

Ten Extracts from the Introduction to The Sphere of Art

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Extract 1: *The Sphere of Art* is a sacromagical “system”. This means, simply, that if you follow the methods described, there will be changes of subtle energy and consciousness that far exceed those changes that are commonly experienced in day to day life, extending beyond personality and individuality into the greater cosmos. The word *system* is used with caution here, and must be qualified before we go further. No magical system should ever be described as complete: all magical systems are works-in-progress, as they must evolve and transform through interaction. If anything is a complete system, it is already dead, and can only collapse; this law holds good in the higher dimensions just as it does in nature.

Extract 2: **In Time of Death, Change, and False Authority**

We live in the death-throws of those rigid dogmatic Book religions that have cruelly dominated human consciousness for at least two millenniums: in their conflict with one another they seem to exert as much destructive power as possible, determined to bring the world down with them. This is not, as it seems on the surface, a geopolitical struggle, but a spiritual death and rebirth for humanity.

Extract 3: *The Sphere of Art* is an open system, a work in progress, and only the

basic parts are described herein, as much of it comes through direct experience and subtle transmission. *If you follow the steps outlined in each chapter, you will come into this new level of experience.*

Providing we understand that the system described here is alive...an *organism* rather than an *organization* based upon an inert check-list, we can use the word “system” beneficially. This emphasis on organism rather than organization is significant, and we will return to it later.

The Sphere of Art and the associated *Two Sensitive Points* enable the magician/priestess/priest or whatever term we choose to describe ourselves, to perform several simple interlaced functions. They are simple, but extremely powerful. They do not involve invocation of deities, association with ancestors or faery or land spirits, nor do they involve “making changes through acts of will”, that tempting and common fallacy, so often described and copied in popular books, that inflates the ego and substantially disempowers the magician.

Extract 4: Read this book, try the methods described, and you will find that it never fails to work. I have been teaching this system or set of magical forms to small groups for several years, and everyone from the most experienced to the relative newcomer to magical arts is astonished at the consistency, clarity, and focus of this material. Not only does it work, but once we have started to participate, it works powerfully every time we engage, and continues to work in the background.

Therefore a word or two of caution. Do not undertake this lightly: it is not a weekend social activity or a fun experiment. Induction into sacromagical power brings responsibility and transformation. If you do not want such responsibility, if you seek escape rather than transformation, do not do this.

Extract 5: **Sources and Connections**

As *The Sphere of Art* and *The Two Sensitive Points* comprise a unique set of practices in sacromagical arts, I will describe briefly the sources that I drew upon to present this material, and, more significantly, to develop it in my own practices over more than 30 years. They are as follows:

1 The contemporary western magical revolution and re-evaluation as embodied by mentors and explorers of the 20th century. These include, but are not limited to, Dion Fortune, Israel Regardie, W.E. Butler, Gareth Knight, W. G. Gray. In this context, my own publications over the last 30 years, from 1976 onwards, include a steady progression that leads up to *The Sphere of Art*.

2 Esoteric alchemy: especially the revival of the art that occurred in France during the early 20th century, and continues quietly to this day, albeit connected to the perennial enduring alchemical traditions. By esoteric alchemy I mean neither the popular idea of the seemingly miraculous transformation of base metals into gold or silver, nor the Jungian concept of alchemy as an internal psychological process, which has generated more obfuscation of alchemy than any other. To the practitioner of the Hermetic esoteric traditions, both of these interpretations of alchemy are simplistic nonsense, serving only to distract the student into fruitless paths, sometimes for many years.

3 Alfred Ronald Heaver, 1900-1980, was one of the Glastonbury adepts of that remarkable generation that surged in the early 20th century, at the same time as esotericists in France were establishing a new movement of spiritual alchemy, and as British occultists were substantially revising the art, after the monumental rigidity and denseness of the 19th century. Heaver was a master of simplicity, the hardest spiritual discipline of them all.

ARH (as we shall call him) is almost unknown to the public, but was influential in many ways in the spiritual revival in Britain from the early years of the 20th century, up to the mid-1970's, after which he retired into deep contemplation, until his fully conscious natural death on his 80th birthday, in 1980.

Extract 6: *The Sanctuary of Avalon*

In the 1950's, ARH opened a dedicated temple of silence known as the Sanctuary of Avalon. This was a small building in an apple orchard, in the garden of his home, equidistant between Glastonbury and Cadbury Camp. At some time or other, many of the people

who were involved in the spiritual and magical revival travelled to Somerset to meet ARH, and in the latter stages such pilgrims included founders of what would become labeled as the New Age movement in Britain, though ARH himself had little patience with this label. They included well known figures such as Peter Caddy (founder of Findhorn) and Sir George Trevelyan, (founder of the Wrekin Trust). A number of occultists and spiritually orientated individuals visited the Sanctuary to meditate in silence, and many younger students or seekers, including myself, were drawn there by mysterious “coincidences”.

