COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE BAROQUE

Estonian: Inglise kirjandus keskajast barokini
Code: FLGR 01.161
Semester:
When/where:
Lecturer: Pilvi Rajamäe
Office hours:
Format: lecture
Credits: 3 EAP
Aim: it is a core course of English literature designed to give an overview of the main trends in English literature from the Old English period to the age of the Baroque

Exam: written, 2 hours, 4 questions, 2 of them general (i.e. on textbook material). 2 with text analysis (i.e. your analysis of the texts we have been discussing in class, based on the material in the textbook, your notes from the lectures and your own reading of the texts; the author's name, the title and the full texts concerned will be provided at the exam together with the questions which will specify the angle from which I would like you to consider the texts)

Required reading/ the textbooks:
***An Outline of English Literature.* Ed. by Pat Rogers. Oxford University Press, 1998, ISBN 0-19-288078-0 (Pbk):**
Chapter 1. Old and Middle English.
Chapter 3. William Shakespeare.
***Myths and Legends of the Middle Ages.* Senate, 1994:**
Chapter 11. Titurel and the Holy Grail.
Chapter 12. Merlin.
Chapter 13: The Round Table.
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.
Roy Strong. *The Spirit of Britain. A Narrative History of the Arts.* Pimlico, 2000. ISBN 0-7126-6495-9:
Chapter 12. Classical Interlude.
Chapter 13. Cultural Revolution.

NB! While you will get the texts mentioned above from me, as *TEXTS TO BE STUDIED AT HOME*, the book below, your basic textbook, is TO BE ORDERED BY YOU INDEPENDENTLY, either at the University Bookshop in Tartu or Allecto in Tallinn, AT ONCE, in order for it to arrive in time for you to make good use of it before the exam. It will also be your basic textbook, besides this course, for the follow-up courses in English literature
FLGR 01.162 English literature from the baroque to romaniticism
FLGR 01.186 English literature from romanticism to modernism
FLGR 01.187 English literature in the 20th century
FLGR 01.188 English literature today
and ultimately one of your basic sources for the final examination in English and American literature.

Andrew Sanders. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature.* Oxford University Press, 1996, ISBN 0-19-871157-3 (paperback):

Chapter 3: Renaissance and Reformation.

Note concerning required/obligatory reading

At our University to get 3 EAPs for a course a student is required to participate in 16 90-minute seminars/lectures, which makes a total of 24 hours, and spend the same amount of time (i.e. 24 hours) on independent work. The regulations laid down by the Faculty of Philosophy decree that the amount of scientific literature for a student to be studied independently is 10 pages per 60 minutes, the amount for fiction being 40 pages per 1 hour. Your required (i.e. obligatory) reading (see above) will amount to 22 hours of textbook material and 2 hours for the works of fiction, the total being thus 24 hours of independent work.

NB! The books below **YOU DON'T HAVE TO READ**, but if you have a deeper interest in the subject, you might find them rewarding.

Anthologies you might want to consult:

The Norton Anthology of English Literature. Fifth Edition. The Major Authors. Norton, 1987.
The Oxford Anthology of English Literature. Volume I. Ed. by Frank Kermode, John Hollander, Harold Bloom, Martin Price, J.B. Trapp, Lionel Trilling. Oxford University Press, 1973.
Literature of the Western World. Volume I: The Ancient World Through the Renaissance. Second Edition. Ed. by Brian Wilkie, James Hurt. Macmillan, 1988.
Macmillan Anthologies of English Literature:

The Middle Ages. Ed. by Michael Alexander, Felicity Riddy. 1989.
The Renaissance. Ed. by Gordon Campbell. 1989.

Other textbooks you might want to look at:

Longman Literature in English Series:

English Poetry:

Michael Swanton. *English Literature before Chaucer.*
W. R. J. Barton. *English Medieval Romance.*
Gary Waller. *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century.*

English Drama:

Alexander Leggatt. *English Drama: Shakespeare to the Restoration, 1590-1660.*

The Penguin History of Literature:

1. *The Middle Ages.*
2. *English Poetry and Prose 1540-1674.*

Texts discussed in class (most of them are extracts):

The Wanderer
The Dream of the Rood
Harley lyrics: *Alisoun*
I sing of a maiden
Spring Song

Now sprinkles the spray
The Thrush and the Nightingale
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
Chaucer:*The General Prologue*
Higden: *Polychronicon*
Fortescue: *On the Law of Nature*
The King James Bible: The Song of Solomon
The Book of Common Prayer (A Prayer for the Queen's Majesty)
Hooker: *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie*
Breton: *A Murmurer*
Oh that my heart could hit upon a strain
Starkey: *Dialogu between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupse*
Skelton: *Upon a Dead Man's Headt*
Wyatt: *The Lover Showeth How He Is Forsaken of Such As He Sometime Enjoyed*
Who So List to Hunt
circa Regna tonat
Mary Ambree
Elizabeth: *When I Was Fair and Young*
Sidney: *Astrophel and Stella: Loving in truth*
It is most true that eyes are formed to serve
Daniel: *Delia: When men shal find thy flower*
Let other sing of knights and paladins
Drayton: *Idea: How many paltry, foolish, painted things*
Watson: *I saw the object of my pining thought*
Spenser: *The Shepheardes Calender: Aprill*
Hymn of Love
Amoretti: Coming to kiss her lips
Like a huntsman after a weary chase
Men call you fair
Who will in fairest book of Nature know
One day I wrote her name upon the sand
The Faerie Queen: Canto XII /The Bower of Bliss/
Marlowe: *Tamburlaine*
Greene: *An 'Upstart Crow'*
Shakespeare: *Sonnets: 55, 57, 60, 140*
Timon of Athens
Troilus and Cressida
Henry IV, Part I
Julius Caesar
Richard II
Macbeth
The Merchant of Venice
As You Like It
The Tempest
Jonson: *To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare*
Volpone
Queen and Huntress
Song: To Celia
Come, My Celia

Marston: *The Malcontent*
The Revenger's Tragedy
Webster: *The Duchess of Malfi*
Pope: *An Essay on Man*
Davies: *Orchestra*
Milton: *Arcades*
Peacham: *The Complete Gentleman*
Dryden: *A Song for St Cecilia's Day*

ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE BAROQUE
Revision questions

1. *Beowulf* and the heroic ideal in Old English literature.
2. Christian elements in Old English literature. *The Dream of the Rood.*
3. The general characteristics of Old English poetry and prose.
4. The medieval and Elizabethan world picture.
5. The cultural impact of the Norman Conquest on the English literary tradition.
6. Chivalry.
7. Courtly love.
8. Medieval literature in the romance mode. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.*
9. The story of the Holy Grail.
10. The story of Parzival.
11. The story of Merlin.
12. The story of King Arthur and the Round Table.
13. The story of Lancelot and Guinevere.
14. The 'Alliterative Revival' during the 'Ricardian renaissance'.
15. The tradition of dream poems. Langland's *Piers Plowman.*
16. Chaucer. *The Canterbury Tales.*
17. The Chaucerian 'makers' of the fifteenth century.
18. Chivalry in the service of Tudor monarchy.
19. The Humanist movement in England (Colet, More, Elyot, Ascham).
20. The impact of Reformation on English culture.
21. The translation of the bible into English, with a special emphasis on the King James Bible of 1611.
22. Early Tudor poetry (Skelton, Wyatt, Surrey).
23. Narratives of Tudor history (Leland, Camden, Holinshed, Hakluyt, Ralegh).
24. Elizabethan prose (Sidney, Lyly, Green, Lodge, Nash, Deloney).
25. The English protestant fear of the image and the resultant emhasis on the text and the cult of emblems.
26. The Elizabethan Neoplatonic sonnet (Sidney, Spenser, Daniel, Drayton, Shakespeare).
27. Spenser. *The Faerie Queen.*
28. The emergence of English professional theatre (companies of professional players, 'public' and 'private' playhouses, Puritan opposition).
29. The origins and development of English renaissance comedy (the influence of Plautus and Terence, Udall, Stevenson, Lyly, Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, Dekker).
30. Seneca and the English renaissance tragedy of atrocious vengeance (Sackville & Norton, Kyd, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Chapman, Marston, Heywood, Tourneur, Webster).
31. Shakespeare's comedies.
32. Shakespeare's history plays.
33. Shakespeare's tragedies.
34. Shakespeare's 'romances'.
35. Jacobean and Caroline romantic tragi-comedies and romantic tragedies (Beaumont & Fletcher, Massinger, Ford).

THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

The *Dream of the Rood* (i.e., of the Cross) is the finest of a rather large number of religious poems in Old English. Neither its author nor its date of composition is known. It appears in a late 10th-century manuscript located in Vercelli in northern Italy, a manuscript made up of Old English religious poems and sermons. The poet Cynewulf, about whom nothing is surely known except that he wrote four Old English homiletic poems (two of them found in the Vercelli manuscript), has sometimes been credited with the *Dream*, but on no very convincing evidence. The poem may antedate its manuscript by almost three centuries, for some passages from the Rood's speech were carved, with some variations, in runes on a stone cross early in the 8th century: this is the famous Ruthwell Cross, which is preserved near Dumfries in southern Scotland. The precise relation of the poem to this cross is, however, uncertain.

The homiletic tone of the Dreamer's meditation may seem anticlimactic after the intensity, so terse and exciting, of the Rood's address to him, but the former is nevertheless an admirable frame for the latter. The experience of the Cross—its humiliation at the hands of those who changed it from tree to instrument of punishment for criminals, its humility when the young hero Christ mounts upon it, and its pride as the restored "tree of glory"—has a suggestive relevance to the condition of the sad, lonely, sin-stained Dreamer. In the Cross's experience, hope has replaced torment; when, at the end of the poem, the Dreamer describes Christ's triumphant

1. I.e., "established the beginning of every one of wonders."
2. The later manuscript copies read *eorþan*, "earth," for *ælda* (West Saxon *ielda*), "men's."

progress from hell to heaven, the verse recaptures some of the excitement of the Cross's address, reflecting the Dreamer's response to the hope that has been brought him.

