

— ROSICRUCIAN — BEACON



September 2021, Vol 30, No. 4



Find your Deeper Self

IN THE depths of your being resides your deeper Self, an aspect of your being which breathes, in calm reflection, the very rhythm of the universe. It is in touch with all things and communicates with all that matters for life on Earth. Its purpose is to instruct and guide you in learning how to live a good life, and it does so with great care for your wellbeing.

Your Self knows why you are here and what you are meant to accomplish. It knows what your chances are of attaining the goals you have set for yourself, and whether they are beyond your reach or are fully attainable. Your deeper Self is a veritable slumbering genius, eager to help you express your hidden talents with great refinement and sophistication. The most productive thing we can ever do is to find and communicate with this Self.

For millennia, seekers of universal truths have known of the existence of a kernel of perfection lying dormant in every person, manifesting supreme confidence, calmness, maturity and wisdom. This deeper Self is called by Rosicrucians the 'Inner Master', for it has in abundance, qualities of refinement, high purpose and spiritual maturity that we would expect only of the most accomplished of humans.

You can discover how to access this high level of achievement and embark on the definitive, true journey of your life simply by learning how to commune with your deeper Self. If you're searching for a way of accomplishing the most fulfilling and rewarding things in life, in a fair and ethical way, then learn from the wisdom of your own inner perfection.

To find out more about the Rosicrucian Order and how it can help you achieve your most treasured goals, find us at one of the following contacts below...

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ROSICRUCIAN BEACON

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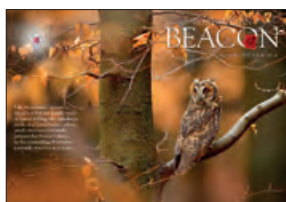
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Cover spread

As nature prepares for winter, the
camouflaged emperor patiently
watches and waits...





On Ecology

by **Claudio Mazzucco**
(Imperator of AMORC)

A few moments before starting to write this message, as I gazed out through the window of my office in the Italian Grand Lodge, here at Ornano Grande, I saw the garden just prepared by one of our volunteer fraters. A simple hint from me on the advisability of having a small vegetable garden was enough for the frater and a soror, also always very present, to prepare the land, bring the small plants and arrange them in order on the small furrows. But what I want to talk about today, and reflect upon with you, is not the vegetable produce of the Grand Lodge, but how nature can reveal its intrinsic order to us; an order of which we are a part, and which we, as Rosicrucians, refer to as

“the Cosmic”, and how ignoring this order has generated, among other things, the environmental problems we are witnessing. It is interesting to note how the word *“Cosmic”* stems from the original Greek word *“Kosmos”* meaning not only *‘order’* but a form of order that has a form of beauty in it too.

Looking out from above (my office is on the second floor) I was able to clearly appreciate how the Vital Life Force impregnates the planet and feeds life. Those plants that I now see in the garden are the result of processes fundamentally linked to photosynthesis. It is a wonderful way, created by nature to imprison and use the positive energy radiated by the sun on our planet





in the plant world. But if we looked with a lens on that small piece of land, where the various vegetables will now grow, we could see a multitude of other living creatures, especially bacteria, but also insects and worms of various kinds. A living network with its own life processes..., interconnected in a harmonious whole. And, if I widen my gaze beyond our garden, towards the hills, the perception is clear: Life is spread over the entire surface of our planet, making it similar to a living being; a living planet or Gaia, as it was defined by the English chemist James Lovelock referring to the myth of Gaia. And as a *living being*, our planet has found its homeostatic equilibrium through an infinity of processes that are all interconnected.

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As an example of how the planet is made up of infinite processes that guarantee the maintenance of a balance such as, for example, the percentage of oxygen in the atmosphere or the average temperature, think of the following cycle that I will now illustrate: siliceous rocks like granites and basalts, are decomposed by fungi, bacteria, and lichens, thus releasing the calcium and silicon of which they are composed. With the carbon dioxide (CO₂) present in the air, carbonates are formed, which are the main component of the structure of micro-algae and shells. When these algae and shells die, they fall to the bottom of the sea and form thick layers of carbonates. The tectonic plates then push these carbonates into the depths of the earth, where the temperature is very high. Finally, with this intense temperature, these carbonates

decompose again, thereby producing the initial carbon dioxide expelled from the volcanoes. Having returned to the atmosphere from where it came, the whole cycle starts again.

Observing all this life and these processes impregnating the soil, air and water of our planet, we realise that we are one of the results of this process. The atoms of which we are composed were generated shortly after the first moments of the Big Bang, corresponding to thousands and thousands of years from the beginning of the universe. And after a long journey of billions of years, these atoms formed our Planet about 4½ billion years ago. Then, following infinite combinations still not completely scientifically clear, the first living forms appeared around 3.7 to 3.8 billion years ago. Then multicellular organisms surfaced around 700 million years ago. The story of the appearance of our species on the planet is still being written. There are still paleontological and archaeological researches in progress that find skeletons of those who were the progenitors of the human species. But for the moment, we can say that about 3.2 million years ago, with the skeleton of Lucy, there existed a female hominid which walked erect. Finally, present humans emerged roughly 200,000 years ago.

Regarding the appearance of life on the planet, the discussion is still very heated. There are biologists and chemists who claim that it is the result of random combinations, a thesis supported by the famous book (*Chance and Necessity*) of the 1960's by the French biologist Jacques Monod. There are other scientists who have a very different idea. British mathematician, physicist, and astronomer Fred Hoyle (1915-2001) used a brilliant and provocative analogy to explain that the mere probability of a chance meeting of molecules is not



enough to explain life. He says such a chance encounter would be tantamount to a hurricane hitting an old iron landfill and producing a fully functional Boeing 747.

We are formed from those same atoms born from the Big Bang and from others generated subsequently as a result of nuclear reactions in the various stars of the universe. These atoms are re-integrated into our body through nutrition and breathing because *"we lose atoms all the time."* We are a bridge of passage of atoms that have belonged to comets, stars and nebulae, who knows..., and which now form plants, like the ones I am looking at, and my own body with its brain that looks. Atoms looking at

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atoms! In the cells of my brain, which I now use to write this message, there are atoms that have belonged to the earth, to some bacterium, to some insect, or even animal, to the water that evaporated from the sea, has travelled thousands of kilometres in the clouds to then fall in the form of rain, in a vital circle that connects all living species to the planet. The writer Primo Levi wrote a beautiful text on the history of the Periodic Table of the elements and the carbon atom, one of the atoms at the basis of life, illustrating the saga of this atom in an almost poetic way.

Observing this vital process makes us perceive how we are the part of the planet that thinks, feels, imagines and dreams. We are the planet, and this is an indisputable truth, although we have, most of the time, the perception

of being something different and separate from it. In fact, with a certain presumption, we also consider ourselves superior to the rest of living beings while, in reality, our life is intimately associated with that of all the other species of this planet and with the planet itself. Somehow, the Earth has generated us in the same way that our mother has generated us. This has caused many civilisations to refer to our planet as *"Mother Earth."*

The ecology discourse of today has become of great importance, practically an emergency, even if we know that there cannot be a true ecological thought without a corresponding expansion of consciousness. In other words, it is one thing to make an ecological discourse well-founded from a philosophical and scientific point of view; it is quite another to live and *feel* according to what one claims to know. And this is perhaps the drama of the human experience on our planet. Many now rationally understand our link with it and with the life it contains, but, from here, to develop a renewed ethics, there is an abyss that can only be overcome through the experience of a *'spiritual nature.'*

When I use the word *spiritual*, I mean an integral, complete, marking and transforming experience. An experience of such a scope that once a person has experienced it, they no longer return to being as they were before, and it shows from the way they live. The person continues to do the same things they did before, but not as they did before. It is not necessarily an experience of a religious nature in the common sense of the term, because the spiritual experience precedes the religious one. It can certainly also happen through religion, but it is not the prerogative of any religion to produce it. A deep immersion in an artistic work, or being absorbed by a scientific problem, can equally generate the conditions for having this experience.

Do you not find it extraordinary, or rather amazing,



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"To say that man is made up of certain elements is a satisfactory description only for those who intend to use him as fertiliser."

Hermann Joseph Muller



namely, something that arouses both a sense of wonder and amazement..., that we are this particular agglomeration of atoms, that in some way thinks, studies, experiments and experiences emotions; and that it now raises the matter of how all these atoms, in this arrangement that is us..., are capable of producing thought? But will an atom or a group of atoms ever produce thought alone, or will it be necessary to add some other non-material element for this purpose? Hermann Joseph Muller, 1946 Nobel Prize winner in Physiology, wrote:

"To say that man is made up of certain elements is a satisfactory description only for those who intend to use him as fertiliser."

And what other human experience could ever connect the scientific knowledge we have now reached of this whole process to its deepest and most transcendent meaning if not the *mystical experience*? It is an experience that by its nature produces a sense of wholeness, of belonging to a Reality that overwhelms, is beyond all who experience it, but at the same time feel that they belong. Called the '*Oceanic Sentiment*' by the 1915 Nobel Prize winner for literature Romain Rolland..., '*Cosmic Consciousness*' by the Canadian psychiatrist Richard Maurice Bucke..., the '*Tao*' by the philosopher Lao Tsu..., and the '*Order of Nature*' by the 1932 Nobel Prize winning physicist Werner Heisenberg.

We Rosicrucians have in our heritage the commitment and tools needed to create the conditions necessary for people to experience moments of harmony that allow them

to experience this '*mystical experience*' at different intensities. Our teachings aim to expand human consciousness by expanding its vision to ever greater dimensions of reality. They are not intended to prepare us merely to make '*good speeches*.' The time for speeches is now over. Furthermore, these teachings are obviously not a path for free hours or a system for obtaining powers of any kind. They are not an activity reserved for those who remain closed in their room and which ceases when they leave it to live their day. Rather, they are a new way of understanding life through various experiences, thereby developing new attitudes towards the events that compose it.

Our teachings aim to expand human consciousness by expanding its vision to ever greater dimensions of reality.

Let me recall in this reflection an important aspect of the mystical or spiritual experience relating to the *moral sense*. The word *moral* here should not be understood as a set of rules imposed perhaps by a religious culture or by social conventions. Rules which take no account of reality, and which are seldom respected by those who propose them, become more properly what we call *moralism*.

The moral sense here must be understood as the act of listening to the voice of conscience manifesting itself in



the inner silence..., making us perceive, time after time, to do what is right, engaging in *'right action'* so our existence benefits not only us, but also the lives of all creatures who share the environment with us. Let me quote the Italian philosopher Vito Mancuso:

"It feels like an indistinct but real call, and we are fascinated by it. And when we say yes to this mysterious call, we tend [to move] in its direction; and this sweet tension within us is called ethics."

This lack of listening is the tragedy of our experience as humans. Our particular deafness is much more than a simple hearing loss, it is a generalised drying up of perception today is stimulated by such violent and aggressive impulses that it then tends to no longer be sensitive to that subtle *'still small voice'* speaking within us when the conditions are propitious. The moral sense is that inner voice dictating to us rules of behaviour we could never transgress even if we were alone and no one could see us. It is a sense that gives to the life of individuals a refined quality to the extent that it removes them from vile, vulgar, dishonest, selfish behaviours, and at the same time elevating

them towards the perception of the harmony of nature and empathy towards living beings, inviting them to act with benevolence and justice. And this action is the foundation of true environmentalist thought.

At this point, we might ask ourselves if the moral sense can be developed, or if it is innate in humans. This important question has accompanied many philosophers throughout the history of human thought, and today it is also a topic of study in neuroscience. This is because, on simple observation, we can conclude that some people appear to be totally lacking such a moral sense, while

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others manifest very high and refined degrees of it. From the Rosicrucian point of view, this meaning corresponds precisely to what we call *'spiritual evolution.'* Indeed, it is a condition not characterised by the presence of extraordinary powers in individuals (although some may exist), but by a capacity for profound discernment, a refined moral sense and a high degree of empathy. It is a condition that can be achieved progressively, but which often appears fragile and at risk of being lost under the influence of the ego. In fact, its absence is easily recognisable because, despite the possible economic success of certain people, their failure as humans will always stand out.

According to Rosicrucian thought, this evolution is one of the potentialities of the human being. We have an unshakable trust in it and channel our energies to favour the creation of the conditions in which everyone can experience, even if for a few moments, this voice within themselves.

"As we often say, civilisation is not a simple improvement of the environment in which humans live, or where they have easier access to material resources. It is also the perfecting of oneself, of the individual." -- Ralph Maxwell Lewis

In order not to remain on the theoretical level when we talk about a spiritual or mystical experience, I invite you to recall an experience that you will most likely have lived. You will certainly have tried, perhaps when you were a child, the experience of being carried away by the





We are the sea, we merge with it,
but we are also the blue sky above
us and the sand below us.

waves of the sea towards the beach. A bit like a surfer does, but without the surfboard, letting themselves be carried away by the flow of the wave. Or even just to be lulled by the waves before they break. In those precise moments in which we are dragged by the current, we experience a sensation of pleasure that cannot be described. There is no difference between us and the sea, and while we are being dragged, we only feel the desire, the deep desire,

Experiencing the sea is too global,
too mystical, to be reduced to an
intersubjective interaction.

that the experience will not end, that the wave will drag us as much as possible.

The water touches our whole body with gurgling caresses, and we have a feeling of being the sea itself, because we temporarily lose our perception of the physical limits of our body. We are the sea, we merge with it, but we are also the blue sky above us and the sand below us. It is a mixture of impressions that generates a

perception of unity marked by a sense of happiness and a desire for it never to end, to last as long as possible. Well, perhaps this is an experience that in its childlike simplicity can suggest what is described by mystics of all ages, and which constitutes the initiatory experience par excellence, our spiritual destiny: to experience Unity. And like the wave that arrives on the beach and then disappears and becomes the sea again..., perhaps we too, in this experience of union with the Whole, will feel that we have always been in the Cosmic, thereby rediscovering our own eternity.

“Experiencing the sea is too global, too mystical, to be reduced to an intersubjective interaction. There is an essential difference between an intersubjective interaction, which takes place in a cultural space, and what one feels when one is alone at sea under a starry sky, moved by the splendour and immensity of the cosmos, with the feeling of being completely immersed in this global space, without being able to do anything but take part in it, without being able to find the words to describe it. At sea, I am no longer myself, I am the Cosmos.” -- H. Laborit (Biologist)





by Amelia

The Human Égrégoire

Group Consciousness for Evolution

A question uppermost in the minds of many who deal with neural systems and artificial intelligence is what consciousness actually is. And it all boils down to a single question: *“Does consciousness depend exclusively on material reality?”* Or put another way, could consciousness exist without a brain, in fact without anything material at all? Clearly this is not something science can answer, for no instruments have yet been devised that can measure anything that may be occurring in the so-called ‘non-material’ or ‘psychic’

realm. And from a scientific standpoint, words such as *non-material* and *psychic* don’t have any strictly defined meanings. Yet, despite the fact that the very question is non-scientific, it is being asked with greater urgency each year by science itself.

