

ESOTERICA

FREE COPY

SUMMER 2012 VOL 3 NO 2

PHILOSOPHY • SCIENCE • SPIRITUALITY



The Journal of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies

ART OF THE ABSOLUTE

ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHIES

Esotericism, occultism and mysticism attempt to involve the individual in a personal search and experience of the highest inner truth within the mind, heart and soul. In this issue we will try and give a few ideas and illustrate the symbols and images that esotericists have used when they describe the ultimate meaning of life.

In many religious belief systems the image of the Absolute utilise the human form in various guises – wise old men, wizards and witches, exotic gurus with flowing white hair and beards and other ‘forms’. Most, but not all, esoteric views of the Absolute do not relate to a human being either male or female. These systems use number, diagrams or words to convey the sacred nature of the Cosmic Absolute.

Some esoteric systems focus on the importance of a journey or pathway where the aspirant moves along and up a ladder or through stages or degrees of higher knowledge and enlightenment. Many try to associate their system with the past and try to show that a particular system has authenticity and reaches far back with a spiritual or esoteric pedigree.

In esoteric art the words and sounds that symbolise the Absolute originate from the various world cultures. Latin is often the preferred language of the Western esotericist to signify the transcendental and mystical. **DEUS** is Latin for **GOD** and is often used in the works of Robert Fludd, Jacob Boehme, Athanasius Kircher, Michael Maier and other esotericists. Some Freemasonry groups prefer the term **JAHBULON** as the secret name of the Great Architect of the Universe. The Kabbalists, and many esotericists, use the **TETRAGRAMMATON**. This was the name of God as revealed to Moses as the representative of Hebrews. This is also called – **JAHWEH**, often abbreviated to – **YHWH**. Since the late 1800s the Indian mantra **OM** - sometimes written AUM or as a Sanskrit symbol – is believed to be the sacred sound that brought the Universe into being and is used by some spiritual and esoteric groups such as the Theosophical Society.

Gradually in the west, since the enlightenment of the 18th century, it has become possible for individuals to examine the world they live in without torture and death. They have been able to pursue obscure avenues that do not conform to the concepts of major religions. Some have adopted Eastern belief systems that seem to offer a less regimental and dogmatic approach. Today many people have replaced religion with various approaches to humanism, magic and occultism, science, various New Age philosophies, transpersonal psychology, transcendental meditation, sacred philosophy, fundamentalist atheism, paganism and nature worship.

Major religions usually have at their heart an esoteric and mystical core. It is here that those of different outer beliefs, customs and practices can agree that the absolute truth of life and the universe have the possibility of transcending culture and politics. But this is rare. At the heart of the belief systems are deeply entrenched ideas and attitudes which can affect how people really fuse and experience what can be called the Absolute.

At an even deeper level we must ask whether we ever do find total union with a transcendental ‘God’ or another human being except in brief, almost imperceptible moments. As Plotinus said ‘The Path always leads from the alone to the Alone’. There are parts within us that are unknown. Is it possible to find and experience absolutes, ultimate knowledge and experience?

In reality, perhaps, the deepest, private and personal spiritual moments may never be shared with anyone except in unique and rare moments in life.

The Hermetic axiom maybe true and that we are ‘Gods waiting to be realised’.

Barry Seabourne
Arts Editor

Front cover: The Theosophical Path – Reginald Machen – 1917

Courtesy of Theosophical Society, Point Loma, USA

All other images used in this magazine are by courtesy of Wikipedia unless otherwise stated.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION – ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHIES	2
FROM THE EDITORS DESK	4
ESOTERIC SPIRITUALITY – <i>Dr. R.A. Gilbert</i>	5
THEOSOPHY	9
THE WESTERN ESOTERIC TRADITIONS – <i>Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke</i>	12
OBITUARY	16
NEOPLATONISM	18
<i>BIRTH OF VENUS – Sandro Botticelli</i>	20
HERMETICISM	24
THE ABSOLUTE – <i>Barry Seabourne</i>	26
ROSIKRUCIANISM	27
<i>THE UNIVERSE AND THE WORLD SOUL – Robert Fludd</i>	28
KABBALAH	30
<i>THE KABBALAH, KIRCHER & THE ABSOLUTE - Athanasius Kircher</i>	32
ALCHEMY	34
<i>THE SOLAR LOGOS – Robert Fludd</i>	36
LONDON PROGRAMME OF EVENTS	38
DIARY OF FOUNDATION SPEAKERS	41

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This issue of Esoterica is a special edition and provides an introductory overview to some of the major western esoteric philosophies. One of the most important of these philosophies is Theosophy, also known as The Ancient or Ageless Wisdom.

Theosophy is esoteric by its very nature and has been derived from three main sources; it is **the fruit of previous evolutions**, it is **the work of those who have gone before us**, and it is **wisdom brought down from higher planes**. This knowledge existed far back in history and was originally handed down in verbal form from teacher to student. It existed long before the introduction of hieroglyphs and the earliest written records and language, even pre-dating **Senzar** – the Mystery-speech of the Initiated Adepts.

This early form of communication eventually developed into various pictorial and written forms and was eventually expressed in works such as the **Vedas, Upanishads, Kabbalah, Hermetic Gnosis, and the Stanzas of Dzyan** (source of the Secret Doctrine). The Ageless Wisdom can be found at the heart of all religions and sacred philosophies. It forms the basis of our human development through the ages and more recently into modern astronomy, science and other disciplines.

The early Theosophists of the 3rd to 5th centuries were known as the '**Philaletheans**', meaning Lovers of Truth, hence the motto adopted by today's Theosophical Society - '**There is no religion higher than truth**'. Theosophists have also been known as **Allegorists** because of their ability to decipher allegorical sources of esoteric knowledge. The doctrines of Theosophy are not stated as dogma but rather as a body of knowledge that has been verified by students for many thousands of years. Theosophy is presented for 'consideration' not belief.

Over my life-time I have known many people who have discovered Theosophy in one form or another. Some have rejected its doctrines as too intellectual, while others have welcomed its depth and breadth as comprehensive and enlightening. Some have claimed it to be irrelevant in every-day life, while others have found answers to the meaning of life and come to understand themselves and their life in a far better light as a result.

With a little study, Theosophy can help us to see ourselves and the world we live in a clearer way and dispel many fears and illusions. It is one of the few esoteric pathways that allow the individual complete freedom to discover the truth in their own way. It allows for real creativity in the contemporary search for spiritual truth, wherever it may lead.

In terms of art, esoteric art is often different from mainstream art in that it attempts to provide visual equivalents and symbolic images that illustrate the nature and mystery of life and the way the Cosmos relates to and affects our lives here on Earth.

In this issue **Barry Seabourne** has written the synopses of the esoteric philosophies and has also chosen the images together with some possible interpretations. These are complemented by the probing article **Esoteric Spirituality** by **Dr R.A. Gilbert** and **The Western Esoteric Traditions** by **Professor Goodrick-Clarke**.

My thanks to all those involved in this special edition. Special thanks to Barry for his 'tour de force'.

I wish you the blossoming of early summer as you open your mind to the Esoteric.

Eric McGough

ESOTERIC SPIRITUALITY

Robert A. Gilbert

'Spirituality' does not lend itself to easy definition, and 'Esoteric Spirituality' is even more problematic, but let us try to make sense of them.

In its essence, spirituality is a blanket term referring to the religious beliefs and practices that arise from our awareness of wholly supernatural realms, which are the home of the sacred and the divine, and which our spirit strives to enter so that it may grow ever closer to and, ultimately be at one with, the divine centre of all. That is, in western terms, to pass from this world to that, and by way of the Divine Vision to achieve ultimately that state of being in which we are at one with God: the last stage of the quest, the goal of Divine Union.

Of course, to attain that goal is not as simple as setting out a form of words. Our interaction with the sacred and the divine is a long, slowly developing process that involves the whole of ourselves – body, mind and spirit – and all that is within those inner realms. The outer forms of the great faiths of humanity show us that such worlds do exist, that there are doors by which they may be entered and that if we truly understand the sacred texts, the doctrines and the ritual practices of those faiths, we may find ourselves in possession of a key to unlock those doors. But what we tend to forget, if we have ever learned, is that before the key will turn there must be a subtle change within ourselves, a shift in consciousness that will awaken our spiritual yearning, open our inner vision and set us on the true path to attainment.

And so we come to the esoteric, to esotericism or – a more appropriate label – esoteric spirituality. The esoteric is that which lies within; in the context of the religious quest for ultimate reality it may be seen as that inner process which enables the unfolding of human spiritual wisdom across the boundaries of culture and religion – but there is a barrier to this enabling, a limiting factor that restricts the numbers of those who are so enabled. To be one of this number you must first find the 'way within', for esoteric spirituality is, by its very nature, a secret wisdom: deeply hidden and reserved to those alone who have eyes to see.

It should not, however, be construed as a barrier imposed by any elite hierarchy, human or super-human, nor do those for whom this way has opened, in response to their yearning, form any kind of moral or spiritual elite. It is simply a matter of self selection: if the path of spiritual regeneration and the goal of Divine Union call to us, and if we respond to that call, we have made a choice to seek the interior way towards 'that which was lost' and to discover the nature and content of a secret tradition, the knowledge of which will guide us on our way of return to the primal Paradise from which our immortal spirit has, apparently, fallen. That secret tradition has been preserved and enriched down the ages by those who have not only chosen it but have chosen also to dedicate themselves to guiding and teaching those who follow in their footsteps.

Their role, which may prove to be ours also, would seem to mirror that of the Bodhisattva in Buddhist tradition, but there are fundamental differences. Not the least of these is that the Bodhisattva is a being beyond the limitations of the flesh; far along the path to the non-beingness of Nirvana, but moved by compassion to halt and give aid to those who are still far below on their way of ascent.

The teacher of the Secret Tradition of the West is different. He or she is, or was, a living

human being who has codified or expanded the practical and theoretical content of one or another branch of that tradition – that is, the various means by which an effective transmission of spiritual knowledge takes place – so that others may learn from their wisdom and their experience. And what they codify and transmit is essentially western esoteric spirituality.

This is not to deny that there are esoteric elements in eastern spiritual traditions, although they are far removed from the fantasies of some misguided western occultists who have, for rather more than a hundred years, claimed to reveal ‘Esoteric Buddhism’ and to express it in the terms of the, sometimes, ‘ersatz’ spirituality of Victorian occultism.

There are, for example, reserved and ‘hidden’ doctrines within Mahayana Buddhism, but they do not reflect the essential components of the Western Esoteric Tradition, which is predicated on the existence of a single, approachable and personal God, in whom a loving relationship between creator and created is manifest.

In all the varieties of this western tradition there are a number of defining features: a belief in human perfectibility – to a certain degree, at least – and a certainty that achieving personal spiritual regeneration and a return to our original ‘unfallen’ state is possible; an awareness that we have the ability to interact with worlds intermediary between the human and the divine, and a recognition that there are specific correspondences between the objects and properties of the material and spiritual worlds. And these features are implicit in the various symbolic systems that map out for us this way of return, this path that leads ultimately to a direct experience of God.

This, you may say, is all very well; it is uplifting and inspiring to know that this is so, but what are the practicalities of the Western Esoteric Tradition? How do we set about the task of learning about these symbolic systems and how do we overcome the problem of engaging with something that is, by definition, hidden from our view? Must we wait for ‘sudden illumination’ or are there more mundane ways of discovering the precise content of this tradition?

There are indeed such ways, but before we consider them something must be said about the difficulties involved in communicating the experience of spiritual reality. Without exception those who have entered upon the Way of Divine Union, and who have advanced far upon this path, speak of the virtual impossibility of adequately conveying the nature and content of their experiences in everyday human language. By its very nature the mystical experience – let us call it that – cannot be communicated. It involves the whole being of the mystic – body, mind and spirit – but it is through the material senses that he or she records what has happened and attempts to transmit that record to others. But because the essence of the experience is that of the spirit, the record transmitted through the physical senses must always be incomplete and inadequate. Even so, we can obtain glimpses of the reality that the mystic has experienced if every possible avenue of expression is used.

It was well said by St. Paul that ‘the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life’ (2 Cor. 3:6), and although the context was different the sentiment applies to the words of the mystics: we cannot express the inexpressible in ordinary written language. The words used can never be more than an approximation, an oblique approach to something that defies everyday description. We must express it in symbolic terms. Thus, when writing of such experiences the mystic, indeed, every traveller upon this path, must use the language of simile, metaphor and paradox – and even this is inadequate. Direct speech, which can vary in rhythm, tone and emphasis, and make use of facial expression and gesture, is an undoubted help, but

even this is not enough, for it remains within the province of the intellect. What is needed is to employ direct means of communication that stir up non-rational, emotive responses – responses that come from the heart. These means may be visual or auditory and may involve also the senses of taste, touch and smell. In one manner or another, all of these are used in the various paths of the Western Esoteric Tradition.

Now let us consider how we may follow some of the different paths within the tradition, each of which has both a theoretical and a practical aspect. Alchemy, the Kabbalah and Rosicrucianism, for example, each have written texts that describe and expound their doctrinal content and provide instruction on the practices that will enable the spiritual pilgrim who has taken them up to gain the spiritual enlightenment that they can give him. Here it must be pointed out that ‘illumination’ is not the goal of such paths – it is simply a transformative realisation that the spiritual goal is attainable and that this path leads towards full and final enlightenment.

The written texts of each of these paths are accompanied by rich visual imagery that can, and does, stimulate and awaken the spirit of the dedicated pilgrim (1). But whichever path we choose will involve a long and complex process of learning; of gaining knowledge and transmuting it into understanding; of practising techniques that will aid us to be aware of the spiritual world – and alive to a realisation that perils as well as rewards lie within that world. Nor can we work alone. We need teachers who are also spiritual directors, able and willing to guide us as we advance deeper into our inner selves; to show us how we must look at these visual images in order to interpret and understand them, and how we can engage in reflective processes – meditation and, ultimately, contemplation – that will take us beyond sensory images altogether.

