



# MASTER MONOGRAPH

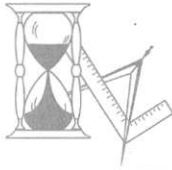
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NEOPHYTE SECTION

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## First Atrium No. 4



# CONCURRENCE

### This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion

The scientific postulations which marked the Renaissance carried no more noted theme than that put forth by Nicolaus Copernicus as this Polish astronomer established the heliocentric view of our planetary system. We can legitimately say that this concept revolutionized the science of modern astronomy. The excerpt below from his monograph reflects the sagacity of these early Renaissance scientists, and it shows their zeal for discovering truth through careful study and analysis. It also demonstrates how difficult it is to struggle against false beliefs and bring about the recognition of new truths.

*Now the earth is the place from which we observe the revolution of the heavens and where it is displayed to our eyes. This motion seems to embrace the whole world, in fact, everything that is outside of the earth, with the single exception of the earth itself. But if one should admit that the heavens possess none of this motion, but that the earth rotates from west to east; and if one should consider this seriously with respect to the seeming rising and setting of the sun, of the moon and the stars; then one would find that it is actually true. Since the heavens which contain and retain all things are the common home of all things, it is not at once comprehensible why a motion is not rather ascribed to the thing contained than to the containing; to the located rather than to the locating.*

*Why are we not willing to acknowledge that the appearance of a daily revolution belongs to the heavens, its actuality to the earth? The relation is similar to that of which Virgil's Aeneas says: "We sail out of the harbor, and the countries and cities recede." For when a ship is sailing along quietly, everything which is outside of it will appear to those on board to have a motion corresponding to the movement of the ship, and the voyagers are of the erroneous opinion that they with all that they have with them are at rest. This can without doubt also apply to the motion of the earth, and it may appear as if the whole universe were revolving.*

*If one admits the motionlessness of the sun, and transfers the annual revolution from the sun to the earth, there would result, in the same manner as actually observed, the rising and setting of the constellations and the fixed stars, by means of which they become morning and evening stars; and it will thus become apparent that also the haltings and backward and forward motion of the planets are not motions of these but of the earth, which lends them the appearance of being actual planetary motions.*

—NICOLAUS COPERNICUS, 1473-1543  
*De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*

Dear Fratres and Sorores,

It is extremely important to understand that everything we know about the material world depends on how we perceive and interpret spirit vibrations. In this regard, we have explained to you that our perception and interpretation of things do not affect those things outside of ourselves, and moreover our notions regarding things cannot change their vibratory nature. We have also demonstrated that a person's concept of the world depends to a large extent on that person's culture, education, and beliefs. We would now like to share with you an example of how grave errors can be committed when people remain imprisoned within their false beliefs and place their entire faith in what they perceive through their objective faculties.

**THEORIES OF COPERNICUS:** For centuries, people believed that the Earth was flat and that it was the center of the visible universe. Such a belief was based on what people observed in the sky above and on their interpretation of what the sacred writings affirmed in that regard. This point of view was virtually unanimous, even among scientists, until the day when Copernicus, a Polish cleric and scientist, expressed doubts about the Earth being flat and questioned commonly held theories concerning sunrise and sunset, day and night, the seasons, the origin of winds, the effect of tides, the apparent motions of celestial bodies, etc. Like the celebrated ancient Greek scientist, Ptolemy, Copernicus claimed that Earth is round like a ball and that we live on its curved surface. Through his research and work, Copernicus also established that the Earth rotates daily on its axis, and that planets revolve in orbits around the Sun.

Copernicus put forth the heliocentric concept. He affirmed that the Sun—not the Earth—is the center of our planetary system (and also the center of our entire universe, he mistakenly thought), adding that the seasons are due to the continuous motion of the Earth around the Sun and that the alternation of day and night results from the Earth's rotation. In his concept of the Solar System he mistakenly thought that the planets move around the Sun in a circular orbit, whereas Johannes Kepler, a major supporter of Copernicus, demonstrated almost half a century later that planetary orbits are elliptical, even stating that the Sun does not constitute the center of our planetary system but rather one of its foci.

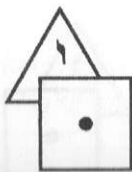


Popular thought of that time promptly rejected Copernicus' theories. However, scientists gradually accepted Copernicus' theories, because his theories offered thinking individuals ample food for consideration as they could clarify a quantity of phenomena which had remained misunderstood and unknown until then.

Copernicus was more than just a scientist. He was a great mystic and sage for he gave valid explanations of facts unrecognized before. Yet he was not absolutely certain about his theories and refrained from demanding that others acknowledge their validity. In the preface to one of his treatises, Copernicus stated that if anyone doubted the accuracy of his propositions and asked him for objective proof, he could supply none, as most of his theories had been inspired during his numerous meditations. Moreover, he was keenly aware of the influence exerted by religion on popular beliefs and on the study of cosmogony. That is why he waited for years before publishing his heliocentric theory of the universe.

In fact, Copernicus knew he would be persecuted as a heretic for he said, "If the earth is the center of the universe and really the whole center of God's creation, then man on earth might well be one of the greatest objects of God's care. But if my theory is right and the earth is but one of many planets revolving in space, and not even the largest of them, and if these others are also inhabited by men, then this earth upon which we live and the men upon this earth may not be so important in God's scheme." Quite obviously such an idea could only displease the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, for it presented a new challenge to religious dogmas of the era and gave a universal dimension to Creation.

In 1540 Copernicus officially announced his theories. In May of 1543, just as his book *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* was being published, he died after having incurred criticisms, attacks, and hardships inflicted by church authorities and by a minority of scholars blinded by the old doctrines. Fortunately, Copernicus did not experience the fate later reserved for Giordano Bruno, one of his greatest defenders, who was accused of heresy and then burned at the stake in 1600. The great astronomer Galileo also suffered censure because of his support of Copernican theories. In 1616 Copernicus' work was prohibited from publication and the interdiction lasted almost two centuries. A great number of his postulates are



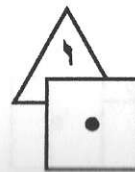


presently taught as established facts in schools and universities, whereas, during his lifetime, they were rejected because Copernicus could provide no scientific proof and because they were incompatible with religious doctrines. This demonstrates to what extent cosmically inspired theories can be denied because they do not correspond to the conventional ideas of an era and because they find no satisfactory proof in the eyes of human objective faculties. But time is the master of evolution and light always overcomes darkness—and this is simply because human ignorance cannot oppose forever the advent of knowledge.

The foregoing example demonstrates that human beings often keep themselves in ignorance because of their intolerance and tendency to believe only what they see. In that respect, Copernicus, Bruno, and Galileo were not the only thinking persons who were victims of the ignorance displayed toward their wisdom and intelligence. In fact, history is replete with mystics, scholars, and other thinking individuals who were condemned during their lifetimes and insulted by the religious and “scientific” opinion of their day.

On a more personal level, it is quite obvious that we cannot gain access to the knowledge of the mysteries unless we question ourselves regularly and recognize that our conception of things may be erroneous. In other words, we must understand that human truths are relative as they necessarily evolve with time and with scientific discoveries. To deny this evidence would amount to saying that human beings know everything and have nothing more to learn. If such were the case, we would be saying that all have attained perfection and that human evolution is finished. The actuality is quite different in that humanity is still far from having accomplished its cosmic mission. As long as you have not received Cosmic Illumination accompanied by an influx of Supreme Wisdom, you must remain a walking question mark in your understanding of things. You must realize that this is an ongoing process and therefore human knowledge is never “frozen” or at a standstill. This remark also applies to our teachings, for you must consider that each monograph is primarily a basis for reflection and meditation.