The great psychiatrist and philosopher Carl Jung (1875–1961) believed that forms of consciousness exist beyond the realm of matter when he said: *“I do not doubt the existence of mental states transcending consciousness.”* His statement implies that the word ‘consciousness’ was



for him a physical process associated with the brain, while *'mental states'* were something beyond material reality. When speaking of mental states, was he referring to a sort of universal or cosmic consciousness common to all living creatures, something above and beyond ordinary material, neurological consciousness? Or was he referring specifically to their human analogies? It's not clear, for he was a universalist in many ways, and in this instance it is quite likely that he was referring to humans consciousness only. With suitable changes to our definition of *mental states* and *consciousness*, the essence of his beliefs could however easily be extrapolated to all living creatures, which would then give his words the more universal appeal that much of his writings contained.

The French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859–1941) made an extensive study of the relationship between the mind, the brain and consciousness, and concluded that mind and some forms of consciousness are separate from the body and its brain. Of course he was not the first to come to this conclusion. For thousands of years, people have believed that some intangible or non-material substance *'inhabits'* the human body and directs its actions at a deep level. It is this *'spirit'* or *'soul'*, rather than the body itself, which possesses the traits and qualities we associate with human consciousness.

Of course neither Jung nor Bergson were neural scientists or investigators of artificial intelligence; for such fields, and in particular PET and MRI scanning, have only existed for a few decades. Great as they were in their time, neither could have had the insight and knowledge that modern science has acquired only relatively recently regarding the strong correlation between the brain activity and our thought processes. They could therefore not have been aware of the close link that is now believed to exist between some of our thoughts and emotions and specific areas of the brain. Had they known this, they may well have adopted a similar approach to that taken by many



Henri Bergson.

research workers dealing with cognition and the brain today, namely that our entire experience of consciousness is due to the electro-chemical activity of the brain alone, and ceases to exist when the brain dies.

That there exist strong correlations between certain thoughts and emotions and certain areas of the brain has been proven beyond doubt. I am aware of course of the strong arguments for the so-called *'brain-only'* or *'brain-first'* origin of both consciousness and simple awareness. Yet there is one part of me which, against my better judgement, simply refuses to accept that something as refined as human consciousness can have a source *exclusively* in the physical substance and structure of the brain. I do not doubt that the bulk of what we would call *'objective consciousness'*, including virtually everything we consider to be our identity, could not exist without the brain. But is that really all there is to consciousness...? here today, completely and forever gone tomorrow? It may be, but I doubt it very much.

The Guiding Power of Life

The deeper forms of consciousness that we, and no doubt most other animals possess..., things like the subconscious



**"I do not doubt the
existence of mental states
transcending consciousness."**

Carl Jung





Plotinus

and unconscious states that do the main housekeeping work of keeping us alive...., are they also exclusively the result of neural activity within the brain? Certain aspects certainly are, and it may be my more unruly, less rational side that needs to be suppressed in the face of scientific facts. But try as I may, I can't ignore the nagging feeling that this can't be the whole story. Something deep within either wants to believe a less material-only explanation, or simply cannot accept the crudeness of current models of consciousness.

There exists a type of fundamental reality pervading the entire universe, a vital part of the life force itself, which infuses and *'inhabits'* all living creatures, from whales down to viruses. And if it does not possess objective consciousness, then it certainly possesses a more diffuse form of consciousness which for us would be analogous to the subconscious or the unconscious that all humans possess. This is no new theory of course: Plotinus (3rd Century CE) wrote often on matters closely related to consciousness, though in modern terms we would be more inclined to dismiss his musing as mere belief unsupported by even the logic of his own day.

Consciousness at the level of the subconscious or the unconscious is, I believe, the guiding power of all life...

Consciousness at the level of the subconscious or the unconscious is, I believe, the guiding power of all life and the pattern or design through which life is expressed. It meshes with all other qualities, laws and forces of the universe under a single overarching intelligence which in esoteric circles, particularly in the Rosicrucian Order, is known

simply as the *'Cosmic'* or the *'Divine Mind.'* Of course I'm speculating, I know this is merely a personal belief based on nothing more than an *'inner feeling'* on the one hand, and reasoning based on inner assumptions on the other. But I'm fully aware of the risk I'm taking with my professional standing each time I air such matters. Yet, despite the fact that there is no scientific basis for believing any non-physical origins for consciousness, I can't shake off the feeling that there is something deeper and as yet undiscovered by science. My experience of life and the beautiful thoughts my mind has obligingly conjured up for me over the years, makes the existence of a sentient sort of *'Divine Mind'* an inner certainty, not merely a remote possibility.

A Collective Consciousness

Can we really envisage a universe as sophisticated as ours *not* possessing some form of universe-wide *'collective consciousness'*, a sort of *'sentient natural law'* which guides and cajoles all things to follow their particular *'templates of ideal existence'*, thereby allowing them to achieve the highest possible states of fullness and excellence in their particular lives? I find it hard to accept that any universe can be purely mechanistic, like a great wind-up toy which slowly winds itself down, and in the process causes all things to happen in a fully pre-determined manner. Once again this is a belief of course, but increasingly so, one based on a firmer and firmer footing as the wonders of quantum physics unfold in the pages of respected scientific journals.

It is a wonder to behold the manner in which the cooperative collection of cells which makes up our bodies and brains can give rise to such a rich experience of human life. And just as humans have an ideal state to which they are biologically driven to strive to achieve, no doubt all creatures have their own ideal states too, all striving for those states without ever wondering why. The cooperative collection or *group consciousness* (and intent) of members of any living species, creates a rich experience for individuals of the species to benefit from.

And group consciousness, by definition, must possess greater complexity, and therefore a higher form of intelligence, than any individual member of the species. This *'group intelligence'*, being of a higher, more refined sort than individual intelligence, is, I believe, the closest we can ever get to a sensible definition of a God. It is not the highest concept of God, but it is the highest form that any member of the group can ever become conscious of. God, as experienced by the individual, is therefore different for all creatures, and depends to a large extent on the *égrégoire* or group consciousness to which the species gravitates.



A Super-Égréгоре

With the human intellect though, because of its ability to reflect upon its own capacity to think, there is the possibility of a God higher than that perceived by all other creatures on Earth; one that not only incorporates the qualities, thoughts and hopes of all humans, but of all living creatures *below* and *above* humans as well. And that *'super-égréгоре'* or super collective consciousness, can be assumed to be the highest form of God that humans can ever aspire to become conscious of. There are almost certainly elements of that super-consciousness which are at least partially separated from and entirely apart from the physical, neural systems of all creatures in the universe. And certainly, this group consciousness or super-égréгоре continues existing regardless of individual members of any species dying off.

The consciousness of any individual creature must therefore include within itself a focused and highly specific form of consciousness, but must also have access to a much more general and diffuse awareness of the collective consciousness of the species as a whole. In the Rosicrucian Order we use the coined term *égréгоре*, which it seems was first used by the French poet Victor Hugo (1802–1885), though admittedly not with quite the same meaning as ascribed to it in esoteric circles today. In modern usage it refers to *'a field of collective consciousness'*, and it is this form of broad consciousness that I believe exists in all living creatures to some extent, and which powerfully binds together members of each species.



Victor Hugo

I'm not deluding myself, for I know perfectly well that there exists as yet no objective, factual evidence to support such speculations. But speculating is after all one of the primary tools-of-trade of all philosophy; and as an aspiring philosopher then, my temporal experience of life could amount to nothing more than a fleeting period of highly focused objectively conscious awareness of a very

small portion of a much wider field of consciousness known as the *'human égréгоре.'* And that égréгоре in its entirety, namely everything that a human can ever become, may well be part of an even broader collective consciousness called the *'Divine Mind'*, of which all other living creatures also happen to be a part. As the great sage of Nazareth is reported to have once said: *"... in my father's kingdom there are many mansions."* Maybe this refers to the many forms of *'collective consciousness'* or égréгореs that exist, one for each species.

Life is Unique in Every Instance

As far as we know, each individual life experience, down to its most intimate details, can never be repeated. Each creature born into our world is unique in some way, and the consciousness associated with it ceases, according to science at least, at death. Taken to the limit then, the greatest manifestation of life may be the collective consciousness of everything that has ever existed, rolled up with the collective consciousness of everything that ever could exist. Such consciousness would have no past or future, only a fixed, unchanging present. Everything that could ever happen, happens permanently in the present moment, in this *'life'*, and we could comfortably refer to it simply as the *'Divine Mind.'*

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This greatest of all actualities, this Divine Mind, would possess an intelligence that at one and the same time vastly lacks the focus and specificity of our objectively conscious experience of life in the microcosm, but also possesses in parts of it, the highly focused, objective awareness of individual humans for example. It could therefore operate both as an impartial natural law, and as a highly personal, loving, caring God. This God then may be the broad actuality that lies behind all existence, human existence included; and to some extent at least, aspects of that both broad and specific consciousness may be the sort of consciousness we experience after death.

Even after your death, when you have no physical brain with which to pick and choose the parts of the *'Divine Mind'* you wish to experience, the *'Universal*





"You and I Arjuna, have lived many lives. I remember them all; you do not remember."

Krishna to Arjuna

Actuality that existed before you died would continue to exist virtually unchanged. The experience of your life could conceivably then continue existing within the permissive bounds of that vast égrégore. And it is perhaps from that égrégore that *something else* is able to take up the thread again in some form or other, and continue the life experience which was briefly interrupted between the moment of your death and the moment of the birth of another human in another era, perhaps in another part of our universe, perhaps even in another universe entirely.

Our dreams may be disconnected fragments of this form of consciousness..., a bubbling up from the subconscious of experiences that we can't have unless the will is quiet and a door to deeper, less objectified forms of consciousness has been opened. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says to Arjuna: *"You and I Arjuna, have lived many lives. I remember them all; you do not remember."* Although any discussion of consciousness more or less assumes that we are referring primarily to the focused, objective type we associate with thinking, we must leave the door open for the possible existence of a host of other forms of consciousness: less focused, less specific and analytical than our ordinary thought processes. They may be forms of consciousness which exist in other life forms totally unknown to us, perhaps life forms that aren't even carbon-based. And some of these may experience forms of consciousness similar to what we experience after death. Speculation it certainly is, but rich food for thought nevertheless.

Consciousness, Intelligence and Complexity

Let us remember that consciousness and intelligence are not necessarily synonymous. The word *'intelligence'* almost

exclusively refers to a form of consciousness that *'moves'*, namely experiences things in a focused and purposeful manner linearly from past to present to future, using past experiences to project into the future possible scenarios of what may happen. Consciousness in a wider sense is therefore not synonymous with intelligence, but more akin to what we know as *'intuition.'*

Intelligence on the other hand can be closely associated with the concept of *complexity*; the greater the complexity of a system, the greater the intelligence the system can and probably *must* possess. So, *consciousness pairs with intuition* while *complexity pairs with intelligence*. Ultimately, the two pairs differ only in one respect, that of outward complexity. I use the word *'outward'* deliberately, for there exists with intuition a far greater degree of *hidden complexity* and therefore *hidden intelligence* (also known as *'inherited wisdom'*) than the outward complexity that is associated with any intelligent creature.

In war, soldiers use their intellect and reasoning powers to devise the best strategies of survival while trying to defeat their enemy. But in critical situations when there is *'no time to think'*, they throw caution to the wind and follow instead their intuition in an apparent override of the intellect. This is often the case where urgent life-or-death decisions have to be taken and the objective intellect can't respond quickly enough on its own. By very definition, intuition must tap into some sort of *'super intellect'* or knowledge-base far superior to the specific and highly focused type of intellect we use when applying our *'intelligence.'* This well of knowledge is, I believe, none other than the collective consciousness or égrégore of the human species, and exists independently of any individual. Whether we are alive or not, the human intuitive group consciousness continues to exist, and almost certainly can continue being drawn upon *'beyond the veil.'*



Only Human Consciousness?

Not only humans have consciousness of course. There exist forms of consciousness both broader and more all-inclusive than humans possess, and some creatures possess *'packages of cognition'* much more focused and objective than anything we can experience. I therefore need to expand a bit upon what I mean by the word *'consciousness'* when applied to non-human life forms.

Let's begin with say minerals, and then move up the ladder of complexity to plants and animals, the latter of which we are a member species. I can hear you say *"but minerals have no life"*, and yes, in the normal sense of the word, this is true. But minerals do possess structure, organisation and specific rules by which they *'self-assemble'*. For the purposes of the present discussion, I am therefore extending *'life'* (temporarily) to include any form of self-organisation, and of course that would include even a computer.

Each form of consciousness in the universe has associated with it a *'cluster'* of energies of which that consciousness is formed. The energies in this cluster come from a wide range of frequencies, but they are not necessarily contiguous. This is not to say that consciousness itself *is* the energy, only that consciousness in some form, however primitive, is present wherever energy exists. One may postulate further that no energy can exist without some form of consciousness being associated with it. Rosicrucians refer on occasion to the so-called *'law of the triangle'* whereby all manifestations in nature have two causes or two inherent properties, never just one. In the present context then, we have *energy plus consciousness* being associated with every *'living creature'* (I loosely include minerals here), just as we have *space plus time* being associated with the dynamics of all reality in the universe. And just as space and time cannot be conceived each in isolation, energy and consciousness can also not be conceived each in isolation. In both cases, they always exist together; without one, the other does not exist.

At the level of minerals, how can we speak of consciousness? Admittedly we do so only with some difficulty, for the concept is so far removed from the analytical form of consciousness we use, that most people would fail to see a link. But this is merely a problem of scale and complexity. The highly-focused form of consciousness humans possess exists as a result of the complexity of the brain. The human brain has orders of magnitude greater complexity than what exists in the structure and self-organising process of say the crystals in a mineral. But just as various laws of nature ensure that certain crystals self-assemble in one way only, and others in other ways only, a wider set of natural laws ensure that humans too

'self-assemble' only in specific ways. I'm sure you're thinking of DNA by now, but more specifically I'm thinking of the self-assembly *coding* that causes DNA to come into existence, not the self-assembly which is caused by the DNA structure itself, once formed.

