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The Earth in the Magical Cosmos

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When people speak of invoking the Earth Energies for magical purposes, they do not always make it clear whether they are invoking the energies of the whole of Planet Earth, or whether they are proposing to invoke the energies of the Element of Earth.

It might be a good idea to use terms such as the Terrestrial energies when you are seeking to link yourself with the planet as a whole; and reserve the term Earth energies for the very stable, material energies that are associated with the element of Earth among the four Elements of Air, Water, Fire and Earth.

Eastern Ideas about the Elements about the elements arose in 6th century Bce in Greece. This was a century that saw human knowledge grow faster than in any succeeding century until the 20th century Ce., not only in Greece but in every part of the planet.

The scientists and philosophers, who were associated with the most important Greek city Miletus during 6th century Bce, were not abstract philosophers nor academic scientists who never tested their theories in the real world, but practical men of affairs who drew their theories from observation and tested them in real life.

The first rational Greek philosopher was Thales of Miletus. He visited Egypt and brought back to Greece the knowledge of geometry that Egyptians had developed in building their mighty temples and pyramids. He had become familiar with the Egyptian creation myths while in that land, and used them to understand how the world came into being.

His philosophical theories about how the world came into being were then developed and

refined by first Anaximander and then Anaximenes. We need not give all the details, but just a summary of the final form these ideas received in Anaximenes' philosophy.

Everything begins with Mist

To Anaximenes, everything begins with Mist. When mist becomes rarefied, it becomes warm and its moistness evaporates, yielding heat. When you condense Mist, it yields Water first. Then, as more and more of it packs into a given space, the Water is separated and squeezed out, and it becomes harder, heavier and drier. Thus is the element of Earth separated from Water. Anaximenes used the craft of felt-making as an analogy to the process of separating the dry land from the primeval waters.

Although Thales and Anaximenes were rationalists who needed no Gods to explain the universe, other Greeks preferred to think of Mist, Fire, Water, and Earth as gods and goddesses. The Goddess Achlys, pronounced Akloos, was Spirit; Air, Wind and breath; as well as being a verb, worshipped as the Dark Mist, the Mother Goddess who existed even before Chaos and gave birth to Chaos. She is the primordial Archetype of potentiality, for She contains all within herself.

When the Milesian philosophers spoke of Mist, they were referring to the air which we breathe. Anaximenes invited you to test his theory that rarefied Mist is warm and condensed Mist is cold. Open your mouth wide and blow air on your hand. The rarefied breath comes out warm and warms your hand. Now, purse your lips and emit a thin stream of condensed breath. Feel how cold it is. Nowadays, we use the word Air, rather than Mist as the name of the first element.

From these early speculations and experiments were to come the sophisticated theory of the four elements of Air, Water, Fire and Earth, perpetually flowing, combining and changing into each other that we use today.

The chief contributor to the final theory of the Four elements was Aristotle 4th century Bce. He added a fifth element, Aether or Spirit, from which all the other elements emerged. He also analysed the four elements into the following relationships: Hot and dry, hot and moist, cold and moist, cold and dry.

Aristotle refers to a fifth element, the quintessence which means literally 'fifth element'. He also calls it Ether, by which the Greeks meant the upper or purer air, contrasted with Air, the lower atmosphere. Ether came to mean something like what the Qabalists refer to as ha-Ruach ha-Qadosh or the Holy Spirit, and think of it as the source of all energies in the universe. The Holy Spirit here is used as a magical rather than a religious term although it has some correspondence to the religious use of the term. Some find it difficult because in Hebrew the root-word Ruach has multiple meanings: Spirit, Air, Wind and breath. Ancient Qabalists constantly punned on these terms.

In Greek, Spirit is rendered by Pneuma and Psyche, as well as by Aether.

- Aether means two things: Spirit and Air

- Pneuma means breath, soul and ghost
- Psyche means soul, spirit; ghost or energy

There are subtle differences between these words, but there is no space to discuss them here. In the Aristotelian system:

- Fire and Air are connected because they are both Hot
- Air and Water are connected because they are both moist
- Water and Earth are both cold
- Earth and Fire are both dry
- Fire and Water have nothing in common
- Air and Earth have nothing in common

Qabalistic magicians starting with the author of Sefer Yetzirah took Aristotle's elemental system and developed it in a similar way. In the Qabalistic system, the Holy Spirit emerged Be-limah - 'from the Nothing.' The Holy Spirit (Ruach ha-Qadosh) breathed out (rawach) the hot, moist Air (ruach). The hot, moist Air Ruach cooled and condensed so that cold, moist Water Meyim emerged. Then, the Creator built dykes and dams to hold back the Water (cf. Anaximenes squeezing it) and from it the cold, dry Earth (Erets) merged.

Then, the hot moist Air became warmer and its moistness evaporated to yield hot, dry, Fire [filth]. From Fire was built the Throne of the heavens which extended in six directions: height and depth East and West; North and South. The six directions form the Cube of Space in which the Stable Earth manifests itself.

The Fundamental Dynamics of the Universe

The ancient Qabalists described the Four elements in another way, referring them to the fundamental Dynamics of the Universe. As the Guardians say "Force channelled by form becomes more powerful force; and is again channelled to become even more powerful". The unpronounceable Name the Tetragrammaton which simply means 'a four-letter word'; the Tetragrammaton is a sacred formula that reveals to initiates the Fundamental Dynamics of the Universe, which operates at every level of the universe. Those who learn how to apply this principle in their actions will enhance every aspect of their lives. At its simplest this principle states:

'Force channelled by Form becomes more powerful Force; and is channelled again to become even more powerful' In the Guardian tradition this statement has two corollaries:

1. Unbalanced, Form stifles Force
2. Unbalanced, Force blows Form apart

According to the traditions of the Guardians, the process need not stop there; the cycle can be repeated again and again. In times past, the metaphor commonly used to convey this idea was: The male seed (Yod) is received by the female womb (Heh) and becomes the child (Wav) in due course the child matures and takes part in a further cycle of the process (the second Heh) and so on through generation after generation. This has a direct bearing on

The Father-Holy Spirit and Son (Yeshua) in the mysteries.

We can observe many applications of this principle in our daily lives. For example, a pair of bellows (Form) channels air (potential Force) so that it can be focused and directed to make the fire blaze more powerfully (dynamic Force). Again, Jet engines and rockets are clear examples of the use of this principle. Energy is fed in at one end, then focused and channelled down until it becomes so powerful it can take us around the world.

From your own experience, you can probably remember occasions when you have had a good idea; but, because you did not make a note of it or start to work on it immediately, it has dissipated and disappeared from your mind. This principle is expressed through many sets of correspondences in the realms of the Qabalah and High Magic. In Yetzirah, there is a carefully arranged order to the Elements of Nature which is reflected in Tetragrammaton. Following the Sefer Yetzirah we assign the Elements to the Tetragrammaton in the following sequence.

Air - Yod - Potential Force
Water - Heh - Fluid Form
Fire - Wav - Dynamic Force
Earth - Heh - Stable Form

During the Renaissance era, another synthetic God-name, this time of Five Letters, hence called the Pentagrammaton, began to be used in High Magic by some Jewish and Christian Cabalists.