

# BROSICRUCIAN BEACON



September 2010



# THE SACRED

## AND THE PRIMORDIAL TRADITION

**CONVENÇÃO MUNDIAL ROSACRUZ**  
"O Sagrado e a Tradição Primordial"

**CONVEGNO MONDIALE ROSA-CROCE**  
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“Heidelberg, City of Rosicrucian Mystery”



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The Rosicrucian Beacon -- September 2010

# Heidelberg & the Early Rosicrucians

## Part 1

by Bill Anderson, FRC

*"I saw Heidelberg on a perfectly clear morning, with a pleasant air both cool and invigorating. The city, just so, with the totality of its ambiance is, one might say, something ideal."*

-- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832



REMEMBER ONE OF MY FRIENDS asking me if I had heard of the Rosicrucian University in Heidelberg, Germany. I hadn't, but, driven on by an overwhelming curiosity, I decided to go there to see what I could discover. So, some weeks later, I took a flight to Frankfurt and made my way by train to Heidelberg. One of the first things I did when I arrived there was to go for a stroll along the *Philosophenweg* (Philosopher's Way)

with its impressive views of the *Residenz*, the castle of the Prince-Electors on the hill across the other side of the river Neckar.

It was a lovely summer day, so I decided to stop and sit in the shade of the trees watching the scene across the river, with the ruins of the castle and the green silences of the *Odenwald* (Odin's forest) in the background. Below me one of the boats of the "White Fleet" was sailing slowly along the river taking new tourists on a





*The territories and dominion of the Holy Roman Empire in terms of present-day states was comprised of Germany (except Southern Schleswig), Austria (except Burgenland), the Czech Republic, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Slovenia (except Prekmurje), besides significant parts of eastern France (mainly Artois, Alsace, Franche-Comté, Savoie and Lorraine), northern Italy (mainly Lombardy, Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, and South Tyrol), and western Poland (mainly Silesia, Pomerania, and Neumark).*

voyage of discovery. Sitting there and listening to the music of Jacob Regnart, one of the composers at the court of Rudolf II in Prague, on my MP3, my mind started thinking about the book *Rosicrucian History and Mysteries* and especially Chapter 8, “The Chymical Wedding” which may have had a connection with this town.

Why Heidelberg? What was special about this place? What was the connection, if any, with the Rosicrucians? Was there any evidence to show that there had ever been a Rosicrucian University here some 400 years ago?

## Heidelberg and the Palatinate

The earliest signs of human life on the European continent, some 600,000 years old, were found in Heidelberg. By the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the Celts had arrived and built a cult site there. The Romans were here too until 260 CE, when they withdrew to the west bank of the Rhine. Something had been drawing people to this place for millennia. Would I be able to discover what? Who knows? That there was a very special ambience about this place, I had no doubt at all, and I was determined to investigate further.

Konrad von Staufen, the half brother of the Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa was the first *Pfalzgraf bei Rhein* or Count Palatine of the Rhine.

The name Heidelberg is first mentioned in 1196, and some 18 years later in 1214, the title Count Palatine of the Rhine passed to Ludwig I of Bavaria, a member of the Wittelsbach family. It is this family which plays the prominent part in this article. One of their members, the Holy Roman Emperor Ludwig IV the Bavarian, whom we met in the December 2000 edition of the *Rosicrucian Beacon*, who had briefly ruled the Palatinate, decided to split the Palatinate from the Wittelsbach Duchy of Bavaria to which it had belonged. And so in 1351 Emperor Ludwig IV elevated his nephew of the Palatinate line of the Wittelsbachs to the title of *Kurfürst* or Prince-Elector of the Palatinate.

It was also at this time that the confrontation with the Habsburg family started, something which was to play an important part in the main section of this story some 300 years in the future. Following the Golden Bull of 1356, the Prince-Elector of the Palatinate, who was given the hereditary titles of *Reichstruchseß* or Lord High Steward and *Reichsvikar* or Imperial Vicar, had become one of the most powerful nobles in the Holy Roman Empire.

## Holy Roman Empire

What, exactly, was this title *Kurfürst* or Prince-Elector? In theory, the Holy Roman Emperor was elected by an electoral college of seven princes of the empire (Prince-

**The name Heidelberg is first mentioned in 1196 and some 18 years later in 1214.**

Electors), some of them ecclesiastics like the archbishops of Cologne, Mainz and Trier, while the rest were powerful secular lords. Being part of this electoral-college made the Prince-Electors very powerful people within Europe. With their hands firmly on the European levers of power, and being blessed with hereditary secular and ecclesiastical ownership of vast tracts of land and towns stretching from the Rhine river to the Upper Palatinate (in northern Bavaria), the Prince-Electors were second only to the Holy Roman Emperors themselves in dignity, power and prestige.

In 1618 the Holy Roman Empire was one of the largest realms in Europe, encompassing all of Germany, the Kingdom of Bohemia together with Moravia, Silesia and Lusatia (Poland), the Austrian territories, the Netherlands and parts of northern Italy. It stretched from the Baltic and North Sea over the Alps to the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. Although the main language of the Imperial government, administration





*Prince-Elector Otto Heinrich, a member of the Wittelsbach dynasty was Duke of Pfalz-Neuburg from 1505 to 1559 and Prince Elector of the Palatinate from 1556 to 1559. He was a son of Ruprecht, Count Palatine, third son of Philipp, Elector Palatine; and of Elizabeth of Bavaria-Landshut, daughter of George of Bavaria.*

and justice was High German, the Empire included speakers of the Dutch, French, Italian, German, Polish and Czech languages.

## Prince-Elector Otto Heinrich

*He was a Renaissance prince who personified his era like no other. Lover of books and all things beautiful, he was a scholarly debater, builder and collector, and stormed the very heavens themselves.*

The Duchy of Pfalz-Neuburg was created in 1505. It was created from the Wittelsbach territories north of the Danube for Otto Heinrich and Philipp, the sons of Ruprecht of the Palatinate, whose father was the Prince-Elector. Otto Heinrich, usually known by the contraction Ottheinrich, was driven out of his tiny dukedom by the Habsburg emperor in 1546. Having good reason to hate the Habsburgs, he became Prince-Elector of the Palatinate 10 years later.

Although Ottheinrich possessed a natural curiosity about alchemical and astrological medicine, his interest may have been spurred by the politico-religious unrest that gripped the Palatinate, particularly in the mid 16<sup>th</sup>

century. A recent study of patronage at Protestant German courts during the early modern period suggests that princes turned to alchemy and the occult to realise their own political and economic ambitions. Ottheinrich's lifestyle, as well as the prevailing political situation, beset him with health and financial problems. As a result, he was captivated by Paracelsus' *Lapis philosophorum* (alchemy), which was thought to restore good health, and the alchemical application of his ideas, namely, the transmutation of base metals into gold. In addition to his interest in alchemical writings, Ottheinrich had a long-standing curiosity regarding astrology and other arcane arts, and some twenty years before he became Prince-Elector for example, he had consulted astrologers concerning favourable days to conduct political meetings.

Ottheinrich was interested in alchemy to the extent that he actively participated in experiments. He had also actually met Paracelsus, whom he admired greatly. With his court fast becoming a centre of Neoplatonism, Ottheinrich was an avid collector of Paracelsian manuscripts, which he kept at his castle at Neuburg on the Danube, which became a centre for Paracelsian research after the latter's death. Paracelsus, who had been at university in Heidelberg, had visited Neuburg in 1525. It was his colleague, Hans Kilian, who became the Prince-Elector's chief alchemist around 1565. However, it was the court physician of another Wittelsbach, Prince Ernst von Wittelsbach, the Prince-Elector-Archbishop of Cologne, who had these manuscripts published in Basel, Switzerland in 1589-1590.

During Ottheinrich's reign as Prince-Elector of the Palatinate (1556-1559), he had built the *Ottheinrichsbau* in the Residenz at Heidelberg, now considered to be one of the most beautiful Renaissance palaces north of the Alps. His personal library included books on alchemy, astrology, astronomy, architecture, geometry, mathematics, medicine and art. He also possessed copies

**Ottheinrich was interested in alchemy to the extent that he actively participated in experiments.**

of Plato's *Dialogues*, as well as works by Julius Caesar and Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*. He sent his agents as far as England and Spain to seek out old books to be copied or bought for his collection, which he then transferred to Heidelberg when he became Prince-Elector in 1556.

The Prince-Electors of the Palatinate based in Heidelberg, adopted Lutheranism in the 1530s and Calvinism in the 1550s. When the senior branch of the family died out in 1559, with the death of Ottheinrich,





The High School at Heidelberg in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century

The logo of the Ruprecht Karl Heidelberg University

1518 made a lasting impact, and his adherents among the masters and scholars soon became the leading Reformationists in Southwest Germany. With the Palatinate's turn to the Reformed faith, in 1558 Ottheinrich converted the university into a Calvinist institution, transforming it into one of the leading, if not the leading university in the Empire. As the 16<sup>th</sup> century was passing, Humanism took its place beside Calvinism as a predominant school of thought; and figures like Paul Schede, Jan Gruter, Martin Opitz and Matthäus Merian taught at

the Electorate passed to one of his relatives, Friedrich III, a staunch Calvinist. Thereafter the Palatinate became one of the major centres of Calvinism in Europe, supporting Calvinist rebellions in both the Netherlands and France. It is strange then, that within the stifling strictures of this strict form of Protestantism, people as open-minded as the Rosicrucians would have been attracted to Heidelberg..., but that is precisely what happened.

the university. It was now attracting scholars from all over the continent and soon developed into a cultural and academic centre. However, with the beginning of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), the intellectual and fiscal wealth of the university declined.

## Heidelberg University

*After my musings on the Philosophenweg, I walked down the steep slope of the Schlangenberg (Snake Way) and crossed the river Neckar by the Karl-Theodor Bridge, usually known as the Old Bridge (Alte Brücke.) The university lies at the heart of the old town, but to get there I had to pass by the Heiliggeistkirche or Church of the Holy Spirit, in the old Market Place, which had been not only a repository of the earliest library in Heidelberg, but also the last resting place of many of its Prince-Electors.* Ruprecht I, the very first Prince-Elector of the Palatinate, had been wealthy and powerful enough to establish the oldest university in present-day Germany in 1386, known today as the Ruprecht-Karl University. The first lecture was held there on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1386. The university provided faculties for the study of philosophy, theology, law and medicine, and became the third most important university in the German-speaking world after Prague and Vienna. Over time it became a centre for theologians and law experts from all over the Holy Roman Empire and soon became a hub for independent thinkers, eventually developing into a stronghold of Humanism.

Martin Luther's disputation at Heidelberg in April



The noted Moravian Rosicrucian, Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670) studied theology at Heidelberg University in 1613-1614.



Many refugees from France and the Low Countries had fled persecution and settled in the Palatinate, and this had a profound effect on the University of Heidelberg. For more than 50 years the university

**Many refugees from France and the Low Countries had fled persecution and settled in the Palatinate.**

became one of the most international universities in Europe. A whole series of brilliant French, Italian and Dutch professors contributed to the fame of the university, and the presence of so many outstanding foreign scholars and the influx of new ideas, created an intellectual fervour. In 1605, Heidelberg was the first European university to have chairs of Arabic history and philology. Intellectuals from all over Europe brought many different ideas with them. Here then, I was beginning to understand what may have drawn the early Rosicrucians to this city of academic excellence.

The noted Moravian Rosicrucian, Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670) studied theology at Heidelberg University in 1613-1614. He was there in time to see the triumphal arrival of Friedrich V and his new wife Elizabeth Stewart in Heidelberg following their wedding, after they had sailed down the Rhine and into the river Neckar from Holland. In later life he was to travel to the courts of Queen Christina in Sweden, then in 1648-1650 to Britain and afterwards to the court of Transylvania, after an invitation from the widow of Prince George I Rákóczi.

## Bibliotheca Palatine

*After the introduction of the printing-press, which Sir Francis Bacon said had "changed the whole face and state of things throughout the world," by the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, the German book market was being flooded annually by hundreds of new books and pamphlets.*

The *Bibliotheca Palatina* or Library of the Palatinate was one of the largest libraries in Europe. It was housed mainly in the *Heiliggeistkirche*, but there was also a library building within the *Residenz* itself, built by Ludwig V. In 1622, during the Thirty Years' War, the whole library was carried off by the Imperial commander Field Marshall Count von Tilly and then transported to Rome, where it still forms part of the Vatican Library. At that time the *Bibliotheca Palatina* contained almost 10,000 works. The works confiscated included not only the volumes of the various libraries of Heidelberg University, but also the personal collections of the Prince-Electors and the collection of Paracelsian

manuscripts. The extensiveness of the collection and the uniqueness of many of its books attest to the importance of Heidelberg as a centre of learning during the later Middle Ages and the early modern era.

Many medical manuscripts in the *Bibliotheca Palatina* were collected by three generations of Prince-Electors: Philipp der Aufrichtige (Philip the Upright, ruled 1476-1508), Ludwig V (ruled 1508-1544), and Ottheinrich (ruled 1556-1559). Their initiatives reflected prevailing contemporary attitudes toward the medical arts, and what might be considered today as pseudo-medical sciences and shaped the tradition of medical manuscript collecting and copying in Heidelberg in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, with Electoral impetus and support, Heidelberg became a locus for the pursuit of alchemical remedies and experiments by the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century.

*In part 2, we will consider the story of Friedrich and Elizabeth, the Winter King and Queen, and their connections with the early Rosicrucian movement. We will look at the new world that opened up for Europe, leading directly to the scientific explosion that has culminated in our own times, though not in the way that the early Rosicrucians expected!*



*The Bibliotheca Palatina or Library of the Palatinate was one of the largest libraries in Europe. It was housed mainly in the Heiliggeistkirche pictured here.*



# The Three Refuges

A Buddhist Chant

by Charles Tease, FRC

*Buddham saranam gacchami  
Dhammam saranam gacchami  
Sangham saranam gacchami*

**W**HAT WE IN THE WEST CALL Buddhism is more properly known as *Buddha Dharma*, the “Path of Awakening.” The historical Buddha, Prince Siddhartha Gautama, lived in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Renouncing all his worldly goods, he spent 40 years searching for enlightenment. Having achieved this, for the rest of his



life he taught a proven way for others to follow. The Buddha stressed that each individual was responsible for their own life and should not look to a superior Being to take that responsibility away from them.

Buddhists have many chants in which they voice the principles of their beliefs. It is well known how effective the human voice is in creating the right mental and physical condition for spiritual work. The *Three Refuges* chant quoted vocally expresses the aspirant's desire to approach the heart of their beliefs. Also known as the "Three Jewels," it can be taken as a basic definition of what a Buddhist is. The language above is Pāli, in which the earliest known Buddhist texts were written.

Translation of words from Sanskrit-derived languages into English can pose some difficulty although the student of philology can soon identify some correspondences in the Latin roots of words, indicating a common ancestry in the ancient past. The Refuges are *Buddha*, *Dhamma* (Dharma) and *Sangha*. The "m" endings denote the accusative case in Pāli, which has eight cases as opposed to six in Latin and four in modern English, where they are becoming rather confused. Changing the word order, the translation of the above is as follows:-

*I go to the Buddha as refuge.  
I go to the Dhamma as refuge.  
I go to the Sangha as refuge.*

A synonym for "refuge" is "sanctuary" from the Latin word *sanctum*, a sacred place, which possibly expresses the spiritual aspect a bit better. It's said that the Buddha is large enough to encircle the universe and small enough to fit in your heart. And that sanctuary is literally at the heart of the teachings of all the great spiritual leaders. No good looking up to the skies; the kingdom of Heaven is within! Let us now look at the individual lines of the chant.

***Buddham saranam gacchami: I seek refuge in the Buddha.*** The historical Buddha proclaimed that anyone could become a Buddha, an enlightened being, by following his way. All religions attempt to teach us to see the light and turn away from darkness, but Socrates' simile of the cave gives an idea of the reaction we in the West can expect from the world if we do make some progress into the light.