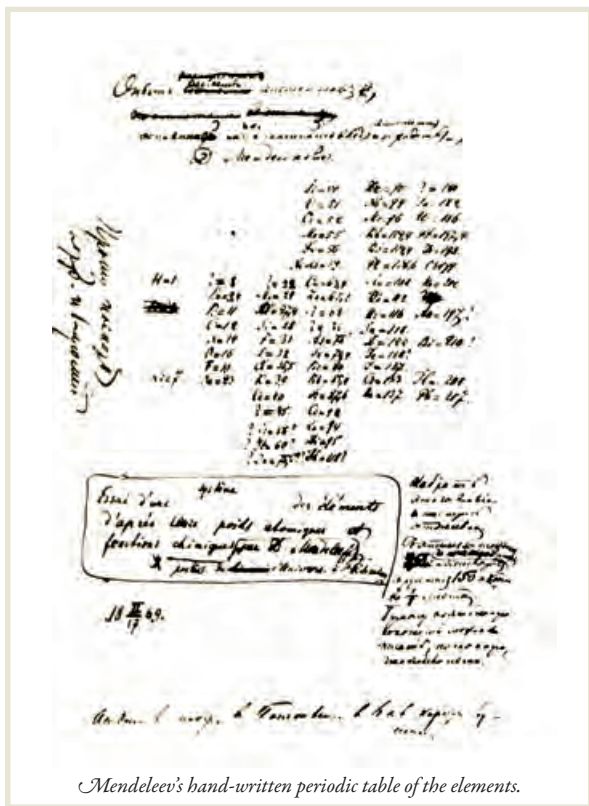
These ways of assembling an organism may give greater degrees of freedom to the human self-assembly process, thereby yielding people with red hair, others with black hair, some with freckles, some with white skin, others with brown skin, some with blue eyes, others with green eyes, etc., but all conforming to a basic body plan from which there is little deviation. And conformance to that body plan, and the intellect that comes with its brain, differs conceptually only in scale and complexity from the very simple laws governing the self-assembly of crystals. We are different to crystals *in scale and complexity only*. Crystals and humans could therefore both be governed by égrégores or islands of *'group consciousness'* that define what they can and cannot accomplish and the extent to which their *'intellects'* can grow.



Where 'Dead Matter' Becomes a Living Organism

Just as our thoughts manifest as energy which can at times be perceived by other humans, so too it can be said that the self-assembly of mineral crystals is caused by definite laws which provide the information necessary for the atoms and molecules to assemble themselves in the only way possible for that mineral. And this self-assembly process may, perhaps with a stretch of the imagination, be considered as a form of *'life'* too, though of course nowhere near as complex and sophisticated as even the smallest bacteria. Self-organisation occurs at all levels in nature, and it is merely a matter of scale and complexity





Mendeleev's hand-written periodic table of the elements.

to decide at which point we agree that *'dead matter'* ends and *living organisms* begin.

Arbitrary points on a scale are okay if we can all agree on them, but in absolute terms they aren't much use and the scale itself is all that should interest us. We may use inches or centimetres as our scale of length, but there is nothing universal or absolute about those units. So, the point at which life begins and ends is arbitrary, and precise agreement on where that point lies is not universally accepted. Therefore, putting arbitrary agreements aside, on the basis of this universal self-organising, self-assembly principle, we can say that even simple minerals possess *'life'* too.

The laws governing the *'self-organisation'* of simple elements are well known today, but thanks should go out to one man in particular, the 19th Century Russian scientist Mendeleev for his creation of the periodic table of the elements, a simple arrangement of the basic atomic elements which is still used in chemistry classes today. His table has of course been superseded by more detailed and useful tables, and the rules governing the self-organisation of elements are much more complex than they were only 50 years ago. But in principle, we have at least a clear set of laws of nature that govern the manifestation of *'life'* at these simple levels.

And this corpus of natural laws is under the overarching

governance of an *égrégoire* or *'group consciousness'* of sorts, something that science would call the *laws of physics* perhaps but that the brightest minds of societies of past centuries would have referred to as something like the *Cosmic Mind* or *Divine Intelligence*, in the same way that the laws governing higher, more complex life forms are also placed under an umbrella of some sort of *'intelligent guidance.'* In the plant kingdom, there are many plants that actively turn towards the sun as it moves across the sky. Some close their petals at nightfall, and others (like the Venus Flytrap) close their flowers quickly in order to capture and consume their prey. Awareness is certainly revealed in a plant capable of trapping a living insect, just as consciousness (or awareness at least) is of course present in a plant that actively tracks the motion of the sun.

Primitive Consciousness

An early experiment to try and demonstrate the presence of consciousness in plants was done by Satyendra Nath Bose, a great Indian mathematician and one of the co-founders of Quantum Mechanics. Born in Calcutta, unlike many scientists of his time, he had a deep and abiding love of all Creation, including things as simple as plants. Turning his mind to the possibility of plants possessing consciousness, he created an extremely sensitive instrument which could record the precise moment a stalk was cut, and he showed in this manner that plants were well aware of trauma to their physical integrity.

Much more delicate instruments have since then proven this beyond doubt, and many psychically sensitive people have reported perceiving the discomfort that a plant undergoes as its leaves or stems are cut. That is not equating that conscious response to what we know as pain; it is merely highlighting that the plant is at the very least aware, and to an extent possesses consciousness of a form



Satyendra Nath Bose



With humans, as with animals, people have many levels of consciousness, though roughly conforming to what we easily recognise as being human.



that we humans undoubtedly also possess in the most primitive parts of our brain.

The pattern of consciousness in all things becomes more apparent as we move up the ladder of complexity. The greater the complexity of the organism, the more sophisticated are its faculties of perception, observation, knowledge and even memory. Migrating birds that fly thousands of miles across oceans and continents at fixed periods of the year are undoubtedly helped by the earth's magnetic field and the polarisation of sunlight entering their eyes. But they are almost certainly also influenced by a higher *group awareness* or *égrégoire* that is linked to the Cosmic Mind of the universe. Border collies, the working dogs of many sheep farmers, learn quickly through observation, repetition, and a conscious understanding of the intent and purpose of the farmer's voice, what each

instruction means. And for many, their intelligence is in some cases almost human-like.

In wild creatures, consciousness is closely influenced by instinct or intuition, much as a mother plover for example (a ground-nesting bird), becoming aware of an approaching potential predator (a human, dog or cat for example) deliberately leads the predator away from where the chicks or eggs are hidden, by deliberately behaving as though it were wounded and therefore presenting a potential easy meal. They become aware of the danger, instinct or intuition warns them of the gravity of the situation, and their bird intellect causes them to act injured as they lead the predator away.

Karma and Reincarnation

With humans, as with animals, people have many levels of consciousness, though roughly conforming to what we easily recognise as being human. According to mystical lore, the exact nature of their consciousness is determined by their past thoughts, words and actions, in other words their karma (from the Sanskrit root *krm* meaning *action*). Origen (185-254 CE) in his work *De Principiis*, says: "*Every soul comes into this world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of his previous life.*" Clearly he believed that humans reincarnate and that their lives are influenced by what they have done in past lives.

Human consciousness is that '*continuing essence*' within the person upon which is recorded these actions. Is the *continuing essence* none other than the soul itself? Whatever we wish to call it, it is special, it is individual and unique to that person alone, though it also shares many of its qualities with the great human group consciousness known as the



In wild creatures, consciousness is closely influenced by instinct or intuition. (Plover shown here).



'human égrégore.' Like animals, primitive hominids were conscious at first only of the most basic of conditions, such as fear of lightning, floods, fires, etc., but also danger from predators like lions and hyenas who undoubtedly ate them when they could.

Slowly, as challenges in their environment grew and they were forced to adapt to harsher conditions, their consciousness adapted to the greater and greater complexity of their brains and they became conscious of things such as devotion to one's loved ones and the need to protect them from harm. Much later in evolutionary terms, they realised the many advantages that exist when living with inevitable compromises in larger social groups, such as a clan or tribe. And from this, social life as we know it finally started emerging.

At this level, early hominids knew of their world only by means of their five senses. They became aware of simple facts such as the similarity of some physical objects to deeper principles of life, and from this, symbolism as a pure artifice of the intellect was born. Much later of course, aspects of thinking such as reasoning and memory became the dominant feature differentiating hominids from all other creatures.

Inner Apprehension

As the complexity of human cognition increased neurally, so did the complexity and sophistication of interactions between people. Consciousness of higher, less tangible qualities of life slowly emerged, and this led in due course to moral and spiritual philosophies and religions. It was the deep-rooted consciousness of something hidden, unknown and apart from the individual that led to the formation of all belief systems.

With the acquisition of a higher inner apprehension of greater forces in life than those they were aware of through their senses, early humans began using faculties of the mind such as imagination, concentration and visualisation to plan their futures. And inevitably a time came when the first person experienced what we today refer to as an *'afflatus of the soul'*, from which true spirituality finally emerged.

Our early ancestors became conscious of a much more intricate world than that of previous times, and over tens of thousands of years, systems of governance, moral codes of conduct, and inner levels of personal discipline became the hallmarks of what was considered *civilised* or not. Eventually mathematics and science emerged and made human life far more pleasant and easier to bear. Evolution had moved beyond mere random mutations of DNA, to deliberate choices made in the minds of humans who could see better ways of living and treating each other.



The "Great Eagle" of Native American ancient religious belief, is ultimately what guides and directs all humans in their evolution.

I have no doubt that this inner apprehension of *'something better'*, emerged not only through the labours of a few pioneering individuals, but was almost imposed upon them when they realised from communion with their inner self or their conception of a universal God, that there exists something far greater and more awesome than any single person can conceive. And it is this *'great something'*, this *"Great Eagle"* of Native American ancient religious belief, which ultimately guides and directs all people in their evolution.

We have come a long way from the first microbes to emerge on Earth billions of years ago, and we have a wonderful evolution of consciousness ahead of us if we can but survive our present world crisis. But one thing I believe is certain, the broader issues of our cognitive evolution, while governed certainly by physical laws of inheritance and random selection, are also governed by something more subtle, something I have referred to above as the human collective consciousness or *'human égrégore.'* And to drive the point home as far as it will go, this human égrégore exists with or without us and will continue existing even when the last human has gone extinct.

The broader implications of such a belief are that consciousness, or some form of it at least, is not purely *'physical'*, not purely the result of electro-chemical signalling within a complex system such as the human brain, but exists as well entirely independently of the human form. It's a belief of course, and you can take it or leave it; but I urge you to at least think about it.





The Strange Packing Box

by **H Spencer Lewis**
(Imperator 1915-1939)

The following article was written by Harvey Spencer Lewis, Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order between 1915 and 1939. It is excerpted from a book of four short stories entitled "*My Personal Experiences: Four Unusual Psychic Adventures.*"

A few months after I had moved my home to a large city in Florida in 1925, with the intention of remaining there a few years to assist in building up our work in that part of the country, I was called on the phone one evening by a very close neighbour who asked if I would come quickly to his home and investigate something that had been tormenting his wife and himself throughout the evening. It was a little after midnight when I was called, and I had not yet retired. It was early in the spring and the sky was very dark but clear and there was a warmth in

the air plainly indicating that the warm summer period had made a good start.

Many homes in this city of Florida were large and spacious, the ceilings especially being very high in order to allow a large amount of free air circulation throughout the summer months. Houses of this kind had many large windows, well screened, and when I say well-screened, I do not mean with a loose portable fly screen or a large one on the outside of the windows that flaps loosely or is easily removed, for the great winds that often sweep over Florida necessitate the construction and fastening



of screens in a manner that will protect them against being torn from the building suddenly and completely. Furthermore, the city was on the highway, traversed most frequently by tourists from the north, and was generally filled each day with motorists and those begging free passage along the way, and there had been so many attempts at robberies and intrusion, that the owners of homes had taken every precaution to see that every downstairs window and door was tightly secured before retiring at night.

The second stories of such homes very often consisted of one or two enclosed bedrooms and three or four sleeping rooms or open air porches. My neighbour's house was a wooden bungalow with a second story consisting only of two sleeping rooms entirely surrounded by windows that could be opened and with only the tightly fastened screens would become typically an open air sleeping porch. The hallway and stairs by which these two upper rooms were reached were at the rear of the house. Just between the dining room and an adjoining den room and library, a flight of stairs ascended for about six feet where there was a small platform at right angles with another flight of stairs rising for six more feet to the second floor. Here there was a small hallway on either side of which were located the two sleeping rooms, to which I have referred.

My neighbours had moved into this house but two or three months previously, and had had it redecorated inside and out in a very thorough manner. Only within the last few days had they furnished one of the upper bedrooms, for during the first two months of occupancy

of the house, it was cool enough to permit them to sleep in one of the downstairs bedrooms. From the very first night of their occupancy of the upstairs bedroom, they had been awakened from eleven o'clock onward with peculiar sounds in the hallway outside of their upstairs sleeping room and in the adjoining bedroom, which was unfurnished and was used for storage of unused pieces of furniture and packing cases of various materials and articles.

For three or four nights, they believed these noises to be due to the winds which often become very strong after midnight or late in the evening, or possibly to mice or to the flapping of a radio wire connecting the antenna on the roof with a set in the den room below. It appears, however, that the young couple occupying this house had generally retired after midnight, and on only

one occasion had been in their bedrooms before eleven o'clock. They had therefore heard the sounds only after twelve-thirty or one in the morning. When I reached their home on this particular night, I found both of them in

Both of them remained awake listening, but each was unconscious of the fact that the other was listening.

bathrobes or dressing gowns seated in the den room downstairs and frightened out of their wits. The story they told me was as follows:

They had retired just about eleven o'clock in the upstairs room and closed the door as they had always done. Shortly after the lights were extinguished in their room and they were at rest in the bed in the far corner, they heard footsteps in the outer hall and a bristling noise as though some paper was being rattled. Both of them remained awake listening, but each was unconscious of the fact that the other was listening. The young man

happened to be in a position where his face was turned toward the closed door on the opposite side of the room. The faint light from the arc lamp on the street illuminated the room sufficiently for them to see the outline of the door and the pieces of furniture in the room.

Listening for a while to the footsteps, the young man was suddenly frightened by hearing the door-knob of the door rattle and turn. The door-knob was one which stuck, and required more than the usual amount of pressure to turn it, and after being rattled for a while and turned, the door gradually opened. You can imagine the sensation this created in the mind of the young man, but he was able to restrain himself and lie quietly in his bed





and watch. The door opened to the extent of eight or ten feet, and then moved no further. He waited to see if there would be any attempt on the part of anyone to enter the room, but there were no further sounds for a few moments, and nothing else to be seen.

