

*Meditation on the
Seventh Major Arcanum of the Tarot*

THE CHARIOT

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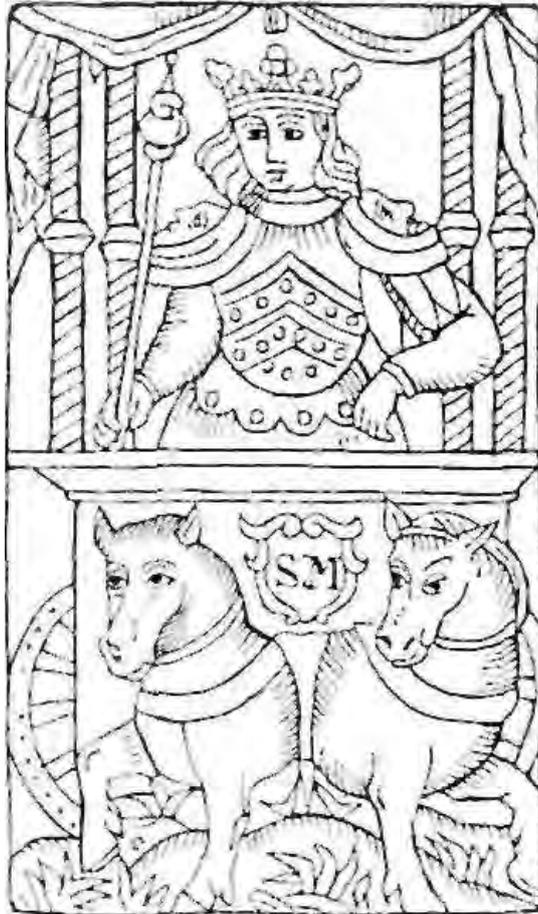
Then the devil left him, and behold.
Angels came and ministered to him.
(Matthew iv, 11)

When the unclean spirit has gone out of man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest; and finding none he says: I will return to my house from whence I came. And when he comes he finds it swept and put in order. Then he goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.

(Luke xi, 24-26)

I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.
(John v, 43)

LETTER VII



THE CHARIOT

Dear Unknown Friend,

Like the preceding Arcana, the Arcanum "The Chariot" has a twofold aspect, it represents, from one side, he who—having triumphed over the three temptations—remains faithful to the vows of obedience, poverty and chastity; and it represents, from another side, the danger of *the fourth temptation*, which is the most subtle and intimate temptation, and is the invisible synthesis of the three temptations: he spiritual temptation of the victorious through his victory itself. It is the temptation to act "in one's own name", to act as master instead of as servant.

The seventh Arcanum is that of *mastership* understood in the sense of temptation as well as achievement. The three Gospel quotations which are found at the head of this Letter delineate the nature of the ideas here.

Paul Marteau says that the general and abstract meaning of the seventh Card is that it "represents *selling in motion in seven states*, i.e. in all domains" (*Le Tarot de Marseille*, Paris, 1949, p. 33), and it is exactly this that we have designated above as "mastership". For mastership is not the state of being moved, but rather that of being able to set in motion.

The Son of Man resisted being moved by the three temptations in the wilderness; consequently, it is he who set in motion the forces which served him. "Then the devil left him, and behold, Angels came and ministered to him."

Here, again, is a fundamental law of sacred magic. One could formulate it in the following way: *That which is above being as that which is below, renunciation below sets in motion forces of accomplishment above and the renunciation of that which is above sets in motion forces of accomplishment below*. What is the practical meaning of this law?

It is the following.

When you resist a temptation or renounce something desired below, you set in motion by this very fact forces of realisation of that which *corresponds above* to that which you come to renounce below. It is this that the Master designates by the word "reward" when he says, for example, that it is necessary to guard against practising righteousness before other people in order to gain their regard, "for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew vi, 1). *Reward* is therefore the action that one sets in motion above by the renunciation of desire for things below. It is the "yes" from above corresponding to the "no" from below. And this correspondence constitutes a basis for magical realisation and for a fundamental law of Christian esotericism or Hermeticism. Let us guard ourselves from taking it lightly, for here is given to us one of the principal keys of sacred magic. It is not desire which bears *magical* realisation, but rather the renunciation of desire (that you have formerly experienced, of course). For renunciation through indifference has no moral — and therefore no magical — value.

Desire, and then renounce—here we have the practical magical meaning of the "law" of reward. To say that one has to renounce what one desires amounts to saying that one has to practise the three sacred vows — obedience, poverty and chastity. For the renunciation must be *sincere* in order for it to set in motion the forces of realisation from above, and it cannot be so when it lacks the aid, light and warmth of the sacred vows. It is necessary therefore to understand once and for all that there is no true sacred magic—nor mysticism, gnosis or Hermeticism—outside of the three sacred vows, and that true magical training is essentially only the practice of the three vows. Is this hard? No. it is easy—it is the "concentration without effort" which was considered in the first of these Letters.

Let us now consider the text of the Gospel account concerning what happened immediately after the three temptations. "Then the devil left him" (*tote aphiesin auton ho diabolos*) says the Gospel according to Matthew, but the Gospel according to Luke adds "for a time" (Luke iv, 13). Now, these additional words give rise to the supposition that again a trial or temptation — the fourth, which is the most

subtle and intimate —is to come. And it is this which forms part of the teaching of the seventh Arcanum, which represents a crowned man standing on a triumphal chariot drawn by two horses.

"And behold, Angels came. . . to him" (*kai idou angeloi proselthon*), i.e. now they were able to approach him, since a "space" necessary for their descent became free. Why and how?

Angels (*ἄγγελοι* *hoi angeloi*, in Greek) are entities which move *vertically*, from above below and from below above. "To move" signifies for them "to change respiration", and "distance" for them amounts to the number—and to the intensity of effort that it comprises — of changes from inhalation to exhalation. Thus, for example, when we say. "a distance of 300 miles from the earth", an Angel would say, "three successive changes from normal respiration in the sphere of the Angels". "To draw near" for Angels signifies a change in respiration; "to be unable to draw near" means to say that the "atmosphere" of the sphere which they want to draw near to is such that they can no longer breathe there, and that they would "faint" if they were to enter this sphere.

This is why the Angels were unable to approach the Son of Man during the time when the concentrated forces of terrestrial evolution —the forces of the "son of the serpent"—were active. They "occupied", so to say, the space around the Son of Man, so that the Angels were unable to breathe —and therefore they were unable to enter there without "fainting". But immediately that "the devil left him" and the atmosphere changed, they *were able to* approach him, and did so.

One can add, by way of a corollary, that the "law of presence" delineated above gives us a strong reason for acknowledging the necessity of churches, temples and consecrated or holy places in general. There are certainly other reasons again, but this would suffice, even if there were no other reasons, for us to defend (the protection of all sacred places. Let us therefore protect through our thoughts, words and deeds, all churches, every chapel and, lastly, every temple, where one prays, worships, meditates and celebrates God and his servants.

