

PREFACE

For some years I have been listening to people give talks on spiritual subjects, mainly at conferences or events where I am giving a concert or speaking myself. I have heard many wonderful and inspiring things, and I am grateful to live in a time and in a culture where such things are allowed. Nevertheless, I must admit to a deep dissatisfaction with one trend that seems widespread: speakers, often highly acclaimed authors and teachers, repeatedly talk only about their own experiences. “When in Prague I had a vision of X” or “That night I sensed a spirit enter the room” or “The Masters gave me this message...”.

If you have attended any such events, you will have heard many talks of this sort. What I want to hear is *how can we have such experiences for ourselves?* (with the exception of messages from the Masters, who always seem so vague and out of touch). How can we have such experiences for ourselves? We need not to merely hear stories about spiritual perception, but to come into spiritual perception for ourselves. My aim for some years has been to offer techniques and explorations that do just that, whereby the student can have actual experience and not be restricted to hearing or reading about what happened to someone else, no matter how remarkable it may be.

The Sphere of Art and the Two Sensitive Points took more than 30 years to develop in the present form, yet the practices, once they are grasped, are simple and brief. Before writing this book, I spent some time teaching the material to small groups of advanced students in several locations in the USA, and opened out the broader aspects at larger gatherings in Britain, (between 2004 and 2008 in Glastonbury Town Hall and at Hawkwood College, Stroud, both key locations in Britain for the seeding of new spiritual impetus). In group work we found that a verbal teaching could be grasped quickly; the problem with text on magical arts is that the reader really has to *do it* before some aspects of the text become clear. Of course, we should understand this as a process of elucidation through experience, and therefore not a problem at all.

The text is in two volumes: the first, *The Sphere of Art*, is a short condensed exploration and exposition with the essential practical

forms and basics described. The second, *The Purifying Fire*, explores themes that can only be fully addressed after experiencing the forms and practices described in volume 1.

Both volumes are intended for those who dedicate themselves to focused spiritual work through ethical magical arts. These are not books for beginners, and the techniques and concepts found here are not easy, popularized, or made fashionable. Nor, I hasten to add, are they intentionally obscure: the time for prolix unapproachable texts on alchemy and magic is long since over.

The aim throughout this book has been to make subjects that are by nature recondite and subtle draw close to the reader, speak with plain language and propose workable practical examples. Most of all, the aim is to bring the student into the practices of the Sphere of Art and the Two Sensitive Points that transform the spiritual life, and thus the outer life. By undertaking this task in ourselves, we begin to transform the world, bringing it into a new condition and redeeming the old. No lesser task is worthy of our magic.

Volume 1 contains the following categories (not always in the order listed, though mainly organized by chapter):

Category 1: *background, sources, and perennial spiritual traditions relating to the subject matter.*

Category 2: *brief autobiographical context in the development of The Sphere of Art in my writing, teaching, and spiritual life.*

Category 3: *brief biographical context for A R Heaven, the Glastonbury adept known as "Zadok".*

Category 4: *Discussion of forms, methods, and implications of The Sphere of Art and the Two Sensitive Points.*

Category 5: *Detailed methods of working, stage by stage: these are found in Chapters One to Three, typically but not exclusively at the end of each chapter.*

Category 6: *Appendices and Bibliography, support material and further reading/research.*

Content of Volume Two, The Purifying Fire

Brief references are made throughout to Volume 2, citing themes that will be developed at length. Volume 2 focuses on three

main themes:

- 1 The relationship between the Arimathean and Arthurian traditions in practical sacromagical work, though not in a mythic historical or literary sense (as there are many books that do so already).
- 2 The alchemical text *Aesch Mezareph*: from a practical perspective in spiritual magic, not as historic literature or psychological reductionism.
- 3 The relationship between sacromagical mediation (the art of the magician priestess and priest) and prophecy.

If you take up this work, you will be joining a contemporary community that continues an ongoing sacromagical task that began its current phase in the Glastonbury area in the 1950's, as described in our Introduction. This contemporary community comprises a small network of people widely located, in the USA, Canada, Britain, Europe, Egypt, and Brazil. Not a rigid organization, but a living organism of intention, of sacromagical dedication, of consciousness.

The “beginning” of this organism in Britain in the 1950's is really an insertion point in time, and, like all such communities regardless of cultural origin, our spiritual impetus has a much longer cycle than that of human generations. Such insertion points may be traced to various centuries, individuals, tasks, and teachings. The true community exists in a consciousness beyond time, a trans-lunar awareness. You can join this greater community through the Sphere of Art.

R J Stewart California 2008