...the significance and purpose of the Sanctuary of Avalon was clear: it was a small empty shrine of silence dedicated and attuned to the Fourfold Name of Being. Anyone who sat and meditated therein came into attunement with potent spiritual forces, focused into the sanctuary like a powerful floodlight. And we took something of that power away within us, resonating in our bodies. The Sphere of Art enables us, today, to open to that same power, and to go some stages further into its mediation. (*A new Sanctuary of Avalon was opened and empowered in 2007*).

Extract 7: The Sphere, Subtle Fire, and the Lineage of Zadok

With the long-term development of the Sphere of Art, we come into a subtle realm that permeates all of the above sources in one way or other, all broadly within the Hermetic tradition.

I refer to ancient and enduring spiritual transformative traditions of *subtle fire* that surface from time to time in evolving forms, then disappear into the underworld for a period of regenerative dormancy.

This is why, our group work today is described as issuing from the Fire Temple, coming to us through the *lineage of Zadok*, to which we will return shortly. There is more than one Fire Temple, and through the Sphere of Art we attune to a specific inner temple and spiritual impetus.

The impetus, the seeds, for this work within the Sphere of Art, can be traced in part to ARH and the transformative *prophetic* traditions of the Fire Temple. What ARH was primarily concerned with, in the alchemical context, was the opening of subtle regenerative energies within the body of the planet. This deep planetary aspect of the spiritual life and its responsibility,

passed on to me along with other seeds through ARH, has permeated my own work both in print teaching and in private, from the early 1970's to the present day. In addition to the UnderWorld telluric fire connection, there is a specific sacromagical prophetic and priestly lineage that carries a spiritual power through time seeking to resonate out to many: this has been all-embracing in my own work, and is epitomized in the Inner Temple Traditions Inner Convocation and Sphere of Art forms.

Extract 8: **Zadok and the Order of Justified or Righteous Ones**

ARH went so far as to write his letters and essays under the name of Zadok, which means Priest, rather than use his personal name. If you choose to research the name Zadok, however, you will find many insights and esoteric connections associated with it, both in terms of Qabalah and Biblical mythology or chronicle. The name is associated with the concept of Righteousness and being Justified: in my early book *The UnderWorld Initiation* and in later publications, this idea appears as the influence of a specific line of inner contacts, transhuman beings who seek to work with us in our spiritual evolution. We will explore some of this in volume 2, but I highly recommend individual research and meditation, beginning with a concordance.

The Zadok tradition itself holds a lineage older than Biblical or Jewish sources, for it is rooted in ancient Persia and the ancestral fire and volcanic temples of both the middle-east and the Mediterranean world. This tradition gave birth to Greek philosophy, especially that of Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Plato. In the esoteric tradition, handed down through the occult lodges, in oral teachings, and in more recent years within a wide variety of texts, an even older source is proposed: we are told that this Fire Temple tradition originated in Atlantis...a theme first described by Plato around 360 BCE, and stated by him to be ancient even in his day

Atlantis was the first perfected glyphic city, sited on a sacred island in the ocean. More simply, its cosmic archetype was the same as that of the perfected Jerusalem so vividly described by Blake, Swedenborg, and other mystics.

Here we touch upon a distinct esoteric tradition of the glyphic city being prepared in ancestral consciousness through the interaction

of early humanity and planetary energies or spiritual entities...

At this early legendary time, the Fire Temple receives its power from the telluric core, rising through volcanic openings.

Extract 9: **Dion Fortune, The Fire Temple, and the Sea Temple**

In the vigorous Glastonbury revival of the early 20th century, we find Dion Fortune writing about the Goddess and the Sea Temple of Atlantis. We find A. R. Heaver mediating the Fire Temple and the *Aesch Mezareph* of prophetic and purifying fire. It is through traditions regarding the center of the Earth and the sacred volcano, prime emblems of Atlantis, that these two streams of Sea and Fire Temple come together. This communion is experienced directly within the Sphere of Art.

Through the Center of the Earth

There were certain themes that ARH initiated, that have evolved in my work over the last 30 and more years. Here are some examples:

Spiritual Transformation and the Planet

ARH emphasized that spiritual transformation is not only interior to the human consciousness: its impulses originate in the stellar realms and pass *through* the body of the planet, through its stellar fiery core, to resurface in a new manner. If we are able to attune to this rising light from below, we can benefit from it as a catalyzing and empowering force. This tradition, which I have described in modern terms in several books, reaches far back, and is found most emphatically in the philosophical and cosmological writing of Empedocles (490 BCE -430 BCE). To work with forces of spiritual transformation to greatest effect, ARH suggested we must follow a similar path into the Earth and back out again. We can see connections here not only the Empedoclean, UnderWorld and folkloric faery traditions, but to the influential Rosicrucian tradition that surfaced and developed in the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe, wherein all the major action took place in a sealed underground vault, aligned to stellar and planetary forces. This mystery of the UnderWorld is an age old tradition, of course, with many variants more ancient than that of

Rosicrucianism.