"... and they ministered to him" (*kai diekonoun auto*): the plural "they" indicates to us that it is a matter here of three Angels. Each temptation resisted corresponded to an Angel charged with the special mission of reward and who tendered a special service.

What, therefore, were these services?

He had refused —he, being famished—to command stones to become bread; now, it was "the word which comes from the mouth of God", become bread, which the Angel of poverty served him. He had refused to cast himself down from the Pinnacle of the temple; now, it was breath from the height of the throne of God that the Angel of chastity brought to him. He had refused to accept the role of superman — to be king of the world at the price of worshipping the ideal of the world of the serpent; now, it was the royal crown of the world of God that the Angel of obedience presented him.

Just as the three mages offered their presents to the new-born Child—gold.

frankincense and myrrh—so did the three Angels each offer a present to the Master after his Baptism in the Jotdan and his Confirmation in the wilderness: the crown of gold, the breath of incense from the throne of God and the divine word become food.

This is what happened *immediately* after the three temptations in the wilderness. This was the response from above to the threefold renunciation by the Son of Man below. But what was the effect of the vanquished temptations not only for the vanquisher himself and not only immediately, but also for the outside world of the so-called "four elements" and in the course of time?

The effect here was *mastership* of the world of the elements, and what took place in the course of time was the *seven archetypal miracles* described in the Gospel according to John, i.e. the miracle at the wedding of Cana, the miracle of the healing of the nobleman's son, the miracle of the healing of the paralysed man at the pool of Bethesda, the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, the miracle of walking on the water, the miracle of the healing of the man born blind and the miracle of the raising of Lazarus at Bethany. And to the manifestation of these seven aspects of mastership or "glory" there corresponds the revelation of the seven aspects of the *name* of the Master: "I am the true vine", "I am the way, the truth and the life", "I am the door", "I am the bread of life". "I am the good shepherd", "I am the light of the world" and "I am the resurrection and the life". This is the rainbow of seven colours of the manifestation of "glory" or mastership and also the octave of the seven tones of revelation of the "name" or mission of the vanquisher of the three temptations. And this rainbow shone around the empty and sombre place in the wilderness where the temptations took place.

The seven miracles of the Gospel according to John are, in their totality, the "glory" (*doxa*) or splendour of the victory of the three sacred vows over the three temptations. Here there is at the same time a beautiful piece of qualitative mathematics: the threefold good, when it prevails over the threefold evil, *produces sevenfold good*, whilst when the threefold evil prevails over the threefold good it produces only threefold evil. For the good is only qualitative, and when it *is able to* manifest itself, it manifests itself *wholly*, in its indivisible fullness. This is what the number seven is—fullness (*pleroma*) or, when it manifests itself, "glory" (*doxa*). which St. John speaks of when he says: "And we have beheld *his glory*. . . and from his *fullness* we have all received grace upon grace" (John i, 14, 16). And the first miracle, that of the wedding at Cana, was the beginning of the manifestation of this fullness or "glory":

This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him. (John ii, 11)

"His disciples believed in him" means to say that they believed in his *name*, or his *mission*, which was revealed in its seven aspects by the seven "I AM" sayings quoted above from the Gospel according to John.

Now, the effect of the triumph over the temptation in the wilderness was the manifestation of the seven aspects of mastership or "glory" (the seven miracles) and the revelation of the mission or "name" of the Master. And all this was nothing other than the manifestation of the glory of the Father *through* the Son, and the revelation of the name of the Father *through* the name of the Son.

But the possibility of the *other* "glory", i.e. the manifestation of mastership in one's own name, also exists. The words of the Master at the head of this Letter—"I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive" (John v, 43)—state it clearly. Experience in the domain of Occult, Esoteric, Hermetic, Cabbalistic, Gnostic, Magical, Martinist, Theosophical, Anthroposophical, Rosicrucian, Templar, Masonic, Sufi, Yogistic movements, and other contemporary spiritual movements, supplies us with ample proof that the words of the Master have in no way lost their actuality, even in the domain of science and in movements of a social, or national, or semi-scientific nature. Because for what other reason do the Theosophists, for example, prefer the Himalayan *mahatmas*, whose astral bodies through projection appear from a great distance (or who "precipitate" letters written in blue or red crayon), to the Master, who has never ceased to teach, inspire, illumine and heal, amongst us and near to us—in France, Italy, Germany, Spain, to name only the countries where there have been well-established cases of meetings with him—and who himself said: "I am with you always, to the end of time" (Matthew xxviii, 20)?

for what other reason does one seek a guru amongst the Hindu yogis or Tibetan lamas without giving oneself half a chance to seek for a teacher illumined through spiritual experience in our monasteries or spiritual orders, or amongst lay brothers and sisters who practise the Master's teaching and perhaps are quite near at hand? And why do members of secret societies or orders of the Masonic type consider the Sacrament of Flesh and Blood of the Lord insufficient for the work of building the new-man, and why do they seek special rituals to supplement it or even to replace it?

Yes, all these questions fall under the heading of the words of the Master: "I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive." Why? Because for some the superman has more attraction than the Son of Man, and because he promises them a career of increasing power, whilst the Son of Man offers only a career of "foot washing".

Dear Unknown Friend, do not interpret what I am saying in the sense that I am opposed or even hostile to the above-mentioned societies, fraternities, and movements of a spiritual and initiatory nature, nor in the sense that I am accusing them of an anti-Christian attitude. Do not attribute me with a lack of respect for the *mahatmas* and *gurus* of India. It is a matter here only of the *purely psychological tendency* (that I have been able to observe something of everywhere) which prefers the ideal of the superman to the ideal of the Son of Man. There is room to add, in order to do justice to the societies and fraternities mentioned, that if this tendency shows up all over the place at the core of these societies and frater-

nities, it is also so that it is everywhere combatted in a more or less effective way, There is always an opposition to this tendency, although this opposition is sometimes only that of a minority.

Be that as it may, the charioteer of the Arcanum "The Chariot" is the victor over trials, i.e. the temptations, and if he is master, then it is thanks to himself. He is alone, standing in his chariot; no one is present to applaud him or to pay homage to him; he has no weapons—the sceptre that he holds not being a weapon. If he is master, his mastership was acquired in solitude and he owes it to the trials alone, and not to anyone or anything external to himself.

The victory achieved in solitude. . . what glory and what danger it comprises at one and the same time! It is the only *real* glory, for it in no way depends on human favour and judgement; it is *intrinsic glory* — the teal radiance of the aura become luminous. It is, however, at the same time the most real and the most serious spiritual danger which exists. "Ptide" and "vaingloriousness", the traditional names which one gives to it, do not suffice to characterise it in an adequate way. It is more than this. It is, rather, a kind of *mystical megalomania*, where one deifies the regulating centre of one's own being, one's ego, and where one sees the divine only within oneself and becomes blind to the divine above and outside of oneself. The "higher Self is then experienced as the supreme and unique Self of the world, although it is only *higher* in relation to the ordinary, empirical self, and it is far from the *supreme* and unique being... far from being God, in other words.