Then suddenly the footsteps in the hall were heard again, much louder this time because of the door being open. Then another door-knob was rattled and turned, and the creaking door on the opposite side of the hall giving entrance way to the unused bedroom indicated that whoever was causing the disturbances had stepped across the hall. The second door finally closed and as the young man listened he heard the movement of some heavy articles on the floor and then the rattling of paper as though large sheets of stiff wrapping paper were being shaken, and finally the noise of a hammer hitting against nails or wood.

Thoroughly alarmed he turned around to awaken his wife, only to find that she too had been listening to the entire procedure and believed that he was asleep. They compared their impressions and then arose and turned on the lights, and rushed out into the hallway with a gun which the young man always kept in his room. They found the door of their bedroom open, but the door of the bedroom on the opposite side of the hall was closed. They examined every part of that room carefully, including a little door that afforded entrance way into part of the attic adjoining these two bedrooms. No one could be seen and nothing found to give any explanation of the noises they heard. After searching around downstairs and making sure that every window was still closed tightly and every door locked, they returned to their room, and before they could possibly get to sleep, similar noises were repeated. Always the same rattling of large sheets of paper, the handling of pieces of wood, and the hammering of these together as though nailing up a box or crate.

Just why the young couple interpreted the noises as the nailing up of a crate, they could not explain. It is a psychological fact that we try to associate every noise with some commonplace incident or something with which we are familiar. In looking at my notes from which I am dictating the report of this experience, I find that in my usual manner I made very careful notations of everything that was told to me, and everything that I observed myself, for I do not like to depend upon memory in regard to such experiences. Years of research and investigation have trained me in making copious notes in notebooks, and filing these away under various index classifications.

I find one notation which deals with this very point.

I asked the couple several times why they believed that the noises had anything to do with the packing of a large wooden crate, and their answer was that it sounded just like the noises they had made themselves when they packed some of their crates and unpacked them in the processes of moving to their present home. I found however that very often the Cosmic Mind or the psychic mind within the individual gives a clue to the nature of the noises, and that this is more dependable than the mere association of ideas. However, we were all agreed that the noises heard had something to do with the handling of wood, paper, nails and a hammer.

After hearing the same noises a second time, they decided to stay up the rest of the night, and partly dressed

I found however that very often the Cosmic Mind or the psychic mind within the individual gives a clue to the nature of the noises...

they went downstairs into the den room on the first floor, which was almost directly under the bedroom in which they had been trying to go to sleep. With all of the lights on in the house, they could still hear footsteps on the floor upstairs and every now and then they would hear one of the two doors open and close, and then there would come the rattling of paper and the hammering. They even heard the footsteps descending the stairs as though coming down to the lower hall and entering the very room in which they were seated. After listening to all of this for over an hour, they finally asked me to call.



After making a search all through the house and finding nothing that would give any clue, I sat down in the den room with them and waited. In a little while we heard the footsteps, the creaking boards, the turning of door-knobs, the creaking hinges, the rattling of the paper, and the hammering. There was no mistaking the noise of the paper, and there certainly could be no mistake of the noise of hammering. Whether the hammering was upon a packing box or on the floor, I could not determine. Every attempt to go up the stairway while the noises were distinct resulted in an immediate cessation of the noises. However, one time I stood at the foot of the stairs with the lights all turned on and distinctly heard the footsteps coming down the steps toward me until they were within three or four feet of me.

Deciding that I would make one of my usual materialistic tests, I took a sheet of thin tissue paper and stretched it out on one of the steps half way up the flight. Then we waited for the footsteps to come down the stairway again. As the noise of the footsteps began and approached me we waited for the invisible footsteps to reach the piece of paper. Suddenly, we saw the thin sheet of paper pressed downward against the wooden step just as though some foot had stepped upon it. You may realise that a piece of thin paper lying on a carpeted step will lie very lightly and will not fit tightly against the carpet. However, the paper was suddenly depressed in the centre and gave every visible evidence of some light weight upon it. Then the noise of the footsteps ceased.

Wishing to carry my investigation a little further I went up the stairs to the upper floor and sat down upon a chair midway between the two bedroom doors and then extinguished the lights. The young people remained downstairs in the den room. Finally I heard the footsteps ascending and looking down the stairway I could see the haze and bluish white aura of a figure. It came closer and closer and finally passed right by me, and through the partly opened door into the bedroom



that was not being used. Then the door closed just as definitely and decidedly with all the noise and clicking that one hears when a door is closed by a physical hand. Waiting a moment, I heard the rattling of the paper again and finally the very loud pounding of the hammer.

Pushing the door open I found a large, white, hazy figure much like an oval form of white fog standing in the middle of the room and then floating in the space of the room in a horizontal position it wafted out through the upper part of the open window passing through the metal screen just as though there was nothing to interfere with its passage. It was the first time in my experience that I had ever seen a figure of this kind hasten away from me. In nearly every instance of psychic research, such figures, whenever of genuine psychic nature, become passive and remain long enough in my presence to reveal to me the nature or purpose of their mission.

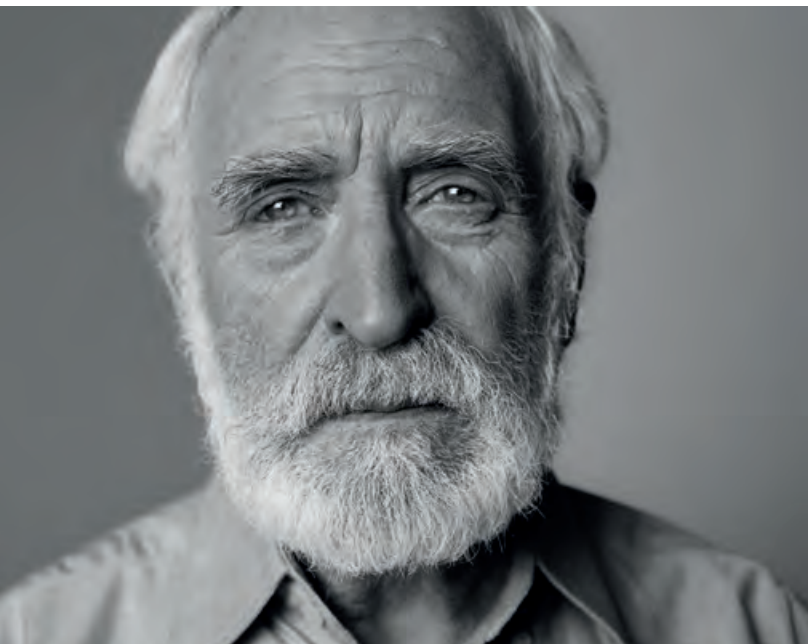
I closed the door of the room and seated myself on the edge of a trunk and waited in the faint light that came from the street lamp for any further developments.

I suppose that many would consider it an uncanny thing to sit in the centre of a room and watch a small door apparently open of its own accord.

Suddenly my attention was attracted to the little door that gave access to the attic. This little door was about eighteen inches wide and possibly thirty inches high, and was cut into the wooden panelling of the room in a hidden manner with just a little brass catch on it to keep it closed. It was not intended for any use except possibly for electricians or repair men to get to the attic when absolutely necessary and since the attic was very low and unfinished, the little door was kept constantly closed. Earlier, I had looked at this little door and noted that the spring catch on it was working properly and that the door was securely fastened. Now I was surprised however to see the spring catch on the door actually open with a click, permitting the door itself to open to the extent of eight or ten inches.

I suppose that many would consider it an uncanny thing to sit in the centre of a room and watch a small door apparently open of its own accord. Looking through the dark opening of the door I could see in





So, all three of us proceeded then to sit in concentration while I attuned myself with the Cosmic forces and pleaded that this sort of psychic manifestation should discontinue...

the centre of the attic a small bright light much like a ball of luminous paint. It had a very hazy outline but the centre of it was brilliantly white. As I concentrated upon it I saw that it was moving toward me, and as it moved it widened in area until finally it was at least two feet in diameter. Then I saw it squeeze or condense itself through the little open doorway and rapidly expand into a large oval of misty white luminosity. This appeared to be the identical oval form that I had seen float out of the window. It came closer to me, passed in front of me, and went to another corner that was very dark. Here it stood and gradually changed its shape from an oval figure to the form of an old man. I plainly saw the grey hair and grey beard, and the bright eyes, and even the trembling lips.

Slowly he raised one of his hands and enabled me to see that in this hand he held an odd shaped hatchet. Pointing with this hatchet over toward the opposite dark corner, I was surprised to see there a large packing box made crudely out of odd pieces of wood. The top of it was partly closed, and alongside it stood a number of pieces of wood which evidently were intended for the closing of the top of the box. I was just about to ask some questions when the wind blowing against one of the shades or something else caused one shade that was pulled all the way down against a closed window to suddenly flap and spring upward. As the shade wound itself rapidly around the roller, making a terrific noise, the figure in the corner

trembled and turned into a misty haze again of a deep red colour, and seemed to condense into nothingness right where it stood. Even the vague packing box in the corner disappeared also.

After I had made sure that the figure had entirely disappeared, I examined the window where the shade had caused all the disturbance and could find no reason for this incident, which certainly interrupted what might have been an interesting conversation. The young folks downstairs had heard the noise of the shade, and had heard me spring across the room, and were quite concerned. They stood at the foot of the stairs and called to ask if anything was wrong. To pacify them I had to go down and explain that merely a shade had played a trick on me. They were thoroughly frightened however and explained that they would not go to bed as long as there were such noises in the house, and the young wife even threatened to prepare to move the next day. I had to assure them therefore that I would intercede for them and see that the magic spell that had been cast over the house was neutralised or extinguished for all time.

So, all three of us proceeded then to sit in concentration while I attuned myself with the Cosmic forces and pleaded that this sort of psychic manifestation should discontinue inasmuch as I had received sufficient explanation from what I had seen to eliminate any further necessity for a continuance of the visitation.



Explanation

I did not attempt to trace this completely and to learn the details of the story back of it. Whatever details I would have learned would have been unimportant from a mystical or psychic point of view. For instance, I am not concerned even today as to the identity of the old man or what his position or place in life had been. It is quite evident to me from what I saw, that the old man had lived in the house at one time either as a permanent resident or a guest, and that just before his death he had engaged in packing something or many things in a large box, which he had crudely constructed out of various pieces of wood, and intended to ship this packing box to some place or leave it for someone to possess with all of its contents.

Death however overcame him before he completed his work and evidently the contents of the box had gotten into the wrong hands or were in danger of getting into the wrong hands, and the personality of the old gentleman was undoubtedly disturbed and uneasy, and desired to complete the protection of the things that had been placed in the packing box.

Such strong desires in the heart and mind of a person at the moment of death often cause them to



return to the earth plane or to be held earth bound on the earth plane for days, weeks, or months after death. It is just as though after death they found themselves floating in space as a being, but with their mind and thoughts centred upon and held fast by some little problem that they considered exceedingly important. Through their mind being concentrated upon the problem and the location and character of the problem, their personality projects to that place and they perform in a sort of mental visualisation those acts or those things that they would have liked to have done before death. These mental pictures project themselves to the place being thought of and become visible. If you can convince such a projected personality that the message they wanted to give or the thing they wanted to do is being taken care of, and that everything is all right, they will immediately abandon their restlessness about it and forget it completely, and this at once releases them from constant contact with some earthly place.

Nearly all cases of the return of a personality to some former habitation is for the purpose of giving to someone a message, pointing something out that is hidden, lost or undiscovered, or to attempt to cause some little act which weighed heavily upon their minds at the time of death. The turning on of lights however, and the brusque manner of dealing with these projections and manifestations, often frightens away the personality only to return again at some quiet moment. The quickest way to end this sort of thing is to sit by peacefully and sympathetically and ask the vision before you what it is it desires to convey or what it wishes to have done, and listen to what is said or watch what is shown, and thereby bring the matter to a permanent close.





The Inner Self

by **Mary Coulsdon**

Within every genuine seeker of spiritual enlightenment there exists a deep longing for soul-manifestation; or as Rosicrucians see it, a longing of the outer self to enter into deep and regular communion with the soul. The basic reality of the soul resident within every person, eventually leads even the hardest and least refined people to have feelings of yearning for a relationship with something so awesome and great that they are hard put to describe it in any terms other than simply *God*.

As a species of life sharing the earth with many other creatures, we are collectively seeking to reveal as many aspects as possible of the divine qualities within that link us with this God. These aspects of our deeper self are the ultimate source of our destiny, and reveal to us crucial snippets of why we are here and what we are supposed to accomplish with our lives. We know we are more than mere chemical elements, minerals, cells, nerves, bones, muscles, etc., of which our bodies are made; for we are endowed with consciousness and the ability to think. And

more importantly, we are endowed with a unique form of consciousness which, on earth at least, is, as far as we know, restricted to humans only..., namely, the ability to know that we are thinking, and to reflect not only on other things but on our inner self as well. We are responsive to our inner self and recognise it as something quite apart in many ways, from our outer self, yet still part and parcel of what each of us calls "*me*." This self-responsiveness has led many a person to seek out, find and eventually accept the challenge of embarking on a well organised path of spiritual development, and remain with it for the major part of the rest of their life. Such people earn the right to bear the title of "*mystic*."

Know Thyself

All mystics have discovered that they possess an inner self; and a major part of the rest of their lives revolves around learning as much as they can about this masterful inner personality. Knowing this inner self in an intimate and





Ruins of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

truly deep way must have been the motivation behind those who designed and built the temple of Apollo at Delphi where, inscribed over the entrance portal, were the words: “*Know thyself*.” One cannot escape the simple yet profound meaning of these three simple words..., “know thy self.” It is not merely a matter of possessing an innate intelligence or a gifted intellect, for there are many highly gifted people who have not the slightest interest in any deeper quest in life. Knowing oneself involves self reflection, and that does not require any great intellectual ability to begin with; anyone can do it, if they are sufficiently motivated. No matter what one’s abilities are, or how unaccomplished or unrefined one is intellectually, one can still embark upon a path of getting to know the inner self.

The one attribute that makes our species, homo sapiens, unique amongst all the primates and other creatures of the world, is our ability to know that we are thinking, and furthermore to know that we are thinking about ourselves. As mystics, we are seeking to know our self, our real self, and are trying to unlock its mystery by whatever means available to us. To *know thyself* requires regular periods of introspection and self reflection, which is something requiring no great innate gifts of intelligence, only determination to succeed and the steady application of a well thought out system of inner development. In reflecting upon oneself, one is analysing aspects of one’s being not only for the many small faults and strengths one has, but especially for really important positive potentialities one already possesses but have not yet developed. These potentialities are the broad brush strokes of the life we will lead, and it is incumbent upon us to learn as much as possible about them, as early in life as we can.

