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Traditional Martinist Order

San Jose, CA USA
www.martinists.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Greetings in the Light of Martinism!

In this issue of the *Pantacle*, we present for the first time English translations of four articles from *L'Initiation*, the monthly magazine published in France from 1888 to 1912 under the direction of Papus, the co-founder of the Martinist Order (founded in 1891, with co-founder Augustin Chaboseau).

L'Initiation published articles by the leading French esotericists of that time – Papus, Augustin Chaboseau, F.-Ch Barlet, Albert Poisson, Stanislas de Guaita, Victor Blanchard, Teder, Josephin Peladan, Marc Haven, Alexandre Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, Lucien Chamuel, and others, on subjects related to Philosophy, Initiation, Literature, Science, and Kabbalah.

We present the following articles in English:

- “The Astral Body” by Papus, co-founder of the Traditional Martinist Order
- “The Psychic Body” by Papus
- “The Alchemical Monuments of Paris” by Philophotes (Albert Poisson), French alchemist and student of Papus
- “The Cult of the Self” by F.-Ch Barlet, Parisian Occultist and associate of Papus and Augustin Chaboseau

Most of the original issues of *L'Initiation* (in French) are published on <https://www.martinists.org/texts>.

We hope you enjoy these thought-provoking and inspiring articles.
May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom!

Julie Scott
Grand Master

The Astral Body

By Papus

Co-founder of the Traditional Martinist Order

From *L'Initiation*, September 1890, Volume 7-8, pages 502 - 516.

“Human beings are the Divine’s shadow in the body of an animal.”
- Eliphas Levi

The astral body is a frequent topic of discussion. With a large number of spiritualistic phenomena being assigned by schools of occultism to the action of this element, one can understand the interest tied to the knowledge of its faculties.

In the following preview, we are going to, first of all, quickly summarize the main theories put forward to explain the constitution of human beings, then we will develop an analogy that permits, in our opinion, a clear understanding of the mystical properties of the astral body as it is conceived by occultists. The pictures provided by this analogy may be naïve, but are, in our opinion, very suggestive. Our readers will be the final judges.

To understand the various theories taught about human beings, their past and future, it is, first of all, important to know the various principles that constitute a human.

Human beings are constituted in a very different manner depending upon whether one addresses the works of theologians and spiritualistic philosophers, or studies the works of materialists.

For schools deriving their teachings from religious thought, humans are composed of two opposing principles: the *body* and the *soul*. The body, subject of all temptations and reason for all decay; the soul, immortal and pure, origin of the conscience and psychic faculties. These theories have a defect in that they are not capable of explaining a large part of that which is produced by the human being, and that their application leads one to say that humans are consumptive because “they have a consumptive soul,” which is a little forced.

As always, it is to the materialistic school that we are indebted for the more solid work on the question of the constitution of human beings. This school only admits one principle: the *body*, but at least it is honorable enough

to seriously, and especially experimentally, study the theories that it advances. Exaggerated in the sense of reaction, materialism let itself succumb to a serious defect and now denies *a priori* all phenomena of premonition, remote viewing, and bilocation possible in human beings, etc. All these are frequently noted phenomena occurring under conditions which exclude deception.

However, browse the works of all initiates, address yourselves to the traditions of all peoples, and you will see that at all times it has been taught that humans were composed not of one, nor of two, but of three perfectly studied principles. Plato designed his three souls from it, localized in the three large segments of the human organism: head, chest, and stomach -- indeed, the real origin of these three principles.

Catholicism itself, in affirming on one hand that God made man in his image, and teaching on the other hand that God is one in three persons, allows for this constitution of the human being. This has already been presented by Saint Paul who taught the existence of the astral body¹.

THE THREE PRINCIPLES

The three principles designated by Occult Science as forming the Human Being are:

1. The body.
2. The plastic mediator (astral body).
3. The soul.

Occultism differentiates itself, therefore, from theology by admitting a new intermediate principle between the body and the soul.

It differentiates itself from materialism by teaching the existence and functioning of two principles, which escape, in humans, the laws of matter. It follows that the original side of the theories of Occult Science reside entirely in the study of this intermediate principle which has received various names:

Astral body — Perispirit — Life, etc., etc., but which is studied identically by all schools.

Eliphas Levi summarizes very precisely the human being's constitution in the following definition:

The human being is an intelligent and physical being, made in the image of God and of the world, SINGLE in essence, TRIPLE in substance, immortal and mortal. There is in him a spiritual soul, a

material body, and a plastic mediator.

If one fully grasps the interpretation of these principles, it can be seen that Life is the obligatory mediator; without it, the body cannot obey the provocations of the soul, and the soul cannot receive the impressions of the body.

Here is a theory brought up without fail, some philosophers would say. Unable to reconcile these two opposites: the body and the soul, unable to explain how the subjective becomes objective, you elude the question, you gentlepeople called “occultists,” by inventing a so-called intermediary principle perfectly endowed with all the properties necessary to prove your cause².

It is sufficient to open any treatise on physiology to learn that this principle, which moves our heart and our faith, in spite of our will, and safe from its influence, does indeed exist, no matter what the origin. The biggest mistake of occultists to date has been the desire to remain confined to their own domain without taking note of the discoveries of experimental science.

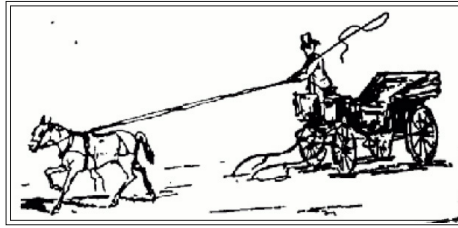
Mention to a physician: *the astral body* causes internal spasms, and he will look at you like a mad person. Tell the physician, on the contrary: organic life propels these organs, the physician will answer you: good Lord, yes! I know it well. Show the physician next that what he [or she] calls *organic life*, you call *astral body*, and the two of you will begin to get along.

When you want to be understood by a foreigner, you know very well that it is useless to speak your language to the person no matter how loud you shout. This elementary rule seems naive, but it still seems unknown to all sides!

In order to fully grasp the interpretation of these three principles, I will once again make a sacrifice to the mania which is so dear to me in using a very vulgar analogy. If you really want to understand the human constitution: go to the window and watch any carriage in the street pass by; you will see more clearly than reading every treatise cluttered with Sanskrit or Hebrew words.

A working carriage consists of three main elements:

1. The carriage;
2. A horse harnessed to this carriage and setting it in motion;
3. A coachperson guiding the horse.



The carriage. Analogical picture of a human being's three principles

The carriage is motionless by itself. It is incapable of moving without another element, therein lies the fundamental character of the *material body*.

The coachperson on his seat can attempt in vain to get things going, cracking his whip, shouting as loud as he pleases; if there is no horse attached, nothing will happen. The coachperson is the conductor, it is he who will navigate toward the indicated goal, but he requires an indispensable auxiliary: the horse. The coachperson shows us, by analogy, the general characters of a human being's superior element: the soul.

THE ASTRAL BODY

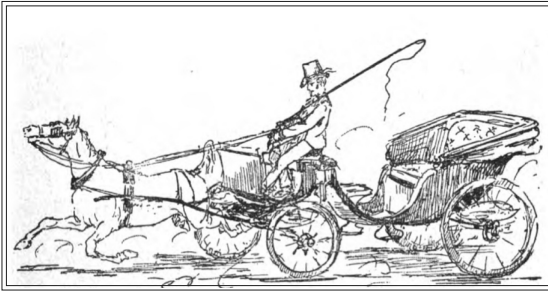
Bound to the carriage by the shafts, and to the coachperson by the reins, we see the general intermediate principle: the horse.

The horse is stronger physically than the coachperson, but the horse is guided nevertheless, in spite of everything, by this person holding the reins. When inquired by philosophers what good this astral body is, we can answer: to act in a human being as the horse acts for the carriage, that is to say to drive it all while being under the direction of the superior principle: the coachperson.

