

The Garden of the Heart

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The mentality of the present humanity is shaped and hardened by gross materialism. The cognitive effect of this is the tendency to take the visible material world as the “natural” starting point of conjecture. In contrast with this there is another form of reasoning which was commonly shared by all traditional civilisations. This form of reasoning is rooted in metaphysical principles which are rationally applicable within the physical world, in both its psychic and somatic modalities.

Gross materialism treats the visible material world as the only reality. Everything that is of an invisible nature—from a relative materialistic point of view—is considered as “unreal” and labelled, pejoratively, as “poetry” and “idealism,” investing these terms with a sentimentality they do not properly possess. The materialistic vision does not understand that metaphor (*meta pherein*) and symbol (*symbolon*) have nothing to do with sentimentalism and fantasy but with intellection (*Ātma-vidyā*), and that poetry, as well as music, is meant as an effective means of conveying in a rhythmical respiratory manner truths of a higher order. Such being the case, the reasoning made from a materialistic perspective starts from the soil and is directed towards the soil. The reasoning made from the traditional perspective, starts from the immutable, universal, eternal metaphysical principles and is directed—within its own limitations—towards the same metaphysical domain. The materialistic vision is effectively blind to the realisation of *metaphysical identity* being, as it is, based exclusively on a poorly understood physical science. This mentality, perceiving only the natural disjunction and alterity of the physical domain, is in fatal need of an *artificial unity*, which could be designated as a *strictly horizontal unity*. Traditional thought does not deny the natural differences and contrasts which exist in the physical world. However, underlying these it recognises the unity of the Spirit. By this and through this, traditional thought has the great virtue of relating to the physical domain in terms of *insight* and *empathy*, and of transcending it in terms of *metaphysical identity*.

Traditional thought understands that beyond the differences of skin, muscle, individual interest, psychic orientation, there is one and the same centre. In order to return to it, we must “wear our inside out”: *That* which has contracted itself within, must bloom again, through an operation of expansion.

According to the Kabbalistic doctrine of *tsimtsum*, as expounded in the Lurianic School, in the act of manifestation God withdraws (*tsimtsum*) Himself into Himself thereby allowing an empty “primordial space” into which “that which is not God” can come into being. The Presence withdraws, leaving an empty cavity, a trace, a wound.¹ We are “unwhole” and through this hole, which itself speaks of a fullness, we can come to our true self again. At the central point of manifestation, the heart is within the Presence of God and the Presence is within the heart. The heart and the Presence are One. It is the divine station (*al-maqām al-ilāhiyy*). The Sanskrit word for heart is *hRdaya*, which designates both the heart and the idea of centre. The verbal root of both the English heart and the Sanskrit *hRdaya* is HRD, and in Sanskrit, this same verbal root possesses the meaning of heart.

The fallen man’s spiritual quest is not for God’s plenitude for “there is no other God but God” and because “only God knows God.” This man’s spiritual quest is that of God’s absence. Man has to realise that what lacks in his being is the Presence of God.² This is the goal of the Lesser Mysteries and this is the quest of the Grail.³ As Meister Eckhart observed, the temple inside must be cleansed, emptied, drained, unbound, *ledic*.⁴ Orthodox Christianity speaks of two stages marking

¹ The wound of the heart is the Heaven within. This wound is the veil of Truth, Its garment, Its chalice. We communicate with God through the cracks in our establishment. Jean Duval mentions this curious riddle: *within suffering*, which is the literal translation of *empatheia*. In ancient Egypt, *the heart and the Heaven* were both symbolized by the cup. Heaven envisaged as a *hollow* is also present in the relation that some have seen between *coelum* (Heaven) and *koilon* (hollowed), as Guénon shows (*Le Roi du Monde*, Ch. VII). A very important aspect which should be also mentioned here, is the universal connection between *gap* and *veil*, between *concavity* and *occultation*.

² *Asta-anga Yoga* emphasizes the knowledge of what the Self is not and this is actually the discriminatory knowledge *par excellence*. See my ‘Therapeycon Seayton,’ *Oriens: Journal of Traditional Studies* 5: 3-4, April 2008 (www.regnabit.com).

³ It is interesting to notice that the Medieval Latin term, *gradale*, besides the fact that it utters of a concavity, it seems to come from the same root, *hrd*.

⁴ ‘And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple’ (Matthew 21:12). *Ledic* is a Middle High German term, used frequently by Eckhart.

the spiritual path: the first stage is characterised by man's strife of purifying his garden from passions and thus reaching the state of *apatheia*. The second stage is marked by God's work within man's emptiness.

