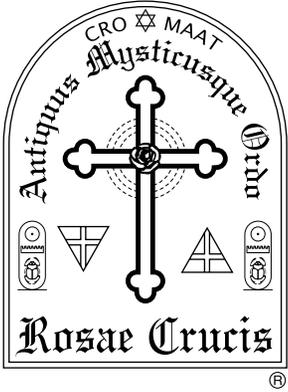




MASTER MONOGRAPH

ROSICRUCIAN ORDER
AMORC



NEOPHYTE SECTION

Atrium 1 Nos. 1-3

*“Know thyself, and thou shalt
know the universe and the gods.”*

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First Atrium No. 1

CONCURRENCE



It is unfortunate that certain schools of philosophy deny the importance of the material world and refuse to acknowledge its function in the cosmic scheme. Although we should not make the mistake of glorifying matter, we do need to admit that the material world has its usefulness. To do otherwise would mean that our conception of life would be irrational. As Rosicrucians, we need to interest ourselves in the remarkable laws of nature manifesting in the material world and in our bodies. We will then obtain a better appreciation of the physical world and a more intimate understanding of the harmony that must prevail between the physical and the spiritual. Life will thus be revealed in its true sense. The necessity for studying natural laws and the purpose of Creation is beautifully expressed in the following quotation, taken from a work by the philosopher and theologian William Ellery Channing. As you progress in the studies, you will understand more fully the truth of the thoughts expressed by this author.

Matter was made for spirit, body for mind. The mind . . . is the end of this living organization of flesh and bones, of nerves and muscles; and the end of this vast system of sea and land, and air and skies. This unbounded creation of sun, and moon, and stars, and clouds, and seasons, was not ordained merely to feed and clothe the body, but first and supremely to awaken, nourish, and expand the soul, to be the school of the intellect, the nurse of thought and imagination, the field for the active powers, a revelation of the Creator, and a bond of social union. We are placed in the material creation, not to be its slaves, but to master it, and to make it a minister to our highest powers. It is interesting to observe how much the material world does for the mind. Most of the sciences, arts, professions, and occupations of life, grow out of our connection with matter. The natural philosopher, the physician, the lawyer, the artist, and the legislator, find the objects or occasions of their researches in matter. The poet borrows his beautiful imagery from matter. The sculptor and painter express their noble conceptions through matter. Material wants rouse the world to activity. The material organs of sense, especially the eye, wake up infinite thoughts in the mind. To maintain, then, that the mass of men are and must be so immersed in matter, that their souls cannot rise, is to contradict the great end of their connection with matter. I maintain that the philosophy

(continued on page 11)

On this day of the R+C path

Dear Fratres and Sorores,

The initiation you have just carried out in your sanctum makes you a Neophyte of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis. As such, you have passed through the Great Portal which gives you access to the antechamber of the symbolic Temple of our Tradition. This antechamber is composed of three allegorical rooms, each of which is known in our Order as an *Atrium*. In the coming months, you will pass through each of these three rooms and receive the Knowledge connected with them. If you prove yourself worthy of this Knowledge, you will then be allowed to cross a threshold which will give you access to the Initiate Section.

Despite all appearances, keep in mind that this admission is earned and is far from automatic. Many are the Neophytes who leave our Order before completing the study of the preparatory degrees. These students often think that it was their own free will which put an end to their affiliation. On a purely objective level this is quite accurate, because each of us uses free will as we desire. However, on another level, the path approached by these students did not correspond to the deepest aspects of their personalities, for reasons which cannot be the object of any general explanation.

From now on, it would be appropriate, as a Neophyte of our Order, that you begin your sanctum periods by carrying out the ritual I will now describe to you. You will find this to be very simple. Its goal is simply to perpetuate a special aspect of the Rosicrucian Tradition while expressing to the Cosmic the desire to benefit from its inspiration when studying the monographs. The ritual is as follows:

Before entering your sanctum to study your monographs, wash your hands as a token of physical purification, and dry them well. Then drink a glass of cold water to symbolize your desire to be as pure as possible on the mental plane.

Then enter your sanctum, sit down, and meditate a few moments on the work you are about to undertake. If you wish, you may burn a small amount of incense.

After meditating briefly, stand up and make the Rosicrucian Sign while facing the East of your sanctum. Use the procedure described in the booklet entitled *Neophyte Guide—Rosicrucian Initiation*.



Then light the two candles on your sanctum altar, beginning with the one on the left. Immediately afterwards say the following invocation either mentally or softly:

“May this period of study and meditation place me in harmony with the Cosmic and with all my fratres and sorores on the entire surface of Earth. May it also make me receptive to the lessons and inspirations of the present hour. So Mote It Be!”

After reciting this invocation, begin to study your monograph, remembering to use your study notebook to write down all observations inspired by your period of study.

When you have finished your study, meditate a few moments in your sanctum. Then stand up and extinguish the two candles, beginning with the one on the left. Afterwards make the Rosicrucian Sign while facing the East of your sanctum and mentally say the following invocation:

“May the Cosmic sanctify this period of study and meditation. May peace reign over the entire surface of Earth and within each being. So Mote It Be!”

You may now leave your sanctum and resume your normal activities.

If you should have the opportunity to seclude yourself when studying your monographs, and if you can benefit from the desired tranquility, I would advise you to follow these instructions for all your sanctum periods. With practice you will realize that this ritual makes it possible to create an inner harmonization with the Rosicrucian Égrégore and the Masters who watch over our Order. That is why, beyond its simplicity, it is very effective to approach your Rosicrucian work under proper spiritual conditions. This effectiveness, of course, also depends on the sincerity with which you will approach your period of study.