The Dream of the Rood[1]

Behold, I shall tell of a most marvelous dream—what I dreamed at midnight, when men and their voices were at rest. It seemed to me that I saw a tree, more wonderful than any other, reach high aloft, bathed in light, brightest of wood. All that beacon[2] was covered with gold. Four gems were set where it met the earth, and five more stood on it high about the crosspiece. There looked upon it many hosts of angels, fair in the form God gave them of old. This was surely no felon's gallows, for holy spirits beheld it, men upon earth, and all this glorious creation. Wonderful was the triumphant tree, and I stained with sin, wounded with wrongdoing. I saw the tree of wonder, adorned with clothes, shine brilliantly, decked with gold; splendidly had jewels covered the Lord's tree. But through that gold I might see wretches' ancient agony, for now it began to bleed upon the right side. I was sadly troubled, afraid of that fair sight. I saw that beacon, changeable, alter in clothes and in color: now was it wet with moisture, drenched with blood's flowing, now adorned with treasure. But I lay there a long while looking upon the Saviour's tree, troubled in mind, until I heard it give voice; the noblest of trees began to speak.

"It was long ago—still I remember it—that I was hewn down at the wood's edge, taken from my stump. Fierce foes seized me, shaped me into the spectacle that they wished, bade me lift their felons. Men carried me on their shoulders to a hill where they set me down; foes enough fastened me there. Then I saw the Master of Mankind hasten with all his heart because he wished to climb upon me. I did not dare against God's word bow or break, though I saw earth's surface tremble. All foemen I might have felled, but I stood fast. The young hero stripped himself—he who was God almighty—strong and stouthearted. He climbed upon the high gallows, valiant, in the sight of many, for he would redeem mankind. I shook when the warrior embraced me, yet I dared not bow to earth, fall to the ground's surface: I must stand fast. A cross was I raised; I lifted up the Mighty King, Lord of the Heavens; I dared not bend. They pierced me with dark nails—on me are the wounds seen, open hateful gashes. Nor did I dare do harm to any of them. They mocked

1. This prose translation, by the present editor, has been based in general on the edition of the poem by J. C. Pope, *Seven Old English Poems* (1966).
2. The Old English word *beacen* means also "token" or "sign" and "battle standard."

us both together. I was all wet with blood shed from the sides of that man by the time that he had sent forth his spirit. Many bitter things I had endured on the hill. I saw the God of Hosts cruelly racked. Darkness had covered with its mists the Ruler's body, the bright splendor. Shadow came forth, dark under the clouds. All creation wept, bewailed the King's fall: Christ was on Cross.

"Yet from afar, ready and willing, there came some to the Lord.[3] I saw all this. Sore was I troubled, yet I bent to the hands of the men, with all my heart humble. They took Almighty God, lifted him from his great torment. The warriors let me stand, stained with blood. I was all wounded with arrows. They laid him down, limb-weary, stood at his body's head, gazed upon Heaven's Lord; and he rested him there a while, exhausted after the great struggle. In the sight of his slayer[4] warriors began to build him an earth-home, carved it out of bright stone, set therein the Wielder of Triumphs. Then they began to sing for him a song of lament, sad in the evening. Then would they depart, tired, from the great Lord. He rested with small host; yet we[5] stood in our places a good while, weeping. The song of the men rose up. The body grew cold, the spirit's fair dwelling. Then they began to fell us to the earth—that was a fearful fate. They buried us in a deep pit. Yet thanes[6] of the Lord, friends, heard of me there[7] . . . decked me with gold and silver.

"Thou might now understand, man beloved of me, that I had endured suffering of evils, of grievous sorrows. Now is the happy time come that far and wide men upon earth adore me, and all this glorious creation prays to this beacon. On me the Son of God suffered for a while; therefore now I tower glorious under the heavens, and I may heal every one of those that hold me in awe. Once I was made the hardest of torments, most loathsome to men, before I made open the true road to life for all who have voices. Lo, the Lord of Glory honored me above all the trees of the wood, the Ruler of Heaven, just as his mother also, Mary herself, Almighty God for the sake of all men honored above all woman's kind.

"Now I bid thee, man beloved of me, that thou tell this vision to men. Reveal with thy words that it is the tree of glory on which Almighty God suffered for mankind's many sins and for the deeds done by Adam long ago. Death he tasted there; yet the Lord rose again in his great might to help mankind. Then he ascended into Heaven; but he will come again hither to seek mankind on doomsday, the Lord himself, Almighty God, and his angels with him, that at that time he who has the power to judge may judge each one as in

3. According to John xix.38–39, it was Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus who received Christ's body from the Cross.
4. I.e., the Cross.
5. I.e., Christ's Cross and those on which the two thieves were crucified.
6. Members of the King's body of warriors.
7. A number of lines describing the finding of the Cross have apparently been lost here.

this transitory life he deserves. Nor may any be unafraid of the word that the Ruler will speak. Before his multitude he will ask where the man is who in the name of the Lord would taste bitter death as he did on the Cross. But then they will be afraid and will little know what they may begin to answer to Christ. Yet there need not any be afraid who bears on his breast the best of beacons. For through the Cross shall every soul who thinks to dwell with the Lord seek his kingdom[8] in his earthly journey."

Then blithe-hearted, confident, I prayed to the Cross, there where I was alone, without company. My heart was drawn away from earth's paths. Often I endured weariness of spirit. Now is there hope of life, that I may seek the tree of triumph, honor it more often than other men, since I am alone. Great is the desire of my heart for the Cross, and my hope of protection rests in it. I have not many powerful friends on earth, for they have gone from the joys of the world, sought for themselves the King of Glory; now they live in Heaven with the High Father, dwell in glory. And every day I expect the time when the Lord's Cross that I beheld here on earth shall fetch me in this transitory life and bring me where bliss is great, joy in Heaven, where the Lord's folk are set at the feast, where bliss is eternal. And may it place me where I may thereafter dwell in glory, enjoy with the saints their delight. May the Lord be my friend, who here on earth suffered for man's sins on the gallows tree. He redeemed us and granted us life, a heavenly home. Hope was restored, with glory and bliss, to those who suffered in fire.[9] The Son was victorious in that foray, mighty and successful. Then he came with many, a host of spirits, into God's kingdom, the All-Powerful Ruler, and the angels and all the saints who then dwelt in Heaven rejoiced when their Ruler, Almighty God, came where his home was.

8. I.e., the Lord's.
9. This and the following sentences refer to the Harrowing (i.e., pillaging) of Hell: after His death upon the Cross, Christ descended into hell, from which He released the souls of certain of the patriarchs and prophets, conducting them triumphantly to heaven.

The Wanderer[1]

"Often the lone-dweller lives to find favor, mildness of the Lord, though long over the water-way, troubled in heart, he has had to stir with his arms the frost-cold sea, tread the tracks of exile. Fully fixed is his fate."

So spoke the earth-walker, mindful of hardships, of cruel war-slaughters—and the fall of dear kinsmen.

"Often before the dawn of each day, alone, I have had to speak my cares: there is now none of the living to whom I dare clearly say my heart's thought. I know for truth that it is an excellent custom in a man that he lock fast his heart's coffer, keep his mind's hoard-case closed, purpose what he will. The weary-hearted may not withstand fate, nor the torn spirit bring help. Therefore those eager for fame often bind sorrowful thought fast in their breast-coffer.

"So I, often wretched with care, deprived of my homeland, far from dear kinsmen, had to fasten my heart's thought with fetters—after the time, in years long past, that I covered my gold-friend in the darkness of earth; and thence downcast I crossed over the woven waves, winter-sad, yearning for a hall, sought a giver of treasure—where, far or near, I might find one who should know of my people or would comfort me friendless, receive me with gladness. He who has felt it knows how cruel a companion is sorrow to him who has no beloved protectors. The path of exile attends him, not twisted gold—frozen are the thoughts in his heart-case, no joy of earth. He remembers the hall-warriors and the taking of treasure—how in his youth his gold-friend made him accustomed to feasting. All delight ends.

"Indeed, he who must long forgo the counsel-words of a beloved lord knows how it will seem to him in his mind, when together sorrow and sleep often bind the poor lone-dweller, that he is embracing and kissing his liege lord and laying his hands and head on his knee, as in the old days when sometimes he shared in the gift-giving. Then the lordless man wakens again, sees before him the yellow waves, the sea-birds bathe, spread their feathers, frost and snow fall, mingled with hail.

"Then the wounds of his heart are deeper, sore for want of his dear one. Sorrow is made new as memory of kinsmen moves through his mind: he greets them with glad words, eagerly looks on them, a company of warriors. They fade again, moving away over the water: such fleeting ones' spirit brings there no well-known voices. Care is renewed in him who many and often times must send his weary heart over the woven waves."

"Therefore I cannot think why my heart's thought should not grow dark when through this world I consider all the life of men—with what terrible swiftness they forgo the hall-floor, bold young retainers. So each day this middle-earth fails and falls. Indeed, no man may become wise before he has had a share of winters in the kingdom of this world. The wise must be patient, must never be too hot-hearted, nor too hasty of speech, nor too weak of wars, nor too wanting of thought, nor too fearful, nor too glad, nor too greedy for wealth, nor ever too eager of boast before he has clear knowing. A man must wait, when he speaks boast, until, sure-minded, he knows clearly whither the thought of hearts will turn.

"The wise warrior must observe how ghostly it will be when all the wealth of this world stands waste, as now here and there through this middle-earth walls stand blown by the wind, covered with frost-fall, the dwellings storm-beaten. The wine-halls totter, the lord lies bereft of joy, all the company has fallen, bold men beside the wall. Some war took away, bore them on their way forth; one a bird carried off over the deep sea, one the gray wolf shared with death, another a man with sad face hid in an earth-pit.