*"They would say that his visit to the upper world had ruined his sight, and that the ascent was not worth even attempting."*<sup>1</sup> On the other hand Buddhists are positively encouraged to follow the Way, and the road has been charted with all the joys and pitfalls clearly set out.

***Dhammam saranam gacchami: I seek refuge in the Path.***

The word *Dhamma* (Dharma in Sanskrit) has several meanings. It is the body of teachings, the *sutras* given by the Buddha. It's the pattern set out by him, the vibratory rate we might say, at which we can approach the portals of enlightenment without suffering the fate of Icarus, (*Sampaati* in the Indian tradition), who flew too close to the sun. It's also the path

to be travelled, the way of the mystic. Along the way the student must burn off all the impurities in their thoughts, actions and deeds to fuel their progress. Nobody else can do it for them.

***Sangham saranam gacchami: I seek refuge in the enlightened brotherhood.*** The *Sangha* is the body of Buddhist monks and nuns living the life and studying the teachings in gradual progression towards enlightenment, the community of disciples of the Buddha. In a wider sense it's everyone who has entered on the Path.

## The Rosicrucian Égrégoire

Rosicrucians are familiar with the concept of *Sangha* and have a word for their own version of it. This is the Égrégoire of our Order, which has been defined as "a hierarchical expression of group consciousness." We are told that when a group of people come together for a common purpose, the resultant group consciousness is much greater than the sum of the individual contributions

This is one of the great advantages arising out of attending an affiliated body. Much more than that, the Égrégoire is the essence of every Rosicrucian who ever existed, and is available to each of us for attunement and guidance. And that really is a worthy refuge!

### Endnote

1. Plato, *The Republic*, Part 7.



# William Blake

## Painter, Poet & Mystic

by William H McKegg, FRC

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.*

-- William Blake: opening stanza from  
*Auguries of Innocence* (c. 1800-03)



*Self-Portrait (c.1802)*

**A**MONG THE MANY FAMOUS PAINTERS and poets of Rosicrucian ancestry who flared across the artistic and literary horizons in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries William Blake stands out as one of the most illuminated minds through whom Cosmic wisdom flowed. In his ability to symbolise great truths in art, William Blake is without peer. His paintings and poems revealed to men and women of his time what the esoteric philosophy of Jacob Boehme had revealed to 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Like other great mystics who wrote inspiring works to assist a struggling humanity out of the dull rut of tradition and bigotry, Blake was little understood and never achieved the just fame he deserved during his lifetime. But soon

after his death he was recognised as a genius and today he stands high among the list of England's immortal minds.

Born in London in 1757, he was the second of five children. His father was a hosier, and fairly prosperous. At the age of eight, Blake beheld beautiful, strange visions. Nature appeared to him not in her usual guise but in the Royal Splendour of her True Self. He was sternly ridiculed by his elders and others when he related to them what he could see. And once running in to his mother to tell her he had just seen a vision of the prophet Ezekiel standing under a tree, he received not her approbation for gaining such an honour but a sound thrashing for being too imaginative. However, his ardent desire to create finally caused his parents to permit him to take drawing lessons.



Later on he was apprenticed to James Basire, an engraver to the Society of Antiquaries. Basire sent young Blake to Westminster Abbey to sketch. There, in Edward the Confessor's Chapel in the Holy of Holies in Westminster, he copied the heads of deceased kings and queens of old. It was here too that he drew his first picture of importance "Joseph of Arimathea, Among the Rocks of Albion."

## Establishing His Art

Blake was greatly attracted to the story of the Holy Grail, to the magician Merlin and King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Between the ages of twelve and twenty he wrote his first poems concerning them. Eventually branching out as an artist, he was urged to paint in oils. He tried it for a while but soon discarded it as being inadequate to his style, saying that oil paintings "sank," taking away the brilliance and colour he sought. "Colouring," Blake declared, "does not depend on where the colours are put, but on where the lights and darks are put. And all depends on form or outline, on where that is put. Where that is wrong, the colouring never can be right."

His bold assertions and odd views incited the antagonism of various established artists, but they had to admit that his creations possessed a profound beauty of colour and symbolic vision. Frederick Tatham, the friend of his later days and his biographer, said: "Like his thoughts, his paintings seem to be inspired by fairies, and his colours look as if they were the bloom dropped from the brilliant wings of the spirits of the prism."

At twenty-four, Blake fell in love with a young girl who did not however return his affections. Taken ill, he went into the country to regain his health and there stayed with the Boucher family. He met their daughter Catherine, whose sympathy and care attracted him to her. A year later they were married and a devoted union of ideal beauty existed between the two until Blake's transition to the higher realm [death]. Four years later his wife passed away.

## Imagination

Blake asserted to his friends, among who were some of the most famous men of his time, that he had the power of bringing his

imagination before his mind's eye so clearly that he could not go wrong in his designs. He also said he was often the companion of spirits who taught and advised him. His exquisite, hauntingly beautiful painting of "The Vision of Jacob's Ladder" reveals in an instant to every true mystic what Blake was referring to. He similarly declared that he had the power of calling upon the deceased from the past, and to converse with them about their painting methods. His own creations compared strangely enough, with those of the Cinquecento (16<sup>th</sup> century) period. He held the works of Raphael and Michelangelo in deep veneration.

As a mystic, Blake had revealed to him the Divine Wonders of the Universe and the secrets of Nature. Once,

**Blake lived with complete indifference to the glitter of material wealth.**

when a prospective patron commented that his designs were a bit too unreal, Blake replied: "The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in the way. Some see Nature all ridicule and deformity, and by these I shall not regulate my proportion: and some scarce see Nature at all. But to the eyes of the man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself. As a man is, so he sees. To me this world is all one continued vision of fancy, or imagination, and I feel flattered when I am told so."

"Why," he later stated, "is the Bible more entertaining and instructive than any other book? Is it not because they are addressed to the imagination, which is spiritual sensation, and but immediately to the understanding or reason? Consider what Lord Bacon says: 'Sense sends over to imagination before reason has judged, and reason sends over to imagination before the decree can be acted.' I am happy to find a great majority of fellow mortals who can elucidate my visions, and particularly they have been elucidated by children who have taken a greater delight in contemplating my picture than I even hoped."

## Indifference to Worldly Wealth

Blake had one horror in life..., the fear of wealth, which he habitually declared, "destroys creative art." He was neither rich nor poor, and those who were closest to him affirmed that he always appeared to have sufficient on which to live and make himself and his wife happy and contented.



The earliest engraving that scholars can confidently attribute to Blake reflects his interest in early British history and legend. He later reworked and reprinted it with the title Joseph of Arimathea among the Rocks of Albion and dated it 1773, the second year of his apprenticeship.





*Blake's portrayal of Jacob's Ladder, the dream that the biblical patriarch Jacob envisions during his flight from his brother Esau as described in the Book of Genesis 28: 11-19.*

They were both known to be very charitable, never failing in kindness, and always having some money to spare for anyone greatly in need of it.

Blake lived as many mystics before and since have lived..., with complete indifference to the glitter of material wealth. But he was never understood; in fact, many regarded him as mad. A person prompted only by idle curiosity would get a bewildering reply to any question he put to him, which confirmed his suspicion that Blake was insane. But, to a soul eager for knowledge and enlightenment, Blake showed himself to be a font of profound wisdom. His life was lived in this world but he was not of it..., sharing his angelic visions on paper and in his written words, for the few during his lifetime who knew him for the great mystic he was.

### Messengers from Heaven

When his youngest brother died, Blake declared that he had appeared to him one night and disclosed a method whereby he could invent and put to use what he later called "Illuminated Printing." "I am not ashamed, afraid or averse to tell you," he wrote to a friend, "what ought to be told; that I am under the direction of messengers from heaven, daily and nightly."

All who aspire to a life of sanctity and closeness to God, will at least once, go through a period of despair..., a seventh period or dark night of the soul. Blake's mystical pictures and poetry met with ridicule from critics and

those jealous of his prowess, and this rejection of his artistic efforts eventually led him to his darkest hour and his world appeared to crumble about him. He left London and placed his talents at the disposal of a rather exacting friend who had an eye more on financial gain than artistic furtherance. Much against his grain, Blake made miniatures. He deserted "imitative" art, which is ever the highest, for "imitative" art, which, though possibly more lucrative, carries with it no satisfaction, no worth.

"I say this much to you," he wrote to one of his most intimate friends, "knowing that you will not make bad use of it. 'But it is a fact too true that, if I had only depended on mortal things, both myself and my wife must have been lost. I shall leave everyone in this country astonished at my patience and forbearance of injuries upon injuries; and I do assure you that, if I could have returned to London a month after my arrival here, I should have done so. 'But I was commanded by my spiritual friends to bear all and be silent, and to go through all without murmuring.'"

It would appear from Blake's inference that he was passing through a great test. Rosicrucian mystics know this period as the "dark night of the soul," a period through which he was passing and from which he emerged, shining with an inner light that burned all the more brilliantly after its temporary inactivity. Soon he was back in London where he renewed his former life and work.

### The Wonders Within Man

Blake was aware of the wonders within the human being. He was eager to enlighten others by revealing the powers they could attain from within themselves if they would but put to use various simple, natural laws.

"Oh! What wonders are the children of men!" he wrote. "Would to God that they would consider it, that they would consider their spiritual life, regardless of that faint shadow called natural life, and that they would promote each other's spiritual labours, each according to its rank.... If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up till he sees all things through narrow clinks of his cavern."

### The True Spiritual Life

Imagination was the word Blake used when alluding to true spiritual life. "I know of no other Christianity, and of no Gospel than the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination: Imagination, the real and eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow, and in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies, when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more."



## Transition



In 1788 Blake began publishing his own poetry, using the elaborate technique of "illuminated printing" which was revealed to him in a dream by his younger brother Robert, who had died of consumption (tuberculosis). With the exception of the early "Poetical Sketches" which were set in ordinary type, all of Blake's books were printed by this laborious process in which both handwritten text as well as drawings were etched on stereotype plates.

Blake hand coloured each sheet according to the mood of the moment, with the result that no two copies of a Blake book are exactly alike. His books are similar to 15<sup>th</sup> century blockbooks, so called because for each page both letters and images were carved from the block rather than being printed from movable type. His printing was done in one colour only, here a bright red-brown, and the pages were then painted, perhaps by Blake himself, in watercolours and gold. He kept the plates and reprinted his books over a long period of time, probably according to demand.

Illustrated here is Blake's illuminated book, *Songs of Innocence* (1789), a collection of short lyric poems and their accompanying designs. Deceptively simple at first reading, the *Songs* have affinities with 18<sup>th</sup> century children's literature but go beyond the traditional children's book to question some of the unexamined assumptions of adult society.

While his mystic paintings may have appeared odd to the average person, they certainly appealed to those who sought spiritual Light, and were regarded with high esteem by some of the greatest artists of the time. Both Romney and Fuseli were ardent admirers of Blake's paintings, as Coleridge and Wordsworth were admirers of his poetry. He read books in their original languages, which he taught himself..., and when he was past sixty he read Dante, though before then he knew no Italian.

Shortly before his death, while in bed, he executed his most distinguished picture "The Ancient of Days Striking the First Circle of the Earth." It was suggested to him by the lines in Book VII of "Paradise Lost" beginning with "He took the golden Compasses..."

Blake spoke calmly of the approach of his transition to a higher realm and did not consider it as a "death" in anything but name. We are told that the happiest and most joyous period of his life was the hour before he passed away. He sang in a manner so beautiful that those who heard it were held moved beyond words by its mystic import.

"His bursts of gladness made the room peal again." Tatham relates. "The walls rang and resounded with the beatific symphony. It was a prelude to the hymns of saints. It was an overture to the choir of heaven. It was a chant for the response of angels. Then his spirit departed like the sighing of a gentle breeze."

Another friend wrote of him: "He was more like the ancient pattern of virtue than I ever expected to see in this world; he feared nothing so much as being rich, lest he should lose his spiritual riches. He was at the same time the most sublime in his expressions, with the simplicity and gentleness of a child."

The predominant truth William Blake expounded throughout the sixty-nine years of his life may be summed up in one of his own lines: "Nature has no Outline, but Imagination has. Nature has no Tune, but Imagination has. Nature has no Supernatural and dissolves: Imagination is Eternity."



Blake's depiction of the "Ancient of Days" described in chapter seven of the Book of Daniel.



# THE MAKING OF A ROSICRUCIAN

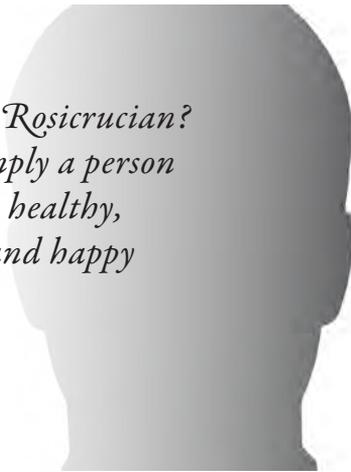
*by Dennis Kwiatkowski, FRC  
English Grand Master Emeritus*



**W**HAT MAKES A PERSON A REAL Rosicrucian? Perhaps by the end of this article, that question, or at least one rather important aspect of it, will be answered. But before we get to the answer, let us ask an easier and somewhat related question. Why do people join the Rosicrucian Order? It is fairly well known that the membership of the Order is comprised of people from all walks of life as well as from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. In addition, members of the Order come from the widest



*What makes a real Rosicrucian?  
Is a Rosicrucian simply a person  
who is more psychic, healthy,  
successful, peaceful and happy  
than most?*



variety of religious settings and even include those who consider themselves non-sectarian in nature.

Therefore, it probably comes as no surprise that the reasons members have for joining the Order are as varied and unique as the individual members themselves. However, many basic reasons tend to show up frequently on membership applications when prospective members are asked why they wish to affiliate with the Order. Specifically, members expect to “get” something from Rosicrucian membership. Some are drawn to our advertised concept of the “Mastery of Life” which is usually interpreted as meaning a way to achieve greater success. Others are drawn to the possibility of developing unusual psychic abilities and powers. For some it is the hope of creating or maintaining radiant health and increased vitality by using the principles contained in the studies. Others hope the Order will help them resolve nagging and perplexing problems which have hounded them throughout life by their recurring and inextricable nature, while still others desire to increase their spiritual unfoldment and happiness.

For each person the reason is different. For each of us, even the attraction to the Order is different. Some read the Order’s promotional material and after considering it, expect the Order to provide them with what they feel is necessary. After these people join and begin to study, they look for the means to satisfy this expectation. Others are strangely drawn to the Order as though by an intangible magnetic pull. Once these people join and begin to study, they often feel they have finally “come home” and have found much of what they were looking for in life. It is not as though these people place the Order before the excitement and importance of life’s experiences. But for them, the Order fills a great need which seems to be linked with their very reason for being.

And to be sure for either group of people, the Order

does indeed provide them with what they desire. In studying and applying the teachings, their psychic ability will be developed, their health will improve in a variety of ways, and they will have the means to manifest material success. They can then achieve the answer to their problems and thereby unfold spiritually. To the degree that a member considers and applies the studies, be it lesser or greater, to that degree will a member achieve the various results just mentioned. The Rosicrucian system really does work. The results are inevitable, and the overwhelming majority of our members have had sufficient demonstration of the principles to justify their reliance on the system. Furthermore, in helping to develop

our connection with the Inner Self, the Rosicrucian teachings encourage the expression and flowering of our individual innate skills, skills granted us by Divine Mind, by Divine decree to assist us in our unique life purpose. The expression of our skills, talents and abilities in the fulfilment of our life purpose is one of the prime reasons we have incarnated.