Since the Renaissance, science has evolved greatly, and the discoveries made in numerous areas have considerably improved living conditions in modern societies. Yet, we must



not infer that science has penetrated all mysteries of the universe and that its explanations in various domains of research are always accurate. In fact, science still has much to learn as a great number of its postulates are false. It cannot be otherwise, for scientific research is a reflection of those who conduct it, and thus it is necessarily limited and imperfect. Its merit lies in its striving toward perfection and its desire to always extend the boundaries of the unknown. We must hope therefore that science will someday give a more spiritual direction to its work, so as to contribute to the raising of consciousness toward the Supreme Source of all that exists. If the science of the 21st century does not free itself from its overly materialistic conceptions, it runs the risk of overstepping its bounds and eventually causing the destruction of the human species. That is why we truly hope that tomorrow's scientists will take into account the knowledge mystics can teach them in many areas.

Spirit energy, to which we devoted the first monographs of this Atrium, likewise has been part of the research undertaken by scientists—notably physicists—for science has been striving for years to understand the origin of the forces of adhesion, cohesion, attraction, and repulsion which act within matter. Scientists have come to understand most of the effects produced by these forces, but they have not yet succeeded in establishing a unity among them. Only now is evidence mounting that will help prove an underlying unity between these forces. On the other hand, only recently have scientists admitted that all energy—whether exhibiting adhesion, cohesion, attraction, or repulsion—is vibratory in nature. Of course, such truths were taught long ago in the ancient mystery schools.

Finally, we must recognize that most scientists pay no heed to the philosophical principles growing out of a mystical approach to material creation. Their attitude is due to their refusal to admit that all tangible things proceed from a world which is intangible. In other words, contemporary science still is at the stage of rejecting the concept of God, such as a Rosicrucian may conceive it. However, a time will come when scientists will be obliged to recognize the existence of a Cosmic Intelligence,

of a Primordial Energy, of a Great Architect of the Universe to explain the unexplainable. We will then witness a fusion of the best of what science and mysticism have to offer humanity.

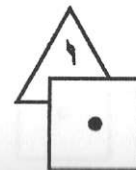


**THE CONCEPT OF PROPERTY:** Before summarizing the important laws connected with our study of Spirit, we must now consider a philosophical problem which is bound to the mystical application of this study. This is the concept of property. If you admit that the whole of the material world owes its origin to spirit energy and that such energy is of cosmic origin, it follows then that everything that is part of our earthly surroundings is the work of God—or, if you prefer, of Universal Intelligence. By virtue of this fact, humans therefore have no right of possession over things of this world. This means that from a mystical standpoint we can possess nothing as our own and cannot exert an exclusive power over any being or any thing, for all that has been, is, and will be on the material plane is the property of all. This constitutes a heritage which humanity, in its collectivity, received from the Cosmic. Let us give a simple example for further illustration.

According to laws made by human beings, we can obtain certain rights to various material goods which make us their proprietors. Thus, a person may have a house constructed and take possession of it legally by paying the price needed for its construction. However, if we consider this principle philosophically, is it really possible to claim its ownership?

Indeed, what is a house? It is a structure of various materials all of which have their origin in Nature. Whether it be stones, bricks, sand, wood, or tiles, all those elements were taken from the earth. But who originally paid Nature to obtain them? No one, for it is impossible to buy anything from the energy which is the basis of all matter. We can only seize the object and decide arbitrarily that it belongs to us. Thus, we cannot deny that humans created the notion of property and made that notion the basis of commerce and of those laws growing out of it. Yet, Nature never sold anything to humanity, for it gives without counting. In that respect, the debt we owe it is forever impossible to repay.

If we pursue this mystical reasoning, we can say legitimately that if it is true that nothing can be bought from Nature, it is normal to give compensation to those who work for us. Returning to our example, the construction of a house requires a certain amount of work and, consequently, the employment of competent persons—architects, carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, electricians, roofers, etc. In compliance with laws governing



modern societies we compensate their work by means of money. However, everything they do is possible only because they received from the Cosmic the ability to do it. Architects, for instance, owe their skill to their intelligence, but that intelligence is a gift of God. Likewise, a master carpenter or bricklayer can demonstrate great physical strength and stamina in the building of a house, yet, once again, the carpenter or bricklayer owes his or her strength to the good health given by the Cosmic. Neither the architect, the carpenter, or bricklayer purchased their respective qualities from God.

In general we can say that humanity is indebted to the Cosmic, for everything we own on the material plane has its origin in the various manifestations of spirit energy. Thus, the possessions at our disposal during our earthly existence belong to us only in the eyes of human society for, from a mystical standpoint, they are given to us so we may best utilize them, not only for our own evolution, but also for that of others. To illustrate this point, let us quote what Pythagoras, who played a great role in our mystical brotherhood, said on this subject: "These ideas came to me as an inspiration from God. God gave me these ideas; they rightfully belong to Him: but He gave me an understanding of His laws and ideas; therefore, they do not belong to me, so I will pass them along to others for their use and benefit as a gift from God."

**THE LAWS OF SPIRIT:** Let us now summarize the fundamental laws governing Nature and the manifestation of spirit energy we have been discussing. We shall return to this study in future degrees, but what we have already said about it in these lessons is essential to future considerations of this subject.

1. The entire universe is permeated by a vibratory energy which Rosicrucians call Spirit.
2. Spirit energy is the basis of the material world, for all forms of matter owe their existence to it.



3. All material substances vibrate inwardly and outwardly through the action of spirit vibrations.
4. After having affected our five objective senses, the vibrations emitted by our physical surroundings are transmitted to our brain where they are interpreted.

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5. Our understanding of the material world is formed by the interpretation which our objective consciousness gives to the vibrations emanating from the material world. That interpretation is influenced by our culture, education, and beliefs.

6. From a mystical standpoint, no material thing can belong to us, for all our earthly possessions owe their existence to spirit energy which, by nature, is the work of the Cosmic.

In the next monograph we shall approach another subject of study which we feel will be of considerable interest to you.

With all best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER



## Practical Application

*Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant*

What we have said in this monograph regarding the concept of property must not be the source of any misunderstanding, for our explanations belong exclusively to the philosophical plane. In other words, we are not advocating any particular political or economic conception and we do not seek in any way to preach an equal distribution of earthly goods. In this respect, it is important to make a definite distinction between what things should be in the Absolute and what they can be at a given moment of human history. We cannot deny that the possessions of each individual differ, and this is true no matter in what country the person lives. However, contrary to current opinion, such a difference is not systematically connected with the economic, social, or political direction given to the various states composing our world. Rather, the lives of individuals and of nations are governed by cosmic decrees which, as we will explain to you later, have their origin in the accomplishment of karmic law. Indeed, that law justifies to a great extent the apparent inequality one may observe among people.

When we mention the problem of distribution of worldly goods and of the right to possession, we must also admit that not all individuals possess the same degree of intelligence or bravery. Thus, experience proves that if you divided a certain amount of wealth equally between all members of a society, at the end of a few months some of them would possess nothing, whereas others would still have in their possession nearly all the goods distributed to them at the beginning. Some would even have more wealth at their disposal. All of this occurs because not everyone is able to manage correctly what is entrusted to him or her. Seen from this angle, you cannot force anyone having acquired material wealth through their own efforts to share with the indolent, for such an act can thwart the idle individual's evolution. This being said, generosity remains one of the finest virtues.

In coming days, we suggest that you meditate on this vast problem by considering its philosophical and mystical aspects. In that way, you will understand that the concept of property arose in human consciousness and that it does not have its origin in Cosmic Intelligence. When humanity has evolved sufficiently, this concept will yield to more universal, and hence less individualistic, values.



## Summary of This Monograph

Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ For centuries people believed that the Earth was flat and that it was the center of the visible universe. That belief was based on what they observed in the sky above and on their interpretation of what the sacred writings affirmed in that regard.
- ¶ In his work *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*, Nicolaus Copernicus expressed in detail his heliocentric theory of the universe. It was rejected because of its incompatibility with religious dogmas of the time.
- ¶ Human truths are relative as they necessarily evolve with time and with scientific discoveries. This is an ongoing process and therefore human knowledge is never at a standstill.
- ¶ If the science of the 21st century does not free itself from its overly materialistic conceptions, it runs the risk of overstepping its bounds and eventually causing the destruction of the human species.
- ¶ Scientists will someday find themselves compelled to recognize the existence of a Cosmic Intelligence, of a Primordial Energy, of a Great Architect of the Universe to explain the unexplainable. We will then witness a fusion of the best of what science and mysticism have to offer humanity.
- ¶ From a mystical standpoint we can possess nothing as our own and cannot exert an exclusive power over any being or any thing, for all that has been, is, or will be on the material plane is the property of all. This constitutes a heritage which humanity, in its collectivity, received from the Cosmic.
- ¶ Nature never sold anything to humanity, for it gives without counting. In that respect the debt we owe Nature is forever impossible to pay.
- ¶ The possessions at our disposal during our earthly existence belong to us only in the eyes of human society for, from a mystical standpoint, they are given to us so that we may best utilize them, not only for our own evolution, but also for that of others.