"So the Creator of men's generations laid waste this dwelling-ground until the old works of giants stood idle, empty of the sound of the stronghold's keepers. Therefore the wise in heart thinks deeply on this wall-place and this dark life, remembers the great number of deadly combats long ago, and speaks these words: 'Where has the horse gone? Where the young warrior? Where is the giver of treasure? What has become of the seats for the feasts? Where are the joys of the hall? Alas, the bright cup! Alas, the mailed warrior! Alas, the prince's glory! How has that time gone, vanished beneath night's cover, just as if it had never been! The wall, wonderfully high, adorned with snake-images, stands now over the old traces of the beloved company. Might of the ash-spears has carried away the earls, weapons greedy for slaughter—Fate the mighty, and storms beat on the stone walls, thick-falling snow binds the earth; winter's roar, when darkness comes, the night-shadow falls, sends from the north harsh hailstones in hatred of men. All the kingdom of earth is wretched, work of the fates changes the world under the skies. Here wealth is fleeting, here friend is fleeting, here man is fleeting, here woman is fleeting—all this resting place of earth shall be emptied.' "

So spoke the wise in heart, sat apart at the council. Good is he who keeps his pledge, must never man utter too quickly the passion of his breast, unless he knows first how to achieve remedy, an earl with his valor. Well will it be with him who seeks favor, support from the Father in heaven, where for us the only stronghold stands.

'HARLEY LYRICS' (1)

Now sprinkes the spray

Now sprinkes the spray,
Al for love ich am so seek
That slepen I ne may.

Als I me rode this endre day
  O my playinge,
Seigh I whar a litel may
  Bigan to singe,
  "The clot him clinge!
  Way es him i love-longinge
Sal libben ay!"

Son ich herde that mirye note,
  Thider I drogh.
I fonde hire in an herber swot
  Under a bogh,
  With jove ynogh.
  Son I asked, "Thou mirye may,
Why sinkestou ay?"

Than answerde that maiden swote
  Mid wordes fewe,
"My lemman me haves bihot
  Of love trewe:
  He chaunges anewe.
  Yif I may, it shal him rewe,
By this day."

'Now blossoms the spray:
All for love I am so sick,
My sleep has gone away.'

On horseback as I rode one day
  Adventuring,
I chanced to hear while on my way
  A maiden sing:
  'Clod to him cling!
Alas to love in suffering
  My life away!'
    'Now blossoms the spray, etc.'

And hearing that delightful tune,
  I went to see;
And in a glade I found her soon
  In ecstasy
  Beneath a tree.
I asked, 'Why sing so ceaselessly,
  O maiden gay?'
    'Now blossoms the spray, etc.'

And then replied that lovely she,
  (Her words were few)
'My lover swore on oath to me
  His love was true:
  He's changed for new.
May it bring him grief and rue
  This very day!
    Now blossoms the spray:
    All for love I am so sick,
    My sleep has gone away.'

Alisoun

Bitwene Mersh and Averil,
  When spray biginneth to springe,
The lutel fowl hath hire wil
  On hire lud to singe.
  Ich libbe in love-longinge
For semlokest of alle thinge;
He may me blisse bringe:
  Ich am in hire baundoun.
An hendy hap ichabbe yhent;
Ichot from hevene it is me sent;
From alle wimmen my love is lent,
  And light on Alisoun.

On heu hire her is fair ynogh,
  Hire browe browne, hire eye blake;
With lossum chere he on me logh,
  With middel smal and wel ymake.
  Bote he me wolle to hire take,
  For te buen hire owen make,
  Longe to liven ichulle forsake,
    And feye fallen adown.

Nihtes when I wende and wake,
Forthy min wonges waxeth won;

Levedy, al for thine sake
  Longinge is ylent me on.
  In world nis non so witer mon
  That al hire bounte telle con;
  Hire swire is whittore then the swon,
    And feirest may in towne.

Ich am for wowing al forwake,
  Wery so water in wore,
Lest eny reve me my make;
  Ichabbe y-yirned yore:
  Betere is tholien while sore
  Then mournen evermore.
  Geinest under gore,
    Herkne to my roun:
  An hendy hap ichabbe yhent;
  Ichot from hevene it is me sent;
  From alle wimmen my love is lent,
    And light on Alisoun.

Between March and April,
  When sprays begin to spring,
The little bird in bird-song
  Delights and longs to sing.
  And lost in love, I cling
  To the fairest, sweetest thing.
  Blisses may she bring
    To me, her bonded one!

      Grace and glorious luck are mine,
      And sure, their sending is divine;
      My love has left all womankind,
        And lights on Alison.

Bright hair and body slender,
  Tawny eyebrows sweet;
Her eyes of black show tender
  When my own they meet.
  Unless she takes me straight
  To be her own true mate,
  I shall be felled by Fate,
    My earthly life fordone.

      Grace and glorious luck, etc.

At night-time, tossing, waking,
  (My cheeks turn pale for you)
For your sake, lady, aching,
  I feel desire anew.
  No wizard's words will do
  To give her praises due:
  Ah, neck of swan-like hue,
    Fairest beneath the sun!

      Grace and glorious luck, etc.

I weary like milling water,
  With sleepless longing sore,
And lest my love be stolen,
  I languish in her lure.
  But better a while to endure
  Than mourn for evermore.
  Sweetest whom I adore,
    Hear my orison!

Grace and glorious luck are mine,
And sure, their sending is divine;
My love has left all womankind,
  And lights on Alison.

HARLEY LYRICS (2)

Spring Song

Lenten is come with love to towne,
With blosmen and with briddes roune,
  That al this blisse bringeth.
Dayeseyes in this dales,
Notes swete of nightegales,
  Uch fowl song singeth.
The threstelcok him threteth oo,
Away is huere winter wo,
  When woderove springeth.
This fowles singeth ferly fele,
Ant wliteth on huere winne wele,
  That al the wode ringeth.

The rose raileth hire rode,
The leves on the lighte wode
  Waxen al with wille.

The mone mandeth hire bleo,
The lilye is lossom to seo,
  The fenil and the fille.
Wowes this wilde drakes:
Males murgeth huere makes,
  On strem that striketh stille.
Mody meneth, so doth mo:
Ichot ich am on of tho
  For love that likes ille.

The mone mandeth hire light;
So doth the semly sonne bright,
  When briddes singeth breme.
Deawes donketh the downes;
Deores whisperes dernes rounes,
  Domes for te deme;
Wormes woweth under cloude;
Wimmen waxeth wounder proude,
  So wel hit wol hem seme.
Yef me shal wonte wille of on,
This wunne wele I wol forgon,
  Ant wight in wode be fleme.

2 *briddes roune*, birds' voice — 4 *this*, these — 6 *uch*, each
7: i.e., The song-thrush chides constantly — 8 *huere*, their
9 *woderove*, woodruff — 10 *ferly fele*, wondrous many
11: i.e., ? and warble on their wealth of joy
13 *raileth hire rode*, puts on her hue — 15 *wille*, delight

Spring's about with love again,
With blossom and with birds' refrain
  The top of pleasure bringing.
Daisies whitening all the dales,
The lovely notes of nightingales –
  Every bird is singing.
The song-thrush endlessly trills on,
For winter's misery is gone
  When the woodruff's springing.
A host of birds profusely sing
The joy and blessing of the spring,
  And set the woodlands ringing.

The rose puts on her reddening hue,
The leaves with ardour sprout anew,
  In the bright woods glowing.
The moon sends down her radiant light,
While lilies, lovely to the sight,
  Fennel and thyme are blowing.
Wild and wanton drakes abound;
Their mating calls to lovers sound
  Like stream serenely flowing.
The passionate man and others sigh,
And of that company am I,
  Distraught with love and wooing.

The moonbeams shed their lovely light,
And when the glorious sun shines bright,
  The sounds of bird-song swell.
The moistening dew on uplands falls,
Creatures utter secret calls,
  Their loving tales to tell.
Worms beneath the ground make love;
Women flaunt their pride above –
  The spring becomes them well.
If none of them can burn for me,
Then, lost to fortune, I shall flee
  And in the wild wood dwell.

16 *mandeth hire bleo*, sends forth her radiance
17 *lossom to seo*, lovely to see — 19 *wowes*, woo; *this*, these
20 *males*, ms: *miles; murgeth huere makes*, gladden their mates
21 *on*, ms: *ase; striketh*, flows
22: i.e., passionate (lovers) complain, so do others
23 *ichot*, I know; *ich*, I; *tho*, those — 24 *likes ille*, i.e., are troubled
27 *breme*, clearly — 28 *donketh*, moisten
29: i.e., animals whisper dark secrets; *whisperes*, ms: *with huere*
30: i.e., in order to settle their affairs
31 *woweth*, woo; *cloude*, ground — 32 *wounder*, wondrous
33: i.e., ? so well it (their pride) will suit them
34: i.e., if I must do without my delight in one of them
35 *wunne wele*, wealth of joy; *wol*, will
36 *wight*, creature; *fleme*, fugitive

CHAUCER

From The Canterbury Tales

The General Prologue

Whan that April with his° showres soote° — *its / sweet*
The droughte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veine[1] in swich° licour,° — *such / liquid*
Of which vertu[2] engendred is the flowr;
Whan Zephyrus[3] eek° with his sweete breeth — *also*
Inspired hath in every holt° and heeth° — *grove / field*
The tendre croppes,° and the yonge sonne[4] — *shoots*
Hath in the Ram his halve cours yronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye
That sleepen al the night with open yë°— — *eye*
So priketh hem° Nature in hir corages[5]— — *them*
Thanne longen folk to goon° on pilgrimages, — *go*
And palmeres[6] for to seeken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes, couthe° in sondry londes; — *known*
And specially from every shires ende
Of Engelond to Canterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martyr[7] for to seeke
That hem hath holpen° whan that they were seke.° — *helped / sick*
  Bifel that in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk[8] at the Tabard as I lay,
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Canterbury with ful° devout corage, — *very*
At night was come into that hostelrye
Wel nine and twenty in a compaignye
Of sondry folk, by aventure° yfalle — *chance*
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle
That toward Canterbury wolden° ride. — *would*
The chambres and the stables weren wide,
And wel we weren esed° at the beste.[9] — *accommodated*
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,[1]
So hadde I spoken with hem everichoon° — *every one*
That I was of hir felaweshipe anoon,° — *at once*
And made forward[2] erly for to rise,
To take oure way ther as[3] I you devise.° — *describe*
  But nathelees,° whil I have time and space,[4] — *nevertheless*
Er° that I ferther in this tale pace,° — *before / pass*

1. I.e., in plants.
2. By the power of which.
3. The west wind.
4. The sun is young because it has run only half-way through its course in Aries, the Ram—the first sign of the zodiac in the solar year.
5. Their hearts.
6. Palmers, wide-ranging pilgrims—especially those who sought out the "straunge strondes" (foreign shores) of the Holy Land. "Ferne halwes": far-off shrines.
7. St. Thomas à Becket, murdered in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170.
8. Southwark, site of the Tabard Inn, was then a suburb of London, south of the Thames River.
9. In the best possible way.