It must always be borne in mind that the unfolding of our awareness of spiritual reality, of a growing engagement and familiarity with the various forms of esoteric spirituality, is a slow process. There is no instant road to spiritual regeneration; our awareness of the stages to true enlightenment takes place very gradually over a long period and requires dedication. It cannot be entered upon lightly or with the wrong intention. We do not seek to seize fire from heaven: we receive divine grace only when we have passed through our period of probation; and only when we subordinate the self to the divine Other, only when we offer up our will to the will of God, can we become aware of the presence of God, and so prepare ourselves for the final stages of our return to the centre of all.

This is our final goal, but we cannot attain it while we dwell in the material world. Our task here, if we have chosen the Way of Divine Union, is not simply to travel alone on that Way, but to bring other pilgrims with us and after us. If we do enter into these states of real spiritual awareness, of exalted spiritual vision, we find them to be timeless but not yet eternal for us. We realise that ecstasy in the spiritual world comes at the price of duty in this world, and we do well to reflect on the words of A.E. Waite (2), a twentieth century mystic who caught the real essence of this quest and successfully articulated his experience. He described this exalted state as ‘a state beyond the images, a repose of inward being, apart from action in the mind’. It is a timeless state of being and we cannot say that we have entered it and subsequently left it.

All we can say is this:

“We are simply in it and subsequently we are not in it, but amidst a terrible experience of lost beatitude in reality.”

But lost glory apart, we pay a price for this beatitude:

Those who enter into this state come back into the world, with the yoke of the kingdom upon them in a law of service. Then God shall give them work.”¹

And for us that work is the perpetuating and transmitting of the secret tradition of Western esoteric spirituality.

There remains the question of the specific details of the practices associated with the various elements of the Western Esoteric Tradition. These are complex and extensive and need to be set in the context of the appropriate philosophical foundations.

A full exposition, with detailed practical instructions, cannot be given in a paper for public distribution, but an outline of the manner in which esoteric spirituality can be practically applied, together with guidance for those who wish to follow these paths, will be presented in a further paper in a subsequent issue of *Esoterica*.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. An example of this from my own experience may not be out of place. The Shakers – who derived from the Quakers and established what are best described as Protestant monastic communities – created inspirational, symbolic drawings drawn from biblical texts. They have often been reproduced, but the copies do not and cannot convey the power of the originals. One of the best known of these ‘Gift Drawings’ is of ‘The Tree of Life’, drawn by Hannah Cohoon in 1854, and the original can be seen in the museum at the Shaker community in Hancock, Massachusetts. The Tree is represented by a pattern of green leaves and red fruit and in the printed copies is rather mundane. But the original has a dramatic power: the intensity of the complementary colours, and the manner in which they ‘flash’ is difficult to put into words; their effect, however, is not. On seeing them I could do nothing but burst into tears.

2. A.E. Waite, *Lamps of Western Mysticism*, 1923, pp.328 & 329

INTERESTED IN FREEMASONRY?

Why not consider what the Grand Lodge of Freemasonry for Men and Women has to offer. Masonry is a fraternal tradition based on Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth; and on the Perfectability of humankind. The Grand Lodge has and upholds the equality of both men and women as practicing Masons, without distinction of race, creed, colour, gender or social conditions. Masonry recognises all those sincere seekers of truth, who work for humanity and wish to become better examples to others in the conduct of their lives. Freemasonry offers a rich and ancient cultural heritage in allegory and symbol for our spiritual education and progress along the path of unfoldment. The Grand Lodge has made the study of the Masonic heritage and its spiritual insights a keystone of our work, preserving the tradition inaugurated by the Great Theosophist Annie Besant in 1902.



We are a forward-looking Order established in Britain and Europe with Lodges in London and around the country. If you wish to know more contact the Grand Secretary at: glf4m-w@tiscali.co.uk or jheaslewood@tiscali.co.uk or see our website at: www.grandlodge.org.uk



The origins and use of the word THEOSOPHY are complicated. The actual word is a compound of the Greek words THEO, meaning God or Divine and SOPHIA meaning wisdom. Some theosophists trace the word back to Theogonia or Theogony which means 'of the unfolding of the Gods'. This places the beginning of 'theosophy' at a time when humankind first considered that their world had a transcendental aspect.

The earliest known philosophers who used the term were the Platonists or Neoplatonists from the 3rd century AD. The most important of these philosophers was Ammonius Saccas who presented his version of Platonic philosophy as 'the pursuit of Universal Divine Wisdom of the Ancients' - which he termed Theosophia. His later followers included Plotinus and Proclus.

The word THEOSOPHY was used in the 17th century to describe a form of Esoteric Christianity that was evolving in Europe at the beginning of the 1600's with philosophers such as Robert Fludd and Jacob Boehme. Boehme defined theosophy in a way that suggested an esoteric system of philosophy with a basis in Nature which would lead to an understanding of the Divine Nature. In the 17th Century the term Theosophy was taken from the Greek root meaning God-Wisdom or Divine-Wisdom. It denoted a metaphysical teaching and system derived from esoteric traditions and personal experience.

The primary aim of theosophy is to enhance awareness of the relationship between

nature and the spirit and enable the individual to achieve direct, unitive knowledge, wisdom and personal experience of the spiritual world. The term relates to various esoteric and spiritual philosophies and concepts. These include Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, and spiritual Alchemy.

Theosophy was a speculative method of analysing a philosophy of the universe in an attempt to understand the origins of life on this planet and how this impacted on the human condition and situation. It aimed at producing a vision of the world where there was a hierarchy between all life forms the elements and the cosmic bodies.

The term was further defined when the Theosophical Society was formed in New York in 1875. This was later defined as a system of beliefs and teachings that incorporated various ideas and teachings taken from the Western Esoteric Tradition and fused with aspects of Indian religious ideas found in Buddhism and Hinduism including Brahmanism and the concepts of reincarnation and karma. Other terms relating to astral communication and channelling were also included such as the Ascended Masters and the evolutionary theories of Root Races.

Theosophical Society teaching became more complex as it allowed most members to hold their own views on spiritual philosophy. Although there were smaller group within the Society who were more focused on religious and spiritual development investigating the nature of the soul and the mystical insight into the nature of the Divine and latent potential in the human race. The TS attempted to bridge the gulf between religion, science and philosophy that had arisen during the 19th century. Concepts in science were defined in both occult and metaphysical terms.

From its foundation in 1875 in New York it has become the most widely influential organisation for the public promotion of esoteric and occult teachings in modern times. Blavatsky's vision drew on many aspects of various spiritual and religious teachings. These included Western occult traditions (as listed above), American Spiritualism, oriental religions especially Buddhism and Hinduism which were placed into an evolutionary framework derived from contemporary scientific evolution and traditional Indian concepts of cosmic cycles.

In *The Secret Doctrine* (first published in 1888) HPB describes the evolution of the cosmos and humanity as a dynamic process of emanation and return through seven stages from the descent from the Absolute (three stages) into increasing materialisation, a middle stage of crystallisation, and then three more stages of ascent into spiritualisation and re-absorption back into the Absolute.

In Helena Blavatsky's Proem in *The Secret Doctrine* she offered three principles on the nature of the occult as a metaphysical phenomena.

The first is that there is ONE ABSOLUTE REALITY. She describes this herself as; 'An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible since it transcends the power of human conception ... It is beyond the range and reach of thought – unthinkable and unspeakable.'

The second is THE ETERNITY OF THE UNIVERSE. She believed that there are an infinite number of Universes that are manifesting and disappearing. These Universes are similar in that there is a cosmic out-breathing and in-breathing, a going out and a return, a waking and sleeping, day and night, birth and death, manifestation and withdrawal.

The third principle is that there is A FUNDAMENTAL IDENTITY OF ALL SOULS WITH THE UNIVERSAL OVERSOUL.

Helena Blavatsky envisioned the human race proceeding in a similar way through seven stages of evolution called root races. We are currently in the fifth root race on the path towards the development of spiritual enlightenment which will be finally realised by the final two root races.

It is possible that some individuals have achieved these highly evolved states through the processes of karma and reincarnation. These transcendental souls are called 'mahatmas' or masters and include great religious leaders, occultists, and mystics from history remaining present as immortal souls who guide and protect humanity as it evolves.

Essentially HPB tried to move society away from materialism and dogma towards the 'truth' as she saw it. This meant investigating, scientifically, the laws of the Universe, including the spiritual realms; realising the potential of human beings to achieve their highest expression; make known both Western and Eastern spiritual ideas; and establish an international group of people who shared these ideas and aims.

Theosophy influenced many artists and art movements of the early 1900's. In art theosophical theory and practice translates into a situation where the individual artist is free to find within their own life experience and soul a particular and unique form of expression. How these fundamental visions and concepts begin to find expression move from Theosophical concepts caught the imagination of many intellectuals, artists, scientists and those who were looking for a new way in their lives. Groups were formed all over Europe. Many of the avant-garde artists of the 20th century joined such groups. The two major art movements of this period moved in different directions – Symbolism and Abstraction.

Artists from each of these areas include the abstraction of life energy in the middle period of Kandinsky to very controlled studies of the nature of the Universe by Mondrian. Other abstract artists include Van Doesburg, Klee, Malevich and Hilda af Klint.

In the work of the Symbolists we see mystical, magical and fantastical works of the esoteric vision where heaven and perfection can meet the dark abyss. The most important esoteric artist of this period was Jean Delville who was the General Secretary of the Belgian Theosophical Society around 1900.

On the front cover is *The Theosophical Path* by Reginald Machen (1917) and was illustrated and described in *Esoterica* - May edition, pages 14/15. The painting now hangs in the Theosophical Society, Point Loma, USA.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

International Headquarters: Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

President: Dr Radha Burnier Vice-President: Linda Oliveira

The Theosophical Society was formed in New York, 17th November 1875, and incorporated at Chennai, 3 April 1905. Its three declared Objects are:

- * to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
- * to encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
- * to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

The annual subscription in the English Section of the Society is £40 (£20 concessions). **Financial hardship shall not be a barrier to membership.**



THE WESTERN ESOTERIC TRADITIONS

Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke
(EXESES, University of Exeter)

ANCIENT HELLENISTIC SOURCES OF WESTERN ESOTERICISM

Western esotericism is both a story of geopolitics and the recurrent tide of cultural influence passing between East and West. The ancient crucible of this contact between the West and Orient was the contest between Greece and Persia for world-power. By 300 B.C. East-West transfers were reaching their climax in the world-empire of Alexander the Great which stretched across Egypt and Western Asia to provinces in India. Alexandrian or Hellenistic civilization represented the first truly global culture extending throughout the known Western world. Today's globalized Western culture offers a tempting parallel with Alexander's magnificent world-city akin to London or New York. The Greek mind became adept at 'philosophizing' the myriad beliefs and exotic cults that migrated westwards with visitors, papyri, and immigrants from Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and Persia. The battle-gods of Iranian dualism, the labyrinthine hierarchies of demons and spirits current among the Gnostics, the ancient Pharaonic gods and funerary rituals of the Egyptian pyramids were absorbed by the Graeco-Roman world in an astonishing proliferation of new religions.

The Western esoteric traditions have their basis in certain distinct patterns of Thinking about the deity, cosmos, and man which stretch back into classical antiquity. These patterns concern correspondences between a higher divine reality, the universe, the earthly realm, and human beings; the idea of a living, ensouled, or animated universe; notions of spiritual intermediaries in the form of hierarchies, planes, and angels acting as a ladder of descent and ascent between the higher and lower worlds; and the idea of the human soul's transmutation through reawakening and returning to these higher worlds. These patterns of thought are found in such ancient teachings as Alexandrian Hermetism, Neoplatonism, theurgy, and to a limited extent in Gnosticism, which all originated in the eastern Mediterranean area during the first few centuries A.D.

We may indeed understand the West as an extensive Greco-Roman philosophical heritage, with which the Jewish and Christian religions, and Islam as an external factor, have interacted to produce the 'Western esoteric traditions.' With their origins in Gnosticism, Alexandrian Hermetism, and pagan Neoplatonism, these traditions have in turn left vital traces in the three Abrahamic religions. The traditional Hermetic sciences of alchemy, astrology, and magic had their rationale in this spiritual worldview and offered a continuity of practice and speculation from the late ancient world through Byzantine and Islamic culture into the medieval Latin West. However, it was in the European Renaissance that these originally Hellenistic traditions and sciences first came to be combined with new additions from Jewish Kabbalah (following the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492) to create a reformulated "perennial philosophy" in which Renaissance scholars discerned multiple concordances.

ALEXANDRIAN HERMETISM

Foremost among the sources of Western esotericism are the Hermetica, a diverse collection of works on theosophy, astrology, and magic which have their origin in Alexandria. The texts contain revelations attributed to various deities, but chiefly to Hermes Trismegistus, or Thrice-

Great, an ancient sage identified with Thoth, the Egyptian god of wisdom and magic. This identification with Thoth is a vital key to understanding the exalted reputation of Hermes Trismegistus in both the ancient world and in Renaissance Europe. This syncretic god was to become a powerful influence on the whole development of esoteric thought into the Renaissance era.

Greek magical papyri present the new composite Hermes as a cosmic power, creator of the universe, presiding over night and day, life and death, fate and justice. In time the Hellenistic Hermes became identified among the Stoics with the logos and demiurge (pantocrator, cosmocrator). To him is revealed 'all that is hidden under the heavenly vault, and beneath the earth.' Magical spells addressed to Hermes seek arcane knowledge or oracles, or they invite the god himself to appear in a dream and to bestow the blessings of a favoured life (food, success, happiness). At the same time, he is one who can be known intimately in oneself. 'I know you, Hermes, and you know me. I am you and you are me.' This self-identification with Hermes may have derived from an euhemerist tendency to see Thoth as a divinized human being. Once human and mortal in the long-distant past, Hermes-Thoth became, through his own efforts of spiritual advancement, an intermediary hovering between the divine and human worlds, rather like a Bodhisattva who has attained immortality but remains in the human world as a channel for the divine.

The Hermetica include both the technical Hermetica on magic and the philosophical collections. The philosophical collection known as the Corpus Hermeticum blends theology, cosmology, soteriology, and eschatology. The theme of the divine intellect as a "mirror," on which "speculating" is a continuous exchange with higher spiritual entities, is a major theme of Hermetism. Because God created the universe, it is saturated with his spiritual symbols. Once humans learn to read these symbols, they can know God directly. In this way, Hermetism negates any absolute ontological dualism between God and his Creation.