Yet, this does not answer our initial question: What makes a real Rosicrucian? Is a Rosicrucian simply a person who is more psychic, healthy, successful, peaceful and happy than most? Is a Rosicrucian more kind, tolerant,

**To the degree that a member considers and applies the studies, be it lesser or greater, to that degree will a member achieve the various results expected.**

confident, giving, and understanding than the average person, as many members and officers have written in various articles? Well, yes, of course, all these words describe the true Rosicrucian and we could add a score of other exemplary, descriptive words, all of which would be true. But none of this, to my mind, really seems to answer the question.

### **A Rosicrucian Promise**

Perhaps we can turn to the teachings themselves to help us find the answer. In the Rosicrucian studies a promise is made to the advancing student. The promise is this: *“You are about to learn how to command all nature. God alone will be your inspiration. The Philosophers will be your equals. The highest intelligences will be ambitious to obey your desires. The demons will not dare to approach the place where you are, your voice will make them tremble in the depths of the abyss, and all the elements will deem themselves happy to administer to your pleasures.”* These are



powerful words, and this is a powerful promise. These words describe a bold and invincible character.

How many of us feel we are equal to the promise just mentioned? How many of us feel that the invincible person described in the promise is us? As Rosicrucian students, this is what we have been promised by the Order. If we, as students, have diligently studied and applied the teachings, why have we not manifested the abilities mentioned in the promise? I would like

**The Rosicrucian Order exists to abolish ignorance, superstition and fear.**

to submit to you that many students have developed through their application of the studies and work in the Order those necessary abilities described in the promise, but they don't know it. Far from making the demons tremble in the abyss, their time is spent wrestling with their own personal demons, both real and imagined. What then is the problem?

### Fear

The answer, in a single word, is *fear*. The Rosicrucian Order exists to abolish ignorance, superstition and fear, and most Rosicrucians have made real progress in ridding themselves of ignorance and superstition. But how many can say they have overcome fear?

Fear can take many forms and manifest in many different ways. There are the obvious fears which each of us easily recognises as our fears, and which we perhaps plan to work on some day. Fear can also take many disguises. Anger is frequently disguised fear. Avoidance is frequently disguised fear. How many of us have ever stopped to consider that our avoiding a particular task or a course of action which is good for us may be something that is rooted in a deep-seated fear? The anticipation of change can also produce fear. We live in an era of intense change, and changes will continue to occur in our society at an even faster pace in coming years. So we will certainly be exposed to the conditions which can cause fear.

In speaking of fear, I am not referring to the natural fear or caution one experiences in facing a threatening or dangerous situation. Rather I am referring to the types of fears which hold back our progress in life. Fear is a real burden, for once a fear is established in the mind, it

takes over and dominates us. It also produces physical effects, usually manifesting at the very least as a reduced level of "aliveness." In fact, it been stated that if we consider a wide variety of conditions, including a lack of health, vitality, enthusiasm, and energy..., among others, we will certainly find fear.

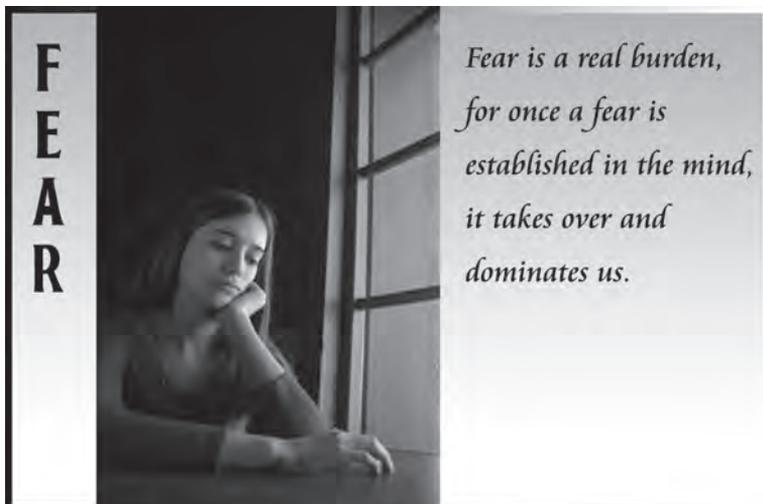
Fear has also been described as the absence of love, and a lack of awareness of what actually is. The nature of God and the Cosmic is that of pure love. How can we employ the principles and power of divine energy or love, how can we command the forces of nature as mentioned in the Rosicrucian promise if we are functioning in a state of fear? Most of us have many more fears than we commonly believe, and a careful reflection on our fears can often produce surprising results and is well worthwhile.

### Facing Our Fears

Now, being a kindly, tolerant, compassionate Rosicrucian is fine. The teachings themselves and our attunements with the Cosmic will bring out this quality in us quite naturally. But when it comes to our fears, we have to face them on our own. We can choose to face our fears or to back down from them. But if we do back down, we weaken our resolve. Each time we continue to back away from a fear, we weaken our ability to face it until the fear itself paralyzes us.

Not that facing fear is an easy thing. To avoid facing our fears, many of us have surrounded ourselves with strong walls of protection. When we finally realise that we no longer need the walls and that it is better for us to come face to face with the fear, we are sometimes in for a surprise. We have built up secure walls, and the surprise is that they sometimes do not come down easily.

We may also experience stress, headaches, queasiness,



dread, etc., in facing our fears. And yet that does not really matter. The discomfort is only incidental to our facing and coming to terms with ourselves and our universe. While I said earlier that we must face on our own, the truth of the matter is that we are never alone. We are divine in origin, we have an inner core of sanctity. The Cosmic is always with us, and our imaginings of what it would be like to face our fears are always much worse, sometimes monstrously so, than the actual facing of the fear itself.

To answer our initial question, the real Rosicrucian is a person who is honest with him or herself, and agrees to face each fear and come to terms with it. Our purpose in life as incarnate beings is to experience all facets of life, and from those experiences to grow the concept of the Divine that our outer self can hold. All life grows and develops, not by being inert or complacent, but by being stimulated and challenged. Fear is not a negative thing; it is simply a challenge demanding a response from our being.

Meeting the challenge..., in other words facing and overcoming our fears, is supremely liberating. It allows us to employ the unlimited power of the Cosmic mentioned in the Rosicrucian promise. If I could wish one thing for you today, it would be that this discussion of facing one's fears plants a seed within your being that will continue to

**Facing and overcoming our fears, is supremely liberating.**

grow and bother you, annoy you and nag until you face or come to terms with your own private fears.

The nature of the Cosmic is love, unlimited potential, freedom, expression, happiness and fulfilment. The only thing that stands in the way of our own happiness and fulfilment, the only thing that determines whether our potential manifests and the demons cower beneath us in the abyss, or whether they overshadow our lives, is how we decide to come to terms with our fears.

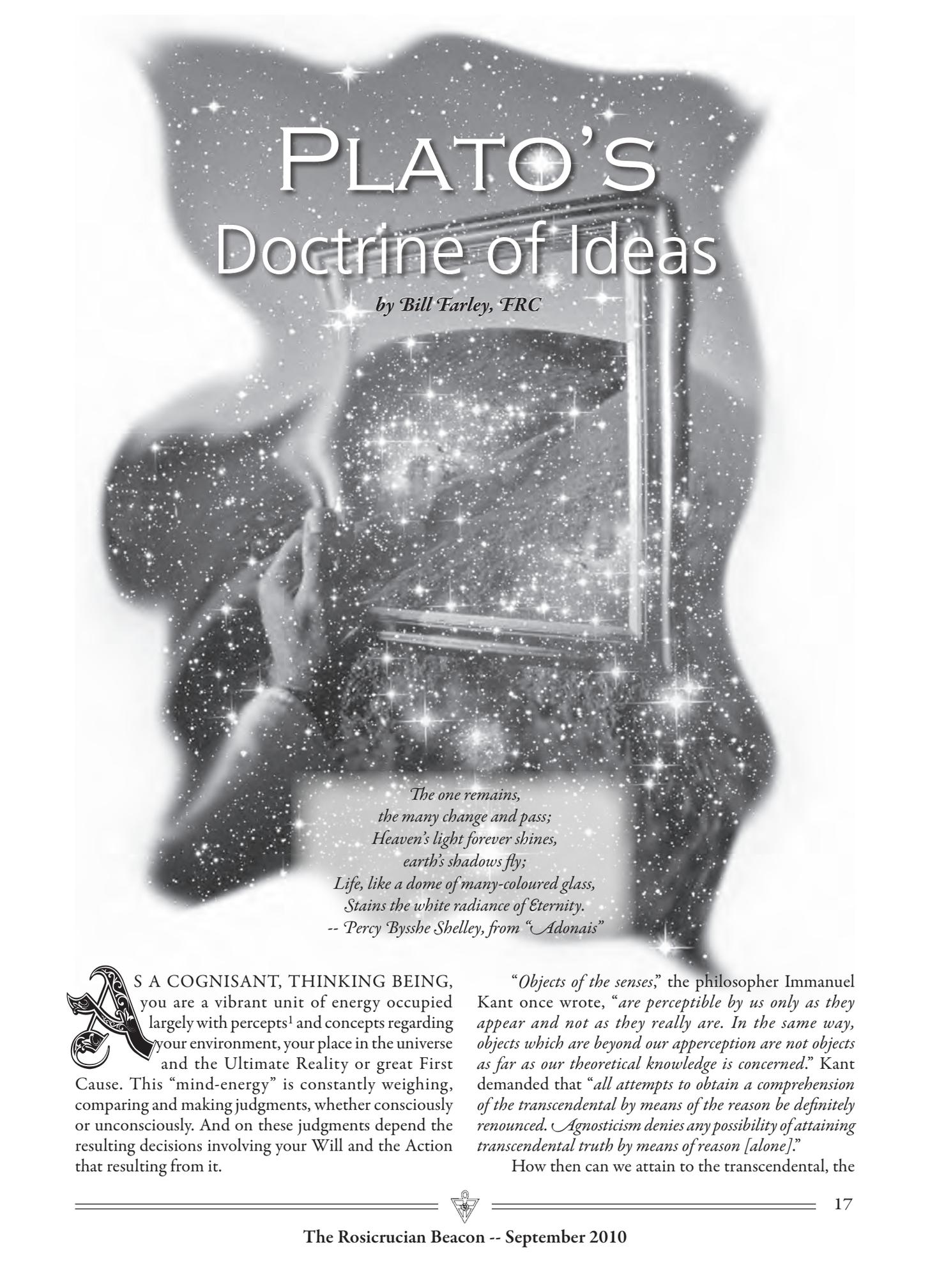
# Imagination

Imagination is like the sun. The sun has a light which is not tangible, but which nevertheless may set a house on fire; but the imagination is like a sun in man acting in that place to which its light is directed. Man is what he thinks. If he thinks fire, he is fire; if he thinks war, then he will cause war; it all depends merely on that the whole of his imagination becomes an entire sun; namely, that he wholly imagines that which he wills.

The spirit is the master, imagination the tool, and the body the plastic material.

-- Paracelsus, 1493 - 1541



A hand is shown holding a glowing crystal ball. The crystal ball is filled with a dense field of bright, multi-colored stars, creating a vibrant, ethereal effect. The background is a dark, starry night sky, suggesting a connection to the cosmos and the 'Doctrine of Ideas' mentioned in the title. The overall image has a soft, dreamlike quality with a white, misty border.

# PLATO'S Doctrine of Ideas

by *Bill Farley, FRC*

*The one remains,  
the many change and pass;  
Heaven's light forever shines,  
earth's shadows fly;  
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.  
-- Percy Bysshe Shelley, from "Adonais"*

**A**S A COGNISANT, THINKING BEING, you are a vibrant unit of energy occupied largely with percepts<sup>1</sup> and concepts regarding your environment, your place in the universe and the Ultimate Reality or great First Cause. This "mind-energy" is constantly weighing, comparing and making judgments, whether consciously or unconsciously. And on these judgments depend the resulting decisions involving your Will and the Action that resulting from it.

"Objects of the senses," the philosopher Immanuel Kant once wrote, "are perceptible by us only as they appear and not as they really are. In the same way, objects which are beyond our apperception are not objects as far as our theoretical knowledge is concerned." Kant demanded that "all attempts to obtain a comprehension of the transcendental by means of the reason be definitely renounced. Agnosticism denies any possibility of attaining transcendental truth by means of reason [alone]."

How then can we attain to the transcendental, the





Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) said that objects perceived by our normal senses are perceptible only as they appear and not as they really are. He also said that reason cannot be used to comprehend the transcendental (that existing outside of our normal senses).

super-physical, the real, what lies behind or above the changing phenomena of the material world? How can we sense the noumenon<sup>2</sup> behind the many manifestations of the physical world? To advanced thinkers and mystics like Socrates, Plato and Jacob Boehme, cognition of the real is immediate. Through Cosmic attunement a person can pass beyond the veil which separates the “uninitiated” from the world of Reality.

As Boehme wrote after his last Illumination: *“In a quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at a University, for I saw and knew the Being of all things, the Abyss and the Byss [sic], so that I did not only wonder but exceedingly rejoice.”* And we are told that the Buddha *“knew by direct cognition the laws behind the phenomena revealed by the senses. He perceived an ordered Universe, the smallest movement definitely caused and itself the cause of action, and he perceived that when these are understood, power follows as a necessity.”*

## Becoming

In the higher interpretation of a mystic, facts which heretofore seemed dull and lifeless take on an added lustre of wonder and achievement..., a living reality. Thought is vital and progressive, and consists of a continuous series of judgments, a constant tearing-down and building-up in the light of newer knowledge and experiences, as Hegel so ably demonstrated in his famous doctrine of “Becoming.” All scientific disciplines are simply segments of the great circle of the knowable universe, and scientists everywhere are devotedly toiling to reveal hidden treasures of knowledge..., what mystics consider to be the very laws that uphold the universe..., laws that

proceed from a primary and ultimate “First Cause.”

As the philosopher Baruch Spinoza wrote... *“We do not see the law of inverse squares, but it is there and everywhere. It was there before anything began, and will survive when all the world of things is a finished tale.”* And from the great French philosopher Henri Bergson we read: *“...reality is fundamentally a spiritual activity.”* For those who have committed themselves to lives of inner spiritual discovery, how well they understand this definition! It is, to use one of Plato’s phrases, “a priceless pearl of philosophy.” As opposed to the purely mental processes of thought, the mystic’s immediate cognition of realities is inspiring and illuminating. And *“the purpose of the mystic,”* as [the writer] Clifford Bax says, *“is the mightiest and most solemn that can ever be...; for the central aim of all mysticism is to soar out of separate personality up to the very consciousness of God.”*

In our journey toward the heights of Illumination there are many milestones; and we who are endeavouring to travel along that pathway, have realised many marvellous manifestations of psychic phenomena hitherto hidden and unsuspected. When one is able to perceive super-physical phenomena, one knows that one has made at least some progress on the Path. And this knowledge, however slight, motivates further development which will open a doorway of infinite possibilities, and may lead to the very footstool of Divinity.

## Cosmic Attunement

Plato we are told, attained that greatest of human attainments, a state of being known to modern mystics simply as “Cosmic Consciousness.” To him, ideas were real, and many who have worked through their Rosicrucian mystical studies have realised the validity of Plato’s *Doctrine of Ideas*. Up to this time, for most of us, this doctrine may have been only an interesting hypothesis, an unproven theory. But if experience is knowledge, then the experiences we have had in mounting the first steps of the Rosicrucian path have

**Through Cosmic attunement a person can pass beyond the veil which separates the “uninitiated” from the world of Reality.**

given us a clearer conception of Plato’s meaning than years of book study and philosophical speculation could otherwise have done.