THE PASSIONS

The horse represents the life of the human being, center of the *passions*, as we will see later on. The common character of the passions is to choke the efforts of reason and to drag the entire being to its demise, in spite of the actions of the soul, which has become powerless.

Anger is, in this respect, especially remarkable. As soon as it takes root in a weak being, it seems that the blood stream localizes itself entirely in the head. A puff of heat rises in the face, the eyes cloud over, reason tries in vain to master the organic life which has become mistress of the land: a person *sees red, one no longer knows what one is doing*, one is capable of everything at this moment. The astral body has defeated the soul.



The horse gets carried away. Invasion of the soul by the astral body.

ANGER

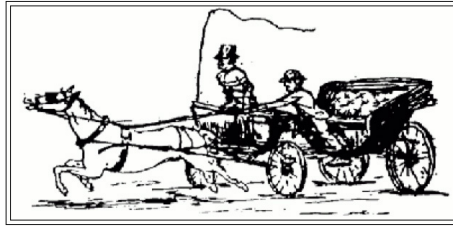
See, is this not precisely what happens to the carriage when the intermediate principle, the horse, no longer obeying the coachperson's efforts, gets carried away?

Physical strength has invaded everything in this case. The coachperson, weaker but better armed, is defeated; the carriage rolls on with a frightening speed led by the horse, which became the master, until the moment when the horse, in its blindness, comes upon an insurmountable obstacle destroying, at the same time, the entire collection - itself, carriage, and coachperson.

The clarity given to most abstract questions through analogical methods, such as this figure of the carriage, which seemed naive at first, can be very useful to us in understanding certain theories of occultism concerning the mysterious properties assigned to the astral body. Let us note in passing the coachperson's actions stirring the pace of his horse by means of the whip, a striking image of the effect of stimulants (alcohol, coffee, etc.) on the astral body. A race horse that one beats too severely can lose its temper, in the same way an astral body too strongly stimulated by alcohol can drive the organism to its demise³.

MAGNETISM

Do you want to know how to produce the phenomena of magnetism? A stranger comes who makes it impossible for the coachperson (the soul, will) to take the reins (links of the brain to the astral body). It is this stranger (the hypnotist) who seizes the reins, and the poor coachperson, dazed, is the witness to the direction of the carriage by a will that is not his own and against which he cannot fight. The astral body (horse) will always obey the one who holds the reins, whether it is the owner of the carriage or a stranger.



The coachperson is tied to his seat. - A stranger seizes the reins and steers the carriage. - Magnetism.

However, the coachperson, although tied-up and incapable of acting effectively, can still make his voice heard and stop the horse cold, even though he holds no reins. This explains how, with some subjects to whom were given criminal suggestions, the conscience of the subject fights against the suggestion, and the individual vanishes (the horse rears and falls) rather than to execute the given order.

ASTRAL TRAVEL. MAGIC. SPIRITUALISM.

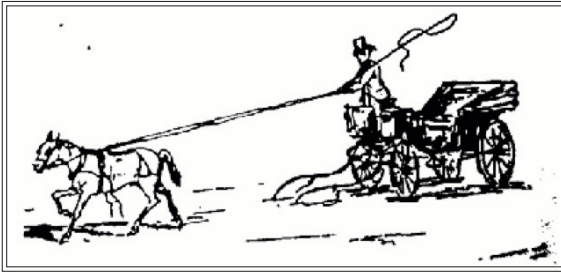
Another phenomenon, often mentioned in occultism, is clearly explained by this analogy. It concerns *astral travel*.

Several facts with supernatural appearances are explained by this action. Under the influence of a particular diet and the careful use of some PSYCHIC stimulants⁴, the human being enters into a mixed state containing both the waking state and the somnambulistic state.

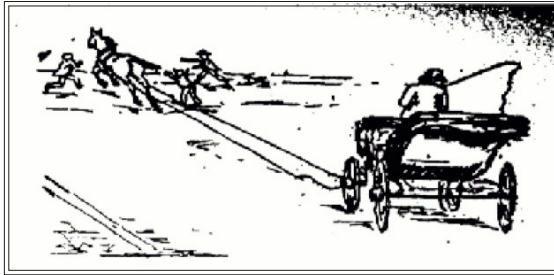
The astral body leaves the body momentarily as the unharnessed horse would leave the carriage. The cooled body remains immobile but the soul stays alert. It directs the astral body toward the place where it wants to go because time and space no longer exist for it.

The coachperson, whose reins can stretch out at will, and who could thus guide his unharnessed horse, gives us a rather correct idea of the *conscious departure* of the astral body. In this case, the body is absolutely immobile, the astral body being bound only to the soul.

In another case, the coachperson (the soul) falls asleep. The unharnessed horse (the departed astral body) freely has its way and heads toward adventure. It is no longer held by the shafts of the carriage which held him, but merely by the ties that connect it to the carriage (ties of the astral body to the physical body). According to occultism, it is the phenomenon which occurs in *mediumship* (unconscious departure of the astral body). The astral body is then at the disposal of the various influences which can seize it (spirits or suggestions)⁵.



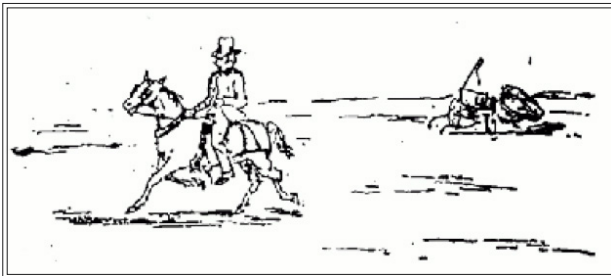
The reins stretched. The unharnessed horse continues its race guided by the coachperson. (Conscious astral travel).



The coachperson sleeps. The ties that attach the horse to the carriage are stretched out. The horse wanders about no longer under the coachman's direction. The beings prowling around the horse are looking to seize it. (Unconscious astral travel.)

DEATH

Finally is a phenomenon that interests us all more or less, because we are called to study it closely: *death*. The carriage (the physical body) is broken and lies on the road, the coachperson (the soul) mounts the horse and the horse (the astral body) departs for the journey beyond.



Abandonment of the carriage by the horse and coachperson. Abandonment of the body by the astral body carrying the soul. (Death).

We have chosen an image that we believe to be very lucid in spite of its innocence to explain the game of the three principles that constitute the interpretation of human beings according to occultism. The analogy provided by this example is so exact that one could apply it to all parts of philosophy. One of my friends G. P. made me notice that it responds to, rather spiritually, various philosophical opinions. Materialism generates the horse from the carriage and the coachperson from the horse.

Pantheism puts the horse in the carriage and makes the coachman drag it.

Finally, Catholicism, like the spiritual philosophy of the University, places a coachperson on the carriage but without admitting the existence of the horse. The body and the soul must be sufficient to all. Unfortunately, in this famous principle, supposedly invented by occultists for their own needs, the horse is so necessary that nothing works without it, at the Sorbonne or on the most ordinary of our roads.

ENDNOTES

(1) The Trinity made human beings in his image and in his appearance. The human body is double and its ternary unit is composed of two halves; the human soul which is also double; it is animus and anima, it is spirit and tenderness. It has two genders: The paternal gender in the head, and the maternal gender in the heart. The achievement of redemption must be therefore double in humanity. It is necessary that the spirit by its purity redeem the errors of the heart. Then it is necessary that the heart, by its generosity, redeem the egotistical coldness of the head. GUILLAUME POSTEL

(2) See. *Philosophical Dictionary of Franck*, articles Paracelsus and R. Fludd.