THE EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE

Geopolitical factors in the Mediterranean world and Near East played a vital part in a new process of cultural transfer and the re-positioning of ancient philosophy in the modern world. As the Ottoman Turks succeeded the medieval Arab caliphates as the dominant power in the Middle East from the 11th century onwards, they increasingly supplanted the Byzantine or Eastern Roman empire which had been the major political and cultural force in south-eastern Europe and Anatolia ever since the fall of Rome. As the territory of Byzantium began to dwindle, culminating in the final fall of Constantinople in 1453, the rich repository of Classical, Greek and Arab learning, formerly the powerhouse of its own cultural sphere, shifted westwards through the movement of refugee intellectuals, churchmen, libraries, manuscripts and other treasures.

This increased contact with the Greek world of the declining Byzantine Empire in the fifteenth century caused the Latin West to undergo a significant philosophical shift which in turn produced a revised outlook on nature and the heavens and, ultimately, a new vision of man, science and medicine. This shift in philosophy chiefly involved a growing regard for Plato over Aristotle, whose works had formed the mainstay of medieval thought and science following their introduction to the Latin West through the Arab world in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. As the lover of spiritual mysteries, Plato complemented his erstwhile student Aristotle, the philosopher of nature, who in turn had been the tutor of Alexander the Great.

FLORENCE AS A SWITCHBOARD FOR EAST AND WEST

The centre of this revival of Platonism was the flourishing Renaissance city of Florence. Coluccio Salutati, chancellor of the republic from 1375 until his death in 1406, recognized the importance of original Greek sources for a deeper understanding of Roman authors. In 1396, he persuaded the Florentine government to appoint Manuel Chrysoloras, the leading Byzantine classical scholar, to teach at the local university. Thanks to Salutati's initiative, there were sufficient numbers of new Italian Hellenists to receive and articulate the next wave of Greek thought and letters that arrived in Florence from the Byzantine world. In 1438–39, the Council of Ferrara^{3/4} moved in mid-session to Florence at the behest of its ruler, Cosimo d' Medici^{3/4} was held to discuss the reunion of the Eastern Church with the Roman Church, sundered since the Great Schism of 1095. Leading figures in the Byzantine delegation were Georgios Gemistos Plethon (c. 1355–1452) and John Bessarion of Trebizond (1395–1472), the young patriarch of Nicaea. The elderly Plethon espoused a pagan Platonic philosophy that understood the ancient Greek gods as allegories of divine powers. The ensuing wave of philosophical disputes, together with their translation and discussion among the humanists of Florence, prepared the ground for a major efflorescence of Hermetism and Platonism in the second half of the century.

Many Florentine thinkers had been attracted by Plethon's claims that all Greek philosophies could be harmonized and that a profound knowledge of Plato could become the basis of religious unity, the hot subject under debate at the Council of Florence. But others were more receptive to ideas of a new spirituality. These seekers found in Platonism and the Hermetica an inspiration which promised far more than ecclesiastical concord. Prominent among these idealists was the young Florentine humanist called Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) who, under Cosimo's auspices, became the chief exponent of this revived Platonism and the high priest of the Hermetic secrets within a new Platonic academy.

This rediscovery and revival of Hermetism and Neo-Platonism was soon joined by the Kabbalah, which would subsequently become a major current among the Western esoteric traditions from the Renaissance up until the present day. This Jewish mystical tradition was based on the ten sephiroth and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The doctrine of the sephiroth was first laid down in the Book of Creation (Sefer Yetzirah), dating back to the third century A.D., when Greek Jews were also receptive to the Neoplatonic currents of late antiquity. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a particular esoteric teaching emerged among Jews in Provence and northern Spain with the Book of Illumination (Sefer Bahir), composed by Isaac the Blind (fl. 1190–1210). This Kabbalah interpreted the sephiroth as powers of God arranged in a specific structure. The Bahir was also the first text to describe the sephiroth as a "tree of emanation," which from the fourteenth century onward was depicted in a detailed diagram widely familiar today as the Tree of Life. The Bahir also aided the development of speculative Kabbalah based on the sephiroth as cosmic principles arranged in a primal group of three major emanations above a lower group of seven. The doctrine was developed further in the Book of Splendor (Sefer Zohar), written in Spain during the thirteenth century, which represents the tradition adopted by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), Marsilio Ficino's younger contemporary in Florence.

Together Ficino and Pico laid the basis of a *prisca theologia*, an 'ancient theology' deriving from Hermes Trismegistus, supposedly contemporary with Moses, to confirm Christianity. These Hermetic ideas, involving an animated universe, correspondences between the macrocosm and microcosm, spiritual hierarchies and ascents, and powers of operative intervention (magic)

in nature define the Western esoteric tradition, which is closely related to but also distinct from the mystical tradition of absorption in the deity. Hermetic notions deeply influenced the art and literature of the Renaissance (Botticelli, Michelangelo, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton) in ways that are only now beginning to receive attention.

ESOTERICISM IN THE CONFESSIONAL AGE AND RISE OF SCIENCE

The Renaissance revival unleashed a widespread dissemination of Hermetic and Neoplatonic ideas in Italy, France, Germany and England through the sixteenth century and early seventeenth centuries (the first golden age of the Western esoteric traditions). Scholar-magicians and physicians such as Ludovico Lazarelli (1447-1500), Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516), Johannes Faust (1466-1540), Henry Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535), Paracelsus (1493-1541), John Dee (1527-1608) and Robert Fludd (1574-1637), to name but a few, pursued studies in the varied fields of alchemy, astrology, magic and medicine, while its specifically Protestant currents were Rosicrucianism (fl. 1610-1620) and the theosophy of Jacob Boehme (1575-1624). As the seventeenth-century scientific revolution signalled the rise of new empirical and rationalist modes of enquiry, the essentially theological philosophies of nature implicit in the esoteric tradition were marginalised. However, the mathematical, mechanistic and rationalist worldview was already overreaching itself by the mid-eighteenth century. The ideas of the Enlightenment were qualified by the Protestant movement of Pietism and though the quickening interest in things medieval, chivalric, mystical and marvellous that characterises the dawn of Romanticism. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), William Blake (1757-1827), theosophical sects, eighteenth-century Rosicrucianism, alchemy, secret societies and Freemasonry represent a renewed flowering of the esoteric tradition in the period 1750-1820.

By the mid-nineteenth century, positivism, materialism and secularization accompany the industrialization of Europe and America. Again another reaction is perceptible in the rise of spiritualism, psychical research and movements seeking to reconcile the new and often disturbing findings of science (Darwinism, evolution, psychology), but also addressing the challenges of secularism and economic interpretations of society with mythology and ancient and exotic religions. Here lies the appeal of new syncretic projects such as spiritualism, psychical research, Christian Science, the Romantic revival of magic through fringe Freemasonry, and the Theosophical Society of Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891).

THEOSOPHY AND MODERN ESOTERICISM

Widespread dissatisfaction with the hegemony of science in Western culture and its preoccupation with the concrete, the factual, and the substantive interacted with a lack of confidence in traditional Christianity, itself undermined by the very progress of scientific explanation. Theosophy, in the strict meaning of the movement founded by H. P. Blavatsky, addressed these concerns in a progressive way. Adapting contemporary scientific ideas to posit the idea of spiritual evolution through countless worlds and time-eras, Theosophy supplied dignity and purpose to man's earthly life within a cosmic context. While spiritualism (a major movement from the mid-1850s) posited survival after death, Theosophy located human destiny in an emanationist cosmology and anthropology that have their roots in both Neoplatonism and Oriental religions. The Renaissance had similarly transcended the limitations of scholasticism by reviving ancient Hellenistic sources, which had originally combined Greek and Oriental (West Asian) traditions. Theosophy was a major factor in the revival of the indigenous Western esoteric

tradition. However, as modern Western culture seemed increasingly in thrall to rationalism and science, Theosophy repeated the Hellenistic embrace of exotic religions of the East, only now through colonial contact these included the Oriental (South and East Asian) religions of Buddhism and Hinduism. By popularizing ideas of reincarnation and karma, secret Masters, and Tibet as the land of ageless wisdom, Blavatsky attracted many spiritual seekers in Europe, America, and India to her new movement, which sought to combine philosophy, science and religion.

Theosophy also has doctrinal significance for the revival and reception of the esoteric tradition in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Blavatsky's monumental works *Isis Unveiled* (1877) and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) were important fronts in the scientific-modern revaluation of the tradition for educated audiences in the late nineteenth century. Her movement generated a sufficiently large following in America and Europe to support busy magazine and book publishing on esoteric subjects. Her Theosophy combined a revival and restoration of the Western esoteric tradition, as represented by Hermeticism, Kabbalah, Freemasonry and numerous borrowings from ancient Egyptian and Graeco-Roman mythology and religion, with a subsequent accretion of Eastern doctrines taken from Buddhism, Hinduism and Oriental mythology. Blavatsky, her works and the TS acted as a prism, through which the esoteric heritage of antiquity and post-Renaissance Europe was refracted to new and wider audiences. When she began her work, this heritage amounted to little more than the neo-Romantic and Masonic revival of magic in France and England). By 1900, as a direct result of the TS, the esoteric tradition had entered public consciousness and European culture on a scale not seen since the sixteenth century.

OBITUARY

JOAN ALICE WEST 3.12.1929 – 15.04.2012

Joan was born into an active Salvation Army family, and spent her youth travelling to meetings, where she met her future husband, Sam. She was a talented artist, and both were very musical. They had two children, Jean and Bobby, also musical, university educated and with good careers till mental health problems afflicted them both. This was a source of sadness to Joan and Sam, but they met all problems with great courage.

Joan was a true Sagittarian – a traveller mentally and physically, sociable, generous, and outspoken with a great sense of humour. They both joined the "Social Democrats", were members of the Unitarian Church and Joan was also a member of the Green Party. New Age spirituality interested them, but once they found Theosophy, they felt at home. Sam became a noted speaker for the Theosophical society.

They held home meetings, and became the 'heart and soul' of Bolton Lodge. They all loved going to Summer school, and Joan continued even after Sam, and then Bobby passed away. Someone said of Joan, "A person for whom the word LIFE was invented". She was well loved and will be missed by all who knew her.

Chris Lowe

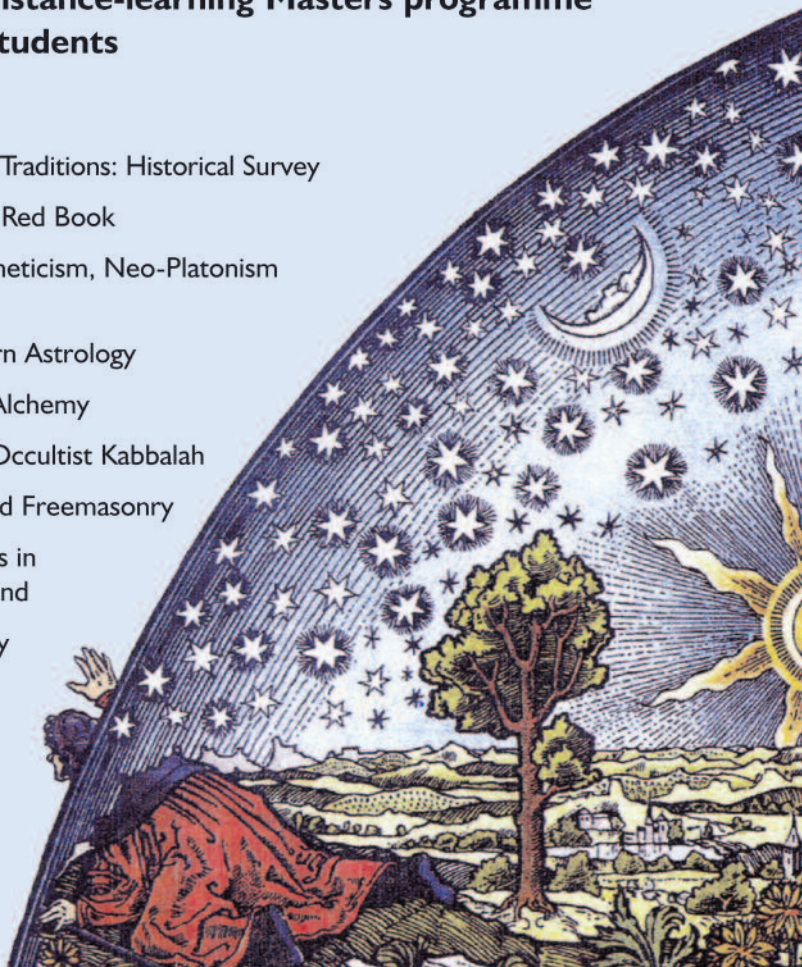
MA in Western Esotericism

at the University of Exeter, UK

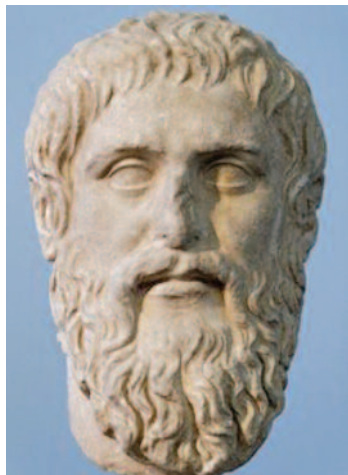
**A part-time, distance-learning Masters programme
for graduate students**

Modules include:

- Western Esoteric Traditions: Historical Survey
- C G Jung and the Red Book
- Alexandrian Hermeticism, Neo-Platonism and Astrology
- History of Western Astrology
- Hermetic Art of Alchemy
- Renaissance and Occultist Kabbalah
- Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry
- Esoteric Traditions in Renaissance England
- The Esoteric Body
- Theosophy



NEOPLATONISM



Plato - c.423BC – 348BC

Neoplatonism is a modern term for a mystical system of thought that developed around the 3rd Century AD and the Early Renaissance (15th Century). It derived from the works and philosophy of Plato.

The founder was **Ammonius Saccas** who used the term 'theosophia' to describe his teaching. His most important pupil was **Plotinus** (c. 204-270) and it is in his *Enneads* that we can read the clearest account of the belief system. Plotinus saw this philosophy as a form of mystical belief containing both theoretical and practical parts. The first part dealt with the origin of the human soul and showed how it had departed from its perfect and original state. The second part showed the way the soul may return to the Eternal and Supreme State. Other important Neoplatonic philosophers of the time include

Porphyry (233-309), **Iamblichus** (245-325) and, later, **Proclus** (412-485).