With all my heart and soul I wish that the study of the teachings of this First Atrium may fulfill your fondest mystical expectations and that you may see, beyond the Great Portal you have just passed through, the radiant beauty of the Rose on the Cross.

With best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,

Christian Bernard
Imperator



Dear Fratres and Sorores,

You are now in your sanctum, ready to devote yourself to a new period of study and meditation. As you read these few lines, keep in mind that other fratres and sorores are doing likewise, because, seeing how many Rosicrucians are scattered all over the world, not a day goes by without many of them studying their monographs. Whatever their country of residence, their religion, or their race, external conditions have no influence on their sincerity or on the interest they take in our teachings, because all of them are motivated by the same desire—to always have a better understanding of the deep meaning of existence. Thus, always remember that you are never alone in the pursuit of your spiritual quest and that Rosicrucian mysticism constitutes a fraternal bond which, independent of time and space, unites all members of AMORC in the same Égrégoire.

Before beginning the study of the first subject in this Atrium, we would like to draw your attention to an important matter. No doubt you have asked yourself whether you are obliged to wait a week between study periods. Although we have no desire to restrain your enthusiasm, we would advise you to respect this delay. We understand fully that you may be impatient to find out about our teachings; and you must remember that these lessons convey something other than mere intellectual knowledge. As we previously explained, they also serve as a basis for spiritual alchemy slowly taking place on all levels of your being. You will gradually realize that a mental and psychic evolution is being subtly achieved within you between each of your weekly sanctum periods. This is why we recommend that you study no more than one monograph per week unless you are behind in your work.

Following these few preliminary remarks, let us approach today's study. In the Postulant Section, we showed you that a human being is quite different from a mass of matter kept alive by physicochemical processes. Moreover, we explained to you that each person possesses certain phases of consciousness which completely transcend his or her purely objective faculties. As you progress in the monographs, we will offer you a certain number of experiments that will prove to you that our explanations concerning this subject are well founded.

Nonetheless, we must not minimize the importance of the material world in our existence, because it is the foundation from which the immaterial may evolve. This is why Rosicrucians have



always paid attention to the study of matter as it expresses itself on the physical plane, as it is impossible to understand the laws governing the metaphysical world without mastering the basic principles governing the physical world. That is why the greatest mystics of the past were also eminent scholars, because they knew that the quest for the invisible begins with observation of the visible. We will therefore begin the study of this First Atrium with a general survey of laws inherent to matter.

SPIRIT: For centuries, Rosicrucians have felt that all forms of matter, living or nonliving, owe their existence to a universal energy which we designate as *Spirit*. Scientists are still poorly acquainted with the nature of this energy because, instead of directing their research to what Spirit is in essence, they analyze its various manifestations. Scientists distinguish four great forces active in nature: cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion. Yet, from a mystical point of view, these four forces are only the different manifestations of a single energy, which, in this case, is Spirit. In this respect, the mistake of present-day scientists arises from the fact that they too often mistake effects for causes, because they do not understand that the apparent multiplicity of material things has its origin in an intangible, invisible, and infinite Cosmic Unity. They tend to attribute a causal nature to physical phenomena arising from an unique metaphysical energy.

For physicists, cohesion is the force which unites particles of a same material substance to one another. A simple example of this force is provided to us by the billions of drops of water which, when united, form a pond, a pool, a lake, and even an ocean. In our physical body, it is cohesion which allows all our cells to maintain themselves in groups to form our organs, muscles, and, generally speaking, all the tissues of our body.

Adhesion, on the other hand, corresponds to the force which unites two different bodies by means of an intermediate substance. For example, when we glue two pieces of wood together, it is the adhesive power of the glue that keeps them assembled.

Attraction, as you know, designates the force attracting material bodies to one another, the most obvious manifestation being the attraction produced between the opposed polarities of two magnets.



As for repulsion, it naturally involves the force causing two material bodies to repel each other. Once again, the use of two

magnets constitutes a good example of the power of repulsion, which poles of the same nature can bring about between them. However, beyond these few definitions that we encourage you to explore further by consulting a dictionary or an encyclopedia, Rosicrucians feel that these four seemingly distinct forces act within matter solely under the impulse of Spirit.

You are familiar with the word *Spirit*, because it is very often used by religions. However, as employed by our Order, it is not connected in any way with a religious principle. We do not give to this word the theological meaning ascribed to it by priests or spiritualists. To be even more precise, we do not use it to designate the Holy Ghost, Soul, or the spiritual principle animating every human being. From a Rosicrucian point of view, Spirit is the universal energy which gives to matter the tangible expression we know it to have.

Thus, from the smallest grain of sand to the largest planet, everything constituting the material universe is imbued with Spirit. The human body itself owes its existence to energy, because it is this energy, in the form of cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion which gives the body its organic structure. As long as we are alive, there exists a perfect equilibrium between the forces of cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion at work in our body. However, at the time of death, the forces of repulsion increase in intensity and finally cause the decomposition of material substances composing the body. That is why the body disintegrates and slowly loses the organized form it once had.