It would be as well, now, to dwell on the problem of identification of the self with the higher Self and of the higher Self with God.

C. G. Jung who, after having explored the sexual or "Freudian" layer, and then that of the will-to-power or "Adlerian" layer, of the unconscious (i.e. *latent or occult consciousness*) of the human being, encountered a *spiritual* (mystical, gnostic and magical) layer during the course of his clinical and psychotherapeutic experience. Instead of drawing back from it or extricating himself from it through a corrosive "explanation", he had the courage and honesty to set himself to the laborious study of the phenomenology of this layer of the unconscious. Now, this work proved fruitful. Jung discovered here not only the causes of certain psychic disorders, but also the profound and intimate process that he designated as the "process of individuation", which is nothing other than the gradual birth *of another self* (Jung called it the "Self) higher to oneself or one's ordinary ego. The discovery of the process of the "second birth" prompted him to extend the range of his exploratory work considerably, notably to include symbolism, mystery rituals and the comparative study of contemporary and ancient religions.

Now, this broadening of his field of exploration also proved fruitful. Jung's arrival at his discovery (which at first racked him, preventing him from speaking of it to a living soul for fifteen years) had its train of consequences, including the knowledge and description of some dangers or temptations belonging to the way of initiation and the process of individuation which corresponds to it. One of these

dangers which are at the same time trials or temptations—is that which Jung designated by the term "inflation", which signifies the state of consciousness of the self inflated to excess, and which is known in psychiatry in its extreme manifestation by the term "megalomania".

Therefore, here we are concerned with a range of psychic phenomena, which to begin with show up in relatively innocent forms—such as a high opinion of oneself which is not entirely justified, or the somewhat exaggerated desire to have one's own way—which become quite dangerous when they manifest as a disparaging negativity towards everyone. . . the faculties of appreciation, gratitude and worship being concentrated upon oneself; and which eventually signify a catastrophe that is rarely curable, when they reveal themselves as obsession with easily recognisable illusions, or megalomania, pure and simple. Here, then, are the principal dangers of inflation: exaggerated importance attached to oneself, superiority complex tending towards obsession and, lastly, megalomania. The first degree signifies a practical *task* for work upon oneself; the second degree is a serious *trial*; whilst the third is a *catastrophe*.

What is it a question of in the process of inflation? Let us look first at what Jung himself says about it:

The "superordinate personality" is the total man, i.e. man as he really is, not as he appears to himself. To this wholeness the unconscious psyche also belongs, which has its requirements and needs just as consciousness has . . . I usually describe the "superordinate personality" as the "self, thus making a sharp distinction between the *ego*, which, as is well known, extends only as far as the conscious mind, and the *whole* of the personality, which includes the unconscious as well as the conscious component. The ego is thus related to the "self as part to the whole. To that extent the self is superordinate. Moreover, the self is felt empirically not as subject but as *object*, and this by reason of its unconscious component, which can only come to consciousness indirectly, by way of projection. (C. G. Jung and C. Kerényi, *Introduction to a Science of Mythology*, trsl. R. F. C. Hull, London, 1951, pp. 223-224)

Now, this "way of projection" is living symbolism—traditional symbolism as well as symbolism manifesting itself in dreams, "active imagination" and visions. Dreams, when observed in a series (often running into several hundreds), show that they obey a kind of *plan*. They seem to relate to one another and to be sub---t in a profound sense to a common goal:

... in the deepest sense. . . they seem . . . to be subordinated to a common goal, so that a long dream-series no longer appears as a senseless string of incoherent and isolated happenings, but

resembles the successive steps in a planned and orderly process of development. I have called this unconscious process spontaneously expressing itself in the symbolism of a long dream-series *the individuation process*. (C. G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*; trsl. R. F. C. Hull. *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol. 8, London, 1972, pp. 289-290)

The process of individuation is "*the spontaneous realisation of the whole man*" (ibid., p. 292). For the formula that is henceforth valuable for the notion of the soul is: "psyche = ego-consciousness + unconscious" (C. G. Jung, *The Practice of Psychotherapy*; trsl. R. F. C. Hull, *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol. 16, London, 1954. p.90). With respect to the role of the unconscious in this formula, it is necessary to take account of the fact, principally,

that in every child consciousness grows out of the unconscious in the course of a few years, also that consciousness is always only a temporary state based on an optimum physiological performance and therefore regularly interrupted by phases of unconsciousness (sleep), and finally that the unconscious psyche not only possesses the longer lease of life but is continuously present (i.e. *it assures the continuity of being*), (ibid., p. 91)

Now, the process of individuation is that of the harmonisation of the conscious self and the unconscious in the psyche. But the "conscious and unconscious do not make a whole when one of them is suppressed and injured by the other." (C. G. Jung, *Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation*; trsl. R. F. C. Hull. *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol. 9, part VI, London, 1959, p. 288). It is a matter of a harmonisation which is only realisable by way of the *re-centering* of the personality, i.e. the birth of a new centre of the personality, which participates in the nature of the unconscious as well as in the conscious self—a centre, in other words, where the unconscious is perpetually in transformation into consciousness. This is the aim of the process of individuation, which is at the same time a stage of initiation.

The process of individuation operates, as we have said, by establishing a collaboration between the unconscious and the conscious. The domain of *symbols* affords such a collaboration and it is here, consequently, that it can begin. In the process of individuation one meets—or rather one awakens—the symbol-forces that Jung designated, in consideration of their typical character, by the name "archetypes".

The archetype—let us never forget this—is a psychic organ present in all of us. A bad explanation means a correspondingly bad attitude to this organ, which may thus be injured. But the ultimate sufferer is the bad interpreter himself. Hence the "explanation" should always be such that the functional significance of

the archetype remains unimpaired, i.e. that an adequate and appropriate relationship between the conscious mind and the archetypes is insured, For the archetype is an element of our psychic structure and thus a vital and necessary component in our psychic economy. . . There is no "rational" substitute for the archetype any more than there is for the cerebellum or the kidneys. (C. G. Jung and C. Kerenyi, *Introduction to a Science of Mythology*; trsl. R. F. C. Hull, London, 1951, pp. 109-110)

Now, one must not take archetypes lightly. They are formidable psychic forces which can also invade, inundate and engulf consciousness. This is what happens in the case of the *identification* of consciousness with the archetype. Then it produces, more often than not, an identification with the role of the heroes (and, sometimes —when it is a matter of the archetype named "the wise old man" or "the great mother"—an identification with a cosmic figure).