Plotinus claimed he was restoring Plato's own doctrine. He emphasised the aesthetic, cosmological and psychological aspects of Plato's thought and omitted the political and ethical. Plotinus was Greek and studied in Alexandria, Egypt and later taught for twenty five years in Rome.

In his philosophical system there are three principles: the One, the Intellect, and the Soul. The concept of the One is that there is a supreme, totally transcendent reality, containing no division, multiplicity or distinction; beyond all categories of being and non-being. It cannot be any existing thing or the sum of all things. Plotinus identified the 'One' with the concept of 'Good' and the principle of 'Beauty'.

The One is not just an intellectual conception but something that can be experienced, an experience where one goes beyond all multiplicity. Plotinus writes, "We ought not even to say that he will see, but he will *be* that which he sees, if indeed it is possible any longer to distinguish between seer and seen, and not boldly to affirm that the two are one."

For Plotinus reality is a hierarchy of levels of being, an eternal descent from the transcendent 'One' down through a succession of stages to the material world of the senses and physical manifestation.

For the human soul wishing to find Absolute Truth they must return and ascend these levels back to the 'One'.

The aim of the Soul is to progressively purify itself through the experience of mystical experiences to complete union with the 'One'. In some ways this echoes many esoteric systems in this return to the Divine, Universal or Higher Self or Higher Soul.

This return is not automatic and cannot be accomplished by means of magic, techniques, or secret knowledge (gnosis). It is achieved by awakening to the illusion of the physical world and its material needs and turning inwards towards the inner self where the individual

prepares themselves and their life both intellectually and morally.

Later Neoplatonists also took from Plotinus several major ideas: the hierarchical nature of reality; the created world animated by a World Soul; the importance of correspondences and sympathies; the Soul's ability to ascend the levels of reality back to the Perfect One.


In the fifteenth century in Italy the Catholic Church dominated the spiritual and intellectual life of many city states and beyond. In Florence, early in the Italian Quattrocento, there was a movement by scholars and artists to re-discover original classical sources from Greece, Egypt and other parts of the Middle East. Their inspiration was the classical, and often beautiful, antique sculptures and architecture they saw in Italy (and sometimes Greece and Egypt).

Cosimo de Medici became influenced by the lectures of Plethon and became very interested in philosophy and the arts. Cosimo had many ancient manuscripts in his collection but in 1437 he acquired the collection of manuscripts from the humanist scholar Niccolo Niccoli. He began to expand his collection of classical manuscripts by employing people, such as his good friend Bracciolini, to search for various sacred and philosophical works in Italy, Greece and other areas in the Middle East and around the Mediterranean. In 1444 he opened the doors to Europe's first public library at San Marco.

In 1463 Cosimo established the Platonic Academy at the Villa Careggi. The following year Cosimo died at the Villa. A few months before his death he had written "Yesterday I came to my villa at Careggi not to cultivate the fields, but my soul."

The Academy met regularly to discuss Platonic philosophy. **Marsilio Ficino** led the Academy and also used a farm in the grounds of the Villa as a base to translate many valuable and precious manuscripts into Latin including by Plato's whole work, Plotinus's *Enneads*, and the *Corpus Hermeticum*.

The Academy attracted important thinkers, poets and artists such as Angelo **Poliziano**, Pico della **Mirandola**, and Cristoforo **Landino** and continued until the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492. In recent analyses (2007) of the bodies of Poliziano and Mirandola who both died in 1494 it has been found that both bodies contained arsenic – indicating that they may have been murdered by Piero de Medici. It may show that the pursuit of 'truth,' in terms of the Platonic and humanist viewpoints, at the Academy was not the without its critics!



* HOURNE FARM *

Set in the beautiful and picturesque Sussex countryside, Hourne Farm offers a programme of weekend workshops, courses, open weekends and summer schools. These aim to promote a deeper understanding of life and consciousness and a greater awareness of our true spiritual potential.

For full details send a stamped addressed envelope to **Vin Rendel,**
Hourne Farm, Steel Cross, Crowborough, Sussex TN6 2SQ. Tel: 01892 661093
N. B. - reductions are available by arrangement for unwaged or O. A. P.'s

BIRTH OF VENUS

SANDRO BOTTICELLI (1445-1510)

For the past few hundred years art historians have debated the paintings of Botticelli and have tried to discover the secrets behind his beautiful and exquisite works of art. Some historians, such as Panofsky and Berenson, have helped provide vital keys to what lies behind these iconic masterpieces. They are among the some of the most important works of visual art produced in the history of humankind.

The *Birth of Venus* (c. 1486), along with Botticelli's other major work of this period, *Primavera*, reflects the influence of the ideas developing in the Platonic Academy (sometimes called the Florentine Academy) which met at the Villa Careggi, just outside Florence, between 1464 and 1492. The leader of the school was Marsilio Ficino. Many of the most important philosophers, artists, poets and intellectuals living in Florence attended the Academy (see section on Neoplatonism).

Many of Plato's important works had been translated from the Greek into Latin by Ficino. He also translated *Corpus Hermeticum* (published in 1471) and the works of Plotinus. The Platonic Academy studied and followed the spiritual teaching of Plato and earlier Neoplatonists, as well as the Hermetic text, *Corpus Hermeticum* and Kabbalist ideas.

Very important to Ficino was the text of Plato's *Symposium*. He translated this into Italian and also wrote a commentary which he called *De Amore (On Love)*. Love was considered by Plato to be the ultimate motivating force of the Cosmos. Ficino thought that Plato's concept of 'Love' could lead to a revival of the true philosophy and unite both pagan and Christian visions of spiritual truth.

For Platonists there were two types of 'Venus'. One was an earthly, sensual Goddess who aroused sexual desire and a perfect, beautiful divine being who inspired intellectual and spiritual love. In Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* we see the second – sometimes called the Venus Pudica.

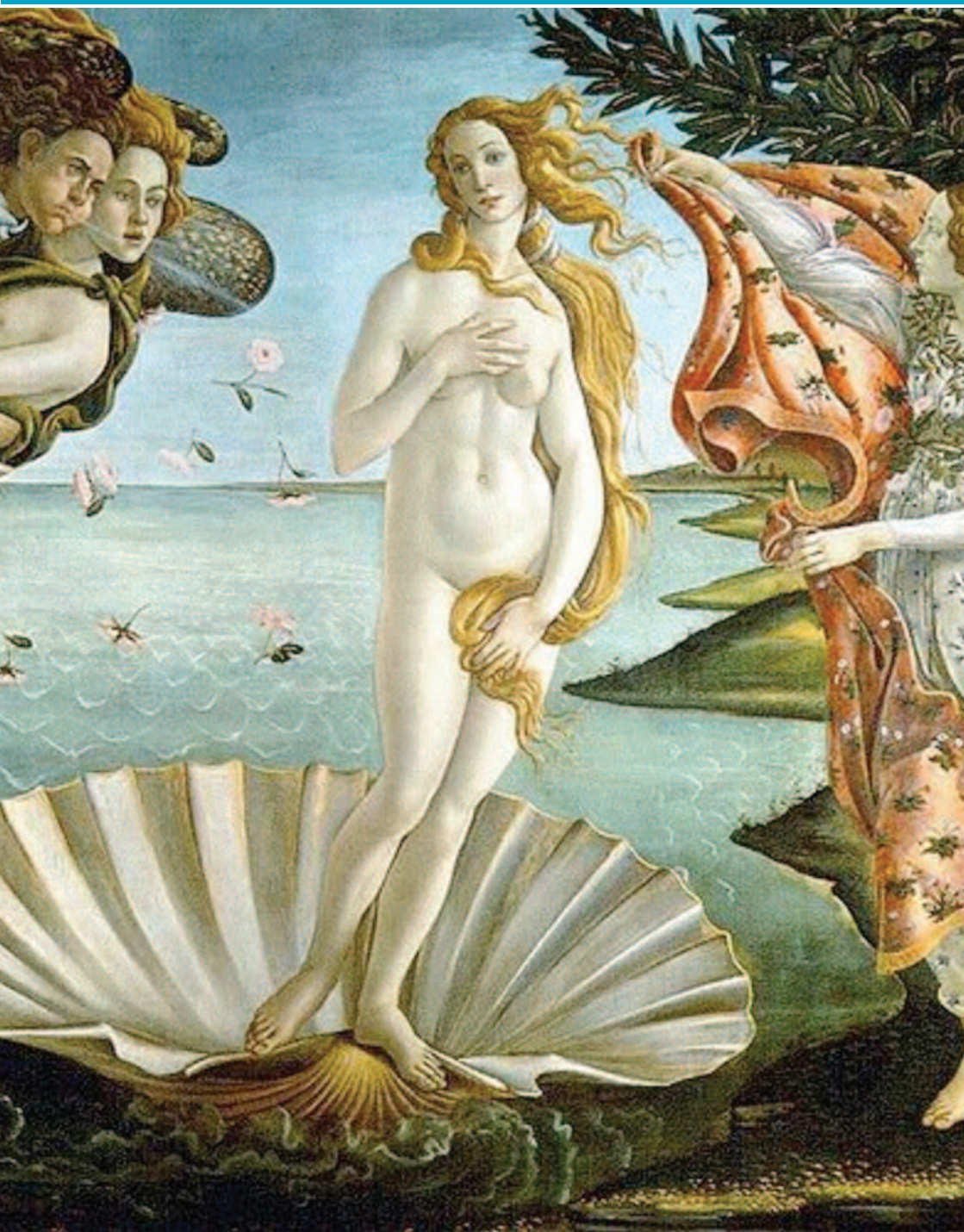
In Greek mythology the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite (also the Roman Goddess, Venus), was born fully formed as the Venus 'Pudica' from the foam of the sea near the island of Cythera and came ashore in a bay near Paphos in south-western Cyprus. Botticelli captures the moment she is approaching the bay being blow by the Zephyrs (loving winds). She is being covered by one of the seasons as she is portrayed naked as pure and perfect love. This naked, pure love was considered to be too sacred to be seen by ordinary mortals.

The source of inspiration for the work has been much discussed. It may have come from a poem by Poliziano (a member of the Platonic Academy). In turn this poem may have been inspired either by an early sculpture, a painting by Apelles of Kos or a fresco found in Pompeii where in each Venus is being born and carried along by through the sea on a large shell.

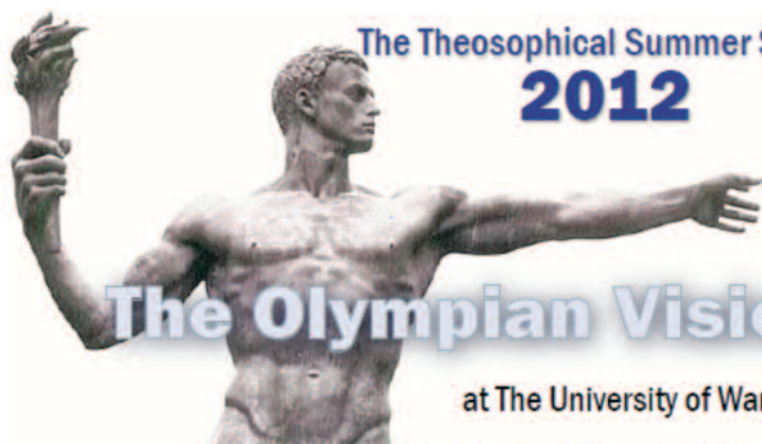
Although this painting is inspired by the idealistic and essentially spiritual philosophy of Plato and Plotinus originally it may have also centred on the Cult of Aphrodite which had its centre at Paphos in Cyprus. This was more of a sacred, sexual and ecstatic secret group than the refined and erudite vision and concept of the Florentine Neoplatonists.

Botticelli's delicate and lyrical use of line and pattern combined with his sensitive use of transparent and translucent colours are underlined with deeper levels of meaning. The sensitive viewer may be able to 'catch' the enigmatic and hidden mystery and beauty contained in his mythological and Platonic works.

BS



The Foundation for Theosophical Studies Presents...



The Theosophical Summer School **2012**

The Olympian Vision

at The University of Warwick

Saturday 4th August - Saturday 11th August 2012



2012 promises to be one of our best Summer Schools yet with...

- A superb new venue
- Inspiring lectures
- Great Entertainment

Chief Guest Speaker: Erica Georgiardinis, of the Greek Section of the TS.