1. Had set.
2. I.e., (we) made an agreement.
3. "Ther as": where.
4. I.e., opportunity.

MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE WORLD PICTURE

DEGREE or ORDER or (DIVINE) LAW

Hooker "Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity":

Above all earthly and cosmic laws or orders there is Law in general, "that Law which giveth life unto all the rest which are commendable just and good, namely the law whereby the Eternal himself doth work". God created his own law both because he willed it and because it was right. Though voluntary it was not arbitrary, but based on reason. That divine reason is beyond our understanding, yet we know it is there. God's law is eternal, "being that order which God before all ages hath set down with himself, for himself to do all things by". God chose to work in finitude in some sort to show his glory and having so chosen he expressed the abundance of his glory in variety.

SIN

Pauline (St Paul's) scheme of sin and salvation: the revolt of the bad angels under Lucifer because of their pride, the creation, the temptation and fall of man, the incarnation, the atonement, the regeneration through Christ. There is the everpresent glory of God's creation in the world, his Providence keeps the whole system running smoothly. When God had made the world he found it good and he created man in his own image but with the Fall of Man both man and the universe were corrupted. Thus disorder or chaos, the product of sin, is perpetually striving to come again. Man's way to salvation is through God's grace and Christ's atonement but contemplation and meditation also help as by the Fall man was alienated from his true self and he can regain true self-knowledge through contemplating the works of nature of which he is part.

THE CHAIN OF BEING

This metaphor served to express the unimaginable plenitude of God's creation, its unfaltering order and its ultimate unity. The chain stretched from the foot of God's throne to the meanest inanimate objects. Every speck of creation was a link in the chain, and every link except those at the two extremities was simultaneously bigger and smaller than the other, there could be no gap. The precise magnitude of this chain could not be ascertained but it was safe to say that it was short of infinity though of a finitude quite outside man's imagination.

First there is mere existence, the inanimate class: the elements, liquids, and metals. But in spite of this common lack of life there is vast difference in virtue: water is nobler than earth, the ruby than the topaz, gold than brass. Next there is existence and life, the vegetative class, where again the oak is nobler than the bramble. Next there is existence, life and feeling, the sensitive class. In it there are three grades. First the creatures having touch but not hearing memory or movement. Such are shellfish and parasites on the base of trees. Then there are animals having touch memory and movement but not hearing, for instance ants. And finally there are the higher animals, horses, dogs, etc., that have all these faculties. The three classes lead up to man, who has not only existence, life and feeling, but understanding: he sums up in himself the total faculties of earthly phenomena. (For this reason he was called the little world or microcosm, the created universe being the macrocosm). But as there had been an inanimate class, so to balance it there must be a purely rational or spiritual one. These are the angels, linked to man by community of the understanding, but freed from simultaneous attachment to the lower faculties. There are vast numbers of angles and they are as precisely ordered along the chain of being as the elements or the metals. Now, although the creatures are assigned their precise place in the chain of being, there is at the same time the possibility of change. The chain is in fact a ladder. There is a progression in the way the elements nourish plants, the fruits of plants beasts, and

the flesh of beasts men. All this is one with the tendency of man upwards towards God. The chain of being is in this way educative both in the marvels of its static self and in its implications of ascent. If the chain is to be whole, the top of one class must link with the bottom of another. Every class in the chain is allowed to excel in a single particular. Stones may be lowly but they exceed the class above them, the plants, in strength and durability. Plants, though without sense, excel in the faculty of assimilating nourishment. The beasts are stronger than man in physical energy and desires. Man excels the angels in his power of learning, for his very imperfection calls forth that power, while the angels as perfect beings have already acquired all the knowledge they are capable of holding. Only the angels, through their peculiar gift, the faculty of adoration, cannot claim to go beyond the class of being above them.

Another form of excellence is that within every class there is a primate, the most excellent specimen of that class: the dolphin (sometimes the whale) among fishes, the eagle among birds, the lion (sometimes the elephant) among the beasts, the emperor among men, God among the angels, the sun among the stars, justice among the virtues and the head among the body's members.

The four elements (earth, water, air, fire) formed a ladder of their own, the earth being the lowest and the fire the highest in it. Still, all things in the created world were compounded of all the four elements direct. The elements in them being represented in various proportions. The highest perfection achievable in this chain was a being made of the purest of fires - heavenly fire, i.e light. This being is God as a being of pure light.

The four elements were the material for the whole universe, but they were differently mixed in the two regions: below the moon (in the sublunary world) ill, above it perfectly. Hence the heavens were eternal, the sublunary region subject to decay because in it the elements were mixed unequally. Also the air below the moon was thick and dirty, above it it was pure and known as ether. Also ether could be considered as the fifth element and the substance of all creation from the moon upward. In this case it would be only natural that the farther the distance from the earth and the nearer to heaven, the purer and more brilliant the atmosphere. Contrarywise the earth itself was gross and heavy and the more so towards its own centre. In fact the earth in the Ptolemaic system was the cesspool of the universe, the repository of its grossest dregs.

ANGELS

The most influential account of the angels has been that of Dionysius the Areopagite, a Christian Neo-Platonist of the fifth century A.D. given in his work "On the Heavenly Hierarchy" and it is widely known because Aquinas and Dante used it. The angels are arranged in a definitive order according to their natural capacity to receive the undivided divine essence. Knowing themselves and being without sin, they are utterly content with the full measure of what they can assimilate, and will not envy those above them. Those of inferior capacity will receive divine knowledge through the medium of their superiors. There are three main orders of angels. The highest is contemplative and consists of Seraphs, Cherubs and Thrones. Thus the highest link in the chain of being would be the chief Seraph. The second order is more active but rather potentially than in deed: their psychological state is rather of an attitude than of an action. They are divided into Dominations, Virtues and Powers. More active still is the third order, divided into Principalities, Archangels and Angels. It is the lowest rank, the Angels, who form the medium between the whole angelic hierarchy and man. They go on man's errands. These nine orders of angels echo the Trinity, secondly they correspond to the ninefold division of the material heavens. From heaven in descending order the spheres were those of *primum mobile*,

the fixed stars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon; and the nine hierarchies of angels were thought each to regulate one of these spheres in the order given above, the seraphs regulating the *primum mobile* and so on. The celestial sounds the spheres make while in constant movement are called "the music of the spheres". Angels were supposed to direct the turning of the spheres. To Neo-Platonists these angels were identical with the heavenly sirens of Plato who sit upon their spheres and, each singing their different note, compose a harmony of ravishing beauty. Humans cannot hear this music because of their corruptible and sinful body.

NATURE

according to the orthodox view worked unswervingly by a set of rules applicable to her alone, she is a direct and involuntary tool of God. The Neo-Platonists viewed nature as an intellectual being, "Soul of the world", standing on the ladder of creation above man but below the angels.

THE ELEMENTS

were primarily viewed as certain qualities attributable to all matter: hot and cold, dry and moist. Heaviest and lowest was the cold and dry element, the earth. Its natural place was the centre of the universe, of which it was the dregs. Outside earth was the region of cold and moist, the water. Outside water was the region of hot and moist, the air. Noblest of all is fire which next below the sphere of the moon enclosed the globe of air that girded water and earth. It was hot and dry, rarefied, invisible to human sight, and was the fitting transition to the eternal realms of the planets. In this region meteors and other transient fires were generated. These, as transient, could not come from the eternal region of the stars. The elements were always mixed in infinitely varied proportion and they were perpetually at war with each other. For instance, fire and water are opposed, but God in his wisdom kept them from mutual destruction by putting the element of air between them, which, having one quality of both the others, acted as a transition and kept the peace. Also the elements were in a constant flux of transmutation, one into the other.

MAN's

very anatomy corresponded with the physical ordering of the universe. His frame was compounded of the four elements, and on the same principles as was the sublunary world. Man's physical life begins with food, and food is made of the four elements. Food passes through the stomach to the liver, which is lord of the lowest of the three parts of the body. The liver converts the food it receives into four liquid substances, the humours, which are to the human body what the elements are to the common matter of the earth. Each humour has its own counterpart among the elements:

Element:	Humour:	Common quality:
Earth	Melancholy	Cold and dry
Water	Phelgm	Cold and moist
Air	Blood	Hot and moist
Fire	Choler	Hot and dry

In normal operation all the humours together are carried by the veins from the liver to the heart, a proper mixture of the humours being as necessary to bodily growth and functioning. The four humours created in the liver are the life-giving moisture of the body. They generate a more active life-principle, vital heat, which corresponds to the fires in the centre of the earth. This vital heat is mediated to the body through three kinds of spirit, which are the executive of the microcosm. These *natural* spirits are a vapour formed in the liver and carried with the humours along the veins. As such they have to do with the lowest or vegetative side of man and are under

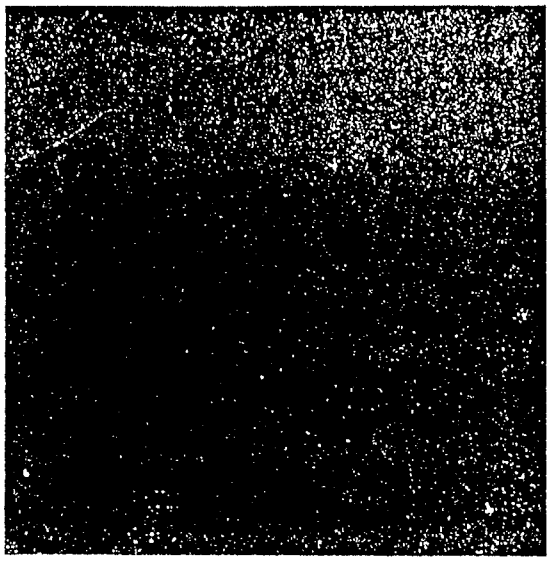
the dominion of the liver. But, acted on in the heart by heat and air from the lungs, they assume a higher quality and become *vital* spirits. Accompanied by a nobler kind of blood, also refined in the heart, they carry life and heat through the arteries. The heart is king of the middle portion of the body. It is the seat of the passions and hence corresponds to the sensitive portion of man's nature. Some of the vital spirits are in due course carried through the arteries into the brain, where they are turned into *animal* spirits. The brain rules the top of man's body and is the seat of the rational and immortal part. The animal spirits are the executive agents of the brain through the nerves and partake both of the body and soul. The word *temperament* or *complexion* meant the tempering of one humour (or element) by another, or the intertwining of the humours that was the cause of character. If man was of a phlegmatic temperament, it meant that the four humours were mixed in a way that allowed phlegm, the cold and moist humour, to be the most emphatic. Usually one humour was a little more prominent than the rest in a man's body, thus giving the man his distinctive mark. Besides the normal conditions of the humours, there were the abnormal. Abnormally the humours would ascend straight from the stomach or other abdominal organs to the brain in a vapour, like vapour ascending from the earth to the air. Catarrh comes from these evil vapours. There was also the terrible possibility of a humour not merely existing to excess, as in a perfectly sane man with some marked idiosyncracy, but going bad. A humour could both putrefy or be burnt with excessive heat. The most famous kind of corrupt humour was the burnt or adust, and *melancholy adust* was the name usually given to it even if it was one of the other humours that had been impaired.