At this stage there is usually another identification, this time with the hero, whose role is attractive for a variety of reasons. The identification is often extremely stubborn and dangerous to mental equilibrium. If it can be broken down and consciousness reduced to human proportions, the figure of the hero can gradually be differentiated into a symbol of the self, (*ibid.*, p. 137)

And, let us add, if this does not succeed, the figure of the hero takes possession of consciousness. Then the "second identification"—or the "epiphany of the hero"—takes place:

The epiphany of the hero (the second identification) shows itself in a corresponding inflation: the colossal pretension grows into a conviction that one is something extraordinary, or else the impossibility of the pretension ever being fulfilled only proves one's own inferiority, which is favourable to the role of the heroic sufferer (a negative inflation). In spite of their contrariety, both forms are identical, because unconscious compensatory inferiority tallies with conscious megalomania, and unconscious megalomania with conscious inferiority (you never get one without the other). Once the reef of the second identification has been successfully circumnavigated, conscious processes can be cleanly separated from the unconscious, and the latter observed objectively. This leads to the possibility of an accommodation with the unconscious, and thus to a possible synthesis of the conscious and unconscious elements of knowledge and action. This in turn leads to a shifting of the centre of personality from the ego to the self, (*ibid.*, pp. 137-138)

This is the aim of the process of individuation.

Now, inflation is the principal risk that attends each person who seeks the experience of *depth*, the experience of what is *occult*, which lives and works behind the facade of phenomena of ordinary consciousness. Therefore, inflation constitutes the principal danger and trial for occultists, esotericists, magicians, gnostics and mystics. Monasteries and spiritual orders have always known this, thanks to the immense pillar of experience which they have accumulated over millennia in the domain of the *profound life*. This is why their whole spiritual practice is based on the cultivation of *humility* by such means as the practice of obedience, the examination of conscience and the reciprocal brotherly help of members of the community. Thus, if Sabbatai Zevi (1625-1676) had been a member of a spiritual order with a discipline similar to that of Christian spiritual orders and monasteries, his illumination would never have led to his revealing himself (in 1648) to a group of disciples as the promised Messiah. Neither would he have had to become a Turk in order to save his life and continue his mission ("God has made me an Ishmaelite-Turk; he has commanded, and I have obeyed—the ninth day after my second birth", he wrote to his followers in Smyrna). Because he would have been spared *positive inflation*, just as he would have been spared the *negative inflation* of which Samuel Gandor, his disciple, gives the following description:

It is said of Sabbatai Zevi that for fifteen years he has been bowed down by the following affliction: he is pursued by a sense of depression which leaves him no quiet moment and does not even permit him to read, without his being able to say what is the nature of this sadness which has come upon him. (Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, London, 1955. p. 290)

The history of the illumined Cabbalist Sabbatai Zevi is only an extreme case of the general dangers and trials which all practising esotericists have to face. Indeed, Hargrave Jennings expresses this danger and trial in a successful way concerning the Rosicrucians:

They speak of all mankind as infinitely beneath them; their pride is beyond idea, although they are most humble and quiet in exterior. They glory in poverty, and declare that it is the state ordered for them; and this though they boast universal riches. They decline all human affections, or submit to them as advisable escapes only—appearance of loving obligations, which are assumed for convenient acceptance, or for passing in a world which is composed of them, or of their supposal. They mingle most gracefully in the society of women, with hearts wholly incapable of softness in this direction; while they criticise them with pity or contempt in their own minds as altogether another

order of beings from men. They are most simple and deferential in their exterior; and yet the self-value which fills their hearts ceases its self-glorifying expansion only with the boundless skies ... In comparison with the Hermetic adepts, monarchs are poor, and their greatest accumulations are contemptible. By the side of the sages, the most learned are mere dolts and blockheads... Thus, towards mankind they are negative; towards everything else, positive; self-contained, self-illuminated, self-everything; but always prepared (nay, enjoined) to do good, wherever possible or safe. To this immeasurable exaltation of themselves, what standard of measure, or what appreciation, can you apply? Ordinary estimates fail in the idea of it. Either the state of these occult philosophers is the height of sublimity, or it is the height of absurdity. (Hargravejennings, *The Rosicrucians. Their Rites and Mysteries*, London-New York, 1887, pp. 30-31)

Let us say absurd as well as sublime, because *inflation* is always simultaneously sublime and absurd. This is what Eliphas Levi says about it:

There is also a science which confers on man powers apparently superhuman. They are enumerated thus in a Hebrew manuscript of the sixteenth century:

ALEPH — He beholds God face to face, without dying, and converses familiarly with the seven genii who command the entire celestial army.

BETH — He is above all griefs and all fears.

GHIMEL — He reigns with all heaven and is served by all hell.

DALETH — He rules his own health and life and can influence equally those of others.

HE — He can neither be surprised by misfortune nor overwhelmed by disasters, nor can he be conquered by his enemies.

VAU — He knows the reason of the past, present and future.

ZAIN — He possesses the secret of the resurrection of the dead and the key of immortality.

(Eliphas Levi, *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie*; trsl. A. E. Wake, *Transcendental Magic. Its Doctrine and Ritual*, London, 1968, p. 10)

Is it a matter here of a programme or of *actual* experience? If it is experience, it is one of inflation pushed very far. If it is a programme, he who takes its realisation seriously cannot fail to fall prey to inflation, be it positive (superiority complex) or negative (inferiority complex).

whatever it may be, the experience or programme of this Hebrew manuscript of the sixteenth century quoted by Eliphas Levi shows a remarkable similarity to

the *experience* of John distance, described by him in his book *Wisdom, Madness and Folly: the Philosophy of a Lunatic*. It is as follows:

I feel so close to God, so inspired by His Spirit that in a sense I am God. I see the future, plan the Universe, save mankind; I am utterly and completely immortal; I am even male and female. The whole Universe, animate and inanimate, past, present and future, is within me. All nature and life, all spirits, are co-operating and connected with me; all things are possible. I am in a sense identical with all spirits from God to Satan. I reconcile Good and Evil and create light, darkness, worlds, universes. (John Custance, *Wisdom, Madness and Folly: the Philosophy of a Lunatic*, London, 1951, p. 51)

The state described by John Custance is characteristic of that of acute mania, and the author himself in no way denies it. But would he still look at it in this way, one can ask, if he knew that his experience is found described exactly in the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad*. which says:

He who has found and awakened to the Soul that has entered this conglomerate whole —he is the maker of everything, for he is the creator of all; the world is his: indeed, he is the world itself. (*Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* 4.4.13; trsl. R. E. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Oxford, 1962, p. 142)

Can one say with certainty that this text quoted from the Upanishads is based on an entirely different experience to that of John Custance?

Thirty-eight years ago I knew a tranquil man of mature age who taught English at the YMCA in the capital of a Baltic country. Now, he revealed to me one day that he had attained a spiritual state which manifests itself through "the eternal gaze" and which is that of consciousness of the identity of Self with the Eternal Reality of the world. The past, present and future — seen from the pedestal of eternity, where his consciousness had its abode —were an open book for him. He had no more problems, not because he had resolved them, but because he had attained the state of consciousness where they disappeared, having become of no importance. Because problems belong to the domain of motion in time and space; he who transcends this and arrives at the realm of eternity and infinity, where there is neither movement nor change, is free of problems.