The human heart devoid of Divine Presence is a concavity which can be symbolically represented by the cup, the vessel, the ship, the moon's horn, the athanor, the cave, the calyx, the womb, the wound. Likewise, the centre understood as a prohibited *locus*, where—in this case—the Divine Presence dwells, is symbolically represented by a citadel, an island, a land or a garden guarded by a guardian and surrounded by thick impenetrable walls.⁵ However, depending on the different degrees of symbolical understanding, the thick surrounding walls could also be seen as marking the prison of the seeker and not as a defensive shield for the Divine Presence. Just the same, the guardian of the forbidden *yard*, could actually be understood as the key unlocking the door of our prison.⁶ The garden, as symbol for the *heart*, for the *centre*, conveys of the golden primeval state when man dwelled within the Presence of God and the Presence of God dwelled within man. The edifice of the garden is symbolically made of five concentric terraces, the most peripheral being the mineral domain, following the vegetative, the animal and the fourth one, forming the crown, the Androgynous man. In the centre of all, there is the Presence of God as quintessence, holding them together, assuring the unity and the peace of

It means *free, unbound, empty, unmarried, void, pure, virgin, naked*. The term is used for “describing” metaphysical reality, and its meanings are not to be taken strictly literally.

⁵ The verbal root GRD, which is identical to HRD, as Guénon noticed, gave the English *yard, garden*, the Old Germanic *gardr* (as in Midgardr, Asgardr), the German *garten*; it is also present in Slavic languages in such names as Novgorod, Belgrade, the Czech *zahrada* (to be noticed HRD instead of GRD), the Polish *ogrod, the Russian ogorod*. In the Latin languages it can be found in the French *jardin*, the Italian *giardino*, the Spanish *jardin* (which is pronounced with an *h*) and also *huerto*, which pretty much speaks for itself, the Portuguese *jardim* or *horto*; the Scottish *gharradh* and the Irish *gairdin*, the Welsh *gardd*; we should also mention the term *horticulture*. Our point here is not to demonstrate something in linguistics, but to stress some symbolic equations.

⁶ If *the guardian* stands in clear relation with *the garden*, being thus *el jardinero*, the *vrtlar* (in Serbian the name for *garden* is *vrt*, which is identical with the Sanskrit *hRd*), the Polish *ogrodnik*, etc., then *the curator* stands in the same clear relation with *the heart* (the Latin *cor*) and *curator* is related to *cure*. In ‘Therapeyson Seayton’ I shown that Mikael is both the heavenly physician and the guardian of Eden.

manifestation and representing the *axis* within this level of being, unifying the whole macrocosm and microcosm.⁷

In order to realise the Presence of God, the heart of man—the human centre—must be opened, ready to receive the *Shivalinga*.⁸ But the *lingam* is not only the fullness of God, is not only His majestic kingly aspect, but represents also His sacrificial feature, which in Islam bears the name of the All Compassionate and All Merciful (*ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*). The *lingam* is also a mark, a trace, a symptom; it is *the image of God*. That which is cave-shaped craving for the King is the Palace of Wisdom, the resonance box, the meaning of Light, the articulation of the Holy Syllable, the seer of Truth, the wise filled with understanding, the Grail filled with Holy Blood. This is why the heart of man is a cup,

⁷ Man is not whole without the Presence of God, and by this wholeness we understand the mineral, the vegetal, the animal integrated within man as cosmic cross and held together within this manifested unity through the power of the quintessential centre. By ignoring the quintessence, man lies in a state of division and war. Only within the Divine Presence, man wears the crown of the Androgynous being. In the *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad* we read:

‘When, as earth, water, light, heat, and ether arise, the fivefold quality of Yoga takes place, then there is no longer illness, old age, or pain for him who has obtained a body, produced by the fire of Yoga. As a metal disk (mirror), tarnished by dust, shines bright again after it has been cleaned, so is the one incarnate person satisfied and free from grief, after he has seen the real nature of the self. And when by means of the real nature of his self he sees, as by a lamp, the real nature of Brahman, then having known the unborn, eternal god, who is beyond all natures, he is freed from all fetters. He indeed is the god who pervades all regions: he is the first-born (as *Hiranyagarbha*), and he is in the womb. He has been born, and he will be born. He stands behind all persons, looking everywhere’ (II.12.14-16; tr. M. Muller).

The body of fire mentioned in the above fragment, should be connected with *Taijasa* and with Mikael’s fiery sword (see ‘Therapeyson Seayton’). The ‘mirror tarnished by dust’ suggests Genesis 1:26, 27:

‘And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.’

⁸ *Ājnā cakra* has as a symbol a lotus with two petals. In it, is depicted a reversed triangle, which is the symbol for the cup and the heart, but in this special case it represents the *yonī*—the Holy Womb, the Virgin—, which is basically the same thing at this point. The latter contains the *lingam*, named, very significantly, *the other (itara)*. This is obviously connected with what we have called in ‘Therapeyson Seayton’ the ‘office of *diagnosis*.’ In the Catholic Christian art, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is depicted as a fiery heart, pierced by a sword and crowned with thorns (a vegetal crown for the King of the Garden).

a concave form that needs to be filled with the elixir of immortality that will irrigate the soil of the garden and make it bloom again.