We have just stated that Rosicrucians make a very clear distinction between Soul and Spirit. In future degrees, we will make a complete study of the spiritual dimension of humans. However, at this point we can say that the Soul is a cosmic energy independent of the material world, which possesses functions and attributes not found in nonliving matter. However, Soul is closely associated with another energy, the Vital Life Force, which serves as a support, as long as the Soul is incarnate in the body. Since Spirit is the basis of the material world which, by definition, is limited and transitory, we assign to it a polarity of negative predominance. By contrast, we attribute to Soul a predominantly positive polarity, because it is of a spiritual nature—in other words, unlimited and eternal.

That being said, you must not consider that one of these two polarities is bad and the other one is good, or that one is quite simply more important than the other. They merely designate two



different poles in the expression of terrestrial life. In other words, they relate to two different and yet complementary energies which, when they are united, express the duality we find among all living beings. In human beings, it is the fusion of these two energies at the time of birth which makes possible the incarnation of the Soul in the body. Soon we will see why and how this is so.

THE COMPOSITION OF MATTER: Since Spirit is the energy that is the basis for all forms of matter, this means that everything existing on this earthly plane—whether sand, stone, wood, glass, or any other material substance—owes its existence to a single universal essence. It follows that the difference we perceive between things lies only in their expression—that is, in their external aspects—because they are infused by the same energy. What makes one object differ from another is the way in which the elements composing them are combined, and it is this variation of combinations which is responsible for the multitude of manifestations we can see, hear, touch, smell, and taste through our sensory faculties.

It should be noted that these elements have nothing to do with the meaning that is generally attributed to the word *element*. In other words, we are not referring here to earth, air, water, and fire, because these four principals are themselves only major effects of Spirit. When we use the word *element* in connection with the composition of matter, it is used to define the particles composing all material substances—in this instance, atoms. We shall see precisely what those particles consist of in the First Temple Degree.

Since Spirit is a universal energy, it therefore follows that it is constantly permeating space. This means that energy is always ready, in one form or another, to serve matter. It cannot be destroyed, because any energy, whatever its type, is indestructible. Naturally, it is possible to act on Spirit and modify the way that it manifests. It is possible, for example, to break a vase. However, even in this case, the energy composing it is not destroyed. By breaking the vase, we simply modify the combination of elements which, under the action of forces of cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion, were giving it its external aspect.



The same principle applies to all material substances constituting our body and our earthly surroundings because, although we cannot deny that they can be modified in appearance or made to disappear, it is impossible to destroy the essence

that infuses them. From a mystical point of view, this implies that the atoms composing matter are immortal. Indeed, all of them are particles of Spirit.

We shall continue the study of Spirit in our next monograph. For now, the explanations we have just provided concerning this subject will be sufficient. Before closing this sanctum period by following the ritual instructions you were given for that purpose, we recommend that you read this lesson once more, because it involves some extremely important principles.

With best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

NOTE: *The symbol appearing in the lower corner of each page of this monograph indicates that you have now passed through the Portal leading into the First Atrium of the Neophyte Section. In a general way it designates this Atrium. In fact, it is itself composed of three symbols, which are the following: a triangle, square, and dot. These are very ancient geometric figures which were used for centuries by mystics, philosophers, and sages to symbolize certain natural and universal laws—laws you will study in our teachings. The triangle, as you will soon learn, designates perfection; the square symbolizes stability; and the dot represents the beginning or birth. The small sign found at the apex of the triangle is the letter Yod, the tenth character of the Hebrew alphabet. For the Hebrews, it also symbolized the number 10. Its equivalent in English is the letter Y.*



Practical Application

Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant

We have explained in this monograph that Rosicrucians make a fundamental distinction between Spirit and Soul. To help you better understand this difference, we will compare a human being to an electric clock. A clock, as an object, is the work of a builder—in other words, of a human intelligence. As humans, we owe our existence to the Creator, who may be considered the Divine Intelligence that conceived everything that exists in the universe.

Any electric clock owes its form and outer appearance to the particles of matter composing it. Yet no matter how solid and beautiful the clock may be, it cannot fulfill its function—that is, give the time—unless it receives electricity. This means that if, for one reason or another, an electric current no longer reaches the clock, it ceases to function and becomes an object of no particular interest.

The same principle may be applied to humans. Our physical body is a combination of material elements which, through the action of Spirit, forms a cohesive and perfectly organized whole. However, it is the Soul that provides the energy necessary for its metabolism. When Soul leaves us at the time of death, this energy disappears at the same time, and our physical body becomes a mass of inert matter, devoid of any vitality or awareness. We then stop being a living, conscious individual.

The preceding analogy will help you to understand that the words *Spirit* and *Soul*, as we use them in the teachings of our Order, are not synonymous. The first designates the energy, which is the basis of the material world, whereas the second applies to the spiritual energy animating each human being. These two words are therefore associated with two different yet complementary energies. We will have the opportunity to return to this very important matter.

Summary of This Monograph

After carefully reading this monograph, read the following summary. It contains the major principles on which you are to reflect and meditate in coming days. If any of the points are difficult to understand, refer to the explanations given in this monograph. Moreover, we advise you to read this summary again immediately before your next sanctum period.

