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COVER SPREAD

“Music of the Spheres”



Humanity

by Christian Bernard, FRC
Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order



OUR VISION OF THE WORLD IS VERY often communitarian and too narrow. We call ourselves Europeans, Africans, Americans, Asians, etc., while we are all members of the same humanity. This notion of humanity has always been an abstract concept. According to history, it is referred to as the gathering of all humans. Victor Hugo imagined it as “radiant and reconciled.”

This awareness has gradually emerged during the last few centuries, but it was particularly in the 20th century that a real opening on the principle of humanity developed. There is no humanity without human beings and the



concept of “human rights” is today commonly understood by all humankind. To this idea of human *rights* must be added the corollary of human *duties* as well, something that the Rosicrucian Order made official a few years ago with the publication of the “Declaration of Human Duties.” I am proud to see how this notion of human duties has become very popular because not a day goes by in the world without a politician, an artist or journalists addressing this question.

The idea of human rights comes naturally to humankind, and there can be no justifiable cultural excuses, or references to old taboo or so-called traditions that would hinder the application of these rights. In the divine order, there are no inferior beings and all beings capable of reasoning are part of the same humanity. An insult made to one person is an insult to humanity as a whole, just as a wound inflicted on our immediate environment is also a wound inflicted on our planet earth.

Toward a Global Community

Our world is rather cramped today, and we can no longer continue ignoring our fellow human being. The fact that so many are today striving for the establishment of a single global community, strengthens peace..., and peace after all, is the only fundamental choice we can and must demand for the good of humanity. Universalism is the cradle of peace. Peace is universal and humanity is the life force behind it. Peace will not be possible unless there is some humanistic change and for this to take place, the utopian forces must mobilise their resources.

Let us endeavour to understand this world and ourselves rather than seeing the world as



Our world is rather cramped today, and we can no longer continue ignoring our fellow human being.

confused and too full of mysteries. Let us no longer see humans as a danger for themselves and the planet. This is the only way we will be able to act and accomplish some good. To act in a beneficial manner, we must be strong, and we

The idea of human rights comes naturally to humankind.

need others to gain that strength. On the other hand it is only when we are strong that we are able to turn towards others. We must therefore get acquainted with this paradox in order to understand and to love humanity, this humanity whose history has been in a constant conflict with God. What if it were not God who made man to his own image, but man who created God to his image, seeing in God the reflection of his own nature?

God is not Separate from Man

Whether worshiped or denied however, God is still present in man’s heart. Personally, I cannot separate God from mankind. Believing in humanity does not hinder believing in God or some cosmic force. And yet today it often seems as though mankind only believes in itself; blinded by ego, it moves along without paying attention to the Creator. Some think they have freed themselves from God; others think they are walking towards their fall.

As innocent children we believed that the world was about good and evil. Later in life though, we realised that things were not always cast in black and white. The principle of Yin-Yang is always present and manifests itself everywhere; but the thin line separating good from evil is ever present, whether visible or not. Too many people walk on that razor-edge without being able to take a step to the good side. There is always some mistrust, some hesitation and some doubt!

Love Our Fellow Humans

As I pointed out before, we must strive to understand, and be acquainted with our world in order to estimate ourselves at our true value as human beings. Isn’t the humanism of human beings gauged more by the love that they give than by the love that they receive? As this has been advised to us before, let us love our fellow humans; let us accept them as they are, even though they may be different from us.



Let us accept the fact that they can become part of a land or a history even if it is not the one that they or their ancestors were originally born in. One belongs to the place one loves and where one feels accepted. Let us accept the hand that is extended to us and let us learn how to extend ours to others so they may be friends and not enemies. Understanding and accepting others also means

Accept our condition as humans with confidence and not allow fear about the future to add to the problems of the present time.

understanding and accepting ourselves, and vice versa. Let us accept our condition as humans with confidence and not allow fear about the future to add to the problems of the present time. And finally, let us take time to discover where the streams come from and where the river flows to.

The nobleness of human beings is to hope and work for the realisation of a project that they will not see completed and that they will not be able to live long enough to enjoy. But far from



...my eyes fell on an epitaph on which was inscribed the following: "The one we leave here, under these leaves, has been useful."

being discouraging, this thought should help us to build a better world without thinking of the time it will take for this to happen.

Sense of Purpose

Should we trust the things that are easy to accomplish? Difficulty is often a sign of good accomplishment and eternity it is said, is timeless.

Therefore, let us act as builders and when we leave behind this time-ruled life and join eternity where the spirit of nothingness and the infinite rule, and where we will be accompanied by the Great Watchmakers, the Masters of the hourglass, who tirelessly guide the path of humans from birth to death and death to birth, we will leave this plane with complete peace of mind and with the feeling of having been useful. This sense of purpose, perhaps a bit too practical, came to me just by accident one day when I was taking a walk. My eyes fell on an epitaph on which was inscribed the following: "The one we leave here, under these leaves, has been useful."

This "encounter" led me to reflect on the feeling of being useful that every human being carries inside. How often do we hear people saying the following: "I'm worthless, I am useless to my family and society, etc..." This feeling of failure, weakness and regret (often unjustified and unfounded) is proof that human beings have a natural desire to build and to be useful to their fellow humans. We can be useful, so let us be the light and let us be a voice in the service of humanity!

As one, let us accept our human condition, and when the time comes for us to leave this plane, let us not deny our humanity. Let us not leave dissatisfied with life, and let us make it in such a way that our last glance is directed toward happy, smiling faces.

As this message has been about humanity, I would like to end it with a passage written by Jacques Brel, an artist and humanist who enjoyed defying God with his tender look on humankind.

*You, you if you were the good Lord
You would light up parties for the beggars.
You, you if you were the good Lord
You would be more giving of blue skies.
But you are not the good Lord
You, you are better than that,
You are a man!*



PYTHAGORAS THE TEACHER

by Mary Jones , SRC

*In this second part of the series on Pythagoras and his teachings, we look at his theories concerning numbers and music. "To Pythagoras, music is a representation of cosmic harmony, a microcosmic representation of the macrocosm. He and his followers speculated that the entire universe is built on mathematical principles."*¹

Part 2 Life is Number, the Universe is Music

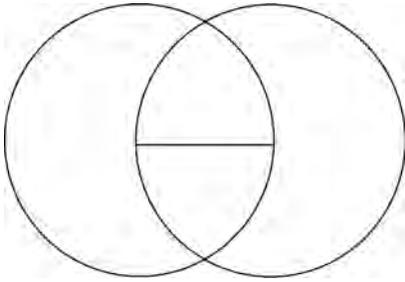


LIKE MANY OF THE BRILLIANT MINDS of ancient Greece, we sorely lack detailed information about Pythagoras. All we know in abundance is that he was an extraordinary man, a spiritual man, a man far in advance of others of his time in every way. Even during his lifetime, he was imbued with an aura of mystery and admiration and has been held up by generations since as an ethical, intellectual and spiritual model of human life. Certain aspects of his life are very nebulous, while others are clear and unexceptional. And this side

of his life and teachings give us much to reflect upon.

As with so many persons of the ancient world, it is difficult at times to separate myth from fact, and that applies equally to various stories concerning Pythagoras' life. In this article we will look at some of the main points characterising his doctrine..., a doctrine that synthesised different aspects of knowledge, applying principles that enabled his followers to become initiated into the cycles of nature, music, mathematics and science. He proposed a special way of life and inspired a





A modern representation of the dyad.

well-defined political ideal. In his communities of followers, into which women were also admitted, his teachings were studied primarily for moral elevation, but also for the renunciation of passion and purification of the body.

Living as a Pythagorean disciple meant living under severe limitations. Amongst several other practices, his disciples engaged in silence (known as *echemythia*), daily examination of their consciences, abstained from the eating of meat, and lived exclusively on a diet of fruit and vegetables. This ascetic life was aimed at the elevation of the soul during its temporary union with the body. It maintained the soul and made it immune from corruption, ensuring it could return to its divine origin and enjoy supreme beatitude, the contemplation of universal harmony. So severe was the regime that if the soul became "contaminated" in any way, the sentence was immediate damnation. But if the guilt was lighter, the soul would undergo certain purgatory-like tests during which it would incarnate many times into the bodies of animals and vegetables, thereby allowing it at some later stage to merge with the divine.

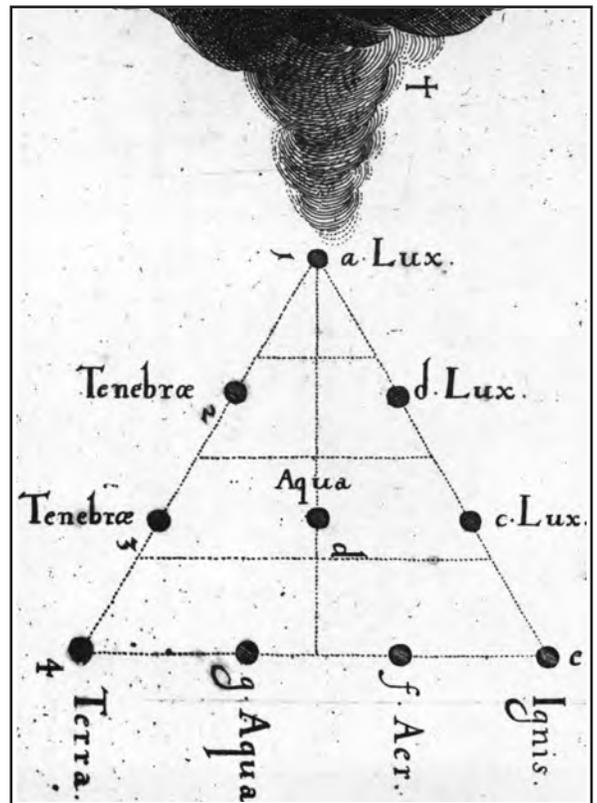
The fundamental basis of Pythagoras' teachings taught that truth alone was to be spoken. Then, through silent contemplation, facts could be verified according to personal experience and wisdom. Gradually the student acquired confidence in his own convictions, eventually becoming independent of the beliefs of others. In this way knowledge became intimately and indelibly imprinted in the mind of the initiate. This period of autonomous meditation, together with the observance of certain rules of life lasted between two and five years.

The Pythagoreans were divided into an inner circle called the *mathematikoi* (mathematicians) and an outer circle called the *akousmatikoi* (listeners). In the two degrees of Pythagoreanism the *mathematikoi* were supposed to extend and develop mathematical

and scientific work, while the *akousmatikoi* focused more on the religious and ritualistic aspects of the teachings.

Knowledge

Like Plato, Pythagoras regarded the acquisition of knowledge as necessary preparation for the more serious task of looking within oneself..., eventually moving away from preoccupation with the natural and mutable things of the phenomenal world to an investigation of fundamental reality. This involved amongst other things, an in-depth contemplation of mathematics, music, cosmology and the ceaseless rhythms of the stars.

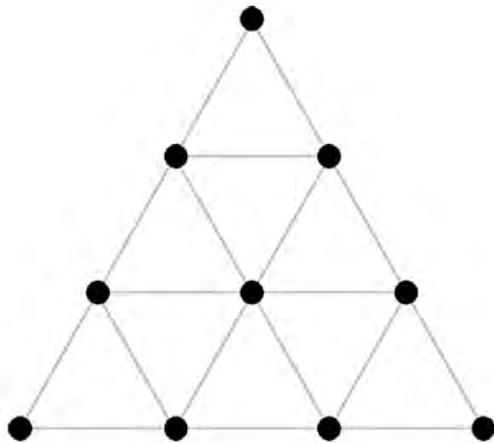


The Pythagorean Tetrad according to Robert Fludd: Another model of creation is the mathematical one whose source is the Pythagorean number philosophy handed down in Plato's *Timaeus*. The Monad generates the Dyad, and the Triad and Tetrad follow, the arithmetical progression continuing indefinitely. In the diagramme above, absolute darkness precedes the Monad, the first created light. The Dyad is the polarity of light and darkness, with which the Humid Spirit makes a third. The polarisation of the four elements concludes the foundation of the world, bringing the number of principles to ten. Fludd borrowed this mathematical philosophy from Francesco Giorgio, whose *De Harmonia Mundi* (1525) also supplied him with his ideas of musical proportion as a universal schema. (Godwin, Robert Fludd, 1979)



Pythagoras was said to have been able to translate the fundamental principles of the universe into the language of music and mathematics, and communicated them effectively to his disciples. The Pythagoreans were not hermits, they did not live detached from the world. They could stay in the school and devote themselves entirely to the initiatic disciplines or return to everyday life to continue their development at home.

Pythagoras also expressed his views on politics: power had to reside with the wise and these were the initiates who had received



The Pythagorean tetractys.

enough of the teachings to be able to exercise public powers in order to establish a non-tyrannical regime. Government was to be oligarchic (governed by only a few) in character, with a background based on theocracy (divinely guided) and wisdom.

Numbers and Harmony

One of the basic elements of Pythagoras' doctrine is that number is not only a quantitative arithmetic entity, but also a qualitative metaphysical principle. Numbers are the essence of all things, and their role is to induce harmony and regulate the universe. It was within this harmony that the Pythagoreans believed that opposites could be reconciled.

For example, the concepts of the boundless and the limited are, from a numerical point of view, a simple opposition of odd and even. The *dyad* (that consisting of two parts) was a source of

Ten Sets of Four Things

Numbers	1	2	3	4
Magnitudes	point	line	surface	solid
Elements	fire	air	water	earth
Figures	pyramid	octahedron	icosahedron	cube
Living things	seed	growth in length	in breadth	in thickness
Societies	man	village	city	nation
Faculties	reason	knowledge	opinion	sensation
Seasons	spring	summer	autumn	winter
Ages of a person	infancy	youth	adulthood	old age
Parts of living things	body		three parts of the soul	

One particular triangular number that the Pythagoreans especially liked was the number ten. It was called a *Tetractys*, meaning a set of four things. The Pythagoreans identified ten such sets as the table shows.

opposites and the Pythagoreans composed tables representing these opposites, which together suggested harmony. Rosicrucians will recognise in this the "Law of the Triangle" where one thing combines with another to produce harmony in a third phase. Pythagoras taught his students that by focusing on numbers, they could calm and purify the mind and ultimately experience true happiness.

This "doctrine of opposites" was fundamental for the Pythagoreans. They understood that the ultimate substances of all things, both material and immaterial, are numbers, which have two distinct and complimentary aspects: the physical and the abstract individualised as dyads: left and right, male and female, etc. Because his students were sworn to secrecy and nothing he taught was written down, the inner workings of the Pythagorean number philosophy were lost within a few generations of his death. But

Pythagoras was said to have been able to able to translate the fundamental principles of the universe into the language of music and mathematics.

we do know that the first ten numbers were of particular significance. Together they constituted the *tetractys*, (a triangular figure consisting of ten points arranged in four rows: one, two, three, and four points in each row) which, according to Pythagoras, was an image of the created and eternal realms.

One denotes the primordial unity at the basis of creation. *Two*, the dyad, represents the first step of creation: duality. *Three* represents bringing into being (the Rosicrucian Law of the Triangle). *Four* represents completion. *Five* represents





Pythagoras is here shown quantifying the weight of the bells and glasses, plucking the monochord with measured weights, and arguing the finest points of dissonance [comparing flute lengths] with Philolaus. Clockwise from top left: the hammers in the Jubal [from the Old Testament] smithy; playing tuned bells and water filled cups; experimenting with weights on the end of fixed length strings; and on the length of pipes to determine the exact ratios of consonant sounds one to another.

reconciliation and concord. Six, the first perfect number, represents a state of health and balance. Seven represents virginity; as it can't be divided by any other number other than itself, it brings order to nature. Eight is associated with safety and steadfastness, balancing and regulating everything in the universe. Nine brings things to fruition. Ten is the greatest number of all, for it holds the universe together and manifests all the laws of nature.

Music and Harmony

While the early Chinese, Hindus, Persians, Egyptians, Israelites and Greeks employed both vocal and instrumental music in their religious ceremonies, as well as to complement their poetry and drama, Pythagoras raised the art to its true dignity by demonstrating its mathematical foundation. He is now generally credited with the discovery of the *diatonic scale* (the seven-note musical scale used in Western music).

