

The Mystical Marriage, the Alchemical
Wedding, and the Search for the Eternal
Beloved.

*The dynamics of male and female in
initiation and its shadow in our times.*

Part I: The Mystical Marriage - world unites
with the soul - East.

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And
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Part I
The Mystical Marriage
World unites with the soul - East.

Rumi said:

A lover asked his beloved,
Do you love yourself more than you love me?
Beloved replied, I have died to myself and I live for you.
I've disappeared from myself and my attributes,
I am present only for you.
I've forgotten all my learnings,
but from knowing you I've become a scholar.
I've lost all my strength, but from your power I am able.
I love myself...I love you.
I love you...I love myself.

At the end of this lecture we will look at this again and see if we can understand it better.

When I think of the eternal beloved an image rises up to my mind of Novalis on a moonlit night in a cemetery laying on Sophie Von Kunst's grave. I see a picture of Henrich Von Offerdingen's search for the Blue flower. I see or rather hear Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata. I see him sitting at his piano with his ear to the wood listening for the vibrations of the music he could no longer hear...the music he wrote to a beloved, who was the externalized image of his soul. I see Mona Lisa, smiling back at Leonardo Da Vinci. I see an image in my mind of the beautiful lily, I see Gretchen, I see Joan of Arc as the vanguard of St Michael, dressed in a man's suit of armour. I see all the Temple art depicting Isis and I see all the renaissance paintings of Mary the foremost of which for me is Raphael's Sistine Madonna. In Fairytales I see Sleeping beauty and Snow White waiting for an awakening from their princes. I see the theme in Hollywood movies, for instance Inception, the Matrix, Constantine...I see Orpheus, Virgil and Dante descending to the underworld to rescue the feminine; I see Soloviev conversing with his beloved who in the night came to sit at the foot of his bed and I see Rumi speaking of his beloved as a he! I see Flor and Blanchfleur, the west rescuing the east. I see it in my book Fifth Gospel in the mysterious young woman, Lea, who visits Brother

Bertrand Marty the Cathar perfect to tell him the story of the Fifth Gospel. I see the beloved in the Jewish woman in *The Seal*, and in Eva in the Sixth Key and lastly in Mabel Collins in my upcoming book *Ghost Club* and the Devil's Alphabet. She will also feature in the book after that *The Alchemical Wedding* - of course!

The Mystical experience, the search for the 'eternal' beloved, has given us some of the most poignant art, the most sublime music, the most exalted poetry and yet in our time this experience and its connection to the mysteries has not been fully understood.

Tonight I would like to dedicate this lecture to the Templars who were the representatives of a transition from Mysticism to Alchemy, who worshiped Christ and adored Isis and for this reason were seized on the 13th of October 1307, that is, 707 years ago almost to the day.

As always we will begin with a question.

What is the nature of Mysticism?

It is always instructive to see what the Webster Dictionary defines as 'Mysticism':

- The experience of a mystical or spiritual union or direct communion with ultimate reality reported by mystics.
- The belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (as intuition or insight)
- A vague speculation or a belief without sound basis
- A theory postulating the possibility of direct and intuitive acquisition of ineffable knowledge or power.

In all three we see a common element: the subjective experience. Or rather an experience based on 'feelings', rather than 'thoughts' which are based on soundness, in other words, thoughts based on the material world of the senses, and which are seen to be 'objective'.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that mystics were those human beings who sought

to gain knowledge concerning the foundations of the world through an inner soul experience, that is, by liberating themselves from the world of the senses and its impressions.

These mystics saw the world of images and sense impressions as temptations and seductions¹, which did not show the truth about the origins of all things, but which gave a false or demonic picture, that had to be 'killed' or overcome, if the true pictures living behind all material things were to be found.

A mystic believed that there was no point in using the gate of the intellect to pierce the veil of sense impressions because this was too difficult to do, but believed that in order to find the divine foundations of the world one needed only to pierce the relatively thin inner veil of the soul - that is, by entering through the inner gate of Sentience or feeling life.

In light of this, one might say that all mysticism presupposes two principles: that the true foundation of the world is the spirit, and that one should seek the spirit by entering into the soul.

Let us look at Mysticism historically.

In ancient times, for instance in the Indian Epoch, human beings lived in a dreamy state of oneness with the spirit. The outer world of images was understood to be an illusion or maya, which belonged to spiritual substance as if it had been solidified out of it - in the same way that ice is of the same substance as water. When the Indians looked out at the world they saw their own spirit mingling with it and they knew they were one with what they saw outwardly, and when they looked within their souls they perceived that the spirit or 'the all' which lay behind the world of maya, was within them.

*"The old Indian realised on the one side 'That thou art,' and on the other side 'I am the all' and knew that the world which he saw outside was the same as that within."*²

This was so because the Etheric body of the Indian was not so closely bound to the human physical body, according to Rudolf Steiner and the

¹ Iconoclasts: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iconoclasm>

²<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA113/English/RSPC1940/19090829p01.html>
Lecture by Rudolf Steiner, 29th August 1909.

initiates who had elaborated their etheric bodies had allowed Atma to live in them - Atma penetrated into them as far as the etheric body.³ This means waking and sleeping and even life and death had different meanings - waking and life were a form of spiritual communion while sleeping and death were a form of communion with the material world.

By the time humanity had reached Persian times, a more balanced waking and sleeping, life and death condition emerged as the etheric body entered further into the human physical body. This was brought about, one might say, by necessity: the human being had to live in the world, that is, to work, eat, to find shelter, grow crops and to forge tools. The human being had to reshape the world and in turn this created an inward movement of the etheric body and through it a more divided inner life because the external world of maya now began to make impressions on the human being. By allowing these impressions to enter in and to last longer and longer before disappearing, one might say, the various sheaths of the human soul - the Astral body - were created, and the human being incarnated further and became more conscious of the world. Rudolf Steiner tells us that the Persian thus allowed Life Spirit or Budhi, to penetrate down into the Astral body.⁴

One might compare it to a sculptor making deeper and deeper impressions on prepared clay, which paradoxically creates a vessel. In the same way the outer world shapes the astral body, to create a vessel of consciousness for the soul and through this consciousness comes an understanding of the soul's separated-ness from the world.

We might digress for a moment to look at what Rudolf Steiner tells us about the Astral body.

According to him the brain and spinal cord - the nervous system - are the outer physical manifestations of an inner spiritual counterpart - the Astral body. In the mysteries the nerves and senses are depicted as a snake. Lucifer (the Snake) tempted the male/female human being in Lemuria by entering into the Astral body and this opened the eyes of human beings, in other words, the physical world became perceptible. The Luciferic 'infection' of the Astral body made it heavy and created a split in the human etheric body and physical body into two - creating separate

³ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/OccultHist/19101229p01.html>

lecture by Rudolf Steiner 29th December 1910

⁴⁴ Ibid

beings - male and female.

Now getting back to what we were saying, the impressions of the world entered deeper into the Persian and created 'feelings' and 'sensations' in the soul that came and went. After a time, and deeper impressions were made, a part of the Astral body developed Sentience, that is - a more refined part which could 'register' the inner experience or effect, of an outer cause. Fire burns and pain is felt inwardly.

Thus did a more marked consciousness of outer and inner began, and thereby a more conscious experience of the self as a separate being.

For this reason, Lucifer lives in the Sentient Soul, which has a consciousness or Sentience - an inner feeling life.

By way of the Sentient Soul, and Lucifer, these impressions became more and more inward until they found the etheric body - which is connected to the Sentient Soul, according to Rudolf Steiner. In the etheric body the sensations made deeper more lasting impressions, which one can call the beginnings of 'memory'.

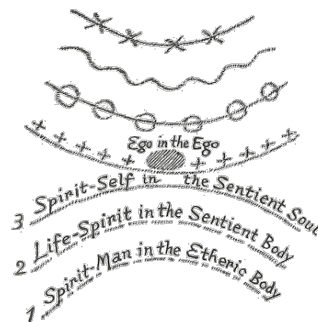
What was the faculty of memory for the ancients?

Every sensory experience of the outside world called forth a counterpart, a corresponding complementary colour or after image in the soul. The multiplicity of sensations the human being received through the senses concerning the world, entered human beings, who by this means could see inwardly the causes of all external things - the ideals - and these remained imprinted in the soul a long time. That is why the ancients had long memories. We can see here a relationship to Saturn - the old father of time. The ancients could see everything that had entered into them as spatial, as if it were still present, like a tableau of pictures full of spiritual meaning, because of the plasticity of the physical body and the etheric body's ability to work into it. In fact due to the folk soul quality of the ego, this worked in all who shared the same 'blood' as a form of collective memory. Here the connection between memory and blood is exemplified.

No longer did the human being experience cause and effect side by side but now, outside the human being there lived the things of the world which they saw as the results or effects, while inside lived the spiritual

causes.

The Egyptians experienced a greater inner life because they were elaborating this sentience into a soul sheath, and by doing so allowed the Spirit Self to penetrate into it.⁵



Eventually as human physical bodies hardened and etheric bodies entered more deeply into them, the 'virginal' images or the spiritual counterparts of everything seen began to die away because they could not be impressed so deeply into an etheric body that was connected to a hardened physical body. In one sense this was a counteraction by the spiritual world, against Lucifer's desire to make the moment eternal, that is, to freeze the spiritual substance and to make it materialize in the human soul.

*'Physiologically speaking, it is Lucifer's constant endeavour to send the life forces out of the rest of our organism into our head. Psychically speaking, Lucifer is constantly endeavouring to give to the content of our intelligence which merely comprises thoughts and images the character of substance.'*⁶

The eternal entered more deeply and died away, and the physical brain became a physical mirror capable of reflecting not the spiritual causes of all things which had sunk into the unconscious, for these had been 'dismembered' from their physical counterparts and thrust into the dungeon so to speak, but only the images of the physical world devoid of

⁵ Ibid

⁶ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/MissMich/19191123p01.html>
Lecture by Rudolf Steiner 23rd November 1919.

spirit to be 'remembered' or 'recollected' as a representation, a reflection by the brain to the soul.