- ¶ For centuries, Rosicrucians have stated that all forms of matter, living or nonliving, owe their existence to a universal energy which we designate as *Spirit*.
- ¶ Scientists distinguish four great forces active in matter: cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion. From a mystical point of view, these four forces are only different manifestations of a single energy—namely, Spirit.
- ¶ The word *Spirit*, as it is used in the Rosicrucian Tradition, is not connected in any way with a religious principle. More precisely, we do not use it to designate the Holy Ghost, Soul, or the spiritual principle animating every human being.
- ¶ Rosicrucians make a clear distinction between Soul and Spirit. The Soul is indeed a cosmic energy independent of matter, whereas Spirit is the energy permeating all material things.
- ¶ The difference we perceive between material things lies solely in their expression—that is, in their exterior aspect—because the elements composing them—in this instance, atoms—are infused with the same energy.
- ¶ Spirit is an indestructible energy. This means that energy is always ready, in one form or another, to serve matter.

Concurrence *(continued)*

which does not see, in the laws and phenomena of outward nature, the means of awakening mind, is lamentably short-sighted; and that a state of society which leaves the mass of men to be crushed and famished in soul by excessive toils on matter is at war with God's designs, and turns into means of bondage what was meant to free and expand the soul.

—WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING (1780-1842)



First Atrium No. 2



CONCURRENCE

In concurrence with today's study, we propose that you read the following quotation taken from the work *Le passage de la matière à la vie* (The Passage of Matter to Life) by Emmy Guittes. Without going so far as to state that the author gives the word *spirit* the same meaning that we attribute to this word in the Rosicrucian teachings, you will see that we can make numerous parallels between what he says concerning the subject of "spirit units" and what we explain in this monograph regarding Spirit.

For the Buddha, the formation of inanimate substances, their motion and the mysterious passage of matter to the first manifestations of life is brought about by the attractive energy of innumerable invisible entities which he named "spirit units." They are potentials of energy in motion. Their ability to condense particles which eventually form material substances, then to group the infinitely small parts of the first unicellular being, originates in their speed of rotation. These are the spirit units which, by their force of attraction, unconsciously built the first organisms which would reproduce by following the current of evolution all the way up to Humanity.

The spirit units had at first only a rudimentary consciousness, the kind a unicellular being can have. However, while organisms live, reproduce, and die, it is the same spirit units—for they do not die, being energy and not matter—which, after death, build other, more perfected bodies. They develop their consciousness and their faculties of perception through their numerous lives. As they evolve, their energy grows and groups together an increasing number of molecules to form the diverse parts of their physical structure which is improved in proportion to their strength. Since these spirit units are energy, they are invisible and are everywhere and in everything. They collaborate in the birth and the development of all phenomena and all manifestations of life.

—EMMY GUITTES (20th century)

Dear Fratres and Sorores,

In the preceding monograph we began the study of a very important subject and we suggested that you consult a dictionary or encyclopedia so as to investigate the meaning of the words *cohesion*, *adhesion*, *attraction*, and *repulsion*. As was explained to you, these words relate to the four forces manifested in matter by Spirit. We presume that you did so because we advised you to do this, and because we believe that you are interested in this subject. Thus, when you read about these forces in various scientific magazines, you will have a better understanding of the laws and principles involved.

THE VIBRATIONS OF SPIRIT: Having seen that Spirit is the energy which is the basis of the material world, we will now concern ourselves with the nature of this energy. We will now consider the way in which Spirit acts in our environment and the form in which it appears to us. From earliest antiquity, Rosicrucians have maintained that Spirit is propagated throughout the universe in the form of vibrations, whose movement is similar to those of ripples resulting from a stone being thrown into water.

In this case, the rhythm and height of the ripples vary according to the stone's weight and size, as well as the force with which it is thrown. If the stone is heavy and large, and if its impact upon the water is violent, the ripples will be in the form of concentric circles that are relatively high (of great amplitude) and close to one another (of high vibratory frequency). If the stone is small and light, and if it is thrown gently into the water, the ripples will be small (of low amplitude) and far apart from one another (less frequent).

In the same way, the vibrations of Spirit are propagated more or less rapidly in space and with more or less force. This means that vibratory waves, of varying amplitudes and of weak or strong frequencies, continuously permeate the universe and keep it in motion.

From a scientific point of view, the vibratory frequency of a wave is determined by its number of vibrations per second. Thus, certain waves are propagated in space at a speed of a few vibrations per second, whereas others move at the rate of several thousand vibrations per second. The expression of every material thing depends on the rhythm by which Spirit makes the elements composing it vibrate. Thus, the difference between two forms of matter is only a question of vibratory frequency, depending solely on the number of vibrations



which propagate themselves through the particular form per second. Thus, if it were possible to act on the vibrations of everything surrounding us and to make them vibrate at the same frequency, we could no longer differentiate between sand, stone, wood, glass, water, air, etc.

For example, when you look at a tree stump, it seems to you to be completely different from a rock. However, this is only because the vibrations composing these two things are not of the same frequency, even though the energy infusing them is exactly the same in essence—in this case Spirit. If you were able to act on their respective vibratory frequencies, you could transform a tree stump into a rock, or vice versa. Such a possibility may seem unbelievable to you and yet, strictly speaking, it rests on fundamental truth. We are convinced that science will one day prove this cosmic law. As a Rosicrucian, you must have a good understanding of this principle, because it constitutes one of the keys to the composition of matter.

In keeping with the preceding explanations, the vibrations of Spirit do not move at the same speed, whether in space or in matter itself. This principle is particularly evident when you compare the vibrations of light to those of sound. To understand this, you need only consider what happens when you watch a carpenter hit a nail with a hammer. If you are about one hundred meters away from the carpenter, you hear the blow sometime after having seen the hammer touch the wall. If you are near the carpenter, you will perceive the sound at the same time. The farther away the carpenter is from you, the more time elapses between the sight of the blow and the resulting sound. This is due to the fact that light vibrations are propagated more rapidly than those of sound. To be more precise, let us remember that sound vibrations move in air at approximately 331.5 meters (1,100 feet) per second, whereas light vibrations move at a speed of about 300,000 kilometers (186,300 miles) per second.