The Blavatsky Lecture: **The Olympian Ideal of Universal Brotherhood.**

The public Lecture: **The Symbolism of the Olympic Games.**



Early Bird application (Before 31st May)

Single Standard room: £410

Single Ensuite room: £540

After 31st May

Single Standard room: £440

Single ensuite room: £570

To provisionally book your place or for more info contact Colin Price 07960 450 316

The programme and application form will be available at the end of January 2012

Guest Speaker; **Erica Georgiardinis**, President of Hypatia Lodge of the Theosophical Society in Greece. She will be giving the Blavatsky Lecture:

The Olympian Ideal of Universal Brotherhood

Erica will also be giving the Public Lecture: The Symbolism of the Olympic Games:
The Friends Meeting House, Hill Street, Coventry, CU1 4AN, 8th August at 7.30pm

PROGRAMME

Saturday 4 August

2.30 pm Arrival

4.15-5.15 Gentle Yoga with Teresa Keast

7.30 pm Welcome by the Chairman – Followed by preview of Study Groups

Sunday 5 August

7.00 am Yoga – daily to Friday

9.45 am **Lecture: To Be The Best: A Theosophical Look at the London Olympics**
Eric McGough - President of the English Theosophical Society

11.15 am - 12.30 pm - Study Groups A: Sunday to Tuesday

1. H. P. Blavatsky - Olympian Hero - Susan Bayliss
2. The History of Man: Root Races - Ted Capstick
3. The Olympian Gods & the Spiritual Path - Gary Kidgell
4. The Secret Doctrine - Tony Maddock

BLAVATSKY LECTURE (4.15 pm)

The Olympian Ideal of Universal Brotherhood - Erica Georgiades

Monday 6 August

9.45 am - **Living from the Heart** - Ruby Tovet

4.15 pm - **Signposts to Be Who You Are** - Marian Barton

Tuesday 7 August

9.45 am **Right Relations** - Teresa Keast

2.00 pm Coach Outing to Warwick Castle

Wednesday 8 August

9.45 am **Striving for Perfection** - Colin Price

11.15 am - 12.30 pm Study Groups B: Wednesday to Friday

1. A Fresh look at the Planes and the Principles - David Harvey
 2. Angels and Devas - Janet Hoults
 3. Way of Spiritual Illumination - Barry Seabourne
 4. A Theosophical Triathlon - Cynthia and Atma Trasi
- 4.15 pm **In the Garden of the Muse** - Wayne Gatfield

7.30 pm Public Lecture at Friends Meeting House, Coventry

The Symbolism of the Olympic Games - Erica Georgiades

Thursday 9 August

9.45 am **Theotokos: Our Planet, the Feminine & Humanity** - Jennifer MacCormack

4.15 pm **Theosophy: the Utopian Ideal** - Colyn Boyce

Friday 10 August

9.45 am **Portals, Initiation & Spiritual Evolution and the Olympic Gods** - Ron Wallwork

4.15 pm **The Origin & Development of Western Mysticism** - Jenny Baker

Saturday 11 August

9.30 am **The Olympian Vision** - Colin Price

*

Cost: Early Bird application Before 31st May Single standard room: £410 Single ensuite room: £540
After 31st May Single Standard room: £440 Single ensuite room: £570

HERMETICISM



The term **Hermetic** is from Latin *hermeticus*, derived from the name of the Greek god, **Hermes** (and later the Roman God **Mercury**). **Hermeticism** is the esoteric and occult tradition associated with the writings ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus (Trismegistus = thrice-greatest). These were associated with the Egyptian god Thoth and the writings and practices of Greek Alchemy, Neoplatonism, Kabbalism and some aspects of Gnosticism.

Original Hermetic thought is contained within the 17 treatises known as the **Corpus Hermeticum** first translated into Latin by **Marsilio Ficino** in 1471. The *Hermetica* or *Hermeticum* contains the *Poimandres*, *Ascepius* and fragments of other works, mainly astrological, alchemical, and magical.

The major Hermetic works are philosophical and revelatory and are essentially Platonic with various other influences including Jewish, Christian and Gnostic. A number of the papers are in dialogue form where Hermes, who in Greek mythology is the *Revealer of Secret Knowledge*, guides his disciple to an illumination about the true nature of the cosmos and to achieve personal enlightenment.

The Hermetic way is essentially a secret path to inner enlightenment and gives us the term 'hermetic seal'. This is where to achieve a chemical transformation nothing can be let in or out while the reaction is taking place. Thus there is a magical and alchemical transformation for the follower to achieve the heights of Hermetic wisdom and spiritual transformation.

The Hermetist views the ultimate spiritual journey as a personal experience of what might be called the Ultimate Godhead. This Deity is referred to as 'God', 'The All', or 'The One'. The term the Absolute is also considered to be the focus of Hermeticism and separates this philosophy from the major monotheistic religions.

In Hermeticism there is an importance given to the relationship between the macrocosm and the microcosm expressed in the axiom 'As above, so below' and is taken from the *Emerald Tablet* where it is written "That which is below corresponds to that which is above, and that which is above, corresponds to that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of the One Thing".

The concept of correspondences and synchronicity are central to the esoteric approach. According to Robert Fludd in his *Utriusque Cosmic Historia* (see also section and image: ROSICRUCIANISM and ROBERT FLUDD) "man is a whole world in of its own and is called a microcosm for it displays a miniature pattern of all the parts of the Universe. Thus the head is related to the Empyrean (the Highest Heaven), the chest to the Ethereal Heaven and the belly to the Elementary Substance."

Pierre Riffard says that "The doctrine of analogy and correspondence present in all esoteric schools of thinking upholds that the Whole is One and that the different levels sometimes described as 'realms' and 'worlds' are equivalent systems whose parts are in strict correspondence. So much so that a part in a realm symbolically reflects and interacts with the corresponding part in another realm."

Esotericists believe that as they advance towards enlightenment the incidence of recognising correspondences increase. This is because as individuals become more in tune with the Universe there is a convergence of occurrences and relationships between nature,

human activity, symbolism and what may have been before chance happenings. In summary, as individuals move higher on the ladder towards their higher destiny elements in life converge.

In the Hermetic system chemical elements, the four Natural elements – earth, water, air and fire, animals, natural occurrences hold important and vital connections with life. For example, gold is aligned to the energy and brilliance of the Sun. The purity of gold becomes a symbol of the search for purity in the disciple and their search for perfection. The quality of gold not to deteriorate gave it a relationship with immortality. The added natural ‘miracle’ that this element was created in the huge heat of atomic reactions at the beginning of time when the stars and planets were first created was not known in earlier periods.

In Hermetic thought the movements of the planets also has meaning beyond the laws of physics and actually hold metaphorical value as symbols in the mind of The All or God. This is then translated through astrology as a tool for understanding how the cosmos influences the planet and human life.

The influence of Hermeticism is to be found in many aspects of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The major input was in the late fifteenth century when there was an amalgamation of Hermeticism, Alchemy and Gnosticism with aspects of Christianity and the Kabbalah.

After Ficino one of the most important philosophers at this time was Pico della Mirandola. His ideas bridged humanism, religion, Platonic philosophy, Kabbalah, magical practice and many other areas. Notably he wrote against astrology as to him it was not compatible with the concept of free will.

Mirandola’s major work is the *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (published in 1486). This book led to the creation of the period known as the Hermetic Reformation.

According to Pico della Mirandola there are two types of magic. The first is GOETIA – black magic – with its reliance on evil spirits and ‘demons’. The second is THEURGY – divine magic – with its focus on divine spirits and ‘angels’.

Theurgy translates as ‘The Science or Art of Divine Works’ and is the practical aspect of the Hermetic Art of Alchemy. Alchemy can be seen as the ‘key’ to theurgy as the ultimate goal was to become united with higher counterparts and leading to Divine Consciousness.

During the late 1800’s a number of groups used the term Hermeticism to establish their own magic and esoteric groups. Anna Kingsford started the Hermetic Society in 1888 in the year she unfortunately died. The ideas she espoused influenced the Hermetic order of the Golden Dawn (see below).

Hermeticism has been one of the most important influences on various Western esoteric traditions including Alchemy, Rosicrucianism, esoteric Christianity, the magical and theurgical systems of practice and thought of Eliphas Levi and, later, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. It has also influenced groups such as the Theosophists and Freemasons.

Hermeticism is more of a philosophy than a religion. Its mixture of different strands and its emphasis on magical practice, ecstatic experience and secret knowledge align the philosophy to *Gnosis* (not Gnosticism), with its search for secret and experiential knowledge.

Hermeticism forms a major part of the basis of a philosophical system known variously as the ‘occult and magical’ tradition. As such its art is mainly associated with the nature of the cosmos and esoteric philosophers’ attempts to visualise the spiritual hierarchy of the Universe and man. This is achieved with detailed drawings, engravings and images of the hidden worlds and the esoteric systems utilising words and images that show the relationship between the levels of the sacred journey that illustrates the soul’s pathway towards illumination.

THE ABSOLUTE

Barry Seabourne



Creation of the Universe - Robert Fludd

In this and the previous issue of *Esoterica* we have presented an objective view of world regions and esoteric philosophical systems. This has been a synoptic and brief overview. As we have seen words attempt to symbolise unseen archetypes that are at the core and cause of the world we know.

People from different cultures and belief systems use a variety of word-symbols to describe the Absolute and the Ultimate. These can include word-symbols such as God, Deus, Yahweh, Allah, Om, Tao,

Brahman, Supreme Spirit and many others.

These may hold sacred and vital cultural meanings and nuances for many people. These words may link us to the history of our past at both a social and individual level. As such they have an important function to help us maintain focus on what we may call the highest conception and belief of who we are and what is the Absolute in our lives.

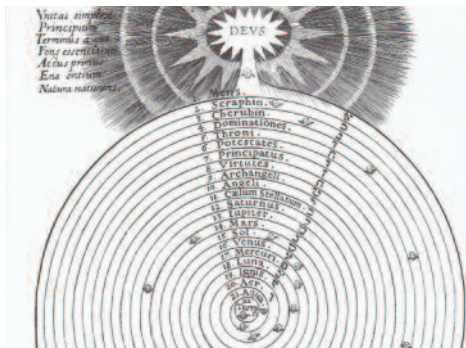
For others it can also divide and keep individuals rooted in ready-made terms and concepts that condition how we think, feel and believe. This could prevent true creative thinking, living and development. At this time it may be more enlightening to find terms that reflect the reality of transcendence and the Absolute but at the same time keep us centred in our essential humanity. These may include various human attributes and functions such as spirituality, intuition, rational thought, intelligence, thinking, emotion and feeling. These attributes need to be included to achieve any holistic and meaningful overview.

How do we find ways to express our life and its manifestation in this world that is acceptable in both Utopian and realistic systems of thought? How do we find terms that reflect major pathways for our existence, evolution and fulfilment? The areas such as science, philosophy, spirituality, psychology, politics and humanism are vital in the quest for individual and world development.

Word-symbols can be selected that do not hold such strong divisive and prejudicial cultural and historical meanings. The selection of word-symbols that can transcend cultural differences and yet still provide sacred, philosophic and objective insights is necessary.

The word-symbol LIGHT is especially powerful when it refers to both the energy of the Universe and the life force within and around us. TRUTH provides the intellectual and objective aim for many scientists, philosophers and others searching and trying to find absolute answers to complex problems. LOVE is the vital universal language of the heart in human affairs and relationships. It motivates human behaviour and development. It brings a quality to life that energises and gives aspiration and higher feeling to the human life.

The expression of 'physical manifestation' is more complicated as it can reflect the other three states. Word-symbols subtly reflect different human ultimate life goals. The state of PERFECTION may be suitable as a word-symbol but may denigrate the sense of flow and creativity that is essential in life. Fulfilment, bliss and ecstasy suggest that the ultimate aim of life is happiness for both the individual and society. The word LIFE may be the quintessential word-symbol that contains the other states as it combines the others while at the same time complementing the transcendental and neutral concept-word ABSOLUTE. In the final analysis each of us must decide whether we want to use an absolute term for what we believe to be the ultimate in life – and what that should be.



The magical and mystical name 'Rosicrucian' has inspired the creation of many esoteric and occult groups. Some have a basis in Christianity – usually defined as Esoteric Christianity. Others are magical and occult with secret rituals and offering transformational pathways. They have no particular allegiance to Christianity but essentially have an alchemical, hermetic and sometimes cabbalistic foundation.

Others, such as those based in Freemasonry, are initiatory and mix ritual, cabbalistic and esoteric practices and

philosophy. Twentieth century variants may combine all or some of the various aspects described above. For some of these groups they may be more concerned with commercial ventures rather than altruist and spiritual aims.

The Rosicrucian story emerges from the Protestant Reformation that started in 1517. It develops during the sixteenth century and then in the early 1600's the mythological figure of Christian Rosenkreuz appears with the publication of three books around 1614-1616. These three key works were *Fama Fraternitatis*, *Confessio Fraternitatis* and *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuze*. They have been attributed to Johann Valentin Andreae although the actual truth may be far more complicated.

Andreae was a mystic and Lutheran theologian who declared the whole idea of a Rosicrucian secret society led by occult adepts to be an elaborate hoax. His own book was called *Christianopolis*, published in 1619, was about his complex utopian dream that instead of searching for fictitious Rosicrucian's we should be aiming at the creation of a real Christian learned society concerned with the advancement of society as a whole.

Rosicrucianism centres on the work of a few esotericists including Michael Maier, Robert Fludd, Jacob Boehme and Thomas Vaughan. They followed on from the alchemical and esoteric work of Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa and John Dee. It develops during the 1600's and some aspects were absorbed into freemasonry when the guilds began to allow non-operative masons into their lodges. The Masonic lodges were formalised as a national group in 1717 in London as the United Grand Lodge of England.

The next development was towards the end of the 1800's with the establishment of esoteric fraternities in England, France and Germany. The actual name and some so called Rosicrucian rituals were adopted by group as diverse as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Peladan's Rosicrucian Salon in Paris, Dr Franz Hartmann's Rosicrucian Order in Germany and the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia which take its membership from Christian Master Masons.

Frances Yates historical researches in the 1970's see the Rosicrucian phenomena as an important phase in European cultural development between the Renaissance and the scientific revolution of the later 1600's. The Renaissance interest in Hermeticism and the Cabala also begins to involve Alchemy. Thus the Rosicrucian manifesto's express this transition phase combining magic, cabala and alchemy towards the making of the new enlightenment in the 18th Century.

ROBERT FLUDD

Opposite: The Mirror of the Whole of Nature and the Image of Art (Utriusque Cosmi) Ptolemaic Universe III - 1617 – Sometimes called THE UNIVERSE AND THE WORLD SOUL (Anima Mundi) - Robert Fludd

Robert Fludd (1574-1637) was an occult philosopher and a follower of Paracelsus. He was involved in many areas of research and study including theosophy, Rosicrucianism, astrology, mathematics and cosmology. He produced some of the most important images and engravings of occult and spiritual philosophy. His other studies were in medicine, alchemy, hermeticism and theurgy.

Fludd was a prominent cosmologist. His most famous philosophical work was *UTRIUSQUE COSMI* although he was responsible for many drawings and diagrams illustrating his various ideas about the macrocosm and microcosm. It is interesting that his contemporary Johannes Kepler disagreed with Fludd's cosmology and in 1619 criticised his view in his book *Harmonices Mundi*.

In the work opposite we see Fludd's esoteric philosophy elaborated into a rich and complex cosmic diagram. Fludd's Cosmology is concerned with the Universe divided into three realms. In the outer realms are three concentric circles representing the Angelic Realm with images of angels. Above this realm we see God - here represented as the Hebrew Tetragrammaton and surrounded by a luminous cloud.

Beneath the Angelic Realm there is the Celestial Realm. There is a circle of the stars, named as the *Caelum Stellatum* on the outer ring. Then there are seven concentric rings with the visible planets, including the Sun and Moon named and illustrated.