(3) Drunkenness is a temporary madness and madness is permanent drunkenness. Both are caused by a phosphoric obstruction of the nerves of the brain that destroys our luminous balance and deprives the soul of its precision instrument. The fluid and personal soul is then taken away by the fluid and material soul of the world (like Moses on the waters). The soul of the world is a force which always tends toward balance: it is necessary that the will triumph over it or that it triumphs over the will. ELIPHAS LEVI.

(4) Among others - magical prayer.

(5) The substance of the plastic Mediator is light, part volatile and part fixed. Volatile part - magnetic fluid. Fixed part - fluid or aroal body. The plastic Mediator is formed of astral or terrestrial light and it transmits to the human body double magnetization. The soul, in acting on this light by its volition, can dissolve it or coagulate it, project it or attract it. It is the mirror of the imagination and dreams. It reacts on the nervous system and thus produces the movements of the body. This light can dilate itself indefinitely and can communicate its image to considerable distances, it magnetizes the bodies submitted to human beings' actions and can, by constricting itself, attract them. It can take all shapes evoked by thought and, in the transitory coagulations of its beaming part, appear to the eyes and even produce a sort of tactile resistance. ELIPHAS LEVI.

The Psychic Body

The Personality After Death

By Papus

Co-founder of the Traditional Martinist Order

From *L'Initiation*, November 1890, pages 97 - 110.

In a recent issue of *L'Initiation* we presented the occult data regarding the astral body by using analogical figures. The success of that essay with our readers invites us to continue in this way; so the same method will be applied to the study of the soul and to the question of the conservation of the personality after death.

In order not to unduly complicate this presentation, we will refer to all the higher principles of humankind as the *psychic body* by analogy with the *astral body* and the physical body that constitute the other synthetic elements of the human being.

When we indeed want to merely address the issue under the general point of view, we can say that a human being is composed of three principles:

1. The physical body;
2. The living or astral body;
3. The soul or psychic body.

But if we want to precisely identify the action of these three principles, if we want to attempt to relate these principles to the current scientific data in our possession, it is necessary to make new divisions, as the physicist who wants to study the laws of colorization analyzes the three irreducible colors he has first determined: red, yellow, and blue.

The physicist who studies the solar spectrum deals with seven main colors; the occultist who studies the human being deals with seven general principles.

The physical body has three components: a material element - the body; an element animating this body - vitality; and finally, an intermediate element between the physical body and the higher principle - an element known as the astral body.

Jacob Boehme and Swedenborg studied the septenary division of humankind, and, moreover, we can show that this analysis follows step by step the color spectrum.

Indeed, the red does offer two more colors to the observer: orange and yellow. We will see that this is still true for the analysis of humankind or light. The same law governs all the phenomena of Nature.

The *astral body*, a median principle, also shows us:

1. One element that connects it to the lower principle, an element that has the name of the principle itself: the astral body.
2. One element that appears in the animal series in individuals with well developed thoracic ganglia: the animal soul, the origin of instinct.
3. One element that appears only when a cephalic ganglion exists in animals or in humans: the human soul, the origin of the intelligence. This last element also serves as the point of intersection to the median principle, the astral body, and to the higher principle, the psychic body.

In the color series, yellow, green and blue correspond to the three elements of humankind.

The *psychic body*, higher principle, shows:

1. The previous intermediate element: the human soul.
2. A special element existing in germ in modern humans: the spiritual soul origin of spirituality.
3. A still less developed element: the divine soul origin of the definite immortality of the personal monad.

Blue, indigo and violet correspond to these elements.

We are only giving here a rather compact nomenclature of these seven principles of which we previously studied the physiological location¹.

What is important to note for the establishment of our analogical figure is that two elements serve as hooks for all the others: the third (astral body) and the fifth (the human soul). In the same vein two of the colors, Yellow and Blue, are intermediate between two different series. The following figure shows these correspondences.

(1) The seven principles of man scientifically.

SOUL psychic body	7. Divine Soul	Violet
	6. Spiritual Soul	Indigo
ASTRAL	5. Human Soul	Blue
BODY	4. Animal Soul	Green
	3. Astral Body	Yellow
PHYSICAL	2. Vitality	Orange
BODY	1. Material body	Red

*

* *

The astral body thus appears to us as a double hook whose rod is the fourth principle (the animal soul).

How to represent the other two principles, the body and the soul?

The material body cannot be better represented than by a mass, a weight, a block of lead for example.

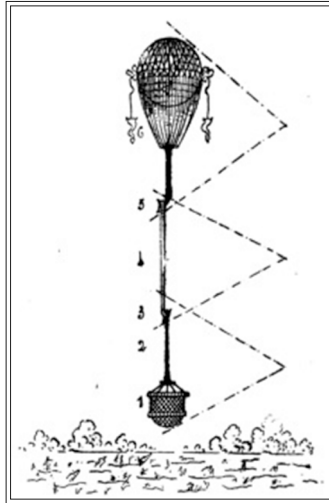
The soul, on the contrary, the essence of which is totally different, has to have a totally opposite image of all the previous. Instead of a heavy thing, it will absolutely be something light, a thing that in all appearances escapes the laws of gravity. What better figure than that of a balloon for this purpose?

I am well aware that it will still be argued that these are ingenuities unworthy of philosophical questions; but occultism is being accused of being incomprehensible to those who have not been beyond elementary school. Since we must show that the most abstract questions can be known to all, we leave there all the critics on the ingenuity of our images and proceed with our presentation.

A double hook holding up a balloon at the top, at the bottom a block of lead, is a very good representation of the composition of the human being with respect to the higher element, the soul, which we will especially talk about later on.

Since the three principles are divided by an analysis in seven, the following figure will show us this division exactly applied in the image of our balloon.

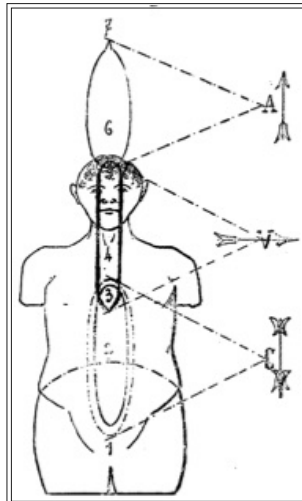
(See figure on following page.)



Analogical figure of the composition of the human being.

Humankind is thus conceived as a system of balanced forces yet put unsteadily. Depending on whether the material body (the mass of lead) or the psychic body (the balloon) prevails, the entire system will be inclined toward earth or toward heaven.

So that one does not think that these are purely metaphysical elements, we will summarize their location with the help of the following figure:



*The seven principles of the human being.
Analysis of the Soul (A), of Life (V) and of the body (C)*

It will be noted that some of these elements are located *outside of the being*. This portion forms the higher NON-HUMAN PERSONALITY or *higher unconscious* studied in detail by the occult schools almost exclusively and unknown by spiritualism.

The Spirit incarnated in humankind, the HUMAN PERSONALITY is formed by the fourth and fifth principles and is, therefore, placed between *two unconscious*; one higher and one lower. The lower unconscious is known by modern doctors as *Organic Life* and located in the sympathetic nerve².

These are not revelations made recently by some Mahatmas. This is the system of Paracelsus, Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, also known on the other hand for thousands of years in India, which we try our best to summarize.

The figure of the balloon already allows one to capture at a glance the esoteric theory of sin or the *Materialization of the Spirit* (predominance of the Lead block over the Balloon) and that of Ecstasy or *Spiritualization of the Body* (predominance of the Balloon over the Lead Block). We can likewise review most religious data that are scientific data not understood, as demonstrated by Wronski who calls dogmas porisms, that is to say, problems to demonstrate.

But let us leave there these minor points and examine a rather delicate question.

THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

Let us note well the positions of the psychic entities.

The HUMAN PERSONALITY is placed between two unconsciousnesses.

1. A higher unconscious, the higher NON-HUMAN PERSONALITY- or the self.

2. A lower unconscious, the lower NON-HUMAN PERSONALITY or Organic Life.

The Balloon represents the self (seventh and sixth principles).