Like the body, the brain was divided into a triple hierarchy. The lowest contained *five senses*. The middle contained first the *common sense*, which received and summarized the reports of the five senses, secondly the *fancy*, and third the *memory*. This middle area supplied the materials for the highest to work on. The highest contained the supreme human faculty of *reason*, by which man is separated from the beasts and allied to God and the angels, with its two parts, the *understanding* (or *wit*) and the *will*. It is on these two highest human faculties, undestanding and will, that the Elizabethan ethics are based.

Man's understanding, though allied to the angelical, operates differently. The angels understand intuitively, man by the painful use of the discursive reason. The angels know all they have to know. Man, though he can rival the angels in knowledge, begins his life in ignorance. What marks man from angel and beast is his capacity for learning: both his 'erected wit' in perceiving perfection and his aptitude for 'nurture' or education in his raising himself towards it. Hence learning is an ethical and religious matter. To learn was to exercise one of the greatest human prerogatives. Man is different from other living creatures in that he seeks perfection through knowledge of things external to himself. One of man's highest faculties is his gift for disinterested knowledge. It is through this gift that he might learn something of God. But there was another subject of understanding which was paramount and that was yourself. This was again a particularly human task, irrelevant to the angels because they knew themselves already and to the beasts because it was utterly beyond them. Not to know yourself was to resemble the beasts, if not in coarseness at least in deficiency of education. To know yourself was not egoism but the gateway to all virtue. It was the great condition of success in the spiritual warfare. For the chief enemy is within ourselves and if we do not understand him we cannot be victorious.

E.M.W. Tillyard "The Elizabethan World Picture"

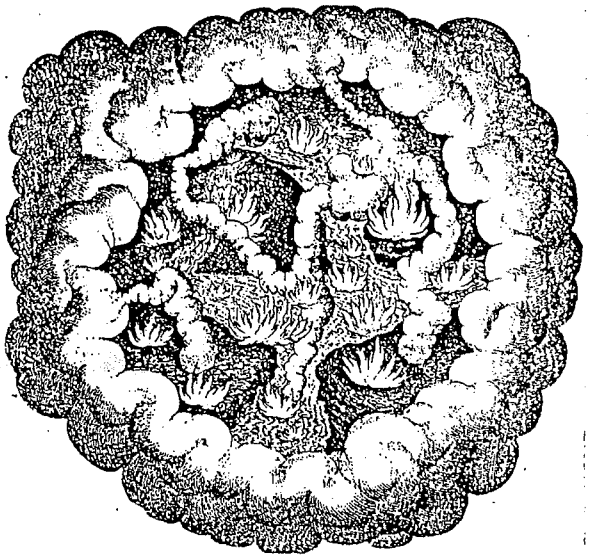
MACROCOSMI:
Genesis



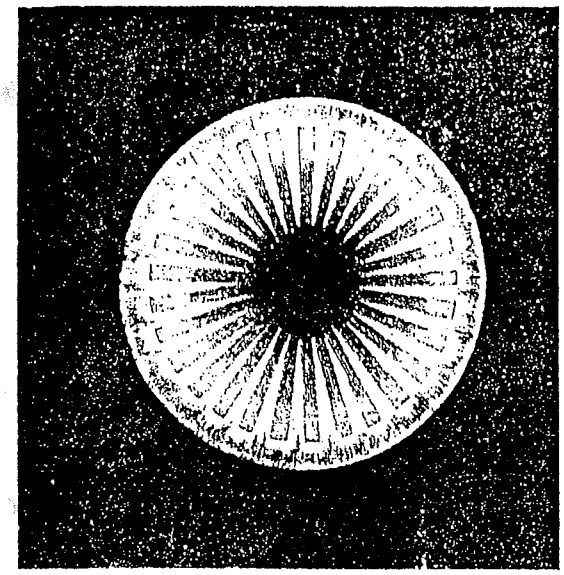
For the Paracelsian Robert Fludd, the divine act of creation took on concrete and visible form as an alchemical process, in which God, as a spagyrist, divided primal, dark chaos, the *Prima Materia*, into the three divine, primary elements of light, darkness and spiritual waters. These waters, in turn, were the roots of the four Aristotelian elements, of which earth is the coarsest and the heaviest, comparable to the dark sediment, the "raven's head" that is left on the bottom of the retort in the process of distillation.

No wonder, wrote Fludd, that our planet is such a vale of tears, given that it has emerged from the sediment of creation, where the devil dwells.
"When the secret of secrets wished to reveal himself, he began to produce a point of light. Before that point of light broke through and became apparent, the infinite (en soph) was entirely hidden and radiated no light." (Zohar)

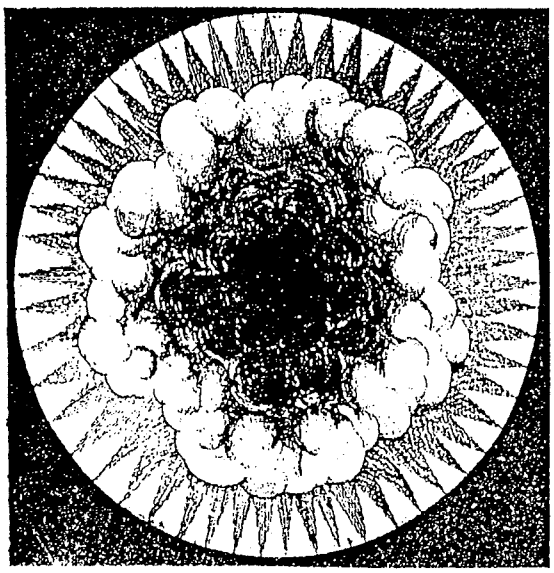
R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617



The chaos of the elements from the lower waters "is a confused and undigested mass in which the four elements fight against each other."

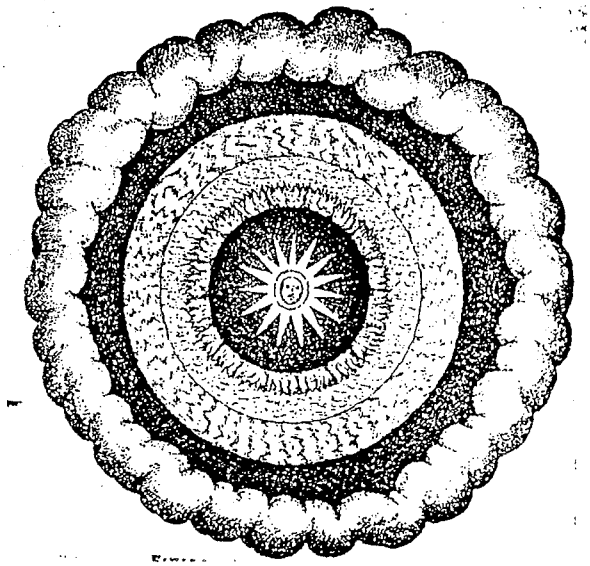


Light, the inexhaustible source of all things, appears in the darkness and with it the watery spirits that begin to divide into near (bright) and far (dark).



In the centre are the dark waters, far from the light, forming the source of matter; at the edge are the upper waters, from which the divine fiery heaven (Empyreum) will unfold. The bright cloud in between is a state "called variously the Earth-spirit, the Spirit of Mercury, the Ether and the Quintessence."

R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617



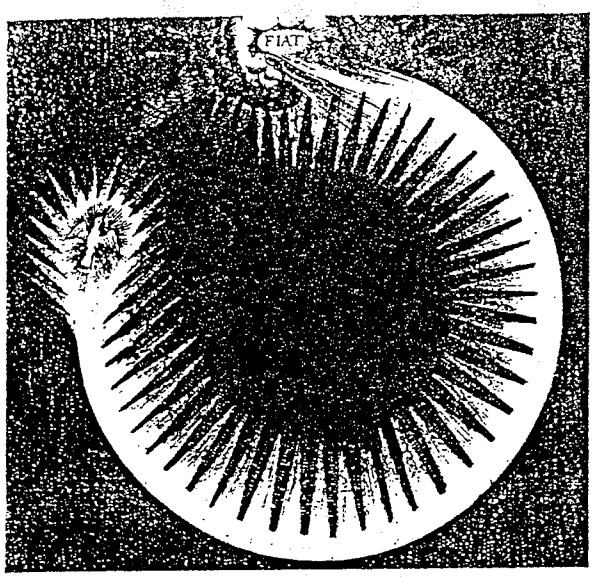
The ideal final state of material is achieved when the elements are arranged according to the degrees of their density: (from outside to inside) Earth, Water, Air and Fire. In the centre appears the Sun, gold.