*'This endeavor of Lucifer's would be crowned with success, were it not released by the Michael-forces. These will not let what is painted in the mind's inner light harden into real existence, but keep it coming and going as a fleeting picture.'*⁷

A consciousness of the reflected mirror images created a need to express what is remembered to others and this was the beginning of language, which enabled, through the expressing of the inward experiences outwardly, thinking to arise: the ability to bring concepts/images into context through the faculty of language. Thinking, as it is related to the etheric body, can be traced back to a seed laid on the Sun sphere of Earth evolution.

The ability to bring context and meaning to experience, to categorise and to bring together a number of concepts to create ideas was the result of the elaboration of another aspect of the soul - the Intellectual Soul. In the Intellectual Soul, Rudolf Steiner tells us, lives the influences of Ahriman, the god who helps us to find freedom by 'focusing' our inner eyes to things seen physically, giving us the 'passing moment' - Time.

So we have two ways the soul can access the etheric body:

Through the Sentient Soul in Image creation - space - eternity.
Through the Intellectual soul in Thought creation - time - the passing moment.

Now the Sentient life of Feelings and the Intellectual life of Thoughts lived in the human being side by side, each working with the other to create a consciousness of the inner self through taking in the outer world. This sense of separateness, this inner world striped more and more of its essential nature or spirit being, became a lie.

Ahriman is the father of lies.

We can understand that the gradual development of the 'soul' means that when one looks back through history, the idea of what constitutes 'soul' is different at different times depending on the sheath that is being elaborated. One might say that the soul in antiquity really consisted of

⁷ http://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA026/English/APC1956/GA026_c22.html

The Michael Mystery: Man's Freedom in the Michael Age; XXII.

the passive/active co-operation of the sheaths in the Astral body (perceptions/impressions and thinking) and its relationship to the etheric body.

Now we come to the source of this duality: the Luciferic 'infection' and later Ahriman's parasitic entry into the soul created female and male and it is this which enabled the inner and outer life to come about.

- To see outwardly created a knowledge of the physical foundations of the world of semblance.
- To picture inwardly created an inner feeling life separate from the physical world but in which the pictures of the physical world (semblance) and spiritual world (the being of the world) could enter. Semblance and being mingled in the soul.
- To think inwardly 'killed' or sacrificed, the spiritual foundations of the world and created an inner life that was only a reflected image of the semblance of the world, a half a truth, and therefore an inner lie - but this lie gave us added inward freedom - because these pictures do not compel being devoid of 'being'.⁸

Let us look more closely at the male female duality.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that the Astral body is neither male or female, but that it is the etheric body which is the opposite of the physical body.⁹

- The physical male has a female etheric body.
- The physically female has a male etheric body.

This was caused by the splitting up of the integrated human being male/female, hermaphrodite, into two separate beings, so that inner and outer could exist - Sexuality resulted in consciousness.

What does it mean to have a female or male etheric body?

⁸ 'In this fact — namely that Man, in his momentary acts of mental conception (in the forming of mental images) is living not in real existence, but only in a reflection of real existence. In a picture-existence, lies the possibility of evolving Freedom. All real existence in the consciousness has compelling power. Only pictures cannot compel.' Ibid.

⁹ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/19080318p01.html>
Rudolf Steiner Lecture 18th March 1908

When we enter the realm of the etheric body we no longer speak of physical form but of a 'quality of consciousness' this is so because the ego or the spark of this consciousness which entered human beings in Lemuria, could only live in the human being in the etheric body, in the warmth body, according to Rudolf Steiner.

This means that while the physical body has a functional physical form, which is either male or female (sexual creative), the etheric body by way of the ego, can be said to have the opposite quality of consciousness to the physical body (Spiritual Creative). This mystery is the result of an occult law of opposites, that is, what exists in the spiritual world in the realm of spiritual space and time, when transferred to the physical realm of space and time, becomes its opposite. Moreover the etheric body is this way due to its connection, pre birth, to either the sun or the moon influences, which, upon entering the physical body, becomes the opposite - one can say that consciousness is related to this interaction of sun and moon:

- The physical body of the male (sexuality) is related to the sun's spiritual forces giving it a masculine physical function and form, while his etheric is related to the moon's spiritual forces which give the etheric body a feminine quality of consciousness (spiritually creative).
- Conversely the physical body of the female is physically related to the moon's spiritual forces (Sexuality) giving it a female function and form while the etheric body is related to the sun's spiritual forces giving the etheric body a male quality of consciousness (spiritually creative).

What are male and female qualities of consciousness?

- The quality of female consciousness is connected to the passive principle, that is, it gathers and fructifies, it forms, reunites, irrigates and harvests; it is the one who builds in order to preserve. It is unified with the spirit. Its representative is Abel and it is connected more to the feeling life of the soul - particularly the Sentient Soul.
- The quality of male consciousness is considered to be the active principle, the diffuser, the initiator, it labours and sows; it wages

wars, destroys in order to create. It is unified with the world. Its representative is Cain and is more connected to the life of Thinking life of the soul - particularly The Intellectual Soul.

Looked at independently from the physical body we can now understand the image in the bible of Cain killing his brother Abel. It is a picture of the gradual move from Sentience to Intellect, where the passive element, a consciousness of the being of the spirit, is killed by the active element or a consciousness of the world. The two human representatives of this gradual move from passive to active were real human beings, Abel and Cain.

One might also say that the passive, feminine consciousness, Abel, was the 'necessity', which created inner conscious awareness. The Sentient Soul, the feeling soul allowed in, all the impressions of the world, so they could become sensations of inner pleasure, fear, love, hate, warmth, cold; harvesting, one might say, what we can call the ideals or beings of these sensations and entering the etheric body with them in order to make impressions there in the memory.

- The Sentient Soul is one with the Etheric body in the life of feelings = necessity = atavistic clairvoyance = seeing all that has ever entered the etheric body - Spiritual Space. Priestly stream.

Conversely, Cain, the Intellectual soul, actively destroys the ideals, the beings of spirit in everything that is seen, and keeps only the mirrored images of the physical world thus dismembering and remembering to create a certain independence of ideas, which brings about freedom from spiritual necessity.

- Intellectual soul is one with the etheric body in the life of thought = freedom = loss of clairvoyance = seeing only the memory of mirrored images reflected back - Earthly Time. Kingly-warrior stream.

The ancients represented this struggle between necessity and freedom, space and time, female and male, in the conflict between Eros and Anteros, the struggle between the angel and Jacob, Epimepheus who looked to the past and Prometheus who looked to the future. It is also typified by: the caduceus of Mercury where we see



two snakes; by the two cherubim of the ark; by the twofold sphinx of the chariot of Osiris and the two columns Jachim and Boaz in Solomon's Temple. The scientific reality of these complements is demonstrated by the phenomena of polarity, positive and negative, acid, alkali, Potassium and Sodium, and by the universal law of sympathies or antipathies.

Goethe made a study of this duality in his colour studies: the primary colour and its complement, the image and the after image.

This duality is the result of the human being entering the physical world, and developing a free soul. A soul free of the compelling nature of the spirit. But a soul that in becoming dual has lost its ability to see the dual nature of the world! That is the interesting paradox. Monism comes from this 'seeing only one side' of a duality: one aspect of the world.

The path of Initiation in antiquity had to do with overcoming this one-sided-ness by finding the dual nature of the world by placing the spirit side by side with its effects in the realm of matter, or rather, it was the path of uniting above and below, the spirit of the world and the soul, in a perfect marriage - a continuity of consciousness in two realms (etheric vision). Such a marriage inwardly experienced was meant to lead from duality to the trinity of body and soul with the spirit.

In antiquity various centres, scattered over the known world specialized in initiations that were either more connected with an entering in passively, in an Abel like priestly initiation, or with a pulling out actively, in a warrior-like Cain initiation. One must imagine that initiates would travel to these centres in order to undergo initiations that varied widely depending on location, culture, climate and religion.

The Mystical Wedding, the entering in to the soul was found mostly in the East; while in the west one found the outer initiations or the Alchemical Wedding.

Tonight we will be speaking about the Mystical Marriage.

It begins, one might say, in Egyptian times when as we saw above, the Sentient Soul was being elaborated. In Egypt we find two kinds of mystical initiations one for males, which we know quite a bit about through Rudolf Steiner, and one for females, which has been veiled for a long time.

Both initiations have a great significance for our time, being a recapitulation of the Egyptian epoch on a higher level and we explore this further next week.

The Egyptian initiations were the Osiris (upper gods) or male initiation and the Isis (lower gods) or female initiation.

The Osiris Initiation: Finding Isis in the underworld - the Eternal Beloved.

In the Osiris initiation, the masculine initiate entered into a trance through priestly ministrations. An Acolyte underwent a form of hypnosis known to Egyptians, which resulted in a 'death' state, that is, the acolyte's consciousness was extinguished in relation to the outer world of images and this was called a mystical death. The initiate entered the spiritual world through the gate of feelings, his Sentient Soul, to connect with his female etheric body.

The journey the initiate underwent is described in a number of Egyptian funerary texts. The entering into the river of souls, the Sentient Soul, on the boat of Isis in order to find Isis on the far shores, at the gates of Duat - the underworld was the 'quest'. The initiate's task was to loosen the etheric body and the Astral body from the physical body - in effect widowing his soul, that is, killing the consciousness of his physical body of senses in order to reach Isis and to marry her with the spirit of Osiris.

Isis was the eternal beloved, to the male initiate, his female etheric body, and the initiate who underwent this journey and returned was himself called the beloved. The initiate would then recount the memory impressions that the spirit had perceived through the organ of the Astral body - what had been impressed into his etheric substance. This uniting of spiritualized Astral body and etheric body was called a consummation of the marriage (conjunctio) of his soul/Isis with the macrocosm/Osiris - above and below. The bride became his mother because she gave birth to the child of etheric vision - which was the beloved of God. That is it could love God (see Him and unite with him through new senses) and thus be loved by God.

In the myth of Oedipus, we are told he killed his father to marry his 'mother'. This points to such an initiation: the Son of the Widow is he who has achieved etheric vision by widowing the female 'soul' and uniting 'her' with a higher 'father' - the groom, or spirit.