We all have certain intrinsic qualities, our potentialities..., and are drawn to reflect upon them. In the process, we examine our most cherished ideals and try to find the essential core attributes of our being that motivate us to live better lives. We reason and rationalise on the virtues of our existence, and gravitate towards experiences that will reveal for us the deepest and most profound mysteries of existence. During our reflections upon self, we inevitably discover our faculty of intuition, and come to realise how hugely important it is. Yet there are five other faculties as well..., sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch..., and they are crucial to our ability to live and learn in the material world. Our sixth sense, the intuitive faculty, is in many ways our most important one, for it often overlays the information it

delivers to us, on top of our five physical senses, thereby making the impressions we receive as real as if they were seen, heard, smelled, tasted or touched. Our intuitive sixth sense therefore, is experienced regularly through our physical senses, and it is often difficult to know if what we have perceived is purely physical in origin or emanates from a higher source. And that is the great challenge of learning to use the intuitive sense well.

Our goal as mystics is to relate all our sensory perceptions to everything that happens to us, from the highest and most sublime, to the most common, practical, mundane matters. The totality of what we are is not immediately revealed to us any more than are the component finite parts of the universe in which we live. But we live in a constant state of confidence that our efforts at understanding the deepest mysteries we know, will in the end be rewarded, and we never give up our quest to *know thyself*.



Our five faculties, sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch are crucial to our ability to live and learn in the material world.





We seek to capture aspects of the infinite so that light may be thrown upon some of the darkness of the world both within and around us.

An Evolving Realisation

Metaphysically speaking we are not only in the universe, but the greater part of what we are originates wholly from the universe. In other words, although a certain highly refined aspect of our being may ultimately originate from beyond the bounds of the physical universe, the overwhelmingly greater part of us definitely has its source from within this universe. It behoves us therefore to devote time and effort, and use our faculties as optimally as we can, to gain a greater and greater understanding of our relationship with all things in the universe, and indeed the universe itself as a unitary, thinking, breathing, living whole.

We seek inspiration to gain greater understanding of what we are, why we are, where we are, and what we are destined to become if we follow the potentialities we already possess. We are imbued with ideas and ideals; we build, create, change and evolve, and our lives face endless changes to which we have to make constant adjustments. But we have confidence in the knowledge that we have already acquired much understanding about our innate abilities, and merely need to use that greater experience in more positive and uplifting ways that contribute to our intellectual and spiritual growth. In time, we come to realise what an extraordinary range of sense perception we have. Our physical senses may each cover very small ranges of the total energy vibrations available in the universe; but even that small fraction is immensely rich in diversity.

We also learn that the diversity of impressions we perceive is not entirely tied to our physical senses, but is closely associated with a mysterious, vibrant, light reflection of our physical body, something known as the “psychic body,” which provides us with a whole new range of sensory vibrations that only our psychic faculties can

perceive. The big challenge for all who seek the mystical life is in coaxing those impressions out of the deeper recesses of the being and overlaying them on the normal five physical sensory receptors in such a way that they make sense and acquire purpose and meaning. As part and parcel of the range of techniques available to us for accomplishing this, we reflect upon such things, take time to be alone with our thoughts, enjoy and daily yearn for our quiet moments, bring order into our lives and maintain that order at all costs, and work regularly and intensively with the age-old techniques of concentration, visualisation, meditation and contemplation in the accomplishment of our goals. We seek to capture aspects of the infinite so that light may be thrown upon some of the darkness of the world both within and around us. And the result is that we manifest outwardly our inner strength, and seek to assist others to do the same.

Everyone is in need of and is capable of rational concepts and thought. In our reflections we seek to understand more and more the true nature of our deeper self. We seek to know the inner life that our inner self has lived from the moment we were born. This has nothing to do with modern psychological theories of multiple personalities, but everything to do with the single personality that the soul possesses, and which in many cases may be very different from the personality of the outer self. To mystics, this inner self is a stage of perfection to which the outer self can but stand in awe and gasp in admiration..., so accomplished and refined is its action. Whilst searching for communication with that masterful inner personality, we naturally are drawn to examine our present habitual thoughts, ideals and aspirations, and come to understand that there are far higher thoughts we should be carrying about with us, ever higher ideals to which we should be striving.





The “fixed stars” of our existence are there from one incarnation to the next, and pass through from life to life in the personality of the soul.

Toward Spiritual Maturity

We know we are infused with life, a sort of life force with intelligence that we come to know as the soul. And we realise eventually that this soul, whilst similar to many other souls, is also quite unique and separate from all others, and as a consequence, manifests a personality that is unique too. The physical body is not merely a collection of elements and cells, nor a mere nexus of energies...., but a hugely complex plexus of life itself. And not only is it this life force that makes us move and live as animals do, but a particularly energetic and *vital* form of it allows us to think and know that we are thinking; and to analyse our experiences and think of better ways of utilising our abilities for both our betterment and the betterment of all things on earth. We seek to give expression to what we know about ourselves and our relationship with all other things within our intellectual and emotional reach; and we apply meaning to it all and see it as a unitary, Cosmic whole.

Over time and with the gradual acquisition of greater spiritual maturity, we acquire the perspective needed to accurately recognise visible and tangible things for what they actually are...., not merely what we perceive them to be in our bubble-world of realities. Some things remain unchanged for tens of years, some for hundreds of years and some for longer than the human race will exist. But

other things are transient and may last only a day or two, a few months perhaps or maybe a year or two, but not much longer. Each particular episode in our lives requires these transient conditions and things to exist for just those short periods in order to learn and grow from them.

But we always try to explain these transient phases of our lives in relation to the more unmoving parts of the universe, the so-called “*fixed stars*” of our realities, for it helps us in applying, meaning and lasting value to our life experiences. But we seek to understand the “fixed star” phases of human existence from the knowledge and experience we have acquired not only in our present life, but from the accumulated experiences of former incarnations as well. The *fixed stars* of our existence are there from one incarnation to the next, and pass through from life to life in the personality of the soul. Those who are able to contemplate the revelations emanating from the true self become aware of an immensely dynamic power within themselves, quietly idling in the background like some well-muffled, shiny supercharged V8 roadster just waiting for the accelerator to be depressed. Incrementally they become increasingly aware of the life and reality of the inner self, and know without doubt that this is their most cherished dream come true...., if only they could bring that inner reality into full outer manifestation in the ordinary day-to-day outer self.



Cosmic Unity

We are not alone in the universe. Not only is there almost certainly much intelligent life elsewhere on other planets, we do not need to look far in order to see life and intelligence as sophisticated as we can deal with, right here, walking the streets of virtually every city, town and village in the world. The discoveries we make whilst *'dwelling within'* and communing with our inner self, must be extended into the world of people and animals; a world that is not our possession alone, but one that has to be shared with countless other living things. The world is for us to behold and care for with reverence, for we are inescapable though vital parts of the great living whole that is our home planet, earth.

That we are capable of reaching out beyond our immediate environment in a non-physical way is borne out through the use of our psychic faculties, particularly the faculties of intuition and projection of thought and consciousness. Like radio transceivers, we can both receive and transmit information; and we have already within us physical means of going beyond ourselves in the form of chakras (energy transit points) and psychic centres (information transit points), based on various fixed areas of the physical body and its aura. Something is acting and working within us. And this *'something'* is part of the broader reality of the self that we seek to have revealed and manifested outwardly through our outer self as much as possible.



Image shows chakras (energy transit points).

Our experience of life is in a cosmic sense a highly complex unity of a multitude of component parts, but particularly a unity of people like ourselves. Through our concepts of mind and matter, we seek greater understanding to fathom the unknowable that stands before us in silent majesty. We seek to plumb the depths of reality, and we do so from within by seeking to know our soul and its material expression on earth, known to Rosicrucians as the *soul personality* or the *master within*.

Realising One's Place

Without regular reflection and periods of deep contemplation, we lose the edge, and our lives start degenerating into chaos. As mystics we know that we must give in order to receive, and giving of our time for the well-being of our own beings, is the price for receiving those insights and moments of inspiration we seek. As each of us is a part of the Cosmic totality, we are capable of becoming keenly aware of the intricacies of our self-manifesting universe, and where we fit into this huge jigsaw puzzle. What is our purpose? What are we supposed to be doing? Why are we here? These and many other questions are eventually answered fully and to our complete satisfaction.

Without regular reflection and periods of deep contemplation, we lose the edge, and our lives start degenerating into chaos.

Too many people take the little things in life for granted; yet so many of these little things are cause for wonder when we look at them in depth. Too often our attention is focused on the big issues and we forget the much smaller issues that may in the long term be of far greater consequence for us. So, we must develop a certain sensitivity to details that bypass most others; and that sensitivity comes through a systematic development of our sensitivity to the intuitive impressions we are constantly receiving but seldom becoming objectively conscious of. When our intuitive faculty has been developed to the extent that it is overlain on our ordinary sense faculties, allowing us to home in on all things in life, great or small that have relevance to our well being and that of others within our karmic proximity, we will have reached a



crucial milestone in our development as spiritual beings and can rightly be called “*mystics*.”

Unity of Humanity

There exists a great, unifying, universal human intellectual *stamp* or *mould* from which all human beings are made. The bible speaks of humans as being made in the “*image of God*”, and maybe this image is nothing other than the so-called “*mould of man*”, the stamp from which all humans are made. This prototype of humankind is capable of self-reflection and has a keen sense of self-awareness when given even a moderate freedom of expression within us. We search and learn new things; constantly, daily, learning things we never knew before, and especially things that help us to arrange our lives in accord with the relatively small set of key universal laws that affect us the most. The superficial must be discarded, and we need to learn how to distinguish what is important from what is unimportant. We seek to overcome a finite ego and to grasp the security of peace, courage, freedom and fulfilment through an understanding of, and attunement with the infinite Mind of the Cosmos.

While it is said that travel broadens one’s perspective, one need not travel to distant places to acquire mastery of oneself. Without any travel at all, one can profit from the experiences of life. In this day of rapid transportation, how much do we learn about the world and its people by flying around it in a matter of hours? Those who understand themselves can understand others. In the revelation of the reality of self, we become aware of a certain intrinsic greatness, and feel a sense of reverence and responsibility for the inherent powers we have inherited. We are also aware of our limitations, and appreciate the contrasts of life, knowing how necessary they are. We learn the truth of the promulgation by great philosophers that “*being is a state of becoming*.” And in our contemplations we arrive at the truth that nothing comes from nothing; that everything must come from something. We become aware that there is something greater in the universe and in each of us than is immediately apparent. We seek to give an account of ourselves and the universe in which we live, and the universe in turn speaks to us in measured tones as soon as our babbling has ceased and we are ready to listen.

Understanding Knowledge

With the understanding and knowledge that is ours for the taking, we do not waver in our decisions. We do not hesitate to pursue the spiritual wisdom that awaits us. Our understanding is maintained in truth, and we keep our eyes on the horizon of infinity. We are looking into the future, to the future of our human race, our nation, our family and friends, and of course of ourselves. And from that vision of what is to come, we gain a deeply mystical perspective of who we are, why we are here, and what we are supposed to be doing. In revealing the reality of self, we expose our infinite, divine quality, not only in order to know ourselves, but to reach beyond the piffling reality that is our material world.

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Francis Bacon said that knowledge is power. We do not believe that he meant to use this knowledge in a conquest to master other people, but rather to master himself. All our thoughts and actions should stem from a unity of rationality, wholesomeness, respectfulness, devoutness, reasonableness, and the

courage of upholding publicly our mystical convictions. We are the keepers or guardians of the life with which we are endowed. We have the freedom and volition to do with our lives what we will; we are the ultimate creators of our lives. Even though we are in the stream of life and share the same Life Force that all other living things possess, we retain our identity and can be self-sustaining in our individual efforts.

Self Knowledge

Let good intentions and achievements be the hallmarks of our lives. We may not have reached our full stature yet, but we know we are capable of growth, and we are experiencing development. While much of our being is of a physical nature, and is therefore finite, we are progressing toward infinite horizons because of the reality of the self that is being revealed to us, the inner self which is infinite in nature. We are working toward a kind of perfection, a personal perfection that uses all our potentialities to their peak performance. The knowledge we have gained helps us in our efforts to attain this end. Self-analysis, guided by the dictates of the inner self, helps us to accomplish this goal. Habits which retard our progress in attaining the goal are disciplined and correctly channelled.





The path we must follow is clear, and we humbly rejoice in being a privileged traveller.

The cherished state of freedom will never be wholly possessed by those who do not come to know themselves. Those who drift along in the stream of life, pushed this way and that by misdirected desires, and haunted by confused and misunderstood emotions, is a slave to materiality, bound helplessly by inflexible concepts and stunted abilities. Rich are the rewards of those who know themselves and the greatness of their true reality. They live in harmony with natural laws, sensing well-being of mind and body; and they reap the fruits of their efforts. Their inner strength, self-confidence, and mental peace are reflected in good health; and they are just and fair in all their dealings.

Sharing Our Divinity

The strength of harmonious unity with the Inner Self, the Master Within, naturally radiates outward. One is able to give of oneself without personal harm, for the lesson has been learned that we have something to give, something that is not uniquely ours but that we are urged to share because of the very affinity of being with the whole. In coming to know oneself, one lives life to its fullest and realise life's greatest joys. The path we must follow is clear, and we humbly rejoice in being a privileged traveller. Our personality is of a refined tensile strength, capable of withstanding the severest trials and

appreciating the beauty in all.

That which is within you is a divine heritage and which no one can take from you. Sincere endeavour and the pursuit of worthwhile ideals will bring you into attunement with the divine nature of your real self. You alone can experience and express the real you, the inner self, the real self. Others can point the way, but you must apply yourself to the work which is to be done. No one can evolve or progress for you any more than another can live your life or breathe for you.

An elevation of your consciousness to a higher plane of thought and action can only be attained by your efforts alone. When this fact is understood, the wisdom of others that can help to show the way to "*knowing thyself*" will not be scorned. Your mystical search will culminate in self-knowledge; and in this search, all fragments hinting at the goal have to be carefully studied by the intellect. By living a life of spirituality and mystical realisation, you grow into greater attunement with the universal laws of the Cosmic and are imbued with all that is infinite.

Within you is a spark of all that is divine. The light of your divine heritage has made you what you are today. It is your divinity that causes you to aspire to greater ideals, realisations, states of awareness and perfection. Thus in coming to know yourself, there is revealed the reality which dwells within you.