The Lower Hook of the Balloon and the Upper Hook of the Astral Body represent the HUMAN PERSONALITY (fifth and fourth principles).

Finally, the other parts of the figure represent the other lowest elements.

What happens after death?

These various principles part from each other with each continuing their evolution *on a different plane*.

We all know that after death the material body evolves on the material plane, that its organic cells are going to animate new organisms and that the vitality spreads into Nature.

(2) Ref. *l'Initiation*, 9th Volume, No. 1.

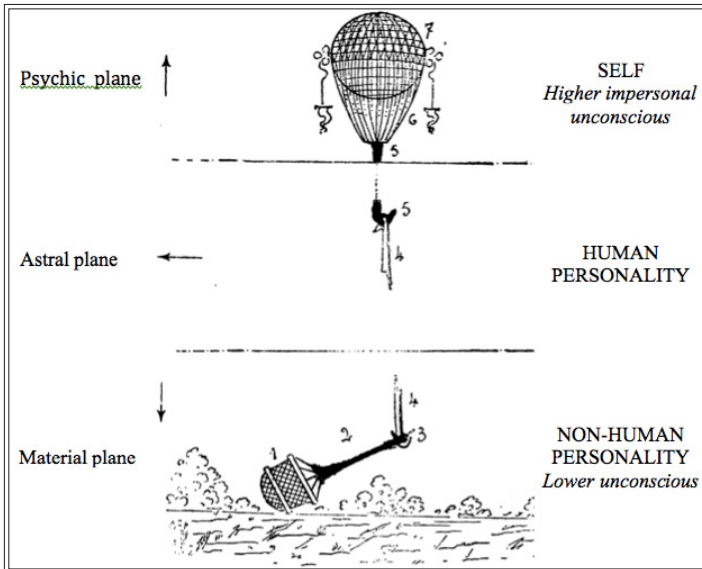
The HUMAN PERSONALITY also continues its evolution in the astral plane. This is a point clearly defined in the various works involved in spiritualism.

On the other hand, the SELF continues its evolution in the essentially impersonal Divine Plane. The last two principles, however, are always connected to one another, we will see later just how.

To summarize let us say that just as there are three distinct planes in the Universe, so there are three evolutions corresponding to these planes:

1. The Material Plane	In which the physical body will continue its evolution
2. The Astral Plane Personal Plane or Moral.	In which the HUMAN PERSONALITY continues its evolution
3. The Divine Plane or impersonal	In which the self continues its evolution

The figure below summarizes these data:



The state of the human being after death

What good does it do, one will argue, that this SELF distinguishes itself from the HUMAN PERSONALITY? This is a source of gibberish that upon which nobody can agree. We will show only one side of the issue, the

others requiring more space than we can dedicate to that study here.

*
* *

The primary doctrine of occultism teaches us the theory of reincarnation. We reincarnate several times during our gradual evolution.

If we now assume that John died, his Spirit, after completing its astral evolution will be reborn with his perispirit, as some spiritualists want, in the individuality of Peter, what will happen if one evokes John through Necromancy and Spiritualism?

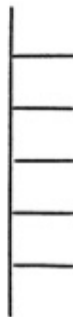
Will Peter have to fall asleep at that moment and send out of himself the primitive individuality of John with his perispirit?

The problem is further complicated if, instead of seeking the previous immediate incarnation, we seek the one that is above the tenth up to the twelfth degree in the series.

It is because Occultism responds better to all these difficulties that we wanted to expound its teachings in this regard.

*
* *

According to the doctrine of *Karma* and Reincarnation, the evolution of humankind can be compared to a long vertical rod cut by small horizontal rods.



The large vertical rod represents the divine principle the SELF that passes through all the personalities and bringing luck or bad luck in the next individuality, following the conduct of the previous individuality.

Each of the small horizontal bars represents one of the many HUMAN PERSONALITIES through which the divine Principle is evolving.

Therefore, if I was *John* in a previous life and I am *Peter* in this one, it is not the personality of John that was used to build my current personality; the divine principle alone that was in John is in me, or rather is above me, and is my ideal, and that this principle will be in my future personality.

The social position and the “luck” of each of these personalities will depend on the behavior of the previous personality, but this does not prevent each of the so generated personalities to keep intact all its individuality, all its HUMAN PERSONALITY, in the astral plane.

The Higher Principle, moving in a different direction, cannot affect in the least the evolution of the different personalities to which it is always linked, as the wire is related to the beads of the rosary it crosses.

When the solar system enters its time of rest, the Higher Principle, the SELF, can see all the HUMAN PERSONALITIES it has evolved manifest before it, and synthesize thoroughly all the merits and demerits acquired during its evolution. But we are discussing there a matter outside of our subject.

To sum it all up, let us note the ease with which the objection made earlier is resolved by the theory of the indefinite retention of the vibrations generated at any given time in the astral plane. Each of the individualities remains, linked to every other by the Higher Principle, but independent from the others in its special evolution.

The Egyptian cross that is found on the Tarot represents at best this theory, the vertical branch representing the SELF and each horizontal branch a differentiated HUMAN PERSONALITY with its special plan of evolution.



PAPUS.

The Alchemical Monuments of Paris

By Philophotes

From *L'Initiation* February 1893, pages 97 - 109.

Initiatic Section

I

We understand by “alchemical monument” any symbolic building initially built entirely or partly by an alchemist, or which has later received a hermetic interpretation by the puffers*, although the founder was an unknown character. Flamel’s foundations fall into the first category. Notre-Dame of Paris and Sainte-Chapelle are especially classified in the second one. For the latter, we will put forth nothing that has not been written either by writers who have had to deal with the issue, or by alchemists themselves. There are relatively few written documents; they are found scattered in Sauval, abbot Villain, Gohorry, Borel, La Croix du Maine, etc. As regards the treatises dedicated extensively to the question, we know only about two, one owed to Gobineau de Montluisant and the other to the Sieur de la Borde.

We will first say a few words about the missing monuments: at the forefront are Nicholas Flamel’s foundations¹. In 1389, the illustrious adept erected an arcade at Holy Innocents’ Cemetery. A colonnade similar to that of Rivoli Street surrounded the cemetery.

This arcade stood on the front of the cemetery near Lingerie Street; it was marked with the N and F, initials that we find in all Flamel’s foundations. He had painted an entirely black man extending an arm to a second arcade that he built later and loaded with hieroglyphs. The figure was holding with the other hand a scroll on which was written: ‘I see marvels many of which “strike me.”’ Furthermore, on the same arcade in front of the black man was a golden plate on which one could see an eclipse or conjunction of the Sun and the Moon and another planet characterized by the sign of

* Puffer (*noun*) - One who claims achievement in Alchemy but has insufficient knowledge of the operations.

(1) All information on Flamel is taken from a book on which M. Poisson is working at this time: *Life of Nicolas Flamel*. To be published in May 1893. (Editor’s Note)

Venus or Mercury rather. There were other plates underneath that one, including one representing a shield divided into four by a cross; the latter was bearing a crown of thorns containing in its center a bleeding heart where a reed was standing. In one of the quarters we see YHVH in Hebrew characters in the midst of a crowd of light rays over a black cloud; in the second quarter a cloud on which are seen a trumpet, a spear, a palm, and a crown; in the third we see the earth filled with a rich harvest, and in the fourth globes of fire.

That arcade had the same fate as the rest of Flamel's foundations. It was gradually destroyed by the superstitious and greedy visitors who removed stone fragments as souvenirs, pieces of the golden metal to try its virtue. In the time of Borel, there were four golden plates on the arcade, three in the time of Gohorry and none at all in the eighteenth century. Finally, in 1761, this arcade was rebuilt, and what remained of it disappeared.