Through Cosmic attunement, all the subtle forces impinging on the sensitive nerve centres of the human





*The Cosmic Garden: Through Cosmic attunement, all the subtle forces impinging on the sensitive nerve centres of the human organism give us varied and multitudinous visions of the land-beyond-the-veil, the veil which separates our objective consciousness from our subjective consciousness.*

organism give us varied and multitudinous visions of the land-beyond-the-veil, the veil which separates our objective consciousness from our subjective consciousness. Who, for example, that has been privileged to enter the Cosmic Garden can doubt that it is the archetype of all the particular manifestations of gardens on the physical plane? In that luminous garden, vibrant with architectonic and prismatic harmonies “*a light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread...; the soft sky smiles, the low wind whispers near,*” and one senses part of the divine plan of the great Cosmic Mind of the Universe.

With Cosmic attunement we are enabled to penetrate beyond the veil and sense the Ideal as opposed to the Real, which manifests on the earth plane as Actuality, or the objective phenomena of the physical world. The Idea of the Supreme Mind is creative and manifests first on the super-physical plane as thought-forms or, as Plato calls them, Ideas; and later, on the physical plane, as the objective phenomena of all the outward manifestations of nature.

## The Cosmic Mind

Plato’s *Idea* is the eternal, the ideal, the universal, the prototype, the noumenon..., and all physical phenomena are but the temporal and particular. “As above, so below,” thought is creative. Let us take a portrait painted as a concrete example of the creative power of the human mind. What is the power behind this picture? Surely not the pigment, not the canvas, not the brush..., these are but instruments in the guiding hand of the artist who brings to fruition his Idea, his idea of colour, form, proportion

and harmony, plus the personality of the sitter.

In the realm of abstract qualities or activities of the Soul such as goodness, justice, temperance, beauty, truth and so on..., for this seer of the invisible, there is a norm or pattern inherent in the human mind and deriving from the Universal Mind, against which, and with which, one judges all particular manifestations of these qualities.

These transcendental Realities or Ideas are eternal conceptions in the Cosmic Mind. And it is only by refining, by a constant process of dialectical inclusion and exclusion of definition, that we may hope to attain to an approximate comprehension thereof. This inward dialectic is the birthright of every individual, and its spokespersons are the two inner voices which are never silent, but are constantly defining, analysing, weighing, judging, accepting or rejecting, by the power of reason vouchsafed to us by the Divine Mind.

## The Human Mind

Are we not all sparks of the Divine Fire? Are we not individual souls depending upon, and drawing inspiration from, the great Oversoul of the Universe? And can we not by loving search, partake in some measure of the ineffable wisdom, and approach in thought to the intellectual beauty of perfect justice, perfect truth, and the other virtues?

In his Dialogues, Plato makes his beloved Master, Socrates, “that old gadfly who brings souls to birth,” the arbiter and judge of all the definitions of abstract qualities

**These transcendental Realities or Ideas are eternal conceptions in the Cosmic Mind.**

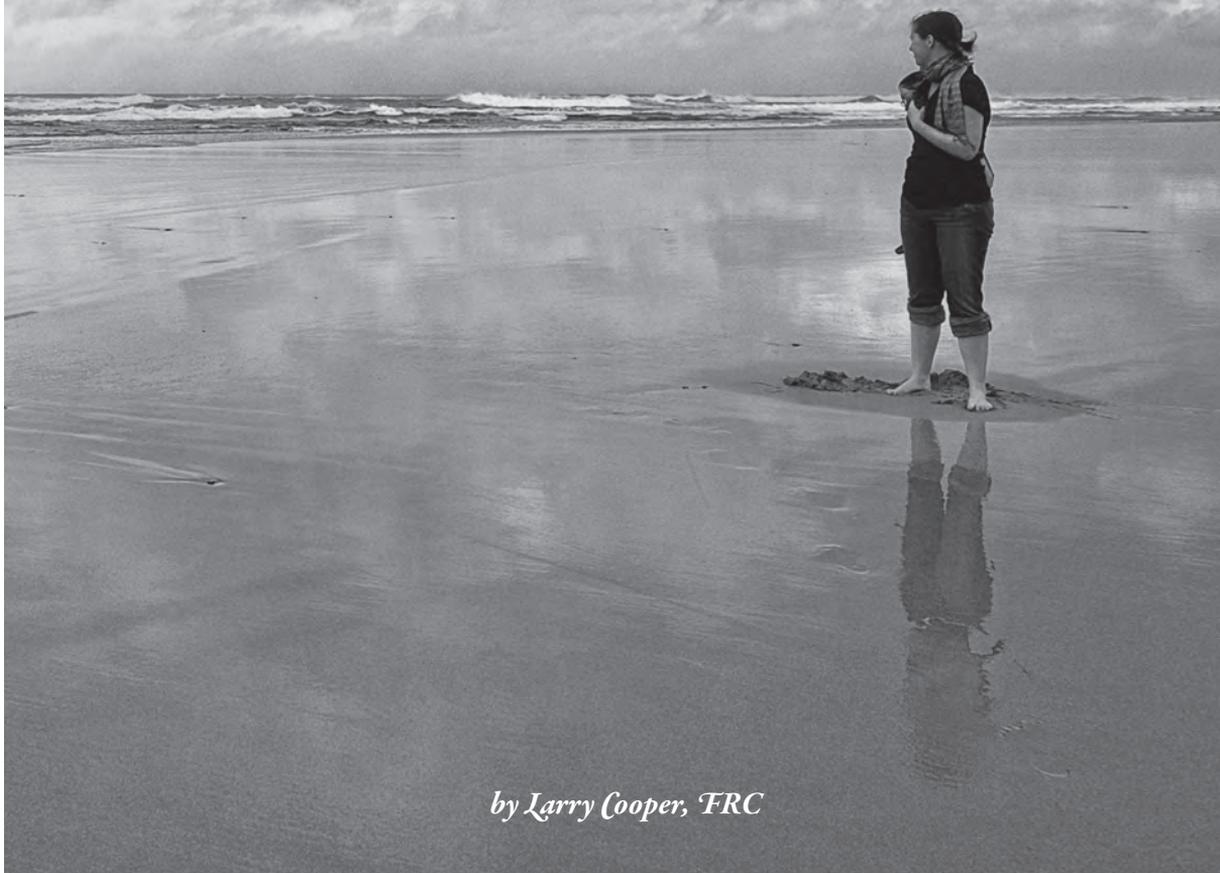
brought forward by his listeners. For Socrates, the human mind and reason are much more worthy of study than the physical world around us, and this is expressed in his famous dictum, “Know Thyself.” He himself professes to know nothing, but only to be a lover of wisdom. And he occupies himself with the eternal verities, those Ideas of all the intellectual abstractions which form the subject-matter of Plato’s Dialogues. For Plato, as for Socrates, the supreme Idea is the Idea of the Absolute Good, or God, the essential unity in-variety of all that IS.

## Endnotes

1. Percept: The representation of what is perceived; a basic component in the formation of a concept.
2. Noumenon: The intellectual conception of a thing as it is in itself, not as it is known through perception.



# Is Struggle Necessary?



*by Larry Cooper, FRC*

**T**HERE ARE TIMES WHEN EVERY sincere student of mysticism says: *“I’m tired of all this struggling. Why is there so much conflict and struggle throughout life? Would the use of artificial means such as hallucinatory drugs, biofeedback devices and so on help me to advance to the point where I would no longer need to struggle..., and at last find a deep and lasting peace?”*

Human beings, it seems, are forever seeking shortcuts to mastering the challenges that “fate” occasionally places in their paths. In trying to escape personal struggle, many have tried hallucinatory drugs and other kinds of artificial stimulants to quicken their psychic development. However, they have found out through personal tragedy that drugs are not the answer. Not only are drugs *not* the key to personal evolution...,



they are also very harmful to one's psychic being.

Yet the path of evolution is difficult, and having failed in the realm of drugs, some have experimented with biofeedback devices supposedly capable of inducing certain states of consciousness within the human brain that will lead to various desired results. It is to be noted that a device is being used, and that individuals desiring to attain particular goals need only submit to this device which, it is claimed, will do the work for them without any personal effort on their part, other than an attitude of submissiveness or passivity. They can even buy the device and use it themselves!

### A Shortcut to Evolution

Without doubt, biofeedback devices have definite medical advantages. But from a purely spiritual point of view, they amount to a shortcut to a desired state of consciousness, and hence demand less effort on the part of the aspiring mystic. Where something is gained with little or no personal effort, little true development occurs. There is no blanket ban on using artificial means to gain spiritual insight, but the stability of those insights is in grave doubt when they come with little or no effort on the part of the recipient.

The human mind and body is already a biofeedback device, and certain glands in the body already produce minute quantities of drugs similar to the psychotropic drugs so many people nowadays use. And this is quite adequate to the task of developing one's conscious

**Don't rely on artificial means of speeding up your inner progress. It may work briefly, but does not last.**

awareness of the spiritual majesty of one's inner being. True worth lies in our perpetual striving and constant efforts, and any reliance upon artificial means or mechanical devices to speed up one's progress is a delusion. We may gain new insights and have new and valuable experiences with such props, but the price is great, and we can never after that, have those experiences unaided by the props. Alone, on our own, we must struggle if we are to become the true masters we wish we were.

As far as drugs are concerned, we all know that addiction soon follows. And there is no use arguing that some drugs, like marijuana for example, do not lead to physical addiction, because this is not correct. Psychological addiction is sometimes far more insidious and difficult to overcome than physical addiction. People who rely upon the use of drugs to get their spiritual highs become addicted to those drugs, to the point in fact



*From a purely spiritual point of view, biofeedback devices amount to a shortcut to a desired state of consciousness. Less effort is required to reach those coveted states of consciousness, but the staying power of spiritual realisation found in this way is much lower than when those states are attained the natural way.*

where they eventually (and often very quickly) lose their ability to act or think for themselves. It is then that such individuals sadly fail in the school of life and become slaves to their drugs. They have never realised that every achievement worthy of the name, can only come about with a genuine inner struggle.

### Role of the Mind

The mind is our greatest asset by far, but only for as long as it can function *of its own accord*, make its own decisions and live happily with the consequences of those decisions. It follows therefore that the mind should not be tampered or interfered with, unless truly extreme measures are called for. Artificially tampering with the mind has consequences and is against our best interests. What took millions of years to evolve, should not be tampered with. Remember that that it is the wilful active use of the mind that brings about positive evolutionary changes that last...; not the passive, artificial manipulating of the mind that comes about through artificial means such as taking drugs or relying on biofeedback devices.

### Seeking the Challenge

Perhaps you are familiar with the story of the man who was looking for a place where there was no struggle. Led to a land of perfection where there is no striving, he first experiences sheer felicity. There, he finds perfect love and perfect friends, and perfect beauty reigns everywhere. However, the novelty soon wears off and his soul begins to yearn again for challenge. One day he decides to go on a fishing trip. But there is no struggle, as the fish arrive in vast numbers, put up no fight, and allow themselves to be



caught willingly. Greatly disappointed and still seeking challenge, he sets out on a hiking expedition, but once again the challenge is nil, as he can scale mountains without the slightest effort. "Everything comes too easily," he complains.

He is then taken to a perfect village where everything and everyone is perfect, but all alike! People do not need to work, for without effort on their part, food is available according to their wishes; and houses are there to satisfy their needs. All flowers are exactly alike, and although they are perfect in every way, after a while their sameness spells boredom and monotony. Eventually this state of inactivity becomes too much for the man who once tired of struggle and dreamed of perfect peace. Now he realizes that it is the overcoming of challenges that brings peace, not the lack of struggle.

Peace is a state of inner being which should be accessible no matter what the outer conditions are. We need not seek peace apart from adversity, but peace within adversity. People need challenge to evolve and grow, and still manage to find peace within the maelstrom. Without making mistakes, how can anyone learn? Struggle is the very purpose of humanity's existence, as it gives the impetus to overcome and thereby the opportunity to grow into higher beings. It strengthens the character and ennobles the soul.

## Clash of Opposites

When we look around we see constant struggle on the stage of the universe, polar opposites constantly in motion: the struggle of light against darkness; of good

**There would be no purpose for duality and polar opposites if it were not necessary for life to evolve through struggle.**

against evil; of beauty against ugliness; of knowledge against ignorance; of truth against falsity; and so on. Throughout nature, the struggle for survival is forever being waged, from the tiniest insect to the largest animal. Nature is competitive; we must take her on her terms and adapt or die.

If it were not necessary for life to evolve through struggle, duality and polar opposites would assuredly not

exist. Duality would not have been created in the first place if there weren't a need for all parts of the universe to be striving for some form of greater or more inclusive expression. Opposites exist and constantly strive against each other for supremacy.

Without struggle, everything would be static, inertia would prevail. No progress could occur, and it would be a very dull world indeed! As long as we are involved with life, we must experience struggle, a necessary tool of evolution stirring us to action. However, we must react in a positive manner if we are to experience a higher understanding and a strengthening of our awareness of spiritual things.

No person can be an island. Sooner or later, we need to involve ourselves with others people. The aspiring mystic does not evade or flee from the vicissitudes of life. Nor does she or he avoid dealing with unpleasant people simply because they bring disharmony into their lives. They face their challenges head-on or obliquely, depending on the circumstances, but never avoiding the challenge entirely; for all challenges encountered are there to teach us lessons and assist us to grow in some particular way. Avoid those challenges, and you do so at your peril.



*The mind is our greatest asset by far... it should not be tampered or interfered with, unless truly extreme measures are called for. Artificially tampering with the mind has consequences and is against our best interests.*



# Balancing Act:

## A Parable

by Hazel Cameron-Menk, SRC



**A**RE YOU AWARE THAT YOU WERE born literally on a tightrope? As soon as you draw your first breath, they put an umbrella in your hand and tell you to get going. It isn't much comfort to hear that the swallow's fall is recorded. You would much rather know how to keep your balance.

If you stick your neck out one side of the umbrella, you get soaking wet. If you stick your neck out on the other, you get scorched. And you are afraid to look down, for fear of falling. The good people say *"Look up, my child; tread the straight and narrow, and nothing can happen."* But strange to say, things do happen!

Of course, those upright and fearless walkers amongst us with their feet firmly planted on their own narrow path, realise that by staying in perfect harmony, they can walk unaided and unafraid. Vibrations from above meeting those below pass through the centre of gravity and all is well. But lean to one side or the other and various ills overtake you. Put down the umbrella and try to go your own way and doom overtakes you before you have progressed very far. So you hoist the wretched thing again and someone says, *"Hold it upside down, you get along better that way."*

This is instantly followed by counter advice, *"My*

*brother knew a man who stood on his head and held the umbrella with his feet."* So everyone tries it and starts to walk on their hands. Soon the whole procession looks crazy, with people falling off their perches. Umbrellas are flying in all directions, bodies are flying through space, and no one knows where they or any one else is going.

Then someone stops long enough to think. *"Listen everyone,"* he cries: *"Don't you see; we are trying to make something hard out of something that should be so simple. You people who are ill, impoverished, headed for you don't know what, try getting back on the path again, hoist your umbrella and walk in the centre of the line. Allow the vibrations to flow freely through and around you. If you fight them, or pull off to one side, you will be sorry."* By that time so many people are profiting by their neighbours' misfortunes that they shout right back: *"Don't believe any of it. Do as you are doing and trust in a higher power. You don't need any vibrations to keep you whole."*

So, torn by doubt and insecurity a few try to get back on the path, but before the vibrations can begin to flow easily and make everything all right again, they slip back to their old, easily explained alibi land. Only the few who believe that they must master the balancing act, go onward and upward, aided by the principles they've learnt and hold dear.



# Reincarnation Lore Explored



*by Frank Hutton, FRC*

**T**O MANY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, particularly on the Indian subcontinent, reincarnation was the most logical and just conclusion they could come to about the possible continuance of life and consciousness after death. And today, in all countries of the world, though especially in civilisations rooted in one or other





*"What we may believe or think in regard to reincarnation, will not change one principle of the doctrine, nor affect the laws involved, one iota."*

*-- H. Spencer Lewis --*

form of Christian ethic, reincarnation slowly but steadily being accepted by many people as an alternative to the stark finality of beliefs based on the Judeo-Christian-Islamic belief systems, the so-called Abrahamic lineage.