Looking Out & Looking In

by Peter Paget

There is a duality in us that might not be immediately apparent throughout our everyday lives. By that I mean our sense organs which have a twofold function, expressed mainly as active and passive. I'll give you a few examples: the tongue is part of the faculty of speech, which is an active faculty; but it also houses the organ of taste, which is a passive faculty. Again, the fingers are the main organ of the sense of touch; they also hold and grasp, and that is an active operation. The nostrils serve the sense of smell, but they are also used for inflating the lungs. Hearing is a passive operation, but the ear, the internal ear at least, plays a large part in balance.

What about the eyes? What other function do they serve besides that of guiding us safely across the street? Think of some distant place you know. You are using what is called your mind's eye, and by that I don't mean what is known to mystics as the "*third eye*." The mind's eye is not actually an organ like the physical eye (or indeed the third eye), yet it is convenient to call it the organ of

visualisation. In remembering something, we visualise; and in planning the future, we also visualise. The mind's eye therefore endows us with memory and expectation, without which there could be no sense of time. Time therefore is subjective. All of us possess the mind's eye, but only a few have developed it into a '*third eye*.'

Now note this. You could not have visualised a distant place unless your outer eye had originally supplied the image. Only the third eye could have done that. With the mind's eye we can see no colour or form that has not been previously seen by the outer eye. Though the mind's eye is the foundation of all imagination, and therefore of all achievement, it is yet limited in its range of vision by the images and pictures which the physical eyes have previously brought in from the outer world.

Fiction writers obtain their scenes and characters, not by originating ideas of places and individuals, but by fusing the characteristics of a number of scenes and incidents into one. They model their so-called creations from people that they have known, that is, those people



their outer eyes have observed. Storytelling is a process of using the mind's eye to rearrange, transpose and mingle the multitude of persons, scenes and adventures which have previously been reflected upon the retina of the outer eye. Words are then used to convey those visions to other minds.

Fiction writers, myth makers who are generally poets, and even historians, are skilled through the use of words to convey the images of their mind's eye to the mind's eye of others. They are responsible for such enduring characters as Santa Claus, King Arthur, Saint George, Romulus and Remus, as well as for Harry Potter and many more. Ultimately, even word-visions are dependent upon the physical eye, for storytellers can tell us nothing outside of the range of their vision. They are equally dependent upon the eyes of their readers (or listeners); hence, angels, an entirely separate order of beings, have to be visualised as humans with wings since this is the idealised form common to most.

An important function of our two physical eyes thus becomes apparent. As we walk abroad, as we admire antique furniture or a wayside flower, as we travel by train or fly through the air, as we gaze into a shop window or into the depths of a sheltered pool, in addition to guiding our footsteps, these two eyes are also peopling our inner world with farms and forests, with antique or modern furniture, with fabrics or fountain pens, or perhaps still pools carpeted with pebbles. Even while relaxed and immersed in a book, we are focusing our mind's eye on the creations of the authors of fiction. In fact, unless we are sleeping or perhaps daydreaming, our outer physical eyes are ceaselessly populating our individual worlds with people, landscapes, grandfather clocks, woods, forests and houses and suchlike.

Realities of the Mind

We cannot separate ourselves from this inner, immaterial world, open to the mind's eye and provided by the physical eye. We cannot even forget about it, as psychoanalysts well know. If we strenuously try to forget something which may be unpleasant, it is likely to form an inconvenient complex, or it may trouble us in our dreams. In fact, these images build up and become part of our consciousness that is almost a part of the Self. Whether our home looks out on a flower garden or a slag heap is more than a question of refinement or culture. As the poet Browning says,

**All of us possess the mind's eye,
but only a few have developed
that "third eye."**

"What entered into thee, that was, is, and shall be." Thus these countless images are something more than feeble reflections of outer reality, or fantasies, as the unthinking multitude regard them.

Indeed who can discriminate between the real and the unreal? Is the outer world real because we see it with our outer eyes, and the inner world unreal because we see it with our mind's eye? Is the mythical King Arthur less real than the historical Charlemagne? The reality of these personalities is dependent not upon any historical counterpart, but upon the intensity of our visualisation. Even when picturing some familiar historical figure, we are dependent upon the accuracy of the historian, and each reader visualises the figure somewhat differently.

It has been truly said that the best histories are only approximately accurate. Where is the real Charlemagne, or even the real Jesus?

We have now reached a rather startling conclusion. Our responsibility, as we continue to people our own inner world, the world we rule, becomes far greater than we had previously supposed. Shall we people it with flower gardens or with slag heaps, with heroes or cowards?

Science knows much more about the two physical eyes than about the mind's eye, for science has given much more attention to physics than to psychology.

The act of seeing is full of wonders almost miraculous. The image on the retina, like all pictures, is two-dimensional; and yet we look out onto a three-dimensional world. The image originally is upside down when it is cast upon the retina; the retina reflects no colours; yet, we see colours. It can, however, only see the here and now. Even as we sit in our own room and view the furniture and wallpaper with our physical eyes, we must use our mind's eye if we would see the adjoining room. And similarly we must use the mind's eye for all the past and the future; that is not a possibility of the physical eyes.

The vision of the mind's eye is largely responsible for the development of character, and being the basis of the imagination, it is responsible for all achievement. And so we are endowed with memory and hope, and are lifted definitely above the animal kingdom. When we know that these mind pictures become a part of our consciousness, is it not reasonable to suggest that the work of the outer eye of projecting scenes and people and events onto the mind's eye is a function even more important than that of its guiding us safely across the street? After all, the kingdom we seek is within.





My Friend Win

by **Madeleine Cabuche**
(1922-2014)

For years I was privileged to have a very dear friend, let us call her Win, possessed of many virtues. Her almost regal appearance and often stern expression seemed at variance with the mischief and laughter sparkling in her blue eyes and the two dimples which came and went each side of her mouth. For me, she provided a mother/grandmother relationship I had never previously known.

Serious by nature she was, nevertheless, a generator of laughter and joy. Whenever we got together, which was alas only once a year, laughter cascaded around us and we seemed to find some object of fun wherever we turned. Many were the midnights I would find her standing, serious and intent on her hot-water-bottle-filling routine, for it was very cold where she lived. Something would trigger us and we would collapse, speechless with laughter, across each other's shoulders. One thing would lead to another and an hour might pass before we finally subsided and she whispered a soft *"goodnight dear"* as she made her way down the long corridor.

Of course, there had to be something about her which was not quite perfect and it was, from my point of view, a big something. She was an adamant atheist. Her only divinities were Lenin and Marx. Despite her



great love of art, literature, scenery, animals and all things beautiful, nothing could break through her absolute conviction that it all led to nothing and death was a final and total extinction. She would have been outraged had I tried to intervene in her stoical acceptance of the recent death of her favourite son. In her eighties, along with anything from Jane Austen to Salman Rushdie, she still found time to read diligently through immense tomes on early socialism. She was I think, both saddened and irritated by my lack of fervour for such matters. She knew of course that I had beliefs for which she could only feel a certain contempt, and steadfastly avoided any discussion of them until, miraculously one morning, there came a breakthrough.

For her, mealtimes were a social occasion, meant as much for talking as for eating and so we often talked during breakfast time, sitting one each end of the long table. Somehow, that morning, politics took a back seat and I found myself, for the first time, able to expound something of what I believed. This had to be done with a delicate precision and avoidance of any word holding the slightest religious connotation. Perhaps the fact that at long last I found this beloved person willing to listen inspired me to find the exact words, the exact analogies which she would be able to accept. Diagrams were drawn with index finger on the chequered tablecloth while, her head a little to one side, sky-blue eyes deeply concentrated, her formidable brain absorbing what was said, she let me talk on uninterrupted and without comment.

Although it would be too much to say she believed

any of it, she obviously thought it worthy of her consideration, so much so that I felt unusually light and happy when I eventually went off on my much-delayed shopping errands. Just three months later, she took her own exit, bravely and in her own way, as she had always declared she would when she felt it to be necessary. For two reasons: firstly, she had developed an incurable illness, which she had kept secret from her family, having stated emphatically, many times, that she would never be a burden to anyone; secondly, the approach of her ninetieth birthday filled her with horror. She so detested "*old ladies*."

When I learned what had happened, my grief was tempered by gratitude that we had had the chance for that talk because I knew that, even at that late stage, the knowledge she had absorbed might help her to adjust to her new state of consciousness. Just four days later, I had proof of that. Whilst spending the afternoon with a sick friend, I experienced a slow influx of peace in the hitherto troubled atmosphere, then a strong impression of Win, over in one corner of the room; just her head and shoulders, surrounded by a faint silvery light, looking down on us, radiating the love and compassion which were her trademark and telling me not to fret, that all was well as she had now discovered the truth of what I had told her.

This happened around mid-afternoon and her presence lingered on throughout the evening. I remarked to my friend that I had sensed such a good, peaceful atmosphere around that day. She said that she had felt it too, adding, after a while: "*Your friend Win was here, wasn't she?*"





The Enigma of Love

by **Ralph M Lewis**

Imperator of AMORC (1939-1987)

Poetry has long acclaimed love as the acme of human feeling. But love has not been confined to the lofty realm poets have assigned it. Love has also been commingled with the lower motivations of human nature, such as sexual appetites, ambition and the cupidity of material gain. The true nature of love has been sought after as earnestly as the Holy Grail or the Philosopher's Stone of the alchemists.

Is love a divine endowment, a gift of the gods, a realm of supreme ecstasy to be attained, a biological impulsion, or an inexplicable psychological phenomenon? Although the philosophers of Ancient Greece were not the first to refer to love, they were the first to reduce it to intellectual scrutiny. Empedocles in the 5th Century BCE offered a theory for motion in the universe. His predecessor, Parmenides, had said that Cosmic Being was *"without empty space"* and therefore denied the possibility of matter moving in space. Empedocles said that matter consists of but four elements: earth, fire, water and air. Motion, he said, was caused by love and strife. In other words,

love was a force of attraction while strife was a force of repulsion. Here we see an analogous relationship between cosmic forces and human nature. Love is said to move the elements into a harmonious commingling, whilst strife moves them towards a gradual separation.

In Plato's dialogue *The Symposium*, the author has Socrates discourse extensively on the nature of love. To what degree these are actually the words of Socrates as opposed to those of his devout student Plato, is a moot question. We can only touch upon a few points of the lengthy dialogue to show the attempt to reduce love to a concise definition. In referring to love Socrates asks: *"First, is it not the love of something, and of something too, which is wanting in people?"* Here we see an interesting concept. Love is reduced to the need for something that people do not possess. It is a personal inadequacy that they feel and think they must overcome. Conversely however, if people are self-sufficient, do they then not love? Must love be a condition of perpetual demanding, or does it become evanescent, that is, pass away when the object or condition sought has been attained?



Qualities of Love

In *The Symposium*, Socrates relates certain qualities to the nature of love: *"In wanting the beautiful, love wants the good."* This must not be construed as meaning just that which is physically appealing and attractive. Moral implications exist as well. The statement also suggests this question: What are the beautiful and the good which love is said to want? Further, it is said in the dialogue that there are *"the aspirations of the incomplete, step by step to goodness of beauty, physical, mind, soul and the absolute beauty, which is a divine beauty."*

The important idea presented here is that in each category of self, namely, the physical, mental and spiritual, there is a realisation of imperfection, the incomplete. We then aspire to the perfection of each of these categories of self. The perfect of each is the good and the beautiful. The beautiful is the harmony that arises from the attainment realised. The finality is said to be *"absolute beauty, which is a divine beauty."* This supreme beauty is a oneness with the Divine and a harmony which embraces all aspects of reality of which we can be conscious. This kind of love implies a transcendence above all other kinds of love.

We will turn again to the subject of beauty and the good that Plato so closely related to love. What do we ordinarily consider the beautiful? What is it that engenders our idea of it? Is not the beautiful, the good that we experience in every emotional satisfaction? For example, whatever we perceive by sight, sound, touch, smell or taste, and which is very pleasing to us, is the good

of that thing. It is likewise the beauty of it, for we accept it as the harmony of the particular quality of that thing or condition.

We call a delectable food delicious rather than beautiful, but the substance of meaning is the same; that which is delicious is that which is considered good. Therefore, the two words, beautiful and delicious, are interchangeable for that value which we consider the good. Where the words beautiful and delicious do not by custom apply to that which is satisfying to us, we instead directly apply the word good, as for example, a good tool, instrument, or solution to a mathematical problem.

If love has been the origin and cause of creation, of the unfoldment of spirit in matter, it is also the agent of the spiritual progress and of return to unity.

Academic psychology does not expound extensively upon the subject of love. When it does, love is given two definite categories, that is, instinctive love and parental love. The primary instinctive love is explained as sexual attraction, as it is the necessary factor for procreation. Without this inherent drive, it is psychologically assumed that sexual relations would be more repugnant than attractive. Love, in this physical sense, is the mere satisfying of an organic want, just as the necessity for nutrition. The gratifying object is idealised as the good, the beautiful.

Parental love, an immanent extension of the self,



Plato's Symposium, depiction by Anselm Feuerbach



*Parental love, an immanent extension of the self, is instinctive.
There is a subconscious extension of self; the child is accepted as an integral part of the parent's body.*

is also instinctive. Simply, the child is not exclusively loved for himself. At the most sublime level, there is a subconscious extension of self, that is, the child is accepted as an integral part of the parent's body. More simply, the mother instinctively loves the child as an intimate part of herself. This is most commonly manifested in the exceptional maternal protection, which is an example of the differentiated self. The mother rationally accepts the child as a separate entity, but subconsciously she loves him as a part of her personal self.

Another form of love is principally referred to as spiritual love. In its most pristine form it may be termed mystical love. Before, before attempting to arrive at an understanding of mystical love, it is appropriate that we relate some principal examples of it.

Mystical Love

Isaac of Nineveh (7th Century CE) was the author of a famed work entitled "*Mystical Treatises*." It was intended for the guidance of those seeking the '*mystical way*.' We have selected the following aphorism from this work as it is characteristic of numerous others by the author:

True love for God is always disinterested, for such is not increased by what benefits it, nor decreased by what neglects it.

A depth of meaning is contained in these words. We may infer that divine love should not be construed in terms of personal benefit to the lover. In his devotion, the individual may experience an ecstasy or other emotional

or physical benefits; but such are not necessarily the result of his love, nor will they intensify it. Conversely, this pure or divine love is not affected by the neglect of any formal demonstration of it. In other words, if one has this intense indwelling divine love, there will be no diminishing of it, even though he neglects an objective personal display of it.