That same year of 1389, Flamel erected with his own funds the small portal of Saint-Jacques-la-Boucherie Church, facing Marivaux Street. He was represented with his wife Pernelle, and on the western jamb of the door was a small carved angel holding in its hands a stone disc in which was embedded a black marble disc in which was enclosed a sealed golden cross. This magic gold must have tempted the puffers many times; yet an unscrupulous but avid alchemist stole it only in the mid-seventeenth century.

In 1407, Flamel erected a second arcade at the Holy Innocents' Cemetery, much more interesting than the first, because Flamel himself has explained to us its double hermetic and theological meaning in his *Book of Hieroglyphic Figures*. We find a reproduction of these figures on the cover of *Theories and Symbols* from M. Poisson. On the side of the arcade could first be seen a writing tablet locked in a small niche, this is the symbol of the philosophical egg enclosed in the Athanor.

To the left stood Saint Paul, dressed in a citrine robe embroidered with gold, holding a naked sword. At his feet was Flamel himself dressed in an orange, white, and black robe; it is the symbolic indication of the colors taken by the philosopher's stone when it changes from black to white. On the side, that is to say in the middle of the arcade, on a green background, three characters are resurrecting, two men and a woman all entirely white, two angels above and overlooking the angels, the face of the Savior coming to judge the world, wearing a white and citrine dress. The green background shows that among other colors of the work, between blackness and whiteness, greenness sometimes appears. The three risen ones are the body, the spirit,

and the soul (Sulfur, Salt, and Mercury), the stone components. The white stone or small elixir is the Lord.

To the right, pairing with Saint Paul, Saint Peter could be seen wearing a red robe, with a key in the right hand; kneeling at his feet, Pernelle wears an orange dress; this group symbolizes the red color that appears last and indicates the delightful success of the work. So we find, by proceeding from left to right, the three main colors of the work. Smaller figures, distributed in decorative borders below the three groups described above, symbolized the principles of matter and the operations of the Great Work.

These were Flamel's main foundations, but since this adept had decorated with hieroglyphs all his houses, all the churches he patronized, the alchemists visited in addition to the Cemetery of the Innocents and Saint-Jacques Church, the portal of Sainte-Geneviève-des-Ardents, his numerous houses in Montmorency Street and Saint-Martin Street; the church of Saint Nicolas-des-Champs; the chapel of Saint-Gervais Hospital, etc. Little or nothing remains of these numerous monuments: the mutilated Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs Church; the bell tower of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, known as the Saint-Jacques Tower, and the tombstone of Nicolas Flamel in the Cluny Museum! If some churches endowed by Flamel were destroyed by revolutionary vandalism, several of his foundations had to suffer especially from greedy puffers, such as the arcades of the Innocents' Cemetery and especially the house he lived at the corner of Marivaux and Ecrivains Streets (Writers' Street) opposite the small gate of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie Church. Sauval related the story in a few words. It was the basement of the house of Ecrivains Street that was the most visited, because that is where, according to Tradition, Flamel retreated to work.

In 1624, an alchemist friar, Father Pacifique, had large excavations run on the site unsuccessfully; after him, came a wealthy German nobleman who turned the house upside down, without finding anything whatsoever. Then a woman who lived in the house found in a place not yet searched some flasks full of the philosopher's stone, but ignoring what it was, she threw it away, thinking certainly that it was some unknown, perhaps dangerous drug. The research and excavation did not stop until the house itself had disappeared.

II

No more than two buildings exist now, the most important being without contest Notre-Dame of Paris. According to tradition, most of the

hermetic hieroglyphs of the cathedral were executed on the instructions of William, Bishop of Paris and learned alchemist.

The triple portal is the most outstanding alchemical part of the monument; we find the explanation in the fourth volume of the Library of chemical philosophers, under the title: *Very curious explanation of the mysteries and hieroglyphic and physical figures at the great portal of the metropolitan and cathedral church of Notre-Dame of Paris, by Mr. Esprit Gobineau de Montluisant, friend of the alchemical and natural philosophy*. Here is the summary of this explanation: The left portal represents, above, God the Father, holding a man and an angel, it is the spirit or rather the universal matter, the wet radical, the Hyle of the Greeks, which, by a differentiation, generates two principles: Sulfur and Mercury.

This is the supercelestial world. Below, are two angels; they represent the heavenly seed or the universal spirit descending from the upper world to fertilize the second world or celestial area. The other symbols represent the lower or terrestrial world. It shows three children in the clouds, who, it seems, are the three principles: Sulfur, Salt, and Mercury. Then come the symbols of air, water, and earth, which are the lower elements, fire being the higher element. A bull and a ram indicate the months of March and April: matter is prepared in March, and in April the mixture is made, the flask is sealed and the work begins. A sleeping man and two vials or flasks signify the radical salt of all things attracting Universal Life or astral light. Finally, we note below four stone figures from ground level: a dragon, is the philosopher's stone; a mascarón that represents the Sophists, puffers, and cacochymists; a dog and a bitch which are the dog of Armenia and the Corascene dog, mythical animals symbolizing the fixed and volatile that can be seen on every page in philosophers' writings; and finally a lion, symbolizing the vibrant salt. It should be noted that there are many other figures in this portal, but they had no significance for the alchemists, since Gobineau de Montluisant disdainfully leaves them aside. He then goes on to describe the hermetic hieroglyphs of the right portal. The twelve signs of the zodiac first catch the eye, but this is what Gobineau has to say:

In the first part of the right side are the signs of the water bearer (Aquarius) and the fishes (Pisces), inactive, which one must notice and note. Then come the ram (Aries), the bull (Taurus), and the twins (Gemini) in activity, one above the other. And above the twins is the sign of Leo, though out of place, since it is the crab's (Cancer) place, but we must consider this a mystery. The signs of Aquarius and Pisces are inactive; the goal is to specifically signify that it not

possible to have or gather universal matter during the two months of January and February. As regards the ram (Aries) and the bull (Taurus) and the twins (Gemini) in activity, one below the other, and ruling in March, April, and May, they indicate that it is in this time that the alchemical sage should pay attention to matter and take it precisely when it comes down from heaven and from the airy fluid, where it only kisses the lips of the mixtures then passes over the belly of the submissive plant buds and vegetal leaves, for a triumphant entry under these three universal principles in the bodies, through their golden doors, and there become the seed of the heavenly dew, symbolically speaking.

A flying dragon looks at Aries, Taurus, and Gemini, months in which are performed the major operations of the work. One must, however, point out to the figures of the four seasons corresponding to the four elements.

Finally Gobineau translates for us the symbols of the central portal. On the right can be seen an eagle which is the Universal Spirit, a caduceus which contains the two principles, Sulfur and Mercury, the Fixed and the Volatile, a Phoenix which is the red Stone, a Ram indicating as above the month in which to start the work, a man holding a chalice, which is the magnet made by the adept whom the Philaethes speaks of so much in his *Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King*. Last is seen a cross, the universal symbol of the four elements. It is still at the central portal that we find the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins in which the alchemist Claude Frollo is much interested in the novel by Victor Hugo: *Notre-Dame of Paris*.

We will mention again, at the left portal, the pillar that divides the entrance representing a bishop trampling a dragon. Gobineau mentioned it and Cambriel did after him. Here is Cambriel's interpretation:

At the bottom of this hieroglyph... are on the left side and the side of the Hôtel-Dieu (the old one), two small protruding full spheres representing the metal materials, raw or coming out of the mine... on the opposite side are also the same two spheres or materials, but worked or ridden of the dirt of the mines that were used to create them. And in front, on the side of the square by the entrance of the church, are also the same two spheres or materials but improved or completely ridden of the dirt of the mines by means of the earlier fusions. The first are the metal materials needed to begin the hermetic work. The second ones, when transformed, manifest to us their inner virtue and relate to this man who is in a box, which,

being surrounded and covered in flaming fire is born in the fire. And the third ones, improved or completely freed from the dirt refer to the Babylonian dragon or Philosophical mercury, in which are combined all the virtues of metallic materials... This bishop has a finger to his mouth to tell one who sees it and come to learn what it represents: "If you recognize and guess what I stand for by this hieroglyph, say nothing..."