The taboo surrounding the subject of reincarnation in past times is all but gone today, and more and more people each year openly, and often in defiance of their religious faith, accept reincarnation as a more logical and certainly a more just system of belief than one which says that we have only one chance in this world to either make it to "heaven" or to be eternally damned to "hell." As the penetrating light of mystical understanding spreads and illumines not only the darkened areas of the world, but more importantly, the darkened areas of the mind, humanity will sweep away those human-made restrictions, limitations and barriers placed in its path.

The collective philosophical reasoning regarding the purpose of life and the true nature of universal justice, inevitably draws us to the subject of reincarnation. That still, small voice within tells us that this is a natural and logical explanation for the mystery of life. But the Western religious indoctrination and education we have

received, has haughtily assured us from childhood that reincarnation is a superstition of unenlightened and ignorant people; that if it were truth it would after all have been taught to us, just as all other truth is. *"Why suffer earthly trials when we have been promised eternal peace in paradise if we will but follow the rules of the church? Be careful, why gamble? This could be your only chance!"* It doesn't seem as though one has much of a choice..., either believe what the church hierarchy says, or spend the rest of eternity in the fires of damnation! Such a stark and devastating assertion is intended to shame us, and certainly it is intended to instill fear in us so we don't make the "wrong" choice in life. But, can we be sure that religious dogma is correct purely because it has existed for so long? Of course long usage is no guarantee of truth, so we must rely on our own inner wisdom when deciding what to do.

Opponents of reincarnation consider the birth of each human being as being the first and only incarnation of that individual. People are created by God, fully formed, with all their physical, mental and emotional traits, like new cars coming off a production line. And they have only one chance of either making the best of this single life, or completely messing things up and ending up in a place of eternal suffering. Where's the justice in that? It doesn't take a genius to see that such a regime is fundamentally flawed from the perspective of universal justice. If there is a God, then surely that God is impartial, and above all, upholds the highest form of justice that the human mind can conceive. Having one stab at living a life that is good in the eyes of the church, regardless of the conditions in which one was born, certainly lies far below the ideal of universal justice that even a child can conceive.

**Religious dogma is not correct purely because it has existed for so long.**

One really wonders how people can be so sure and dogmatic about their beliefs? In his classic text, *Mansions of the Soul*, Dr H. Spencer Lewis wrote: *"Whether we accept the doctrine of reincarnation or not we will continue to live in accordance with some law, some principle, some scheme of things..."* and *"What we may believe, or think, in regard to reincarnation will not change one principle of the doctrine nor affect the laws involved one iota."*

## Natural Law

It seems obvious that natural laws are inviolate. We cannot change them for our own selfish reasons. We



accept the tangible evidence of the laws of the physical world and if wise, cooperate with them to our advantage. Many aspects of the physical world and indeed the universe still confound us, for our knowledge is very limited, but we still do our best to cooperate with the laws that we know and understand.

Of course reincarnation is a belief system too. And like all belief systems, it cannot be empirically verified by any scientific laws we know... yet! Unfortunately, this opens the subject to all kinds of unbridled speculation and consequent literary trash. So few people have made an effort to do any personal research on the subject for themselves that it is understandable there are more misinformed popular notions about reincarnation than there is correct knowledge. Most writers on the subject have simply rehashed the already abundant erroneous material available. Yet, for those who are truly think for themselves, there is much good, honest literature around, if one is prepared to search for it.

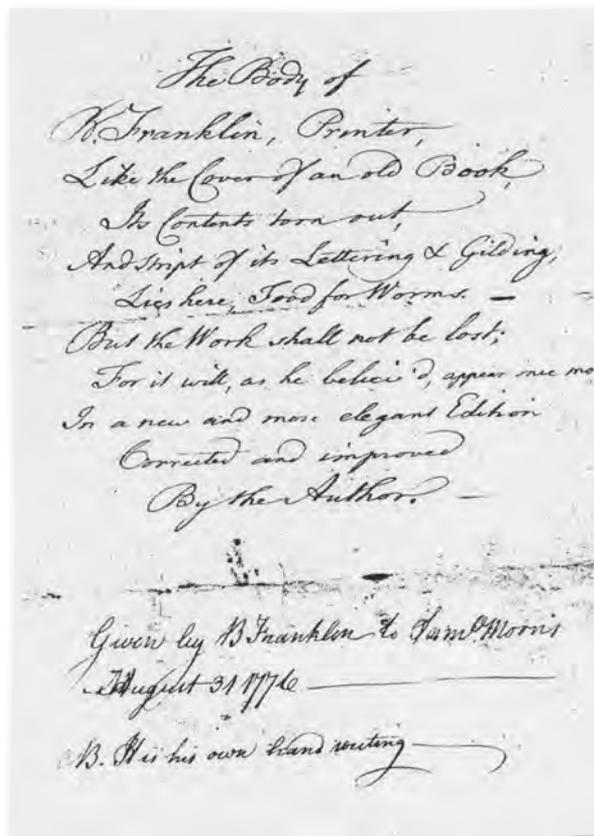
### Evolution and Refinement

The sincere seeker of esoteric truths prefers to draw a line of refining distinction between the several popular terms used to describe reincarnation. *Metempsychosis*, we find, is derived from *metempsychoein*, or the Greek words *meta* (over, beyond) and *empsychoun* (to animate).<sup>1</sup> It has to do with the mythical phenomenon of spontaneous generation.<sup>2</sup> Transmigration has more accurately to do with soul force or a-soul entity migrating from one animate vehicle to another. Such migration is conceived to be casual, if not chaotic, or in other words, without plan. Reincarnation derives from Latin and means literally to be embodied again in flesh. Mystically, it means also that the entity (the "sentient thing") which re-embodies and reanimates a new body, evolves itself to ever higher and more sophisticated levels of consciousness with each incarnation. Specifically, it precludes the possibility of retrogression from the human form to for example the form of some animal, as is understood in the concept of transmigration.

Since all the dominant religions of the East teach the doctrine of reincarnation, it must be admitted that

**Religions of the East all deal with reincarnation in one form or other. It is a central tenet of their beliefs.**

the chief opponent of that philosophical doctrine has been the traditional Christian church. But why? There is evidence that up until a certain time even Christianity embraced the idea of reincarnation. The Jewish historian,



This epitaph, composed by Benjamin Franklin but never used, supports the notion of reincarnation.

Josephus (37-100 CE), wrote in his *History of the Jewish War* "...they say that all souls are incorruptible; but that the souls of good men are only removed into other bodies." In the Christian book of *Revelations*, the last of the Christian Bible, we read, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." This could be a clear reference to the end of the process of reincarnation in the true Christian.

### Biblical References

No less than St. Augustine said, "Did I not live in another body, or somewhere else, before entering my mother's womb?" If we expect reincarnation references in the Bible to be headlined as daring proofs, we will be disappointed, for the subject was not mysteriously rejected in ancient times as it is by the church today. One must be capable of recognising references without the benefit of a headline or index to the subject.

For example, in John 9:1-3 we have the following incident: "As he [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who



sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Clearly the disciples were aware of reincarnation, for if they were not, they would not have entertained the notion that the man could have sinned before he was born.

In Mark 9: 11-13 we have the following conversation "...and they [Jesus' disciples] asked him, 'Why do the scribes say that Elijah must first come?' [i.e. be reincarnated] And he answered, 'Elijah verily comes first, and restores all things....' '...but I say to you, Elijah has indeed come, and they have done to him whatever they wished....'" There is clearly a reference here to reincarnation, and Jesus is saying that Elijah reincarnated as John the Baptist. That at least opens up the possibility of reincarnation within the Christian faith, even if not reincarnation by everyone.

And in Matthew 16: 13-16 Jesus says to his disciples, "*Who do people say that the Son of Man is?*" And they [the disciples] said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'" Once again this is a clear reference to reincarnation and demonstrates that the belief in reincarnation certainly existed with the early Christians.

And in the Old Testament too, there are several references to reincarnation. Reading the Bible therefore with an open mind, one realises that reincarnation is not the abhorrent concept portrayed by the modern church.

Among such certain "heretical" Christian sects such as the Manicheans, Priscillianists,<sup>3</sup> and Cathars, the doctrine of rebirth or reincarnation was no stranger and in fact played a part in their suppression and destruction. It is probable that in all of Christian history there have been those who, although sincere in their faith, have nevertheless clung privately to the concept of reincarnation because of the private experience of revelation that they underwent which proved to them that they had incarnated before.

Rosicrucians have been asked in the past why they do not publish a list of thinkers and prominent people who have endorsed the doctrine of reincarnation. The answer is still that such a list would prove nothing about the truth of the subject. Throughout history, great numbers of people have often been wrong in their opinions. On the other hand, this does not mean that such a list is unobtainable. Most of the venerated Greek philosophers accepted reincarnation without question, as did the Neoplatonists and the Gnostics after them. Spinoza, Leibniz, Goethe, Hume and other philosophers of their time shared in their acceptance of reincarnation.

The delightful epitaph composed in 1728 by Benjamin Franklin, although not used on his grave (as

is sometimes erroneously stated), declares his belief in reincarnation. It bears repeating: *The 'Body of 'B. Franklin, Printer; Like the Cover of an old Book, Its Contents torn out, And stript [sic] of its Lettering and Gilding, Lies here, Food for 'Worms. But the Work shall not be wholly lost: For it will, as we believ'd, appear once more, In a new and more perfect Edition, Corrected and amended 'By the Author.*

The American philosopher and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "*We are driven by instinct but have innumerable experiences which are of no visible value; and we may resolve through many lives before we*

**Reincarnation is no longer a fringe theory. In recent decades there has been a huge change towards respectability in the way people view it.**

*shall assimilate or exhaust them.*" And Thomas Edison and Henry Ford were two great men, both of mechanical and practical bent, who fervently accepted the idea of reincarnation.

The last few decades have brought about a drastic change in the respectability of such subjects as reincarnation. In the past, courageous seekers and thinkers had to conceal their interest in reincarnation for fear of being ostracised from their church, family and friends..., indeed for fear of being burned at the stake! How different it is today where we have the freedom to discuss and express our opinions on many subjects. Few people realise how privileged they should feel to be able to think as they wish. The time has come therefore for everyone to give thought to the concept of reincarnation, and to coolly and calmly compare it in terms of its superior logic and justice, to the crude, illogical and unjust concept of one life in which we, by chance, by the roll of the "Cosmic dice," either make it to eternal paradise, or are condemned to eternal suffering in hell. Eternity is a long time..., only fools speak of it as though they understood it!

## Endnotes

1. Concerning metempsychosis, in the OED we read "*the supposed transmigration of the soul of a human being or animal at death into a new body of the same or a different species.*"
2. Ibid., "*the supposed production of living from non-living matter as inferred from the appearance of life (due in fact to bacteria etc.) in some infusions.*"
3. A Christian doctrine developed in the Iberian Peninsula (present day Spain) in the 4<sup>th</sup> century by Priscillian.



*Le Comte de Saint Germain.*

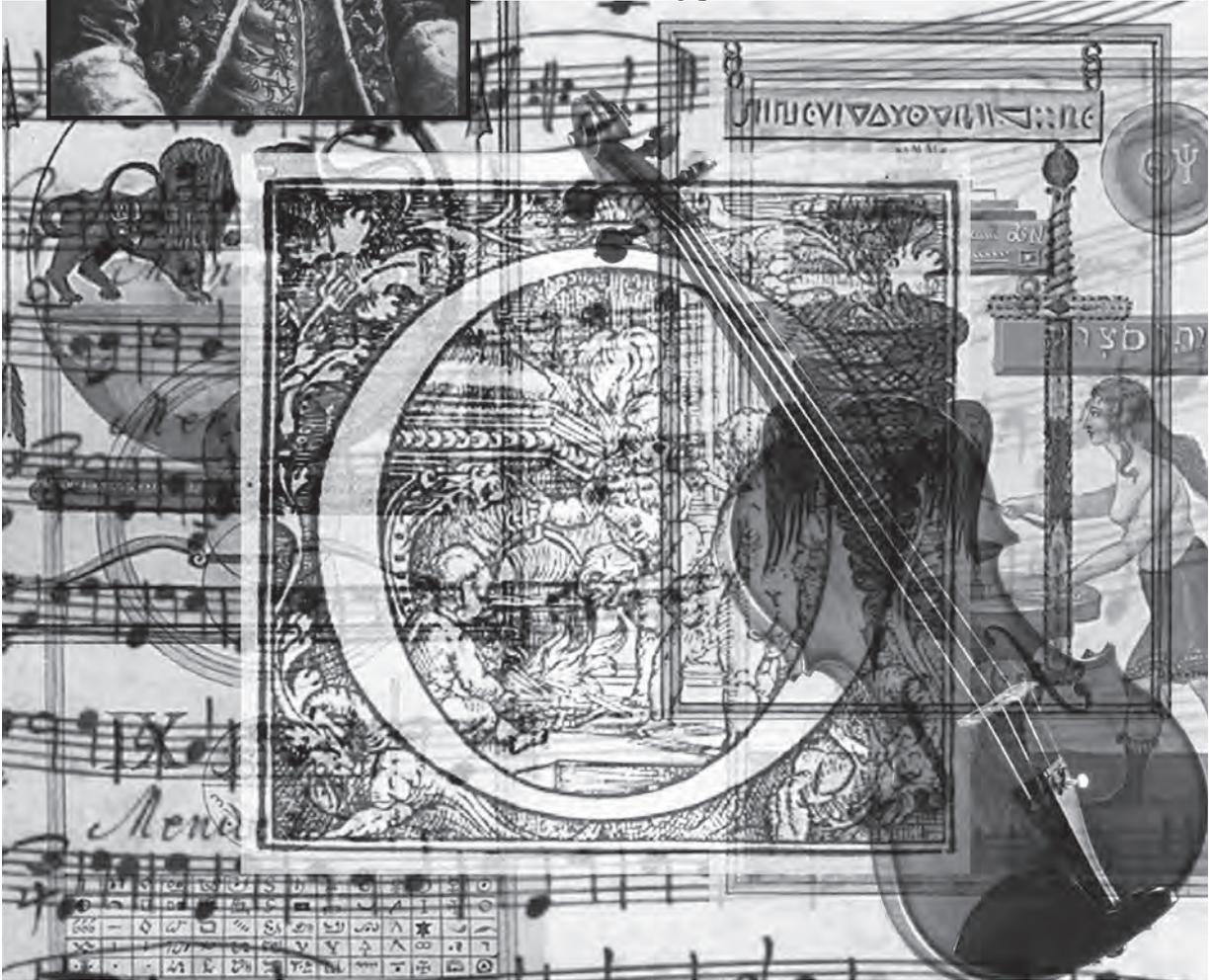


# LE COMTE DE SAINT GERMAIN

## THE MAN OF MYSTERY

### Part 2

*by Johan Franco, FRC*



**T**HE ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF the Count of Saint Germain were highly praised by his contemporaries, and yet hardly a trace of them remains. However, here and there we find evidence of the Count's activities, especially in the musical field. Not one of his pictorial creations has thus far been found and we may assume that they were destroyed during the French revolution, because they are said to have represented fastidiously

adorned and bejewelled dignitaries. It is not impossible, nor even improbable, that somewhere in an attic, one of these paintings is hidden and may be brought to light. We don't even know if the Count signed his work, and it is quite likely that he did not. If the unusual colours he used, which caused so much comment in his days, had resisted the disintegrating ravages of time, the identification would however have been considerably facilitated.