The first day of creation

Fiat lux

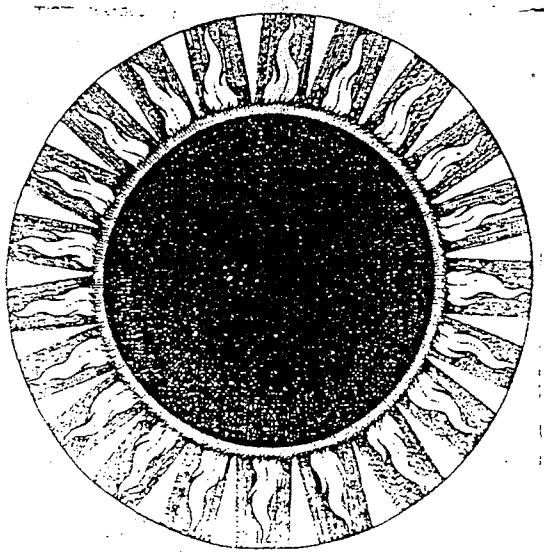
The first day of creation:

"Let there be light, said God; and forthwith Light/(...) Sprung from the deep; and from her native east/ To journey through the aery gloom began,/ Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun/ Was not (...)."
(John Milton, *Paradise Lost* 1667)



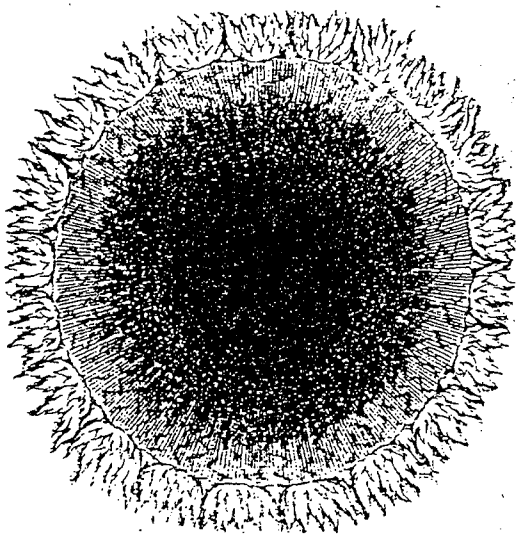
The dove is the spirit of God.

"The uncreated light of the spirit reflected in the sphere of the fiery firmament as in a mirror, and the reflections in their turn, are the first manifestations of created light."

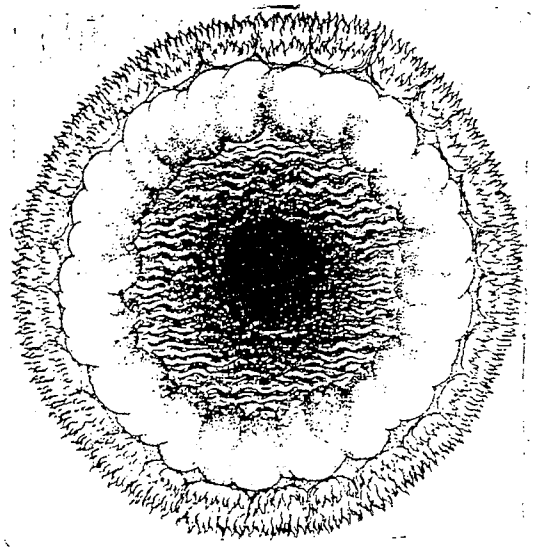


R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617

The earth belongs to the lowest level of the elements, the sediment of creation.



According to the proportions, the grossest element couples with the most subtle when the elements of air and water are produced.

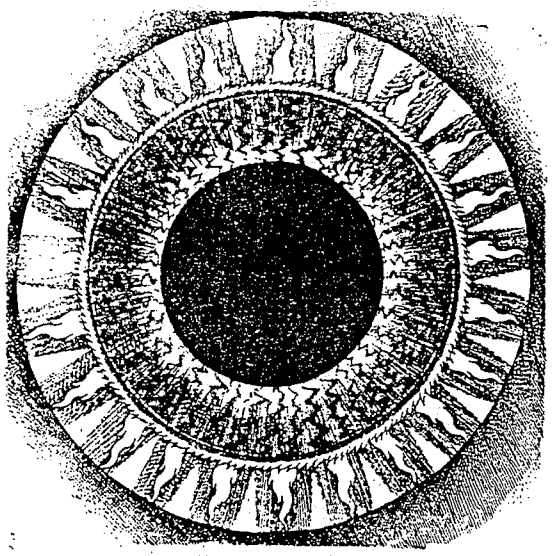


The second and the third day

The second day

"And God said, Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water (...) And God called the vault Heaven." (Genesis 1, 6 and 8)

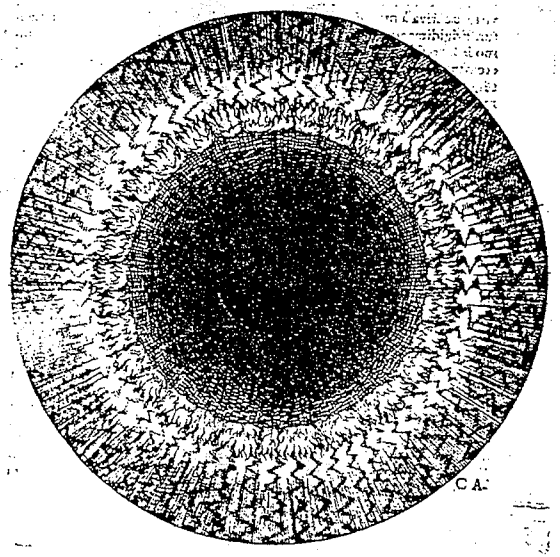
The ethereal sphere with the fixed stars and planets divides the upper waters (Empyreum) from the lower. In this sphere the upper heavenly quality (form) is in balance with the lower heavenly quality (material).



The third day

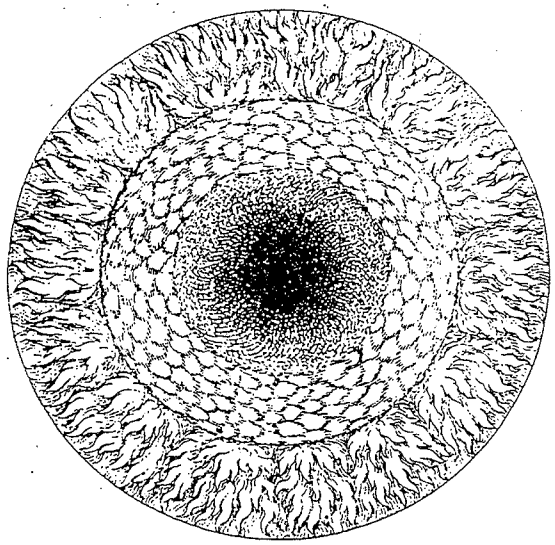
Fire arises as the first and most subtle element.

This is not, as Fludd stressed, the 'invisible fire' of the alchemists, but the material fire that Paracelsus called the 'dark' fire, which leads everything alive to destruction. Life in the Paracelsian sense is a process of destruction by fire.

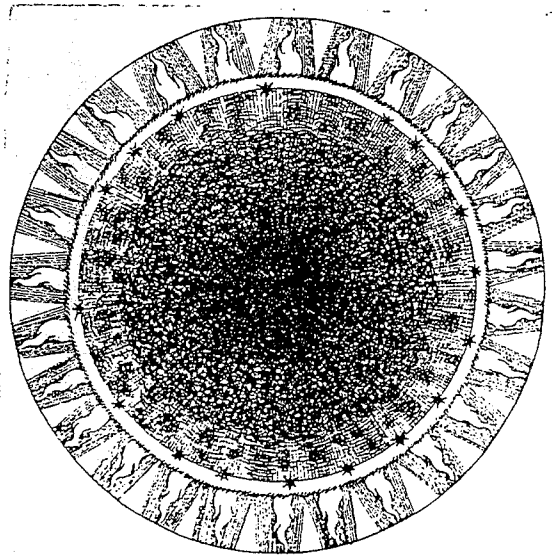


R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617

The sequence by which the elements are ordered in an ascending degree of purity – earth, water, air and fire – is repeated in the structure of the entire cosmos from the sublunary, elemental heavens, the ethereal heaven to the empyrean.

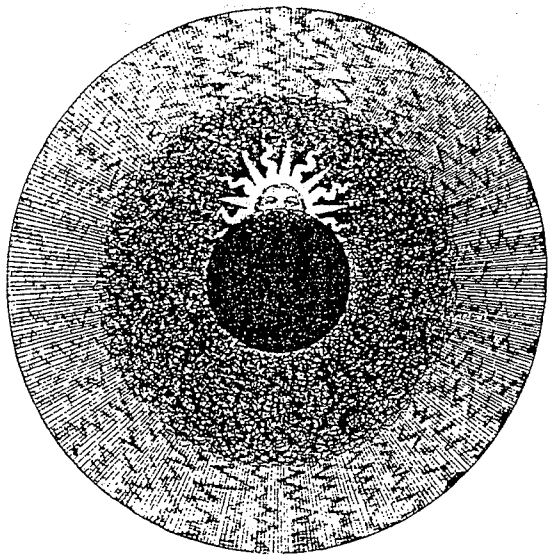


The stars on the outer edge of the ethereal sphere only became visible with the creation of the sun, for they store its light and after a space of time emit it again like phosphorous.

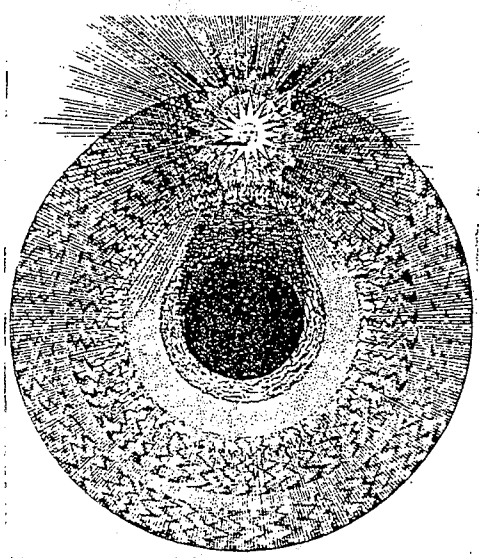


R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617

"The perturbations attendant on creation had caused some of the celestial light to be trapped in the cold mass of the central earth. Obeying the law of gravity, this celestial substance began to rise towards its rightful place in the heavens, and it was thus that our sun was formed."