The lowest circles are the Physical realm. There are four main divisions to this realm: in the outer circles there are the elements of Fire, Air, Water and Earth. Fire and Air

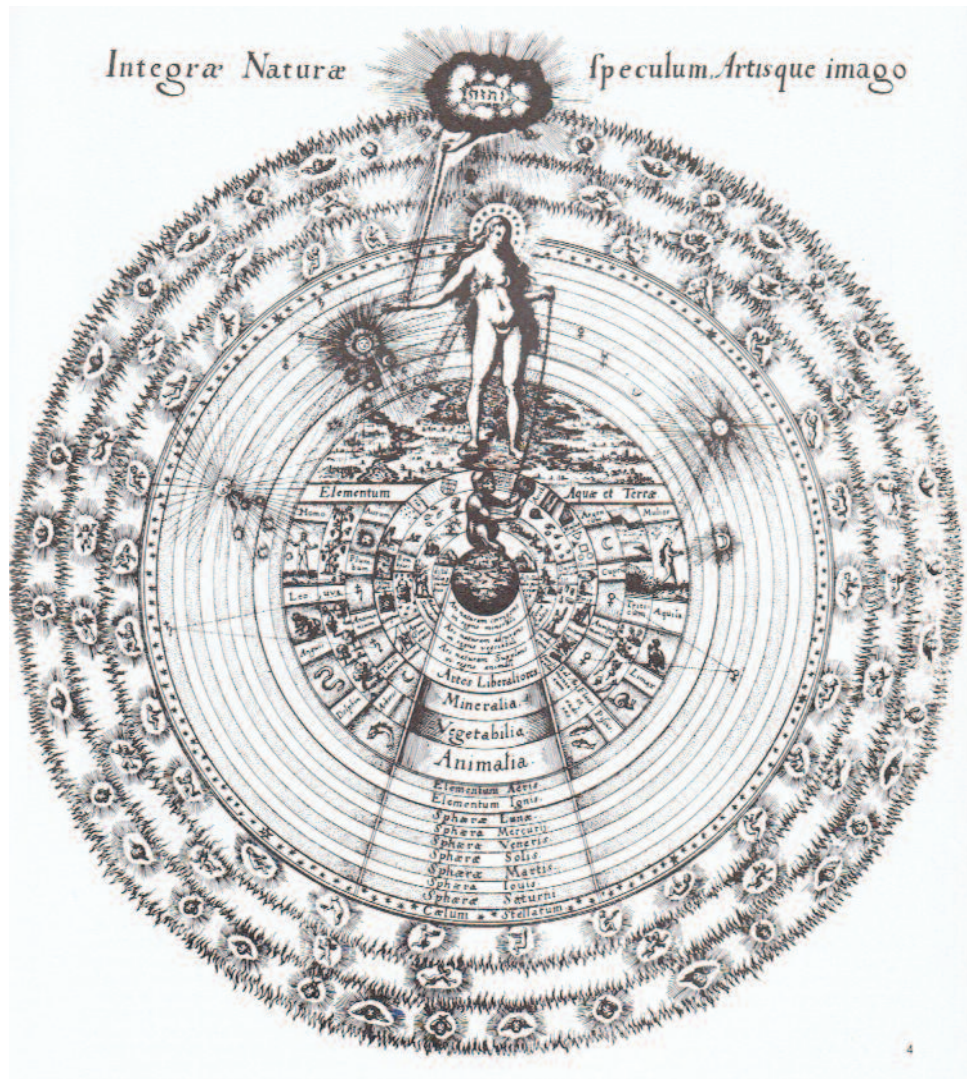
Fludd, and also Maier and Boehme, produced elaborate engravings of their visions of the Universe and how life and God interrelate. Their works have become an important art-form yet to be fully acknowledged by many world art historians and art galleries.

BS

Image courtesy of Wikipedia

Integræ Naturæ

speculum Artis que imago



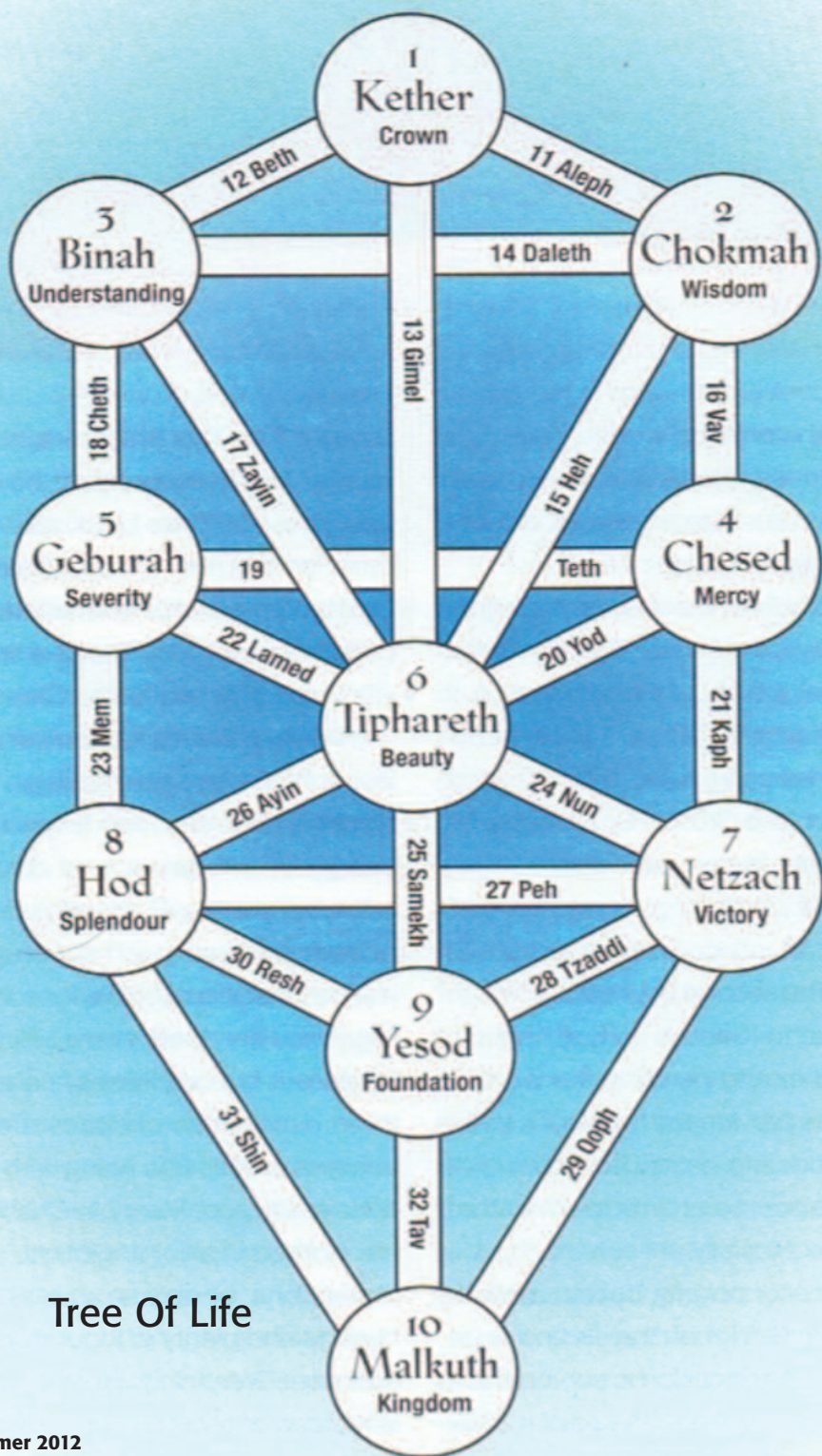
In the esoteric heart of **Kabbala** there is the concept and image of the **Tree of Life**. This, for the Kabbalist, provides the master key in understanding the nature of creation. From the structure of the Universe down to the human being there is a plan and route whereby the ultimate energy from the Universe reaches and is expressed in matter.

The Kabbalist Tree of Life consists of ten stages which are called **SEPHIROTH**. They are said to emerge from the geometric form known as the Flower of Life. The first three Sephiroth are called the **Supernal Sephiroth** and are considered to be the primordial energies of the Universe.

1. For the Kabbalist the first aspect of God is called **Ein Sof** which translates as 'the infinite', 'endless', or 'that which has no limits'. From the **Ein Sof** comes the first emanation of the Tree of Life called the **CROWN (Kether)**. This represents the primordial energy and infinite light out of which all things are created. In this scheme, God is neither matter nor spirit, but is the creator of both. Kabbalists see two aspects of God: (a) God Himself, who is ultimately unknowable, and (b) the revealed aspect of God that is the created universe, who also preserves the universe and interacts with mankind.
2. The next stage is **WISDOM (Chokmah)** which is considered to be a stage at which the cosmic energy of KETHER is expanded into space and time.
3. Then the third aspect is **UNDERSTANDING (Binah)** which is the primordial feminine energy, the Supernal Mother of the Universe which receives the energy of Chokmah, cooling and nourishing it into an infinite number of forms throughout the whole cosmos.

The other Sephiroth are:

4. **MERCY (Chesed)** - This is where the Cosmic Energy from the first three Sephiroth descend into the real Universe. Here there are an infinite number of forms in without discrimination;
5. **SEVERITY (Geburah)** - This is where discrimination decides which elements should stay and which should be eliminated. This achieves a high level of perfection in the Universe.
6. **BEAUTY (Tiphareth)** - This is the pinnacle of refinement reflecting the perfection and beauty of the Divine in all its wisdom.
7. **VICTORY (Netzach)** - This provides the limitless energy to create both physical and spiritual movement. This creates emotion that drives the individual personality into the world of expression.
8. **SPLENDOR (Hod)** - Here the energy of VICTORY is analysed, examined and given direction through rational thought and mental processing pushing energy down into the FOUNDATION.
9. **FOUNDATION (Yesod)** - At this level there is a filter between God's perfection and the needs of the individual. It is important that free will is not overwhelmed by the power of Divine light.
10. **KINGDOM (Malkuth)** - At this stage the primal forces are organised into the patterns that create the world and reality around us – it is here that the world of matter is brought into being. The Tree of Life does not only speak of the origins of the physical Universe out of the unimaginable, but also of Man's place in the Universe. Since Man is invested with Mind, consciousness in the Kabbalah is thought of as the fruit of the physical world, through which the original infinite energy can experience and express itself as a finite entity.



Tree Of Life

THE KABBALAH, KIRCHER & THE ABSOLUTE

Opposite - SEVENTY TWO NAMES OF GOD – Athanasius Kircher (1655)

For the Kabbalist the Creation condenses from the Universe into matter. The Kabbalist aims to return from this Creation and manifestation back up the Tree of Life until their soul is united with its true nature in God. In esoteric Kabbalism this is achieved in two main ways. One is the **Magical-Theurgical** tradition where practitioners endeavour to alter both the divine realms and the actual world through various prayers, rituals and meditations. The other is the **Ecstatic** tradition of Jewish Meditation that strives to achieve a mystical union with God.

Athanasius Kircher was not a Kabbalist but was fascinated by their philosophy and practices. In 1655 Kircher published *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* which contained the engraving shown opposite **Mirror of the Mystic Cabala – Seventy-two Names of God**. In the centre is the Tetragrammaton – YHVH - with the letters for Christ – IHS – built into the Hebrew.

Kircher believed that all the religions of the world shared a common origin and in Seventy-two names he selected the names of God from many countries around the world. He lists the 72 names starting with number one - the **TETRAGRAMMATON**. He continues with the other 'Names' including Alla - 4; Deus - 11; Teos - 12; Dieu - 16; Gott - 17; Tara - 66; and Kalo at 72. Each name must contain four letters following the Kabbalistic name for God - YHVH (YAHVEY) – Yod, He, Vav, He. The English name for God is listed as GOOD at 22.

At the top of the plate he designs the central title which is in Latin and translates as: "Mirror of the Mystic Cabala in which are contained all that the Hebrews have secretly related of the four-lettered name of God, and these are proved to refer to the name of Jesus the Messiah; and it teaches how all the nations of the world have mysteriously spoken the name of God with four letters.

The Tree of Life illustrates the origin of the physical universe and suggests our place within this 'plan'. The Kabbalist believes that the original infinite energy can express and experience itself within the finite energy of the human being. The Kabbalistic Tree of Life represents different levels of reality that are linked. Each stage reflects core values and principles on which life is based.

There are a number of groups each following what they believe is the Kabbalistic path or is at least inspired by it. They include some Freemasonry Lodges, Rosicrucian and Hermetic groups, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and Dion Fortune's Society of Light. Kabbalistic groups provide their own interpretation, pathways and meaning. From this they create their own rituals and philosophical structures.

BS

[illegible]



The secret and magical 'science' of alchemy holds a sense of wonder and mystery even in today's objective and scientific world of analysis and measurement. Known as the *OPUS MAGNA* in Latin, or the *Great Work*, alchemy is a way of transforming the world in which we live into something sublime and transcendental. It is the way of reaching the quintessence of life through practical and esoteric research into the actual material of life and the universe.

This can be metaphorical or the actual creation of a new structure, form or energy. Whenever we attempt to change our world creatively for the better we begin to enter the world of alchemy. In

the past it was how the ancients tried to discover a new and hidden world that might help humankind improve their life. The aim was to discover the magical and eternal 'philosopher stone'.

In the twentieth century Einstein's Theory of Relativity and the subsequent splitting of the atom and the discovery of the sub-atomic world may be the modern alchemy and touching something approaching what was being sought many years ago by the alchemists. With today's latest developments into quarks and quantum theory another world seems to be opening and demanding that even the most materialistic, hardnosed scientist has to accept that the world is more complicated than they may have first thought..

There are two aspects of alchemy. The first was a scientific approach where early alchemists attempted, through various technical and experimental processes, to turn the lower and base metals into gold. The second approach, which sometimes could also involve those 'experimenters', was spiritual alchemy where there was an esoteric and occult method and process to try and transform the lower nature of human beings towards more highly refined and spiritual individuals with higher understanding of themselves and mystical insight into the meaning of life.