The Comtesse de Genlis, who was quoted at length



in Part 1 of this article, has the following to say on the subject: "He [St. Germain] was well acquainted with physics, and was a great chemist. He painted in oil colours, not, as has been said, in the finest style, but very well: he had discovered a secret respecting colours which was really wonderful, and which gave an extraordinary effect to his pictures: he painted historical subjects in the grand styl, and never failed to ornament the draperies of his women with precious stones: he then employed his colours in painting these ornaments, and his emeralds, sapphires, rubies, etc., all had the glancing brilliancy of the precious stones they imitated. Latour, Vanloo,<sup>1</sup> and other painters, went to see these paintings, and admired extremely the surprising effect of these dazzling colours, which however had the disagreeable effect not only of throwing the figure into shade, but of destroying, by their truth, all the illusion of the picture. Notwithstanding, in the ornamental style, these colours might have been happily employed; but M. de Saint Germain never would consent to give up the secret."



*Pages from La Tres Sainte Trinosophie: the work is essentially an allegory, an imaginative tale comparable to the Chymical Wedding. The Canadian born mystic and author Manley Hall describes it as "the rarest of occult manuscripts." He further writes "The word 'Trinosophie' quite properly infers a triple meaning to the contents of the book, in other words that its meaning should be interpreted with the aid of three keys. From the symbolism it seems that one these keys is alchemy; another Essenian Cabbalism; and the third Alexandrian Hermetism, the mysticism of the later Egyptians."*

In the literary field there is one highly mystical poem attributed to Saint-Germain,<sup>2</sup> written in French. It is not known when the sonnet was written, but it sounds unmistakably Oriental in content. The idea of Nirvana plays a major part in it, and the poem could have been written during one of the Count's journeys to the East. Saint-Germain himself wrote to Count Lamberg:<sup>3</sup> "I owe the discovery of the melting of precious stones to my second voyage to India, which I undertook in 1755 with Robert Clive under command of Vice Admiral Watson. On my first trip I had obtained only very slight knowledge on this wonderful secret. All my attempts in Vienna, Paris and London served only as experiments. To find the Philosopher's Stone, I was privileged in said period." The following is a free translation as to meaning, without conforming to the sonnet rhyme and line length:



*The artistic achievements of Count de St. Germain were highly praised by his contemporaries, and yet it has seemed that not a trace of them remained.*

## Philosophical Sonnet

*Curious scrutiniser of all Nature,  
I have known the beginning  
and the end of the great All.  
I have seen the gold in all its might  
in the depth of the mine.  
I have grasped its substance and  
understood the workings of its leaven.  
I could explain by which art the soul  
makes its home in the flanks  
of a mother and carries on.  
And how a grain of wheat, and a grapestone,  
both, when put under the humid dust,  
become young blade and vinestock,  
and ultimately bread and wine.  
Nothing was..., God willed, and  
nothing became something.  
But I doubted it and searched upon  
what the universe is based;  
Nothing kept it in balance  
and nothing supported it.  
Finally, with the measure of praise and reproach,  
I measured eternity. He called my soul,  
I died, I worshipped,  
I knew nothing any more.*



## Threefold Wisdom,

We come now to the most precious esoteric document in existence: *The Most Holy Threefold Wisdom*, which is generally attributed to the Count of Saint-Germain. If we trace its history however, we find little evidence that it was created by the Count. All we know is that he was in possession of the original at one time and that he himself undoubtedly went through its initiation.

The beautiful manuscript, which now rests in the *Librairie de Troyes* in France, is only a copy, made during Saint-Germain's lifetime and decorated in the then very fashionable Egyptian manner. The original was destroyed by the Count on one of his voyages. We cannot here even begin to analyse this profound document. That would include a thorough knowledge of the Hermetic philosophy, the Cabala and Alchemy, which three constitute the Threefold Wisdom.

1. Another enigmatic work attributed to the Count is entitled *The sacred Magic, revealed to Moses, rediscovered in an Egyptian monument and preserved in Asia under the design of a winged dragon*. This manuscript, written in a fairly simple cipher, is a ritual of ceremonial magic with instructions "How to accomplish three miracles": To find things lost in the seas since the upsetting of the globe.
2. To discover mines of diamonds, gold and silver in the heart of the earth.
3. To prolong life beyond one century with strength and health.

## Musical Composition

We read in many accounts about the great musicianship of the Count, but nowhere do we find his name in the music dictionaries, at least not under Saint-Germain. We do however find him mentioned under another name, namely, under that of Giovannini, an Italian violinist and composer (birth year unknown), who died in 1782

**The Count was an accomplished musician, and composed several great pieces.**

and who had been a pupil of Leclair.

Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* tells us that he went from Berlin, where he lived most of the time, to London in 1745 and produced, under the pseudonym of the Count of St Germain a pasticcio entitled *L'Inconstanza delusa* (Haymarket, April 7, 1745), in which the airs were much admired. He also wrote seven violin solos (which are really complete sonatas



*We read in many accounts about the great musicianship of the Count de Saint-Germain, but nowhere do we find his name in the music dictionaries, at least not under Saint-Germain.*

with figured bass accompaniment) and many songs. The most important work, however, seems to be the "Six Sonatas for two violins with a bass for the harpsicord or violoncello" which were published around 1750 by someone called Walsh in London.

Walsh printed a small advertisement on the bottom of the title page of the Six Sonatas about another work by the same author: *Musique raisonnee selon le bon sens aux dames Angloises qui aiment la vrai gout en cet art*. Curiously enough we find exactly the same words in French inscribed by the Count in a copy of that work which he dedicated to his friend and host, Prince Lobkowitz at Raudnitz Castle in Bohemia. Count Lamberg mentions in his forementioned book that the Count of Saint Germain "intended to go to Vienna to meet again Prince Ferdinand Lobkowitz whom he had known in London in 1745." That explains how the London publisher of the Six Sonatas could have seen the *Musique Raisonnee* with its dedication to Prince Lobkowitz.

The most amazing feature is the exact imitation the engraver of the Six Sonatas made of the mysterious symbol in front of the name *de St. Germain*.<sup>4</sup> This symbol is as yet unexplained because we do not know definitely what initials are represented. There is a letter in the British Museum of the Count to Sir Hans Sloane (1735) signed P M de St Germain. Here then, we have undeniable proof that the great mystic, who called himself the Count of Saint Germain, was actually the man who



wrote the music attributed to Giovannini.

We read again in Grove's account of Giovannini that the song *Willst du dein Herz mir schenken* has been attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach for some time. The reason was that it was found in Anna Magdalena's (Bach's wife) second and largest music book, with the marking "Aria di Giovannini" on the outside of the page. Scholars considered this to be an Italianisation of Bach's first name Johann, but this has been widely disputed since then. Dr Alfred Heusz<sup>5</sup> argued that if Giovannini had really written it, he would have been so proud of it, that he surely would have made it known to the world that he was the composer of it, and would have published it with his other songs.

This argument loses all its strength since we know that Giovannini was the Count of Saint-Germain. The Count seemed to thrive on just this type of mystification. He never attempted to justify his moves and actions even under the most embarrassing circumstances. We might also point out that it was quite common for one composer to copy by hand an admired composition of another. Bach frequently did that with illustrious contemporaries like

Vivaldi for example.

There is an unmistakable Bach flavour in the song in question but that proves nothing because we notice this also in other works of Saint-Germain. His music is delicate, graceful and charming without being extremely profound or original. It does show a particular characteristic which can be readily felt and recognised

**Although neither profound nor original, the Count's music is delicate, graceful and charming.**

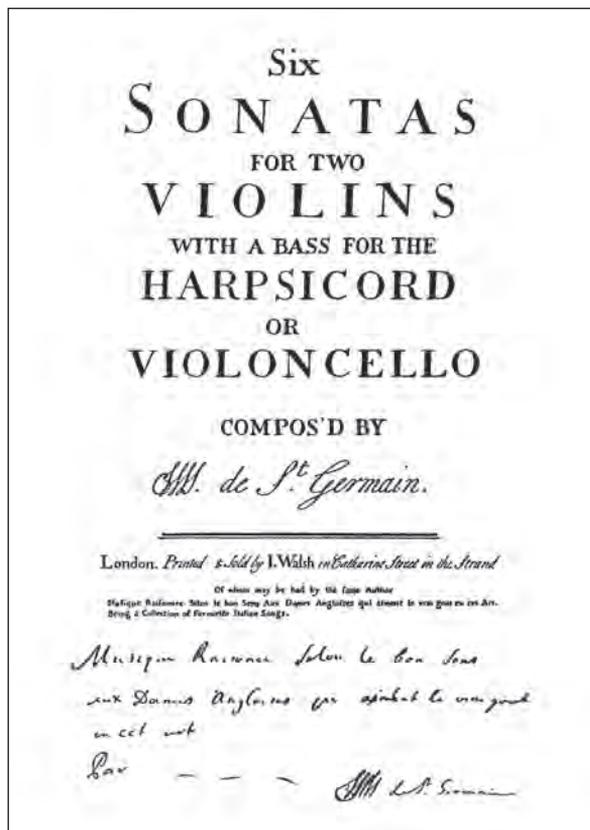
throughout the various works, large and small. It definitely proves to be the typical product of an elegant period, without ever becoming boring or trivial. It does not attain the Olympic heights of a Johann Sebastian Bach however, nor does it quite match the nostalgic beauty of Mozart; but it rather compares favourably with Telemann, Quantz, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and his other contemporaries. We find the work overshadowed also by the musical giants before and after Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. That accounts for the total eclipse of Saint-Germain's music. There is a wealth of beautiful music hidden in the great libraries of the world, just waiting for someone to rediscover and revive them.

## Fact Not Fiction

We have tried here to present absolute facts known to be true about the Count, and to discard all doubtful information and frivolous gossip. Many facets of the life of this strange man never become entirely clear. Napoleon III ordered a complete dossier to be made on the Count. Unfortunately, after this was done, the complete material with all its priceless documentation went up in flames with the building in which it was kept, as if it were destined to remain a secret.

## Endnotes

1. Maurice Quentin de la Tour, 1704 – 1788, famous for his portraits of Louis XV and the royal family. There were two painters with the name of Vanloo: Jean Baptiste (1684-1745) and Carle (1705-1765). Madame de Genlis was probably referring to the latter.
2. *Poemes philosophique sur l'homme*, Mercier, Paris, 1795.
3. *Le mémorial d'un mondain* by J M Comte de Lamberg (Au Cap Corse 1774).
4. Although we usually find the name saint spelled out, the Count seems to have preferred the abbreviation St.
5. *Zeitschrift für Musik* (March 1925, Leipzig)



*Saint Germain composed musical works under the name of Giovannini; illustrated here is his "Six Sonatas" published around 1750 by someone called Walsh.*



# The Fruits of Knowledge

by Elsa Woodman, SRC

**A**S STUDENTS OF THE LAWS AND mysteries of nature, aspiring mystics are often puzzled by the apparent lack of clear-cut results from their inner explorations. Some are discouraged when they don't easily and quickly achieve what they had hoped for at the outset of their investigations. Why can't things be on their terms and at their pace? What they fail to realise however is that nature is oblivious to human impatience. It has its own

exacting and unyielding demands upon all living things, not only human beings, and has its own unerring methods of development which anyone seeking true wisdom would do well to abide by.

The process of human spiritual maturation can be compared to the growth of a fruit tree. As with all life forms, fruit trees propagating naturally, begin with the germination of a seed. Some seeds are huge, like the fabled coco-de-mer palm of Praslin island in the Seychelles, and



some are so small they can hardly be seen, as with certain Australian eucalyptus trees. But in both cases, the end result is a huge spreading tree weighing many tonnes. At several stages of its growth, every plant faces challenges which have to be overcome if they aren't to perish. And each plant species has evolved its particular ways of overcoming these difficulties, whether a flower, a bush or a tree. If we would compare human spiritual development with the development of for example a fruit tree, then humans too have evolved specific techniques of survival in the vitally important area of development of a heightened form of spiritual consciousness. And part of that higher consciousness must involve the ability to use our talents and innate abilities for the greater good of our world, and all living things in it..., not merely for our own personal benefit.



the ability of the tree to forward nourishment to all its parts, it is self evident that the groundwork of gathering important and reliable information, namely the work of the roots and the distribution system within the tree, is of paramount importance and cannot be hurried if choice fruits are ever to be harvested.

The longing to know and understand will send out roots to reach information on all important topics, and thereby gather food for meditation and contemplation. In this manner, the developing trunk rises and expands in proportion to the nourishment it receives from the groundwork..., and the number and strength of the branches and fruit buds will give clear evidence as to the extent of the foundational work since the crown of the tree can spread no further than its nourishing roots permit in order to keep within the law of symmetry and balance.

And as the development of the roots determines the condition of the rising trunk and spreading branches, so do the branches determine the quality of the fruits yet to come. On the branches of Humility, Integrity and Honesty may easily grow the fruits of peace and clear vision. On the branches of Unselfishness and Compassion, come forth happiness, security and love. Especially

### Action Promotes Growth

In this "quest" for spiritual knowledge and the practical application of "spiritual laws," patience is a cardinal virtue. Not all things come to us at the pace and in the amount we initially expect. But in the end, and with the right conditions having been met, our inner "tree of life" will reach maturity and spend the major part of the rest of its existence bearing fruit and providing value for both itself and many other living things, year after year. Our human, fruit bearing, "tree of life" begins life by sending out innumerable "roots" to gather sounds, sights, smells, tastes and textures from all around it, in every possible way it can. As it receives these impressions, it organises them within its developing mind into manageable theories of existence that apply meaning to why we are here, what our purpose is, what we should be doing now, where we should be tomorrow.

Such deep reaching, reliable and fundamental development however, cannot be measured merely on the basis of the amount of time we have spent on it. If we are to accomplish anything of value, we must give the process our full and wholehearted attention, and not get frustrated or impatient when the results we are seeking don't appear as quickly as we thought they would. If we take a "relaxed" approach to life..., not a lazy approach, but a patient, yet constantly hard-at-it approach..., then we are assured of witnessing the growth of an "inner tree" of well rounded, sturdy and upright proportions, growing into a mighty source of valuable knowledge and wisdom, and yielding "fruit" for the benefit of all. But as this growth depends crucially on the strength and condition of the roots and

**Patience is a cardinal virtue in the quest for spiritual knowledge.**

desirable fruits are sure to grow on the branches of Impersonal Interests, and bring to one health and power over oneself, leaving one with a sense of sweet, composing rest. And on the branches of Loyalty to Principles, one will easily gather such satisfying fruits as poise, strength and the joy of living. Indeed on the properly developed fruit tree of knowledge will grow all that is needed for a useful and happy life.

While the beginning of such a harvest is in obscurity and darkness, through toil and perseverance one reaches the light where the fruits will ripen in the sunlight of Cosmic approval and become a joy and benefit to many. In visualising this normal procedure of development, one becomes inspired to concentrate on the spreading and strengthening of the roots in order to acquire the fundamental knowledge needed.

Every aspiring mystic is the fortunate recipient of valuable information, and day-by-day, each may add to his or her store of knowledge from the inexhaustible fountain of wisdom opened to us. The growth in stature and the gathering of desired fruits are a natural consequence of roots that have been well nourished.



# The. Eleusinian Mysteries

A Message for Today's World

by *Albert Hofmann*



**A**LBERT HOFMANN (1906 – 2008) WAS A Swiss chemist best known for having been the first to synthesise, and learn of the psychedelic effects of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). Never an advocate of the recreational use of such drugs, throughout his life he worked to discover how such substances (Entheogens) were used ritualistically in many cultures, and also for use in psychology. This seminal article offers another perspective on the impact of the Mysteries on our world, and on the legacy bequeathed

to us, today achieved by spiritual and mystical means in the Rosicrucian Order.

The Mystery of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis, which was initially only of local significance, soon became an important part of Athenian citizenship, eventually developing into a pan-Hellenic institution of universal importance at the time of the Roman Empire. Its pan-Hellenic character was signalled in 760 BCE, at the time of the fifth Olympiad, when the Oracle of Delphi called upon all Greeks to make communal sacrifice in honour





*The Mystery of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis was initially only of local significance: Demeter (with sceptre) and Kore/Persephone (with torch) flanking a young initiate.*

of Demeter of Eleusis in order to banish a famine which was then affecting all of Greece.