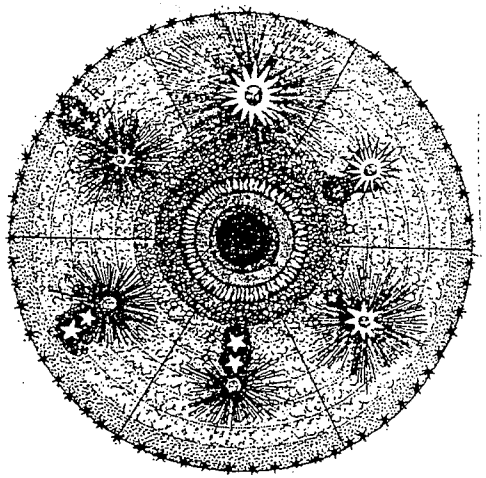


In the firmament the sun is the visible representative of the divine fire and of love. Its corresponding part in the human body is the heart, "which emits its vital rays (*the veins*) in a circle from the centre, and thus animates each individual limb". (Robert Fludd, *Philosophical Key*, c. 1619)

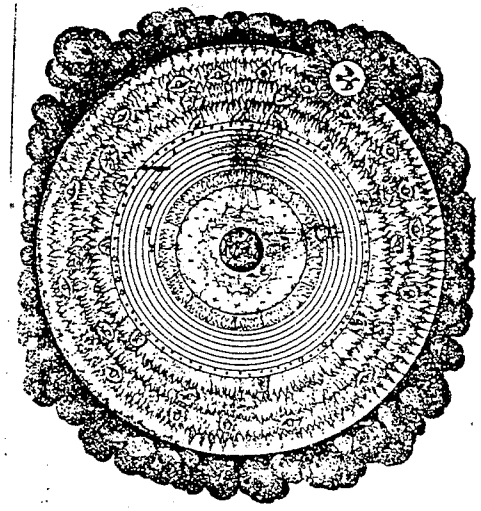


R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617

When the sinking, hot rays of the sun encounter rising, watery steam, they condense and give rise to the planets.



The spirit of God hovers as a dove above perfect creation, which is already menaced by the Fall. In the 'Tractatus apologeticus', Fludd emphasized that the chief goal of macrocosmic study must be to study the role of the divine spirit in creation, for without the light emanating from this spirit, life is not possible.



R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

The theory of the harmony of the spheres dates back to the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (570–496 B.C.).

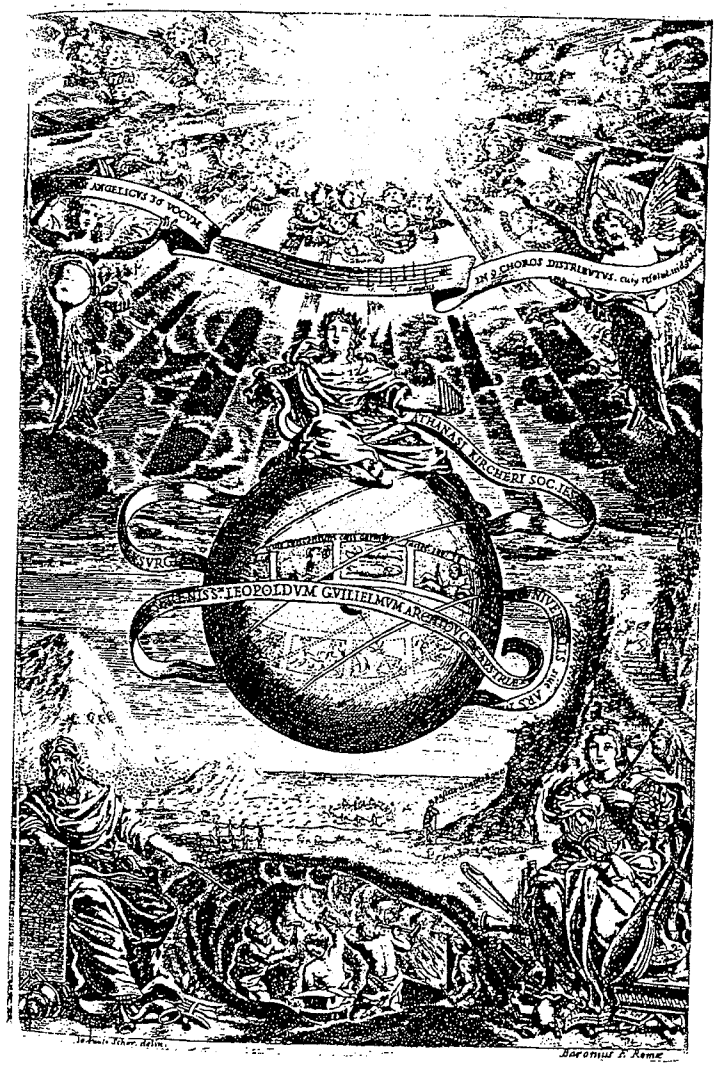
According to a legend told by Iambilochos, when Pythagoras heard the different sound made by hammers in a forge, he realized that tones can be expressed in quantitative relationships, and hence in numerical values and geometrical measures. Using stringed instruments, he then discovered the connection between vibration frequencies and pitch. The whole world, according to Pythagoras' theory, consisted of harmony and number. Both the microcosmic soul and the macrocosmic universe were assembled according to ideal proportions, which can be expressed in a sequence of tones.



F. Gaffurio, Theorica musica, Milan, 1492

The pitches of the individual planetary tones of the celestial scale were derived from their orbital speeds, and the distances between them were placed in relationship to the musical intervals. Kepler complicated the system somewhat by assigning a whole sequence of tones to each planet. The series that he believed he had found for the earth (Mi Fa Mi) came to represent for him, shortly after the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, the fact "that *Mi*sere and *Fa*mes (hunger) rule in our vale of tears".

According to Genesis 4, 21, Jubal (ill. top left), a descendant of Cain, was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ". For Kepler, this figure is none other than Apollo, and Kepler also believed that Pythagoras was Hermes Trismegistus.

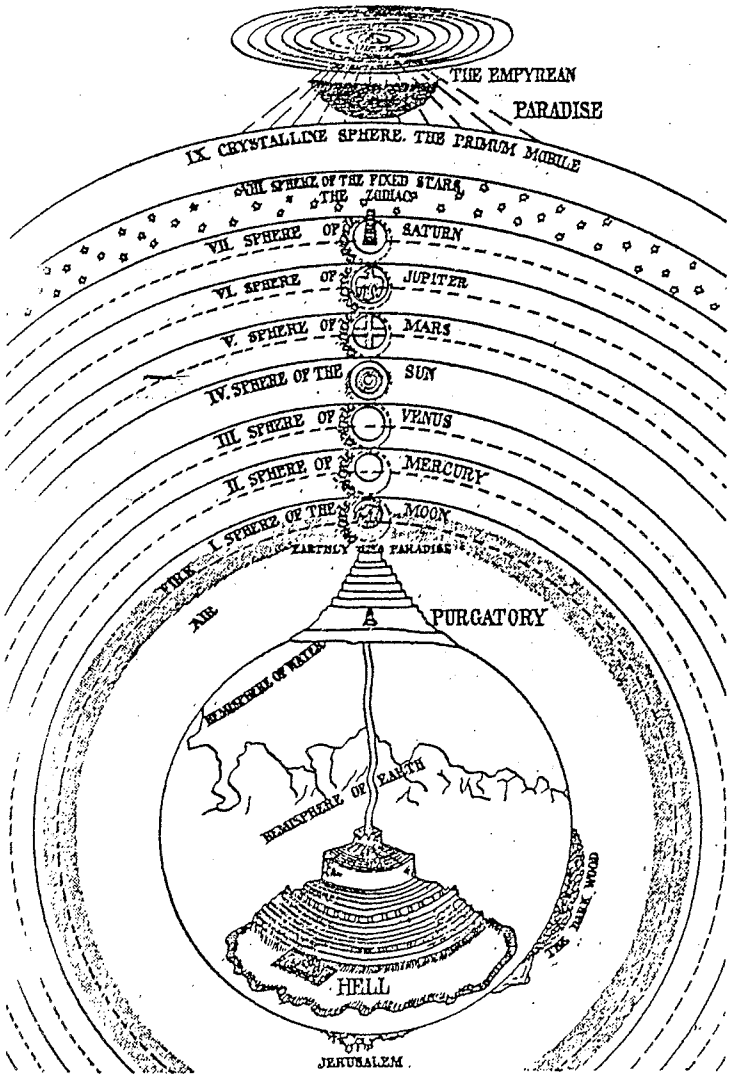


in the bottom left-hand corner, Pythagoras is pointing to the smiths who had inspired him. Here they are at work inside an ear. Kircher goes into great detail about its 'wonderful anatomical preparation', with hammer and anvil.

According to the theorist of Neoplatonic music, Boethius, (5th century A.D.), terrestrial 'musica instrumentalis' is but a shade of the 'musica mundana', the music of the spheres represented by the sphere at the centre. This in turn is merely a faint echo of the divine music of the nine choirs of angels.

A. Kircher, Musurgia universalis, Rome, 1650

THE PTOLEMAIC UNIVERSE

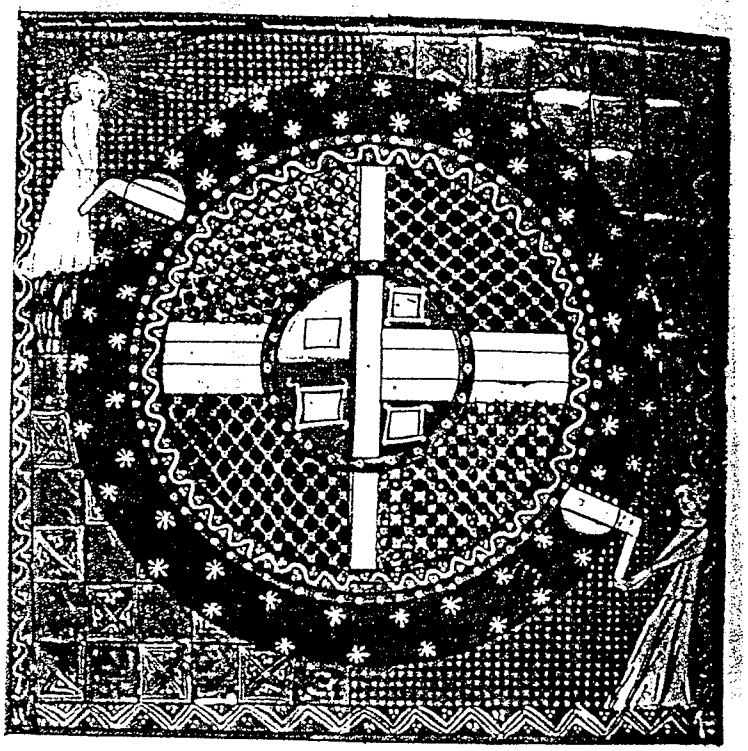


In Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1307–1321), the soul on its pilgrimage rises from the realm of Hell, which projects spherically into the earth, via the mountain of Purgatory and the nine spheres of the planets, the fixed stars and the crystalline sphere, all of which are kept in motion by angels, up to Paradise, where it finds its home in the white rose of heaven, illuminated by the divine light.