Early Hellenistic alchemy originated in Egypt and flourished there around 200AD in the context of Gnosticism and Hermeticism. It was rediscovered by the Arabs in the seventh and eighth centuries where it was developed further and then transmitted to Europe in the 12th century. The aim of both Arab and Western Alchemists was the creation of the Philosophers Stone. The chemical and spiritual process was likened to the redemptive and transforming processes of purification, suffering, death and, finally, rebirth. The touch of the magic stone could cure disease and confer immortality. The 'stone' was the product of the perfect balance of opposites – sulphur and mercury; male and female; the sacred marriage of the king and queen; the androgyne.

Alchemy reached its highest point from around 1470's to 1700 where it was considered to be *the* hermetic art and later practiced by such famous early scientists as Robert Boyle and

Isaac Newton.

Famous early alchemists from the 16th and 17th centuries include Paracelsus (1491-1541), John Dee (c. 1527-1608), Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), Michael Maier (1568-1622) and Robert Fludd (1574-1637). Each alchemist pursued their own journey often being influenced by other alchemists.

Michael Maier's image above sees the alchemist performing the squaring of the circle attempting to turn the two sexes into one. He is trying to "make a circle out of a man and woman, derive from it a square, and from the square a triangle: make a circle and (create) the philosopher's stone." The triangle denotes the unity of body, soul and spirit. The alchemists aim is to create the androgyne where the two complementary opposites are fused into one in the mystical marriage of spiritual and divine union.

Paracelsus and Robert Fludd were initially interested in how they could develop new medicines. Fludd was opposed to the prevailing view of his time that illness was the result of an imbalance among the four humours. He believed that the Creation itself was a chemical process in which the *Mysterium Magnum* (Prime Matter) was separated into the four elements – earth, water air and fire. For him illness was the malfunction of chemical reactions which could be identified and addressed by chemical analysis and treated with chemically prepared medicines.

Alchemy was one of the major approaches in the Western Esoteric Tradition with Hermeticism, Kabbalah, Rosicrucianism, Theosophy, Freemasonry and Illuminism.



Tantric Sun (Jyoti) c. 1780 – Indian

Alchemically and astrologically the Sun holds a special place in the world of esotericism. Symbolically it relates to gold as being the most resplendent and radiant force of energy that is in our immediate and perceivable world. It represented the goal that the alchemists were aiming at with their experiments in the transformation of the base and lower metals into gold. Gold was immutable and unchanging radiating both pure energy and purity in this world. Together with the diamond it is one of the most treasured natural 'materials' that exists in the world. The Sun shares with gold these same qualities but from the higher dimension of the cosmic and spiritual worlds.

Most cultures have at some time worshipped the Sun as the supreme cosmic force. It was, and still is for many, the life-force that creates and sustains life on this planet. It is vital for all life as the giver of warmth, energy and light. Esoterically it is the centre of the human being, and can symbolise the human soul, the heart energy and spiritual illumination.

THE SUN

Opposite: The Solar Logos (1617) – Robert Fludd - Symbolising the Macrocosm that Governs the Creation of the Universe

In many philosophical systems the Sun is the male, or yang, energy, and is associated with the colours yellow, orange, white, gold or a mixture of some or all of these. The moon is the feminine, or yin, energy. Its colours are silver and sometimes white. The Sun is the expansive and creative force whereas the moon is reflective and contemplative.

The main symbols of the Sun are the circle, star and a ring with a point at the centre. Other symbols relating to these core meanings are the Sun Cross - combining the circle as the symbol of the Cosmos and/or the fifth element or Ether and the equilateral cross of the world symbolising the four elements of earth, water, air and fire.

As an astrological symbol the Sun is the ring with the point representing the outer form with its inner core. There are many other symbolic images such as the Catholic monstrance, Gothic rose window as well as the various multi-pointed stellations of various geometric shapes and structures. The meaning and essence of the sun in human life is that it is the main source of radiating light, energy and warmth. Esoterically it is the symbol of spiritual enlightenment, illumination and truth.

In the engraving by Robert Fludd the Sun is emanating rays of warmth and light and it has been given a human face to represent the microcosmic inner light and soul of humankind. For Fludd the Sun is also the heart of the macrocosm. It is the precise point between the triangles of light and dark. It is the 'sphere of equilibrium' of form and matter. For Fludd within the centre of the Sun is the life-giving cosmic soul.

Robert Fludd accepted the view of many alchemists, philosophers and scientists that the Sun should be given absolute primacy in the planetary order as a mid-point in the creation between the outer cosmos and our own level of manifestation. The view of some religions is that the Sun represents the outer light whereas what is essential from the spiritual point of view is the inner light within each human being. Nearer to the truth is that 'light' as life energy is both inner and outer and to live we need both kinds, both cosmic and organic.

Scientifically the Sun is just one of millions of stars that illuminate the Universe. For us it is the life-giving star at the centre of our solar system. The Sun is the material reason why we exist. The Sun affects our lives on many levels. Our very existence can be traced back genetically to the beginning of our solar system. Without the energy of the Sun over the past four or five billion years we would not be here. It is an intrinsic part of who we are. The emanations of cosmic forces including radiation and magnetism combine to affect and maintain us throughout our life.

How we respond to the Sun during our lifetime determines aspects of our psychology, physiology and spiritual well-being. The evolution of humanity and the planet is also determined by the life of our Sun.

The relationship of our solar system with our galaxy and other planetary systems link us to the whole cosmos. Perhaps the journey of the human race is just beginning and at some point in the future we may have to travel to other cosmic regions in one way or another. In the meantime we continue to be in awe of the miracle of the Sun and its generation of solar, electromagnetic and cosmic energy as it maintains our planet, Nature and the life force within and around us.

BS



LONDON PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

JUNE – AUGUST 2012

SUNDAYS (courses, lectures & workshops)

50 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON W1U 8EA

*All 6 pm lectures can be ordered after the event on CD or audio cassette from Barry Thompson –
books@theosoc.org.uk or 020 7563 9816*

*Please note: The opinions of the speakers do not necessarily represent the views of the
Foundation for Theosophical Studies nor the Theosophical Society*

Sunday 10 June, 6 pm

SUFISM & THE PRIMACY OF THE HEART

Sarida Brown

The journey into Reality in the Sufi tradition is through dissolving the veils covering over the heart. 'Heart' is compassion, cosmic consciousness, and more: it is wisdom, divine revelation and ultimately union in the Beloved. As the human heart is the pivot between the multiplicity of creation and divine Unity, it gives consciousness the capacity to evolve. The deepening of the heart also yields a unique creative power. In this talk we will explore a perspective in which, amidst the gravest crises for our societies, for all living beings and for the planet, the human family has the opportunity to evolve towards a greater harmony. Sarida Brown has been nurtured in the river of Sufi wisdom for over 35 years. She is currently responsible for the Sufi Healing Order worldwide, guides retreats and teaches for the Sufi Order. She founded and for 20 years edited Caduceus Journal and works as an acupuncturist.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 17 June, 2 pm.

THE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY OF THE MAYAN 2012 GREAT SHIFT

Chris Kasparis

The Ancient Mayan's prophesied a time of great transition for 2012. They were master astronomers and astrologers who used sacred, astrological wisdom to predict world events thousands of years ago. Undoubtedly, we are experiencing The Great Shift, both collectively and personally, but can the astrology of today help us understand the challenges we face? The Arab Spring, global financial crisis and environmental catastrophes, exciting discoveries in science and a new wave of personal and planetary awakening all characterise The Great Shift. Chris will draw on his Theosophical knowledge, explore the Mayan prophesies and the Esoteric Astrology at play, to help us understand specific challenges and opportunities, as we head towards the 21st December 2012. Chris Kasparis is an Esoteric Astrologer, inspirational speaker and author. His book 2012 – The Great Shift highlights Humanity's spiritual role as we head towards the 2012 Mayan Calendar time-

change period.

£15, £10 concessions

Sunday 17 June, 6 pm

LEONARDO DA VINCI AND MICHELANGELO: MYSTERIES IN RENAISSANCE ART

Lynda Harris

Both of these world-famous High Renaissance artists worked for the church. Though they never had trouble with the religious authorities, there are ways in which their works pose an enigma, and do not quite appear to correspond with Christian dogma. This applies especially to Leonardo, whose highly original paintings hint at esoteric views. We also know that Michelangelo was exposed to Neo-Platonism in his youth. Though he was a pious Catholic, a few of his paintings hint at a secret adherence to some of its ideas.

Lynda Harris is an art historian with a special interest in symbols. For 15 years she led courses at London University on the Art of the 15th and 16th century and Renaissance Mystery Religions. She is author of the book, *The Secret Heresy of Hieronymus Bosch*.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 24 June, 6 pm

THE FORGOTTEN THEOSOPHIST – ANNA BONUS KINGSFORD

Kenneth Rees

Dr. Anna Kingsford, was president of the Theosophical Society's London Lodge, 1883- 84, promoter of vegetarianism, rational dress and women's enfranchisement. But from an esoteric point of view she is best remembered for her 'illuminations' which produced both her new interpretation of the New Testament (The Perfect Way) and the Hermetic Society. Her one-woman revival of Christian Hermeticism, led Madame Blavatsky to proclaim her 'the greatest natural mystic of the present day'. The time has come for giving her the recognition she deserves within the Theosophical Society and the history of esotericism.

Kenneth Rees has been a lecturer in esoteric philosophy for a variety of academic institutions for over 30 years. His special interests include Renaissance Hermeticism, esoteric Christianity and ritual.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 1 July, 2 pm

IT'S ALL IN THE CHAKRAS

Teresa Keast

This workshop explores the nature of the etheric energy body - allowing insight into the chakra energy dynamics that play out through our personality and reflect the unfoldment of our soul expression. Through an understanding of our own energetic connection, we become aware of our connection to others physically, emotionally and mentally. We come to see our part in the united purpose we share as world servers in a universal brotherhood. This allows us to go inward and ask where such insights might take us as individuals and the potential this unlocks for mankind as a whole. Teresa Keast has studied esoteric wisdom with the school of practical philosophy, practised and taught yoga and meditation for many years. She is a holistic therapist, nutritionist, single mum of four, and active member of the Chester Lodge of the TS in England
£15, £10 concessions

Sunday 1 July, 6 pm

SHAKESPEARE AND THE AWAKENING OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Elizabeth Crofts

Shakespeare's plays are not just interesting stories but are consciously constructed to help us understand the human predicament. It is our highly sophisticated ignorance of our own ignorance that is the difficulty. This talk will examine the work of several scholars who show us that the purpose of the plays is to awaken human souls to their spiritual nature and destiny and that the plays are 'prophetic literature rooted in ancient wisdom' as said Theosophist Henry Wild. Elizabeth has been a member of the TS for 4 years and has spent many years studying the rich spiritual teaching contained in the works of Shakespeare.
£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 8 July, 6 pm

HOW'S YOUR HYPOTENUSE?

Andreas Mavromatis

A bunch of rather colourful geniuses suddenly cropped up in ancient Greece around the 6th and 5th centuries BC and changed the way we perceive the world and ourselves. Researchers are still struggling to understand the miracle of their sudden appearance. You've heard of Pythagoras and his hypotenuse (!), and Democritus and his atom, but what about Anaximander, Parmenides, Empedocles and Heraclitus? Research now shows them to be Initiates of varying degrees. What was the source of their knowledge and abilities and their function in the wider scheme of things? Andreas Mavromatis has worked as a journalist, actor, concert-organiser, script-writer, film-maker, teacher and lecturer in further and higher education. He has written books on psychology and 'altered states of consciousness'.
£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 15 July, 2 pm

INSTANT TAROT FOR SELF-GUIDANCE AND ILLUMINATION

Clemens Brenan

Tarot is often thought to be the preserve of psychics and fortune-tellers. Indeed, the full deck of 78 cards is a complex language of symbolism that demands many years of study and use to master. But if we stick to the archetypes in the 22 cards of the Major Arcana, we can rapidly unlock their wisdom and magic. Today we will see how, using the simplest of layouts, they can generate profound answers to any question or issue. We'll learn much about the ancient Tarot de Marseille and, whether beginner or expert, hone our skill of interpretation. Decks will be provided, or bring whichever you already use. Clemens Brenan is a professional Tarot reader and clairvoyant working at Psychic Fairs around the UK.
£15, £10 concessions

Sunday 15 July, 6 pm

TIME AND BRAIN; THE JOURNEY BEYOND

Clive Hambidge

We are all conditioned by time. Time and contemporary life seem to form a causality. We are run by the external clock of an overly mechanized worldview; few escape its cacophony and whirl. Dopamine produced in the base of the brain generates the 'parsed' sense of time in cycles of neural activity or 'loops': in one tenth of a second complex events are ordered. This lecture explores the effect of our cyclic life of activity and non-activity which is essentially the time we know; how to de-condition the brain and, what happens when we do.

Clive Hambidge is a contemporary abstract painter who is greatly influenced by Eastern Philosophy and Theosophy. A close associate of Swami Nirliptananda (Head, Sevashram UK) he is also a Director of two organizations: Human Rights NGO and Facilitate Global.
£7, £5 concessions

INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON THE AGELESS WISDOM: 4.45 – 5.45 pm **Sunday afternoons with Edward Archer**

THEOSOPHY: HIGHWAY TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Until 15 July (not 3 June)

An informal session in which the basic teachings of the Divine Wisdom are explored and discussed. Everybody on this planet is in the Great School of Life - of spiritual development. Over the weeks we shall look at the great hidden truths which make sense of our lives and which gives them purpose. This is a basic grounding in The Eternal Mysteries, and it has absolutely no strings attached! The book *The Key to Theosophy* is

recommended for newcomers.

Leader: **Edward Archer**, who has been a member of the Theosophical Society in England for 35 years

Free admission

Arranged by Foundation for Theosophical Studies

Free admission

WEEKNIGHT COURSES

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

TUESDAYS 7.00 – 8.30 pm

until 26 June (not 5 June)

Leader: **Victor Hangya**

In the midst of today's materialism and the ruins of old religions join us in our 'mining' of the perennial wisdom. Our sourcebook is the Secret Doctrine, which claims 'logical coherence and consistency' and should be treated as a 'working hypothesis'. The SD sheds light on some of life's greatest mysteries.