Bishri Yasin, a prominent Sufi mystic of the 8th Century, was a prolific writer. The following is representative of the theme woven throughout his literary accomplishments:

Divine love is the endeavour to remove self-interest from the dealings of God.

We may construe this to mean that absolute divine love must be distinguished from a mere appeal for divine intercession on one's personal behalf; in other words, it is a love given without an expectancy of personal benefit. It is a love sought for its essence, namely, the experience itself. An East Indian mystic exclaimed:

Forsaking the appeal of evanescent appearances, the devotee's love is directed solely to the one ineffable reality.

In its apparent meaning, this has a relationship to the words of a Christian mystic:

So long as the self is attached to desires, it is blind to its real nature, which is only revealed to it when God is the sole object of contemplation.



These two mystical concepts may be understood as defining divine love as selfless, that is, with none of the qualities that we attribute to mortal existence. Its value is in itself, not in any of the changing values of human life.

The Origin of Creation

One of the many pronouncements of Islamic mystics is: *"If love has been the origin and cause of creation, of the unfoldment of spirit in matter, it is also the agent of spiritual progress and of a return to unity."*

This we can understand to mean that divine love both initially *caused* the physical world but also gave matter *animation* and *consciousness*. Therefore, that same spiritual impulsion should be used as the means of bringing our mortal consciousness to a realisation of its divine nature. The mystic experiences a return to the One, a unity with It.

The mystic's conception of absolute or divine love is fundamentally the same, regardless of time, place or religious influence. May we presume to offer what the mystic conceives this universal thought or concept to be? First, all reality is of a primary One, that is, it is of a God, a Divine or Cosmic Source. Though all things in essence are the same in function, their expressions are not. The God, or Cosmic Source, passes through a cyclic state emanating outward in lesser stages of perfection. However, all such must return again to the Source, completing the circle. As mortals therefore we must return in consciousness to the full realisation and awareness of our divine origin. This, then, is the ultimate unity with Reality, the Absolute, that we, as mystics, seek. No intermediary is needed for our return to a conscious unity with the All. This concept is symbolically presented as a dot from which a line extends in a circular form, evolving around and upward to the dot again.

Now, for a summation of the foregoing. It must be apparent that there is a diversity of loves. However, if we look at the subject analytically, we are aware that all loves have one basic thing in common: Love is desire. The different loves are but a collection of desires. Love is the desire for a particular kind of sensation or experience.

The various types of desires are all motivations for happiness or pleasure of a kind. Such is the substance of love. There exists a hierarchical order of loves and one love in this scale is considered to be supreme. This arbitrary determination is based upon its sustained intensity and duration. The lowest order of loves, the sensual desires, are transient and must be continually aroused for their satisfaction. They are like an itch that is not satisfied until

it is scratched and once appeased, the pleasure quickly passes. The desires of all the appetites have this transient nature.

The next class of love in the rising order of the hierarchy of desires is the intellectual. This includes the desire to create, the acquisition of knowledge, and the achievement in various arts and crafts. It involves calling forth and utilising the powers of the mind in mastering the environment.



Unlike the sensual desires, intellectual love provides no gradual diminishing of satisfaction. Each realised intellectual desire stimulates the mental faculties and fortifies the talents. The pleasure provided by the satisfaction of such desires increases because it does not satiate. This type of love is also the love of wisdom. It is the love of abstraction as the idealism of freedom, the mystery of Being, the inquiring into the phenomena of nature.

The highest type of desire is the spiritual motivation. It is more impersonal than any of the others. In this type of love, self wants nothing for itself. Rather, it desires only to experience a merging with that Wholeness it considers to be the Ultimate Transcendence, be it called God, Cosmic, Absolute, or Universal Mind. The pleasure of such a realisation is an ecstasy that is inexplicable and also ineffable. Theoretically, such a love is the goal of religion. It is the mystical spirit and love of true religion. It is, however, the subjective aspect of religion. When religion relates other desires to its doctrines, then this supreme love retrogresses to the lower order in the psychological hierarchy of human desires.

Love is the desire for happiness, and happiness, I repeat, is pleasure. There is nothing greater than pleasure, as each phase of it has an intrinsic value in the service of humankind. If we confine ourselves solely to any one of the loves, and its pleasures, clearly then we are denying ourselves the full extent of the hierarchy of loves.



Chinese Alchemy

A Search for Immortality



by Michael DeMarco

Above: Illustration of the practice called *Xixin tuicang* (wash the heart and retire to a hidden place) from *Xingming guizhi* (*Pointers on Spiritual Nature and Bodily Life*) by Yi Zhenren, a Taoist text on internal alchemy published in 1615. Credit: Chinese woodcut: Daoist internal alchemy. Wellcome Collection.

Before attempting to compound one of the Chinese elixirs for immortality, such as the “Scarlet Snow and Flowing Pearl Elixir” or the “White Sublimate of Quicksilver Elixir”, it would be wise to heed the words of *Lao Tzu* regarding our motives and methods. In verse 55 of his *Tao Te Ching* he says: “*That which goes against the Way will come to an early end.*”

The Chinese search for immortality has been a long, complex road involving many hazards as we shall see. Fortunately for us, we can benefit much from the long history of trial-and-error in the Far East and attempt by Chinese sages to reach states of permanent bliss. In addition, we will come to know their discoveries concerning human concord with “*The Way of Nature*”

or the “*Tao*.” Of all cultures seeking immortality, the Chinese clearly made an exceedingly thorough and all-encompassing effort. And as with other cultures, their methods of achieving their goals were varied, sometimes pursued with an emphasis on a single method, but usually following a broad holistic approach.

Inscriptions on bronze artefacts from the 8th Century BCE show an ever-present concern for attaining immortality. At this time, a search for permanency was born which later had profound consequences on the Chinese conception of humankind’s relationship with nature. This seed spawned a philosophic growth that would develop into manifold branches with each branch holding the same intention, namely, the attainment of immortality.



Imagination was perhaps the prime motivator in the search for immortality, with fanciful stories, embellished with their authors' secret longings and hopes, spreading the grand idea that immortals do exist. On rare occasion, the presence of such immortals among humans was attested to by a fortunate few. Winged or not, immortals would fly effortlessly across the skies, their only nourishment being the air they breathed. But where was their habitat? Would they share their most precious secret of immortality?

The Immortals

Early imperial expeditions were sponsored to find immortals, known as "*hsien*." The emperor *Wei* (358-320 BCE) of the *Ch'i* kingdom, financed costly voyages in search of the reputed island home of immortals. Known as *P'eng-lai*, it was supposedly somewhere off the northeastern coast of China. Many continued this royal patronage, such as emperor *Chao* (311-279 BCE) of the *Yan* kingdom, and others thereafter.

Another traditional residence for the immortals was the summit of Mount *K'un-lun*, in the far-off reaches of western China. But, when Imperial missions failed to locate immortals in the mountains and at sea, more emphasis was made on finding or developing a method closer at hand.

A leading factor in greatly intensifying the sacred quest was initiated by China's first emperor, *Chin Shih*



Huang Ti. He is remembered primarily as the grand unifier of China, the first to succeed in politically uniting the nation in 221 BCE. This first emperor of a politically united China also standardised coinage, chariot axles, the Chinese script, as well as piecing together many small walls to form the *Great Wall of China* which still exists in large part to this day. Fascinated by the concept of immortality, his power enabled scores of magicians, called *Fang Shih*, to flourish in their pursuit of ways of achieving eternal life.

For his own personal reasons *Chin Shih Huang Ti* was fanatical in his support of the *Fang Shih*. He was deeply afraid for his life after three attempts to assassinate him narrowly failed. He eventually withdrew from public eye to devote time and money toward his newfound task of finding immortality.

Thousands of *Fang Shih* were drawn to the Imperial Court to offer their services, each claiming to possess a method of obtaining immortality. Their methods focused on rational means. First of all, since physical immortality was being sought, the successful method must involve methods of preventing the body from going through its usual ageing process. The logical solution to their problem would be to nurture the body with elixirs into something more durable than its normal constitution.

Just as today, most people then believed that you are what you eat. In the Chinese conception, this included foods, liquids and the air they breathed. As a consequence, the *Fang Shih* often stressed a strict dietetic regime, including the ingestion of herbs and drugs. This was accompanied by respiratory exercises and gymnastics conducive to aiding the body in its metamorphosis to the immortal state.



Chin Shih Huang Ti – China's first emperor.

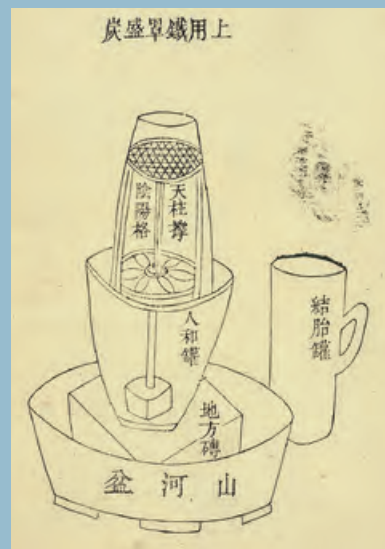




Chinese woodcut, *Famous medical figures: Portrait of Ge Hong*. Wellcome Collection.



Acupuncture chart, heart channel of hand shaoyin, Chinese. Wellcome Collection.



Chinese woodcut: *Alchemical refining furnace*. Wellcome Collection.

Wei Tan The External Search

The primary concern with the *Wei Tan*, or *External Tradition*, was to first slow down the decaying process as much as possible with proper diet and exercise. In conjunction with this, and of utmost concern, was the alchemical production of an elixir to be ingested, and which would cause the physical body to become immortal. But woe betide the royal patron who did not first let his alchemist drink the elixir, for some concoctions proved fatal!

The most renowned exponent of Chinese alchemy was *Qo Hung* (c. CE 280-340), who was the first to break the secrecy of the oral tradition. He eventually presented much of the Chinese knowledge known to him on the subject of alchemy in the voluminous *Pao-p'u tzu*. The alchemical tradition that was enthusiastically pursued for so many centuries provided adepts with many strange items for ingestion. These included lead, silver, gold, digitalis, mica, pearls, brown hematite, jade, quartz, sulphur, and realgar.

The idea behind including alchemical materials in one's diet was to offer the body sustenance in the form of elements which were clearly known to have long life in themselves. The various methods of preparation, including pulverising, mixing, soaking, heating and storing, proved to be a worthwhile endeavour in providing the Chinese with many praiseworthy accomplishments in chemistry, mineralogy, a copious pharmacopoeia, and

such inventions as porcelains, cloth dyes, metallic alloys, gunpowder and the magnetic compass. Nevertheless, the tradition of the external search failed to provide a way to immortality.

Nei Tan The Internal Search

Gradually the previously mentioned external methods for attaining immortality became internalised. Although the reliance on elixirs fell into disuse, there remained a strong concern for health-oriented practices considered conducive to longevity. One reason for this was to assure a suitably long lifespan for attaining immortality through a different means.

What was previously sought outside was now found within. The alchemical tripod became a symbol of the human body; with cinnabar and mercury corresponding to the yin-yang duality, such as those forming the poles of bodily energies. The internal bodily energies and their inner circulation were of major concern since they were understood as the very pulsation of the eternal source of life. The road to immortality became a "*Return to the Source*", attainable only through correct meditation.

Chinese meditation shares, in common with other schools, a desire to obtain a realisation of the Absolute. In the Chinese tradition, an understanding of the meditative practice and its ultimate realisation, are expounded in the philosophy of *Taoism*.





Putting the miraculous elixir on the tripod. Chinese woodcut: Taoist internal alchemy. Wellcome Collection.



Lao Tzu

Taoism

Finding its essential core in the writings associated with the philosophers *Lao Tzu* and *Chuang Tzu*, Taoism presents a simple view of reality. *Lao Tzu* himself said: *"My words are very easy to understand and very easy to put into practice, yet no one in the world can understand them or put them into practice"* (*Tao Te Ching*, 70). Keeping this straightforward simplicity in mind, we get a glimpse of the Taoist concept of immortality.

First, since all things are composites and subject to change, they are impermanent. As with the human body, all things have an allotted lifespan from the time they are formed. Mimicking the movements of animals noted for longevity, such as the crane and tortoise, has a slight effect on prolonging one's years. Imitating foetal breathing, known as *"embryonic respiration"*, is similarly only a part of the necessary practice of attaining immortality. As noted in the *Chuang Tzu*, this *"simply shows the desire for longevity."*

The Taoist secret of immortality rested in their realisation of the absolute *'way'*, known as the *Tao*. There is a constant referral to the *Tao* as the *Mother* or *Source* of all things. Through the meditative process the Taoist adept *"returns to the Source"*, thereby *"embracing the Unity."* The meditative process known as *"Internal Alchemy"*, and necessary for Tao-realisation, was also found to be the necessary path to immortality. The process of creation as stated in the *Tao Te Ching* (verse 42) is what the meditative process reverses:

The way begets one; one begets two; two begets three; three begets the myriad creatures. The myriad creatures carry on their backs the yin and embrace in their arms the yang and are the blending of the generative forces of the two.

Both Internal and External Alchemy have shared a common vocabulary, confusing those unaware of the symbolic intent. Upon final analysis, the meditative process includes a complex system of symbolism used to guide the purifying process of the mental state until it returns to its pristine originality.

The Calm and Clear Mind

If the body can be understood as the tripod, one's very spiritual essence and mental faculties are its alchemical ingredients. Transmuting these into a Grand Elixir requires mental purification, accomplished by calming the mind through proper emotional and psychic refinement.

Once calmed and clear, the mind becomes mirror-like, reflecting the eternal *Tao* and conferring all its potent attributes upon the individual by its mystical *"Heavenly Identity."* No animal or weapon can inflict a fatal wound upon such a Tao-like person. *Lao Tzu* asks: *"Why is this so?"* and then answers: *"Because for him there is no realm of death."*



Hope of the World



by **Cecil A Poole**

Many people have tried to explain why we have life. What, in essence, is the purpose of life? This basic question underlies most philosophies and speculations. Regardless of what the decision or conclusion of each individual may be, there is one factor that seems to predominate more than any other, and that is the desire to fulfil the process of living. Or we might say in another form: the desire to preserve life as an entity.

The average individual will go to great lengths to maintain the living segment of his or her being. In case of illness or accident, or in case of any circumstance that seems to impede the operation of the living body, this individual will seek, if possible, professional advice as to what can be done to maintain the spark of life which is, it would seem, every person's most precious possession.