Having first learned the divine theory of

music from the priests of the various Mysteries into which he had been accepted, Pythagoras pondered the laws governing consonance and dissonance for several years. How he stumbled upon the answer to these reflections is unknown, but the following explanation is given by Iamblichus.

One day, while Pythagoras was passing a blacksmith's shop, he heard the sound of hammers striking a piece of iron against an anvil. He noted that the sounds made by the hammers were all different but that except for one, they were in perfect harmony. He recognised the consonances: the octave, fourth and fifth, while he noticed that the dissonance was the whole step between the fourth and fifth. Realising that with divine help he had discovered what he had been searching for, he entered the shop. After carefully observing the blacksmith's work, and after a lot of tests, he found that the tone depended on the weight of the hammers.

By noting the variances in pitch between the sounds made by large hammers and those made by smaller implements, and carefully estimating the harmonies and discords resulting from combinations of these sounds, he gained his first clue to the musical intervals of the diatonic scale. After carefully examining the tools and noting their weights, he returned to his house and constructed an arm of wood so that it extended out from the wall of his room. At regular intervals along this arm he attached four cords, all of like composition, size and weight. To the first of these he attached a twelve-pound weight, to the second a nine-pound weight, to the third an eight-pound weight, and to the fourth a six-pound weight. These different weights corresponded to the sizes of the blacksmiths' hammers.

Pythagoras then discovered that the first and fourth strings when sounded together produced the harmonic interval of the octave, for doubling the weight had the same effect as halving the string. The tension of the first string being twice that of the fourth string, the ratio of their tension was 2:1, or *duple*. Similarly he ascertained that the

Pythagoras cured many ailments of the soul, mind and body by having certain specially prepared musical compositions played.

first and third string produced the harmony of the *diapente*, or the interval of the fifth. The tension of the first string being half again as much as that of the third string, the ratio of their tensions was 3:2, or *sesquialter*. Similarly, the second and fourth



strings, having the same ratio as the first and third strings, yielded a diapente harmony.

Continuing his investigation, Pythagoras discovered that the first and second strings produced the harmony of the *diatessaron* or the interval of the third; and the tension of the first string being a third greater than that of the second string, their tension ratio was 4:3, or *sesquitercian*. The third and fourth strings, having the same ratio as the first and second strings, produced another harmony of the diatessaron. According to Iamblichus, the second and third strings had the ratio of 8:9, or *epogdoan*.

The key to harmonic ratios is hidden in the Pythagorean tetractys already mentioned. The *tetractys* is made up of the first four numbers, 1, 2, 3 and 4, which in their proportions reveal the intervals of the octave, the diapente and the diatessaron.²

Healing Music

Pythagoras cured many ailments of the soul, mind and body by having certain specially prepared musical compositions played in the presence of the sufferer or by personally reciting short selections from such early poets as Hesiod and Homer.

In his university at Crotona it was customary



The tablet being held at the feet of Pythagoras in Raphael's School of Athens where Pythagoras is explaining the musical ratios to a pupil, shows the mathematical and musical harmonies of the universe with the tetractys at the bottom.

for the Pythagoreans to open and close each day with songs. Those in the morning were calculated to clear the mind from sleep and inspire it to the activities of the coming day. Those in the evening were of a soothing, relaxing mood conducive to rest. At the vernal equinox, his disciples gathered in a circle around one of them who led them in song whilst playing a lyre.

Pythagoras' therapeutic music is described

The Pythagoreans believed that everything in existence had a voice and that all creatures were eternally singing praises to the Creator.

by Iamblichus as follows: "And there are certain melodies devised as remedies against the passions of the soul, and also against despondency and lamentation, which Pythagoras invented as things that afford the greatest assistance in these maladies. And again, he employed other melodies against rage and anger, and against every aberration of the soul. There is also another kind of modulation invented as a remedy against desires."³

Music of the Spheres

Pythagoras conceived the universe to be an immense monochord, with its single string connected at its upper end to absolute spirit and at its lower end to absolute matter. The cord in other words, stretched between heaven and earth.

Counting inward from the circumference of the heavens, Pythagoras, according to some, divided the universe into nine parts..., or according to others, into twelve parts. The twelvefold system was as follows: The first division was called the *empyrean*, or the sphere of the fixed stars, and was the dwelling place of the immortals. The second to twelfth divisions were (in order) the spheres of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the sun, Venus, Mercury, and the moon, and fire, air, water and earth.

The names given by the Pythagoreans to the various notes of the diatonic scale were, according to Macrobius (a 5th century CE Neoplatonist philosopher), derived from an estimation of the velocity and magnitude of the planetary bodies. Each of these gigantic spheres as it rushed endlessly through space was believed to sound a certain tone caused by its continuous displacement of the *æthereal diffusion*. As these tones were a manifestation of divine order and motion, it must necessarily follow that they partook of the harmony



of their own source. Thus Saturn, the farthest planet, was said to give the flattest note, while the Moon, the nearest, gave the sharpest.

The Greek initiates also recognised a fundamental relationship between the individual heavens or spheres of the seven planets, and the seven sacred vowels. The first heaven uttered the sound of the sacred vowel A (Alpha); the second heaven, the sacred vowel E (Epsilon); the third, H (Eta); the fourth, I (Iota); the fifth, O (Omicron); the sixth, Y (Upsilon); and the seventh heaven, the sacred vowel Ω (Omega). When these seven heavens sing together they produce a perfect harmony which ascends as an everlasting praise to the throne of the Creator. Although not explicitly stated, it is probable that the planetary heavens were considered as ascending in Pythagorean order beginning with the sphere of the moon, which would be the first heaven.

The Pythagoreans believed that everything in existence had a voice and that all creatures were eternally singing praises to the Creator. Man fails to hear these divine melodies because his soul is enmeshed in the illusion of material existence. When he liberates himself from the bondage of the lower world with its sense limitations, *the music*

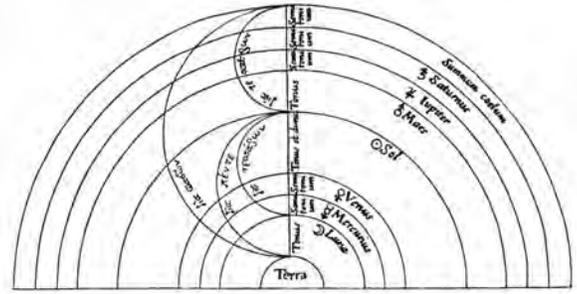
Dante, in his Divine Comedy describes Heaven as an eternal world of light and music.

of the spheres will again be audible as it was in the Golden Age. Harmony recognises harmony, and when the human soul regains its true estate, it will not only hear the celestial choir but also join with it in an everlasting anthem of praise to that Eternal Good controlling the infinite number of parts and conditions of Being.⁴

The Dream of Scipio

Among the many writers who were inspired by the Pythagorean teachings, the most important was the Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero who wrote the *Somnium Scipionis* (The Dream of Scipio) found in the sixth and final chapter of his work *De Republica* (On the Republic, 54-51 BCE).

Modelled on Plato's *Republic*, it tells a story about Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, the destroyer of Carthage, who was discussing some philosophical and political topics with friends. He narrates a dream he had had a few years before whilst serving in North Africa as military tribune of the fourth Legion. During his time there, he had



In the Pythagorean concept of the music of the spheres, the interval between the earth and the sphere of the fixed stars was considered to be a diapason, the most perfect harmonic interval. The following arrangement is most generally accepted for the musical intervals of the planets between the earth and the sphere of the fixed stars: From the sphere of the earth to the sphere of the moon, one tone; from the sphere of the moon to that of Mercury, one-half tone; from Mercury to Venus, one-half tone; from Venus to the sun, one and one-half tones; from the sun to Mars, one tone; from Mars to Jupiter, one-half tone; from Jupiter to Saturn, one-half tone; from Saturn to the fixed stars, one-half tone. The sum of these intervals equals the six whole tones of the octave.

paid a visit to Masinissa (238-148 BCE) the king of Numidia (present-day Algeria), a great friend of his grandfather Scipio Africanus.

On one occasion while at dinner the king had praised his grandfather. Following this Scipio retired for the night and dreamt that his grandfather appeared and conducted him on a journey to the Milky Way, the dwelling place of the souls of the departed

who awaited rebirth. Here Scipio Africanus showed his grandson the arrangement of the planets and the music of the spheres, with the purpose of spiritually raising him and to demonstrate how unimportant terrestrial things are in comparison with the celestial.

In his *Somnium Scipionis* this is how Cicero speaks of the music of the spheres: "That is the sound produced by the impetus and momentum of the spheres themselves. It is made up of intervals which, though unequal, are determined systematically by fixed proportions. The blend of high and low notes produces an even flow of various harmonies. Such vast motions cannot sweep on in silence, and nature ordains that low notes should be emitted by one of the boundaries and high noted by the other. From the uppermost of the heavenly orbits (that which carries the stars) comes a high note with frequent vibrations, in that its cycle is more rapid. The deepest note emanates from the lowest orbit, that of the moon.

"The earth, which is the ninth sphere, remains fixed and immobile in one place, filling the central



position of the universe. Those eight rotating spheres of which two (being an octave apart) produce the same effect, give out seven distinctive sounds [diatonic scale]. According to their intervals, that number is more or less the lynchpin of everything. By imitating this system with strings and voices, experts have succeeded in opening up a way back to this place [the divine], as have others who, in their life on Earth, have applied their outstanding intellect to heavenly subjects.

“Filled with this sound, people’s ears have become deaf to it. Hearing in fact, is the most easily impaired of all your senses. For instance, where the Nile comes hurtling down from the mountain peaks at a place called catadupa, the local inhabitants have lost their sense of hearing because of the loudness of the roar. The noise of the whole universe then, revolving as it does at enormous speed, is so loud that human ears cannot take it in, just as you cannot look straight at the sun because your sight and vision become overwhelmed by its rays.”

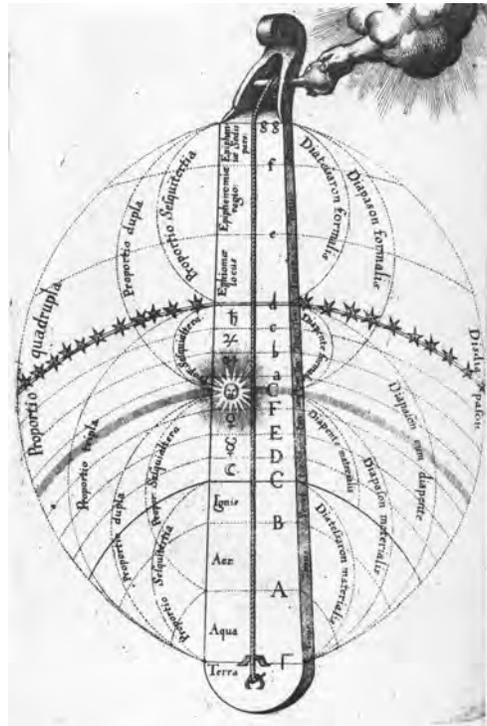
Dante, in his *Divine Comedy* (written between 1308-21 CE) describes Heaven as an eternal world of light and music. He writes of light, the symbol of spiritual elevation, reaching through the path that features in the *Divine Comedy*. The music of the spheres is illustrated as a choir of the angels, of the saints and of the blessed ones.

Both these writers, while presenting the glory of God, introduce those dreams that Macrobius classified as the three true dreams:

1. The *somnium* dream to be deciphered as that which is given by nature (as in the *Somnium Scipionis* and from the pedagogic character of the work of the *Divine Comedy*).
2. The *oraculum* dream, the prophecy on the future as in the case of Scipio Africanus (in the *Somnium*) and Brunetto Latini, Guido del Duca and Cacciaguida (in Hell, Purgatory and Paradise in the *Divine Comedy*).
3. The *visio* dream, the vision of what will happen, gives a vision of the ultra mundane reality or the Milky Way (in the *Somnium*) and Hell, Purgatory and Paradise (in the *Divine Comedy*).

Afterword

In modern times we have photographed the music of the cosmos with the Chandra X-ray Orbiting Observatory, in the rippling of the dust and gas clouds in the constellation of Perseus for example. Or we can hypothesise it, as did the French physicists Marc Lachièze-Rey and Jean-Pierre Luminet in the immensely small subatomic world of superstrings. To many people we have lost the sense of the infinite



The Divine Monochord of Robert Fludd: The three realms with their divisions are set out along a monochord. To the immediate left of the string Fludd specifies the members of each realm [giving to the empyrean hierarchy the Greek names of Epiphaniae (apparitions), Epiphonomiae (voices), and Ephiomae (acclamations)].

To each is assigned a note of the scale, from low G for the Earth (the Greek letter Gamma) up through two octaves to “gg” for the highest division of the empyrean. The proportions work as follows: the Proportio dupla (2:1) from the Earth to the Sun becomes the octave interval from Gamma to G. On the right are the Greek names of the musical intervals corresponding to each proportion: Disdiapason (double octave = 4:1); Diapason (octave = 2:1); Diapente (fifth = 3:2); and Diatessaron (fourth=4:3).

There is however an error in the Diapente materialis: it should join the Sun’s G to the C of fire, as should the corresponding proportio sesquialtera. And for the tones and semitones to be correct (to the right of the string), we have to imagine the Fs as sharp. (Godwin, Robert Fludd, 1979)

that exists both within and beyond us, and the beauty of the “truth” of which we are all a part. As the German poet and philosopher Novalis (1772-1801) said: “Within and around us is eternity with its waves, its past and its future.”

1. Nicholas Cook, *Music, A Very Short Introduction*, ISBN: 0-19-285382-1.
2. This section adapted from Manly P Hall, “The Pythagorean Theory of Music and Color” in *The Secret Teachings of all Ages* (Copyright not renewed).
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.



Partnership with the Cosmic



by Einar Einarsson, FRC

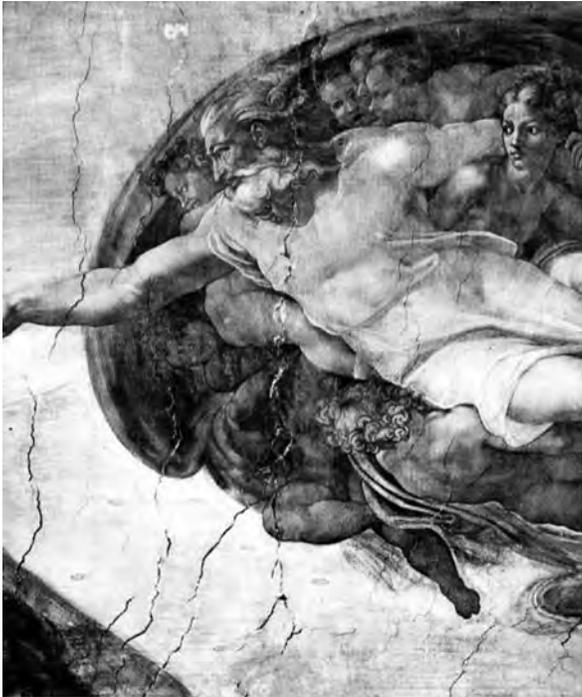
WHETHER INDIVIDUALLY OR IN groups, many Rosicrucians involve themselves in what is generally called spiritual or metaphysical aid. Sometimes petitioners for assistance (usually for healing) will ask the person or group to “pray for them.” Whereas such requests are always taken seriously and acted upon, they sometimes betray a misunderstanding of the nature of Rosicrucian healing work and particularly the nature of “God.”

Metaphysical helpers have often erroneously been regarded as privileged people with direct lines of communication with the Divine that is not

available to others outside this elite circle of healers. For surprisingly many people seeking metaphysical healing, God is conceived in anthropomorphic terms, usually as a wise old man, but also as an authoritarian ruler who arbitrarily afflicts or exalts people on whims of fancy, shortening or prolonging lives without rhyme or reason.

Of course this does not mean that prayer is wrong; praying for assistance in overcoming some overwhelming problem such as impending financial disaster or poor health, is without doubt perfectly permissible if done with deep sincerity and a sense of universal justice for all involved. Advanced mystics however, and especially great





For surprisingly many people seeking metaphysical healing, God is conceived in anthropomorphic terms, usually as a wise old man.

masters and avatars, have and continue to be known for the deep nature of their prayers, some of which grace the pages of inspirational books. But a unique feature of their prayers is that they seldom ask for earthly or personal favours. They are more akin to acts of gratitude, reverence and worship than any specific requests for personal assistance. And when assistance for anyone is involved, it is almost always assistance for someone else, not the petitioner him or herself.

