

Alchemy Journal



Volume 2 No.3 May-June 2001

ARTICLES

[Nagualism and Alchemy](#)

[Cannabis: The Philosopher's Stone Part 1](#)

[The Alchemy in Spiritual Progress Part 3](#)

FEATURES

[New Releases](#)

[Laboratory Notes](#)

[Announcements](#)

EDITORIAL

[From the Editor](#)

[Submissions](#)

[Subscriptions](#)

[Archives](#)[Resources](#)

Nagualism and Alchemy

(by [Jeff Owrey](#))

This essay explores the application of Nagualism as a tool for alchemical change. After an introduction to the fundamental concepts of Nagualism, these concepts are used to examine the appearance of alchemical principles in Chaos magic and Native American magic.

Concept of the Assemblage Point



A most useful concept for studying the epistemology of magic is the idea of the *assemblage point*. This idea comes from a branch of combined Meso-American shamanism and magic commonly known as *Nagualism*, and is described by Carlos Castaneda in the numerous books in which he writes about his encounters with the Mexican *brujero*, Don Juan. Nagualism views the human being abstractly as a "luminous cocoon" of awareness and defines the assemblage point as that location on this sphere where all the fibers of the universe are focused by *intent* into our perception of the universe. Furthermore, this location can be changed by the operation of *intent*. Notice that intent is the key, operative word of this definition.

Indeed, if it can ever be said that the *brujero* Nagual uttered a magic word, that word would have to be "intent", for intent is the quintessential, indefinable term in the language of Nagualism. Castaneda describes the role of intent in the following passage from *Silent Knowledge*

Sorcerers, by the force of their practices and goals, refute the power of the word. They define themselves as *navigators in the sea of the unknown*. For them, navigation is a practicality, and *navigation* means to move from world to world, without losing sobriety, without losing strength; and, to accomplish this feat of navigation, there cannot be procedures, or steps to be followed, but one single abstract act that defines it all: the act of reinforcing our link with the force that permeates the universe, a force which sorcerers call *intent*. Since we are alive and conscious, we are already intimately related to *intent*. What we need, sorcerers say, is to make that link the realm of our conscious acts, and that act of becoming conscious of our link with *intent* is another way of defining silent knowledge.

Working together with the other three apprentices of Don Juan (Carol Tiggs, Florinda Donner-Grau, and Tiasha Abelar), Castaneda combined all the separate aspects of Nagual magic into a single, comprehensive discipline he has named *Tensegrity*. Central to this discipline is the idea that certain,

specific practices, for strengthening and conditioning the practitioner's physical (and energy) body, prepares the practitioner for moving the assemblage point by the operation of *intent*.

Generally speaking, a movement of the assemblage point results in perceptual changes, the intensity of which is proportional to the magnitude of that movement. Smaller movements of the assemblage point result in alterations in the way we perceive the universe of everyday, consensual reality (and vice versa). A sufficiently large movement of the assemblage point results in the perception, however brief, of a wholly new universe - a universe in which one can "live and die". A movement that ends in a new, stable location results in the experience of either a *re-manifestation* of the present universe or of the *manifestation* of a whole new universe, depending on the magnitude of the movement. The discipline of Tensegrity is intended to prepare the practitioner to survive the rigors of the larger movement that results in perception of a new universe. Furthermore, the discipline of Tensegrity is *abstract* because the greater the movement, the more abstract the perceptual experience of the universe that manifests. The following discussion, however, will focus on the smaller movements of the assemblage point that may be brought about by single-minded focus on philosophical ideas, concepts and spatial arraignments. It is these smaller movements that are so important in preparing the aspirant for the larger shift that results in the manifestation of a whole new universe.

Elements in Chaos Magic

Air, Earth, Fire and Water most commonly designate the four classical elements of magic and philosophy. Chaos magic adopts the tradition of the four elements and adds a fifth, postulated element, but changes the nomenclature somewhat. Derived from the physics of quantum mechanics, the elements in Chaos magic, are Time, Space, Mass and Energy. The fifth element, Ether, is postulated to represent the so-called *shadow time* dimension used to account for the apparent paradoxes of quantum mechanics. Figure 1 illustrates the pentagram with these elements as attributes of the four vertices and the fifth element, Ether, as an attribute of the ascendant point of the pentagram. Peter Carroll describes this arraignment of the five Elements more fully in the following passage from *Liber Kaos*