## First Atrium No. 5

### CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



Dr. Bruno Bettelheim—world-renowned psychoanalyst, child psychologist, educator, and writer—offers an insight meaningful to Rosicrucian students in his discussion of a paper written by Dr. Sigmund Freud in 1917 entitled *A Difficulty of Psychoanalysis*. We quote Dr. Bettelheim here and in the following paragraph.

*[Freud's difficulty] is the blow psychoanalysis inflicts on our narcissism by showing that our I is not master of its own house. This injury to our self-love Freud compares to that which Copernicus inflicted by showing us that the earth is not the center of the universe, and to that which Darwin inflicted by forcing us to recognize how closely we are related to other animals. . . .*

*Freud failed to acknowledge his debt to the psychological storehouse of wisdom within astrology, an ancient art practiced by Copernicus as well as other scientists of his time. Because of this oversight, Freud missed the opportunity to associate the true nature of the universe with the discovery of the true inner world of the soul. On the other hand, Freud—seeking a broad view in The Question of Lay Analysis—conceptualizes “the workings of the psyche, distinguishing the conscious from the unconscious, and distinguishing the functions of the it, the I, and the above-I, he uses the term ‘soul’ to describe what he regards as the overarching concept that takes in all the others. It seems natural to Freud to speak of man’s soul. By evoking the image of the soul and all its associations, Freud is emphasizing our common humanity. Unfortunately, even in these crucial passages the translations make us believe that he is talking about our mind, our intellect. This is particularly misleading because we often view our intellectual life as set apart from—and even opposed to—our emotional life, the life of our fantasies and dreams.*

**NOTE:** Above quotes are from the book *Freud and Man's Soul*, by Dr. Bruno Bettelheim (London: Chatto & Windus - The Hogarth Press, 1983).

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Dear Fratres and Sorores,

In previous monographs we devoted ourselves to the study of matter and we came to understand that it owes its existence to spirit vibrations. We hope our explanation concerning the perception and interpretation of material vibrations is fully comprehensible, for this constitutes the foundation of what Rosicrucian philosophy has taught for centuries about the material world. This subject will be explored further in the course of our Rosicrucian studies and at some future time we will consider it from a slightly different angle and in greater depth. You will find that through a method of mental and spiritual alchemy the Rosicrucian teachings will bring about gradual changes within you between Sanctum periods. This method can be symbolized by a spiral progressively raising your consciousness toward heights from which it can behold the same truths from a greater and expanded vision. If you demonstrate patience and perseverance in your studies, there will come a time when you will attain a panoramic view of those mysteries still eluding your comprehension.

**MIND:** We have explained that matter, such as it manifests on the earth plane, is a series of vibrations which originate from spirit energy. Therefore, the human body—your body—is itself a vibratory expression of this energy. However, each human being is far more than a mass of matter. We are also a conscious entity—in other words, a thinking individual.

But what is *mind*? Scientifically speaking, it is the result of brain activity. This definition is quite accurate, but it is incomplete for it does not explain how the brain, which is a material substance, can produce so subtle a phenomenon as mind. In this respect, scientists have too great a tendency to limit their research to the study of mental processes. Such study is of obvious interest, but it does not take into sufficient account the spiritual dimension of laws and principles which underlie those processes.

For Rosicrucians, mind is a special expression of Cosmic Consciousness incarnate in humans. To be more specific, let us say that it results from the interaction which takes place within the brain between spirit energy and Vital Life Force.

The preceding remarks deserve fuller explanation, for they have a direct bearing upon the mystical definition of mind. In fact, we have just stated that mind is the result of the



interaction occurring in the brain between spirit energy and Vital Life Force. But, in earlier lessons we have been told that spirit energy is a characteristic of our earthly environment and that it is the basis of our sensory perceptions. Soul, on the other hand, is a *spiritual* energy which, while it is incarnate in us, radiates from the very depth of our beings. Consequently, mind is born of the encounter of *two energies*, one of which is of negative polarity (Spirit) and the other of positive polarity (V.L.F.). However, as these two energies are vibrations in motion, it follows that thought itself—our mental activity—is of a vibratory nature.

This point now seems obvious, for scientists have perfected various devices—in this case electroencephalographs—which allow reproduction upon a graph of those waves produced by the brain and more especially by the various neurons composing the latter. Although the rhythm of these brain waves varies from one person to another, there exist nevertheless certain averages which make it possible to define, in both child and adult, the rhythm corresponding to a perfectly balanced physical and mental state. Moreover, current experiments prove that an electroencephalogram (EEG) can vary considerably when the subject is tired, ill, or depressed. Thus, the EEG is a valid means of determining the origin and the nature of many physical and mental complaints.

It should be noted that the rhythm of brain waves differs according to whether the individual is awake, comatose, or asleep. Once again, the information obtained by this means is useful, for we can measure and define the levels of consciousness wherein a person's mental activity is situated at a given moment.

Clinical death is reflected by a flat EEG—in other words, the graph displays a straight line, whereas the graph for a live person consists of a series of curved or broken lines. For physicians, a flat graph indicates that the brain no longer functions, while mystics state that this lack of function occurs because the Soul has left the body and that the vibratory interaction it produced with spirit energy no longer exists. As we shall see later, this

detail deserves your attention, for it will enable you to understand that transition corresponds solely to the discontinuance of one form of consciousness—that is, the objective consciousness—but under no circumstances to the total and final annihilation of the soul personality.



Furthermore, you should not confuse the words *mind* and *consciousness*, for the former concerns various levels of activity—i.e., objective, subjective, and subconscious—whereas the latter pertains to the aggregate of the Soul's faculties.

Without going into details which would be of no particular value to us on the mystical plane, we will mention nevertheless that scientists currently distinguish four major categories of brain waves: *delta* waves, *theta* waves, *alpha* waves and *beta* waves. The frequency of delta waves varies between 0.5 and 4 hertz; theta waves between 4 and 8 hertz; alpha waves between 8 and 13 hertz; and beta waves between 13 and 50 hertz, if not more. It must be remembered, of course, that scientific research is evolving constantly in this area. Thus, the currently accepted frequencies are not absolute, and new discoveries could bring further modifications to them. Moreover, it is difficult to define precisely which cerebral activity is linked to which wave, for there exist numerous interactions between them. Furthermore, depending on the state of consciousness we happen to be in, they do not always have the same significance. As an example, the delta rhythm characterizes normal sleep, but then, in a state of wakefulness, it indicates a pathological state. Yet we can make some general deductions and get some idea of the relationship which exists between the rhythm of our brain waves and the profile of our mental activity.

According to research undertaken in the Order's laboratories, delta waves in adults are linked to weak mental activity usually corresponding to a state of dreamless sleep. They are especially marked upon the approach of death or in the case of great physical weakness. Theta waves characterize an intermediate state of consciousness that is situated between the subconscious and subjective consciousness. We generally find ourselves in this state just before going to sleep or awakening. It is also recorded in certain periods of meditation or when the individual is in deep sleep interspersed by striking dreams. Alpha waves occur in a state of wakefulness, when the subject is perfectly calm and relaxed. Experience proves that this cerebral rhythm is generated by merely closing the eyes and relaxing. It is interesting to note that measurements taken on Rosicrucians show that in the first phases of a meditation they emit mental waves alternating between the theta and alpha rhythm, generally between 6 and 9 hertz. Finally, beta waves



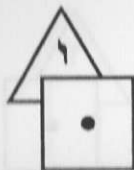


reflect sustained cerebral activity. In fact, they characterize the purely objective phase of our consciousness and are especially prominent when our attention is concentrated on the outside world.