It is said that Adam received the Grail in Eden.⁹ The Grail, symbolizing the centre, stands also as a symbol for the devoid heart, which in turn is the seat of the divine Self. The individual self must withdraw to the point of reaching the shape of a bowl, a *gradale*, a concavity, a cup meant to hold within the most exquisite wine, the fiery elixir, which will transform the fullness of the ego into the emptiness of the Royal Chalice.¹⁰ When the Fall takes place, what is lost is this *receptivity*, this opening, this cup-shape of the soul. After falling from the grace of the Manifested Unity, man saw that he was naked, he saw his opening; he saw the possibility of the paining wound, he started to fear, to be self-conscious, and once this possibility was realised by man, this possibility became actual.

Eden is God manifested within man. This is the Earthly Paradise. In Eden, the fallen man is a possibility of manifestation.¹¹ Outside Eden, the fallen man becomes an actual reality. In Eden, the distinction between man and God is a possibility of manifestation and not an actual reality. The mysterious nature of Jesus Christ is that of the Edenic Man: a divine nature and a human one; this is the Edenic manifestation of God, this is *the image of God*—of which the Book of Genesis and the *Shvetāshvatara* Upanishad speak of—the incarnated Logos of Whom the Gospels and the Upanishads testify:

As a metal disk (mirror), tarnished by dust, shines bright again after it has been cleaned, so is the one incarnate person satisfied and free from grief, after he has seen the real nature of the self. He has been

⁹ R. Guénon, *Symboles de la Science Sacrée*, Gallimard, 1962, p.40.

¹⁰ It is worth noting here that there is a double aspect of “fullness.” The supernal aspect indicates the idea of Infinity or All-Possibility; thus in Eden there is the possibility of Fall, which is to say, the Principle possesses the possibilities of manifestation. The infernal aspect of fullness doesn’t mean at all the idea of *all*, but the idea of a *part* pretending to be a *whole*: this is the “unbreached monolith,” this is the fallen angel: *I, ego*.

¹¹ This possibility is represented by Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and by the divine disjunction of the Androgynous man. This is the cosmogonic point of view (downwards), which is reversed in relation with the initiatory perspective (upwards), in which the initiate, when reaching Eden, is virtually the Universal Man. This virtuality is a reality in the Heavenly Paradise.

born, and he will be born. He stands behind all persons, looking everywhere...¹²

Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.¹³

As *Hiranyagarbha*, the centre must be understood as comprising two complementary halves: the lower concavity (the sacrificed man) and the upper concavity (the sacrificed God). The sacrificed man is the fullness of God and vice versa. This corresponds to the alchemical expressions “the Spiritualisation of the body” and “the embodiment of the Spirit.”

There are two perspectives here that should require our attention. The first one refers to the vertical “dimension”: the sacrificed God or “the embodiment of the Spirit” conveys of an *avatāra* or of a cosmogonic function; the sacrificed man or “the spiritualisation of the body” speaks of the spiritual realisation, the understanding of the Greater Mysteries.

On the other hand, there is also a horizontal approach of the matter. Thus, the sacrificed man symbolises the passage from whatever horizontal periphery to the horizontal centre, where the emptied heart shall be filled with royal wine. This also corresponds to the expression “spiritualisation of the body,” although the end of this journey is the restoration of the *psyche* in the equilibrium of the centre, in Tula. However, horizontally, “the embodiment of the Spirit” has no longer a sacrificial meaning but an infernal one.

The *gradale* is not only a cup but also a book and, as Guénon remarks, this has to do with the *engravings* made on the cup. In *Le Roi du Monde*¹⁴ Guénon observes that Ossendowski speaks of a *black stone*, which is what the Mysterious King traditioned to the Dalai-Lama.¹⁵ In the note, Guénon mentions that Ossendowski is trying to explain the

¹² *Shvetāshvatara* Upanishad II.14.16.

¹³ John 13: 31, 32.

¹⁴ See Guénon, *Le Roi du Monde*, Ch.I.

¹⁵ Concerning a particular aspect of the Centre as *stone*, see ‘The Philosophical Stone,’ *Oriens* 2.7-8-9, Sept. 2005 (www.regnabit.com).

apparition of some *characters* on the surface of this mysterious stone.¹⁶ One may remark that there is a striking similarity between the words *hRd* or *hRdaya* (*heart* in Sanskrit) and *Agarttha*. Actually, *hearty* is translated *hRdha* and from this latter word to *aGaRTTHa* there is not a long way (the Scottish name for *garden* is *gharradh*).¹⁷ All of this strongly suggests the equivalence—if not the identity, taking into consideration the Kingdom of Priest John—between the *Gradale* and *Agarttha*.

It is said that a time will come when we shall rise from the cavern of our heart. That time is called Revelation (*apokalipsis*) and it is the end of *Kali-Yuga*. At the end of the final chapter of *Le Roi*, Guénon cites a Joseph de Maistre consideration in which is affirmed that “the time has come.” So let us gaze deep within.

¹⁶ It should be noticed, among other symbolical meanings, that writing is performed with a sharp object that leaves a trace.

¹⁷ In Sanskrit the word for *garden* is *udhyaana* and the word for *meditation* is *dhyana*. About the etymology of *Agarttha* in connection to the radical GRD see Mircea A. Tamas, *René Guénon et le Centre du Monde*, Rose-Cross Books, Toronto, 2007, p.160.