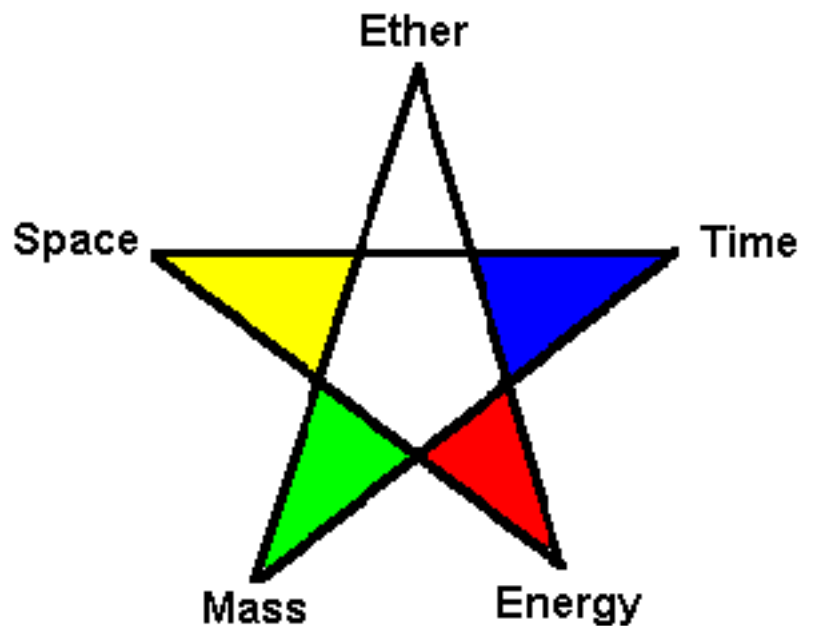


Figure 1. Elements of Chaos Magic.

Matter can be conveniently divided for descriptive purposes into space, time, mass and energy... However, the consensus description on this world at least is conveniently represented by the tetrahedron... The four vertices represent space, time, mass and energy, which is the description the ancients were trying to formulate with their air, water, earth and fire analogies.

When ether (or spirit) is added, a pentagram is created... The pentagram is the simplest possible map of the universe, even the Chaos from which it phenomenizes has been omitted. The pentagram is also a symbol of magic, for it shows ether and matter interacting...

In Chaos magic operations, the Elements may be seen as alternating in position around the pentagram depending on whether they are dominant or subordinate in a particular working. In some operations, space and time might be dominant, in others matter and energy. It is my hypothesis that applying alchemical principles to the quantum mechanical manifestation of the Elements forces a change in perceptual habits of how the Elements interrelate, and that this change results in a beneficial shift in the assemblage point. In turn, this beneficial shift of the assemblage point re-manifests as novel perceptions of the magical universe.

Parallels in Native American Lore

As a prelude to discussing alchemical principles in Native American magic, it is appropriate to introduce a few correspondences to the Elements in Chaos magic. These correspondences, summarized in table 1 below, are taken from various schools of thought inspired by a single, unifying alchemical principle in Native American magic. Unlike systems of correspondences that appear in other branches of magic, the correspondences in table 1 should not in any way be considered as set in stone. The reader should note that different Native American tribal groups often have their own preferred arraignments for these correspondences, especially for Color and Spirit Animal. In fact, one of the concepts found in Native American parallels to Chaos magic is the *Spinning Medicine Wheel*. As an aid in understanding this concept, the entries in the rows of table 1 may be visualized as written ninety degrees apart on concentric rings which may be "spun" independently of each other, as if on a pinwheel. Spinning the rings thus provides a way of randomly deriving new permutations of the entries in the table. One may ask what purpose is served by permuting the elements of table 1, other than total confusion. The answer would be that "spinning the medicine wheel" constitutes a method for forcing a change in perception, and hence is a method for shifting in the assemblage point.

Figure 2 illustrates the unifying alchemical principle mentioned above, the *Medicine Wheel*. The Native American magicians generally considered achieving inner and outer harmony by balancing all aspects of one's being an ultimate, life goal. The Medicine Wheel is a symbolic representation of this balance and harmony in all aspects of one's being. Implicit in the symbolism of the Medicine Wheel is the idea that each individual aspect within the totality of one's being is itself an infinity of aspects that must be balanced before the whole can be brought into balance. In figure 2 the smaller circle symbolizes the idea that each point on the Medicine Wheel (representing the totality of one's being) is itself a Medicine Wheel (a totality contained with a

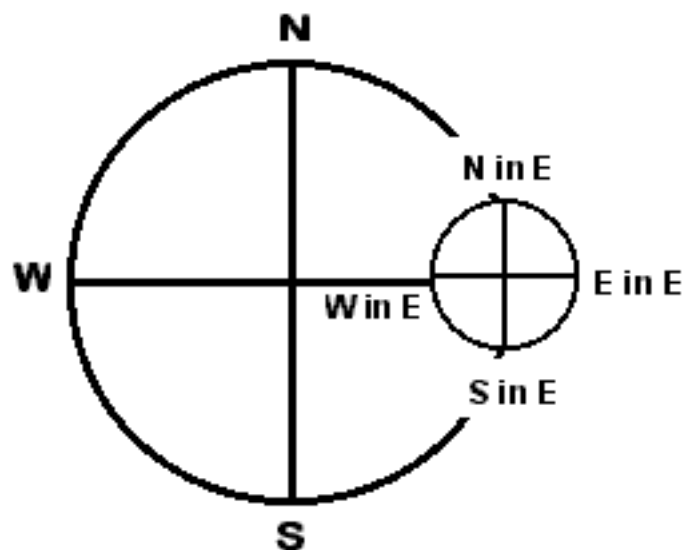


Figure 2. The Native American Medicine Wheel.