Thus, returning to our example, the fact that we are one hundred meters from the carpenter is enough to create a discrepancy between the perception of the hammer blow and that of the resulting sound. Furthermore, the fact that we are close does not allow the light vibrations to reach our sight before the sound vibrations reach our ears. That is why we perceive the act and the sound simultaneously.



Since we have just alluded to sound vibrations, it will be interesting to consider the special example of music. Like

everything we interpret in terms of noise or sound, music is nothing more than a body of vibrations. Yet, no one can deny the great influence it exercises on our physical body as well as on our mind. Music profoundly affects us because our being is especially sensitive to the vibratory effects it produces on our consciousness. In this respect, the impact that music can have on us is not limited to the sensory perception of the vibrations producing it. Music also exerts an influence on our soul, which explains why we feel particularly content when we listen to an inspiring musical work. This is very important, because it implies that beyond the purely cerebral interpretation of a vibratory phenomenon, we possess a form of consciousness that is capable of perceiving what none of our physical senses can apprehend. It also allows us to suppose that we can be sensitive to vibrations even more subtle than those corresponding to music. We will show you later that we can actually attune ourselves with vibratory frequencies extending far beyond the manifestations of the material world.

THE VIBRATIONS OF MATTER: Since all material substances are imbued with Spirit and this energy is of a vibratory nature, it follows that all forms of matter vibrate. To be more precise, we say that they vibrate both inwardly and outwardly, which present-day science recognizes. The role of the inward vibrations is to maintain a constant equilibrium between the forces of cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion, which combine to give objects the material structure we know them to have. Without these vibrations and without this equilibrium, material things could not have the solid and tangible aspect they present to our objective senses. As for the outward vibrations emanating from all objects, they are responsible for our perception of the material world. The outward vibrations are the ones that reach our sensory organs, thus enabling us to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell everything that is part of our material surroundings.

To better understand these preceding remarks, let us take the example of a rose. According to what we have just explained, a rose is composed of different vibrations which have their source in Spirit. Some of these vibrations maintain the rose's inward form and structure, thus allowing the flower to form an organized whole. Others reach our eyes and allow us to discern its shape and color. Still others spread to our nose and produce an olfactory reaction, which we can express in terms of a perfume. When we touch the rose, the vibrations emanating from its



substance give us the sensation of velvet. Thus, everything we can know about a rose and, in general, about all material things, comes from the vibrations emanating from them.

It may seem difficult to admit that all objects surrounding us vibrate inwardly and outwardly. Yet, it is so. Of course, it is impossible to see the vibrations being propagated through them, or those that are being constantly emitted. However, this does not mean that such vibrations are nonexistent. By way of analogy, you cannot observe the heat emanating from a lit candle. But all you need to do is bring your hand close to its flame, and you will feel that heat. Likewise, you cannot see the vibrations produced by the notes played on a musical instrument, yet we know perfectly well that they affect us. If such were not the case, we could not hear those notes. Everything that we perceive in the material world, whether this involves light, colors, sounds, odors, etc., or the sensations of hot and cold, hard and soft, wet and dry, etc., is due to the fact that the world is constantly emitting vibrations, which have their origin in Spirit.

Scientists know the vibratory frequency of chemical elements they have succeeded in isolating, as well as that of sound, electromagnetic, and light waves. However, this knowledge is limited mostly to material manifestations—to phenomena observable and measurable by means of scientific instruments. We shall teach you in future degrees that the spiritual world is also governed by the law of vibrations and that it is possible to perceive its vibratory octaves by means of the faculties of the Soul.

In the next monograph we will continue our study of Spirit and see how its vibrations reach our objective senses before being interpreted by our consciousness. You will thus understand that matter exists for us only because of the interpretation we give to its vibratory nature. Meanwhile, meditate on the explanation we have just brought to your attention. Inevitably, you will come to the conclusion that each human is a body of vibrations immersed in a vibratory ocean having its origin in the Cosmic.

With best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER



Practical Application

Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant

In connection with the study of Spirit and the way in which this energy manifests in matter, we think that you will be interested in reading the following text. It is an excerpt from a lecture that Michael Faraday (1791-1867), a Rosicrucian, gave on the subject of attraction and repulsion, explaining the laws and principles which are the source of those two opposing forces. Faraday's explanation of these principles has the advantage of being simple and easy to understand. As a practical application of this monograph, we propose that you reflect on the experiments described below.

And here is a bar of iron; why, it is only because the different parts of this iron are so wrought as to keep close together by the attraction between the particles that it is held together in one mass. It is kept together, in fact, merely by the attraction of one particle to another, and that is the point I want now to illustrate.

If I take a piece of flint, and strike it with a hammer, and break it thus [breaking off a piece of the flint] I have done nothing more than separate the particles which compose these two pieces so far apart that their attraction is too weak to cause them to hold together; and it is only for that reason that there are now two pieces in the place of one. I will show you an experiment to prove that this attraction does still exist in those particles; for here is a piece of glass (for what was true of the flint and the bar of iron is true of the piece of glass, and is true of every other solid—they are all held together in the lump by the attraction between their parts). I can show you the attraction between its separate particles; for if I take these portions of glass which I have reduced to very fine powder, you see that I can actually build them up into a solid wall by pressure between two flat surfaces. The power which I thus have of building up this wall is due to the attraction of the particles forming, as it were, the cement which holds them together; and so in this case, where I have taken no very great pains to bring the particles together, you see perhaps a couple of ounces of finely pounded glass standing as an upright wall; is not this attraction most wonderful?