The Arimathean Tradition, the Tomb, and the Grail

This leads us to the Arimathean tradition of Joseph and Jesus, the root Mystery of a spiritual link between ancient Britain and the Middle East, that was so significant to William Blake and earlier British mystics, all the way back to the Middle Ages. Mediation of the Arimathean Mystery is closely connected to the Rosicrucian Vault mystery, and in some aspects they are deeply intertwined. In or around 1935, ARH travelled to Jerusalem to visit the Garden Tomb just outside the Damascus Gate in the Muslim quarter.

“As usual, the decision to do anything of this kind always seemed beset with seemingly insurmountable difficulties. However, in all-night silent vigil at Glastonbury my resolution was confirmed and on return to London I booked my passage on the Cunard liner Laconia due to sail from Southampton for Haifa...”

This sanctuary garden, which had been a vineyard some 2,000 years before, at the time proposed for the life of Christ, contains a crudely extended ancient tomb. A preservation trust was first established by General Gordon in the late 19th century, during his visit to Palestine in 1882-83, and continues to this day. The Garden Tomb is thought by many to be the true site of the tomb of Jesus, given, according to legend, by his uncle Joseph of Arimathea.

The mysterious Arimathean tradition, connected to that of the regenerative Tomb and the Grail is a fusion of pagan and primal Christian themes. It refers to the theme of the sacred blood and seed, the red and white powers of regenerative spirit, to which we will return shortly. In an alchemical context, there is a deeply significant connection in the Arimathean Mystery, for British tradition preserves the story that Joseph brought the boy Jesus to the west of England (Cornwall, Devon, Somerset) on his trading journeys to obtain *tin*. This alchemical connection will be explored more deeply in our volume 2.

The tomb imagery that permeates the Mysteries is more than allegory: it repeatedly arises in connection with an esoteric tradition that stellar spiritual energies become embodied in the planet, revealing how humanity may mediate such energies consciously.

Extract 10: **The Folk Soul of Britain**

ARH often referred to his spiritual life as being linked in some mysterious way to what he called “the folk soul of Britain”. This theme has played a major part, albeit in a different expression, in my own work in writing, music, and teaching, as I am convinced that all magical and spiritual work must be firmly rooted in the collective ancestral traditions, and that these traditions are, far from being quaint bizarre remnants of bygone days, a powerhouse of spiritual transformation.

Such traditions arise from and obtain power within the Under-World, that regenerative sacred consciousness that we may enter by passing within the body of the land or planet in mediation, vision, and ceremony.

Earth-based spirituality is now a very popular phrase, but when *The UnderWorld Initiation* was first circulated then published, in the 1970’s and early 1980’s, the idea was still startling. It was Gareth Knight, the renowned British Qabalist and occult author, who convinced me that this material should be published...through the justified ploy of sending a copy to a publisher without telling me until it was too late. Without Gareth, *The UnderWorld Initiation* would not have been published at that time, as I originally wrote it for private circulation.

From the mid-1970’s onwards, there was a substantial revival of interest in folkloric and mythic themes...the Matter of Britain, not only as literature, but as living spiritual tradition. Gareth played a major role in this, following a powerful initiatory path from clues regarding Arthur and Merlin set out by Dion Fortune.

It is due to Gareth’s pervasive influence that many aspects of the western tradition have opened out and become more available to the general reader, and I owe him much respect for his support of my own work over the years. Following the inspiration of Gareth Knight, John and Caitlin Matthews produced substantial works on the Arthurian themes, and I produced a series of books on the Merlin tradition and the Prophecies of Merlin. Much of our early work was developed

during public classes and workshops presided over by Gareth at Hawkwood College, Stroud, England, in the early 1980's.

There was also a potent interaction in closed group work, conducted in a private temple sited at my house in Bath, England, within the ancient Romano-Celtic temple precinct. These gatherings were not open to the public.

Gradually I have come to understand that while Gareth Knight followed on from Dion Fortune, and has continued to the present day to refine and advance the foundations laid down in her remarkable and highly significant work, I have followed, often unwittingly but with growing comprehension, from A. R. Heaver.

ARH was not my sole mentor, nor my sole source of inspiration, but the spiritual lineage that he embodied and communicated to me has had a profound effect upon my life. The UnderWorld and Earth Light work, both as published and as taught in public and private, is directly in line with some of the esoteric statements from ARH, albeit developed further through my own practices and insights into the catalytic transformations available when working with the UnderWorld.

So when we work today with the Sphere of Art and the Two Sensitive Points, these are specialized developments of the art of transformation through the sacred fire, the perennial mystery of Prometheus. Not fire in the service of aggression and militarism, or as a source of profit through unethical technology, but the stellar fire that seeds and stimulates the evolution of consciousness. Under special circumstances this evolutionary impetus can be accelerated.

The methods of the Sphere have grown slowly over thirty years, but they connect to a powerful spiritual lineage of which ARH was a senior mediator during his life on Earth. If you are willing to work with this Sphere of Art, you will come into contact with stellar fire temple energies, mediated by Inner Contacts poetically called the lineage of Zadok.

R J Stewart, California, 2008