All of us wish to live comfortably and happily. In other words, if we judge by behaviour, one of the fundamental purposes of being is to adjust well to the environment in which we find ourselves. Such an adjustment is usually indicated, or at least the standard by which the judgment is made is based upon the degree of happiness and health that we have as individual beings. Psychologically speaking, a well-adjusted person is one who has attained a degree of contentment, and physically, such a person is in good health. In other words, the efforts

of humankind, although it may not appear to be directly aimed in this direction, is toward the establishment of a harmonious relationship between each person and all that is exterior to her or him.

The Value of Life

Considering the great value placed upon life, and the great lengths people go to in order to maintain it, life then, appears to be the greatest of all values possible for humans to conceive of in this earthly existence. No doubt there is a great fundamental truth to this, for without life there would, insofar as human reasoning is concerned, be no purpose to existence, no general aim or end to be obtained in all creation. Indeed there could be no creation without living beings present to perceive it. Everything that exists, or everything we can perceive, revolves around our conception of the material universe, that is, the relation of life to that universe.

Since we all value life so much that we will go to almost any extreme to preserve it, it is conceivable that life, separate from the physical body through which it manifests in the world, has also some value. Anything so subtle as life, and so difficult to define or describe, must have value beyond any manifestation of it that we can understand or perceive. In other words, life is one of



those non-material things we are aware of which are utterly necessary to our ability to grasp, enjoy and benefit from the physical world in which we live. Therefore, life should have a value transcending the world in which we are aware of its function. In Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, the psalmist says...

For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest.

The fatalist would say that these times and places are part of our experience, regardless of what effort we put forth in life. The opportunist, at the other extreme, would say that *we* make the time and place to best utilise the gift of life, that motivating factor of our existence. But regardless of the philosophical theories we may formulate in regard to our relationship with our environment, the fact is that our true aim should be closely related to the utilisation of life for a purpose that will transcend any temporary value.

The Constant of Change

As we well know, the material world is a changing world. It is composed of matter and energy constantly in states of fluctuation. While science tells us that matter and energy cannot be destroyed, we are quite aware from experience that, at any particular time, they can be greatly modified insofar as their states of existence are concerned.

What, then, we ask, is the hope of the world? Are we to live in order to dominate our physical universe, seeking to acquire absolute mastery and control over it? Or does hope lie in our using the medium of the physical world and universe solely as a stage upon which the great drama of life is played out? Out of these two concepts come the bases of further philosophies. Those whose beliefs favour

absolute materialism, believe that their one great hope and possibility is to acquire absolute domination of the physical world, which includes both time and space.

In comparatively modern times, great efforts have been directed toward the control of time and space as fundamental qualities of the physical world. As people have achieved ever greater degrees of domination over time and space, they have believed they have fulfilled whatever destiny was theirs. But such domination alone is not, or should not, be the eventual aim and end of all life's evolution. Evolvement, whether on a biological or psychological basis, includes the general concept of progress and growth. Although people may dominate the physical world, it does not necessarily mean they are gaining the achievements toward which they are evolving.

Let us presume that we ultimately reach a time when every physical condition about us is completely under our control. We might ask, what will we do then if our philosophy of life and our whole purpose of being has been exclusively directed toward the domination of the physical world? When we dominate the universe and control all material manifestations, then all purpose of being will cease. For if material domination is the ultimate end of being, there will be no other place to turn nor any purpose left for further evolution.

The Future of Humankind

The hope of the world lies not necessarily in the domination of the physical universe, but rather in its utilisation so that life itself may become a more meaningful factor. What humans need to realise is that the physical world, which so many people try to dominate, is merely the stage for a far greater drama, the climax and conclusion of which is to eventually manifest at a level which transcends all limitations placed upon us by the physical world.

The hope of the world then, is in the field of the spirit, in the realisation that life is the one essence of which we are conscious as existing in a physical world and yet having no direct relationship with it. It is to be presumed, if this premise is true, that life is associated with a factor or force which transcends the physical world and which continues to exist regardless of the physical world and its changing forms.

Domination is not enough. Human evolution is directed toward a greater fulfilment than merely the control of the material environment; and through evolution, humans will come an eventual understanding of life itself. The hope of the world lies in our realisation that life and its relationship to its source is more important than the control or possession of the entire physical world.



The Story of Colour

by Kenneth Harrolds



Probably one of the first colours appreciated by early humans was ochre-red, followed by green, black and then yellow. Certainly, the ancient Egyptians used these colours principally in their tombs and temple decorations. Colour was a gradual development in the human consciousness and continues to be; for there is yet more to know about colour in our world than we realise.

We can choose a vantage point almost anywhere on Earth and see colour manifested around us, from the ground at our feet upwards to the great expanse of the sky. Above us are multicoloured sunsets and sunrises. In front of us is the green foliage of spring, the multi-hued flowers of summer, and the red, yellow and brown leaves of autumn. Below our feet are the gems and stones of Mother Earth, which reveal such exquisite reflections and sparkling depth of colour. Almost without exception, colour is associated in varying degrees with life and being all around us.





Colour in Higher Realms

We are told by great minds and great mystics who have had a glimpse or vision of higher cosmic realms, that the colours there are more brilliant, more enthralling and varied than any we can experience in our world. Be that as it may, many people will admit that when they look at the beautiful colours of a rose, an orchid or even a common petunia, the ultimate colours they are attracted to the most, seem to be there always first to be seen, right before their eyes. And perhaps they are, to the extent that any person can emotionally respond to the beauty of form and colour. Even the most hardened person will respond to some degree, and in so doing, move a little towards the beauty inherent within themselves.

In considering colour, we soon realise its value in our everyday life; both in the natural phenomena about us and in our human created environment; for example in our homes and in the clothes we wear. Colour, in the latter case, depends upon arbitrary decisions we make. Our attempts at interior decoration are mostly successful, though let's face it, on some occasions a complete disaster occurs through poor colour choices. It is obvious, therefore, that we should take a critical look at colour and

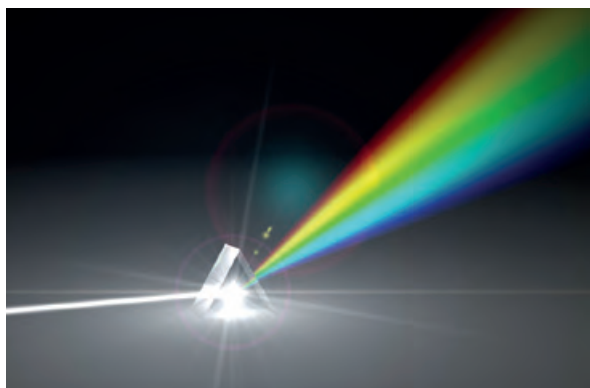
at the harmony or lack of harmony with which we may surround ourselves.

Light through a Prism

Colour comes from light. If you put a prism in the path of a light beam, it will split into the colour spectrum. Traditionally we have seven colours in the colour spectrum: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet; but that is an arbitrary subdivision of the frequencies making up visible light. Any given colour is a vibration of a specific wavelength, give or take a bit above and below that wavelength. Speaking in terms of colour pigments, the artist recognises three primary colours, each of a different wavelength. The artist combines these colours to form secondary and tertiary colours and even further combinations and shadings ad infinitum. Red, yellow and blue are primaries; while orange, green and purple are secondaries.

When white light (which contains all the colours) strikes some object, some of the electromagnetic vibrations (colours) are absorbed, while others are reflected off the surface of the object being seen. This is then picked up by the cones and rods in the eye's retina and forwarded to the brain for translation. The translation that takes place results in an inward realisation of a specific colour or colours. What may be interpreted as orange in one person's centre of consciousness may differ a bit as a realisation for another person.

What makes a wall in your living room at home appear as a pale yellow is simply that the atomic and molecular structure of the paint on the wall is such that the pale yellow vibrations of white light aren't absorbed but reflected back to the retina of your eye and thereby passed into the centre of your consciousness for translation and meaningful experience. The wall only appears yellow. If the object upon which the light falls absorbs all the



light, it will appear black. Black indicates the absence of reflected light.

Colour is, as we have said, derived from light. The material world has no colour until light strikes it. Even then colour isn't part of the material world; only the light vibration that is reflected to the human eye is. If there's no eye and brain to interpret a light ray, there is no colour.

Light and Us

Light, and the colour vibrations contained in it, have a life-giving function in addition to colour value. They stimulate growth in plants, the very things upon which we humans depend for life. Without light, no growth could take place. Without light, life couldn't exist and the meaning of life would be unmanifest.

Let's think about how creation is a balanced system made to appeal to the higher nature of man. For a moment or two give free rein to your imagination. Suppose that an orange were so chemically constituted that it absorbed all the rays of light striking it. Then the orange would appear black to you, wouldn't it? It would also lose something by comparison. Suppose also that all flowers were molecularly constituted to reflect all rays of light in proper proportion.

All the flowers in the world would, therefore, appear white. Again we would have lost something. So it is in the great variety of colours that we receive from the gift of light and in the variety of vibrational atomic structures that our world is made so beautiful for us, even though, as has been emphasised, the experience is an inward and personal one. We need to know everything we possibly can about light and colour since they have such a profound effect upon us.



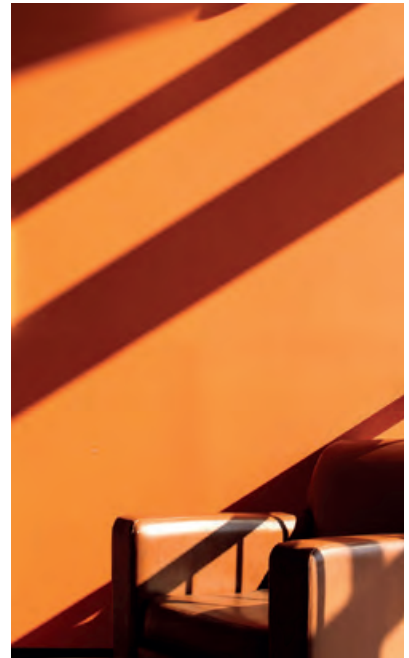
The Effects of Colours on Us

Colour has two effects on us: the symbolic and the emotional. We can explain its symbolism, but the emotional impact is in the process of greater appreciation. Think first of the colours to which we symbolically give a meaning. Typical examples are: having a yellow streak, feeling blue, seeing red and being green with envy. In Western cultures, baby girls are dressed in pink and boys in blue, brides wear white and widows wear black.

White, a symbol of purity, took much longer to develop in the human consciousness. It wasn't until bleaching agents were created that could whiten and remove foreign elements from linen that a consciousness and appreciation for white became significant. The rare and expensive whitened cloth was used in the beginning almost entirely by the early priests of the mystery temples, and later by their initiates, as a symbol of purity.

Dr. H. Spencer Lewis was a great investigator of colour and how it might be used to benefit mankind. He stated that the vibratory rates of a certain colours affect our sympathetic nervous system in such a way that they engender various emotional responses which we always consciously or unconsciously associate with that particular colour thereafter. Different colours affect each one of us differently. For instance, if a particular shade of red was to be flashed on a screen in front of 50 people, there could very well be fifty different interpretations of that red in the minds behind the fifty pairs of eyes viewing it. So it follows that each of us must assess the effect of the basic colours upon ourselves. However, some general hints can be given. We'll consider the case of the colours of objects as commonly seen in our day-to-day lives, and some of the effects these colours or shadings might have upon our being.





Red

Red is lowest in the vibratory rate of the colour scale. It's been used successfully in therapy for the emotionally ill, especially in severe cases of depression. It stimulates, because red is an exciting colour. Generally, though, for the good of our health and emotions, too much red or a heavy red may not be as beneficial as blue, green or even yellow. It's a very aggressive colour, earthy and sometimes warlike.

Yellow

Yellow is the second primary colour and is generally considered to be a mental colour, stimulating the mind and heightening awareness on the intellectual plane. However, as with all colours, there are various shades to consider. If you're the poet, the mystic, the dreamer, the seer (and each of us is to some degree), you'll find delicate shades of yellow pleasing because they enhance this expression from yourself. Are you interested in the study of natural law and spiritual things? Then choose a room in your home, a sanctum if you will, decorated in delicate yellow for contemplation. But keep the shades delicate. Mustard yellow is out, as it's more representative of lesser ideals.

Blue

Blue, vibrating at a higher rate than red or yellow, is the third primary colour. More research needs to be carried out on the emotional impact of blue. Pastel blues are of the spiritual level of our being. Yet these shades can have a puritanical influence for some people. If this is a problem simply avoid overindulgence in blue surroundings. Of course, you would need to get a proper balance.

Blue is often considered a cold colour, which might negate its use in living rooms where warmth, relaxation or happiness is the prime concern. However, when you would like a peace-producing effect, as in meditation or in searching for spiritual knowledge, don't overlook the use of blue.

Orange

The secondary colour orange is a combination of red and yellow. It contains some of the nature and vibrations of both, but on another level. The aggressiveness of red combined with yellow in its mental aspect gives a wearer of this shade a little stimulus of each. At those moments when you felt right with the world, when you realised that somehow you had found a bit more of your true nature than you expected was there, were you by any chance



wearing something orange?

Orange is a happy colour. Use it to stimulate self-confidence where there's hesitation or timidity. Try it especially in social areas, such as a living room or TV room, where you want to stimulate good feeling, friendship and the free flow of ideas. Perhaps a picture of a brilliant orange sunset would be enough or several well-placed objects of similar hues. Experiment!

Green

The secondary colour green is a combination of blue and yellow. It is spiritually elevating and mentally stimulating and brings excitement and anticipation. Green suggests springtime and new opportunity, and is associated with hope and aspiration, compassion, sympathy and understanding. Delicate pastel greens are sure to be found somewhere in the surroundings of aspiring adepts. Sea-green or sea-foam greens, laced with silver, shouldn't be overlooked. Lime green is thought to have a sedative effect, but keep away from dark, drab greens which are flat and lack life.

Purple

The secondary colour purple is the combination of red and blue. Contemporary feelings about purple are in the areas of exaltation, victory, royalty and success. It's the colour of kings and queens. It is a positive colour that stimulates dedication, fairness, honour, honesty and earnestness of spirit. If we allow it to be part of our life and environment, its magnetic quality is sure to raise our spirits in times of stress.

To conclude, we should make a consistent effort to feel the effects of colour on our emotional and mental being and choose those colours that seem to enhance the higher states we desire. Colour is not a part of the material objects in our environment; it's rather a constituent of light and is reflected to our consciousness, where realisation takes place.



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The Rosicrucian Beacon -- September 2021



Life in autumn's forests is
silent but for the gentle rustle
of leaves falling like raindrops
to the leaf litter below, where
small creatures hurriedly
prepare for winter's sleep,
as the camouflaged emperor
patiently watches and waits...