Some of these sculptures still exist in part; the ones we are going to discuss were destroyed. One could see on the right, on entering the nave, a colossal statue of Saint Christopher. He was portrayed crossing the waters, carrying the infant Jesus on his shoulders. This statue was twenty-eight feet high. Erected in 1413 by Antoine des Essarts, it still existed in the eighteenth century. Des Essarts, watched his brother Peter (compromised like him in the party of the Duke of Burgundy) beheaded at the Halles, and he himself had escaped from prison only by a miracle; the statue of Saint Christopher was only the fulfillment of a vow made in his escape.

So there was nothing alchemical in it, which did not prevent the puffers to see in this statue a symbol of matter. What strengthened them in this opinion is that, in the reeds figured at the feet of Saint Christopher, and also on the pedestal of the statue of Antoine des Essarts, were represented two vials.

At the bottom of the nave, on the left side, a gravestone could be seen leaning against the church wall, next to the stairs of the tower. The singularity of this stone justified the attention of the alchemists. It could be divided into three parts. In the upper plane or heavenly world, we see Jesus Christ sitting surrounded by a halo and a globe under his feet. His raised right hand made the esoteric mysterious sign; with his left hand he holds an open book; two swords come out of his mouth. He is surrounded by flames and by a row of twelve angels. In the four corners are depicted four angels blowing trumpets. Christ is the red stone; the twelve angels, the twelve operations; the four celestial musicians, the four elements; the globe symbolizes perfection. A man rising from a tomb occupies the median plane. To the right, a man holds a chalice from which emerge four snakes; on the left, a haloed saint holds a closed book; all this relates to the white stone. In the lower level lies a corpse eaten by worms: the representation of black stone; operation: putrefaction; color: the raven head. In summary, the three planes are the three principles: the body, the spirit, and the soul (sulfur, salt, and mercury), and finally evolution passing successively from black to white, then red.

Apart from the tombstone of Canon Etienne Yvert and the statue of Saint Christopher, most of the other hieroglyphs and above all the portal were attributed to William of Paris.

In addition, some alchemists state, as related by Sauval, that it was he who erected at the entrance to the square in front of the church, just in front of the Hotel-Dieu, this tall and poorly made statue with snakes at its feet, but they do not know whether it is his face or that of Mercury. For, since in the days of old public education was dispensed in the square in front of churches, which moreover is a space and this figure is set in a crossroads, scholars hold that it is a Mercury or Therme that has been placed there in imitation of the Ancients.

And further:

It is, they said, the same bishop William who had engraved in the portal a *lapis-lazuli* colored stone with gold on the edges, the Job that one sees among his friends who mock him with these words: *Patientia, Job*; that by Job he figured the philosopher's stone whose mater has to suffer all kinds of alterations and martyrizations by the relation of R. Lull before reaching its perfection: *sub conservazione formae specificæ salva anima*.

Similarly, the sacrifice of Abraham with an angel, a sheep, and a faggot [a bundle of sticks for a fire], is the sun, fire, and the craftsperson, the three parties that compose the stone and the work. The long theory of the twenty-eight kings that adorn the facade was also given, according to them, a hermetic meaning. They went further and claimed that William of Paris had sealed a provision of the philosopher's stone in one of the pillars of the choir, and on one of the doors is seen a crow whose gaze is directed at the exact point where the Philosophical treasure is located and they related to the fact that this crow is the only one of all the sculptures of the triple portal, that looks into the interior of the church.

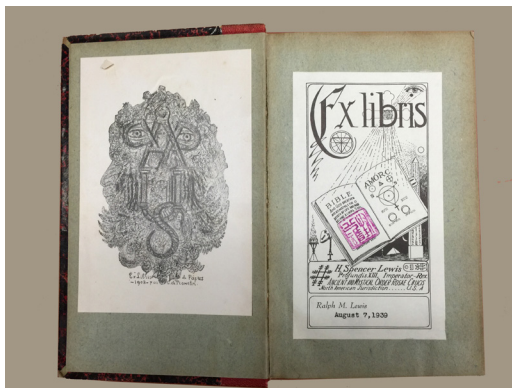
III

Finally, still according to Sauval, the Hermetists claimed to find alchemy at the portal of the Sainte-Chapelle. "The one at the Sainte-Chapelle is one of them of which they say are all full of hieroglyphs; they strongly base their assumption on two angels one of which is sticking its hand in a cloud and the other in a pot."

There were many other alchemical sites in Paris in the Middle Ages, such as the large iron andirons of Ferronnerie Street, the sower of the stained glass window of Saint-Jacques-la-Boucherie Church, etc.

In summary, Paris was the most important Alchemy center in the Middle Ages, while Spain and Italy had very few alchemists, because of the persecutions by the Inquisition; France, more tolerant, as it were, served as a refuge for hermetic scholars. For an alchemist to be persecuted in this country, he had to have a case with the king himself. Puffer if he deceived him, adept if he refused to reveal his secret, the result was exile or death. But those facts having occurred only twice in France are nothing compared to the burning of books in Spain, the hangings carried out in Germany and Italy; also this relative tolerance was enough to explain the great number of alchemists in France in the good old days. Alchemy has now lost its former splendor and, to our knowledge, there is hardly in our country fifty practicing alchemists; the number is much higher in England and especially in the Germanic countries. For most, they are highly educated and have found their convictions in chemistry. We wish them, these brothers, to find and shake the old building that has also become inadequate for modern chemistry.

This article was written by Philophotes (“Lover of the Light”), which was the pseudonym of Albert Poisson (1868 - 1894), a passionate French alchemist who studied with Papus. When Poisson died at the age of twenty-four, he bequeathed his library to Papus and Marc Haven. His book entitled *The History of Alchemy, Fourteenth Century, Nicolas Flamel, His Life, His Foundation, His Works* is part of the collection of the Rosicrucian Research Library. The bookplates in the version of this book shown below demonstrate that it once belonged to Papus (bookplate on left), then to Rosicrucian Emperor H. Spencer Lewis (bookplate on right.) Later, the book belonged to Sovereign Grand Master Ralph M. Lewis.



(MORALITY)

The Cult of the Self

by F.-Ch. Barlet

Court-Appointed Defense Speech for Maurice Barrès versus Quaerens
To Mister Quaerens,
From *L'Initiation*, January 1892, pages 5 – 18.

Modern Introduction written by Steven Armstrong, S.I.

The following essay from *L'Initiation* (January 1892) is a spirited defense by F.-Ch. Barlet of a philosophical trilogy by Auguste-Maurice Barrès from 1888-1891, which was popularly known collectively as *The Cult of the Self* or *The Trilogy of the Self*. In it Barrès discusses, among other topics, the evolution of the Self, and the relationship of the Self and Society, and the resulting Service that evolves with the Self. Barrès was influenced by Symbolism, the artistic movement at the heart of the *Salons de la Rose+Croix* in Paris during the 1890s.

In addition to his literary work, Barrès served in the French Chamber of Deputies from 1889-1893, representing the region of Nancy.

Barlet was the *nom de plume* of Albert Faucheux, an important Parisian Occultist and an associate of Papus and Augustin Chaboseau. He served as the Grand Master of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix beginning in 1879 on the death of Stanislas de Gauta, and served on the first Supreme Council of the Martinist Order, later known as the Traditional Martinist Order. He was one of the editors of the review *L'Initiation*. (Most of the issues of *L'Initiation* are available online in French at <https://www.martinists.org/l-initiation>.)