The old Hermetic maxim 'as above so is below' points to this union as does the double triangle of Solomon's Seal.

Isis Initiation - Finding the dead consort Osiris, the Eternal Beloved, and in order to piece him together or bring him back to life.

In the Isis initiation the female initiate was thrown into a pit of snakes - snakes which represented the nervous system as we have seen and sense consciousness, the gift of Lucifer. The female acolyte, like her male counterpart, had to die to the senses through a snakebite. This enabled the bride, the female Isis initiate, to find her groom, Osiris, her male etheric body and to awaken this male etheric body by 're-membering' him in order to achieve the consummation of the marriage of the soul with Osiris, the spirit - a marriage of above and below.

In the Isis Myth we see an image of this: We are told that Osiris the spirit behind all matter is killed by Typhon (Ahriman). The death of the atavistic etheric vision of Osiris is caused by Typhon because he is in all physical pictures or mirrored images of the world. Typhon is responsible for placing all the sensory pictures of the world enabled by Lucifer - all the spiritual counterparts into a coffin (dungeon of darkness or death). Here we see how the spirit in all we see dies or becomes unconscious in the human being. Isis or the human soul brings these pictures back to life but Typhon dismembers the spirit from them and scatters the 14 pieces. Isis must find her consort, the male etheric body, and re-collect or bring the pictures of the world together again - 13 pieces - not counting that which pertains to the phallus¹⁰ with their spiritual counterparts in order to unite with Osiris once more and obtain etheric vision of the spirit - Horus. Out of a union or mystical marriage of the soul with Osiris, the spirit - Horus - or etheric vision, the child, is born. Isis is the soul that has birthed the child of etheric vision by uniting with the groom, the spirit, Osiris.

Both initiations, the birth of the Son of the Widow and the birth of the Son of Isis, Horus, were a Mystical Marriage, that is, by dying to the

¹⁰ This points to the fact that in the etheric body one cannot speak of physical maleness.

world and uniting with the etheric male/female consciousness the acolyte birthed an etheric vision of the spirit.

In Greco Roman times when the Intellect was being elaborated these initiations took on a different colouring again.

In Greece, for instance, we see, in the story of Theseus, a depiction of the male initiate's journey into the labyrinth, or into the soul to find the etheric body wherein he will find the minotaur - all the mirrored images of the physical world. This Minotaur embodies the death of the sacrificial virgins - the etheric spiritual counterparts of all sensory perceptions. But Theseus must carry with him the thread of Ariadne - the intellectual understanding or thinking soul, which requires memory - or 'remembering'. Theseus now takes with him this faculty of memory (light ether) so that he can re-collect how to get out of the labyrinth again in order to wed Ariadne and to thereby bring to birth the spirit child. But the spirit, Dionysus, takes Ariadne and weds her himself. Why?

It is because the human being cannot enter into the etheric body with ordinary the consciousness acquired through the intellect and mirror image-memory pictures - these pollute the etheric body.

Similarly we have the story of Orpheus. Orpheus journeys to the underworld to rescue his beloved Eurydice, who fell into a nest of vipers¹¹ and died. Orpheus is told he can take her back to life as long as upon leaving the underworld he walks ahead of her and does not to look back. If he looks back, his beloved, or his etheric body will turn into a pillar of salt. Once he reaches the upper world, however, he impatiently turns around, thinking that Eurydice is with him, but she is still in the lower world and she becomes a pillar of salt and is lost to him forever.

What does looking back mean?

Orpheus is told not to mingle higher consciousness with lower consciousness, not to take to the spiritual world pictures of the senses that live in the faculty of memory - looking back - as this would cause the

¹¹ A failed Isis initiation.

etheric body to become solidified, sclerotic.¹² It would turn the etheric body into a pillar of salt.

In Roman times in the Mithras mysteries, Mithras enters into the cave to kill the bull of his lower passions - that is, the pictures of the world created by the Sentient Soul's experience which has become sympathies and antipathies in his soul. Likewise, in Virgil's *Aeneid*, Aeneas enters the underworld seeking Dido and Dante in the *Divine Comedy* goes there seeking Beatrice - their Eternal Beloveds, who could no longer be rescued in the old way.

In the image of Cleopatra and Julius Caesar we see a similar mystery being played out in the world stage now. A Greek queen of Egypt (Ptolemy) is approached by Caesar (Pontifex Maximus) who comes to Egypt seeking to know the secrets of the Isis initiation. But this initiation is not accessible to Cleopatra because she is a Greek. There is a failed union with Rome (both with Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony) and Cleopatra kills herself with an adder or a cobra, depending on the story, imaging forth a failed initiation attempt, that is, a dying to the world of the senses (snake) but ending not in a rebirth of spirit vision, but in physical death - a rebirth in the spiritual world itself. This shows us how the male and female could no longer come together in the old way and signifies that the mystical marriage of soul with spirit had reached its lowest ebb.

At the turning point in time, representatives of the two streams - male and female had to come together in the Solomon Jesus (male) and the Nathan Jesus (female) in Jesus of Nazareth, in order to birth the spirit of Christ into his soul and through him into world evolution.

At this time a further two human beings stood as representatives of these old initiations. Mary Magdalene and Lazarus/John.

In the *Pistis Sophia* we learn that:

'...Mary Magdalene and John, the Virgin will surpass all my disciples and all men who shall receive the mysteries in the Ineffable, they will be on my right hand and on my left and I am they and they are I...'

¹² Rudolf Steiner mentions this in relation to Ahrimanic Immortality:
<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA174/English/RSP1992/19170120p01.html>,
Rudolf Steiner, Lecture 20th January 1917

Mary Magdalene

Rudolf Steiner tells us that Mary Magdalene stands in history as a representative of the Sentient Soul, and the Isis Initiation.¹³ She had the '*pleroma of all pleromas*'. We hear that Peter despaired that Mary Magdalene was more '*loved*' by Christ but when Christ answered ambiguously, 'Why should this be not so?' it was for a good reason.

Only those who possessed the pleroma or 'light' could see the true nature of Christ - in other words, love Him. The other disciples could not see his true nature because their etheric bodies were not as awake as hers. She 'whose heart was more directed to the reign of heaven'¹⁴ had etheric vision. She could unite her Astral/etheric body with her groom who was not Osiris but Christ, in a mystical marriage - a renewal of the Isis initiation which was barred to the men.

It is for this reason that Mary Magdalene (Sentient Soul Representative) as a 'servant' of the 'ego' (Christ) was able to serve Christ by 'anointing' him for burial, that is, enabling the loosening of the etheric body from the physical in preparation for his death.

It is also the reason that in the garden she was the first to see Christ/Jesus' etheric body (gardener) with full consciousness (new form of etheric consciousness) outside the tomb (body). She turned around three times: this points to the faculty of memory - re-calling the pictures (taken in by (1) physical organs by way of the (2) astral body so as to be imprinted into the (3) etheric body) and uniting them with their spiritual counterparts - Recollection.

'Touch me not' in this context simply means do not unite your etheric body (thinking which has become an organ of touch) with mine in a mystical loving marriage, because the spirit of Christ is not yet in it. The mystery of the etheric union with the spirit of Christ had not yet been consummated.

¹³ Mary Magdalene also has a connection with the Queen of Sheba who chooses to unite (brings the ring of the ego) not with the passive wisdom of Solomon, but with active thinking (fire of enthusiasm) of Hiram who could use the sign of the 'tau' - the power to work with the beings of the etheric world into the physical world - to build Solomon's Temple.

¹⁴ Pistis Sophia

'We have to take this step, this turning of one's own active thinking into an organ of touch for the soul, so that we may feel ourselves thinking in the same way that we walk, grasp or touch; so that we know we are living in a real being, not just in ordinary thinking which merely creates images, but in a reality, in the soul's organ of touch which we ourselves have become.'

Similarly, we hear much in the bible about the wedding garments and the bridal chamber and the sons of the bridal chamber. The wedding garments are the etheric and astral bodies (soul) which allow the spirit to enter into them and to make them 'white' or full of light - meaning they bring about etheric vision and this vision brings about a marriage with the groom Christ. That is why Christ Jesus says that while the bridegroom is with them physically they should not 'mourn' - a son of the widow mourns because his soul (mother, beloved) disconnects from the physical (Father) which dies, to unite with the spirit. Later when He is not with them they will fast - they will abstain from what feeds the senses.

*'Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.'*¹⁵

The bridal chamber is the heart, or the seat of the etheric body (soul), in which this mystical marriage is consummated, and the sons of the bridal chamber are those who have acquired etheric vision - they are born anew - initiates.

*"But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' And the man was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*¹⁶

In other words those who try to enter into the spiritual world without having first prepared their souls or wedding garments are thrown by the king - the spirit - into darkness and bound because they can't awaken their etheric vision.

In the Marriage at Cana we see an image of the male initiation - the Son of the Widow - or rather the son, ego, who unites with his female mother/etheric body astral body, to bring a consummation or marriage of the spirit in the soul. The water turning to wine exemplifies the fact that

¹⁵ Matthew 9:15

¹⁶ Matthew 22:12

the astral body and etheric body (Mother) can still only rise to the spirit (Christ) unconsciously, passively, through alcohol (so there is no memory of previous lives) but this will one day be reversed: that is, the soul will find the spirit consciously and it will thereby create a new mystical marriage of Christ with the etheric body, which will result in the etherisation or spiritualization of the blood into 'the water of life'. The wine will become water again.

The Disciple Lazarus/John,

Lazarus/John was the representative of the Son of a Widow initiation. He widowed his soul but this time entirely alone, that is, he had to withdraw the Etheric and Astral bodies from his physical body himself, allowing his physical body to 'die'. Thus did his 'soul' enter the spiritual world to be initiated or united with the spirit by Christ Jesus himself who 'loved' him. Thereafter he became Christ's beloved disciple, the one who had undergone the mystical marriage with Christ.

This marriage which had always been conducted in secret was now enacted in public before laymen, and this gesture seen as a betrayal of the mysteries by the Sanhedrin led to the crucifixion.

