yes it is, and focusing our thoughts, words and deeds on things that we perceive as being constructive, harmonious, good and wholesome, and giving back with a sense of justice delivered to everyone and everything what life has given to us, and then even a bit more, we are sure to find our truest friend one day.

Of course, that friend will not be a being of flesh and blood, but will be the deepest aspect of your own being, the most accomplished and refined aspect of your own soul, what Rosicrucians for ages have known simply as the *Master Within*. So, try to be your own best friend and see what happens next, for the deepest friend you can ever have is already with you. Just think of the power for good that would exist in you if you could unite the two friends of your own self. They may merely be acquaintances today, but aim to make them friends...., soon!





Self Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life

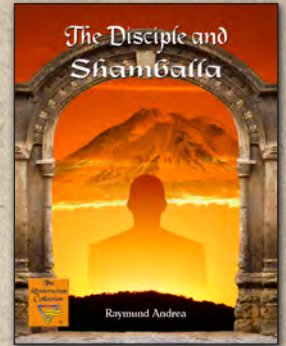
– by *H. Spencer Lewis* -- 160 pages / softback

THE SYSTEM outlined in this book is probably the closest you will get to a rational divinatory system based on self evident truths rather than belief in an immovable 'fate' from which there is no escape. Lewis' book gives a system of accurate prediction of tendencies in life, based on a 'system-of-seven' unrelated to Astrology, Tarot, I-Ching or any other system of divination. Free will and personal choice is the central thread running through this widely read and respected book.

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THE SPIRITUAL realm of Shamballa as defined by Andrea, is beyond most human understanding and some of the masters even have not fully attained it. Yet, Shamballa must eventually be striven for and reached by all who seek the holy existence of union with God. Through nearness to Shamballa, the humble soul overcomes what Andrea calls the 'Nemesis of Karma' and draws upon Shamballic sources of infinite creative power to accomplish a remarkable transformation.



Discipleship on Trial

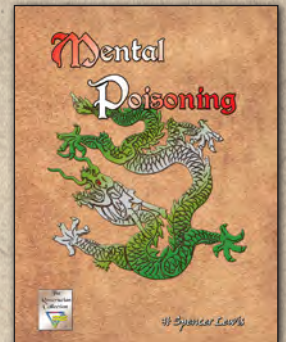
– by *Raymund Andrea* -- 148 pages / softback -- Code: 900 -- £10.95

WHILE THE old world during the Second World War was rapidly changing its values and perspectives, the whole concept of discipleship was being left behind and failed to adapt to the practical world of necessities. No longer could spiritual and esoteric orders remain within the confines of their cosy parlours, safe behind their outdated traditions and theoretical musings. A time for radical transformation had arrived but few embraced it.

Mental Poisoning

– by *H. Spencer Lewis* -- 124 pages / softback

THE THOUGHTS we hold determine our mental and physical health. Irrational thoughts harm us much more than we know and the consequences are always harmful for us. The greatest thing we could do for ourselves is to banish forever all belief in malevolent supernatural causes to our various mental and physical ailments...; for what you think, that veritably you will become!



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-- 160 pages / hardback

THIS EXTRAORDINARY book first came to light in England in 1751, being a translation from Tibetan of a series of lessons and wise sayings purportedly used by generations of Lamas. Open the book at any page and you will find words of wisdom to inspire you throughout the day. The moral and spiritual topics covered are dealt with in the uniquely practical and earthy manner of a Buddhist philosopher: few in words, but with an abundance of meaning.

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The warm embrace of dawn reminds us of the extra day of life we've been given. If this were our last day, what better way to spend it than to help someone in need.