There is something deeply satisfying in appealing to the highest authority we know (call it God) for the welfare of another person. In times of crisis, appealing to God for our own welfare is perfectly justified, but in the vast majority of cases, and these occur almost daily in the life of every true mystic, the appeal is for someone else or some group of people in need.

And if there is anything we wish to appeal for personally in our prayers, there are few better things we can do than to ask deeply and sincerely for more personal responsiveness to the suffering and needs of others. Rosicrucians ask the God of their understanding to make them worthy of and responsive to the highest form of love they know..., and that often manifests in a deep desire

to assist someone or some group of people in need. They know they that this love is what they need more than anything else, and they attract it by the manner in which they live their lives and conduct themselves in their moments of quietude and attunement with the Cosmic.

The Pantheistic Mystic

To find a solid foundation for mystical work, we must elevate our concept of divinity to the most universal and all-encompassing form we know. We must understand that God is not made in the image of man. God is beyond all human forms. What we perceive as God, can never be more than a very rough outline of what God actually is. No mind can ever encompass all that God is.

To a pantheist mystic, God is immanent in the entire Universe and indeed beyond it. God is present in everything from the tiniest to the largest structures there are. "The Cosmic" is a word used to label one aspect of God, namely, the aspect that contains everything we can know about God whilst still human. Being but one manifestation of God, it may have limits definable by science, though God "itself" cannot have limits. God includes all, and we are therefore all parts of God. The life and power of God flows through us and manifests outwardly as sanctity and goodness to the extent we allow it..., no more, no less.

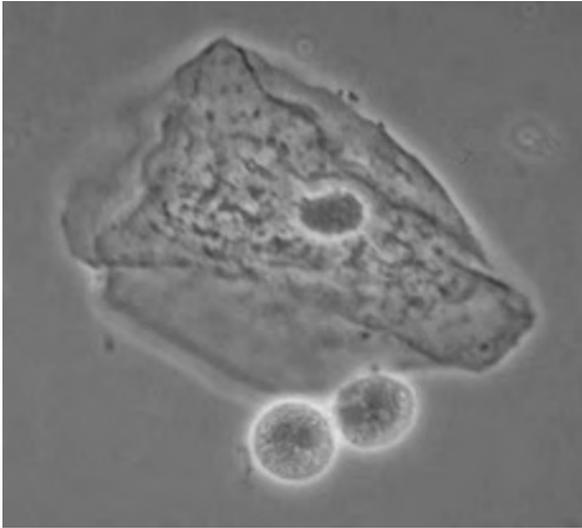
This may be intellectually hard to accept, but in moments of inspiration, some mystics feel emotionally within themselves a oneness with

There is something deeply satisfying in appealing to the highest authority we know for the welfare of another person.

a sort of universal and impersonal yet intimate creative power. With no warning, they are suddenly overwhelmed by feelings of intense love for the totality of Creation, for God. And this love spreads out to all people, indeed to all living things. Such feelings can seldom be expressed in logical words, but are nevertheless hinted at through analogies.

Paul, the early Christian author of several of the books in the New Testament, said that all followers of the new religion were "one body in Christ." Taking the early Christian belief that Christ was the son of God and his followers were therefore "one" with him, the statement can be rephrased as "we are all united in one God," or "we are all part of one God."





Each cell is an individual living being imbued with a rudimentary consciousness.

Working Co-operatively

Extending this analogy further; our body consists of billions of individual cells. Each cell, whether part of the brain, bones, organs or muscles, is an individual living being that is born, dies after a lifespan ranging from a few weeks to many years, and is imbued with a rudimentary consciousness.

Having a keen instinctive interest in our own wellbeing means that we care for our bodies and by extension, we care for its tiniest living components, its cells. But groups of individual cells must regularly be sacrificed for the sake of the whole. We trim our nails, cut out corns and calluses, and even cauterise infected sores, and cells by the million are sacrificed as a result. How does this affect our interrelationship to the single cell? Is it in any way analogous to God's relationship to individual human beings?

If you hesitate with these questions, think of a more understandable analogy. Imagine yourself as drafted into a vast labour force for the purpose of building an Egyptian pyramid! Some recruits may rebel and try to escape from the camp. Others will resign themselves to their situation and work just hard enough to escape punishment. But a small group believes they are participating in a glorious work that will stand for ages as a lasting monument to some transcendent collective ideal, and they sacrifice all they have for that ideal.

The workers in this last group are most likely to be the survivors and the ones that rise

to positions of authority and decision making. Their cooperative and constructive attitude is like that of true mystics everywhere in that they do all that is demanded of them when challenges have to be overcome as they place the interests of their common transcendent ideal above all else. Mystics rightfully use their personal powers to the best of their ability just as an individual blood cell rushes to the site of an infection in order to begin the process of healing.

Spiritual Power

Metaphysical healers are aware of the larger, divine power in which they have a share. They are free to call for the help of this creative cosmic power by clearly visualising a constructive goal and releasing it to the Cosmic Mind. They are also free to call upon this power for their own benefit but seldom do so, electing instead almost always to direct it elsewhere to those who need it most.

When we undertake to treat a sufferer, we are well aware that we are only a channel for the unlimited healing power of the Cosmic. The psychic power we can accumulate in order to accomplish psychic healing is puny in comparison to the power available to us to direct to the afflicted by appealing to the spiritual power that rules our

Metaphysical healers are aware of the larger, divine power in which they have a share.

very destiny. By cooperating with the Cosmic, we become its partner and confidant and have supreme confidence in universal justice and the ceaseless operation of the one immutable law that we know operates in the lives of all creatures: the Law of Karma.



Mystics rightfully use their personal powers to the best of their ability just as an individual blood cell rushes to the site of an infection in order to begin the process of healing.



THE ESOTERIC GARDEN

by Paul Goodall, FRC



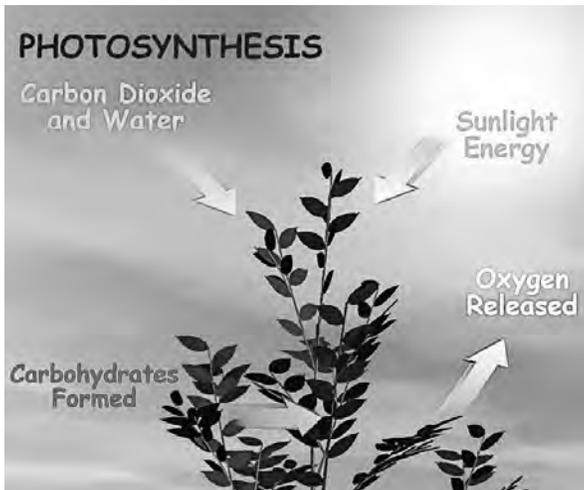
Gardening is an active participation in the deepest mysteries of the universe.
- Thomas Berry (Historian b.1914)

ALL OF US, I'M SURE, IF WE ARE fortunate enough to have space for a garden, enjoy being close to our plants. Small or extravagantly large, each garden is a microcosm of hidden energies that on occasion we feel particularly in touch with. We can't put a finger on precisely the effect that our self-created bit of nature has on us, but when we feel physically tired or mentally drained, our gardens seem to have a magical ability to leave us calm in body and invigorated in

thought. They are also havens of inspiration and many a poet and writer has benefited from their captivating spell. We might say that the "Book of Nature" is a veritable text, full of divine meaning, if we know how to interpret its manifold pages.

From a Rosicrucian perspective we understand this in terms of the Universal Mind and pantheistic philosophy where God is seen as being and residing in everything in the material and immaterial realms. This can be complemented perhaps by the traditional belief in India that





The inner alchemy of plants is manifested in a very real chemical process called photosynthesis.

plants are in perpetual meditation and attuned to the primal mantra *Om*, which is breathed out by the Sun and sent to Earth. This is succinctly and beautifully summed up by Wolf-Dieter Storl in his 2001 edition, *Pflanzendivas* (The spiritual nature of plants):

*"The primal mantra, embodied in light, is transmitted to us by plants in a life-giving process. Only plants are able to connect in this way the celestial and mundane realms. In the sacred language of the Vedas plants are designated by the word osadhi. The word is made up of osa (burning transformation) and dhi (vessel). In this sense plants can be regarded as vessels for the metamorphosis of the cosmic fire."*¹

This is a profound mystical viewpoint that sees plants at the centre of an alchemical process of life, as agents between the sun and us. While we might disagree with some of the metaphysical principles in this passage, as Rosicrucians we can certainly identify with the cosmic essence being evoked.

Plant Alchemy

But returning to the quiet of our gardens, as we silently reflect on the greenery and life all around us, do we think of the vibratory energies manifesting and

changing within it before our very eyes? Plants are continually working an internal alchemical process of transmutation; don't we just marvel at those time-lapse sequences in nature documentaries where we can observe their outer growth and transformation in such fascinating brevity and detail?

This inner alchemy is of course manifested in a very real chemical process called *photosynthesis* that is instigated by the photons of light generated by the sun. And this is where the Hindu viewpoint expressed in the quotation above contrasts, but also resonates in a deep spiritual way with real life science. Photosynthesis is the way a plant makes food for itself. The pigment chlorophyll in the "green" part of the leaves captures energy from the sun and this powers the building of food from very simple ingredients, carbon dioxide and water. Water, containing valuable nutrients and minerals, is drawn out of the soil by the plant's roots and

Our gardens tend to gravitate more toward the earth element with some emphasis on the watery side.

passed up through the leaves where they mix with carbon dioxide from the air and are converted into sugars that are absorbed by the plant to make it grow. During this process the plant releases



The use of the elements in Japanese Zen gardens is self-evident,, being loaded with esoteric symbolism and havens of deliberate manipulation of plants, water, rocks and architectural features, together with the use of wind, fire and suchlike to increase the atmosphere of spiritual tranquility.



oxygen, and together with the absorption of carbon dioxide, performs a vital function in maintaining the atmosphere of our planet.

The Elements

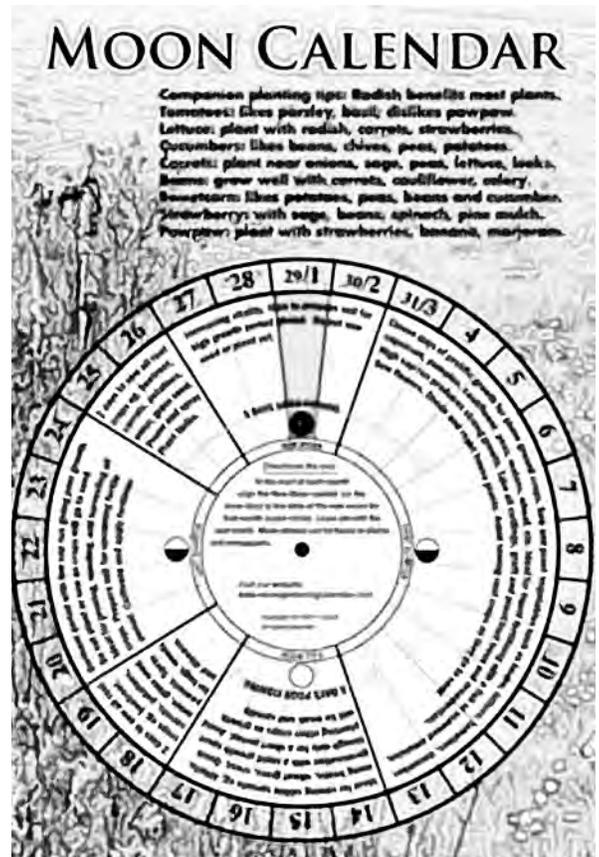
Taking stock of all the components in this energy cycle, we can see a working example of the interacting alchemical elements of Earth, Water, Air and Fire. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of the Anthroposophical movement, saw the four elements reflected in the constituent parts of the plant as follows:

- Roots = Earth
- Leaves = Water
- Blossom = Air
- Seed = Fire

If we read the article “The Fire Within” in the June 2008 edition of the Rosicrucian Beacon we can perhaps make our own comparisons regarding the rotation of the elements operating in plants and humans. It’s not hard to find an underlying complementarity between the two; especially if keeping in mind the Hindu philosophy outlined above.

The use of the elements in Japanese Zen gardens is self-evident; being loaded with esoteric symbolism and havens of deliberate manipulation of plants, water, rocks and architectural features, together with the use of wind, fire and suchlike, to increase the atmosphere of spiritual tranquillity. We in the West tend to be a bit more conservative and remain within traditional and national archetypal models of which there are quite a few. Not that there is anything wrong with that, of course. We get the most out of our gardens by remaining within our cultural parameters and the kinds we identify with in the West are the cottage garden through to more formal arrangements. Ours tend to gravitate more toward the earth element with some emphasis on the watery side; whereas the Japanese seem to combine all the elements in theirs.

Perhaps we also tend to work too much between a functional approach and one of aesthetic design where, for example, we want the patio to be large enough for a table, six chairs and a barbecue. In a small garden this might have a detrimental effect, being less conducive toward achieving a haven of peace and calm. A medium sized or large garden can have all the stops pulled out and there will be ample room to experiment. One can however combine functionality and beauty, even with some



A lunar calendar is indispensable in the tradition of lunar gardening.

symbolic content. Read up on Japanese gardens to see what would be useful to you.

Heavenly Cycles

Following the dictates of cosmic law the energy of a plant is never stationary; there is always change, whether in a daily, monthly or yearly rhythm. The all-important cycle is of course the annual revolution of the earth around the sun, giving us the four seasons. But there is also the ancient tradition of lunar gardening where planting and

The energy of a plant is never stationary; there is always change, whether in a daily, monthly or yearly rhythm.

harvesting is carried out according to the lunar cycle. Passages in the works of Homer and Hesiod indicate that the Greeks used lunar months. Hesiod, in his *Works and Days* of the 8th century BCE, showed that he often used the constellations to plan the planting and harvesting of crops. In



more modern times this system died out because of the increase in the use of fertilizers but in recent decades the practice has been revived, largely due to Steiner's biodynamic agricultural system that he developed in the 1920s.

Lunar Gardening

As we have been discussing lunar cycle based gardening, we might well ask, how does it work? There appear to be a combination of lunar effects such as the differing amounts of light reflected from the moon, its gravitational pull on plant

Our gardens are temporary environments that allow us some respite in a world that can seem the opposite to what one expects from something that is innately divine.

fluids, the tidal effect on the water table and the distortions in the Earth's magnetic field.

Lunar gardeners believe the moon's gravitational pull affects the flow of moisture in the soil. This effect would be strongest at the new and full moon phases, when the sun and moon are approximately lined up with the earth. It is weakest at first and last quarter moon phases. So, to take advantage of the lunar cycle, a gardener would avoid turning the soil in his or her garden when it contains the most moisture which is during the new and full moon period. This increased moisture encourages seeds to sprout and grow, especially with the light of a full moon since this is thought to have an effect on seed germination on the grounds that exposure to light enhances the process.

One particular modern advocate of this method of gardening is Maria Thun, whose books on this subject have influenced gardeners and farmers throughout the world. There is now an abundant literature on the subject of gardening by the moon, and annual lunar calendars have become indispensable for many gardeners.

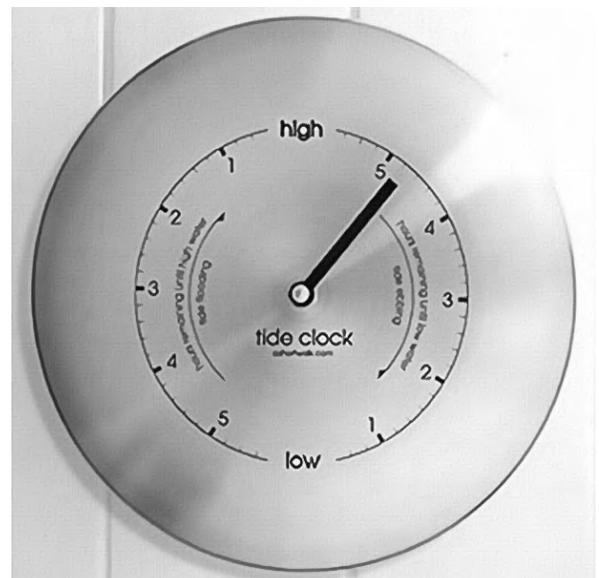
Practical Suggestions

There are several practical things we might do to help stay in touch with the natural world of our gardens. Concerning the moon and its effect, go out into the garden at night and just sit or stand still and quietly sense how the various energies are at work during the different phases of the lunar cycle. Try to empathise with how the plants are experiencing the moon's influence. Gently hold

the leaves or trunk and try to feel the vibrational energy within. Do this in daytime as well, picking up on the cosmic essence of the sun, giving life to all that you see. Breathe in the cosmic rays and imagine the plants doing the same. Try these exercises at different times of day. As you attune yourself to the subtle patterns of ebb and flow, so you will deepen your rapport with the plants in your garden.