After he returned to the physical world Lazarus John experienced an alteration of his consciousness, he experienced both physical and spiritual worlds, juxtaposed - the worlds of effects and causes, above and below were experienced simultaneously or juxtaposed.

This initiation enabled Lazarus John's Christened etheric body to unite with the Sophian or purified Astral body of Christ, His mother, beneath the cross. Once again Lazarus John, became the son of a widow or the Son of the Sophia - John the Divine who had seen the pleroma or the fullness of Christ, this time in the physical world and fully conscious.

We see here a connection of John with Cain and Hiram Abiff.

After the Mystery of Golgotha.

After the Mystery of Golgotha, the mystical marriage continued but it now sought to unite the soul with Christ in a new way. For He was the spiritual being who had descended to earth to undergo a physical death in order that by overcoming it he would be born again into the body and soul

of the earth - resurrection. This meant that the task of the mystical initiate was now to unite with this the Mystery of Golgotha itself, which was the most exalted form this mystical marriage undergone by Christ Himself. A marriage of above and below in its most intimate sense. This is known as a Christian initiation.

What is the experience of the mystic after the Mystery of Golgotha?

We must imagine a mystic standing before the external physical world, with its realms of light and colour and all the other sense impressions and feeling he/she could not penetrate the veil of these appearances to reach to their spiritual source with the intellect. The intellect on its own, could show the mystic only what pertained to physical nature, and for this reason he/she found nothing of Christ there. The mystic felt Christ was closely linked to the male/female in the soul - as a remnant of the old initiations.

One must remember that from 869 AD and the Council of Constantinople onwards, to speak of the spirit in the human being was an anathema and for this reason many mystics became heretics - The Cathars and The Templars are a good example. They were persecuted by the Pope and the King (representatives of the male and female initiations) because of their understanding of the conscious marriage of the spirit with the soul.¹⁷

After Golgotha, when the mystic entered into his etheric body by way of his Sentient Soul, he found all the reflected pictures or impressions of

¹⁷ The Templars were mystics who, being inspired by both the Isis and Osiris Mysteries during their time in Egypt and the Holy Land, were capable of uniting the work of monk and warrior, contemplative/passive and active, feelings and thinking, Priest and King. They could enter into the soul or Isis to find the spirit of Christ/Osiris and also allow the soul to unite with nature/Isis to find the spirit of Christ/Osiris. They could experience the mystical death and the Mystery of Golgotha and in this way perceive the images (temptations) of the world and their spiritual counterparts.

This is the reason that during torture they could not defend themselves. The images of the temptations of the sensual pictures world, all the unredeemed physical images, all the dross, rose up before them like a cloud as their etheric bodies and astral bodies were forced out of their physical bodies, in a perversion of the mystical marriage - forcing their souls to unite with Sorath instead of Christ.

Such was the work of the perversions of the Abel stream by the Pope and the Cain stream by the king of France, for the entrance of the principle of Sorath into the world.

Conversely the Cathars believed they could convey the spirit or 'console' those who wished it in freedom; effecting, in a sense, a mystical marriage of spirit with the soul of the 'consoled' through the laying on of hands. For this reason they could not 'deny' the spirit, even when tortured, and so they were forced to go to their deaths on pyres - for they knew that a denial of the spirit, the spirit that united them in community one with the other, was the only sin which would not be pardoned by God.

the world there, and his feelings (sympathies and antipathies) about them. He also found what the intellect had created - the thoughts derived from these images of the physical world and their unredeemed etheric counterparts. These now assailed the mystic like so many devils. St Anthony for instance, was tempted and tortured by these devils¹⁸ and his task was to resist their temptation and try to forget the pictures of the world (become a hermit) and to obliterate all impressions, to kill them one might say, and to empty his mind of conceptual images if he was to unite mystically with Christ.

The Christian initiate or mystic entered into the self to find the spark, the light of the etheric body, the light or the imperishable element inside himself which he called either Mary or Christ.

Nuns, for instance, consider themselves the brides of Christ and they undergo a materialized form of this marriage.

Eventually these atavistic experiences, or mystical experiences that relied primarily on the Sentient Soul became intermixed with a form of 'Luciferic' sensuality, that is, mixed with images of the sense world and inner feelings of sympathy eg: Hildegard Von Bingen and St Teresa of Avilla, and Anne Katherine Emmerich. What these great women experienced was in a sense individual and tells us more about them, as personalities, than it does about the objective spirit.

*'The mystic feels that when he is open to the external world, its life is like a powerful light which outshines and blots out the finer experiences of the soul. But when all impressions from the outer world are erased, the inner spark, as Eckhart calls it, shines forth. He then experiences in the soul something which had previously seemed not to be there, for it was imperceptible in face of the dazzle of the outer world.'*¹⁹

This imperishable light inside the mystic was unlike the outer light of either the moon or the sun, which fell on the perishable world. It was that part of him or her not subject to death, that is, not subject to the laws of nature like the physical body. Here the mystic entered the realm where there was no longer any outside or inside, it was eternal, called the realm of 'all in all'.

¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_the_Great

¹⁹ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA059/English/RSP1983/19100210p01.html>
Lecture by Rudolf Steiner 10th February 1910

A multiplicity of soul perceptions (the dismemberment of typhon) was now brought into a unity, or wholeness, by the ego in the etheric body, which to the mystic was the principle of harmony.

*'In all mystics, accordingly, we find an outlook which could be called spiritual monism. When the mystic raises himself to the knowledge that the inner being of the soul has qualities radically different from those found in the external world, he experiences in his inner being the consonance of the soul's kernel with the divine-spiritual ground of the world, which he therefore represents as a unity.'*²⁰

The mystical experience is a true one, but one seen through a glass darkly, one that is coloured by the peculiarities of the soul's dispositions - the imperfections of the etheric body and the various organs, as well as any cultural religious or political leanings. And because the experiences are inner ones the mystic cannot discern these colourings. One can liken the etheric body to a rainbow that is seen only when you are observing it from a distance and which begins to disappear the closer you come to it. The mystical experience, because of its connection with and dependence on the bodily organs and their etheric counterparts, and a certain form of unconsciousness, always has an element of the physical or sensual about it.

According to Rudolf Steiner, this is no longer an appropriate path for the Consciousness Soul age, because the accuracy of a mystical experience (which is not achieved through the element of thought but rather below it) cannot be judged with the element of thought, it cannot be followed to an objective source. This means it can only be understood by those who have had similar experiences, leaving others who haven't entered the spiritual world in either a position to believe or disbelieve and this 'belief' without consciousness is always seized by Ahriman and Lucifer. This is the danger. One can, in a sense, lose bits of one's soul with every unconscious image or thought that is taken into the soul, that is, which does not take into consideration the spirit.

*'Just because mystical experience is so intimate and inward, and has an individual character derived from the mystic's earlier years, it is extraordinarily difficult for anything he says about his mystical life, closely bound up as it must be with his own soul, to be rightly understood or assimilated by another soul. The most intimate aspects of mysticism must always remain intimate and very hard to communicate, however earnestly one may try to understand and enter into what is said.'*²¹

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid

Ultimately, mysticism or visionary clairvoyance leads to a desire for a unity of all things, which is only real for the individual soul because the ego in that particular soul, colours it as a unity. This is in a sense an illusion for in the spiritual world one cannot speak of 'unity' as such.²²

Conversely there are those who, since the age of the intellectual soul began more and more to seek to not only to understand the physical world but to pierce through the veil of it to find the foundation of all things. But this is only an outer form of mystical marriage - a kind of material mysticism, because in a sense when one uses the intellect in this way one is still only taking the mystical unreal unity that is created by the ego from the multiplicity of pictures and thoughts about the physical world, out into the world to find there only a multiplicity of unities, this is an illusion because in the spiritual world one cannot speak of 'multiplicity'.²³

In a sense both paths be it the mystical path by way of the Sentient Soul or the Intellectual Soul are in their own ways unconscious, the former tries to negate the world, everything that is experienced through the senses, to find the mystical 'ideals', while the latter relies on the physical world of the senses and negates the fundamental reality of the spirit in a form of mystical materialism - a materialism of ideas that is mystical in 'mood'.

An example of mystical materialism is Particle Physics and the search for the foundations of mass and matter by studying subatomic particles. Striving therefore to find unity in multiplicity - the Higgs Boson particle - or the 'God particle'.

Now we come to the East and West duality.

One might say that the East is connected more to all that is feminine, the mystical and all that belongs to the more priestly, passive stream. One need only think of the image of Buddha sitting with his eyes closed below the Bodhi tree or the rapture of the Sufi speaking of his beloved or of Krishna and his consort Lakshmana.

If we are to look for the shadow of this passive, feminine, mysticism, and where it has been perverted and distorted we will find it in the distortion of the inward search for the feminine or Isis, the etheric body and the

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid

mystical marriage and this can be found in the relationship of east to west.

In the East, we find feminine sexual repression, control, domination and persecution, the hiding of the physical feminine body, genital mutilation, the murder of unwanted baby girls, the lack of education of women. One could say that the greatest parody of Isis/Mary/Sophia in the world today is the rise of the 'Islamic State', which one can liken to the 'Whore of Babylon' in the apocalypse, the inverted image of Sophia or Wisdom - or the anti wisdom of the Anti Christ.

In this case the wisdom of the feminine does not 'marry' the spirit by the anti spirit - the Anti Christ.

One could even draw parallels between the beheading of human beings with the shadow of the mystical initiation, which works below the level of consciousness, or the senses and thinking, bearing in mind that according to R.Steiner beheadings are always associated with Black Magic and he gives John the Baptist as an example. In beheadings one could say, one sees the anti-spirit, AntiGrail impulse.

*'For we find on every hand as the symbol of sacrifice a dish on which a bleeding head has to be laid. It was thought that something can be awakened in man by the spectacle of this bleeding head. What was at work there was nothing but black magic. It was the downright opposite of the Mysteries of the Holy Grail.'*²⁴

Moreover rituals such as beheadings can be linked with the spirits of the 'headless ones' or the astral spirits, that are without egos and linked to Black Magic.