The information we have just given you concerns brain waves registered by an electroencephalograph when we are in an objective, subjective, or subconscious state of consciousness. In the light of what you learned in the Postulant Section, you may wonder to what rhythm a state of Cosmic Consciousness corresponds. From a rational point of view, we would think that any EEG obtained during this time should reveal waves having vibratory frequencies exceeding by far those of beta waves, for they are linked to extremely high vibrations. In fact, the opposite is the case, for an EEG reflects the intensity of our brain activity and not the nature of our state of consciousness. In other words, the equipment can only record and amplify "material" waves.

From a mystical point of view, it is easy to understand that the closer our state of consciousness is to Cosmic Consciousness, as is the case when we are plunged into deep meditation, the weaker our purely cerebral activity is. Moreover, this explains why the EEG is flat at the moment of transition. Although we have no definitive proof of this, we can suppose that a state of Cosmic Consciousness, although corresponding to very high "spiritual" waves, would be characterized on the electroencephalogram by a rhythm ranging between 0 and 0.5 hertz. Heretofore, it has been impossible to record such a rhythm, precisely because of the weak frequency of the vibrations emitted by our brain at that moment.

**THE BRAIN:** Although the brain is not the seat of human consciousness, but the center where the energy of Spirit interacts with that of the Soul to give birth to thought, its role is essential, for mental activity cannot take place without it. In our explanation of the way in which we interpret the vibrations emitted by the material world we pointed out that this interpretation was made by an area specializing in the analysis of our sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch sensations. However, our mental processes are quite obviously not limited to that analysis for, independently of the outside world, we are capable of speaking, reflecting, remembering, imagining, etc. There also exist areas of the brain specialized in such activities as speech, reflection, recall, and imagination. Scientists have localized most of





those areas which, we must point out, were known to the Egyptians of antiquity. We possess documents in our archives which contain irrefutable proof of such knowledge. In fact, as you will see when studying lessons of the Sixth Temple Degree, the members of mystery schools possessed considerable knowledge of the human body and the way to heal a great number of diseases. We will transmit that knowledge to you at the appropriate time.

When you have the opportunity, you will want to consult a reference work to obtain a precise idea of the various areas of the brain. You will note that some of them, aside from those we have just mentioned, concern psycho-motricity, that is to say, the control exerted by thought on the voluntary motions of the head, trunk, arms, legs, and in general, of all parts of our body. In this connection, physicians are aware that a wound to the head may cause partial or total paralysis. Thus, some persons, following an accident, lose the use of some bodily part—an arm, leg, hand, foot, or one side of the body—or even the entirety of the body. Moreover, some lesions of the brain produce memory losses which may involve even total oblivion of our past. Others generate an inability, for some period of time, to speak not only the patient's native tongue but also those languages he or she may have later learned. Such functional anomalies are due to a suspension of activity of one of the cerebral areas. Physicians can remedy some of them but, in many cases, they cannot act without running the risk of creating even more severe damage. That is why brain surgery is an art difficult to master.

It should also be remembered that inaction of certain areas of the brain is not always due to accidents. Many laboratory experiments prove that such areas must be constantly activated and stimulated so as to maintain their activity potential. In this connection, many persons complain of losing their memory, of having limited imagination, of being unable to reflect effectively on certain problems, of lacking inspiration to speak or write, etc. Often such deficiencies occur because these persons do not make sufficient use of their mental processes. In other words, they are in the habit of no longer engaging in mental exercises—resulting in a notable weakening of their subjective faculties. To make an analogy, you know that when a fractured or broken limb is immobilized in plaster for several months, its



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muscles atrophy to the extent that a rehabilitation is usually necessary. Likewise, any individual who adopts a passive mental attitude eventually annihilates his or her intellectual abilities. Any cerebral effort becomes painful for such a person and is reflected by increasingly mediocre results. Such individuals gradually become incapable of exerting their own potential of reflection.

People who wish to retain their full mental faculties will indulge in reading, reflection, and meditation. They avoid spending too much time "escaping" before a movie or television screen, for constantly acting as a spectator paralyzes our mental processes in the long run and impairs our power of concentration. To make another analogy, it is far easier to watch someone swim or train in any other physical activity, than it is to do so oneself. Yet, the satisfaction derived from the activity, whether physical or mental, is far greater than that experienced in passivity or sloth. One must, of course, reserve periods of time for rest and recreation, for such recuperative periods are necessary when changing one's ideas and renewing oneself on all planes. However, such periods must not lead to sickly indolence.

In our next monograph we will continue the study of mind by examining several mental faculties most important to a mystic. At that time you will gradually gain awareness of the creative powers of human consciousness.

These first lessons have undoubtedly raised many questions in your mind, and your notebook must be increasing in size. Future monographs will certainly provide you with clarification on these topics to which you are being introduced. If, however, you have a question you feel needs resolution at this time, feel free to write to your Class Master, who will be pleased to assist you. Remember, we are a fraternal organization, and not just a correspondence school for home study. Kindly remember, however, to include your name, address, and key number on letters sent to the Grand Lodge.

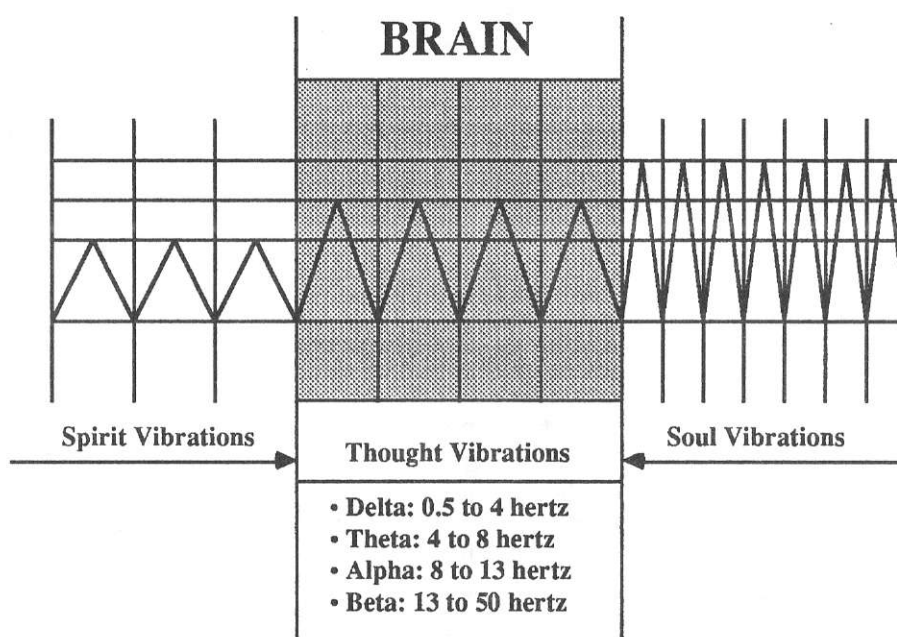
With all best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,  
YOUR CLASS MASTER



## Practical Application

*Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant*

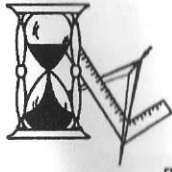


The purpose of this diagram is to show how thought vibrations are formed. According to Rosicrucians thought, vibrations result from the interaction occurring in the brain between spirit vibrations, emanating from the outside and from the brain itself, and soul vibrations, whose source is situated in our innermost selves. We suggest that you study and examine this diagram closely for we will consider briefly certain points connected with it in our next monograph.