But to get back to our opening paragraph musing on the beneficial effect that gardens give us: we find them as temporary environments that allow us some respite in a world that can seem at times the opposite of what one expects from something so innately divine and wholly part of the cosmic. During our physical time on Earth we encounter the bad or dark things in life as well as the good. This is unavoidable and is part and parcel of our progress towards self-knowledge. But considering the plants of our garden, they have their roots in the darkness and shoots in the light, and their sustenance is gained from both worlds..., above and below. We can learn from them that the path of our spiritual progress involves bringing these two metaphysical polarities of light and dark, sun and moon, together in ourselves in mutual harmony in our eternal quest to move closer to God.

1. English quotation from Christopher McIntosh, *Gardens of the Gods*, I.B. Tauris, 2005, p.138.



This "moon clock" lets the gardener know when it is high and low tide as this phenomenon affects the level of moisture available in the soil for plants.



Methods of Purification

by Carolyn Evans, SRC

Often in our lives we feel the need for purification. Usually this takes the form of a simple physical cleansing such as washing our clothes, having a bath or shower or doing the housework. There are occasions however, when we may feel the need for purification, or cleansing, of a more spiritual nature.



PIRITUAL CLEANSING OFTEN takes the form of drinking a glass of pure water and washing our hands and face before meditation, thereby symbolically cleansing ourselves both internally and externally. We may sometimes include a prayer in which we ask for purification so that we may be worthy of attaining higher

attunement. Such methods of purification are very helpful, yet there are situations at times when we feel the need to take more drastic measures.

We human beings have a great capacity to create atmospheres which may be either positive or negative, for each time we emit a thought it has an effect upon the surrounding atmosphere. We have all heard or read at some time or other



of so called "haunted houses" which have elicited the attention of psychic investigators. Many of these psychic investigators have concluded that these "hauntings" are not true hauntings at all; that so-called "ghosts" have long passed on into other realms. Instead it is argued that when an intensely emotional event such as a tragedy has occurred in part of a building or an area outdoors, then that very emotion charges the whole atmosphere with the vibrations of these tragic events. Often the morbid dwelling upon such events by others can keep the emotional atmosphere highly charged, to such an extent indeed, that those sensitive to such things are, many years later, able to register them.



Spiritual cleansing may take the form of drinking a glass of pure water...

We Create Atmosphere

To a similar extent we create atmospheres within our own homes or places we visit. For example, an atmosphere of great joy and happiness may be created after a positive event such as a marriage or a birth. An atmosphere of peace, harmony and at-one-ment will follow a meditation whereas an atmosphere of disharmony and distress will prevail after an argument or tragedy.

Sometimes, through no apparent fault of our own, we may experience distress whilst in a particular location and if this distress should be intense or prolonged it may have such an effect upon the atmosphere of that place that we can feel uncomfortable, even though the original stressful cause has gone.

Moving house is known to be stressful. As well as the general upheaval of moving our family and our possessions to a new home, we may feel uncomfortable with the atmosphere created by its previous occupants. There are many methods, however, for the cleansing of negative vibrations so as to make places pleasant to visit or to live in.

One method, of course, is to be more positive in thought and emotion during our everyday lives. This way we can avoid creating negative

atmospheres or fuelling any negativity that is already present. The constant practise of meditation is very effective in raising not only our own vibrations but also those around us, quite apart from the benefit it brings by increasing our personal happiness and well-being.

Cleansing Methods

There are many cleansing rituals for houses and other places; or we may even make up our own. After all, it is the intent that is important. Many people prefer the use of water for such cleansing

purposes. Water can be blessed and dedicated for the use of spiritual purification merely by the process of holding our hands, palms downward, over it and saying a prayer for support in our work of purification. The water can then be sprinkled throughout the house or over the area of land affected.

Be more positive in thought and emotion during our everyday lives. This way we can avoid creating negative atmospheres.

Salt water is also very good as a psychic cleanser, being well known to have a neutralising effect. However, some people when performing simple cleansing ceremonies like to use all four elements, such as a candle for purification by *fire*; incense for *air*; salt, soil or gemstones for *earth*; and *water*, coupled with prayer and meditation in each affected room. It often helps to give the room a thorough physical cleansing first.

There are also various scents or oils which can be used for purification purposes when burned within a room or outdoors. Probably the most well known of these is sage, a great favourite of the Native American Indians. Another is bergamot, an aromatic herb, which was used by European occultists to "ward off all evils."

Some may prefer to use purely meditative techniques such as the visualisation of pure white or golden light, cleansing the negativity away, or



Salt water is also very good as a psychic cleanser, being well known to have a neutralising effect.



the light of various other colours depending upon the individual preference. The chanting of vowel sounds also has a beneficial effect, as does the visualisation of certain symbols.

Recently this very simple method was brought to my attention: I was advised that 108 repetitions of the vowel sound AUM would effectively exorcise any place of any negativity, whatever its manifestation. Recognising that 108 is a mystical number, I took the person at their word and tried it, finding it to be the most effective method yet for me.

The use of the circle as a symbol has been found very effective, either visualised as surrounding the walls of a room or a house in a protective manner, in the form of a hoop of pure white or golden light, or drawn physically with a finger, or a burning stick of incense. Yet another method is the visualisation of the whole house or area being encased in a protective dome of white light.

Universal symbols such as the pentagram, the Star of David or the pyramid can be incorporated or any other symbol that is felt to be necessary.

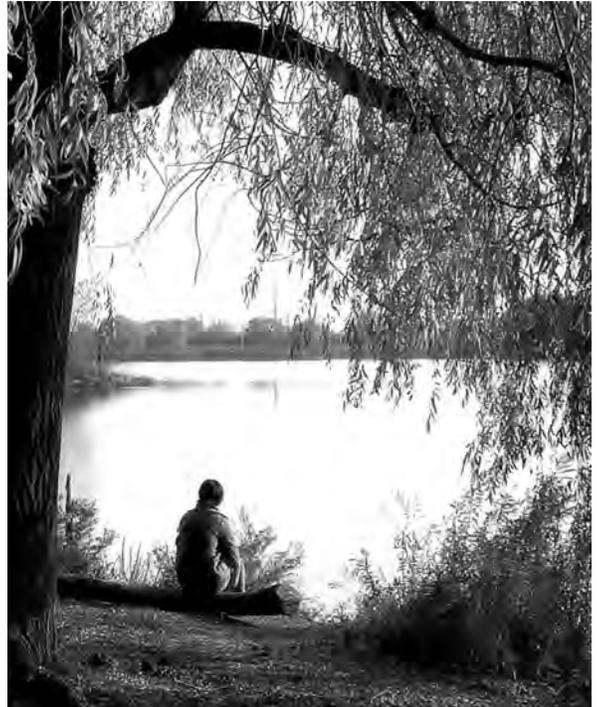
Sometimes it is not possible to actually visit the place concerned. All that is needed then is to form a picture in our mind's eye of the place or property to be cleansed and to visualise the cleansing taking place there. This method can be of use to us psychologically if we wish to remove

Some may prefer to use purely meditative techniques such as the visualisation of pure white or golden light, to cleanse the negativity away.

our attachment from a place in which we have experienced unhappiness in the past. I wonder whether it is the actual place that we exorcise, or whether it is nearer the truth to say that it is our minds that are released from it.

Purifying Ourselves

At those times when we feel the need for a purification of ourselves, physical fasting and the drinking of plenty of water is suggested. However, this may not always be practical for people with delicate digestive systems or certain medical problems although most of us will derive benefit from drinking plenty of water and following a reasonable diet. Again, visualisation may help



Some may prefer to use purely meditative techniques.

if, when taking a bath or a shower, we visualise the water giving us more than a mere physical cleansing. We can imagine the cleansing action of the water extending its action to our aura and psychic body, or as cleansing our whole being. There are also various cleansing and relaxing aromatherapy oils which can be added to the bath water.

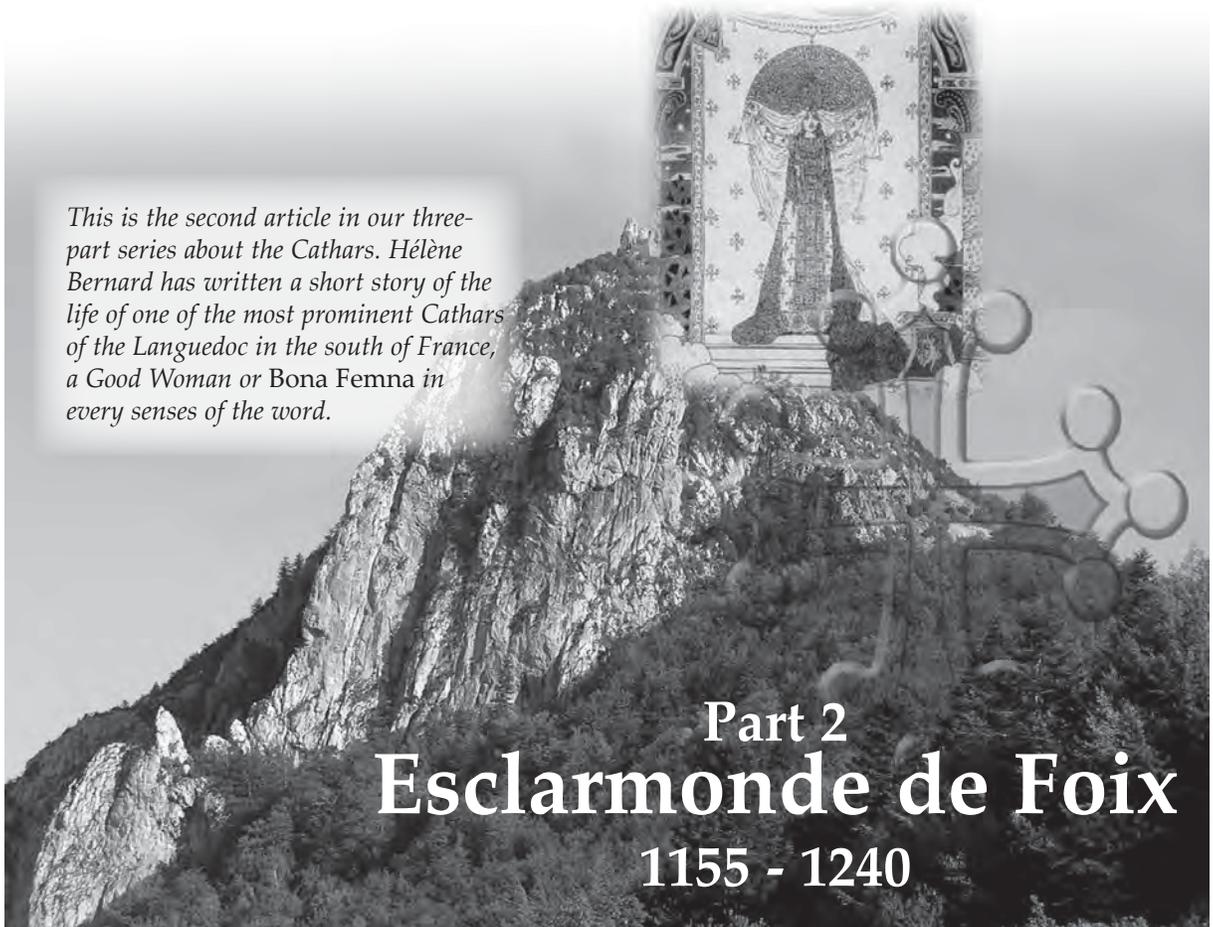
We are all guilty at times of holding on to situations from the past which we need to release. Here meditation can be of help. Whilst in meditation we can create a symbolic picture of the situation we wish to let go of and imagine that situation being cut away or cast away from us, asking the Cosmic or the God of our hearts to take care of it. Even so, some people feel concern as to where the negativity goes after the purification has occurred. There are various methods, of course, to deal with the dispersal of the negative energy. It can be visualised as being burned up with fire, washed away with water, or transformed into the light. Yet all we really need to do is to hold in our minds and hearts the assurance that it will be taken care of by the Cosmic or God of our Hearts and that it will be returned to a place where it will do no harm, ready to be recycled again into the processes of the Universe.



The Cathars

by Hélène Bernard, SRC

This is the second article in our three-part series about the Cathars. Hélène Bernard has written a short story of the life of one of the most prominent Cathars of the Languedoc in the south of France, a Good Woman or Bona Femna in every senses of the word.



Part 2 Esclarmonde de Foix 1155 - 1240

IN THE YEAR OF GRACE 1155, IN the heart of the Occitan country, in a majestic castle overlooking the river Ariège, a second child was born to Lady Zebelia Trencavel de Carcassonne, and Roger Bernard, Count of Foix. It was a little girl, and the wonderful and

predestined name of Esclarmonde was given to her. It was from this haunt, a real eagle's nest perched on a mountaintop, that her father, a strong and loud man, managed his estates.

The house of Foix was of Iberian origin, hailing and went back to Adcantuan who had fought against Caesar. Heir to the manor of



Foix through the counts of Comminges of Merovingian stock, it became, under the names of the counts of Carcassonne and Couserans, titular to the county of Foix around 1068. The feudal rule of the counts of Foix crept into the Ariège Valley and consisted of many manors, the majority of which were established under the reign of Charlemagne.

Through Andorra and Urgel, the county was directly connected with the Iberian Peninsula. In the central Pyrenees its sentinels on the steps of Spain were called *Montcalm*, *Vil-de-Soc*, *Siguer*, *Aston*, and *I'Hospitalet*, while *Aulus* and *Luchon* led to Gascony. Confident in the motto *Custos Summorum*, "guardians of the high plateaus," and under the protection of powerful armouries, the walls of the monumental and solitary dwelling sheltered the happy childhood of Esclarmonde.



Located at the centre of the triangle of Carcassonne-Toulouse-Andorra, Foix lies in the foothills of the Pyrenees mountain range in southern France. The town is dominated by the imposing 10th Century château des Comtes De Foix, shown here. This was once the home of Raymond Roger and his sister Esclarmonde.

Idyllic Days

In 1162, when Esclarmonde was seven years old, her father married off his oldest daughter, who was born from his first marriage to Cecile of Barcelona. On the occasion of these magnificent wedding nuptials, the little girl saw for the first time the best of Occitan chivalry. Among those proud people, the preference of Esclarmonde and her parents went to the members of the Perelha family, lords of Roquefixade and of Montségur.

Esclarmonde's radiant beauty blossomed forth in this cultured and sparkling southern court, between her brother, Ramon-Roger,

Esclarmonde's radiant beauty blossomed forth in this cultured and sparkling southern court.

nicknamed the *druz* (the initiate, the pure, the troubadour), and her little sister Zebelia. In both summer and winter, the days were spent hunting and feasting. Travellers came and went, always enjoying the open and warm hospitality of Roger Bernard and his family.

Immediately after sunset, with a fire crackling in the fireplace, guests were fed well. Then, affected by the soft glow of candlelight, one listened, with open mind and soul, to the sacred

texts and hidden words that the troubadours sang and declaimed from castle to castle in a secret language called *gaye science*.

The Courts of Love

Troubadours! This name alone rouses us: *Trovare-Trouve* (found). They had found a truth and, garbed in the hermetic colours green, yellow and red, they spread their knowledge. Secret ambassadors and bearers of news between influential people, these initiates called *fideles d'amour*, became the disciples and secret propagators of Cathar theories in Occitània.