*'The other beings, the demons created out of immoral actions, also have an astral body, an etheric body and a physical body, at the watery stage, of course, but they do not have the basis for developing an ego. They are born headless, as it were. Instead of taking up the basis for progressing along a regular evolutionary path to the Jupiter existence, they reject this basis.'*²⁵

In the West we see the distortion of the feminine in its portrayal as a sexual object, through pornography and advertising, and we see the perversion of the desire to rescue Isis or the East, as a desire to 'kill' her

²⁴ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/19060729p01.html>

Rudolf Steiner Lecture 29th July 1906

²⁵ http://wn.rsarchive.org/RelArtic/BobbetteRSW/steineraz_1915.html

Rudolf Steiner 3rd January 1915

and destroy her. The understanding of the connection of the feminine with the spirit is feared by the west.

In the West we also find a passive feminine mystical Abel stream in Catholicism and Jesuitism. We see in Catholicism how the perversions are outwardly manifested in Pedophilia with the victims being usually young boys, an outer parody of the unification of the spirit with the etheric body being taken to the level of the physical body - the Priest with the physically male child whose etheric body is 'feminine'. In Jesuitism we see a form of black magic win initiations that subjugate the will - or spiritually behead the individual.

In this case one might say that the feminine 'East' is seeking to be rescued from the unconsciousness of the underworld and the slavery of Pluto. But the west is 'killing' Isis because she has become a parody or a whore.

These are the dualities that exist and which pose a danger because the human being has entered the world of matter and has sunk too deeply into it, but if the human being is to rise up out of the realm of duality to a consciousness of a new triad appropriate to our times, there is another path the Alchemical Path which we will be discussing in 14 days time.

I will leave you with Rumi's words.

A lover asked his beloved,
Do you love yourself more than you love me?
Beloved replied, I have died to myself and I live for you.
I've disappeared from myself and my attributes,
I am present only for you.
I've forgotten all my learnings,
but from knowing you I've become a scholar.
I've lost all my strength, but from your power I am able.
I love myself...I love you.
I love you...I love myself.

Part II: The Alchemical Wedding
The Soul Unites with the World - West.

Given at Sussex St. Sydney
October 28th 2014

Two weeks ago we explored the Mystical Marriage, the ancient initiation whose goal was the inner union of the spirit with the soul of the human being. We explored the Egyptian Epoch primarily as a foundation for our work tonight. We saw how the candidate for initiation was led by a priest into his eternal beloved or his etheric body. The priest, the representative of Mercury/Hermes, placed the acolyte into a hypnotic stupor so that he could enter, by way of his etheric body, into that region that is travelled before birth - the period of 'the unboriness' which stretches from the midnight hour to the time before birth.

Here he comes to his higher self, his upper nature, or the region of the upper gods - Osiris.

"This is the technical expression for the fact that by penetrating into his etheric body man learns to know his "upper" nature. The expression "heavenly" or "spiritual" man was also used because it was realised that these attributes had been formed and fashioned from the spiritual world through which the man had passed during the period between his last death and the present birth."²⁶

The acolyte was said to be a 'pupil' in the eye of the world when he could experience the etheric body of his previous life, coming towards him from out of the darkness.²⁷ This was a connection with his experiences after death and the lower Gods Isis.

"The man now lives through a time in which he finds, as it were in ever denser form, what confronts him as the last remnant from his past life; as it becomes more and more definitely formed, its resemblance to his last etheric body grows until he finally recognises the form his etheric body had assumed at the moment of his last death. And now, after this form has still further condensed, has more and more assumed human shape, he is face to face with his last death. At that moment, for one who is initiated, there is no longer any doubt that reincarnation is a truth, for

²⁶ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/MacroMicro/19100325p01.html>

Rudolf Steiner Lecture 25th of March 1910

²⁷ The Pupil of the World's Eye (the I unites with the I of the world)
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/gno/th3/th328.htm>

he has actually gone back to his last death. Thus we have now come to know what man finds as a remnant of his last earthly life. In spiritual science this has at all times been called the "Lower" or the "earthly" man. The pupil now connected the "Upper" with the "Lower" man; he followed the "Lower" to the point where he reached his last life on Earth.²⁸

To connect the upper gods and the lower gods in his soul was the Mystical Marriage. The Mysteries of light and the mysteries of Darkness:

The grade of Kamephis was presumably represented in the mystery-cult by the arch-hierophant who presided at the degree called the "Dark Mystery" or "Black Rite." It was a rite performed only for those

The grade of Kamephis was presumably represented in the mystery-cult by the arch-hierophant who presided at the degree called the "Dark Mystery" or "Black Rite." It was a rite performed only for those who were judged worthy of it. After long probation in lower degrees, something of a far more sacred character, apparently, than the instruction in the mysteries enacted in the light.

I would suggest, therefore, that we have here a reference to the most esoteric institution of the Isiac tradition, the more precise nature of which we will consider later on; it is enough for the moment to connect it with certain objects or shows that were apparently made to appear in the dark.²⁹

This 'Coming Forth into the Light' from the darkness was the experience of both female and male initiates in their own way.



When we explore the higher recapitulation of Egypt in our times and the redemption of the Mystical Marriage in what is called The Alchemical Wedding, we can see

²⁸ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/MacroMicro/19100325p01.html>

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²⁹ <http://www.sacred-texts.com/gno/th3/th328.htm>

certain complements arising. We see that the ancient Alchemy of an acolyte's soul, manipulated by a priest in the mysterious who was the representative of Thoth/Hermes/Mercury finds its higher recapitulation in the Alchemist, who as his own priests seeks to work on his soul using the Hermetic Laws of as above and so is below, in a counter way - reaching from below to the above - to effectively create a new higher vision through connecting his soul/Isis with Christ/Osiris.

This is the Alchemical Wedding and an Alchemist's task was and is, to work on his or her soul to affect the necessary changes for this wedding to occur. For this reason one can say that the early Alchemists did not belong in the Abel or feminine stream, the passive priestly stream, but to the Cain stream, the stream of activity, the stream that seeks to change the soul transmutation into gold so that it can penetrate through the fabric of nature to the - the spirit the panacea, the universal solvent/medicine.

And it is no surprise then, that we find the leading initiate of this form of initiation, Tubal-Cain stream, Lazarus John, as an Alchemist in his later life - Christian Rosencreutz.

The journey of this new form of initiation is captured in The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz³⁰ supposedly written by Valentin Andrea. I would now like to draw your attention to the end of the Alchemical Wedding where Christian Rosencreutz is asked to write about what he has learnt from his experiences over 7 days. What he writes is a riddle itself. He writes:

The Highest Knowledge is understanding nothing.

³⁰ http://hermetic.com/norton/pdf/Chymical_Wedding.pdf

At the end of this lecture perhaps we will understand this riddle better, or rather understand - nothing!

The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz came out in 1616 but in truth it is a Modern Initiatory Path, a path followed by Goethe and elaborated further again by Rudolf Steiner.

Rudolf Steiner tells us that Lazarus John was initiated directly by Christ at the turning point in time. We explored last week how it was by way of a 'mystical marriage' of his soul with Christ, that he was capable of taking in the pleroma of Sophia at the foot of the cross, that is, of taking Christ's astral body, his 'mother' (Sophia) and bride (Luke Mary) together into his soul. This was a redemption of the initiations of antiquity because it brought together the soul not with a God in the spiritual world, but with the Christ who had descended to the earth to die an earthly death.

In the Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz we find Lazarus John again, now undergoing another initiation, this time an Alchemical Wedding - the marriage of the spirit with Christ through a different path, a path that does not do away with mysticism, but rather which ennobles it, and raises it to a higher level. Alchemy has the task of penetrating into the secrets that exist, not only behind the inner sensual images and pictures, but also behind the sensory tapestry of the world.

- In a Mystical Marriage there is a descent into the soul to find the eternal beloved - Isis - in order to unite her with Osiris - lower with upper, giving birth to an atavistic etheric vision of the spirit - Horus/Son of the Widow.

- In the Alchemical wedding the Christened soul ascends to find the eternal beloved in the world - Sophia the Virgin - in order to unite her with Christ - giving birth to a new conscious etheric vision.

In Egyptian times the initiate subjugated his/her will to his teacher or Guru. This was done so that no mistakes or misunderstandings could occur.

Paradoxically, the Rosicrucian Alchemist has to find his/her own way to initiation by way of mistakes and misunderstandings.

It is for this reason that Dennis Klocek calls Christian Rosencreutz the initiate of Misunderstanding.

But what does this mean?

The motif of this initiation is this: The initiate does not understand, and is mocked for his lack of understanding or lack of knowledge, but it is his lack of understanding that actually leads him to initiation - and wisdom. Every time Christian Rosencreutz realises that he doesn't understand something, he moves to a new level of understanding.³¹

An interesting paradox!

Misunderstandings occur through Judgements. All through the Alchemical Wedding, Christian Rosencreutz is faced with judgements. In truth the modern world thrives on judgements and opinions. It is a world where the 'personality' feels it has a 'right' to freely express or to voice its opinions, and judgements. But Judgements and opinions are a product of the intellect, which, due to its dependence on physical images and

³¹ See Dennis Klocek's lectures on the Alchemical Wedding.

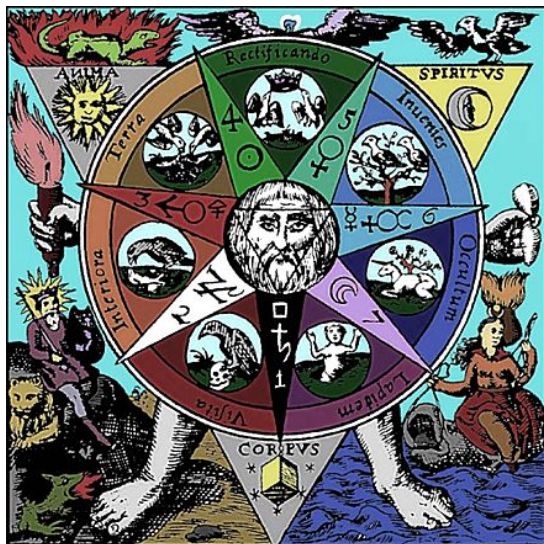
concepts, can only ever really see one side of the truth, and is, therefore, trapped in what one might call a 'lie', a half truth.