Leader: **Victor Hangya** has been exploring the Ageless Wisdom for more than 20 years.

Arranged by Foundation for Theosophical Studies

Free admission

WEEKNIGHT THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS HELD AT 50 GLOUCESTER PLACE LONDON W1U 8EA

DHYANA CENTRE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE JOY OF MEDITATION

Tuesdays 7 - 9 pm:

5 June – 17 July; 14 August – 18 September

Sundays 11 am – 4 pm

24 June, 26 August

The Dhyana Centre holds regular introductory courses for beginners on weekdays, dovetailing with weekend intensives that cover the same ground in a truncated form. Courses teach the theory and practice of meditation as a spiritual discipline.

Leader: **Alan Perry**

Admission free, donations welcome

For details of retreats and other events, go to www.dhyanacentre.org or info@dhyanacentre.org.

BLAVATSKY LODGE

7.00 pm Thursdays

Admission: £5, £4 concessions, £3 TS members

7 June

THE COSMIC BLOODSTREAM AND THE CELLULAR STRUCTURE OF SPACE

Laurence Newey

The blood of all living organisms begins its cycle as a precipitation from a universal, circulating flow of electric waves. Plasma cosmology acknowledges that electric currents in space carry ions and electrons similar to the way blood plasma carries red and white corpuscles. Further discoveries show that Space has an electrically produced cell-wall like structure. This presentation will discuss how the human being is electrically connected to the cosmic bloodstream of the entity, SPACE, the dawning realisation of which will help to transfer the concept of "the brotherhood of man" from mere romanticism to hard scientific fact.

Laurence Newey is a director of the Lucis Trust which promotes the teachings of Alice Bailey and the education of the human mind towards recognition and practice of the spiritual principles and values upon which a stable and interdependent world society may be based.

5 July

THE TAROT: THE TRUE ALMANAC OF THE MYSTERY SCHOOLS

Joseph MacDermott

The Kabbalistic Tarot is not to be profaned by associating its occult symbolism with Fortune Telling. The sincere student of the Esoteric however cannot afford to ignore the ordered symbols laid out in the Tarot, an almanac composed and used for centuries by numerous Masters as "Keys" to unlock higher realms of consciousness. This talk can only hope to introduce the subject and is but a brief illustrated tour through the 22 major paths or grades of the Tarot, in order to make ordinary sense of the often called "Scales of Jacobs ladder".

Joseph MacDermott spent 6 years in a religious community in the 60s where he first became interested in Religious Hermeneutics, Mystery schools and all things esoteric.

THEOSOPHICAL GALLERY TOURS

Tuesdays at 2 pm

Many of London's Galleries & Museums have meaning from a theosophical perspective

12th June - National Portrait Gallery HEROES AND VILLAINS

17th July - Tate Britain, Millbank BLAKE AND TURNER – COLOUR AND FORM

14th August – Victoria & Albert Museum WORLD RELIGIONS

Visits will start from relevant main entrances.

Details from George on **078 8181 3242** or george@whatever-will.be

DIARY OF FOUNDATION SPEAKERS

The Foundation for Theosophical Studies runs a National Speakers Scheme providing experienced speakers for seminars events study groups and lectures throughout the UK.

If you would like a speaker to for an event please write to 'Foundation for Theosophical Studies, 50 Gloucester Place London W1U 8EA or email: office@theosoc.org.uk

Some bursaries are available to attend various events, courses and weekend conferences. Please apply to The Bursar, Foundation for Theosophical Studies at the above address for further information.

BANGOR

COSMOGENESIS

Eric McGough

Tuesday, 22nd May 7.30 pm

From the heart of the Absolute Divine Source, unfold universes without number

Friends Meeting House, Dean St. Bangor

HERNE BAY, KENT

THE GARDEN PATH

Robert Woolley

Saturday 26 May, 2.15 pm

A garden is a spiritual space. We tend to lose sight of this aspect of gardens in the "Ground Force" age, but gardens have been built with a spiritual purpose since Egyptian times. This talk will explore the way that gardens have been used to embody sacred symbols or present spiritual truths. It will show how the same principles can enhance almost any spiritual practice today.

The Lighthouse, Herne Bay. Details: Tel: 01227 370 920

MANCHESTER

THE STORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: A STAR IS BORN

Atma Trasi

Saturday 2 June, 2.30 p.m.

A PowerPoint presentation on the formation and the early years of the TS.

Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount St., M2 5NS. Tel: 01524 853123

BRADFORD

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Bhupendra Vora.

Saturday 9 June. 2.30 p.m.

The motto of the Theosophical Society is 'There is No Religion Greater than Truth'. Truth (Sat) is the very nature of existence and to live in accordance with the Laws of Nature is Man's duty. The Sages of Ancient India proclaimed "Satyam Vada, Dharmam Chara" ("Speak the Truth and follow the Path of Righteousness"). The talk looks at what is Truth and the nature of the Search for truth.

Room 2, Shipley Library, Wellcroft, Shipley BD18 3QH. Tel: Atma, 01274 598455.

LEEDS

PYTHAGORAS AND ORPHEUS: GREEK PHILOSOPHERS

Bhupendra Vora

Saturday 10 June. 2.30 p.m.

Pythagoras is credited with the basics of the Western philosophical system. He was influenced by the teachings of Orpheus. The mystery school of Pythagoras was famous for the esoteric teachings it gave to candidates and the discipline it expected from them. The teachings of Pythagoras as regards the preparatory path bear great resemblance to that of spiritual teachings of India. The School of Pythagoras and its teachings as well as the principles enunciated by Orpheus that were at the core of these teachings is the subject of this talk.

12 Queens Square, Leeds. Tel: Walter, 0776 849 5726

COLWYN BAY

INVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION

Eric McGough

Thursday, 28th June 2 pm

The 'One' becomes The 'Many' as Creation unfolds into deepest matter, but eventually, after untold eons, All return to the 'One' as evolution runs its course.

Parkway Community Centre, Rhos-on-Sea

BOURNEMOUTH

WHO AM I?

Derek Thorne

Saturday 7 July, 2.15 pm

I know who I am, do you? I know I am not these things called thoughts, feelings, sensations and perceptions. I know I am not my memories, nor my history, nor the actions and achievements that fill this life. These things are marvellous in their scope and grandeur yet they pass, constantly arising and falling. In what do they rise and fall? What is it that endures throughout? The answer to that is known. The Jnana Yoga of Sri Ramana Maharshi declares this wisdom in a simple clarity that can be conveyed and transferred. This will be freely shared with those that sincerely seek it out.

Shelley Theatre, Talbot Campus, University of Bournemouth BH12 5BB

Details: 0800 612 7282. Visit:

www.bournemouthsociety.org.uk

HOLYHEAD

THE POWER OF SOUND: THE VIBRANCY OF SILENCE

Cynthia Trasi

Saturday 14 July, 2.30 pm

This illustrated talk looks at sound as the basis of all manifestation. Primordial sound reverberates throughout all existence. All things in the universe are connected to each other, through vibrations, on all planes of existence. The talk will discuss different ways

in which sound and silence affect our lives and how they can help us experience the Soundless Silence; this will include a look at the Seven Sounds in H. P. Blavatsky's 'The Voice of the Silence'
Harvest Moon Shop, 4 Newry Street, Holyhead, Gwynedd LL65 1HP

BIRMINGHAM **MAHATMA LETTERS**

Tony Maddock
Sunday July 15, 4.00 p.m.

These Letters, now held in the British Library, were originally 'written' to A. P. Sinnett then a journalist in Jalalabad, by the Great Masters who taught of modern theosophy through H. P. Blavatsky, and they were first transcribed by A. Trevor Barker.

Tony Maddock is a Trustee of 'The Mahatma Letters'
52 Tamar Drive, Castle Vale, Birmingham B36 0ST
Details: Carmel Greiner 0121 240 5912 or email: tsoffice3@aol.com

BIRMINGHAM **A MIND TO EMBRACE THE UNIVERSE**

Janet Hoult
Sunday July 15, 6.00 p.m.

An investigation into mankind's divine nature based on the 1960 booklet of the same name by E.L. Gardner. The Secret Doctrine tells us that several Angelic Hierarchies built our physical and mental bodies with which to clothe our divine spark, the Monad. How do these bodies give us the means by which we may be able to 'embrace the Universe'?

Janet Hoult is a graphic designer living and working in the midlands. She has been a member of the Theosophical Society for fourteen years, ten of those as Nottingham Lodge president
52 Tamar Drive, Castle Vale, Birmingham B36 0ST
Details: Carmel Greiner 0121 240 5912 or email: tsoffice3@aol.com

HOLYHEAD **THE SEVEN PLANES OF EXISTENCE**

Eric McGough
Saturday 28th July, 2.30 p.m.

The world we see around us is but the tip of a vast field of worlds within world.

Harvest Moon Shop, 4 Newry Street, Holyhead, Gwynedd LL65 1HP

NEWCASTLE **THEOSOPHY THROUGH SERVICE**

Cynthia & Atma Trasi
Sunday 25 July, 2.00 p.m.

An illustrated talk on the Theosophical Order of Service with examples of how members of the Theosophical Society put theosophy into practice through service.

City Library, Charles Avison Building, 33 New Bridge Street West, NE1 8AX
Tel: Jim, 0191 386 0492.

Email: josephgmclakey@btinternet.com or newctheosoc@btinternet.com
Website www.newcastletheosophicalsociety.com

BRADFORD **PATHWAYS TO SPIRITUAL AWARENESS**

Susan Bayliss
Saturday 18 August, 2.30 p.m.

Spiritual seekers are faced with an abundance of would-be teachers, from ancient traditions to modern gurus. We will explore our journey into spiritual awareness through the light of the esoteric teachings. This Living Wisdom - Theosophy - opens a window on the mysteries of existence through which we can learn to fulfil our spiritual potential, discriminate between the real and the unreal, and embrace our transformation into Enlightenment and Truth.

Room 2, Shipley Library, Wellcroft, Shipley BD18 3QH. Tel: Atma, 01274 598455

BOLTON **THE HEART OF THE MATTER**

Cynthia Trasi
Sunday 9 September, 2.30 p.m.

This talk looks at the way in which various systems, texts, philosophies etc. use the image of the heart. Is there a common thread that runs throughout; what can we learn about ourselves and the way towards greater wisdom and service?

School Room, Bank St. Chapel, (Crown St entrance), Bank St, Bolton BL1 1TS. Tel: 01257 401152

BIRMINGHAM **THE KARMA AND THE HEALTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

Ted Capstick
Sunday Sept 23, 4.00 p.m.

This looks at how Esoteric Astrology can aid people by indicating areas that the individual should be aware of and the probable causes.

52 Tamar Drive, Castle Vale, Birmingham B36 0ST
Details: Carmel Greiner 0121 240 5912

BRADFORD **THE ELECTRIC UNIVERSE AND THE NATURE OF THE COSMOS**

Ron Wallwork
Saturday 13 October, 2.30 p.m.

There is a real crisis in Cosmology Today. Most of the universe is missing! Established scientific theories are losing their credibility. Is there a better explanation? Exciting new discoveries and recent scientific data are beginning to point towards a very different and radical alternative. This alternative aligns with the occult and esoteric teachings of H P Blavatsky, and reinforces the hermetic axiom "As above so below". In this audio/visual lecture we will examine the evidence and present this radical new view.

Room 2, Shipley Library, Wellcroft, Shipley BD18 3QH. Tel: Atma, 01274 598455

LEEDS **THE MATRIX**

Ron Wallwork
Sunday 14 October, 2.30 p.m.

A Theosophical/Gnostic Perspective. An Illustrated Lecture.

12 Queens Square, Leeds Tel: Walter, 0776 849 5726.

FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

Headquarters: 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA

Telephone: 020 7563 9817 Website: www.theosoc.org.uk Email: office@theosoc.org.uk

ESOTERICA IS PUBLISHED BY THE FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

Editor: Eric McGough Sub Editor: Colyn Boyce Arts Editor: Barry Seabourne

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Colyn Boyce – Administration Officer: Telephone 020 7563 9817

For lettings, membership, administration enquiries please telephone Tuesday – Friday; 2-6.30 pm
or email: office@theosoc.org.uk

LIBRARY

Barry Thompson – Librarian: Telephone 020 7563 9816

Library and Bookshop opening times: Monday – Thursday 2-6.30 pm
Special appointments may be arranged – please phone the Librarian for further information

CONTRIBUTIONS: Articles, letters, obituaries and other material on the Ageless Wisdom, spirituality, philosophy, science, obituaries on long standing members who have passed on can be sent to the Editor.

All material submitted is on condition that this material can be accepted or rejected in part or in full, or it can be amended or sections deleted on grounds of content, space and suitability without any reason given. Any manuscript sent by post cannot be returned. Material can be emailed.

Please note there is no guarantee that an article, information, obituaries or other material will be included.

Please ensure that any material you may submit is subject to the above conditions

ADVERTISING: To advertise in Esoterica please phone 020 7563 9817 for rates and space availability.
Adverts should be in sympathy with the aims and aspirations of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies.

ARTICLES, ADVERTS AND OTHER MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF ESOTERICA SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO:

EDITOR, ESOTERICA 50 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON W1U 8EA

OR emailed to office@theosoc.org.uk

No later than FRIDAY 6 JULY 2012

Editor's note: Some articles are received that have no author's name on them. When they are brought up from the files at a later time for consideration we sometimes can't trace who sent it in.

Contributors should try to ensure that their articles have been proof read by a competent person prior to submitting and that every attempt has been made to ensure reasoned argument, correct grammar/spelling and clarity of style etc. Consideration should be given to the use of definitive statements to avoid stating as fact that which is actually speculation.

Thank you

FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

The aims of the Foundation are:

**To Advance Education, Promote Study and
Research into Religion, Philosophy and Science and to
Disseminate the Results to the Public**

**To Promote Study and Research into the
Laws of Nature and the Powers Latent in Man**

**To Advance Recognition of the Fundamental
Unity of all People through Knowledge
Of Theosophical Principles of Unity,
Evolution and Perfectibility**

**The Foundation holds lectures, seminars, workshops
and conferences and organises regular residential courses
and an annual Summer School**

For more information telephone 0207 563 9817

Charity No: 1014648