totality). As P.D. Ouspensky points out, the whole being is made up of an indefinite number of individual selves, or "I"s as he calls them. The Medicine Wheel abstracts from all these individual selves a whole made up of only four, archetypal selves: the illuminated self, the introspective self, the innocent self, and the wise (or knowledgeable) self. Although the whole being is made up of a multiplicity of selves, in Native American traditions these four, archetypal selves are thought to be the most important to re-manifest in order to bring the whole into balance and harmony. The Native American author, Hyemeyohsts Storm, describes this concept in the following passage from *Seven Arrows*

At birth, each of us is given a particular Beginning Place within these Four Great Directions on the Medicine Wheel. This Starting Place gives us our first way of perceiving things, which will then be our easiest and most natural way throughout our lives. But any person who perceives from only one of these Four Great Directions will remain just a partial man. For example, a man who possesses only the Gift of the North will be wise. But he will be a cold man, a man without feeling. And the man who lives only in the East will have the clear, far sighted vision of the Eagle, but he will never be close to things. This man will feel separated, high above life, and will never understand or believe that he can be touched by anything. A man or woman who perceives only from the West will go over the same thought again and again in their mind, and will always be undecided. And if a person has only the Gift of the South, he will see everything with the eyes of a Mouse. He will be too close to the ground and too near sighted to see anything except whatever is right in front of him, touching his whiskers.

In order to bring oneself into greater balance and harmony using the Medicine Wheel, one must shift one's perception of oneself. For example, if you are naturally an innocent person of the South, then you must learn to see yourself from the point of view of a wise person of the North. Alchemically this shift of perception results in a movement of the assemblage point. In this case the movement of the assemblage point is very beneficial because it results in a stable, balanced person, much better anchored, within him or herself, than the average person who does not know about or practice the teachings of the Medicine Wheel.

In Conclusion

We have seen how *Nagualism* can be viewed as an alchemical tool for self-development and personal change. These changes are the result of shifts in perception - of the world outside, and of all the selves clamoring within. These shifts of perception in turn result in a gentle movement of the assemblage point that not only prepares the individual for the *crossing of the phylum* implied by much greater movements, but also, in the process, produce a much better anchored and more stable person. Since the beginning of time, there have been an uncountable number of methods devised for moving the assemblage point. Yet to move the assemblage point without anchoring the individual is to cast him or her adrift on an infinite sea. The practices of Tensegrity, the use of alchemical principles in magic, and the teachings of the Medicine Wheel are but a few ways to accomplish this re-manifestation without leaving the individual hopelessly mired in an infinite universe. These few ways are not the only ways, of course, but they are among the most superlative of ways.

Medicine Wheel Correspondences

Chaos Element	Time	Space	Mass	Energy
Traditional Element	Water	Air	Earth	Fire
Ritual Implement	Cup	Sword	Disk	Wand
Compass Point	West	East	South	North
Spirit Animal	Bear	Eagle	Mouse	Buffalo
Season	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Winter
Time of Day	Sunset	Sunrise	Noon	Midnight
Color	Black	Yellow	Green	White
Medicine Wheel	Introspection	Illumination	Innocence	Wisdom
Race	African	Asian	Am. Indian	Caucasian
Racial Gift	Soul	Mind	Spirit	Technology
Racial Achievement	Rhythm & Dance	Martial Arts & Taoism	Ecology & Environment	Nuclear Fusion (?)

Table 1. Some correspondences to the Elements of Chaos Magic.

Jeff Owrey studies the relationship between Chaos Magic and alchemical transformation and has a thought-provoking website at www.klogw.com. His email is klogw@earthlink.net. © 2001 by Jeff Owrey.



Cannabis: The Philosopher's Stone

Part 1: The Knights Templar and Cannabis

(by [Chris Bennett](#), [Lynn Osburn](#), and [Judy Osburn](#))

The alchemical information about cannabis use was reintroduced into Europe after the Dark Ages, when the Knights Templar, founded by Hugh de Payns ("of the Pagans") around the beginning of the twelfth century, became involved in a trade of goods and knowledge with the hashish ingesting Isma'ilis. This knowledge was passed on from Eastern adepts and handed down esoterically through the medieval alchemists, Rosicrucians and later on to the most influential occultists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Modern Freemasonry is also said to have been derived from ancient Templar knowledge, which in turn came from earlier Arabic sources. "Sufi ism," said Sir Richard Burton, was "the Eastern parent of Freemasonry." However, the modern day Freemasons, the religion of the Businessman and Banker, for the most part are practicing empty rituals the meaning of which has been long forgotten. But some mystic Masons like Gerard de Nerval, one of the members of the famous Le Club Des Haschischins, were well aware of this Arabic origin for modern Freemasonry. Nerval commented on it in one of his books, much to the horror of many Masons of the time. Nerval published a 700 page memoir, *Voyage en Orient*, and released information considered sacred by Masons concerning the Master Builder Hiram, which is a pivotal part of their secret rituals. As the authors of *The Temple and the Lodge* commented:

Nerval not only recited the basic narrative. He also divulged — for the first time, to our knowledge — a skein of eerie mystical traditions associated in Freemasonry with Hiram's background and pedigree. What is particularly curious is that Nerval makes no mention of Freemasonry whatsoever. Pretending that his narrative is a species of regional folk-tale, never known in the West before, he claims to have heard it orally recited by a Persian raconteur, in a Constantinople coffee-house.