What was the message conveyed at Eleusis, a message which transformed the cult into the most influential and spiritually significant Mystery of antiquity? This question cannot be answered in detail, for the veil of mystery, maintained by a severe commandment of secrecy, was never lifted through the millennia. It is only by examining the testimony of great initiates that we may gain an idea of the fundamentals and the spiritual significance which the teachings of Eleusis had for the individual. There is no question of any new religion having been promulgated in Eleusis; this can be ruled out because the initiates, when they returned to their homelands after the Mysteries, remained faithful to their autochthonous religions.

Instead, revelations about the essence of human existence, and about the meaning of life and death, must have been imparted to the initiates. Prayers are known from the Mysteries, offered by initiates to Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, imploring her to awaken and vividly maintain the memory of the holy initiation, and that the initiation might persist as an experience illuminating all

of life and transforming existence.

Participating in the Mysteries was an experience which cannot be understood by examining only their external appearance, for it evoked alterations in the soul of the initiate. This is evident from the testimony of the most famous initiates. Thus wrote Pindar of the Eleusinian blessing:

*Blessed is he who, having seen these rites undertakes the way beneath the Earth. He knows the end of life, as well as its divinely granted beginning.*

Cicero also attested to the splendour which illuminated his life from Eleusis:

*Though Athens brought forth numerous divine things, yet she never created anything nobler than those sublime Mysteries through which we became gentler and have advanced from a barbarous and rustic life to a more civilised one, so that we not only live more joyfully but also die with a better hope.*

The initiates often experienced in vision the congruity of the beginning and the end, of birth and death, the totality and the eternal generative ground of being. It must have been an encounter with the ineffable, an encounter with the divine, that could only be described through metaphor. It is striking that the Eleusinian experience is described again and again in antitheses: darkness and light; terror and beatitude. This ambivalence is also evident in other descriptions, such as that of Aelius Aristides, who stated that Eleusis was:

*Both the most awe inspiring and the most luminous of all the divine things that exist among me, Emperor Marcus Aurelius counted the Mysteries among those endowments which manifest the solicitude of the gods for humankind.*

This brings us to a problem of our own time. This involves the question, much discussed today, of whether it is ethically and religiously defensible to use consciousness-altering drugs under specific circumstances to gain new insights into the spiritual world.

**What was the message conveyed at Eleusis, which transformed it into the spiritually significant Mystery of antiquity?**

If the hypothesis that an LSD-like consciousness-altering drug was present in the *kykeon*, an ancient Greek drink made mainly of water, barley and naturally occurring substances, is correct, and there are good arguments in its favour, then the Eleusinian Mysteries have a relevance for our time not only in a spiritual-existential sense, but also with respect to the question of the controversial use of consciousness-altering compounds to attain mystical insights into the riddle of life.





*There is no question of any new religion having been promulgated in Eleusis; this can be ruled out because the initiates, when they returned to their homelands after the Mysteries, remained faithful to their native religions.*

## Separation of Individual and Environment

The great importance and long duration of the Mysteries indicate that they answered a profound spiritual necessity, a yearning of the soul. If we adopt the viewpoint of Nietzsche, the Greek spirit was characterised by a consciousness of reality divided from its origin. Greece was the cradle of an experience of reality in which the ego felt itself separated from the exterior world. Here, the conscious separation of the individual from the environment developed earlier than in other cultures. This dualistic world view, which the German physician and writer Gottfried Benn has characterised as the European destiny neurosis, has figured decisively in the course of European spiritual history, and is still fully operative in the Western world.

An ego that is capable of confronting the exterior world and of regarding the world objectively as matter, a spirit capable of objectivising the external world, was a precondition for the appearance of Western scientific research. This objective world view is evident even in the earliest documents of scientific thought, in the cosmological theories of the Greek pre-Socratic philosophers. The perspective of man in opposition to nature, which has made possible a vigorous domination of nature, was given its first clear philosophical formulation by Descartes in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In Europe therefore, a wholly objective, quantitative scientific investigation of nature has developed which has made it possible to explain the physical and chemical laws of the composition of the material world. Its findings also made possible a hitherto nonexistent exploitation of nature and her forces.

It has led to the industrialisation and technification of nearly all aspects of modern life. It has brought a small

portion of humankind a level of comfort and material well-being hitherto scarcely imaginable. It has also resulted in the catastrophic destruction of the natural environment, and now has produced a global ecological crisis.

Even more serious than the material consequences is the spiritual damage of this evolution, which has led to a materialistic world view. The individual has lost the connection with the spiritual and divine ground of all being. Unprotected, without shelter, and alone with oneself, the human individual confronts in solitude a soulless, chaotic, materialistic and menacing universe. The seeds of this dualistic world view, which has manifested itself so catastrophically in our time, were, as previously mentioned, already evident in Greek antiquity. The Greek genius sought the cure, so that the external, material world, under Apollo's protection, could be seen in its sublime beauty. The colourful, joyous, sensual, but also painful Apollonian world was complemented by the Dionysian world of experience, in which the subject was dissolved in ecstatic inebriation.

Nietzsche wrote of the Dionysian world view in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872):

*It is either through the influence of narcotic potions, of which all primitive peoples and races speak in hymns, or through the powerful approach of spring, penetrating all of nature with joy, that those Dionysian stirrings arise, which in their intensification lead the individual to forget himself completely... Not only does the bond between person and person come to be forged once again by the magic of the Dionysian rite, but alienated, hostile, or subjugated nature again celebrates her reconciliation with her prodigal son, mankind.*

The Eleusinian Mysteries were closely connected with the rites and festivities in honour of the god

**Is it defensible to use consciousness-altering drugs under specific circumstances to gain new insights into the spiritual world.**

Dionysus. They led essentially to healing, to the transcendence of the division between humankind and nature; one might say to the abolition of the separation between creator and creation. This was the real, greater proposition of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Their historical, cultural significance, their influence on European spiritual history, can scarcely be overestimated. Here, suffering humanity, split by its rational, objective spirit, found healing in a mystical experience of totality that made it possible for the individual to believe in the immortality of an eternal being.





*The Eleusinian initiate, who often experienced in vision the congruity of the beginning and the end of birth and death, the totality and the eternal generative ground of being. Young boy with a myrtle crown and torch, related to the Eleusinian Mysteries – Roman copy from 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE after a Peloponnesian original of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Photo: Marie-Lan Nguyen).*

This belief persisted in early Christianity, albeit with different symbols. It is found as a promise in certain passages of the Gospels, most clearly in the *Gospel of John*, Ch. 14:16-20. There, Jesus addresses his disciples as he takes leave of them:

*And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever in the Truth... At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*

But ecclesiastical Christianity, defined by the duality of creation and with a religiosity estranged from Nature, has completely obliterated the Eleusinian-Dionysian heritage of antiquity. In the Christian sphere of belief, only specially blessed people testify to a timeless, comforting reality attained in spontaneous visionary experience; an experience which untold numbers of people could attain in antiquity through the Eleusinian Initiation. The *unio mystica* of the Catholic saints and the visionary ecstasy

described in the writings of Jakob Boehme, Meister Eckhart, Angelius Silesius, Teresa of Avila, Juan de la Cruz, Thomas Traherne, William Blake and others are obviously closely related to the “enlightenment” attained by the initiates to the Eleusinian Mysteries.

## Transcending the Dualistic World View

Today the fundamental importance which a mystical experience of totality can have for healing a humanity afflicted by a one-sided, rational, materialistic world view is emphasised not only by adherents to such Eastern religious currents as Zen Buddhism, but also by leading representatives of psychology and psychiatry. Even more significant is that not just in medicine, but in ever-wider circles of our society, even ecclesiastical circles, overcoming the dualistic world view is considered to be a pre-requisite and fundamental step in the healing and spiritual renewal of Western civilisation and culture.

The official Christian churches, whose dogmas correspond to an expressly dualistic conception of the world, offer no room for such a renewal. Rather, it is private groups and associations who are attempting to satisfy the need and the longing for an all-encompassing experience of the world appropriate to our present level of knowledge and consciousness. Great numbers of all sorts of workshops and courses in yoga, meditation and



*At one point the initiates found themselves at the “Kykeon,” the sacred well of Demeter. Is it possible that the Kykeon had been laced with mind altering drugs to facilitate the attainment of mystical insight?*





*The perspective of man in opposition to nature, which has made possible a vigorous domination of nature, was given its first clear philosophical formulation by Descartes in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.*



*The Eleusinian Mysteries were closely connected with the rites and festivities in honour of the god Dionysus.*

self-discovery are being offered, all with the goal of an alteration or expansion of consciousness. A new direction, transpersonal psychology, has branched off from academic psychiatry and psychology, which are based on a dualistic conception of reality. In this new discipline, various means are sought to aid the individual to attain a healing experience of totality. More and more, individuals seek security and shelter through meditation, pressing onward into deeper levels of experience of reality.

It is no accident that drugs are employed by some of these groups and in the private sphere as pharmacological aids in the production of altered states of consciousness. And, of course, this involves the same sort of drugs hypothesised at Eleusis and still used by certain Indian tribes. These are the *psychopharmaka* (a pharmaceutical substance based on the psyche of the individual) of the hallucinogenic class, which have also been described as psychedelics or entheogens, whose most important modern representative is LSD. The Greeks used the term *pharmakotheon*, or “divine drug.” This sort of psychotropic compound differs from the opiates, such as morphine and heroin, and from such stimulants as cocaine, in that

it does not produce addiction and acts specifically on human consciousness.

### Psychedelics and Expansion of Consciousness

LSD in particular played an important role in the sixties movement, which addressed war and materialism, and whose adherents sought to expand consciousness. As a matter of fact, under specific internal and external conditions, this class of drugs, whether called

**Their historical, cultural significance, their influence on European spiritual history, can scarcely be overestimated.**

hallucinogens, psychedelics or entheogens, is capable of producing a totality experience, the *unio mystica*. Before the use of these substances was prohibited worldwide, this effect was applied in academic psychiatry to assist psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic treatment from the pharmacological side.



A prerequisite for meaningful use and a propitious psychic experience of these compounds, which can be described as “sacred drugs” is the external environment and the spiritual preparation of those experimenting with them. The Mexican Indians believe that if the LSD-like

**Humankind has repeatedly sought paths and evolved methods to evoke deeper perception and experience.**

ololiuhqui (the Christmas vine) is taken by an impure person, that is, anybody who has not prepared for the ceremony with fasts and prayers, then the drug might provoke insanity or even death. This wise and prudent manner of use, based on millennia of experience, was regrettably not heeded when many members of our society began to use psychedelics. Accordingly, the results sometimes took the form of psychotic breakdowns and severe accidents. In the 1960s, this led to the prohibition of any use of this type of drug, even in formal psychiatry.

In Eleusis, where the preparations and the associated ceremonies were optimal (as is still the case among some Indian groups in Mexico where their use is still in the control of shamans), this sort of drug has found a meaningful and propitious application. From this perspective, Eleusis and these Indian groups can indeed serve as a model for our society.

In conclusion, I wish once more to raise the fundamental question: why were such drugs probably used in Eleusis, and why are they still used by certain Indian tribes even today in the course of religious ceremonies? And why is such use scarcely conceivable in the Christian liturgy, as though it were not significant? The answer is that the Christian liturgy worships a godly power enthroned in heaven; that is a power outside of the individual. At Eleusis, on the contrary, an alteration in the innermost being of the individual was striven for, a visionary experience of the ground of being which converted the subjects into *Mystai, Epotetai, Initiates*.

### Eleusis as Model for Today

Alteration within the individual is again underway today. The requisite transformations in the direction of an all-encompassing consciousness, as a precondition for overcoming materialism and for a renewed relationship with Nature, cannot be relegated to society or to the state. The change must and can only take place in each individual person.

Only a few blessed people spontaneously attain the mystical vision which can affect this transformation. As a

result, humankind has repeatedly sought paths and evolved methods to evoke deeper perception and experience. First among these are the different techniques of meditation. Meditation can be assisted by such external means as isolation and solitude, a path the hermits and desert saints followed; and by such physical practices as fasting and breath control. An especially important aid in the induction of mystical-ecstatic states of consciousness, discovered in the earliest times, is decidedly the use of certain plant drugs. In the preceding discussion, I have made it quite clear that their use must proceed within the scope of religious ceremony.

The fact that extraordinary states of awareness can be induced with various means and in various ways shows us that capacity for mystical experience is innate to every person. It is part of the essence of human spirituality. It is unrelated to the external, social status of the individual. Thus, in Eleusis, both free men and women, as well as slaves, could be initiated.

Eleusis can be a model for today. Eleusis-like centres could unite and strengthen the many spiritual currents of our time, all of which have the same goal: the goal of creating, by transforming consciousness in individual people, the conditions for a better world, a world without war and without environmental damage; a world of happy people.



*In Eleusis, where the preparations and the associated ceremonies were optimal, narcotics like the ololiuhqui (the Christmas vine), used among some Indian groups in Mexico, has found a meaningful and propitious application.*





# A Personal Philosophy

By *Affectator*

**H**AVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF HOW you would reply if you were asked to describe your philosophy of life? Although your reply might be that you don't have one, that would not be strictly correct. More likely, it is just that you aren't able to articulate your philosophy in the brief black-and-white sound-bites that so many people expect nowadays. We all have certain moral and ethical principles to which we adhere, even if those principles vary a bit from one person to the next. And if a wide selection of people were given enough time to think about their personal philosophies of life and to respond properly, their responses would be undoubtedly be very interesting and thought provoking.

The kinds of answers we receive might run along the following lines: one person might say their idea about this sort of thing was to take all they could get and never mind who gets hurt; another might say that in this life it is every person for him or herself; others might think that philosophy was their religion; and still others might say they only live for their family. Certainly a varied response..., but some, probably the least in number, might say that they try to uphold certain ideals and believe more people should give some thought to sharing with others and helping wherever possible. In other words, they feel that altruism is a necessary ingredient in a philosophy of life.

Every thinking, serious-minded person has a philosophy to which they endeavour to adhere..., and one's convictions should at the very least include altruism. However, not all philosophies are altruistic; many are selfish. There is always some person or other whose objective is to make a lot of money with no regard for the cost to others, let alone themselves in health and personal family relations. Then there are those who think only of indulging in physical pleasures and the enjoyment of solely material things. Many seek self-approval and fame.

But there are thankfully many people who do have a concern for the welfare of their fellow men and women and their problems. They are concerned with human dignity, their own, as well as others. To some degree they are enjoying life and want to help others to have a similar enjoyment of it. A personal philosophy can be many things to many people. A good philosophy, as I have said, should include altruism..., at least to a degree; a real interest in the needs of others. Involved in this is that arbiter of our emotions..., the conscience. Not everyone however, manifests a high level of conscience.