"Courts of love" flourished in Foix, Aragon, Cerdagne, Gascony and the Languedoc. Divine sciences and asceticism were intensely debated, and borrowing from ancient druid teachings, they honoured the law of numbers. The seekers of secrets of the hereafter were the keepers of thousand-year-old teachings transmitted orally only. This ancient tradition had its ultimate origins in the "mystery" initiations of the old Egyptian religion which over time spread into communities throughout the Mediterranean basin.





Seal of the Count of Foix.



Courts of love flourished in Foix, Aragon, Cerdagne, Gascony and in the Languedoc.

With a long lineage, extending through the Egyptians, Greeks and Essenes, the Arabs became the keepers of this "science of the Magi," and it was to seek this knowledge, rather than to conquer Jerusalem, that a few of the first Crusaders started on their way, bringing back sacred knowledge from which Pyrenean Catharism was born.

But the proud knights also brought back a taste for luxury to which the Church of Peter and

A few of the first Crusaders brought back sacred knowledge from which Pyrenean Catharism was born.

its servants had succumbed, for some bishops and abbots lived ostentatious and wealthy lives, filled with the comforts of the best that money could buy. Esclarmonde watched and learnt of the weaknesses of the clergy and the unvirtuous lives of many clerics.

Marriage

Her adolescence was marked by the appearance of an heretical Bulgarian (Bogomil) bishop called Nicetas. His "mission" gave structure and formality to Catharism as he organised its priesthood and the statutes of its dissident Catholics. The House of Foix welcomed him, and young Esclarmonde and her brother Ramon-Roger were highly impressed by his personality.

Esclarmonde was too young to play a role in the management of a religion which called for nothing less than perfection. Nevertheless, she had much influence at the court of Foix.

She was intelligent and refined and had famous troubadours as teachers. Witty and talented, at 20 years of age, her reputation as a woman of superior intelligence and knowledge attracted many admirers and suitors to her. But like many of her peers, she sacrificed herself to a union ruled by politics. So in 1175 she married Jourdain III de l'Isle Jourdain, who was related to the counts of Toulouse. The name Jourdain (Jordan) was a reminder of his crusading ancestors, who had probably taken their name from the river Jordan in Palestine.

Jourdain's education was based on a particularly fervent form of Catholicism, but Esclarmonde was a Cathar and maybe she had hoped to eventually convert her husband. If their marriage was not a complete spiritual union, it was nevertheless a very fruitful one! Six children were born in the family home where Jourdain ruled by the letter and Esclarmonde by the intellect. First, there were two daughters, Escarone and Obisca; then three boys, Bernard, Jourdan and Othon; and finally a little girl, Philippa.

For 25 years Esclarmonde led a perfectly dignified life with Jourdain. She had given up trying to convince her husband of the cogency of Cathar doctrine but watched very closely the development of the situation in Occitania. She conducted courts of love and remained in touch with the greatest "heretical" personalities of the time. The Catholic Church tried in vain to reclaim the noble "lost sheep." At Albi, in 1176, a council reminded them of their capital sins, and a little



later, the archbishop of Lyon condemned them and accused the future Raymond VI of Toulouse of protecting them. Finally, on 20 March 1179, Pope Alexander III excommunicated them.

Courage and Compassion

In 1180, her little sister Zebelia married Roger I of Comminges, son of Bernard III and Laurence of Toulouse. Their paths were different, but the two sisters respected each other and several times helped one another.

In 1181, Cardinal Henri of Albano openly declared war on the Cathar "sinners" and Jourdain was dragged into this repressive crusade. An insane torrent of hatred and violence raged throughout the region and with a firmness of conviction, Esclarmonde first protected and then led the condemned people to the County of Foix. The Cardinal of Albano was furious and continued his cruelty.



The adolescence of Esclarmonde was marked by the appearance of a heretical Bogomil bishop called Nicetas who gave structure and formality to Catharism. The Bogomils were Christian Gnostics from Eastern Europe. Pictured here is one of only three Bogomil gravestones in Bosnia.

Monks loyal to him spread the rumour that Esclarmonde was responsible for this "ravage by fire and the sword." They had not forgiven her for her firm stand and sought to influence her husband against her.

During these difficult times, Esclarmonde displayed an unusual strength and especially feelings of social solidarity; a very rare thing in the 12th century. In 1185 Pope Lucius III allowed the wounded country to heal its wounds, and Esclarmonde resumed her life as lady of the manor, attending to her children.

Her reputation as a woman of superior intelligence and knowledge attracted many admirers and suitors.

In the months that followed, she had the great joy of seeing her brother, Ramon-Roger, whom she loved dearly, take for a wife the delightful Philippa de Moncade. Philippa loved and admired Esclarmonde and followed in her footsteps on the perilous path of Catharism.

For many years, in spite of the turmoil, the Count of Foix, Roger Bernard, maintained peace on his estates. In 1188 however, he passed away, and on the threshold of the 13th century a new pope, Innocent III, was elected to office. The first years of the new century were very trying for Esclarmonde.

Dove of the Paraclete

In 1203, her brother Ramon-Roger was taken prisoner, and in 1204, after twenty nine years of marriage, her husband Jourdain de l'Isle Jourdain passed away. Having never ceased loving his wife, in spite of her subversive ideas, the clauses of Jourdain's will were in favour of Esclarmonde. His whole family was by now loyal to Catharism. Children, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law felt a deep affection and a great admiration for Esclarmonde.

Having no regard for the material things of life, Esclarmonde left to her children the wealth and huge estates of their father, then returned to her native mountains and remained in Foix to rule there in her brother Ramon-Roger's absence. Free to assert herself in her faith, she surrounded herself with officers and friends of Ramon-Roger, and proclaimed herself dedicated to the Paraclete (in biblical terms the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus following the Crucifixion). The knights and the





The Bogomil/Cathar expansion across medieval Europe.

people from the surrounding area responded to her appeal to unity for a single faith. She selected trustworthy tutors for her nephews and devoted herself, body and soul, to her vocation.

Known as the “Dove of the Paraclete” Esclarmonde established social institutions, workshops, centres of apprenticeship in various branches, and especially hospitals for the elderly and those wounded in the war, as well as lodgings for the ever-increasing number of refugees. Under her leadership, convents for “Perfect Ones” and schools where poor children were taught the new spirit, were founded. Led by her, the “Perfect Ones” went to every home. They assisted outcasts and took care of the sick. Unconstrained, the people were won over by their caring, charitable ways and their pure form of mysticism.

Perfect One

In 1206, after three years in captivity, Ramon-Roger rejoined his court. At last Esclarmonde could devote herself to the life she had been yearning for. She retired to Castellar de Pamiers. The high Cathar officers had nothing more to teach her, and Guilabert de Castres, her teacher and faithful friend, deemed her worthy to be raised to the rank of a “Perfect One” and Archdeaconess.

Accompanied by Auda de Fangeaux, Fais, the Countess of Dufort and Ramonda Miro, Esclarmonde

received the “Consolamentum” in Fangeaux. This purifying ceremony strengthened the new Archdeaconess in her faith, and she devoted all her time and vitality to the establishment of Cathar communities. Along with her activities, Esclarmonde undertook, with Raimon de Perelha, her knight-servant, and other dignitaries such as Guilabert de Castres, the reconstruction of the fortress of Montségur. Relations with the Church were becoming bitter.

Church Scorn

Innocent III issued a sharp anathema against the innovators but Esclarmonde could not idly stand by while the South was so badly treated. The papal malediction only strengthened her convictions. In April 1206, for nearly one month, the seventh contradictory cross-examining council was held in Pamiers.

The Church had the fiery new bishop of Toulouse as its main representative. Esclarmonde, surrounded by Philippa and her beautiful

Esclarmonde established social institutions, workshops, centres of apprenticeship in various branches, and especially hospitals.

daughters, Ermessinde and Indie de Fangeaux, participated passionately in these debates. She demanded complete equality between men and



The “Perfects” or “Good Friends” as they called each other, spread the Word to the faithful. Bound by very strict rules of conduct, they had taken a vow of poverty, chastity and obedience.





Expulsion of Cathars at Carcassonne in 1209.

women, an established fact in the “rebellious” religion. Already prejudiced against women in general through his religious training, the prelate of Toulouse, annoyed by the intellectual abilities of his rival, challenged her: *“Madam, go and spin your wheel; it does not become you to argue in such debates!”*

Conflict and Persecution

On 17 November 1207, the pope ordered the King of France to arm his soldiers and march against the “infidels” as the Cathars were called. Indulgences and promises of salvation were granted to them. Esclarmonde prepared Montségur as the major centre of resistance and moved the treasure of the Paraclete up to the high rock.

Surrounded by the deacons and the “Perfect Ones,” she often looked down toward the forests of Belena (a reminder of the Celtic god of Light) and of Quier (the priest of the mistletoe). Soon, files of refugees arrived, fleeing from the brutality of Simon de Montfort. For years, terrible repressions were carried out by his forces. The bishop of Foulques founded a brotherhood whose members were recruited among the most fanatical and violent enemies of the Cathars. Simon de Montfort murdered heretics by the thousands in a bloody frenzy, sparing none. The occupants of Béziers took refuge in a church upon the arrival of the tyrant and his mercenary abbots. It was then

that the abbot of Citeaux cried out: *“Kill them all, God will know His own!”* And there, in that place of worship, these unfortunate people were burned alive, like so many others.

Finally, the King of France became disenchanted with the bloody, dishonourable way in which Simon de Montfort and his acolytes had led the crusade. Innocent III remained caught between his personal temperance and the growing ambitions of his subjects. The principle of the Holy War could not hide reality: a policy of conquest. For years, pillages, murders and pogroms continued. But in 1227, Occitania experienced a period of respite.

Cathar Revival

Having weathered the bloody times, Esclarmonde, almost in here eighties by now, believed the time was ripe to restore good order within the Cathar religion. She helped and cared for the faithful adepts, and reorganised the priesthood. Communities, hospices and workshops were distributed throughout the area. The Archdeaconess conferred the Consolamentum and baptism, and supervised numerous convents. Catharism rose again from its ashes.

However, as late as 1229, the Cathars continued to be persecuted, and many lived deep in the woods or as discreetly as possible. Some found sanctuary with sympathising noblemen and a great solidarity was established despite the ceaseless repression. In August 1232, Guilabert de Castres and Esclarmonde returned to Montségur.

She demanded complete equality between men and women, an established fact in the “rebellious” religion.

The Dove of the Paraclete was spared the pain of the fall of her beloved castle, the sight of the final defeat, the martyrdom of her friends, and the final subjugation of her free Occitania, for in 1240 at Montségur, the Cathar princess passed away and “journeyed to the stars.” Guilabert de Castres had the mystical joy of secretly burying the great Esclarmonde, his faithful companion through times of joy and times of trial. From good times to bad times, they had served the good.

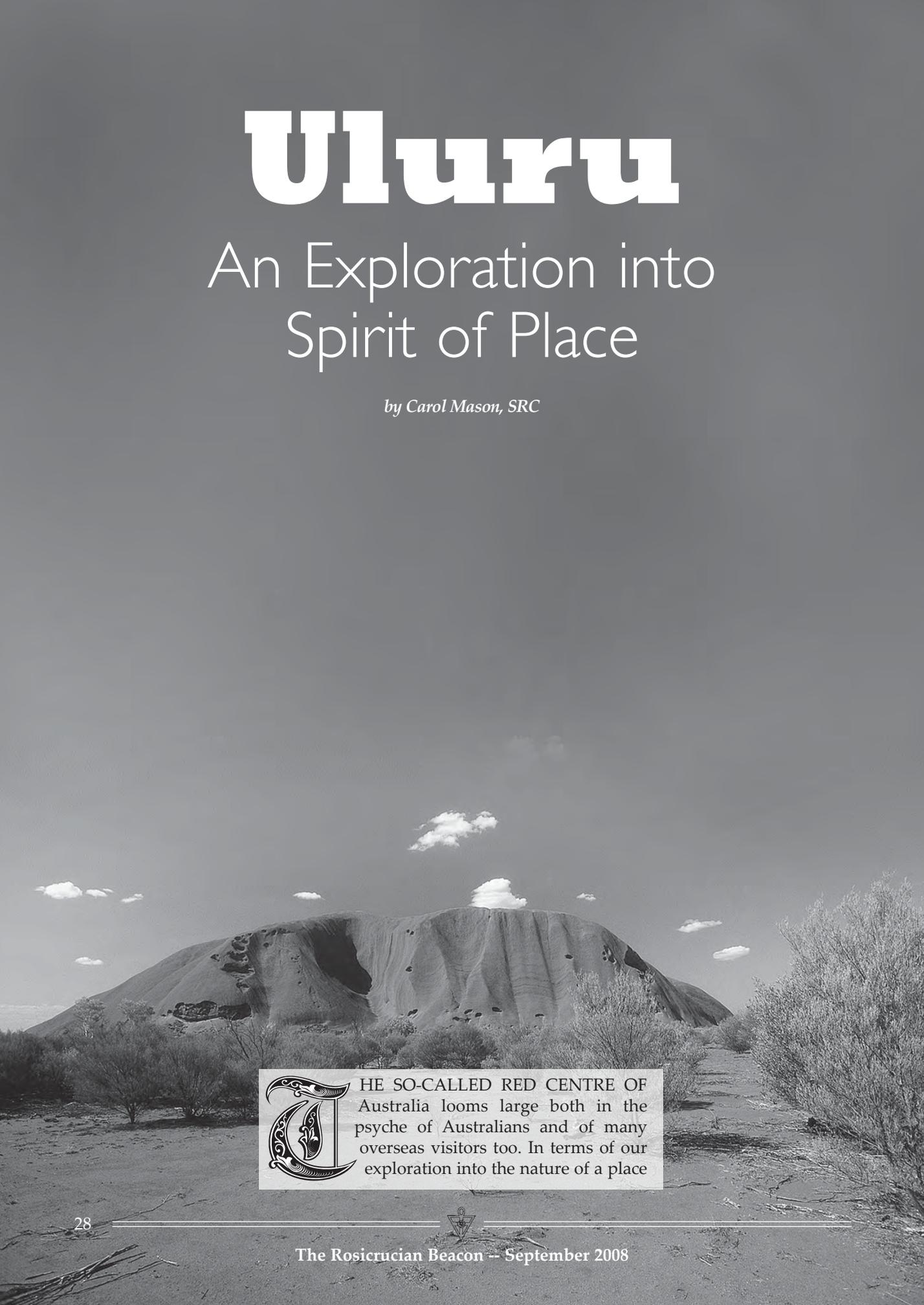
“Great Esclarmonde! A dove has flown away, but in the Cathar country your name remains forever engraved.” – Light of the World!



Uluru

An Exploration into Spirit of Place

by Carol Mason, SRC



THE SO-CALLED RED CENTRE OF Australia looms large both in the psyche of Australians and of many overseas visitors too. In terms of our exploration into the nature of a place



and its capacity to offer portals into the inner self and the knowledge that lies therein, it has no equal. Uluru, also known as Ayers Rock, lies on the land like a heart, spread in all directions, creased, bloody but pumping with life.

Esoterically, it has the reputation as a place of great spiritual outpouring. This is not only the view of the local Aboriginal population, but also of various groups who see it as a symbol of the Earth's energies in the land. This

The rock is something that can be listened to, for the silence within it has been heard by many.

could explain the migration of many who, decamping from their coaches and cars, bow down before it as the sun rises and sets, enjoy dinners with champagne in front of it and gaze with wonderment at the rare rain falling in great cascades from it. We can deduce then, as students of esoteric and spiritual things, that there is indeed something going on there and, as a magnet, it attracts great numbers of souls, who wish to acknowledge it.

It's a wonderful place but many who go there actually miss the point. In fact, the rock is something that can be listened to, for the silence within it has been heard by many. The experience of silence is the main attribute of this area of Australia, mostly untouched by the scream of cars and jet engines and the frantic pace of life that the major cities experience. It is the silence that creates the portal, for when one truly listens, all can be heard.

Sacred Rock

The rock itself is an enigma. It is monumental and yet accessible. It lies in an area of land that is flat for at least a thousand kilometres to the west of it and an expanse of arid grassland to the north of it. There's nothing like an enigma to stimulate the human need for exploration, the need to know. The great land in the centre, believed to have been a lake at one time, has created for Australia an idea of the sacred; both for Aboriginal and other Australians.