## Summary of This Monograph

Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ Mind is born of the encounter of *two energies*—one of which is of negative polarity (Spirit) and the other of positive polarity (V.L.F.). Since these two energies are vibrations in motion, it follows that thought itself is of a vibratory nature.
- ¶ The electroencephalogram (EEG) allows reproduction upon a graph of waves produced by the neurons comprising the brain.
- ¶ The study of brain waves gives data on a person's mental and physical condition. It also makes it possible to outline a profile of an individual's mental activity at a given moment.
- ¶ Science currently distinguishes four major kinds of brain waves: delta waves, theta waves, alpha waves, and beta waves.
- ¶ An EEG reflects the intensity of our brain activity and not our state of consciousness because the equipment involved can only record and amplify "material" waves. The closer our state of consciousness is to Cosmic Consciousness, the weaker our purely cerebral activity is. That is why it is not possible to record the "nonmaterial" (or spiritual) vibrations corresponding to a state of Cosmic Consciousness.
- ¶ Although the brain is not the seat of human consciousness, but the center where the energy of Spirit interacts with that of the Soul to give birth to thought, its role is essential, for mental activity cannot take place without it.
- ¶ Certain areas of the brain specialize in the analysis of our sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch sensations, while other areas are specialized in mental processes such as speech, reflection, recall, and imagination.
- ¶ It is very important to constantly use and stimulate our mental faculties, so as to maintain their activity at full potential.



## *First Atrium No. 6*

# CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



It is true, as we explain in this monograph, that the human mind possesses a creative power. Such a power is explained by the fact that the human, as a conscious individuality, is one of the highest manifestations of Cosmic Intelligence. From an allegorical standpoint theologians are right to state that humans are made in the image of God, for each human being incarnates a particle of the Divinity, and with it some of its attributes, the most important being consciousness itself. Consequently, if we admit that the universe is the work of the creative power of Divine Thought, we would logically state that humans are a reflection of that Thought and that they are likewise gifted with creative thought. Thus, we can reply in the affirmative to the question posed by Thomas Troward at the end of the following quotation.

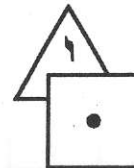
*One of the great axioms in the new order of ideas, of which I have spoken, is that our Thought possesses creative power, and since the whole superstructure depends on this foundation, it is well to examine it carefully. Now the starting point is to see that Thought, or purely mental action, is the only possible source from which the existing creation could ever have come into manifestation at all, and it is on this account that in the preceding addresses I have laid stress on the origin of the cosmos. It is therefore not necessary to go over this ground again, and we will start this morning's enquiry on the assumption that every manifestation is in essence the expression of a Divine Thought. This being so, our own mind is the expression of a Divine Thought. The Divine Thought has produced something which itself is capable of thinking; but the question is whether its thinking had the same creative quality as that of the Parent Mind.*

—THOMAS TROWARD, 1847-1916

Dear Fratres and Sorores,

In your previous monograph we indicated we would continue the study of *mind* by examining mental faculties most important to the mystic. One of these faculties is *thought*. The Rosicrucian concept of thought being a faculty of mind enables us to understand certain interesting facts. If you agree that thought results from the interplay occurring in the brain between the vibrations of Spirit and those of the Soul, you will recognize that it corresponds to a process situated between two worlds—the material and the spiritual. According to the state of consciousness in which we find ourselves, either spirit vibrations predominate, or vice versa. Such alternation of consciousness explains how our mental state, depending on circumstances, is more oriented toward either the outer or toward the inner world. Thus, in a wakeful state, our attention is mostly concentrated on our environment. Consequently, our thought is under the domination of spirit vibrations and corresponds more especially to the objective activity of our consciousness. But when we pray or meditate, soul vibrations predominate within us. In this case, our mental state is under the direct influence of our subconscious, or even of the Cosmic Consciousness which is within us.

When we consider the phenomenon of thought from a mystical aspect, we can understand truths which a purely scientific analysis cannot reveal. That is why, after having considered what science says on a certain subject, we often bring it back to a philosophical and mystical plane. In this way we derive laws which you can apply to Rosicrucian concepts, thus furthering your spiritual quest. As we have stressed previously, human knowledge is relative. Thus, what scientists affirm today about thought and mental processes reflects their understanding of the moment, but it is probable that further research will compel them to revise some of their postulates before long. On the other hand, ten years from now, one hundred years from now, a thousand years from now, the mystical definition Rosicrucians give to thought will still be valid for, as long as humans incarnate on earth, an interplay will take place within them between the energies of Soul and Spirit. This knowledge comes to us from the teachings that were perpetuated in the mystery schools of ancient Egypt. Those who dispensed such teachings were masters and initiates who, for the most part, had received Cosmic Illumination. Therefore, the learning they transmitted





to us cannot age, for it is not the fruit of intellectual speculation, but the fruit of a wisdom acquired through perfect harmonization with the Universal or Cosmic Consciousness.

**THE POWER OF THOUGHT:** According to what we told you in the preceding lesson, the time has come to begin the study of some of the mental faculties most useful to the individual. But before doing so we must consider an important point. It is a fact that the power of thought itself is extensive. It is necessary, therefore, to understand fully that this power necessarily entails limits. We stress this point because we know that this matter is subject to numerous exaggerations. For instance, some schools of philosophy teach that it is possible, by means of sustained concentration, to dematerialize oneself and thereby to go through walls. To explain that possibility, they suggest that a person can act upon the subatomic particles of his or her body and make them separate from one another when in contact with another substance, affirming that the only obstacles to dematerialization are fear and the doubt it arouses within us.

In fact, the problem is not so simple. From a Rosicrucian standpoint, it is impossible for a human being to go through a wall physically. As we explained to you, matter owes its structure and its solidity to forces of adhesion and cohesion, attraction and repulsion which vibrate within it under the action of Spirit. If these forces were not exerted continuously in material substances, houses would sink into the ground, objects would pass through tables, our body would collapse in on itself, and so on. For us to go through a wall, it would be necessary for the atomic structure of our entire being to disintegrate into its component particles. Supposing that such a disintegration were possible, we would become Spirit and Soul in pure state. In such a state we would no longer be subject to the limitations of time and space, and there would be no reason to try to go through walls. Besides, such a process would be irreversible, for we would no longer have the power to again materialize our body. To a certain extent, we would be in the situation of a dead person whose body was cremated, making it impossible for the person's soul to reincarnate in that body.



Thus, unlike what is stated by certain philosophical teachings, Rosicrucian tradition considers dematerialization to be impossible and therefore it cannot be the ideal way to conquer the limits imposed upon us by the material world.

The only value in this kind of speculation is to awaken our imagination and the interest we must grant to the whole of our mental faculties. In the Postulant Section we affirmed that it was possible to go beyond the barriers of time and space. Before long we will prove to you that this is definitely true. You will discover for yourself that such a possibility does not apply to the physical body but to the psychic body, for it is that body and that body alone which can pass through walls, travel considerable distances, perceive manifestations of the invisible, etc. When the moment has come, we will teach you how to succeed in such activities.

Let us consider another example of exaggeration connected with the power of thought. It is not unusual to hear or read that the pyramids of Egypt were built solely by the power of levitation. The placement of enormous blocks of stone was indeed facilitated by the use of certain faculties and knowledge mastered by the initiates of the time, but there can be no doubt that construction of these structures required a considerable amount of labor and technical means calling upon human physical strength. Countless legends have appeared to explain how such monuments were erected, because historians, until the present time, could not satisfactorily explain the exact methods used. On the psychological plane, the unknown opens the doors to imagination, for humans always seek to forget their weaknesses and limitations by contemplating the powers they would like to possess. In that regard, the role of heroic myth is to materialize the physical, mental, and spiritual qualities which every individual, in his or her innermost self, dreams of acquiring.

We could cite numerous examples to show that the power of thought is the object of much speculation. We do not mean to say that this power does not exist. Rather, we want to stress that it is often misunderstood and sometimes applied to things or to situations having no direct connection with it. True, human consciousness basically possesses faculties enabling human beings to exert considerable control over matter, but such faculties can only act within the limits of natural and universal laws. If we were capable of using the power of thought to act on the material world as we see fit, a permanent chaos would reign in all realms of existence as each one of us, according to our desires and whims, could transform our earthly environment to suit ourselves. In this respect, we cannot substitute ourselves for

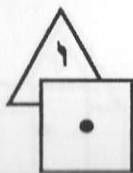


Cosmic Consciousness which, for its own part, acts only within the limits of its own laws—the latter contributing without exception to the maintenance of universal harmony. As stated by the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, “. . . that which is below is like that which is above, and that which is above is like that which is below . . .” Therefore, human consciousness, in the image of Cosmic Consciousness, has at its disposal a creative power which can be exerted only with due respect for certain norms.