Idries Shaw, the Grand Sheik of the Sufi s and historian of their faith, commented on the connection between the Templars and the Sufis:

That the Templars were thinking in terms of the Sufi , and not the Solomonic, Temple in Jerusalem, and its building, is strongly suggested by one important fact. "Temple" churches which they erected, such as one in London, were modeled upon the Temple as

found by the Crusaders, not upon any earlier building. This Temple was none other than the octagonal Dome of the Rock, built in the seventh century on a Sufi mathematical design, and restored in 913. The Sufi legend of the building of the Temple accords with the alleged Masonic version. As an example we may note that the “Solomon” of the Sufi Builders is not King Solomon but the Sufi “King” Maaruf Karkhi (died 815), disciple of David (Daud of Tai, died 781) and hence by extension considered the son of David, and referenced cryptically as Solomon — who was the son of David. The Great murder commemorated by the Sufi Builders is not that of the person (Hiram) supposed by the Masonic tradition to have been killed. The martyr of the Sufi Builders is Mansur el-Hallaj (858-922), juridically murdered because of the Sufi secret, which he spoke in a manner which could not be understood, and thus was dismembered as a heretic.’ — Idries Shaw, *The Sufis*

Mansur el Hallaj, an outspoken advocate of intoxication as means to spiritual ecstasy, is stated to have been the founder of the still existing Order Templar Orientis in their official documentation, either written by, or under the supervision of the great hashish initiate Aleister Crowley, who at one time was a grand master of the Order. Interestingly el-Hallaj is also connected with the pre-European history of alchemy . Not surprisingly many have credited the Templars with being a vital link in this chain of transmission.

The Order of Knights of the Temple was founded in the Holy Land in 1118 A.D. Its organization was based on that of the Saracean fraternity of “Hashish im,” “hashish-takers,” whom Christians called Assassins. The Templars first headquarters was a wing of the royal palace of Jerusalem next to the al-Aqsa mosque, revered by the Shi’ites as the central shrine of the Goddess Fatima. Western Romances, inspired by Moorish Shi’ite poets, transformed this Mother-Shrine into the Temple of the Holy Grail , where certain legendary knights called Templars gathered to offer their service to the Goddess, to uphold the female principles of divinity and to defend women. These knights became more widely known as Galahad, Perceval, Lohengrin, etc. —Barbara Walker, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*

The authors of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* also comment on the liaison between the Templars and Isma’ili’s : “Secret connections were also maintained with the Hashish im or Assassins, the famous sect of militant and often fanatical adepts who were Islam’s equivalent of the Templars .” The authors also comment that “the Templars ’ need to treat wounds and illness made them adepts in the use of drugs.” And the Order; “in advance of their time regarded epilepsy not as demonic possession but as a controllable disease.” Interestingly cannabis is the safest natural or synthetic medication proven successful in the treatment of some forms of epilepsy.

Most (scholars) agree that the Templars “had adopted some of the mysterious tenets of the Eastern Gnostics.” — Walker, quoting, R.P. Knight, *The Symbolic Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*

The famed New Age author, and modern day “stoned philosopher” Robert Anton Wilson, wrote a whole book on the Templars , putting forth a theory that they were practicing a form of Arabic Tantrism, and ingesting hashish , a technique they had picked up from their contact with the Assassins.

Unfortunately Wilson offers no documentation, but does comment that; "ambiguous references to a sacred plant or herb appear in their [the Templars] surviving manuscripts."

The Templars had acquired a great deal of wealth, a fleet of ships and a strong army of warriors who fought by a creed of never retreating unless the odds were more than three to one. Some began to feel threatened by the wealth and power the Order had attained. In a joint effort orchestrated by King Philip (who had been rejected membership into the sect) and Pope Clement V, the Templars were accused of heresy. Among the many criminal accusations against the Templars were mocking the cross, sodomy and worshipping a mysterious idol in the form of a head. The Templars were also accused of tying a sacred cord around their waist, which was said to have been consecrated by pressing it against the mysterious head.

The spiritual descendants of Zoroastrianism, the modern Parsi, each day tie a sacred cord around their waist as part of the ancient Kusti ritual. The Templar practice of the Zoroastrian Kusti ritual indicates a tradition of knowledge going back through the Isma'ilis (witness the similarities between their seven grade initiations, with those of the cult of Mithras) to earlier Gnostic and Zoroastrian influences.