The sacredness of a place is

in many respects a primeval view, for evolution demands that we must move on. And yet the Aboriginal relationship with the land still has much to teach those steeped in the western esoteric tradition that we can learn, through it, to love the earth again.

Let's take a look at aspects of this geographic and geologically very special place on the planet. The sun is unrelenting, parching the land almost every day with high temperatures; and the land is uncompromising. Air simmers and sweeps sand and stones into all aspects of your being. The nights are dark and cold in winter and this combines with

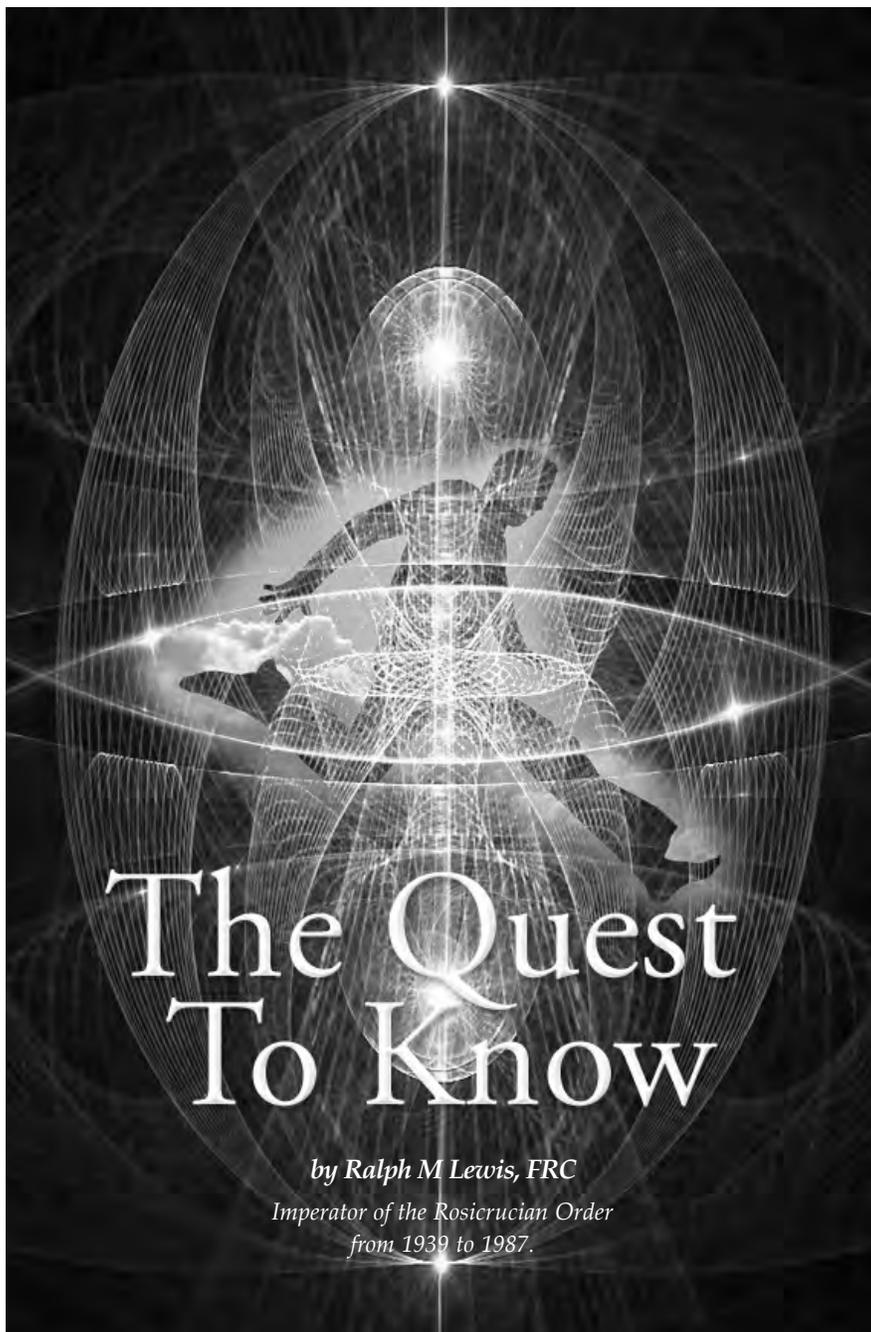
the great, vast and endless space to create a primordial soup of consciousness where it is the beginning and you are being made. The elements comprise everything that we are. And by becoming aware of them within the body and without in the atmosphere, an understanding and acceptance develops that we are one and the same. In this way, the experience of the desert as a dry, arid place, exposes us and allows us to throw off the physical body and the desires of the mind. For in any desert there is only you, and something else!

For those who seek a path through the desert of unknowing, every physical journey has its counterpart in the soul. Find the sacred place and acknowledge the creating of it and the eons of time that it has taken for us to see it as it is: as a way out of the mire into a place that resounds with light and perpetual spring.



Fertility Cave





PROPER DEFINITION OF MYSTICISM, whether from a standard created in today's world or that of previous centuries, has always been elusive and vague. A technical definition from the Oxford English Dictionary (8th edition) assists in such an opinion where it states that a mystic is: "*A person who seeks by contemplation... to obtain unity or identity with or absorption into the*

Deity or the ultimate reality, or who believes in the spiritual apprehension of truths that are beyond understanding." Subsequently, mysticism is often labeled as "irrational philosophy" in that it is thought that the intellect cannot comprehend such enlightenment. Furthermore, the irrational implies self-delusion and dreamy confusion of thought.

It was not too many years ago that



“intellectual giants” thought it irrational to believe in gravity or a heliocentric conception of the sun and its planets and, more recently, in plate-tectonics or a myriad of other currently rational existences. However, our point is not to identify with the particulars of an ever-changing intellectual comprehension of the universe or whatever it is that is being sought, but rather with the *act* of seeking. And with that act comes a different definition of mysticism, being a term applied to philosophical or scientific theories of which no rational account can be given at the present time.

Desire for Enlightenment

It is from a non-scientific contemporary community that another perspective of mysticism has developed. This community is often referred to as participants in the so called “New Age,” an age of enlightenment where there is a transformation of human consciousness whereby utopian ideals will eventually manifest. These are noble concepts indeed. However, we are mistaken if we think that they are new to our era. Such goals have been the concern of humanity for ages.

Yet today we may read books, attend lectures, seminars or retreats, or practice a variety of “disciplines” to attain enlightenment. We may follow popular fads or trust in popular

The transformation of human consciousness has been the concern of humanity for ages.

beliefs, but what is accomplished? Only what you do, only what you experience or what you decide. To convince potential followers to practice their system many groups offer promises of enlightenment or the development of special powers. Support for their cause is sometimes given by citing a supernatural source. This source often manifests as a coming messiah, a channelled entity, or a Master-personality of great attainment who allegedly works through one person not perceived by anyone else unless they have such great faith that they too share in the created reality. Many define this as mysticism. Rosicrucians define it as *fantasy*.

So, what then is mysticism? Is it irrational philosophy? Or is it a mysterious, supernatural, psychic belief?

What the scientist, the advocate of the New Age, the philosopher and the theologian, regardless of their diverging beliefs share in common, is the quest to know what there is to be known. That too is the objective of the mystic. In fact, is it not true that such a quest is the objective of all human beings in one manner or another? Subsequently, when we consider such disciplines as science, philosophy or mysticism, we need to recognise them for what they simply are, namely, methodologies to obtain an objective.

An Art of Knowing

Very few people in today’s world would consider science to be weird or mysterious. However, mysticism is sometimes categorised as such because it is often related to things psychic, occult, magical or supernatural. Often one brings to mind images of crystal balls, fortunetelling and suchlike.

Yet mysticism is none of that. It is simply an *art of knowing*. Misconceptions develop from a misunderstanding of the technique and the mystical experience as described by those who have actually had such an experience. The reason for this is because the mystical experience is an experience of a transcending nature, and often the mind will enter a reality where most people will not have the words to describe that experience. As a result, it will be labelled as “irrational,” but not by the participant. The mystic would consider the experience about as irrational as beauty or love, or harmony and peace.

The art of mysticism is the development of a technique to personally know the source of all Being. Many call this source God, others call it the Cosmic; and yet others call it the Grand Unified Theory, the point being that the experience is noetic or requiring the assistance of the mind or intellect. We know; not think we know or develop a faith or belief, but we know. Knowledge is rational.

The experience is even more beautiful because the potential for knowing exists in all human beings. The experience of enlightenment is not a nebulous something which is separate from the self. It is present everywhere, and the process of enlightenment is nothing more than an evolved realisation.



Self Esteem

by Judy Child, SRC



SELF-ESTEEM IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL and emotional state of being which governs our response to our experiences in the world. True self-esteem does not allow either ego inflation or false humility.

It is the balanced state of consciousness between these extremes; the balanced state of neutrality which achieves maturity. One of the ways we

can better understand ourselves in relationship to self-esteem is by contemplating *three* powerful attributes of the spiritual principle of *Love*.

Forgiveness

The first of these three attributes is *forgiveness*. The strongest barrier to forgiveness is guilt. We have all experienced guilt at one time or another, and



know that it is often a powerful stimulus toward self-examination. However, guilt can also be a debilitating emotion that undermines our self-confidence. It is important to remember that self-examination often surprises us by revealing our strengths as well as our weaknesses.

It is important that you forgive yourself for not being able to forgive.

When we become lost in feelings of guilt, we often become defensive and critical of others, being perhaps a misplaced attempt to bring a sense of balance to the situation. But real forgiveness of both ourselves and others can permanently heal the wounds we all sustain as a natural part of living.

As you contemplate the nature of forgiveness, think about a situation in your life that you intuitively feel needs forgiveness. Perhaps someone has done something to you that you believe can't be forgiven. Or perhaps you feel you've done something for which you can't forgive yourself. You may know intellectually that you want to forgive, but are unable to change your feelings or behaviour.

It is important also that you forgive yourself for not being able to forgive. We are often hard on ourselves and others for "not being spiritual enough." Know that the growth process is meaningful, but you can't take the second step before you've taken the first. Ask the Inner Self for understanding, and then listen to the still small voice within.

The Inner Self is never judgmental, vengeful or indifferent. It sees the situation clearly and wants to act in the best interests of everyone concerned. Sometimes that will mean letting go of a relationship. At another time it will mean allowing yourself to love again and doing whatever you can to repair that relationship.

Most importantly, if you are learning to forgive yourself, remember that you are learning to understand your real responsibility in a relationship or situation. We are often unforgiving towards ourselves because we are assuming too much responsibility for what has happened or

is happening. In the same way, we tend to have difficulty in forgiving others by giving them too much responsibility, i.e., we are blaming them. Finding a balanced perspective on any issue involving questions of responsibility and forgiveness takes time, continued reflection and the willingness to consider new ideas.

True self-esteem comes from knowing that our understanding of Self deepens with experience. We are learning to trust our own personal commitment to spiritual growth. This means that we have demonstrated to ourselves that we can change, that our consciousness is evolving as we meet the challenges of our own particular situation.

Trust

The second attribute of Love that contributes to self-esteem is *trust*. The primary barrier to trust is fear. We have all experienced the way fear tends to undermine self-confidence and distort our perceptions. On the other hand, trust gives us great reserves of inner strength and true insight into life's circumstances.

Trust is a state of being rooted in our deepest commitment to spiritual realities. It is the basis of our relationship with the world around us, and most importantly, with the Inner Self. If we have had experiences in life, particularly in childhood,

where we believed our trust was broken or betrayed, we will need to learn to trust again. The wound is within ourselves, so that we must "go within" to heal. Otherwise, fear becomes a habitual response which subtly poisons what we think, feel and do.

As you contemplate the nature of trust, think about what you most desire in life right



"Do you know what love is?" she asked.

"What is love?"

"Love is forgiveness" she responded.

Trust is a state of being rooted in our deepest commitment to spiritual realities.

now, or perhaps what you value the most. Feel the love radiating from your heart toward this desire. Gradually allow love to fill your whole being and resolve to let go of any fears you may have of losing what you value, whether you are aware of these fears or not. Again, ask your Inner Self



for understanding, for it knows how to help you let go of fears that have been generated by your own particular life experiences.

Sometimes the Inner Self may urge you to talk about your fears with a trusted friend or family member. Fear usually begins when we feel isolated, unprotected, unloved or misunderstood. Talking about our fears with someone we trust often heals, simply because we then no longer feel so alone.

As you engage in this process of strengthening trust through letting go of fear, it is important to remember that you are responsible for your choices. If we make choices out of fear, we tend to re-create the circumstances that generated fear in the first place. On the other hand, if we resolve to trust the still small voice within, we will gradually learn to make choices that create harmonious conditions in our personal lives and in the world around us.

Compassion

The third attribute of Love that contributes to self-esteem is *compassion*. One of the strongest barriers to compassion is intolerance, or the tendency to be judgmental. It is most important to remember that every time we feel judgmental or superior to another person, we are creating conditions in our inner life that contribute to the loss of self-esteem. This is because we know in our heart that we also have difficult aspects of our personalities and conduct that makes us feel vulnerable to the judgments of others.

Ironically, intolerance is an attitude that often makes us feel strong and powerful in relationship to the world around us. However,

Self-esteem does not demand perfection but an understanding heart and the wisdom of experience.

this is an illusion, for intolerance separates us from the Inner Self, which is the true source of our strength and ability to act in the best interests of ourselves and others.

As you contemplate the nature of compassion, think about a situation or problem in your life at the present time which makes you feel angry, jealous or frustrated. Often, we would



It is the basis of our relationship with the world around us, and most importantly, with the Inner Self.

simply ignore or walk away from the problem if we could. Most probably, we are faced with the challenge of changing our attitude toward the situation so as to act constructively.

It is helpful to begin by being as honest as possible with yourself about the true nature and extent of your feelings. Know that strong emotions such as anger, jealousy and frustration interfere with your ability to think clearly. At the same time, if you ignore such feelings or try to “rise above them,” they will still interfere with the ability to think clearly. It is best to accept your feelings and work to calm them, rather than to deny them. We must begin with the sincere desire to resolve the situation or problem.

As you continue to meditate on compassion, imagine yourself surrounded by the clear white light of spiritual understanding. Know that you desire to change your feelings and behaviour, and gradually allow yourself to believe that resolution is possible. Feel your emotions become calmer and quieter as you know in your heart that true insight will come. Most importantly, let go of any thoughts or feelings that you are right and the other individual is wrong. Know that each of us in our own way contributes to the larger meaning and purpose of human experience.

Depending on the strength of your feelings of anger, jealousy or frustration in regard to the situation, you may need to meditate for some days on simply believing that resolution is possible. Gradually, as you become quieter



and more committed to understanding, allow the Inner Self to show you the true nature of the situation. Insight may come through the urge to read certain passages from a book or monograph, or to seek advice from a particular person. Or there will simply be a moment when you will know how to act in the best interests of everyone concerned. Listen to these urgings from the Inner Self, always knowing that in time, if your desire for resolution is sincere, you will find the way.

Do Not Expect Human Perfection

Self-esteem does not demand perfection of us; rather, self-esteem requires an understanding heart and the wisdom we have gained from experience. If we expect perfection of human personalities, either our own or others, we immediately create conditions antithetical to spiritual growth, because we grow through recognising and accepting our limitations and our individual differences.

We all have problems with self-esteem from time to time. This is a natural part of life as we take risks, make mistakes, learn, mature, experiment and reach out to others, engaging in all the myriad of experiences available to each one of us. As we strive to live up to our spiritual ideals, aspiration must be balanced by acceptance of who we are and what we can reasonably accomplish.