That bar of iron one inch square has such power of attraction in its particles—giving to it such strength—that it will hold up twenty tons' weight before the little set of particles in the small space equal to one division across which it can be pulled apart will separate.

Summary of This Monograph

After carefully reading this monograph, read the following summary. It contains the major principles on which you are to reflect and meditate in coming days. If any of the points are difficult to understand, refer to the explanations given in this monograph. Moreover, we advise you to read this summary again immediately before your next sanctum period.

- ¶ Spirit is an energy which is propagated throughout the universe in the form of vibrations, and these vibrations move at differing rates of speed and power.
- ¶ From a scientific point of view, the vibratory frequency of a wave is its number of vibrations per second.
- ¶ The expression of every material thing depends on the rhythm by which Spirit makes the elements composing it vibrate. The difference between two forms of matter is only a question of vibratory frequency.
- ¶ If it were possible to act on the vibrations of everything surrounding us and cause them to vibrate at the same frequency, we could no longer differentiate between sand, stone, wood, glass, water, air, etc.
- ¶ Sound vibrations move in air at approximately 331.5 meters (1,100 feet) per second whereas light vibrations do so at a speed of about 300,000 kilometers (186,300 miles) per second.
- ¶ Human consciousness can harmonize itself with vibratory frequencies extending far beyond the manifestations of the material world.
- ¶ All forms of matter vibrate both inwardly and outwardly. The role of inward vibrations is to maintain a constant equilibrium between the forces of cohesion, adhesion, attraction, and repulsion, which combine to give to objects the structure we perceive them to have. As for the outward vibrations emanating from all objects, they are those vibrations which reach our sensory organs, thus enabling us to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell everything that is part of our material surroundings.
- ¶ Scientists know the vibratory frequency of chemical elements they have succeeded in isolating, as well as sound, light, and electromagnetic waves. However, their knowledge in this area is limited mostly to material manifestations. The spiritual world is also ruled by the law of vibrations.
- ¶ Each human is a body of vibrations immersed in a vibratory ocean having its origin in the Cosmic.

NOTES



First Atrium No. 3



CONCURRENCE

Human beings have too great a tendency to trust their sensory perceptions and often make the mistake of believing that these perceptions are the exact reflection of material reality. As we will explain in this monograph, humans do not perceive what things are in themselves; rather, they perceive only the mental image they produce in our consciousness. David Hume, a prominent philosopher and scientist of the 18th century, wrote at length on this subject, and accordingly we offer here a passage from his work.

It seems evident, that men are carried, by a natural instinct or prepossession, to repose faith in their senses; and that, without any reasoning, or even almost before the use of reason, we always suppose an external universe, which depends not on our perception, but would exist, though we and every sensible creature were absent or annihilated. Even the animal creation are governed by a like opinion, and preserve this belief of external objects, in all their thoughts, designs, and actions.

It seems also evident, that, when men follow this blind and powerful instinct of nature, they always suppose the very images, presented by the senses, to be the external objects, and never entertain any suspicion, that the one are nothing but representations of the other: This very table, which we see white, and which we feel hard, is believed to exist, independent of our perception, and to be something external to our mind, which perceives it. Our presence bestows not being on it; our absence does not annihilate it. It preserves its existence uniform and entire, independent of the situation of intelligent beings, who perceive or contemplate it.

—**DAVID HUME (1711-1776)**

Dear Fratres and Sorores,

Today we shall continue our study of Spirit vibrations and we shall examine how we interpret them. In the last monograph, we learned that these vibrations are responsible for all the sensations we receive from the material world. However, we must go further and consider the processes by which our objective consciousness expresses them in terms of colors, sounds, odors, etc. In doing so, we shall examine in particular the mechanism of sight, because what we say regarding this subject may likewise be applied to our senses of hearing, touch, taste, and smell.

THE PERCEPTION OF VIBRATIONS: While watching a movie, you may have asked yourself about the nature of what comes out of the projector, travels through the air, and creates images on the screen. Physicists state that it is simply a beam of light. They are correct; however, we may state more precisely that this beam is nothing other than vibrations, which, when focused by a mechanical device, reproduce the filmed images on a screen. In the same way, the vision we have of objects is due to the projection toward us of light vibrations they receive from the sun or from any other source of natural or artificial light. These light vibrations then traverse the cornea, and, by the action of the crystalline lens, converge on the retina where they form an inverted image of those objects.

We can say therefore that the retina of the eye is like the screen of a movie theater, with the exception that it has a curved and not a flat surface. Moreover, the retina's surface is not a smooth membrane, but a rough one, composed of thousands of cones and small rods oriented towards the crystalline lens. Once the retinal image is formed, it is transmitted immediately via the optic nerve to that portion of the brain which specializes in the interpretation of visual impressions. Within a fraction of a second, this image is inverted and then interpreted by our subjective faculties, thus becoming for us a conscious reality.