Those who wish to find the truth, those who wish to become initiates, must be willing to overcome their opinions and judgements - to lay them aside, so to speak, and leave them at the threshold of physical and spiritual worlds, and one such human being is Christian Rosencreutz in the Alchemical Wedding.

The moment we open this book we are faced with a mystical number.

The Number 7 because the book is divided into 7 days.

The number 7 in the mysteries is related to the etheric body and has a connection with the 7 planets, the 7 physical organs, the 7 colours of the rainbow, the 7 metals and so on. This connection to 7 is also found in the Apocalypse where the initiate enters the realm of spiritual time and to all that exists as the fundamental living force behind all sequence and rhythm. For this reason there are 7 Alchemical Processes, Calcination Dissolution, Separation, conjunction, fermentation, distillation, coagulation - which correspond to the planets (worlds).



This symbol represents this work from another side in the anachronym V.I.T.R.I.O.L which uses the first letter of each word in the following recipe: Visita, Interiora, Terra, Rectificando, Invenies, Occultum, Lapidem. Translated this means, visit the interior

of the earth and by rectifying or altering find the hidden stone. Vitriol, or Azoth, essentially describes the essential processes used to transmute minds and metals.

For the alchemist this was a symbol of reality. The Alchemist observed how by working with metals and substances he could make changes outwardly that would have an inner counterpart.

In other words, that the elementary beings of the minerals, metals and substances that he encountered in his experiments, were also inside him as by products of every sensory perception, and that if he could work with these inwardly, they would be redeemed, disenchanting, and thus help him to produce the changes necessary in his soul so that he could discover the secret they carried into him - the universal medicine - the spirit behind all things.

In the physical body the number seven is also related to the rhythm of heart and lungs, the rhythm which connects the inner soul with the outer world (Mercury) and so it is integral, therefore, to the wedding between the soul's consciousness and the essence of the spirit in the world. Again, this rhythm we might call Hermes/Mercury, and the mercury staff entwined with its black and silver or white snakes, points to the task of Mercury in the balancing out of the duality: what is dead in the Alchemist and what is living - the dead images of the world and the spiritual archetypes that live behind them.

Paracelsus called these living archetypes the Archaic, the wisdom behind all things, and in the mysteries this wisdom is seen as higher than knowledge, opinion, or judgement, because it is always based on experience - the Alchemist is active.

What is wisdom?

Aristotle once said that a wise person is one who can entertain a thought without believing it. Allowing it to live independently in the soul without judgement or opinion.

The Divine Sophia is the Wisdom of the Cosmos because she is capable of gathering and to harmonising the conversations of the gods - the cosmic intelligence of Christ - without judging it! Judgement and opinion kills conversation! And conversation according to Goethe is more precious than gold because what is born out of it, Alchemically speaking, is a spiritual gold that is freely acquired - that is, a gold that comes from an alchemical marriage of that part of the soul which is wise, with the Sun³² being, Christ.

Wisdom comes from humility. Humility is that part of the soul that misunderstands in order to understand how much it doesn't know.

In our world today we have two polarities, according to Dennis Klocek, that prevent the human being from being humble and therefore wise. One is scepticism: I know what I know and anything else, that is, anything I don't know, is not worth knowing. This is a kind of contraction into the self.

The other polarity is inflation: I know all there is to know and further more, I know what you don't know, and I'm going to tell you what you don't know, so you can know how much I know! This is a kind of expansion.

The duality of inner and outer in the realm of the intellect.

We see these two in the world of economics today: depression/recession - I'll keep what is mine to myself thanks.

³² The Sun's forces, materialized, are found in earthly gold.

And Inflation - I'll have what is mine and also what is yours thanks!

What is the cure?

Humility is the Mercury that can live in the in between, the realm of uncertainty, the realm of 'I don't understand'. Because scepticism and inflation must live in certainties - even if these certainties are both illusions.

Humility or Knowing, how much one does not know prevents one from judging others and creating misunderstandings; it creates tolerance when we are misunderstood. In initiation practise, it is the consciousness that perceives the difference between one's idea and one's ideal: that is, how short one is of bringing the idea that lives in the intellect together with its dismembered spiritual ideal - the living and the dead - the two snakes on the staff of mercury.

One might say that the degree of humility in a person and his or her inability to judge another human being is seen by higher beings as the potential for initiation. To them it is a sign in the spiritual world, because it radiates a particular consciousness that invites consciousness from the other side.

It shows whether or not a person is capable of attending the wedding. Because one needs humility or knowing what one does not know - self knowledge - if one is to take the first step towards bringing the etheric body and astral body together because without this knowledge one can easily become inflated on the one hand or sceptical on the other.

To give birth to a new consciousness through synergy,³³ the soul must already have acquired a degree of wisdom through humility and this is so for Christian Rosencreutz because on the night before Easter Sunday, he is visited by an angelic being who brings him an invitation to a wedding.

But the invitation warns that those who wish to attend had better look into their souls to make certain they are wise enough to go - inflated individuals full of earthly knowledge will find themselves in trouble, since earthly knowledge holds no weight in the spiritual world - only wisdom acquired through humility and a lack of understanding!

Christian Rosencreutz immediately judges himself unworthy of the invitation and is undecided so he goes to sleep - in an altered state of consciousness he mystically enters into his subconscious, in which he sees as a dungeon full of people scrambling to get out.

This Rudolf Steiner tells us must be the first step, to enter into the self like a mystic but not to stop there, to use this self knowledge to rise higher.

In the dungeon, every now and again a rope is let down (by a son on the orders of his mother)³⁴ and one or more of these people are grab a hold of it and rise to the top. Christian Rosencreutz is one of them but he hurts himself, he is wounded in the head. The Matron tells him keep these wounds for her sake.

What does this mean?

³³ The interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects. One imagines here the synergy that exists in an orchestra, whose combined musical effect is greater than the sum of the effects of each individual instrument.

³⁴ We see here a reference of the Son of a Widow initiation.

This means that all human beings who wish to enter into a new consciousness through the Alchemical Wedding, can only do so by incurring a 'wound'. This wound is the result of initiation, which is a premature evolutionary development and an initiate's mistakes and misunderstandings, thought necessary due to his imperfections incur karma - the karma of initiation. For this reason all initiates suffer!

When Christian Rosencreutz wakes up he sees the dream as a sign that he should go to the wedding and now begins the journey through his consciousness, which is recounted in the rest of the book. He proceeds despite his 'wound' or his imperfections and through destiny he follows the right karmic path to the castle.

In the mysteries a castle, a house, a cave, a hut always corresponds to the human head. And it is in the head, the etheric part of the head, that the Alchemical Wedding takes place.

After getting past all the gates and the various guardians of the threshold he arrives late for the banquet and is mocked by those inflated guests who are full of their own importance. Among them he appears stupid and feels misunderstood. Here we see the picture of the holy fool, who, not unlike Parzifal must pass through humiliation in order to find understanding.

Among other happenings a 'Virgin' (Sophia) now calls for those who think they deserve to remain at the wedding to step forward and for those who think they shouldn't be there to step aside.

The inflated ones are taken to comfortable plush rooms to sleep while Christian Rosencreutz and those who believe themselves unworthy are chained up and left to sleep on the

floor in the dark.

In the morning those who held themselves in high esteem will be weighed for wisdom. And here Christian Rosencreutz is mocked again by the Virgin and feels misunderstood so he cries because he doesn't understand and he says so, but it is a consciousness of this lack of understanding that is a sign of his wisdom and this become apparent when all the 'inflated' ones are weighed on scales and are found light - that is, their knowledge doesn't have any weight in the spiritual world. But when Christian Rosencreutz, on the other hand is weighed he weighs heavily because he is wise, he is seen as 'THE ONE!' So he is able to help one of those inflated emperors, through his compassion, by imparting some of his wisdom to him and therefore, allowing him to stay at the wedding.

He goes on then to experience a path in which the soul redeems the Mystical process and births a new Alchemical one, which involves a number of experiences that are rarely understood: he sees a naked virgin and is wounded on the finger by cupid, is present when 6 queens and 6 kings have their heads chopped off etc and the axeman's head is also chopped off and is boiled and its 'elixir' dissolves the bodies of the 6 kings and queens! The end product however, is the marriage of the new king and queen - the created philosophic "babes" who had fed upon the blood of the alchemical bird.

These all point to the changes necessary for the creation of a new etheric vision, which can exist side by side with a vision of the ordinary world: divine and human consciousness. As a midwife of this process Christian Rosencreutz becomes a 'Knight of the Golden Stone'. He is then given a gold medal which has two sides:

Art is the priestess of Nature.

Nature is the Daughter of Time.

So let's look at the Alchemical process.

As we mentioned two weeks ago, the pictures of the world are always entering into us and through them we create our thoughts. According to Rudolf Steiner, in ordinary thinking all our thoughts are based on concepts (inner pictures) created from the experiences we have through our sensory organs.

Our ordinary thoughts are derived from material or physical concepts are a process of Calcination - salt formation - due to the interaction of breath and blood, oxygen and Carbon dioxide, death and potential for life.

One might imagine that oxygen is connected to life, but to the alchemist oxygen that is required by ordinary thinking is connected to a dying process. This dying process dissolves the spiritual counterparts of everything we see - the complementary colour and the after images which fade away - and separates the ideal from the idea, leaving us with a mere representation of the physical world, a dead image, which is reflected to us by our physical brain.

But this dissolution of the after images and complementary colours is enacted by Michael for our freedom. He 'dis-solves' the pictures by way of his Michaelic iron which enters into our red blood to maintain the purity of the spiritual horizon of our soul - in other words to prevent the spirit of the things we see from compelling us and thus allowing us to think free thoughts. This dissolution of the images and separating out, is a passive experience because it is done for us.