**CONCENTRATION:** We now come to the study of the first of the mental faculties we will study in this Atrium: *Concentration*. Many works have been devoted to this faculty, but it is treated solely from a psychological aspect most of the time. It is just as important to consider its mystical application for such an application forms the basis of most of the experiments you will perform during your Rosicrucian studies. From a Rosicrucian standpoint, concentration is the ability to channel our physical, mental, or psychic energy to attain a specific objective. That is why we distinguish three forms of concentration: *physical*, *mental*, and *psychic*.

Physical concentration consists of channeling all our muscular energy in that part of the body—shoulders, arms, back, legs, etc.—which is about to be used. Thus, when athletes are in a state of concentration before a race, a considerable amount of their energy potential is directed toward a specific area of their body, which results in considerably enhancing the physiological performances of that area. Mental concentration, on the other hand, may be directed toward the outer world or may concern abstract ideas having their origin within ourselves. As for psychic concentration, it consists, as its name indicates, of channeling our psychic energy toward a given point. That is possible only from the moment when our psychic consciousness is sufficiently awakened. This awakening will be the subject of the work we shall undertake by the end of this Neophyte Section.

When our mental concentration is directed toward the outer world, it concerns things we perceive through our five objective senses. Its purpose is then to give full attention to what we see, hear, touch, smell, or taste. What matters in that case is to have all our mental energy converge exclusively on the object of our concentration. Thus, if we concentrate on a thing we are looking at, only our sense of sight is called upon to the exclusion of others, and



that thing alone must be the center of our visual and mental attention. If our concentration bears upon some sound or noise, we must become sensitive only to the sound impressions transmitted by our hearing. The principle is the same when we concentrate on an odor, a flavor, or an object's form. In general, we can say that concentration consists of being fully one with the thing to which we turn our attention. When that unity is perfectly realized, there comes a time when we totally lose consciousness of what we are, of the place where we are, and of all sensory impressions, with the exception of those impressions coming from that thing.

**EXPERIMENT NO. 3:** In coming days we suggest that you perform the series of exercises outlined below. Their purpose, as you will see, is to develop your power of concentration and more especially that power as it relates to the outside world. Give them your undivided attention for they constitute the basis of your future work.

A. When walking along the street, look for a few moments at a store window of your choice. Try to mentally photograph the objects displayed in the window. After a few minutes, turn away and try to enumerate the objects one by one. Verify your performance and resume this process until you are able to re-form or reconstitute in your mind the entire window display.

B. Choose a cassette, compact disk, or record of your choice and listen to it attentively. While doing so, try to isolate each instrument and name each one aloud as you recognize it. What matters in this experiment is not really your ability to distinguish all the instruments which were necessary to the musical interpretation to which you are listening, but your ability to maintain such concentration throughout the duration of the composition.

C. During a walk, stop at a place where there are stones or pebbles and, without looking, pick one up at random. With your eyes closed, concentrate on its shape by feeling it with your fingers. Try to define its angles, curves, hollows, rough parts, smooth parts, etc. While doing so, try to imagine it in its entirety. After a few minutes of concentration, open your eyes and check if the shape of that stone does correspond to what you imagined as you touched it.

D. When you have the time, go for a stroll in a public park, a forest, or any other place where you can smell the scents



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emanating from the flowers and the vegetation. Sit down, close your eyes, and concentrate exclusively on the odors. While doing so, try to concentrate on these scents to such a degree that you have the sensation of merging with them.

E. The next time you eat some fruit, take time to savor it—that is to say, to concentrate on its taste. Most of the time we pay scant attention to the flavor of food. This is a pity, for the awakening of our sensitivity to taste can produce interesting psychological and psychic experiences. Therefore, perform this simple experiment whenever you have the opportunity. You may also use a food dish composed of several ingredients. In that case, concentrate on its taste and try to determine the various ingredients composing it.

With these few experiments we will close this week's study. In the next monograph we will continue our examination of concentration and will pass another landmark in its practical application.

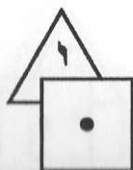
With all best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

### FOR YOUR NEXT INITIATION

Soon you will receive another initiation to perform. To properly enact this initiation, it will be necessary for you to burn some incense. You may obtain incense locally or from the Rosicrucian Supply Bureau. We recommend India Moss Rose scent, which is available in cones or sticks. Please write or call our Supply Bureau for current prices.



## Practical Application

*Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant*

For this week's practical application, we wish once again to emphasize the importance of practicing the experiments in this lesson. Despite their apparent simplicity, they are quite effective in developing your power of concentration. Indeed, as you progress through the degrees of our teachings, advancing one step at a time, you will note that this power forms the basis of most of those mystical faculties which shall be divulged to you within the framework of your Rosicrucian studies. Such faculties include telepathy, psychic projection, absent healing, vibroturgy, telekinesis, etc. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you start to learn right away how to concentrate your mental energy toward a specific goal.

You will note that each one of these experiments requires the use of one of your five objective senses—namely, hearing, sight, touch, smell, or taste. These experiments are therefore useful for increasing your sensory acuity, allowing you to acquire a sharper perception of the material world. Keeping this in mind, we wish to suggest that from now on you train yourself to memorize those sensory impressions which come to you from your environment, because such memorization is essential to visualization, one of the faculties that we will study in the near future.



## Summary of This Monograph

Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ Since thought results from the interplay occurring in the brain between the vibrations of Spirit and those of the Soul, it corresponds to a process situated between two worlds—the material and the spiritual.
- ¶ According to the state of consciousness in which we find ourselves, either the vibrations of Spirit or those of the Soul dominate. If spirit vibrations dominate, our mental activity is rather objective, whereas if soul vibrations dominate, our mental activity is under the direct influence of our subconscious, or even of the Cosmic Consciousness which is within us.
- ¶ Rosicrucian tradition considers dematerialization to be impossible and, therefore, it cannot constitute the ideal way to conquer the limits imposed upon us by the material world.
- ¶ It is true that human consciousness basically possesses faculties which enable humans to exert considerable control over matter, but such faculties can act only within the limits of natural and universal laws.
- ¶ From a Rosicrucian standpoint, concentration is the ability to channel our physical, mental, or psychic energy to attain a specific objective.
- ¶ Mental concentration may be directed toward the outer world or, on the other hand, may concern abstract ideas having their origin within ourselves.
- ¶ When our mental concentration is directed toward the outer world, it concerns things which we perceive through our five objective senses. Its purpose is then to give full attention to what we see, hear, touch, smell, or taste.



## *First Atrium No. 7*

### CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



James George Frazer described admirably the importance of fire among primitive tribes. His remarks about the Damaras and Hereros enable us to understand how and why prehistoric people venerated fire and made it an object of worship. Fire radically transformed their life and marked symbolically the beginning of human civilization. Millennia have passed since then, but fire still exerts a great fascination over us because the mystical experience resulting from its discovery is forever engraved in the consciousness of the human soul.