When he spoke to me of these things, his beautiful blue eyes rayed out sincerity and certainty. But this radiance gave way to a dark and angry look as soon as I raised the question of the value of the "subjective feeling of eternity" when one is not aware of or one is unable objectively to do something more towards helping humanity, be it in spiritual (or other) progress, or in the alleviation of spiritual, psychic and bodily suffering. He did not forgive me this question and he turned

his back on me. which was my last impression of him in this world (he made his way to India, where soon after he died as victim of an epidemic).

I recount this episode in my life only so that you may know, dear Unknown Friend, when and how the very serious problem of the forms of, and the dangers of spiritual megalomania were awakened in me, and how I owe it to this objective experience that I began work on this problem, some of the outcomes of which I am in the process of showing.

Spiritual megalomania is as old as the world. Its origin is found well beyond the terrestrial world, according to the millennial-old tradition concerning the fall of Lucifer. The prophet Ezekiel gives a most moving description of this:

You were the signet of perfection,
 You were full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.
 You were in Eden, the garden of God;
 You were covered with every kind of precious stone:
 Sardonyx, topaz, and diamond,
 Chrysolite, onyx, and jasper,
 Sapphire, carbuncle, emerald, and gold.
 With which you were adorned.
 And which were prepared for you
 On the day that you were created.
 You were a guardian Cherubim, with outspread wings;
 I placed you, and you were, on the holy mountain of God;
 You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. . .
 Your heart was proud because of your beauty,
 You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour.
 I cast you to the ground.
 I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. ..
 (Ezekiel xxviii, 12-17)

Here is the higher (i.e. celestial) origin of inflation, superiority complex and megalomania. And since "that which is below is as that which is above", it is repeated below in human earthly life from century to century and generation to generation. It is repeated above all in the lives of those human beings who are detached from the ordinary earthly setting and the state of consciousness belonging to it, and who transcend it, be it in the sense of height, in the sense of breadth, or, lastly, in the sense of depth. He who aspires to a plane *higher* than that of the terrestrial setting risks becoming haughty; he who seeks *breadth* beyond the normal circle of earthly duties and pleasures risks considering himself to be more and more important; he who is in search of the *depth*, beneath the surface of the phenomena of terrestrial life, runs the greatest risk: that of inflation, of which C. G. Jung speaks.

The abstract metaphysician, who arranges worlds according to an order that he has chosen, can lose all interest for the particular and for the individual, in

such a way that he comes to consider human beings to be almost as insignificant as insects. He regards them only from above. Seen from his metaphysical height they lose all proportion and become for him small or almost insignificant—whilst he, the metaphysician, is great, since he participates in great metaphysical things, which clothe him in grandeur.

The reformer who *wants* to correct or save humanity easily falls victim to the temptation of considering himself as the active centre of the passive circle of humanity. He feels himself as the bearer of a mission of universal significance—therefore he feels himself to be more and more important.

The *practising* occultist, esotericist or Hermeticist (if he is not practising, he is only a metaphysician or reformer) experiences the higher forces which work beyond his consciousness and which make their entrance there. At what price?.., Either at the price of worshipping on his knees—or otherwise at the price of the identification of self with these higher forces, which results in megalomania.

One speaks often of the dangers of occultism. Black magic is usually the supreme danger against which the beginner is put on guard by the "masters"; others (above all those who know more or less about medicine) see it as disorders of the nervous system.

But experience during forty-three years of practical occultism (or esotericism) has taught me that the danger of occultism is neither black magic nor nervous disorder—at least, these dangers are met no more often amongst occultists than amongst politicians, artists, psychologists, believers and agnostics. I am not able to cite by name any black magician amongst the occultists that I know, whereas it would not be too difficult to name some politicians who, for example, have nothing to do with occultism—and who would even be hostile to it—but whose influence and impact agree very well with the classical concept of that of the "black magician". Indeed, is it difficult to name politicians who have exercised a deadly, suggestive influence on the popular masses, blinding them and inciting them to acts of cruelty, injustice and violence, of which each individual, taken separately, would be incapable. . .and who, through their semi-magical influence, have deprived individuals of their freedom and rendered *them possessed* And is not this action to deprive men of their moral freedom and to render them *possessed* the aim and very essence of black magic?

No, dear Unknown Friend, occultists—including those amongst them who practise ceremonial magic—are neither masters nor disciples of black magic. Truth to tell, they are amongst those who have least of all in common with it. It is true that they—above all the adepts of ceremonial magic—often fall prey to illusions and mislead themselves and others, but is this black magic? Besides, where can one find a class of human beings who never make mistakes? Even Doctor Faust—who made a pact with the devil (and this concerns all "pact-makers" of this kind, ancient and modern)—was only the naive victim of a prank on the part of Mephistopheles (who is a rogue well-known to all those who have knowledge of the "occult world"), because how can you "sell" something which in no way belongs

you? It is his soul which would have been able to sell Doctor Faust, but never would Doctor Faust be able to give away his soul, however solemn his pact was and no matter whether he wrote and signed with blood or with ordinary ink.

It is Mephistopheles' way of giving a lesson to those who want to be "supermen"; he brings to light the puerility of their pretensions. And whilst wholly deploring the naivety of poor Doctor Faust, one is led to consider the "method of roguishness" of Mephistopheles as, in the last analysis, salutary. Because what Mephistopheles does (and other examples of this method of a more recent date could be cited) is to show the ridiculousness and absurdity of the aspirations and pretensions of so-called "supermen". "Of all Spirits who deny, the rogue is the least burden to me," says God concerning Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust* ("Prologue in Heaven", *Faust*, part I).

Let us therefore not condemn the rogue of the spiritual world, and above all let us not be afraid of him. Nor let us condemn Doctor Faust, our brother, by accusing him of black magic—it is, rather, childish credulity of which he can be accused, if he must be accused. In any case, he was one-hundred times more innocent with respect to mankind than our contemporaries who have invented the nuclear bomb. . . as good citizens and scientists.

No, neither black magic nor nervous disorders constitute the special dangers of occultism. Its principal danger—of which, however, it has no monopoly—is designated by the three terms: superiority complex, inflation, megalomania.

In fact, an occultist (who is not a beginner) who has not attained this moral illness, or who has not at some time in the past undergone it, is rare. The tendency to megalomania shows up all over the place amongst occultists. Decades of personal relationships, as well as reading occult literature, have taught me this. There are many levels of this moral defect. It manifests at first as self-assurance and a certain informality with which one speaks of higher and sacred things. Then it expresses itself as "knowing-better" and "knowing-all", i.e. as the attitude of a master towards everyone. Lastly, it manifests as implicit or even explicit infallibility.