If the Templars trampled the crucifix, they may have copied the example of Arab dervishes who ceremonially rejected the cross with the words, "You may have the Cross, but we have the meaning of the cross." — Idries Shaw, *The Sufis*

The crucifixion is a major tenet of Roman Catholicism that has been denied by a number of groups dating back to the earliest days of Christianity. The Gnostics were killed for repudiating it. The largest massacre in Roman Catholic Church history was over this very tenet when the Albigensian Crusade took place and 30,000 soldiers were sent forth by the Papacy to slaughter 15,000 men, women and children — slaughtered not for denying Christ and his teachings, but for denying his crucifixion. (See chapters 19 and 20, *Goddess and the Grail* and *The Resurrection*.)

In *The Sufis*, Idries Shaw states the Templars' worship of a mysterious head could well be a reference to the great work of transhumanisation that takes place in the aspirant's own head.

The Golden Head (*sar-i-tilai*) is a Sufi phrase used to refer to a person whose inner consciousness has been "transmuted into gold" by means of Sufi study and activity, the nature of which it is not permissible to convey here. — Idries Shah, *The Sufis*

We propose in this study that the mysterious head worshipped by the Templars may have actually been some sort of a vessel or cauldron, like the head of Bran the Blessed in Celtic mythology or a later day version of the Mahavira Vessel .

In "The Mahavira Vessel and the Plant Putika," Stella Kramrisch describes a plant which she connects with the mysterious soma. The Mahavira Vessel , like the Templars mysterious idol, is referred to as a head. To the ancient worshipper the Mahavira vessel represented the decapitated head of Makha, from whose wound flowed forth the Elixir of Life.

The Templars were rounded up and arrested on Friday the thirteenth (the origin of the "bad luck"

associated with this combination), October, 1307. Although put through the ex-treme tortures that the Inquisition was so famous for, the vast majority of the Templars denied the charges. Of course the inquisitors coerce a small number of admissions of guilt. When subjected to excruciating pain, people will most often admit to whatever their questioners want to hear. The court repeatedly refused to hear depositions from no fewer than 573 witnesses. Some Templars managed to escape, but the majority were burned at the stake. A witness to the event stated:

All of them, with no exception, refused to admit any of their alleged crimes, and persisted in saying they were being put to death unjustly which caused great admiration and immense surprise. — Stephen Howarth, *The Knights Templar*

For this act Dante, who was inspired by Sufi authors, in his *Inferno*, places both King Philip and Clement V firmly in Hell.

Baigent and Leigh speculate in *The Temple and the Lodge* that some of the Templars may have escaped to Scotland. They point to medieval graves with Templar insignias, and Templar style churches (round) as evidence. Scotland was at war with England at the time of the Templars' persecution, and in the resulting chaos the Papal Bulls dissolving the Order were never proclaimed there. Comparatively, according to Professors Graeme Whittington and Jack Jarvis of the University of Saint Andrews in Fife, Scotland, hemp was grown agriculturally in tenth century Scotland. Sediment from Kilconquhar Lock, near Fife, contained cannabis pollen. Cannabis from around the same time has been found in East Anglia, Wales and in Finland. The hemp was found to have been grown in areas occupied by religious groups of the time. Jarvis commented in an *Omni* interview, "the decline of these ecclesiastical establishments may have coincided with a decline in the growing of hemp."

In a letter to Chris Bennett, dated November 6, 1992, Dr. Alexander Sumach, author of *Grow Yer Own Stone* and *A Treasury of Hashish* stated:

You are on to some interesting views. The Templars were active in *only* rare goods — which were tax free. Silks, drugs, as-tromical equipment. Cannabis as a confection — not a pipe was their toy. Turkish delight. They grew fields of hemp for canvas and rope to equip their vast fleet that traveled far and wide. Check out the connection between the Mic Mac Indian myth hero "Glooslap" who may have been a Templar in Nova Scotia. He taught the Indians to fish with nets. Cartier, centuries later saw the natives with neat hemp clothing made from native hemp. Cartier was from a hemp district in France, knew all about ships. If he called it hemp....

Mircea Eliade commented on the potential connections between the Templars and the Grail Myth (also known as the Fisher King and The Perlesvaus). He stated in *A History of Religious Ideas Vol. III* that in a twelfth century text of the legend, the knights were members of a group referred to as Templeisen. He adds: "A Hermetic [alchemical] influence on Parzival seems plausible, for Hermetecism begins to become known in twelfth-century Europe following massive translations of Arabic works." The scholar further comments on the secret languages, symbols and passwords that were in use in Europe at that time.

Wolfram Von Eschenbach wrote his version of the myth, *Parzival*, sometime between 1195 and 1220. Interestingly Wolfram is also said to have paid a “special visit to Outremer,” a Templar outpost, “to witness the Order in action.” In Wolfram’s version of the tale the Templars are the knights who guard the Grail and the Grail castle. R. Barber contends in *Knight and Chivalry* that Perlesvaus, written by an anonymous author, may well have been penned by a Templar.