*The Damaras or Hereros (tribes), in southwestern Africa, maintain sacred fires in their villages, and their customs and beliefs in this respect present a close resemblance to the Roman worship of Vesta.*

*The sacred fire is regarded as the centre of the village; from it at evening the people fetch a light to kindle the fire on their own hearths, for every householder has his own private hearth in front of his hut. At the holy hearth are kept the most sacred possessions of the tribe, to wit, the bundle of sticks which represent their ancestors; here sacrifices are offered and enchantments performed; here the flesh of the victims is cooked; here is the proper place of the chief; here the elders assemble in council, and judgment is given; here strangers are received and ambassadors entertained. . . . So great is the veneration felt by the natives for the sacred hearth, with its hallowed bough, that they dare not approach it without testifying their deepest respect.*

*When a man goes forth from the village with his family and servants to herd the cattle on a distant pasture, or to found another village, he takes with him a burning brand from the sacred hearth wherewith to kindle the holy fire in his new home.*

*If the sacred fire should go out through the neglect of the priestess, a sudden shower of rain, or any other accident, the Herero deem it a very evil omen. The whole tribe is immediately summoned and large offerings of cattle are made as an expiation.*

—JAMES GEORGE FRAZER, 1854-1941

*The Golden Bough*

Dear Fratres and Sorores,

Today we will continue our study of concentration and will engage in a new experiment. In our last lesson we mostly considered those principles we need to use so as to concentrate effectively on various objects in our material environment. We hope that you pursued these experiments because they will aid in the development of your concentration for each of your five objective faculties—sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. As you will learn later, such concentration also contributes to the awakening of our extrasensory perception, for our objective senses have a psychic counterpart.

We will now consider another important concept linking the material and immaterial worlds. We will use a candle flame, for it truly constitutes an ideal focal point to develop a certain form of mental concentration. On the other hand, it has been associated for centuries with the important symbol of *fire*. Although a candle flame is a physically small manifestation, it possesses all of the physical and metaphysical potencies of fire. Thus, before presenting the experiment for this lesson, we will examine the reasons which help make *fire* symbolical of those laws and principles that are especially important in the realm of esotericism. Of the four elements, fire is the one most venerated by mystics of the past for, as we shall see, its properties apply to matter as well as to consciousness.

**THE SYMBOLISM OF FIRE:** Since the dawn of human civilization, fire has been regarded as a source of warmth and light. No one can say exactly how early humans discovered it, but what is certain is that their ability to produce fire *voluntarily* is one of those events which most revolutionized their lives. On the physical level, it brought incalculable well-being. People could stay warm when it was cold, cook their food, and protect themselves more efficiently against predators. This feeling of protection exerted a positive influence on their emotional state, for the fear in which they lived continuously—especially at night—yielded to a feeling of security. Finally, fire formed the basis of their spiritual awakening. By allowing fire to burn in the cave they used as shelter, early humans prolonged their hours of wakefulness and used it as a basis for their first meditations. In that respect, the discovery of fire made it possible for them to conquer not only the outer



darkness, but also that which, for millennia, had prevented them from contemplating their own inner light.

We thus see that fire brought into existence a profound mystical experience for, while it contributed to physical well-being, it made it possible for people to reflect on their own condition and to gain awareness of the spiritual dimension of their being. Under such conditions, it was natural for fire to become an object of veneration and to serve as a basis for the early religions. We will have occasion to return to this point in this Neophyte Section, for we shall soon see how religions were born which marked the gradual evolution of human consciousness.

According to classical literature, the mystical use of fire dates back to *Zoroastrianism*—that is to say, to approximately the 6th century B.C. However, the actual roots of Zoroastrianism go back to prehistoric times. Zoroaster contrasted *Ahura Mazda*, the angel of light and good, to *Ahriman*, the demon of darkness and of evil. In fact, many Hermetic writings prove that the cult of fire is lost in the mists of time for, from most remote antiquity, it was an integral part of religious ceremonies. In the temples of ancient Egypt a sacred flame burned continuously in the Holy of Holies. This flame was to be extinguished under no circumstances for, if such an event occurred, it was thought to be the sign of a curse and as the temporary victory of forces of evil over those of good. That is why a certain number of chosen persons, generally young girls, had the duty of making sure that it never went out. They kept watch over the flame night and day, and consequently held themselves responsible before God and the Kheri-Hebs for what would happen if they should fail in their duty.

The importance attached to the perpetual fire is also found in the temples of ancient Greece, where a special cult was devoted to *Hestia* who, for the Greeks, was the goddess of fire. Once again, traditions report that it was young girls who, under the protection of Hestia, watched over the sacred flame. In ancient Rome, the same principle was applied to the deity *Vesta*, the guardian of fire and the hearth. The cult of that deity was ensured by young priestesses who, for obvious reasons, were called *Vestals*. We may still see, among the ruins of some Roman temples, the remains of small houses which served as the residences of Vestals.



This tradition of using Vestal virgins has been perpetuated in our era because of its profound symbolism. In Lodges and Chapters of our Order, a young girl has the function, in certain rituals, of lighting the candles which are located on the Shekinah—that is to say, on the central altar of the temple. For centuries, she has borne the traditional name of *Colombe* (i.e., “Dove”).

Today, in all temples consecrated to various religions—Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, or most other religions—we find that fire is always present in some form or another. Various instruments are associated with temple fires: candle-holders, tapers and candles, or oil lamps. No matter what implement is used, its symbolism remains the same—namely, representation of Cosmic Light on the earthly plane. We can probably say without doubt that the mystical use of fire dates back to the time when humans began to distinguish good from evil and to associate the former with light and the latter with darkness. This fact is supported in religious texts, as all indicate that fire is the symbol of human virtue or the expression of Divine Perfection.

In the *Vedas*, for instance, God is considered to be a fire that lights and warms bodies as well as souls. In the *Old* and the *New Testament*, the symbolism of fire and flame is used many times. It is likewise related to good and to all the qualities people must demonstrate to reflect the Celestial Light. Many verses of the *Koran* compare the human soul to a flame ceaselessly consuming itself and containing within itself the attributes of Divine Fire. In fact, all the sacred scriptures refer to those attributes and connect them with the spiritual nature of humans.

**THE ALCHEMY OF FIRE:** The preceding remarks lead us to consider the other aspect of the symbolism associated with fire. As you know, it is not limited to the representation of good or of the presence of God on earth. In all traditions and in most religions, a power of purification and regeneration is also attributed to it. Fire, in its earthly expression, is thought to be an agent which can consume many material substances. In that respect, it is the only element capable of totally transmuting one form of matter into another by reducing it totally to ashes or steam. Moreover, it is used to sanitize and purify objects or places, for no impurity, be it of mineral or organic origin, can resist its action.

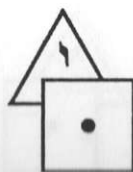




All these physical properties have made fire the basic element of *material alchemy* which became the basis of modern chemistry. In their laboratories, alchemists used it to purify certain base metals—particularly lead—transmuting them into gold. This purification and transformation took place in several progressive phases which were increasingly complex and difficult. But this material alchemy was only the counterpart of a *spiritual alchemy* based on the gradual purification of the human soul. Alchemists knew that the purpose of existence is to evolve toward perfection and that this evolution demands that human beings purify themselves of their faults by transmutation into opposite qualities. Besides, alchemists understood that such a purification and transmutation could only be effected by contact with the mundane world, for it alone supplies us with the experiences which are necessary to our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual regeneration.

In the original version of sacred scriptures we find specific references to the alchemical power of fire. All these references clearly show that such power was linked above all to the various transmutations people must experience in the course of their earthly evolution. Unfortunately, the statements were corrupted by literal interpretation, thus giving birth to dogmas no longer having any connection with the mystical principles involved. Thus, most religions refer to the fires of *purgatory* and of *hell*, suggesting that such are real places where the soul of the dead is purged of its faults and purified of its sins before it can enter Heaven or Paradise. This is an erroneous interpretation of the true symbolism of fire, for quite obviously such places do not exist and are purely symbolic.

From a mystical point of view, earth itself constitutes the purgatory and the hell of humanity for, as alchemists and mystics have taught for centuries, it is during their earthly existence that people face the trials necessary for the purification of their personality and the gaining of awareness of their Divine Self. The material world therefore is the crucible in which the evolution of our spiritual nature is wrought, and each of us now experiences on the material plane physical, moral, and spiritual sufferings which are the lot of any human being incarnate on this earthly plane.



For Rosicrucians, fire symbolizes laws and principles which have been associated with it since the most remote times. In



its mundane appearance it corresponds to the highest expression of the visible manifestations of Spirit. It is precisely because of its high vibratory frequency that it has the power to transmute material forms placed in contact with it. Besides, this frequency makes it an intermediate agent between the material world and the spiritual world, for its vibrations are such that it is at the same time substance and essence while being neither one nor the other. Thus, although one may see and observe the colors fire may assume, it is impossible to seize it, to contain it, or to impose a form to it, unless, of course, one resorts to special technical means.