Before proceeding, we must emphasize that human sight, when compared to the vision of numerous other animals, has a very special characteristic, because the two images formed on the retina of our eyes are not interpreted independently or separately by the brain. Before being submitted to analysis, the images are merged into a single mental image by a very complex physiological process, and it is to that unique mental image that our cerebral interpretation reacts. This fusion is very



important, because it enables us to perceive the three dimensions of space and the contour of our surroundings with so much precision. Moreover, it is due to this that our vision of things is so sharp. Many animals do not have this faculty, because their brain interprets two different retinal images—one for each eye. Most of the time each of these two images is flat, and thus we can surmise that those animals cannot perceive perspective or correctly estimate distances separating things. That is why they often call upon a sense other than sight when moving about or observing their natural surroundings. Because they see two images at the same time, their vision is blurred—or at least this is what experiments involving insects seem to indicate.

The preceding explanations are simplified, as we have deliberately avoided the terms used in physiology. Our primary goal is to give you a clear idea of the principles involved. If you have the opportunity, we advise you to deepen your study of the optical functioning of the eye. However, you will find that science generally remains silent on the philosophical dimension of sight. This dimension is very important for mystics. That is why we shall focus upon and demonstrate the laws and principles involved. You will thus find that sight and, in general, the entirety of our objective perception are far from being limited to the sensory mechanisms that are the object of scientific research.

From a physiological point of view, sight is a process whose goal is to transform a retinal image into a mental concept. We have seen previously that the retinal image is of a vibratory nature. Accordingly, the interpretation of material things we see is not based upon those things themselves; it is based on the vibrations emanating from them. Thus, it is impossible to know exactly what the world surrounding us is, because we interpret what it seems to be rather than what it truly is. When you are looking at some object, the idea you have of it is based on what your brain has given you; however, nothing proves that this object is truly what you perceive. You can, of course, call upon your sense of touch to confirm your visual impression, yet how can you be sure that you are not deceived by your tactile perception? Or if something interferes with the vibrations emanating from this object, the mental image you have of it undergoes modification, whereas, in itself, the object remains what it was.



For example, if you put on eyeglasses with blue-tinted lenses, the object may seem bluish to you, even though it is not truly this color. When putting on these glasses, the vibrations reaching

your eyes were submitted to an alteration which is translated by a retinal image to which your brain attributes a blue predominance. This very simple example demonstrates that when the vibrations of an object we are looking at are affected before reaching our eyes, the mental image we have of it is itself modified. However, this object is not changed in its own reality. This proves that what we see depends on the way we perceive the vibrations of Spirit and not on what that energy is independent of us.

The same principle applies to what we hear, smell, taste, and touch, because sounds, odors, flavors, and forms likewise correspond to vibrations which, after having reached our ears, nose, tongue, and skin, are transmitted to a precise area of the brain which, depending on the situation, is specialized in the interpretation of sound, smell, taste, or touch impressions. If, for whatever reason, some interference occurs between the vibratory source of these impressions and the area of the brain involved in their interpretation, then the realization we have of these vibrations is distorted. For example, you know quite well that if we plug our ears even slightly, the voices reaching us are not of the same tonality. Yet, the voices in themselves remain what they were. In another example, the sensation that is experienced in contact with objects is very much modified when we wear gloves. However, once again, it is not the things we touch that change, but the interpretation given to us by our objective consciousness. Thus, as is true of what we see, what we hear, smell, taste, and touch is a body of vibratory stimuli emanating from a source whose precise nature we cannot know, because the totality of our sensory perceptions rests solely on the way in which we interpret the effects produced by the vibrations of Spirit on our five objective senses and on our brain.

THE INTERPRETATION OF VIBRATIONS: The way in which we interpret material things also depends on our culture, education, belief, and life experience. Thus, when you see a chair, you cannot have any doubt that it is a chair and that it is used for sitting. However, from a philosophical and psychological point of view, the matter is not so simple. If you had been taught from earliest infancy that the object on which you sit is not called a chair but a table, you would sit down on a chair thinking that it is called a table. Moreover, the fact that what you call a “table” is actually a chair does not change the chair into a table or vice versa. To take another example, if you had been told as a child that cats bark and



dogs meow, you would call barking what, for others, would be meowing, and yet your misnomer would change in no way the sounds produced by those animals. The dog would continue to bark and the cat would meow. This means that the way in which we interpret the things that we perceive does not affect in any way what they are in their own reality, because the understanding we have of them does not change at all what they are on the vibratory level.

The understanding that we have of our material environment is associated with the interpretation given to us by our objective consciousness. However, this interpretation does not affect the real nature of things we perceive. Let us consider the way in which blind people apprehend their surroundings. When blind people look in the direction of a tree, they do not see it. Yet, they would be wrong to think that this tree does not exist, because other persons are able to see it. They are simply incapable of interpreting the vibrations emanating from this tree for two major reasons—either due to physiological deficiencies, no image is formed on the retina of their eyes; or the image is indeed formed on the retina but cannot be transformed into a mental image, notably because the optic nerve has been affected or because the cerebral region in charge of the interpretation of visual impressions has been damaged. The same is true of people who are deaf. In that case, they are unable to interpret in terms of sounds or noises the sound vibrations reaching their ears, yet it does not mean that such vibrations do not exist. Daily life does prove that we are constantly subjected to various sounds and noises. These two examples show that it is possible, due to a functional anomaly, not to see things or not to hear sounds that do exist.