Barlet is responding to earlier comments on Barrès's work in *L'Initiation* by "Quaerens" (that is, "a Seeker") in November 1891. In an essay "The Real Plague," he argues that Egoism is at the heart of all the ills that were plaguing humanity at the time, chiefly militarism and misery. In the course of this, Barrès's *The Cult of the Self* is singled out for excoriation.

Barlet's defense consists in distinguishing the selfish egotism, which he, like Quaerens, decries, from the Universal Principle (the One Self) which is within each of us. As our realization of this Divine Self within evolves, we

become capable of higher service in Society.

The Realization of Self, and Service to humanity, our fellow creatures, and our planet continue to be vital to our life on Earth.

Here is the original article, translated from the French.

DEAR RESPECTED COLLEAGUE,

Please allow that by offering you, after many others certainly, all my congratulations on your vigorous article of November 2, 1891, on the *Real Plague*. I confess that the enthusiasm it inspired has happened to be for me, and for more than a reader perhaps, troubled by a painful feeling, because of the work you mixed it with. It seemed to me as if reading a beautiful sentence in itself yet issued by the effect of a judicial error. Let me, I pray you, appeal to your very self, although I was not asked to, if not by a strong desire to submit to you a set of subtle arguments, perhaps, but essential in my opinion, that this cause borrows from the doctrines that we hold dear.

Unlike you, indeed, dear and honored colleague, I believe that the *Cult of the Self* belongs to the purest occultism.

You did not have, I think, the opportunity to read this remarkable *Examination* that comes before the new edition of *In the Eye of the Barbarians*.; you would have seen that what you consider “a simple literary joke, a paradox for the love of art,” is instead a seriously meditated upon doctrine, vigorously spread by lectures or by the press, and which quickly reached out to our youth. The author’s explanations would have you understand also how his doctrine deserves such success, how we should rejoice at it and help it.

Think not that I did not want along with you to criticize selfishness, a principle of multiplicity, and primary source of all suffering.

I cordially applaud your just imprecations against this spirit of evil. But if, by the poverty of language, its name is at the head of the work, it is not the subject of the books of Maurice Barrès, full of a lofty spirituality.

Far from being here in front of this *real plague* whose haughty brutality causes, unrelenting, all the outbursts of generous hearts, we are in this serene atmosphere of principles where the depth and delicacy of thoughts can only be perceived through the firmest quietude of the soul.

In the metaphysical language of this region, *Cult of the Self* no longer means as below, the worship of the personal self, but *the Culture of the Self of*

Fichte and Schelling; this Universal Principle which lies hidden in the depth of the human being as in a sanctuary, assaulted, constantly threatened by the Non-self, by the *Barbarians*, who, despite the title, are the true egoists.

That very use of the expression egoism or egotism is easily explained. Staunch advocate of the Fraternity as one can be, it is impossible to interpret it as a complete abnegation of our own person on every occasion. Is it not clear that dedication must have its limits? Personally, I could never understand, but, as a vulgar degeneration, the legend that shows us the Buddha (a superhuman being who has renounced the splendors of Nirvana to educate humankind) ended his heavenly mission by throwing himself to the mercy of the tigress in search of prey for her cubs. No: each of us has our mission, our role (persona), our character to play in this world. It places us above a series of beings of a lower order, against which we have to save it; defending it against any external danger, removing all that is opposed to the fullness of its expansion is therefore a must.

Thus there are two versions of egoism!

One is aggressive, absorbent; it is a devouring center; it is the vulgar egoism, *nothingness in action*; the destructive plague you so rightly vowed to loathe.

The other, solely resistant, is initially unshakable to become a radiant center; it is the philosophical egoism of Being that watches over its very essence, *freedom*.

The first carries both *pauperism* and *militarism*; the hideous war of conquest! It is the war of the Barbarian.

To the second relate dignified and fortifying poverty; the cleansing war of defense, protection of the *Homeland*, of the *Self*.

It is the Barbaric Egoism that creates the Egotism of the *Self*; moreover, there lies the cause of the mystery in occultism. If the *Barbarians* are at war, it is to the satisfaction of the lower desires, while the *Self* that is defended by the Egotism against them is the source of the highest human sentiments; it is the inner humankind, this delicate seed that must grow constantly as the rationale of present humankind, and hope for its future.

Hear the statements so crisp and so elegant of Maurice Barrès on this point:

I understand that we will talk about solidarity: The first point

was to exist. And if you feel free from the Barbarians and truly the owner of your soul, look at humanity and seek a common path for you to commune.

... Ah! Let the moment come where the Unconscious will have me advance up the ladder of beings, that I embrace the Universe in all awareness! Then I will have reached that Self that is complete, that is my principle and my end, and the impulse of my culture. I will be absolute consciousness; I will be the Divine!

And this formula too:

“A common need agitates each and every one of us, defend our Self, then expand it to the point that it contains everything.”

Is not this a full Initiation? Are not its purpose and necessary preliminary effect clearly indicated there? Do you not recognize at all that which in occultism we call *psychic culture*? The Γνωθι σεαυτόν of ancient Initiates?

Knowing, wanting, daring, *keeping silent*. Is not this imprisoning the *Self* in the citadel of the individual conscience, protected from the attack of the Barbarians, in order to freely cultivate it? Besides, see the very code of Fraternity: the Gospel; how many examples does it not offer to us regarding the defense of the Self? The indignation against the Pharisees; the merchants in the temple chased with the whip; Christ's mother even pushed away as a foreigner when the esoteric unfolds; and the order given to him to leave his next of kin, and the statement that the Gospel takes war outside with inner peace!

The thing is that devotion, like any force in nature, becomes widely fruitful, and reaches the magical hills of the Fraternity only on the condition that it is *universalized*. If it is individualized, if it allows itself to fall into the *nets* of pity, it will perish there in favor of the forces of unimportant things. Undoubtedly a superb role, perfectly proper to provide what Buddhists call a rich *Dewachen*, but not to raise us up to the sublime spheres of the Fraternity. Remember, dear colleague, this beautiful fiction of the initiate Bulwer Lytton, entitled *Zanoni*. As this disciple of Mejnour, an initiate for centuries just as he was, yields to pity for Glyndon, and to individual love, his transcendental faculties are disturbed, fade, and he eventually dies, whereas the implacable Mejnour, master of the *Self*, survives to continue the great work.

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Do not fear that such a doctrine could be disfigured, by revealing itself, in the midst of the Barbarians: such a high spirituality is not to touch them. One cannot taste it unless knowing, like Philip, “to understand oneself as a moment of an immortal thing.” It must be “a Self that desires to keep itself, know itself, in front of fantasy, taste, pleasure, the much vivid wandering among the young and sensible beings.”

One must in order to enjoy this high culture, oppose “those who live as in a perpetual *Mardi Gras*, under formulas borrowed from the fashionable costumer.” One must “know and be willing to strive to grow.”

These are indeed chosen souls that Maurice Barrès prepares for us through the cult of the Self; he creates the breeding ground of that fraternal humanity your generous soul wants with all its heart. His disciples are the initiates of tomorrow for whom we will only have been the weak precursors. What makes me think that they may well be as many as we wish, is that the cult of the Self adds to its high qualities the advantage of being the transcendent morality best suited to the spirit of our time and to the providential movement of progress.

The evidence of this assertion goes back to very important observations that we will find perfectly set in the work of Maurice Barrès.

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Let us first consider the cult of the Self on the philosophical viewpoint. Morality based on pure sentiment is no longer acceptable today, however high its expression; the one driven by common sense is not enough either. Put in defiance against all our religious or scholarly instincts, we want to only obey the doctrines founded on experimental science.

Positivism, which was their first expression, turned first into utilitarianism with Stuart Mill and Spencer, then into monistic pessimism with Schopenhauer rehabilitated, and Hartmann, the philosopher of the Unconscious. But you know what anguish these subtle and cold morals torment us with. Similar to some mathematical demonstrations, they prove themselves without convincing us; they are like automatons living but without souls, to pull us along; they advance without going anywhere.