A personal philosophy must include a sense of fairness, not only to oneself, but more so to others. One must be truly honest with oneself first and foremost, and maintain self-respect and personal integrity and dignity at

**Every thinking, serious-minded person has a philosophy to which they endeavour to adhere.**

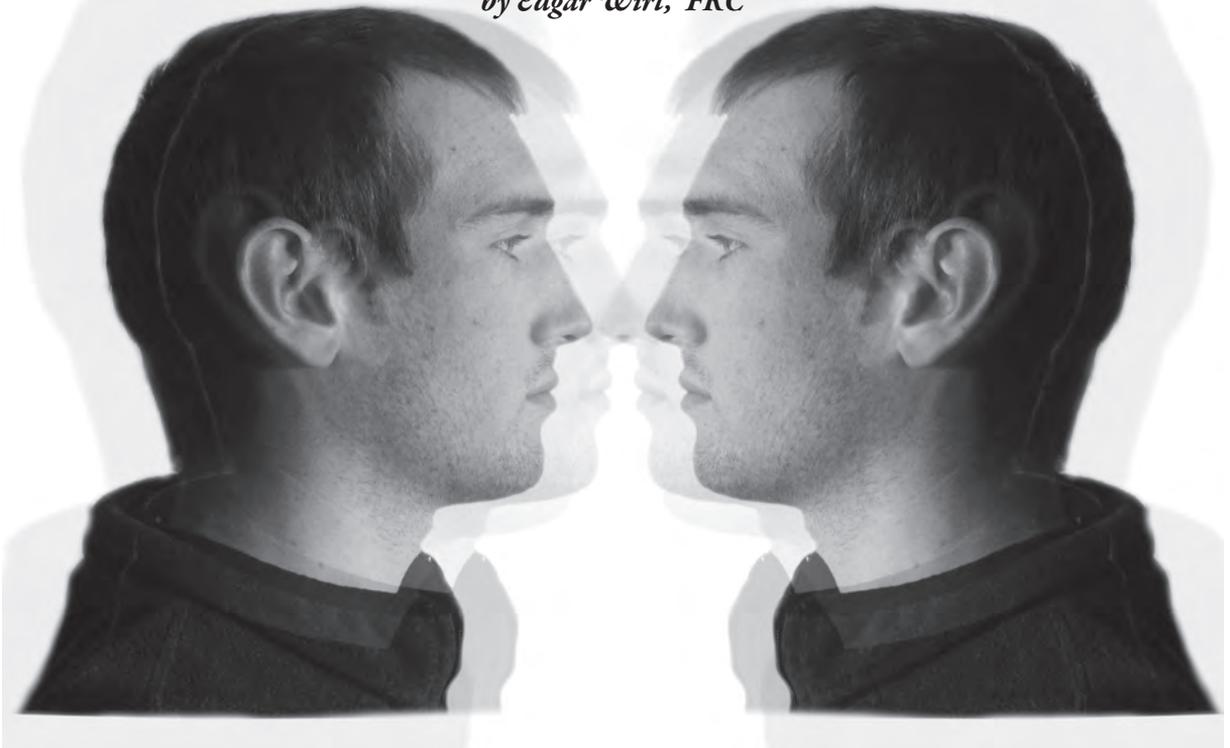
all costs. There should be no room or time for pessimism, but rather, there must be provision for dreams of a better day and a sense of joy for each day that passes, and humble confidence in the future. The American writer and philosopher Elbert Hubbard hit it on the nail when he wrote, *"...to love the plain, homely, common, simple things of earth, of these to sing; to make the familiar beautiful and the common-place enchanting; to cause each bush to burn with the actual presence of the living God..."*

What *do* we really mean by *philosophy*? As advanced to us by the Greeks, it means love of truth, that which is reasonable and right. It means to live truth and express truth in word and conduct. It means that in the living of this span of life, our character, our personal life and conduct should not be suspect but instead be imbued with honour, the strength of humility, and of course truth and honesty.



# Self-Awareness

by Edgar Wirt, FRC



**W**HAT IS MEANT BY BEING “SELF-aware?” What can we know about our self? How do we recognise our self and know that it is the most intimate part of what we are? How do we differentiate between the various levels of our self? And how do we recognise and even communicate with the deepest and most stable of all our layers of self, the soul itself? These are all pertinent questions but there are admittedly few really satisfying answers.

Starting with William James in 1890, psychologists have given much attention to different aspects of the self; how well we can know them, and how they affect our behaviour. To make this more pertinent, take just one quality of self that might be labelled *honesty*. Are you honest in all ways and in all circumstances? How do you know this? A truthful answer might be, “*I don’t know; I have not been completely honest ‘in all circumstances,’ but I hope I am never put to the test.*” We might not be able to fathom fully how we would act when delving into each aspect of our character. Yet even though we don’t have this complete knowledge,

each of us has a concept of our self, a “self-image” that can be described only in terms of its parts or aspects, all of which are changeable. In general, there have been three untested, uncritical *assumptions* about this self.

1. The image we have of our self changes in direct response to incoming information relevant to the self. What we feel and do, what we achieve or fail to achieve, alters our self-image, our self-esteem.
2. Conversely, the components of self have a constant and predictable effect on our behaviour.
3. We have ready access to knowledge of the various layers or components of self and with training can give accurate reports on them. Subjective as our reports may be, we are convinced of their accuracy because we are the ones making the observations and cannot doubt what we “see.”

These assumptions do not hold up however. According to experimental work, before any component of self comes to play a significant part in psychological functioning, it must first become an object of the person’s *attention*. For



the most part the components of self lie dormant, even undiscovered, until attention turns inward upon them. Consequently, self-reports about various qualities of self do not necessarily correspond with those qualities..., not unless there has been prior awareness of those traits. It turns out in fact that people's self-descriptions often have very little to do with the actual nature of their multi-layered self.

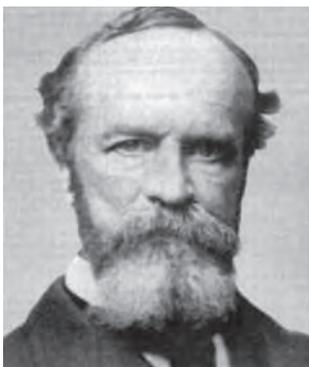
Therefore to be self-aware, to "know thyself," would require self-attention to many traits, some of which we aren't even aware of. Psychologists ask more specific questions: How do we acquire direct knowledge about our selves? In what circumstances do we become aware of aspects of self? In what circumstances does a component of self influence our behaviour and experience?

### Becoming Aware

Another new principle (but a long-known fact) is that self-awareness is relative; at best it is a part-time state. Waking state attention does not spread widely (as it does during meditation for example) but focuses pretty much on one thing, or at most a few things at a time. It can be directed either to self, or outside away from self, but it cannot be shared between the two at the same moment.

Certainly the brain has the ability to multitask or time-slice events taking place within oneself with those taking place outside of oneself, and this gives the illusion of being focused on more than one thing at a time. In actual fact though, this ability is undeveloped in most people and even when developed, is merely a rapid oscillation between states of consciousness. The extent of self-directed attention is therefore reduced by a variety of distracting influences, especially sensory stimuli that capture our interest, and activities that demand involvement.

A woman for example who is not self-conscious, gives little time or attention to self-reflection. She is typically extroverted, unaware of aspects or components of self, and thinks of herself as a single work of art, just one piece, not many smaller, cooperating pieces. Even a "self-aware" person is not totally self-oriented, otherwise he or she would not be able to assimilate any external feedback whereby self-awareness can be altered or extended. Every day there are many occasions and circumstances that prompt self-awareness, especially in connection with social interaction and attention from others. For example, if I hear what someone said about me, or if I wonder what someone



*Starting in 1890 with the American psychologist and philosopher William James (1842-1910), psychologists have given much attention to different aspects or components of self, how well we can know them, and how they affect our behaviour.*

notices about me, I am prompted to think analytically about some aspect of myself. According to another principle, when self-directed attention comes into play, no matter what the cause, it will gravitate toward whatever feature of self is most salient, and not to the entire self.

However, there is a tendency in these situations for some other aspect of self to become the object of attention. For example, when attention is brought to bear on the material, physical self, it is prone to focus next on some other self-component which can be an aspect of the material, the social, or the spiritual self. The different aspects of self are not separate but interconnected in

ways that enable self-attention to shift among them. The more frequently one turns one's attention inward to any component of self, the more likely one will explore further into other components.

Professor Robert A Wicklund, at the University of Texas in Austin, summarised these findings and principles in an article in *American Scientist*<sup>1</sup> from which most of the foregoing and following comments have been taken. He

**The different aspects of self are not separate but interconnected.**

also described an interesting experiment by C S Carver<sup>2</sup> that illustrates these principles and has further implications, especially for Rosicrucians.

### An Experiment in Self-Awareness

For this experiment, a number of college students were questioned as to whether they thought that punishment is effective in learning, and whether they would be willing to use this tactic in teaching. They were then divided into three groups according to their responses: those who were clearly for punishment..., those who were against it..., and a



*The extent of self-directed attention is reduced by a variety of distracting influences, especially sensory stimuli that capture our interest, and activities that demand involvement.*



middle group who were not decided either way. This last group was therefore left out of the experiment.

Each of the remaining students was then asked to teach some prescribed verbal material to another person. It was understood by each “teacher” (but was in fact not true) that his “pupil” was wired up to an electric shock device and that each time the pupil gave an incorrect response the teacher was supposed to administer a shock of whatever intensity he chose. Records of the experiment showed instances in which each teacher thought he was administering a shock and the intensity of each shock he prescribed.

Comparison of results for the two groups showed that they were equal in their use of punishment, namely, their behaviour was not consistent with their self-images as punishers or non-punishers. Perhaps they did not “know themselves” as well as they thought.

However, the results were different in a later repetition of the experiment in which one major circumstance was changed: now, in the place where each teacher did his teaching, he also faced a mirror. Whenever he looked up, he saw his own reflection. His own movements, whose reflection he caught in the periphery of his vision, prompted him to look up more often. In this circumstance, those who were pro-punishment used punishment more severely, and those who were anti-punishment used it less. In other words, their behaviour was now more consistent with their self-image! Why would a mirror make such a difference?

## Facing Oneself

The experiment bore out several of the foregoing principles. Awareness of their images in the mirror prompted the students to think about themselves momentarily. Their self-attention fell first on their physical selves as seen in the mirror, but then shifted to another salient aspect of self. The most salient aspect at that moment had to do with their self-images as either punitive or non-punitive. As their attention turned to it again and again, this aspect had an increasing effect on their behaviour.

In another experiment by Diener and Wallbom,<sup>3</sup> also reported by Professor Wicklund, students were left alone to take a test with the instruction that they were to stop work the instant a bell sounded in the room. Each student was observed and



*In an experiment by Professor Charles Carver a number of college students were questioned as to whether they thought that punishment is effective in learning, and whether they would be willing to use this tactic in teaching.*

monitored secretly. For half the group, each student had full view of himself in a mirror, and at the same time could hear the playback or a recording of his own voice. The other half were not working in these circumstances.

Continuing to work on the test after the bell sounded was a form of cheating, and all these students honestly felt that they were opposed to cheating. However, in the “mirrored” group 7% worked past the time signal, and in the other group 71%! Even an accepted social norm (fair play, no cheating) is not brought into play unless self-awareness is directed to it. No doubt this is in part the rationale

for sensitivity sessions, role-playing, and other educational tactics used in moral training.

## Self-Evaluation

Once attention comes to bear on a specific aspect of self, self-evaluation takes over (quite automatically and involuntarily) and can bring forth a concern about it. A self-aware person becomes aware of any discrepancy or disparity between his or her actions and self-image. Or in a social situation he may first become aware of a difference between his own ideas and behaviour, and the ideas and behaviour of others around him, which turns his attention critically to himself in the first place.

One possible reaction to this is to try reducing the discrepancy by substituting different behaviour, as the students did in the mirror experiments. Another possible reaction, especially in a social situation, is to reaffirm the self-image and one's own behaviour and to consider the actions and behaviour of others as incorrect.

Still another possible reaction is to try to avoid self-evaluation, to turn attention outward to other things. This is more difficult in the presence of stimuli that tend to generate self-awareness, such as a mirror, in which case the person may try to avoid any such reminder of the self. In several other experiments with students, when their self-image had been jolted, when they had received negative feedback as to some aspect of themselves, they tended to shun pictures of themselves, to leave a room where there was a mirror or TV camera, or to avoid the sound of their own voices from recordings. To use a common expression, a person “hates himself” at such a moment. It may sound a bit extreme,



*Nearly everyone uses a mirror at times for self-grooming, and one can wonder whether this leads to self-evaluation in any respect other than the appearance of the physical self.*



but “hating oneself” does nothing to reduce the discrepancy between one’s self-image and the evidence contrary to it.

Nearly everyone uses a mirror at times for self-grooming, and one can wonder whether this leads to self-evaluation in any respect other than the appearance of the physical self. Rosicrucian students use a mirror for various psychic experiments and home exercises, and in light of the foregoing reports, one can wonder whether studying in front of a mirror would tend toward greater self-evaluation and self-honesty, or would distract from the object of study, or would make a person so uncomfortable that he or she would abandon the study period.

## The “Total” Self

Apart from the factual material presented by Professor Wicklund, there are some other considerations. All of the foregoing deals with self in a piecemeal fashion, with its aspects or components rather than the whole. This is the workaday self, the “outer self,” that is involved in all our daily doings. When attention turns inward to the outer self, it embraces only one or a few salient aspects, but not self as a whole.

Some will of course be uncomfortable with this viewpoint. In fact, a popular slogan used today is “be

**The idea of the Self is abstract at the very least and almost certainly beyond ordinary knowledge.**

holistic,” which means that a person should consider him or herself as a single though multifaceted whole..., whether in healing, teaching, adjudication or any other relationship. However, it is doubtful that the totality of a person can, with the outer self, ever be fully conceived (“embraced”) by his or her full conscious attention.

Many people are already familiar with a different concept of self, known as the “inner self,” the “true self,” or quite simply as Self (with a capital “S”). This Self is considered to be a “chip off the old block,” partly mortal, partly divine. The divine part..., the part that is beyond intellectual analysis, is considered to be indestructible, whole, and not fractioned into parts as the other, outer, multi-layered self is. The Self might be construed as the *core* of self as opposed to the *components* of self. According to mystical lore, we gain “knowledge” of this inner Self by developing “psychic awareness,” which means in effect, bypassing the component parts of the outer self that are manifested in day-to-day affairs. A psychologist however, might suspect that this is merely a form of evasion, avoiding self-evaluation by withholding any effort to reduce discrepancies between an idealised self-image and actual behaviour.

Many people are already familiar with a different concept of self, known as the “inner self,” the “true self,” or quite simply as “Self.”



The idea of the Self, namely, the core of or the aggregation of all aspects of the multifaceted outer self taken as a single unit of consciousness..., is abstract at the very least and almost certainly beyond ordinary knowledge..., even though it may not be beyond experience. It is therefore a very tricky area of investigation for hard science. If one begins with the abstract concept of the Self, one may assume, and try to realise a concrete entity that fits the picture of a psychological process. This is called *reification*. Also there is a question as to one’s point of reference or viewing point. Who and where is the observer who is to become aware of that whole, immortal Self? It can be none other than the familiar, practical, mortal outer self, the one that is aware of the world and of itself in the world, but cannot perceive its complete totality.

That is not unfortunate. A sane person cannot escape the outer self and has no choice but to go right along with it. In the end, if the personality (or soul personality) is to develop during this life span, it will be in terms of its daily experiences and responses, with piece-meal accretions to and transmutations of its own awareness: To “know thyself” is a matter of self-attention to its many component parts, and truly knowing thyself is beyond the scope of all enquiry.

Where the grand concept of the total, divine Self has great value is in connection with cosmic principles and cosmic factors whereby such transmutations can be brought about more readily in our daily lives. The ideal of the divine Self is the *pattern* toward which these transmutations can advance—as in the mystical saying, “*as above, so (be it) below.*”

## FOOTNOTES

1. Robert A. Wicklund, “The Influence of Self-Awareness on Human Behaviour” *American Scientist*, 67:187-193, 1979.
2. C.S. Carver, “Physical Aggression as a Function of Objective Self-Awareness and Attitudes Toward Punishment.” *Journal Exper. Social Psychology* 11:510-19, 1975.
3. E. Diener, and M. Wallbom, “Effects of Self-Awareness on Antinormative Behaviour.” *Journal Research in Personality*, 10:107-11, 1976.





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

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

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

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

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

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*I saw Heidelberg  
on a perfectly clear morning,  
with a pleasant air both  
cool and invigorating.*

*The city, just so...,  
with the totality of its ambiance  
is, one might say, something ideal.*

*-- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
(1749-1832)*