On the alchemical plane, we also consider that fire represents the mystical process operating continuously within the individual and which, at the end of each individual's incarnations, must allow that individual to receive the illumination—that is to say, the influx of wisdom resulting from perfect harmonization with Cosmic Consciousness. Such illumination can be obtained only after having totally purified ourselves of our imperfections in contact with the Divine Fire illuminating the altar of our inner temple. It is this Divine Fire that constitutes the *Philosopher's Stone* to which alchemists alluded in their writings. Thus, contrary to what many believed and still believe, it does not designate and never designated a stone of material nature, but rather the divine essence which animates our being and whose radiance we must learn to express in each thought, word, and action. In that sense, it is the most precious of jewels we have to discover. Finally, on the spiritual plane, Rosicrucians attribute to fire the symbolism that was always associated with it—namely, the presence on earth of Cosmic Light and, consequently, Universal Good.

In addition to the alchemical symbolism attributed to fire, the Rosicrucian tradition also uses the flame to represent life, such as it manifests itself in the whole of the universe and, of course, on our planet. In that respect, we note that all living beings draw their vitality from the air they breathe. In the same way, fire can only burn in the presence of that element. It is because of this special symbolism that Rosicrucians never extinguish a candle flame by blowing upon it. They feel that the breath is the expression of our Vital Life Force and that, consequently, it must not be used to remove the symbol of life itself. Thus, when Rosicrucians must extinguish the flame of one or several candles while performing a ritual, they always use a



snuffer, for that flame represents for them the spark of life which illuminates the body, heart, and soul.

To conclude the symbolism of fire, we would like to present this following text taken from the archives of our Order and which is evidence of the interest mystics always have taken in that symbolism:

*Think of the forms taken by fire when it vacillates soundlessly, when it winds, twists, widens, lengthens and contracts. Note its changes of color as its ardor increases. See the imaginary forms surging from its flames, propelled into space as lightning surges toward Earth. Behold the sky lit by thousands of stars, like a scintillating sea reflecting a single flame. The latent heat of generative fires is found in the coldest silex stone, in the most limpid and in the purest air, in oxygen in ozone, in every thing and in all, for fire is a truly royal principle, of supernatural splendor. It purifies all things and makes them become invisible. The sacred ceremony of fire prevails in all religious cults. It is a universal symbol, a visible representation of the invisible. For, just as fire is everywhere, God is also everywhere, around us and within us, and thus we are men enlightened by God. That is why people adored the unknown God in the last form man could imagine, fire, which was known as his shadow. In all this it is not the natural fire we contemplate, but the mystical, celestial, divine fire.*

**EXPERIMENT NO. 4:** Since we have now discussed these general considerations on the symbolism of fire, let us go on to the experiment you will perform as regularly as possible in coming days. First of all, extinguish one of the two candles in your Sanctum and to place the other one in the center of the altar. That being done, sit down approximately 2 meters (7 feet) away from the lit candle and observe the following instructions:

Put your hands on your knees and place your feet flat on the ground, slightly apart from each other. Keep your back very straight and relax for a few moments while taking three neutral breaths. The latter, we remind you, are done by inhaling and exhaling deeply through the nose without interruption between inhalations and exhalations.



As soon as you feel fully relaxed, concentrate your gaze on the candle flame. Blink your eyes normally. Maintain this concentration until you experience the feeling of being one with the candle flame. At that time, you must no longer be

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conscious of who you are or of the place where you are, but you must have the sensation of being the flame itself—that is to say, light and heat.

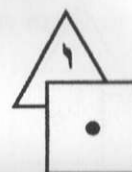
When your concentration is at its peak and when you have succeeded in creating a perfect unity between yourself and the candle flame, stop this experiment. If you wish, observe a brief pause and repeat the experiment entirely. Whatever the results obtained, definitely stop at the end of your second attempt, at least for this sanctum period.

This experiment is effective in developing your power of mental concentration and it will aid in the special work you will be performing at the time of our next meeting. When you have finished, put the lit candle back in its place and light the other one again. After having read the Practical Application and the Summary, have a brief period of meditation, then close your sanctum period with the simple ritual which was presented to you in the first monograph of this Atrium.

Before closing this ritual, you may wish to read this monograph again. A single reading is not usually not sufficient to assimilate its content fully. This recommendation is also valid for all of the monographs provided by AMORC.

With all best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,  
YOUR CLASS MASTER



## Practical Application

*Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant*

In connection with the study of the symbolism which mystics have attributed to fire and flame for centuries, it seems important to us to make a few comments on the importance you must attach to the use of incense, notably when you prepare to study a monograph or to withdraw to your Sanctum to meditate. For obvious reasons, incense is linked to the alchemical power of fire for it is impossible to burn some without using a source of heat. Moreover, as it is consumed, its transmutation gives birth to a scent which, on the vibratory plane, is in perfect harmony with the consciousness of Soul. Smelling such an odor arouses within ourselves a desire and a need for introspection or contemplation.

Some persons state that they do not like the scent of incense or even that they cannot bear it. Actually, it may not be the odor itself which causes their aversion, but rather its connection with a religious context they dislike. You will note that most persons who have a certain "allergy" to incense do not like the atmosphere of churches and, in general, feel in no way attracted to mysticism. In some cases, it may be a sort of mental block or a form of superstition concerning everything connected with religion.

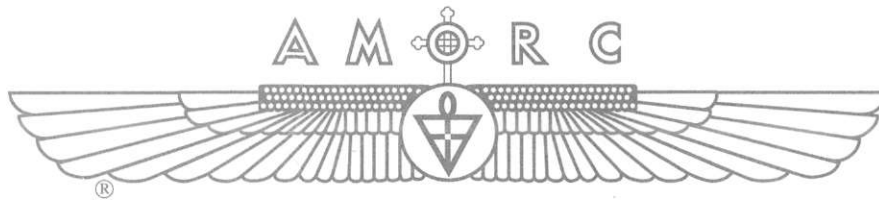
Very rare among persons interested in spirituality are those who do not like the odor of incense and who do not take pleasure in burning some regularly at home. To that odor is added the symbolism one may see in the motion of incense vapors as they rise in a room. For they then materialize the elevation of consciousness—that is to say, the spiritual ascent which allows the individual to rejoin the Universal Good someday. Thus, for all those reasons, the use of incense is an invaluable element when one desires to create at home or in one's Sanctum an atmosphere favorable to the study and application of mysticism. Of course, it is not a matter of burning some in any place and at all times, for its use must always be made respectfully and in a proper context.

## Summary of This Monograph

Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ Of the four elements, fire is the one most venerated by mystics of the past, for its properties apply to matter as well as to consciousness.
- ¶ The discovery of fire, and the ability to produce fire *voluntarily*, revolutionized the life of early humans—on the physical plane as well as on emotional and spiritual planes.
- ¶ From remote antiquity, fire has been an integral part of religious ceremonies. In the temples of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, a sacred flame burned continuously under the watchful eye of young priestesses.
- ¶ Today, in all temples consecrated to various religions—Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, or most other religions—we find that fire is always present in some form or another.
- ¶ The mystical use of fire dates back to the time when humans began to discern good from evil and to associate the former with light and the latter with darkness. This fact is supported in religious texts, as all indicate that fire is the symbol of human virtue or the expression of Divine Perfection.
- ¶ Fire has always been the basic element of *material alchemy*. But the latter was only the counterpart of a *spiritual alchemy* based on the gradual purification of the human soul. That is why fire also symbolizes the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual regeneration of humanity.
- ¶ For Rosicrucians, fire, in its mundane appearance, corresponds to the highest expression of the visible manifestations of Spirit. On alchemical and spiritual planes, Rosicrucians attribute to fire the symbolism that was always associated with it—namely, the presence on earth of Cosmic Light and, consequently, Universal Good.

*Consecrated to truth  
and dedicated to every Rosicrucian*



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