Now that spirit, the warmth that they lack, is given to them by the cult of the Self while synthesizing the forms of their evolution. The fatal

step is accomplished through it, here is crossed the threshold that separates naturalism from spiritualism. Thus, by reading Maurice Barrès, one wonders if it is still Goethe, Spencer, or Hartmann that we are hearing; if not rather Spinoza, Shelling, or Wronsky.

Hear these lines:

Here is first the reason for being of this scientific morality:

“Not finding in their entrance into life, a master, axiom, religion, or prince of men¹ that impose on them, the sincere youth should first serve the needs of their Self; the first point is to exist.”

Here are their results:

We are the ones creating the Universe; such is the truth that permeates every page of this little work. Hence the conclusions: the Self discovers a universal harmony as it has a wider and sincere consciousness of the world. This is understandable, it creates in accordance to itself; it is sufficient that it actually exists in a universe that is solely that of its thoughts, to see prevail the beautiful order according to which the designs of a lucid mind will necessarily adjust to each other!

Here is, finally, the purpose much higher than that of pessimism:

“Thus, through vivid expansion, the Self will melt in the unconscious. Not disappear there, but extend for itself the inexhaustible forces of humanity, of universal life.”

You have noticed, undoubtedly, that the spiritualism of Maurice Barrès is still wholly Indian; it is closer to what among us we call esoteric Buddhism; this is still the character of its current opportunity. The Buddhist Protestantism is indeed, by the subtlety of its metaphysics, the natural intermediary between positive philosophy and spiritualism. The reason is clear: it is negative as our science, in that it thinks primarily to *receive* for its own benefit; but at the same time as it has its foot rest on our individual egoism, its head rises to the highest metaphysical regions. A great occultist has clearly defined it by calling it “spiritualized egoism.” We must rise to still more detachment to attain that providence-like spirituality by forgetting ourselves for universal redemption. It is surely difficult and rare to get there directly from our deep individualistic analysis. This is why esoteric Buddhism is more easily spread among Protestant peoples who have suffocated their sentiment the more, or

(1) A very remarkable Trinity the author is careful to point out; it indeed marks the different powers in History, with their chronological order giving the law of evolution.

among scholars exclusively impassionate by accuracy². Here at home, India attracts by its positivism but repels by its dryness; Maurice Barrès entertains it through conscious activity; conserving it in the Nirvana.

Let us examine the sociological point of view:

The above quotations have already shown to you how much it takes for the philosophical doctrine of Barrès to inflict a harsh denial upon his political views. There is however in their consistency such interesting observations that they deserve more attention.

Notice first how this doctrine is essentially democratic.

Let us review the definition of the *Barbarian*, it is not the uneducated being at all; Barrès strongly denies this heresy:

By what gross professional obsession would I separate humanity in artists, makers of works of art, and non-artists? If Philip complains to live under the eye of the Barbarians, it is not because he feels oppressed by humans without culture or traders; his grief is to live among beings whose vision of life is a dream opposed to the one that he conceived of it, even if they were also gifted scholars.

The *Barbarian* is the usual pedantic, inflated with the undigested science of others; he is the “system-person mounting the pessimistic donkey”; the satisfied individual who suffocates under the mask of *conventions* “under the formulas borrowed from the fashionable costumers” all the protests of oppressed nature to his advantage.

All their beliefs, all their feelings are Court coats hanging obsolete and flabby on unworthy souls! - They contradict the unconscious by eluding to play the character for which they were fashioned from all eternity - Soldiers, judges, moralists, educators, to distract the fools from the terror you put them in, let them be clearly exposed under your harsh reasoning, the remorse of surplus and the imbecility of most among you.

Now where do we find them widespread, these barbarians living in a “continuous” Mardi Gras? Where? If not in the social category that likes to proclaim, according to their appetites, even more than from their duties: *the ruling class*! It has known, as had in the past religion and nobility, its time of greatness and good work. However, its downfall is for the most part in the corruption of the *end of century*.

(2) This is what explains the success of the Theosophical Society in England and America, and its failure in France.

Here we see the great law of evolution that Lejay will show us in his next book: the succession of the three Trinitarian principles in the form of nobility, bourgeoisie and people, to achieve their synthesis. The bourgeoisie cycle is ending: the torch of civilization is now passed on to democracy; the social form to approach the still idealistic reign of Fraternity must currently pass through it. "The popular soul is the guardian of virtues past and keeps the tradition of the race; within it like in the interior of a crucible where any action bears its share of immortality, the future is coming."

However, the People are not a *Barbarian*, and also one of the ultimate goals of the Self free from barbarism is to participate in the happiness of the people. The cult of the Self is completely democratic:

The people are not a Barbarian because they live by instinct, are spontaneous, natural, and true.

Humankind united by a common passion creates a soul. Each person possesses one within, but does not even know it; only in the atmosphere of a large gathering, in contact with some passions that strengthen the science that, forgetting itself and its small thoughts, it allows its unconscious mind to expand.

The popular soul is born from the sum of these unconscious minds. To create it, only workers will do, common people, more spontaneous, less tied by small interests than the thoughtful minds. It is similar to each of those who compose it, and is identical to none. It surpasses any individual in wisdom, vitally. What it decides spontaneously are the necessary conditions for life.

Also, how cherished by Barrès is this collective spirit!

"What is the soul of the people? I want to shudder with it, understand it through a detailed analysis, and, for love finally get to be the conscience of it."

These feelings belong to the third degree culture of the Self; I recall the expressions that indicate it, as they are essential to another *social* viewpoint.

It is not enough that the Self existed; as it is alive, it must be cultivated, acted upon mechanically (study, curiosity, and travels).

If it is hungry again, give it action (seeking fame, politics, industry, and finance).

And if it feels too dry, follow your instinct, love the humble, the poor, those who make the effort to grow.

Do not you perceive in this Trinitarian program the essential quality without which democracy almost always perished: the hierarchy!

Not the artificial, tyrannical hierarchy, that by self-preservation and lack of anything better, we take from the old legacy of past civilizations; but this natural hierarchy that confirms equality, ensures freedom, and develops fraternity, because it is based on the natural growth of the Self from Instinct up to Intuition. Here, authority is the essential, real value.

At the bottom the Self that seeks to grow by mechanical action, opens its seeds -The Laborer.

In the middle the liberated Self emerges in full force as an ardent social laborer: in charge of the State, glory, industry, high finance, and government, the class which truly and rightly directs political society.

At the top the Self, which rises up to the love for the humble and the weak, that forgets itself into devotion, the true nobility, that of the soul.

Let us add to that the state described elsewhere where “the Self has expanded to the point of including All.” Will you not have both of the major degrees of *Initiation* and the classes of this *Synarchy*, which is based on sacred science!

Such is the true significance of the cult of the Self. That is how it must lead to this social form for which you call the advent, where there will be no *Barbarian*, or they will be stifled. I do not mean war and poverty (necessary tests for still many centuries to come), but their hideous caricatures: the militarism by which might is right, and pauperism, the shameful side of opulent egotism.

It would remain to see through which institutions this fruitful cult of the Self could be promoted. However, I dare not even extend this much long defense. Besides, you have undoubtedly seen that institution. The vigorous satire of Maurice Barrès pretty well denounces it too:

It is a public education, fairly free in its ideas to develop in every one our own originality, instead of mutilating it in an academic mold; fairly widespread to present itself to every capacity; and finally quite complete and synthetic enough to lead each student exactly to the special rank which he or she is capable of.

I cannot demonstrate to you here its possibility. However, here is much more than enough, I hope, to convince you, dear colleague, that the cult of the Self must meet the most legitimate aspirations of your generosity.



Papus (Gérard Encausse, M.D.)