The Templars appear in *The Perlesvaus* not just as military men, but also as high mystical initiates. This is indicative, for the Templars were only too eager to reinforce the popular image of themselves as magi, as wizards or sorcerers, as necromancers, as alchemist, as sages privy to lofty arcane secrets. And indeed, it was precisely this image that rebounded upon them and provided their enemies with the means of their destruction. — Baigent and Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge*

This article is from **Green Gold: the Tree of Life, Marijuana in Magic and Religion** by Chris Bennett, Lynn Osburn, and Judy Osburn published by Access Unlimited. For more information email openi420@juno.com. The complete article with footnotes is posted at www.AlchemyLab.com/cannabis_stone1.htm.



The Alchemy in Spiritual Progress

Part 3: Separation

(by [Nanci Shanderá, Ph.D.](#))

In this seven-part article, we have discussed the first and second stages of alchemical transformation, Calcination and Dissolution, where our egos are shocked, disillusioned, deflated, or burned to ashes, then washed clean and thrown deeply into the secrets and gifts of the emotions.

During the process of Dissolution, we actually use the emotions to access more emotion - the kind that is authentic and valuable in our quest for wholeness. As we move on to the third stage of alchemical transformation, Separation, where the emotions and other parts of us are brought to conscious awareness, it is time for us to review all the areas of our lives in regard to what is important and what is not.

The ego in this stage is temporarily quieted - most often by the passion of emotional expression within the second stage - so we can contemplate our priorities without the ego’s interference.

This is a level of intellectual exploration, but not a hiding place, which so often is where we go when upsetting emotions begin to emerge. We all have experiences where we were frightened by the intensity of feelings expressed at difficult times of our lives and how we have “escaped to our heads,” thinking it

would protect us and even “get rid of” those pesky emotions. Did it work for you? Probably not. Using the intellect this way is actually a misuse of it, the pure purpose of which is to complement and enhance the emotional states and expand us to wholeness. It is the graceful yet powerful dance of the masculine forces of the intellect with the feminine forces of feeling - neither is attempting to outdo or overshadow the other, but rather perform the sublime dance of surrender to the other. It is the entry into the Hieros Gamos, or the Sacred Marriage, which takes place at the fourth - and higher - levels of transformation.

On human levels, the exploration of Separation is a key to manifesting the kinds of relationships we dream of since it is a preparation stage for the harmonious communion between the inner masculine and feminine. It is also a stage that most of us avoid when embarking upon the quest for a new relationship. For instance, if we have recently ended a relationship, the tendency is to either go out immediately to fill the void with another one, or to hide away, closeting ourselves from further hurt. In either case, most people will ignore the most necessary of tasks before entering a new partnership: the inner “housecleaning” which offers the opportunity to become aware of what was learned in the previous relationship. This is a crucial step because without it, we will repeat the old patterns in the new experience and then wonder why they keep happening. It’s like (and this is for those of us who remember what phonograph records were!) trying to listen to a beautiful symphony on a record that is dusty and caked with grime. Before the music can shine through, it must be cleaned.

Separation gives us the opportunity to learn from the past and make decisions based upon what we learned. Of course, doing it well requires courage - every stage of transformation requires this. I believe it is the main ingredient for a successful and fulfilling life because it prepares the way for us to walk with purpose and integrity. To separate ourselves from something that we sense is no longer healthy or appropriate takes a brave heart. It may be a troublesome person in our lives - a lover or boss, perhaps - who we know is not good for our particular Soul need. And this conclusion must be based upon a great deal of deep inner work before we can consciously, and with high intention, extract ourselves from that person. Otherwise, it’s just an excuse to remain unconscious and to keep blaming our problems on others. We can test this by reviewing how many times the same thing has happened over and over between us and that person. This is caused either by our blindness to or rejection of our own issues, or by the repetition itself being a clear sign that all is not well in this relationship and it is time to leave it. If it is the latter, it may mean a sacrifice is needed before our courage can get us through and keep our eye on the correct path.

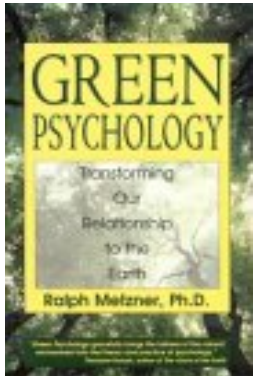
It is far easier and requires no courage to stay in a relationship or to keep working for the same abusive boss than it is to leave. Leaving means we’re on our own. We are not shored up by our wobbly hopes that somehow things will get better. No, we’ve tried that a million times and it hasn’t worked. Something new has to be done. A symbolic sacrifice of what has supported the dependency must be made. I always recommend a solemn ritual that evolves from our own creativity before embarking on the actual sacrifice of the person or situation we must leave. This ritual will connect the human part of us with our Soul selves and guarantees that the connection will be made ready for the next stage of alchemical transformation. A ritual for this purpose may be as simple as lighting a candle, speaking to that person from our Soul self about the reasons for parting, then doing a symbolic cord-cutting to finalize the decision. Or it may be elaborate - it depends on our sense of what will impress our inner needs the most. For it is from within that change is made and when the outer determination of mind combines with the emotional expression within a ritual, the desired result has already been made manifest on higher planes. All that is needed from that point is to go forth in the world and accept the new experiences that are awaiting.