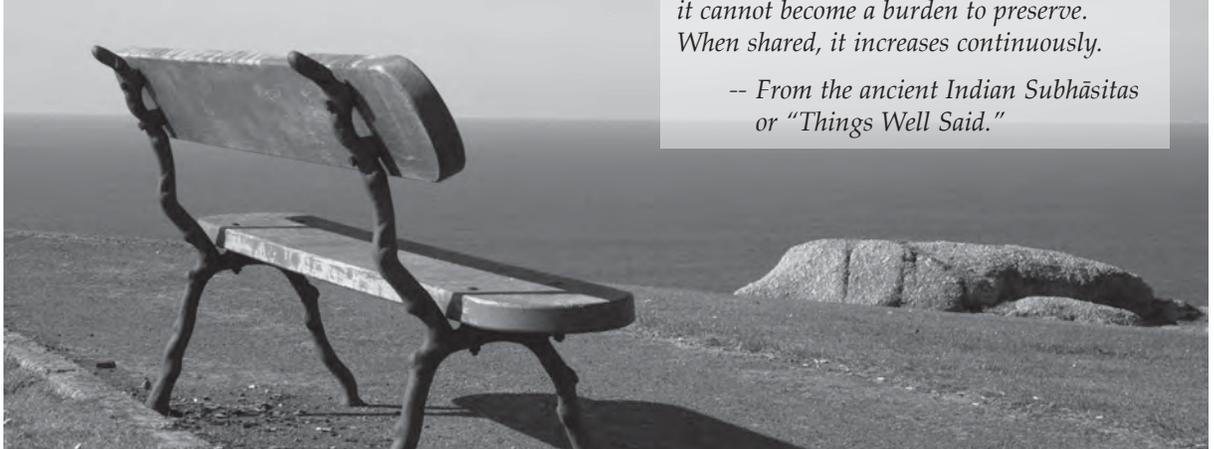
We nurture self-esteem within ourselves slowly, one day at a time, one step at a time.



Know that each of us in our own way contributes to the larger meaning and purpose of human experience.

No matter what may be happening in our outer circumstances, if we know in our heart we are doing the best we can, that is enough. As we contemplate the nature of forgiveness, trust and compassion, we are primarily healing our relationship with the Inner Self. When we commit ourselves to the exploration of inner realities, we also accept deeper responsibilities in the world around us. And acceptance of those responsibilities is the foundation of true self-esteem.

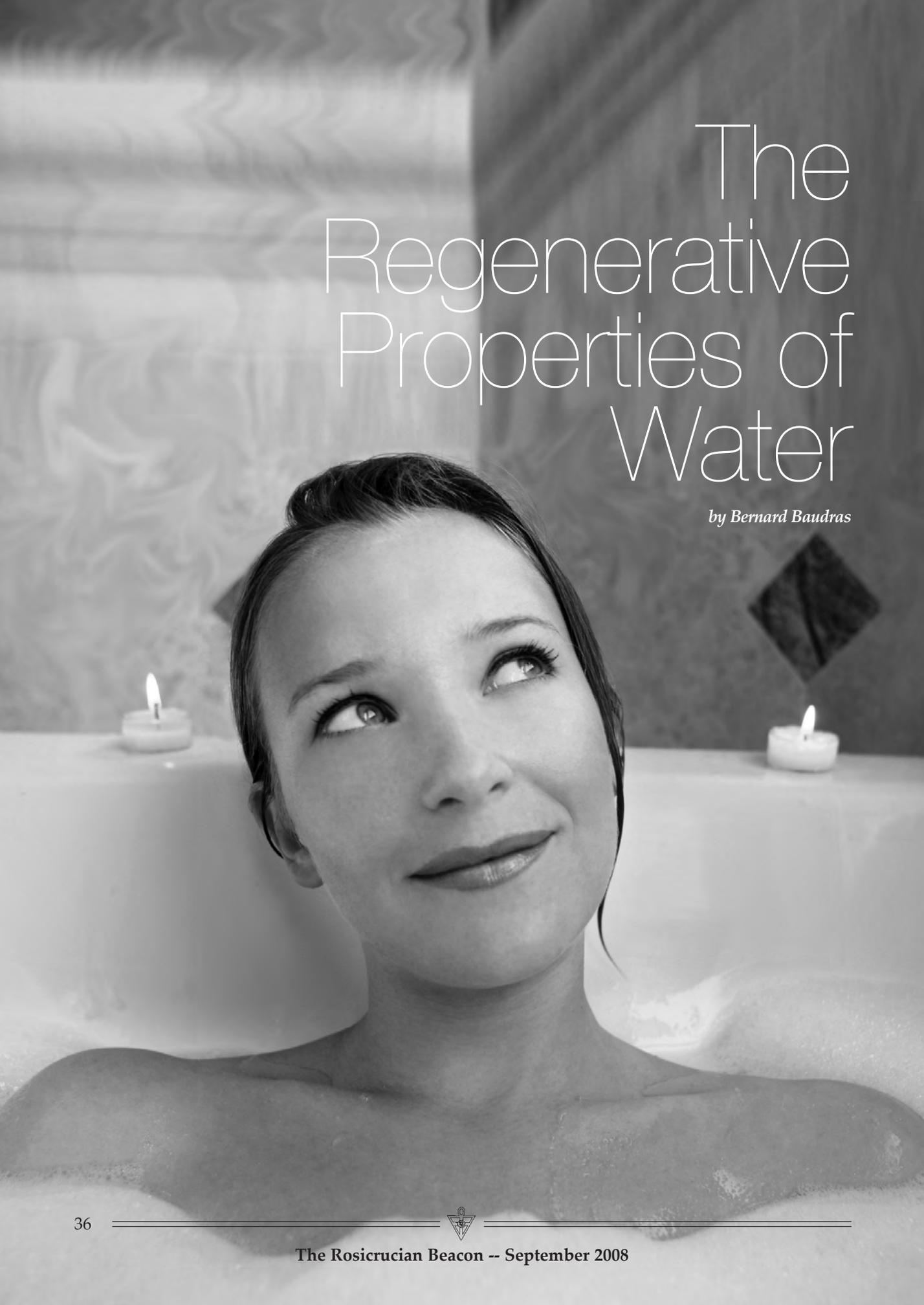
Wisdom



The wealth of wisdom is the greatest of all wealth, for... it cannot be stolen by thieves, it cannot be confiscated by the king, it cannot be appropriated by brothers, and it cannot become a burden to preserve. When shared, it increases continuously.

-- From the ancient Indian Subhāsitas or "Things Well Said."





The Regenerative Properties of Water

by Bernard Baudras





HE REGENERATIVE PROPERTIES of water are well-known, at least, so we believe. From time immemorial, water has been used as a cleansing agent, cleaning and healing both body and spirit. Let us examine how water affects the state of our health.

The first effect of contact with water is when washing. It has the power to dissolve the salts and secretions that form a deposit on the openings of the pores of the skin, thus eliminating them. So, thanks to water, we are able to preserve the ability of our skin to breathe. This first point is important, but it does not explain everything.

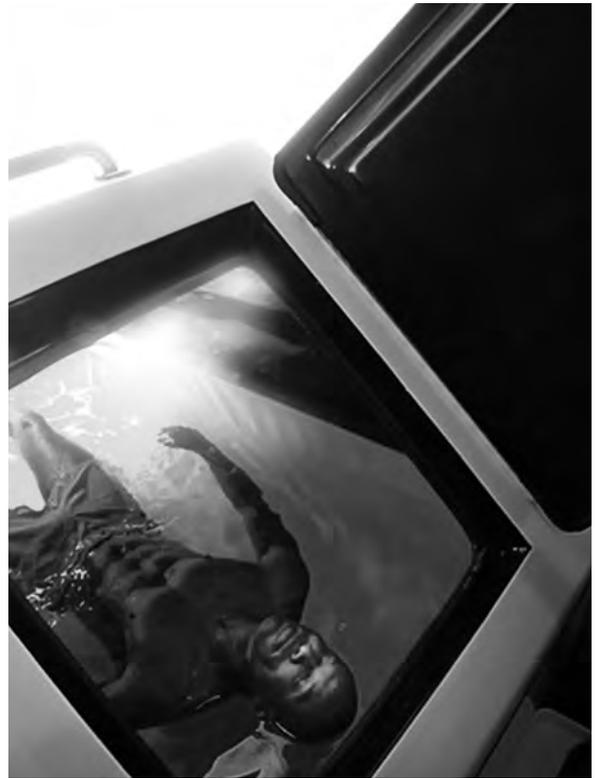
The adherents of Hydrotherapy prefer cold to hot water, but preferably running water, such as streams, waterfalls, currents, eddies and showers. Fresh, bubbling water is richer in oxygen than still water. It is said to be more "alive." The water's temperature also has a direct action on the body. Cold water induces a defence reaction which manifests in a peripheral vasoconstriction (a decreasing of the diameter of the blood vessels). Tepid water induces vasodilation (an expanding of the blood vessels) and a state of relaxation. Very hot water is a danger to us and the body defends itself by compulsory perspiration.

Water is electrically neutral. Its polarity depends on its temperature: negative below 4°C, positive above it. One could say that it is, to a certain extent, "accepted" by electrons, with soft water being a bad conductor of electricity,

For water therapy to be most effective, it must be constantly renewed and circulate around the body.

while hard water conducts electricity well. For water therapy to be most effective, it must be constantly renewed and circulate around the body enabling an exchange of ions and electrons on a large scale.

What specific electrical effect then is so important? The rate of accumulation of static electricity in the body or on its surface steadily increases as the levels of stress and electromagnetic pollution rise. The harmful results are everywhere to be seen, but water has the near-magical property of being able to eliminate this excess. Kirlian photography gives us a clue as to the



An isolation tank is a lightless, soundproof tank in which subjects float in salty water at skin temperature. They were first used by John C. Lilly in 1954 to test the effects of sensory deprivation. Such tanks are now also used for meditation, prayer, relaxation, and in alternative medicine.

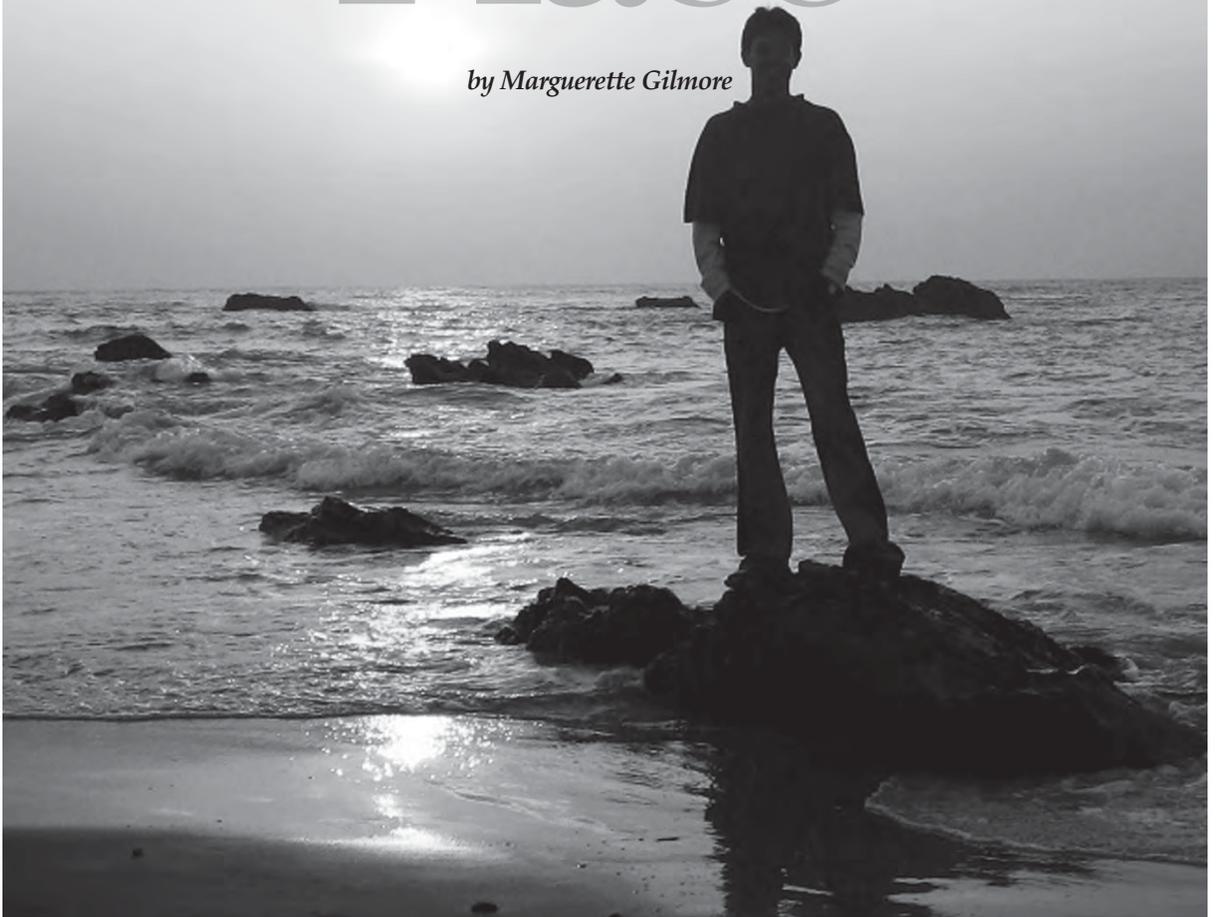
ultimate cause of this build-up. For a long time, scientists were puzzled by the brilliant blurs and "blobs" of energy which they could observe on the sensitive paper used in this technique. These energy clusters always formed about a centimetre away from the skin. They were visible only on negatives and their radiation appeared much disorganised. Finally, it was discovered that this phenomenon was not artificial, indeed quite the contrary; those brilliant blurs were the impact of electrons emitted from acupuncture points.

Thus, it is possible that the regenerative effects of water may in some way be bound up with its capacity to *change* the electrical charge of the skin or, more precisely, with certain acupuncture points. This capacity can perhaps be regulated by the salinity of the water, by its temperature and by the speed of discharge. If and when this is found to be the case, each of us may one day be able to choose the water which best suits us, according to our needs, and for the general betterment of our health.



A. Listening Place

by Marguerette Gilmore



WITHIN EVERYONE IS A QUIET, serene centre where one can go to garner strength, to regain composure, to find answers and to grow in spiritual stature. This is our soul centre where we commune with the God of our deepest understanding. It is important that we go there

each day for a period of renewal and guidance. In this period we find strength and serenity to meet and conquer life's challenges and to move up the ladder on which we ascend so slowly but so surely.

There are a few who can sit or stand amidst a crowd and be able to shut out the noise



and confusion and “go apart” to this quiet place and, right there and then, listen to the directions from the Infinite Mind. But most of us need to really go apart in body as well as in mind and find a place of quiet in order to hear the inner voice of holiness. To most of us, the stilling of our mundane thoughts is difficult enough without the added confusion of outside noise and activity. So, to us it is important that we have a physical place to go to, a place that is peaceful and beautiful, and where we can be alone so that it is possible to really hear when the Cosmic speaks.

Others Can Do It

It is well known that Edison used to slip away and find a quiet spot for a moment of rest, sometimes stilling his conscious mind to the point of sleep. Only a few minutes were necessary, and he would return to his work and co-workers with answers that astonished him as well as others, combined with a new enthusiasm and strength with which to work.

Many outstanding people are able to do this, to find just a corner somewhere where it is quiet and they can have a few minutes alone and be able to retreat to this serene centre deep within to seek, to listen, to find. But the most ideal sanctuary is one to which we can go regularly, a place of beauty and serenity, a place that invites meditation, that in itself will start the process of stillness and peace within us.

I know one woman who has a certain path through the woods where she walks, and whether during spring, summer, autumn or winter it is on this path that she is able to listen to the Cosmic and find her answers. She walks here every day, sometimes standing amidst wild flowers and the fragrance of wet bark and fresh leaves, and

Many are able to find a corner somewhere where it is quiet and retreat to a serene centre deep within.

sometimes in snow. And it is here that the God of her heart speaks to her, guiding her in making decisions, in overcoming grief and in growing in love and stature.

I also know a person who has no lovely woods in which to walk and yet he finds peace and stillness while sitting by a certain window overlooking city buildings. He calls it his “listening window.” Here he has come to attune with the



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Cosmic and to recognise the “voice” of God.

Another woman I know rises at 3 o’clock in the morning because time is the important element in her meditation. The Cosmic communes with her in the quiet solitude of very early morning when the house and world are asleep and she is undisturbed. I am sure she sits in the same spot each day for this communion.