It is important to understand that material things exist for us only because of our ability to perceive and interpret the vibrations constantly emanating from them and which, as you now know, have their source in Spirit. If, for any reason whatsoever, we lack this ability, we become incapable of having a precise idea of our material environment. That is why, when we are sound asleep, we lose consciousness of the world surrounding us. Indeed, our five objective senses are then inactive and do not transmit any vibratory stimuli to our brain, thereby resulting in a nearly total absence of sensory impressions. However, sleeping, and being unconscious of our immediate environment, does not imply that it no longer exists. It simply means that we no longer perceive it objectively and thus we no longer interpret its vibratory reality.



For example, whether you are awake or sound asleep does not change the appearance of your room, nor the vibrations that compose it. This point is very important, because it shows that our interpretation of terrestrial things depends on the way in which we perceive them, and conversely, that the way we perceive them does not affect what they are independent of us. Seen in this light, the material world is both a reality and an illusion for, although it appears in a concrete and tangible way to our objective consciousness, we cannot know, by means of our sensory faculties, what it truly is in essence. We emphasize the statement “by means of our sensory faculties,” only because we will show you in a future degree that it is possible to perceive Spirit and to act upon its vibrations by means of psychic faculties which, because of their nature, are often called *extrasensory*.

In the next monograph we will complete what we want you to learn about Spirit within the framework of this First Atrium, and we will draw from it certain laws on this subject that you must absolutely remember. As we have instructed, write in your study notebook those questions raised when studying our teachings. Do not hesitate to jot down the comments that are inspired in you or the impressions that come to you. In this way, you will better assimilate the laws and principles involved. Moreover, when you read your notes again in a few years’ time, you will find that your understanding of the points discussed has evolved considerably.

With best wishes for Peace Profound,

Sincerely and fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER



Practical Application

Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.—Unto Thee I Grant

There are some very simple experiments you can perform at home to demonstrate to yourself the existence of Spirit vibrations. As we explained, these vibrations are propagated in space—in the apparent vacuum separating objects—and within the objects themselves. As a demonstration, take a ruler made of wood, steel, or plastic, and place the end of this ruler next to one of your ears. Then, using a finger, scratch the other end of the ruler. You will then perceive a sound, which proves that the vibrations produced by scratching the ruler propagate themselves through it. You can do the same experiment with a tree. Place one ear against the tree and strike it with your hand on the opposite side. You will once again hear a sound.

Solid substances are not the only things that propagate sound vibrations. The next time you take a bath, immerse your head under water and strike the edge of the bathtub with your hand. You will hear a perfectly audible sound which, in many cases, will even seem to be amplified. This simple experiment can be performed with the same success in a swimming pool or at the sea. Dive all the way to the bottom of the water and hit the ground with your fist, stir pebbles, or just simply listen. You will perceive a multitude of sound sensations.

For another experiment confirming that vibrations are propagated in space, we suggest that you obtain two metal rods that are approximately two millimeters (one-eighth inch) in diameter and thirty centimeters (one foot) in length. Hang them from a string and place them about twenty centimeters (eight inches) apart. Then strike one of them forcibly with a hammer or some other metal object. At the moment that the resulting sound is at its peak, gently place your hand on the other rod. You will feel that it vibrates and that it is affected by the vibrations emitted by the rod you have struck.

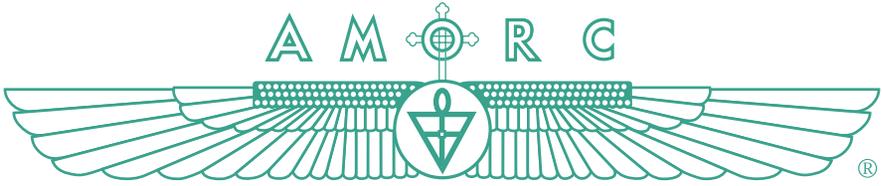
In the coming days, carry out these experiments, or even others that you create, so as to prove to yourself that everything you perceive is only the result of surrounding vibrations; remember that if we were incapable of perceiving and interpreting vibrations—either physically or psychically—we could have no knowledge of what surrounds us.

Summary of This Monograph

After carefully reading this monograph, read the following summary. It contains the major principles on which you are to reflect and meditate in coming days. If any of the points are difficult to understand, refer to the explanations given in this monograph. Moreover, we advise you to read this summary again immediately before your next sanctum period.

- ¶ The vision we have of objects is due to the projection toward us of the light vibrations that they receive from the sun or from some other source of natural or artificial light.
- ¶ Human sight, when compared to the vision of numerous other animals, has a very special characteristic, because the two images formed on the retina of our eyes are not interpreted independently of one another by the brain. Before being submitted to analysis, the two images are merged into a single mental image by a highly complex physiological process.
- ¶ The interpretation of the material things we see is not based upon those things themselves; it is based on the vibrations emanating from them. Accordingly, it is impossible to know the exact character of the world surrounding us, because we interpret what our surrounding environment seems to be rather than what it truly is.
- ¶ Corresponding to what we see, what we hear, smell, taste, and touch is a body of vibratory stimuli emanating from a source whose precise nature we cannot know, because the totality of our sensory perceptions rests solely on the way in which we interpret the effects produced by the vibrations of Spirit on our five objective senses and on our brain.
- ¶ The way in which we interpret material things depends on our culture, education, beliefs, and life experience.
- ¶ The material world only exists for us because of our ability to perceive and interpret the vibrations emanating constantly from it and which have their source in Spirit.

*Consecrated to truth
and dedicated to every Rosicrucian*



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