In the next article, we will work with the fourth stage of alchemical transformation called Conjunction, where we experience a sacred marriage deep within us and one that gives us a glimpse of the wonders of wholeness. Until then, consider your what is important in your life and what is no longer necessary or conducive to wholeness. Do some inner housecleaning. Those dust buffaloes need to go!

Nanci Shanderá, Ph.D., is a Mystery School teacher and spiritual counselor and dreamworker at EarthSpirit Center in Eagle Rock, California. This article is excerpted from her book in progress: *Digging for Gold: the Art & Soul of Spiritual Experience*. She can be reached at (323) 254-5458. Website: www.EarthSpiritCenter.com.

FEATURES

New Releases



Green Psychology: Transforming Our Relationship to the Earth

by Ralph Metzner

(Click on bookcover to order this book at 20% discount.)

In his latest book, visionary psychologist Ralph Metzner examines the growing rift between human beings and nature. For millennia most cultures on earth existed in a religious and psychological framework that honored the planet as a partner and attempted to maintain a balance with nature – never taking more than was needed to survive. According to Metzner, a “pathology” developed as the Biblical idea of human dominion over nature took sway. This led to a fatal hubris built into Western civilization that has led to an alienation of the human spirit from its roots and allowed an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems that support all life on the planet.

The relationship between the planet and its people is subtle and deep, but Metzner does a wonderful job of conveying it in a chapter called “Gaia’s Alchemy.” He shows that the cosmic pattern of “as Above, so Below” applies to planets and the life that evolves on them. In other words, there are fundamental correspondences between humans and earth. In terms of the archetypal alchemical elements, “Earth” is expressed in the planet by soil, minerals, and rocks, while in individuals it is expressed as flesh, muscle, and bone. Water on the planet is manifested as oceans, rivers, and rain, while in people it is blood, lymph, and hormones. Air on the planet is in the atmosphere, clouds, and winds, while in individuals it is in our respiration, breath, and voice. Fire on the planet comes from lightning and radiation, while in individuals it is found in our bioelectric nervous system and bodily metabolism.

What can be done to restore the planet’s delicate alchemy? Metzner looks for role models in human

history, in our mythology and among shamanic cultures and mystics down through the ages. The search leads from pagan green gods and black goddesses to ceremonies with Lacandon Maya shamans and a modern vision quest in the California desert. He also examines the writings of mystics, such as the eleventh century abbess Hildegard von Bingen, who created an amazing view of nature mysticism within the framework of the patriarchal Catholic Church, where the idea of dominion over nature became primary dogma. The search for the origins of the split between mankind and nature goes from ancient sky-god worshipping societies to the rise of a monotheistic view in Egypt, from animistic beliefs to the supremacy of mechanistic science. By the time the author is done, the reader has a clear view of the precarious human situation and how it came about.

The wound between the human psyche and life-giving nature is in all of us. We inherited it from the culture in which we were born, and our only hope is to start by healing the wound within ourselves. There are a number of groups in the world that are crucial to human survival, even though their importance is often underrated. The spread of the Gaia principle in deep ecology disciplines and eco-feminist movements is creating a new worldview in which the human mind and the health of the planet are harmoniously intertwined. By bringing balance and harmony into the ecosystem, we will bring balance and harmony to our own minds and souls.

Laboratory Notes



The Entfleurance Apparatus

The extraction of essences from various natural substances such as flowers, roots, barks, leaves, and animal parts pre-dates recorded history and is probably the oldest alchemical operation. Prior to 1850, all essences were natural, but with the advent of modern organic chemistry, synthetic essences became the norm. According to spagyrics, such synthetic compounds do not carry the true signatures of the natural substances and are useless. The entfleurance (French for "extract from the flower") is an apparatus designed to extract natural essences. It is a low temperature process that uses animal fat (lard), which has the property of being able to absorb essential oils of natural substances. In the vessel, the lard and natural substance are combined and the container heated just enough to melt the lard. After shaking vigorously, the warm container is left standing for about an hour to allow the fat to absorb the essential oil. The strained fat is then mixed with *undenatured* alcohol (vodka is often used) and distilled. An Entfleurance Distillation Kit is available from the [ETX Catalog](#). The basic unit comes with complete instructions and includes copper condenser coil with support stand, entfleurance vessel, vented stopper, and product vials. Using the commercial unit or a similar set-up of your own construction, you can make spagyric oils, aromatherapy oils, flower essences, soap fragrances, perfume, cologne, after-shave, etc.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Crucible 2001: An Alchemical Adventure