But the spirit of everything we see continues to live in us, in our subconscious, these are elemental beings, and because

these elemental beings do not have an ego, they can be seized by Ahriman and Lucifer so that they become Luciferic or Ahrimanic. This is what creates the coagula known as the Guardian of the Threshold. It is the image of all that is unredeemed in us, and it is depicted in the Alchemical Wedding in various ways, the first is through the imagery of the dungeon, the subconscious, which is full of scrambling beings trying to get out by taking hold of the 'rope', the rope, one might say, is the faculty of memory in our etheric body (not unlike Ariadne's thread) which brings those images back up to our consciousness so that we can remember - but only a few of those become conscious thoughts and the rest fall away. The Alchemical acolyte, like the mystic must enter into the place where the archetypes of all the things we see are willing themselves in us, in order to grasp not the mirror images in the memory but the spirit behind them - 'the thing itself in its true being'.

The after image and complementary colour are really evidence that a being has entered us and made an impression in our souls. These are the rudimentary atavistic remnants of past memory states as we saw two weeks ago, and point to the fact that we are always 'touching' the spirit in the world unconsciously. Through the Sentient Soul, Lucifer seeks to beguile us with these beings, to tempt us to live in this past condition but if we empty our minds of these and only use them to find our etheric body we are on our way to redeeming the effects of Lucifer and reversing the fall. These after images and complementary colours, one might say, are our modern day, Ariadne's thread.

But using this old atavist faculty of 'memory' even if only to find the etheric body, incurs a wound as I mentioned before, because we are using the past in order to reach future conditions. This is the wound that Christian Rosencreutz

suffers on his head. We must bear the wound so that we can redeem it through wisdom (on behalf of Sophia - the Mother) freeing thereby the unredeemed images that are still in our subconscious (beings). We must take our wound, the knowledge of where these images are made and continue on our journey to the Alchemical Wedding even if it means we are doing something prematurely and incurring karma.³⁵

Learning where the etheric body is through after images and complementary colours (memory) is called 'Building the Hut' according to Rudolf Steiner. We find the place where we can feel safe, because we know it thoroughly. It is a place that belongs both to us (etheric body) and the etheric world.

When we enter the castle or the hut, the etheric body of our heads, we can there begin the process of eliminating outer impressions, dissolving them and closing the eyes and entering into the soul like a mystic.

In the Alchemical Wedding Christian Rosencreutz enters into his soul and sees the eternal beloved, the naked Venus, in other words, he enters down into his etheric body (kidneys)³⁶ before it is awakened - Venus, is still sleeping.

The mystics sought to enter below the level of thinking into the etheric body in a dreamy sleep state, but the Alchemist has to be completely conscious. Because Christian Rosencreutz is curious (intellect) and seeks to enter before he is ready, he creates further karma, which adds to his wound.³⁷ When he returns to earth he does not tell Cupid the truth about his transgression and he is further wounded in the finger - more karma. But one can say that unless one is capable of awakening

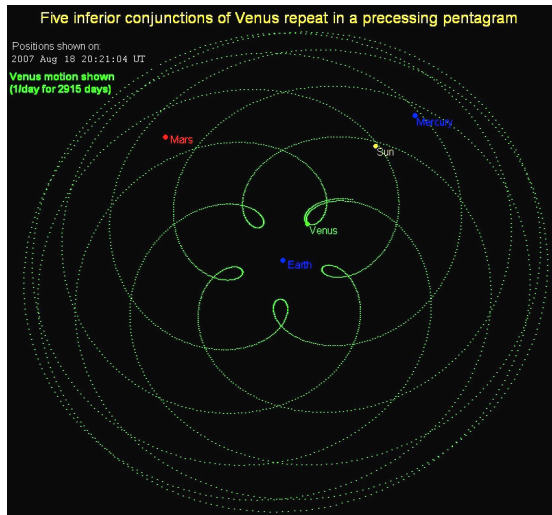
³⁵ Initiates are those who experience future conditions ahead of time. In white magic this is a sacrifice of the self in the service of others in black magic a sacrifice of others is used for the sake of the self.

³⁶ We mentioned last week that the mystic clairvoyance was related to entering the spiritual world through organs.

³⁷ Karma of initiation.

the etheric body, then one cannot help but lie - in the sense that one does not yet see the entire truth. For this reason Christian Rosencreutz is not punished for his transgression in the end.

We can see this connection of Venus with the Etheric body and the Pentagram³⁸ in the five inferior conjunctions of Venus.

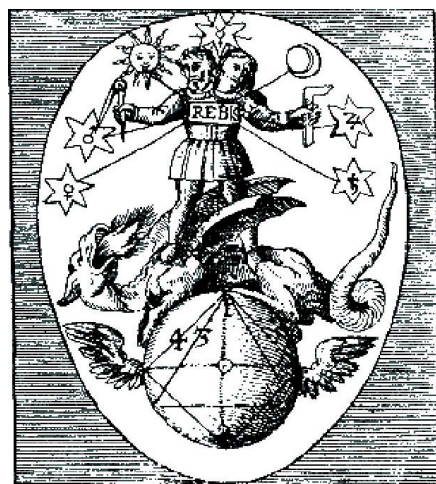


So, to an Alchemist, the emptying of the consciousness should only be effected in order to allow the potential for something new to arise, new pictures not based on memory pictures. An empty consciousness creates a conscious crucible in which a creative feminine process can begin - a drawing with the astral body, one might say, on the etheric tablet. When the Alchemist achieves this, the result is a transformation of the sense life through thinking - Spirit Vision is True Thinking. It is the vision of what thinks in us.

begin - a drawing with the astral body, one might say, on the etheric tablet. When the Alchemist achieves this, the result is a transformation of the sense life through thinking - Spirit Vision is True Thinking. It is the vision of what thinks in us.

How does the Alchemist achieve this seeing of what thinks?

The Alchemist must know how to bring into this crucible the outer and inner paths, the sun and the moon, male and female, above and below, the circle and the square, into one human being, the



³⁸ Depiction of the Earth:Venus 8:13 near resonance. With Earth held stationary at the center of a nonrotating frame, the successive inferior conjunctions of Venus over eight Earth years trace a pentagrammic pattern (reflecting the difference between the numbers in the ratio). The Pentagram is connected to the etheric body. (Thanks go to John Barnwell for this!)

Alchemical Hermaphrodite. In the above diagram, we notice that Mercury is at the top balancing out Jupiter and Saturn on the one hand, and Mars and Venus on the other. Rebis comes from the latin - *res bina*, meaning double matter. To the Alchemist it is the end product of the alchemical "great work." After one has gone through putrefaction and purification, separating opposing qualities, those qualities are united once more in what is sometimes described as the divine hermaphrodite, a reconciliation of spirit and matter, a being of both male and female qualities as indicated by the two heads within a single body.

This is a Conjunction.

The Alchemist must learn to live in the uncertainty of duality, with perfect equanimity, holding onto paradoxes, sun moon, inner outer, male female, above below, as if they were two sides of the one gold medal. This ability is a strengthening for what the Alchemist does next; he/she must bring two images that never occur together in the outer world, together inwardly in the soul.

*'Now let us see how this way of knowledge came into being. Did we say to ourselves: We will take the outward path and seek for the foundations of things? To a certain extent, yes. we go out to the external world, but we are not searching for the basis of things, or for molecules and atoms; we are not concerned with what the outer world sets directly before us, but we retain something from it. The black cross could not arise in the soul if there were no wood in the world; the soul could not imagine a red rose unless it had received an impression of one from the world around it. Hence we cannot say, as the mystic does, that we have obliterated everything external and turned our attention away entirely from the outer world. We submit to the outer world and take from it something that it alone can give, but we do not take it just as it comes, for the Rose Cross is not found in nature.'*³⁹

³⁹ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA059/English/RSP1983/19100210p01.html>
Lecture by Rudolf Steiner, 10th February, 1910

We will take two images as examples. The first image is the black cross with roses growing out of the dead wood. The second image is the white cross with green roses growing out of its radiant life. These are especially good because they are complementary images.⁴⁰

These images don't exist in the real world so we must use Ahriman's gift, our ability to lie in our thinking⁴¹ in order to create freedom - that is something that does not exist in the world of nature as it is perceived by ordinary senses.

One might say, conversely, that the Black Cross and red roses represent the redemption of the inner life or the physical etheric manifestation - the inner red/blue blood in the black 'nigredo'⁴² or death of inner unconsciousness; while the white cross with the green roses represents the redemption of the outer life or the physical light which creates the blue/green ether that we perceive with our ordinary consciousness.

Red/blue - inner ether

Green/blue - outer ether

⁴⁰ This exercise from Rudolf Steiner:

'Evening,

3-4 minutes: I go into the spiritual world. Then 10 minutes: Imagine a charcoaled cross with 7 pink violet roses.

So as out of the black cross

The red roses,

So out of the darkness of the world

The clearness of Christ's life.

Morning,

15 minutes: Retrospect of the preceding day. Then imagine a white, gleaming sunlight-cross with 7 green roses.

So as the green life

In the white sunlight,

So Christ's life

In the course of man's evolution.'

Rudolf Steiner.

⁴¹ This connects to Christian Rosencreutz lie about seeing Venus and illustrates the karma of initiation.

⁴² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigredo>

When we create such images and we allow them to exist in us we realise that they don't lead us either to the outer or the inner life but that they actually work in us creatively as a power, these images build 'will power' - they build up the inner light - power of the etheric body.

How?

The intellect has to be willed consciously to unite new concepts inwardly, to create a symbol. This enlightens the will and loosens thinking from its bonds to the physical brain. This form of creative thinking is therefore not a passive acceptance of the outer world of pictures (Abel) and it is not an active killing or separating of the reality from the world pictures (Cain) to create ordinary thoughts. In the building of a symbolic image the etheric body becomes the tablet on which the Astral body draws. An inner marriage has taken place and this inner soul activity is what one calls in spiritual science, imaginative cognition or imagination. The etheric body is grasped and seen through a new kind of thinking.