I do not want to cite passages from occult literature, nor to name names, nor to mention biographical facts concerning known occultists, in order to prove or illustrate this diagnosis. It would not be difficult for you, dear Unknown Friend, to find them yourself in abundance. What my intention is here is to refute the false accusations concerning occultism, on the one hand, and on the other hand to show up the real danger that occultism presents—so that one is put on guard against it. But what should one do against this danger, in order to guard one's moral well-being?

The ancient saying "*ora et labora*" ("work and pray") constitutes the only answer that I have been able to find. *Worship* and *work* constitute the only curative as a psycholytic remedy that I know against megalomaniacal illusions. It is necessary to worship what is above us and it is necessary to participate in human effort in the domain of objective facts in order to be able to hold in check the illusions concerning *what one is* and *what one is capable of*. For whoever is aware

of raising his prayer and meditation to the level of pure worship will always be conscious of the *distance* which separates (and at the same time unites) the worshipper and the worshipped. Therefore he will not be tempted to worship himself, which is in the last analysis the cause of megalomania. He will always have in sight the difference between himself and the worshipped. He will not confuse *what he is* with *what the worshipped being is*.

On the other hand, he who *works*, i.e. who takes part in human effort, with a view to objective and verifiable results, will not easily fall prey to illusion with respect to *what he is capable of*. Thus, for example, a practising doctor inclined to overestimate his power of healing will soon learn to know the real limits of his ability through experience of his failures.

Jacob Boehme was a shoemaker, and was illumined. When he had had the experience of illumination ("... the Door became opened to me, so that in a quarter of an hour I observed and knew more than if I had attended a university for many years. ..." he wrote in a letter to the tax collector Lindner), where he "recognised the Being of Beings, the firmament and the abyss. ..." (same letter), he in no way concluded from it that he, in so far as he was a shoemaker, could henceforth do more than his colleagues in the trade, or that he himself could do more than before his illumination. On the other hand, through his illumination he learned to know the greatness of God and the world ("... of which I was highly surrounded. without knowing how it happened to me, and thereupon my heart turned to praise of God"—same letter), and this filled him with *worship*.

Therefore, it was work and the worship of God which protected the moral well-being of Jacob Boehme. And I allow myself to add here that my experience in the domain of esotericism has taught me that what was salutary in Boehme's case is also so, without exception, regarding all those who aspire to supersensible experiences.

Worship and work—*ora et labora*—therefore constitute the *conditio sine qua non* for practical esotericism in order to hold in check the tendency towards megalomania. This is in order to hold it in check, yet in order to obtain *immunity* from this moral illness, more than this is necessary. One has to have the real experience of concretely meeting a being higher than oneself. I mean by "concretely meeting" neither the feeling of "higher Self, nor the more or less vague feeling of the "presence of a higher entity", nor even the experience of a "flood of inspiration" which fills one with life and light—no, what I mean by "concretely meeting" is nothing other than a true and really concrete meeting, i.e. face to face. It can be spiritual—face to face in vision—or more physically concrete. Thus, St. Teresa of Avila (in order to cite only *one* of many known examples) met the Master, conversed with him, asked and received from him advice and instruction on an objective spiritual plane (yes, spirituality is not exclusively subjective—it can also be objective). And certainly Papus and his group of occultist friends met Monsieur Philip of Lyons on the physical plane. Here are two examples of the concrete meeting that I mean.

Now, he who has had the experience of a concrete meeting with a higher being (a saint or righteous individual, an Angel or another hierarchical being, the Virgin Mary, the Master. . .) becomes through this very fact immune with respect to the tendency towards megalomania. The experience of having been face to face with a Great One necessarily comprises complete healing and immunity from any tendency towards megalomania. No human being who has *seen and heard* will be able to make an idol of himself. More than this: the true and ultimate criterion for the reality of these so-called "visionary" experiences, i.e. with respect to their authenticity or falsity, is given in the moral *effect* of these experiences, notably whether they make the recipient more humble or more pretentious. The experience of her meetings with the Master made St. Teresa more and more humble. The experience on the terrestrial plane of the meeting with Monsieur Philip of Lyons also made Papus and his occultist friends more humble. Now, these two experiences—quite different though they are with respect to subject and object—were *authentic*. Neither Papus was thereby mistaken about the spiritual greatness of he who he recognised as his "spiritual master", nor was St. Teresa any less mistaken about the reality of the Master, whom she saw and heard speak.

Dear Unknown Friend, read the Bible and you will find there a great number of examples of this law, which may be expressed as follows: *authentic experience of the Divine makes one humble; he who is not humble has not had authentic experience of the Divine*. Take the apostles who "saw and heard" the Master and the prophets who "saw and heard" the God of Israel — you will not find amongst them any trace of tendencies towards pride such as you can certainly find amongst many gnostic teachers who *{consequently}* had not "seen and heard".

But if it is true that it is necessary to have "seen and heard" in order to thoroughly learn the lesson of humility, what is there to say about people who are "naturally" humble and who have not "seen and heard"?

Without prejudice to other good and valuable answers, the answer which seems right to me is that all those who are humble *have certainly seen and heard*—no matter where or when, and no matter whether they remember or not. Humility can be the result of the real (i.e. non-intellectual) memory of the soul of the spiritual experience prior to birth, or it can be due to memory of nocturnal experience undergone during sleep and which remains in the domain of the unconscious or, lastly, it can be the effect of experience that is present consciously or unconsciously but is unacknowledged by oneself or others. For humility, like charity, is not a natural quality of human nature. Its origins can in no way be found in the domain of *natural* evolution, since it is not possible to conceive of it as the fruit of the "struggle for existence", i.e. natural selection and the survival of the fittest at the expense of the weak. Because the school of the struggle for existence does not produce humble people; it produces only strugglers and fighters of every kind. Humility is therefore a quality which must be due to the action of grace, i.e. it must be a gift from above. Now, the "concrete meetings, face to face" of which it is a question here are always, without exception, events due to grace, being *meetings* where

a higher being voluntarily draws near to a lower being. The meeting which made Saul, the Pharisee, into Paul the apostle was not due to his efforts; it was an act of the One whom he met. It is the same with all meetings "face to face" with higher beings. Our part is only "to seek", to "knock" and "to pray", but the decisive act comes from above.

Let us now return to the Arcanum "The Chariot", whose traditional meaning is "victory, triumph, success".

This meaning is derived naturally from the bearing of the personage (the charioteer) and presents no difficulty. (J. Maxwell, *Le Tarot*, Paris, 1933, p. 87)

Now, there is all the same a difficulty that it presents, namely that of answering the question: Does this Card signify a warning or an ideal, or rather both at once?

I am inclined to see in all the Arcana of the Tarot simultaneously both warnings and aims to be attained—at least, this is what I have learnt through forty years of study and meditation on the Tarot.