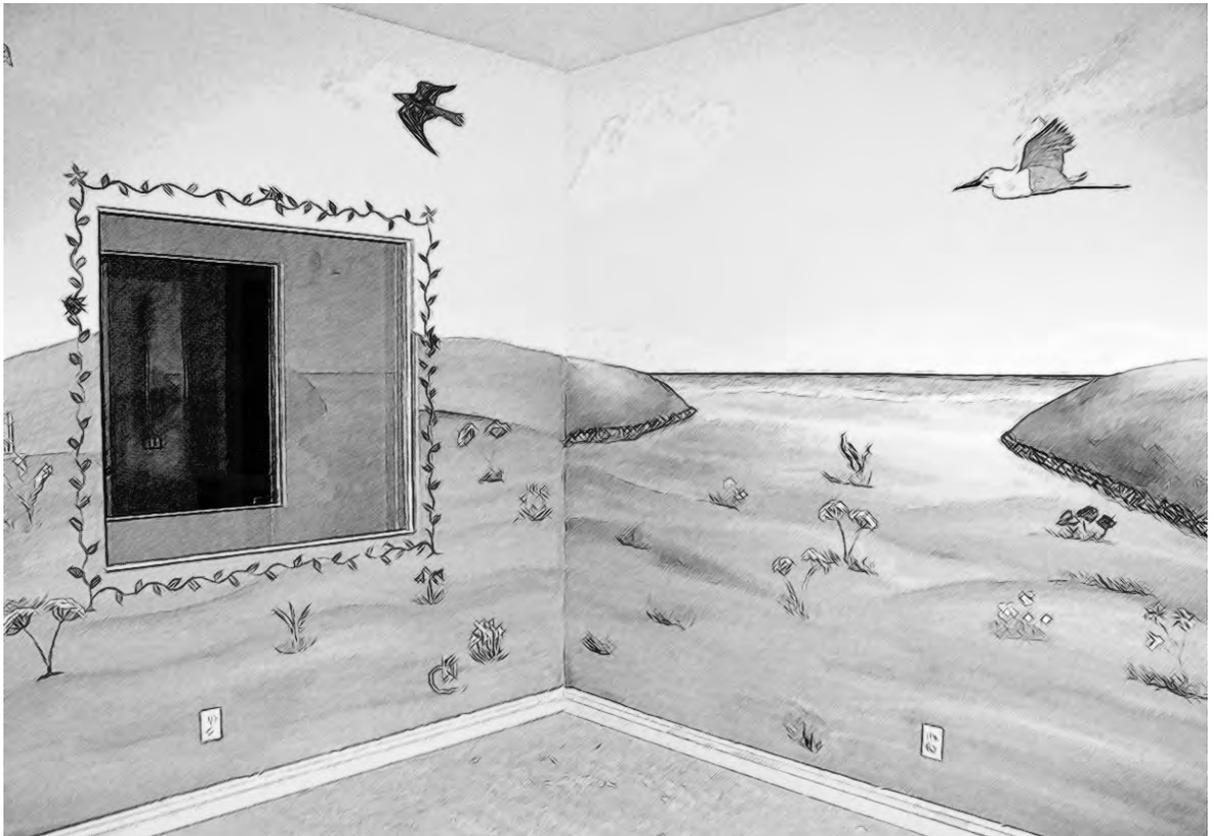
My Sanctuary

I feel fortunate that I live in the mountains and can sit on a high place overlooking valleys, jagged rocks and fresh green trees. I am fortunate that I can “lift my eyes to the hills from whence comes my strength.” Just the beauty alone in my “listening place” creates so much awe and adoration of God that mundane feelings and thoughts, petty grievances and small fears have a way of slipping quietly out when I go there. Peace and goodness well up in me, and gratitude is spontaneous and overwhelming.

Your Sanctuary

If you want a sanctuary and have no place to go, find one spot that is secluded, perhaps your own





Your own bedroom can be your sanctuary to quieten the turmoil inside you, to return to the reality of God and restore your real self.

bedroom. Hang a lovely painting on the wall and permeate the room with love and feelings of peace. Sit there daily and dwell on the Cosmic. Ask and listen. Let this room become so imbued with your best that upon entering it you will instantly feel the quietness and strength there. Even the walls will soak up your love and higher thoughts and reflect them back to you.

In this spot you will find it easier to shut out the petty worries of the world and become quiet. You will find it possible to retreat all the way to the core of yourself and tap the cosmic power waiting in that quiet, serene centre. And at times when you feel the pressures becoming too great, or an emergency or grief assaults you, then you can quickly retire to your listening place. You will realise at these times how really important it is to have this sanctuary from the world: this place that has become sacred to you.

In your sacred place, you will more easily than anywhere else, quieten the turmoil inside you, return to the reality of God, and restore your real self; for here you will have established

a mental and spiritual pattern so crucial to the establishment of harmony, balance and a peace that surpasses all understanding. However important our sanctuary is to us in times of stress, remember that it is during the mundane, ordinary hours of less consequence that we do the real labour of transforming our holy space to a sanctuary of great love, strength and comfort. We must develop the habit of giving love and strength whilst in this place to all we've met or encountered in our lives,

Let this room become so imbued with your best that upon entering it you will instantly feel the quietness and strength there.

and to do so unconditionally.

It is so important therefore that we never neglect our daily retreat to this sanctuary, for minute and invisible though they may seem, the rewards from our listening place come to us daily in growth and guidance, and in stored-up strength, which we receive continually after "going apart" for no other purpose than to listen to the God of our understanding.



The Influence of Power

by Alexander F Skutch



Alexander the Great was an unfortunate example of a man whose unparalleled military power was unmatched by self-control

AS HUMANS, WE ARE SOCIAL ANIMALS and can hardly survive without the support of our fellow kind. Yet, from time immemorial, it has been our fellow human beings that have caused us more suffering than anything else in our whole experience. It would probably

not be too great an exaggeration to say, as did Aristotle's contemporary, the philosopher and intellectual, Dicaearchus (c.350 - c.285 BCE), that men themselves have been responsible for more human misery than flood, earthquake, volcanic eruption or depredation of savage animals.

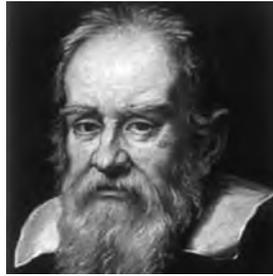
A chief cause has been our inordinate craving



for power. Cities and empires have been destroyed, battlefields strewn with the dead, sorrowing captives torn from ancestral homes, prisoners entombed in the dungeons of secular and ecclesiastical despots, countless burned, beheaded or shot; all to satisfy someone's lust for power.

The thirst for power appears to be inherited from pre-human ancestors. The urge to dominate seems to be widespread in flock and herd. Among domestic fowl there is caste where each pecks those below it in the scale. The one at the top pecks all below him, and the one at the bottom is pecked by all above. This impulse to dominate may not be destructive so long as it is confined to processes which natural selection would eliminate when they proved harmful to the species.

It does cause immense havoc though when an active human imagination devises countless new ways to satisfy it. But it would be wrong to suppose that the exercise of power is always mischievous, and the urge to display it invariably wicked. Power, in the widest sense, is the capacity to cause changes in surrounding objects; and it is only by such means that anything reveals its existence. If, for example,



Persuasive power, in the physical realm, is resonance; witnessed when a vibrating object such as a piano string sets up in a neighbouring object, vibrations whose natural periodicity is the same. We persuade others by discovering their natural tendencies and set their talents in motion much as resonance is set up in material bodies. We must convince their sentiments or their reason; and if perhaps we can persuade both together, our appeal will be irresistible. As the philosopher Bertrand Russell pointed out in his book *Power: A Social Analysis*, the figures of Buddha, Jesus Christ, Pythagoras and Galileo owed their vast influence over mankind to persuasive power alone.

Use and Abuse

When power is desired for its own sake, for the mere satisfaction of imposing one's will on others in order to command or oppress, it is detrimental and dangerous and has been the principal cause of sufferings for humanity. So it becomes necessary in our personal development to take responsibility for the power we already have, and be dictated by our conscience in using it wisely. In this way power has the ability to bring many benefits to humankind.

Of course our outer conduct and moral standards are influenced by the notions of right and wrong that prevail within the culture and society in which we live. The subtle effects of collective societal power can create or destroy, making us cheerful and effective or sad and destructive, creating honourable citizens or enemies of that society. On a personal level we have to take from society that which is good and transmute any negative inclinations. In this way use our personal power to improve society where we can, no matter how small a part we might think we play in doing so.

As voters and part of the electorate we might consider the power to determine community and national policies, a power exercised in too small a measure. Out of an electorate of millions, a single vote might count for little, and we may feel our power too slight to exercise it. But even if our political power seems negligible, our conduct as private citizens can raise or lower the moral tone of the community in which we live.

Our most important power is wielded over the natural world: the earth and its living creatures.

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a speck of dust did not deflect a ray of light to our eyes, we would never suspect its presence. Magnets bring themselves to our attention because they move bodies of many kinds.

Living things differ from lifeless ones in the more varied powers they display: they grow, they move, they respond to stimuli, they alter their environment in manifold ways. Power then, is a measure of existence, and those that exercise no power are not living.

Power; a Dual Nature

Power is of two kinds: *coercive* and *persuasive*. Coercive power is exemplified by the hurricane, the landslide, the tidal wave, which level obstacles regardless of their nature. Among men, coercive power is exercised by the military conqueror, the slave-driver, the political or domestic despot and everyone who imposes their will on others without regard for character and feelings.



If we live in the country, we have the ability to preserve or destroy the animals and plants which surround us. If we farm, we have the means to impoverish the soil or to carefully husband its fertility. Even those in towns and cities, by their choice of food, clothing and other commodities, indirectly exercise a considerable power over the earth and its inhabitants. Many innocent looking products contain components neatly packaged that were procured and manufactured by means we would indignantly condemn if we were fully aware of them.

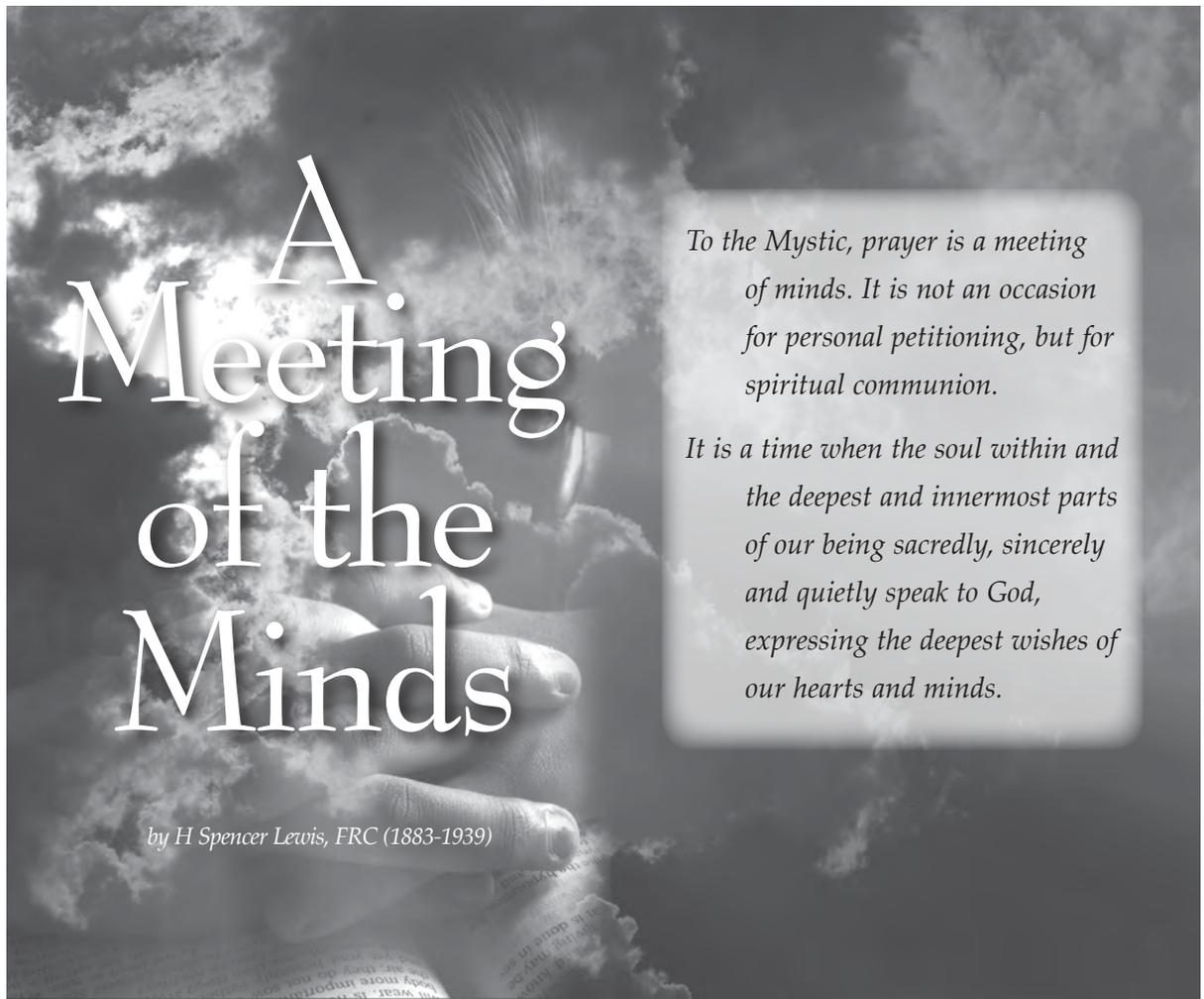
Power and Self Control

Most important of all is the power of our inmost self to moderate and subdue the passions inherited from our forebears in their long struggle to survive in a crowded, competitive world. Unless we can govern passions like anger, hatred, avarice,

jealousy and lust, any power we have is going to prove deleterious rather than benefit humanity at large.

Ancient philosophers pointed to Alexander the Great as the unfortunate example of a man whose unparalleled military power was unmatched by self-control. In a rage he slew his friend Cleitus and then grieved immoderately over what he had done. Excessive drinking apparently was largely responsible for his death at the early age of 32. His history is proof that strength of body, noble blood, and success in war can never make a man happy unless he can win that victory over his inner self.

We, who rightly estimate the power we wield, may feel the responsibility involved, and doubt our ability to use it wisely; yet, it is already ours because we are human beings. We must decide whether our use will be coercive or persuasive. The results will show the wisdom of our choice.



A Meeting of the Minds

by H Spencer Lewis, FRC (1883-1939)

To the Mystic, prayer is a meeting of minds. It is not an occasion for personal petitioning, but for spiritual communion.

It is a time when the soul within and the deepest and innermost parts of our being sacredly, sincerely and quietly speak to God, expressing the deepest wishes of our hearts and minds.





THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT while "God is in heaven," all is right with the world. They are all too rare. When we meet with this kind of idealism in daily life, we're likely to consider the person who thinks in these terms an impractical dreamer, and perhaps a fool. Yet this attitude is just the thing necessary for our survival as a species; for if we cease to hope, to plan, to idealise, then we cease to be separated from the so-called lower animals.

Certainly there are times when we come to think that life is not worth the struggle we put into it. We work constantly for achievement, but when our ambitions are fulfilled, we are rarely happy. And if we do find that haven of contentment, it is often an unstable thing, easily snatched away by envy or hatred from others.

It is interesting to note that the majority of young people don't have concerns for the future; the present seems to be all that most of them live for. And when we are older we tend to rely on the past, seeking security in what we have achieved already. Our lives have been a patchwork of fleeting experiences that have come and gone far too quickly it seems.

And then there is a nagging discontent that

haunts us because we know we are living a lie when we claim belief in things in which we have no belief; worry over things that actually concern us but little; and pay continuous lip service to those about us whom we feel merit our attention for one reason or another. It is indeed tragic how much of our lives we waste in imaginary battles with imaginary foes.

There are so many things we do not understand about life with its complexities being only the smallest part of the total mystery. And, of course, life is full of questions which often torment the mind, but we can only hope to find answers if we will embrace the mysteries of life even though we may have to accept that no answer will necessarily be forthcoming.

We should then learn to be seekers, in the sense of Gibran's words, never stationary but always moving ahead, secure in the knowledge that life, like the rose, unfolds itself.

*We wanderers, ever seeking the lonelier way,
begin no day where we have ended another day;
and no sunrise finds us where sunset left us."*

-- Kahlil Gibran, "The Prophet"





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There is geometry in
the humming of
the strings.

There is music in
the spacing of
the spheres.

-- Pythagoras