*'All that is developed through the activity of thinking is a man's first super-sensible member — later I shall be describing it more fully. First we have man's physical body that can be perceived by our ordinary sense-organs, and this offers resistance on meeting the ordinary organs of touch. Then we have our first super-sensible member — we can call it the etheric body or the formative forces body. It must be called something, but the name is immaterial. In future I will call it the etheric or formative forces body. Here we have our first super-sensible member, just as perceptible for a higher power of touching, into which thinking has been changed, as physical things are perceptible to the physical sense of touch. Thinking becomes a super-sensible touching, and through this super-sensible touching the etheric or formative forces body can be, in the higher sense, both grasped and seen. This is the first real step, as it were, into the super-sensible world.'*⁴³

And

⁴³ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA227/English/RSP1966/19230819p01.html>
Rudolf Steiner Lecture 19th August, 1923

*'By keeping in touch with the real world and making our thinking active, we reach the stage of living spiritually in the world in such a way that thinking develops into a touching. Naturally it is a touching that has nothing to do with chairs or tables; but we learn to touch in the spiritual world, to make contact with it, to enter into a living relation with it. It is precisely by means of this active thinking that we learn to distinguish between the mystical fancies of auto-suggestion and the experience of spiritual reality.'*⁴⁴

Thinking must be changed to a higher form of higher sensing or feeling.

But what is gained at this stage now must be allowed once more to die away through our own will - or fire, so that it can 'Ferment'. The fermentation process is a form of deconstruction and reconstruction, a form of digestion - one deconstructs in the same sequence only backwards into nothing. We let the symbol ferment - die away into the darkness - and we wait for the self readjustment process, the rectification to begin.

*'This empty consciousness, that comes to anyone on the verge of sleep, now has to be brought about at will. But while all conscious impressions, even those self-induced, have to be blotted out, it is most important for the student to remain awake. He must have the strength, the inner activity, to keep awake while no longer receiving impressions from without, or any experiences whatever. An empty consciousness is thus produced, but an empty consciousness of which one is fully aware.'*⁴⁵

Letting Go allows for the Letting come! As Dennis Klocek says.

'Now we have to concentrate our attention on this activity, on what the soul had to do in order to call up the image of the black cross as a symbol of what has to be overcome in man. When we thus deepen ourselves mystically in the experience of the soul during this activity, we come to Inspiration, or inspirational cognition. The awakening of this new faculty not only brings the appearance of the little spark in our inner being: we see it lighting up as a powerful force of cognition, and through it we experience something which reveals itself as closely related to our inner being and yet wholly independent of it. For we have seen how our soul-activity is not only

⁴⁴ ⁴⁴ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA227/English/RSP1966/19230819p01.html>
Lecture by Rudolf Steiner, 19th August 1923

⁴⁵ Ibid

*an inner process but has exercised itself on something external. So we have here a knowledge of our inner being, as a residue of mysticism, which is also knowledge of the outer world.*⁴⁶

What comes out of this 'potential' darkness 'nigredo' is that inner spark which is now freed through our soul activity. This is Inspiration - that is, the ability to see inwardly what has been brought into the soul through the pictures of the world - what has died away inside us and is now resurrected through our will - the spirit.

*'The awakening of this new faculty not only brings the appearance of the little spark in our inner being: we see it lighting up as a powerful force of cognition, and through it we experience something which reveals itself as closely related to our inner being and yet wholly independent of it. For we have seen how our soul-activity is not only an inner process but has exercised itself on something external. So we have here a knowledge of our inner being, as a residue of mysticism, which is also knowledge of the outer world.'*⁴⁷

This conscious spirit is our Ego, illuminates the etheric body and particularly the blood - so that a Consciousness of the entire Soul is born - Venus awakens and we find our eternal beloved!

When we push out this loosened 'I' filled etheric body (Venus) we begin now to see the spirit in the world our I unites with the I of the world - this is how the Consciousness soul becomes Intuitive. By uniting the spirit in the world with our I and blood, we begin a process of distillation. In other words, the etheric body lives in the etheric aspect of the plant world, is now illuminated by the sun of the spirit, leading to an etherisation of the blood - a form of higher photosynthesis.

This leads, concurrently to a concentration of purity - the Process of Coagulation.

⁴⁶ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA059/English/RSP1983/19100210p01.html>

Rudolf Steiner Lecture 10th of February, 1910.

⁴⁷ Ibid

This unification of above and below, inner outer, female and male, Abel and Cain is the Alchemical Wedding which cosmically speaking occurs in the sphere of the Virgin and microcosmically speaking occurs in the human brain, in that part of the human brain that connects the etherised blood - the spiritual substance rarefied from human blood. This is the elixir is Love, the active love or good will which rises up to the pineal gland to provide the ambrosia that will feed the gods for the good of the world.

Ordinarily the Pineal gland creates brain sand with every ordinary perception that through memory becomes thought. Salt. But the Salt is redeemed through the work of the alchemist who through new perception, thought and memory, transforms the salt into a purified concentration or coagulation, a diamond or what is called the philosopher's stone - the fountain of eternal youth - the Holy Grail, the Azoth.

Rudolf Steiner says this about the two currents in the brain - the Pineal gland and the pituitary gland:

'Thus we have in the brain, whenever a memory-picture wishes to form itself, two ether-currents, one coming from below and one from above, which oppose each other under the greatest possible tension, just as two electric currents oppose each other. If a balance is brought about between these two currents, then a concept has become a memory-picture and has incorporated itself in the ether-body.'

Such super-sensible currents in the human organism always express themselves by creating for themselves also a physical sense-organ, which we must first look upon as a sense-manifestation. Thus we have within us an organ, situated in the centre of the brain, which is the physical sense-expression for that which wishes to take the form of a memory-picture; and opposite to this is situated still another organ in the brain. These two organs in the human brain are the physical-sensible expression of the two currents in the human ether-body; they are, one might say, something like the ultimate indication of the fact that there are such currents in the ether-body...One of them is the pineal gland; the

*other, the so-called pituitary body: the "epiphysis" and the "hypophysis" respectively.*⁴⁸

Now we can understand a anachronism Vitriol.

Visita, Interiora, Terra, Rectificando, Invenies, Occultum, Lapidem. Visit the interior of the earth (the underworld, the etheric aspect of the human brain) and by rectifying or altering you will find the hidden stone.

The birth of a new being, a new organ of cogntion, occurs through the mysterious interaction of these two organs in relation to a new form of memory/picture formation/thinking.

*'We let the divine-spiritual ground of the outer and inner worlds hold sway in us, and only then can we hope that we shall be "on Heaven's way." This means that we shall come to a spiritual realm which is coloured neither by our own inner world nor by the outer world — a realm which has the same ground as the infinite world of stars shining in on us, as the atmosphere which envelops the earth, as the green plant-cover, as the rivers flowing into the sea; while the same divine-spiritual element lives in our thinking, feeling and willing and permeates our inner and outer worlds.'*⁴⁹

In the Alchemical wedding this is exemplified by the boiling of a head of the moor who had beheaded the queens and kings.

And this is connected to the octave or the higher form of the salt making process and its relation to carbon and the philosopher's stone - the stone of the wise - a sparygic⁵⁰ created from the Great Work. This is the work with nature, that is, the art of marrying the spirit in etheric nature with the etheric body, the time body of the human being. Maybe now we understand this better:

Art (the Alchemical Wedding) is the priestess of nature.

⁴⁸ Rudolf Steiner Lecture 23rd March 1911

⁴⁹ <http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA059/English/RSP1983/19100210p01.html>

⁵⁰ Sparygic is a 'medicine' produced through fermentation distillation and the extraction of mineral components from the ash of the plant. One can see how this translates to the etheric body and its connection to nature and the etheric world.

Nature is the daughter of time (The spirit).

It is this marriage that gives birth to a new spirit consciousness (through the agency of elemental beings) in the human soul, an etheric consciousness of Christ. Christ is the child Horus, the son of the Widow and giving birth to him as Christ is a recapitulation of the Egyptian Mysteries at a higher level because now the spirit child, the Christ in us, is born in complete consciousness.

One might say this new cognitive experience is of the 'nothing' - the nothing is the divine spiritual world, which the intellect believes does not exist. Faust tells Mephistopheles that in his nothing he will find his all, and this is also what Christian Rosencreutz writes down in his book at the end of his journey:

The Highest Knowledge is *understanding* 'Nothing'.

All his misunderstandings have led Christian Rosencreutz to an understanding of how much he doesn't understand and through it he is able to reach the highest understanding of all, that is, an understanding of 'nothing' which in Alchemical terms is the 'all in all'.

Modern Practical Alchemy, the Alchemical Wedding, is a redemption of mysticism. It is in a sense how the West can bring something to the East. It is a rescuing of the East, or the feminine, in this sense.

The task of Rudolf Steiner was to bring Alchemy into the Spiritual Scientific world view.

What are the shadows of the Alchemical initiation?

We see it paradoxically in the interaction of the human soul not with the spirit in nature but with the spirits of the sub-natural - Ahrimanic, Luciferic and Asuric.

We can see a shadow of the feminine image creation in the world today. We are bombarded by a stream of images that are not connected to the world of nature but rather to the world of sub-nature via computers, cinema, phones etc. The human being has no choice but to take in these passive, dead images unconsciously, because there are too many of them. They bring with them the subnatural beings that exist behind them - Luciferic and Ahrimanic beings. The trick is to practice spirit vision as an Alchemical remedy - because by doing so one finds the Universal Medicine - the spirit.

There are shadows of this sub-natural alchemical invasion in all areas of life: agriculture, nuclear Science, medicine, food, chemistry and the economy.

The search for the beloved has even become computerised - phones can have a feminine or masculine interface - Siri can be either male or female now!

Finally, it might be beneficial to our understanding to connect this lecture with my lecture on Rudolf Steiner's New Isis Myth. For the New Isis Myth given for our times, is the true experience of the recapitulation of the old Isis Myth in a higher way. In it, Isis awakens in our souls through the agency of elemental beings who illuminate the Christ.⁵¹

And because in Alchemy all conversation should be in the form of riddles or questions I will leave you with one from the Alchemical wedding:

⁵¹ http://media.wix.com/ugd/93123f_f77e79beb4184af9b024d149b3972a78.pdf
Lecture by Adriana Koulias, Michael and the New Isis Myth

Who has the greater joy, he that beholds what he loves, or he that only thinks on it?"

"He that beholds it," said the Virgin.

"No," I answered.

Why do you think Christian Rosencreutz answered no?

Goodnight!