Thus the Magician is a warning against the intellectual jugglery of the metaphysician, heedless of experience, and against charlatancy of every kind—and at the same time it teaches "concentration without effort" and the use of the method of analogy.

The High Priestess warns us of the dangers of gnosticism in teaching the discipline of true gnosis.

The Empress evokes the dangers of mediumship and magic in revealing to us the mysteries of sacred magic.

The Emperor warns us of the will-to-power and teaches us the power of the cross.

The Pope confronts us with the humanistic cult of personality and the magical pentagram in which this culminates, and opposes to this holy poverty, obedience to the Divine, and the magic of the five wounds.

The Lover warns us of the three temptations and teaches us the three sacred vows.

The Chariot, lastly, warns us of the danger of megalomania and teaches us the *real triumph* achieved by the Self.

The real triumph achieved by the Self—this means to say the successful outcome of the "process of individuation", according to C. G. Jung, or the successful outcome of the work of true liberation, which is the fruit of *catharsis* (purification) and which precedes *photismos* (illumination), and which is followed by *henosis* (union), according to the occidental initiation tradition.

The "triumpher" on the Chariot can therefore signify either a sick person suffering from megalomania or a man who has passed through *catharsis* or purification, the first of the three stages on the way of initiation.

The thesis that I am advancing here is this: that, just as with all the other Cards of the Arcana of the Tarot, the Card of the seventh Arcanum also expresses a double-meaning. The personage on this seventh Card signifies at one and the same time

the "triumpher" and the "Triumpher"—the megalomaniac and the integrated man, master of himself.

The integrated man, master of himself, conqueror in all trials—who is he?

It is he who holds in check the four temptations—i.e. the three temptations in the wilderness described in the Gospels as well as the temptation which synthesises them: the temptation of pride, the centre of the triangle of temptations—and who is, therefore, master of the four elements which compose the vehicle of his being: fire, air, water and earth. Master of the four elements—that is to say: *creative* being in clear, fluid and precise thought (*creativity, clarity, fluidity* and *precision* being the manifestations of the four elements in the domain of thought). It means to say, moreover, that he has a warm, large, tender and faithful heart (*warmth, magnanimity, sensitivity* and *faithfulness* being the manifestations of the four elements in the domain of feeling). There is, lastly, to add that he has ardour ("man of desire"), fullness, flexibility and stability in his will (where the four elements manifest themselves as *intensity, scope, adaptability* and *firmness*). To summarise, one can say that a master of the four elements is a man of initiative, who is serene, mobile and firm. He represents the four natural virtues of Catholic theology: prudence, strength, temperance and justice; or rather Plato's four cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice; or yet again the four qualities of Sankaracharya: *viveka* (discernment), *vairagya* (serenity), the "six jewels" of just conduct, and the desire for deliverance. Whatever the formulation may be of the four virtues in question, it is always a matter of the four elements or projections of the sacred name *mrp* — the *Tetragrammaton* — in human nature.

The four columns supporting the canopy on the chariot drawn by two horses. In the Card of the seventh Arcanum, therefore signify the four elements taken in *a vertical sense*, i.e. in their analogous meaning through the three worlds — the spiritual world, the soul world and the physical world.

And what is signified by the canopy itself that the four columns support?

The function of a canopy, taken as a material object, is to *protect* the person who is found beneath it. It therefore serves as a roof. Taken in its spiritual sense, at which one arrives by way of analogy, the canopy above the man wearing a yellow royal crown expresses two contrary things: that the crowned man is a megalomaniac in the condition of "splendid isolation", separated from heaven by the canopy, or else that the crowned man is an initiate in the mystery of spiritual well-being and that he does not identify himself with heaven, *being conscious of the difference* which exists between himself and that which is above him. In other words, the canopy indicates the facts and truths underlying humility as well as megalomania. Humility, being the law of spiritual health, implies consciousness of the difference and distance between the centre of human consciousness and the centre of divine consciousness. He has a "skin"—or a canopy, if you wish—in his consciousness (just as the human body has a skin), which separates the human from the Divine, at the same time uniting them. This "spiritual skin" protects the

spiritual well-being of man by not allowing him to identify himself *ontologically* with God. or to say "I am God" (cf. *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* 1.4.10: "*aham brahmasmi*" = "I am Brahma"), but at the same time allowing him the *relationship of breathing*, coming together and separating (which is never *alienation*'), which together constitute the life of *love*. The life of love consists of coming together and separating always with the consciousness present of *non-identity*: this is analogous to the process of breathing which consists of inhalation and exhalation. Is this not found expressed in an unparalleled way in the extract from Psalm 43. which is the sixth phrase in the Mass: "*Emitte lucem tuam, et veritatem tuam: ipsa me deduxerunt, et adduxerunt in montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua*"? ("Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles"—Psalm 43, 3). Yes, the *light* of your presence (*drawing near*) and the *truth* that I receive in me through reflection (*separating*), this leads us towards the *tabernacle*.

Tabernacles. . . are these not tents, baldachins, *canopies* under which man is united in love with the Divine, without identifying himself with it or being absorbed by it? Aren't these tabernacles made of the "skin of humility", which alone protects us against the danger of killing love through ontological identification — i.e. the identification of the human being with divine being ("this soul is God" — *ayam atma brahma*", *Mandukya Upanishad*, 2; "consciousness is God" — "*pragnanam brahma*", *Aitareya Upanishad*, 5.3) — and therefore protects us from the danger of spiritual megalomania (i.e. from arrogating to ourselves the very being of God instead of his image)?

There are three forms of mystical experience: the experience of union with Nature, that of union with the transcendental human Self, and that of union with God. The first kind of experience is that of the obliteration of the differentiation between the individual's psychic life and surrounding Nature. It is this which Levy-Bruhl calls "mystical participation", which notion he coined whilst studying the psychology of primitive peoples. This notion designates the state of consciousness where the separation between the conscious subject and the object of the outside world disappears, and where subject and object become one. This kind of experience underlies not only shamanism and the totemism of the primitives but also the so-called "mythogenous" consciousness, which is the source of natural myths, as well as the ardent desire of poets and philosophers for union with Nature (e.g. Empedocles threw himself into the crater of the volcano on Mount Etna in order to unite himself with the elements of Nature). The effect of peyote, mescaline, hashish, alcohol, etc., can sometimes (but not always, and not with everyone) produce states of consciousness analogous to that of "mystical participation". The characteristic trait of this form of experience is *intoxication*, i.e. the temporary fusion of oneself with forces exterior to one's self-consciousness. The Dionysian orgies of antiquity were based on the experience of "sacred intoxication" due to the obliteration of the differentiation between self and non-self.

The second form of mystical experience is that of the transcendental Self. It

consists in separating the ordinary empirical self from the highest Self, which is above all motion and all that which belongs to the domain of space and time. The higher Self is therefore experienced as immortal and free.