Crucible 2001 is a jump-in-the-fire event for anyone interested in creative transformation. The alchemical adventure will be held on Saturday, October 13, at the luxurious Delta King Hotel, on the riverfront in the heart of old Sacramento. Hosted by author and practicing alchemist Dennis William Hauck, this intensive multimedia event will focus on the practical and spiritual methods the alchemists actually used for the transformation of body, mind, and soul. Demonstrations, experiments, meditations, and other techniques will make these principles come alive in participants. Before any metal becomes gold, it must be exposed to the fire of the crucible! The Delta King is a five-story, 300-foot-long, completely refurbished riverboat with eight large meeting rooms, a comfortable bar/lounge, an award-winning restaurant, and spacious staterooms. Built in 1928, it was renovated in 1999 to become what *U.S. Today* calls "a unique meeting place with AAA five-diamond ratings." Admission is \$79 (\$99 after October 1). For a free brochure, fill out the online [Information Request Form](#). To use a credit card to register now, click [Register Online](#). Contact: info@crucible.org

Mystical Egypt and the Path to Immortality

This international conference on "Mystical Egypt and the Path to Immortality" will be held in Cairo, Egypt, from November 6 to 11. There will be a one-week Egypt tour and Nile cruise after the event that lasts from November 10 to 18. Speakers include the following authors: **John Anthony West** is a writer and scholar, and author of *The Traveler's Key to Ancient Egypt*. His previous book, *Serpent in the Sky: The High Wisdom of Ancient Egypt* is an exhaustive study of the revolutionary egyptological work of the French mathematician R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz. **Dennis William Hauck** writes and lectures on the universal principles of physical, psychological, and spiritual perfection to a wide variety of audiences that range from scientists and business leaders to religious and New Age groups. He is the author of *The Emerald Tablet: Alchemy for Personal Transformation* and numerous translations of old alchemy manuscripts. **Normandi Ellis** is an author and poet, most well known for her poetic transliteration of the Egyptian Book of the Dead, *Awakening Osiris*. Among her other works are: *Feasts of Light* (the Egyptian Goddess festivals) and *Dreams of Isis*. **Marc Amaru Pinkham** is a metaphysical researcher and author of *The Return of the Serpents of Wisdom* and *Conversations with the Goddess*. **Nicki Scully** is a metaphysical teacher and author of *The Golden Cauldron: Shamanic Journeys on the Path of Wisdom* and *Tribal Alchemy*. For complete conference and tour information, click [Cairo Conference](#).

EDITORIAL

From the Editor ([Dennis William Hauck](#))

This issue of the *Alchemy Journal* is devoted to the topic of alchemy and shamanism. Due to the growing interest in this topic, we have also added a special section to the Alchemy Lab website on [Shamanic Alchemy](#). Because of its emphasis on psychoactive substances, some traditional alchemists

have told me they do not believe this is a suitable topic for alchemical practice. However, we would be naive indeed if we could not at least consider the possibility that the alchemists worked with mind-altering drugs. They were, after all, the first chemists. Personally, I believe the states of consciousness described by the alchemists are beyond mere brain chemistry, but in keeping with the principle that alchemical changes must occur on all three levels of reality (the body, mind, and soul), I would not be surprised to find chemicals corresponding to those states.

Moreover, I am sure whatever super-snoop government software is perusing the Internet has already discovered the wealth of chemical information and labware offered through our website, and we are already looked at with suspicion, so why not give them a little more for *our* money? And if that is not enough to arouse their interest, just wait until they see the topic for the next issue, which is sexual alchemy. The government watchdogs will probably have to invent a whole new security category for things like "internal sex," "alchemical incest," and "sex with spirits" that they will find in these pages.

Submissions

Please submit your articles on any aspect of alchemy. We are looking for biographies, historical articles, practical laboratory work, spagyric recipes, philosophical pieces, experiences in personal transformation, spiritual insights, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, book reviews, film and video reviews, website reviews, artwork, etc. Please submit your material or queries to the *Alchemy Journal*, P.O. Box 22201, Sacramento, CA 95822-0201. You may also submit materials via email to the Editor at DWHauck@alchemylab.com or to the Assistant Editor, Tiffany-Nicole Hill at Zyons_touch@yahoo.com.

Subscriptions

The *Alchemy Journal* is posted bimonthly at the Alchemy Lab website on the journal archives page at www.AlchemyLab.com/journal.htm. To subscribe to the journal, send a blank email to AlchemyJournal-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Alchemy Resources

- **Alchemergy** (Modern Alchemy) <http://www.Alchemergy.com>
- **Alchemy Guild** (Membership Organization) <http://www.AlchemyGuild.org>
- **Alchemy Lab** (Alchemy Articles, Files, and Gallery) <http://www.AlchemyLab.com>
- **Alchemy Website** (Original Alchemy Texts) <http://www.levity.com/alchemy/>
- **Crucible Catalog** (Books, Tapes, Labware, Tinctures, Herbs) <http://www.Crucible.org>

- **Flamel College** (Alchemy and Hermetic Courses) <http://www.FlamelCollege.org>

[Return to Top](#)



© 2001 All Rights Reserved. Published by [ETX](#).