If "Nature mysticism" is characterised by intoxication, that of the Self, in contrast, has the characteristic trait of progressively "coming to one's senses", with the aim of *complete sobriety*. A philosophy based on the mystical experience of the Self, which represents it in the purest way and is least distorted by the addition of hazardous intellectual speculations, is that of the Indian school of Sankya. There the individual *purusha* is experienced in its separation from *prakriti* (i.e. all movement, space and time) as immortal and free. Although the same experience is found at the basis of the Vedanta philosophy, its followers are not satisfied with the immediate experience which teaches nothing more, and nothing less, than that the true Self of man is immortal and free, but they add the postulate that the higher Self is God ("this soul is God"—"*ayam atma brahma*", *Mandukya Upanishad*, 2). The Sankya philosophy, in contrast, remains within the limits of the experience of the higher Self as such and in no way denies the plurality of *purushas* (i.e. the plurality of immortal and free higher Egos), nor does it raise the individual *purusha* to the dignity of the Absolute—which has resulted in it being considered an atheistic philosophy. It is so, if one understands by "atheist" the frank confession: I have not had *experience* of anything higher than the immortal and free Ego; abiding by the experience, what can I say in good faith? Sankya is not a religion and therefore does not merit being classed as "atheistic" any more than, for example, the modern psychological school of Jung does. On the other hand, can it be considered as proof of belief in God to attribute to the higher Self of man the dignity of the Absolute?

The third sort of mystical* experience is that of the *living God*, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the God of St. Augustine, St. Francis, St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross in the Christian tradition, the God of the Bhagavad-Gita, Ramanuja, Madhva and Caitanya in the Hindu tradition. Here it is a matter of union with God in love, which implies a substantial duality being essentially at one.

This experience has as its principal characteristic trait the *synthesis* of the intoxication of Nature mysticism and the sobriety of mysticism of the highest Self. The term coined by tradition to express the state where ardent enthusiasm and profound peace manifest themselves simultaneously is that of "beatitude", or "beatific vision" (i.e. *beatitudo*, or *visio beatifica*). *Beatific vision* implies the duality of the seer and the seen, on the one hand, and their union or intrinsic oneness in love, on the other hand. This is why this term expresses in a wonderfully clear and precise way the essence of theistic mystical experience: the meeting of the soul with God, face to face, in love. And this experience is all the more elevated the more complete the differentiation is, and the more perfect the union is. For

*The term "mystical" used here comprises mystical experience proper and gnostic experience, as united.

this reason the Holy Cabbala puts at the centre of spiritual experience that of the Holy Face (*arich anphin*) of the Ancient of Days, and this is also why it teaches that the supreme experience of the human being—as well as the highest form of death for a mortal—is attained when God embraces the human soul. This is what the *Sepher Yetzirah* says:

And after that our father Abraham had perceived, and understood, and had taken down and engraved all these things, the Lord most high (*adon hakol*) revealed Himself, and called him His beloved, and made a Covenant with him and his seed.
(*Sepher Yetzirah* vi, 4; trsl. W. Wynn Westcott, London, 1893, pp. 26-27)

And St. John of the Cross spoke of his experiences of the divine Presence in the tabernacles of love only in the language of love.

The three forms of mystical experience have their "hygienic laws", or their "tabernacles" or "skins". They fall under the law of temperance or *measure*. Otherwise the rage of acute mania, megalomania and complete alienation from the world (*ιδιότης*) menace, respectively, their adepts. The *breast-plate*, the *canopy* and the *crown* are the three symbols for the salutary measures pertaining to the domains of experience of Nature mysticism, human mysticism, and divine mysticism.

Now, the "triumpher" of the seventh Arcanum wears a breast-plate, stands under a canopy and is crowned. This is why he does not lose himself in Nature, why he does not lose God in the experience of his higher Self and why he does not lose the world in experiencing the love of God. He holds in check the dangers of rage, megalomania and exaltation. He is *sane*.

The "triumpher" of the seventh Arcanum is the true adept of Hermeticism, i.e. an adept of mysticism, gnosis and magic—divine, human and natural. He is not running. He stands upright. He is not seated, deep in meditation. He holds a sceptre which serves him to bridle the two horses (one blue and one red) which draw his chariot. He is not absent, plunged into exalted ecstasy. He is on his way and he goes forward, standing upright all the while in his vehicle. The two horses, the one blue and the other red, have relieved him of the effort of walking. The instinctive forces of "yes" and "no", attraction and repulsion, arterial blood and venous blood, trust and mistrust, faith and doubt, life and death and, lastly, "right" and "left"—symbolised by the pillars of Jachin and Boaz—have become motive forces in him, obedient to his sceptre. They serve him voluntarily as he is their true master. He trusts them and they trust him—this is mastership according to Hermeticism. For in Hermeticism mastership does not signify the subjugation of the lower by the higher, but rather the alliance of superconsciousness, consciousness and instinctive—or sub-consciousness. This is the Hermetic ideal of peace in the microcosm—the prototype of peace within a humanity divided into races, nations, classes and beliefs.

This peace is equilibrium or justice, where each particular force playing its part

in the life of the microcosm is assigned its rightful place in the life of the entire psychic and physical organism.

Equilibrium or justice is the subject of the following Arcanum — the eighth Arcanum, Justice—which will be the theme of the next Letter.

Summarising the practical teaching (for it is always the practical aspect which occupies us in the first place) of the seventh Arcanum of the Tarot, one can say that the "triumpher" is a "convalescent", i.e. that the "triumpher" has triumphed over sickness or imbalance—spiritual, psychic and physical—which means to say that he is at the same time "righteous", or the one who has triumphed over the four temptations by remaining faithful to the three sacred vows as well as to their root and synthesis: humility. In turn, this means to say that he is a "liberated man" or "master". He is free of astrological planetary influences—rediscovered in our time by C. G. Jung in the guise of the "collective unconscious" with its seven (!) principal psychic forces or "archetypes". He is master of the "archetypes" (astrological planetary influences, or *archontes* of the ancient gnostics), i.e. the "shadow", the "persona", the "animus", the "anima", the "wise old man" or "father", the "mother" and even the "self, above which is the "Self of Selves" or God.

In other words, he holds in check the influences, in so far as they are baleful, of the moon, Mercury, Mars, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn and even the sun, above which he knows there exists the "Sun of suns" or *God*. He is not *without* the planets, archetypes or *archontes* (just as he is not without earth, water, air and fire) for these are what comprise that which is called the "astral body" (or psychic body) in occultism. The psychic body is a *body* in so far as it is composed of unconscious, collective or "planetary" psychic forces. It is the astrological planets (or Jung's archetypes) which form the "stuff of the psychic or astral body. The "triumpher" of the seventh Arcanum is therefore the master of the astral body. . . master of the astral body—this means to say master of the *seven* forces which it comprises, holding them in equilibrium.

What is the eighth force which puts the seven forces of the astral body in equilibrium?

It is the eighth Arcanum of the Tarot. Justice, which gives the answer to this question.