Michelangelo Cactani, La Materia della Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri, 1855

Angels set in motion the sphere of fixed stars, which in turn drives all the other spheres.

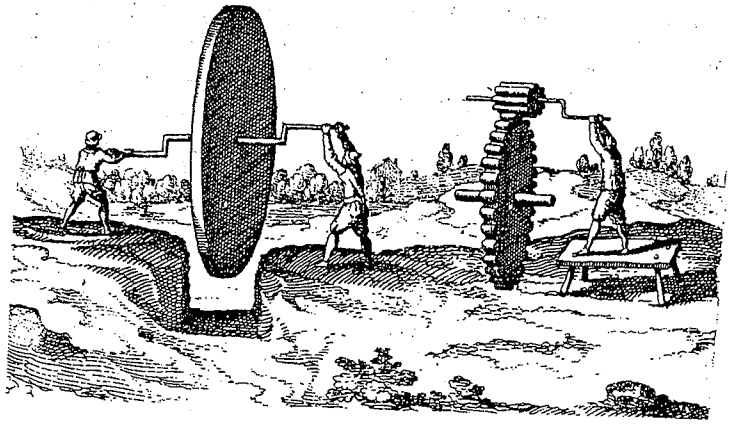
Miniature, France, 14th century



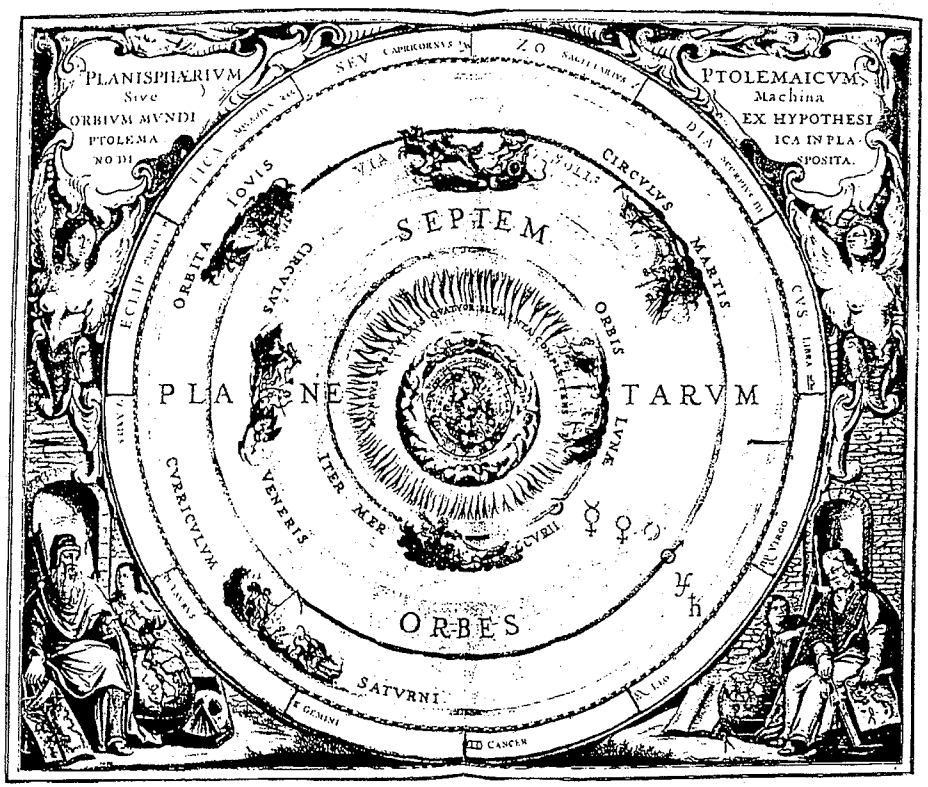
Here, Fludd is defending the geocentric concept of the world against the new theory of Copernicus, which he considered illogical on the grounds that it would be much simpler for the prime mover or God the creator to rotate the wheel of the spheres from the rim than for a sun to do so from the centre.

For Fludd, the mechanical centre of the universe remained the earth, while the spiritual centre was the sun.

R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617



THE PTOLEMAIC SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSE

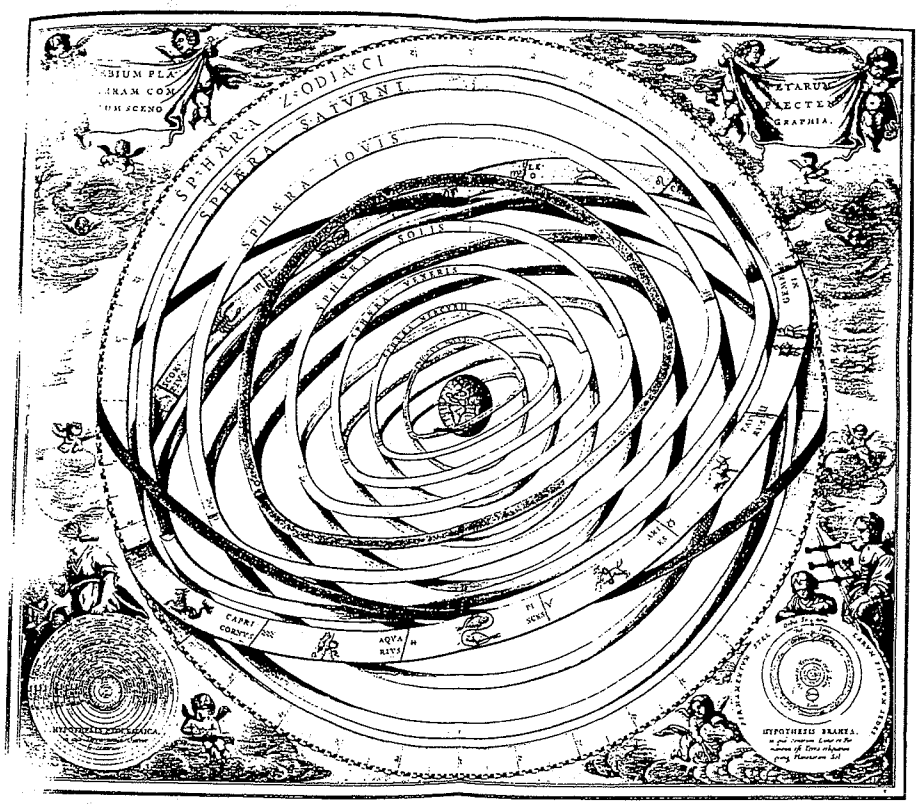


Planispheric depiction of the Ptolemaic system.

"The eye of man, who stands on the earth (...) organizes the structure of the entire universe in the sequence that he perceives, and in a sense places himself at the centre of the whole of space. Wherever he sends the rays of his gaze, he marvels at the work of the heavens, curved with admirable roundness (..) and believes that the globe is set at the centre of this great work." (Andreas Cellarius)

The illustration shows the Aristotelian stratification of the four elements in the sublunary region: the globe of the earth consists of the heaviest and most impure elements of earth and water, then comes air, and finally, adjacent to the sphere of the moon, is the lightest and purest element, fire.

A. Cellarius, Harmonia Macrocosmica, Amsterdam, 1660

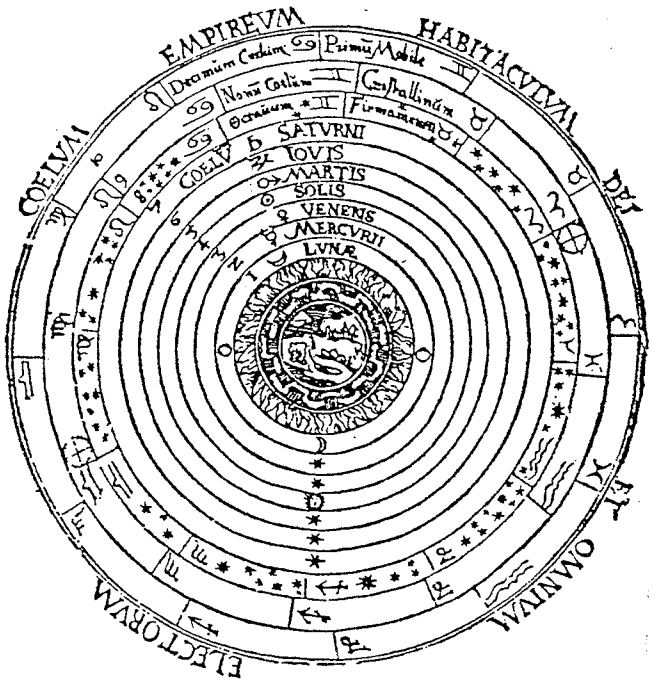


Spatial depiction of the Ptolemaic system

"Most ancient philosophers (...) believed that the superlunary world, i.e. the ethereal heavens, consisted of several circles or spheres, solid and diamond-hard, the ...ner of which contained the smaller. And ... the stars, like nails set in the wall of a ...p or some other movable object (...), were set in motion by them." (A. Cellarius)

The outermost, opaque sphere of the fixed stars was known as the *Primum Mobile*, the "first moved", because, driven by divine love, it caused the motion of all other spheres.

A. Cellarius, Harmonia Macrocosmica, Amsterdam, 1660



Typical Pre-Copernican Diagram of the Universe. [Reproduced from Petrus Apianus, Cosmographia, Antverp. 1574. Courtesy of Stanford University Libraries.]

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

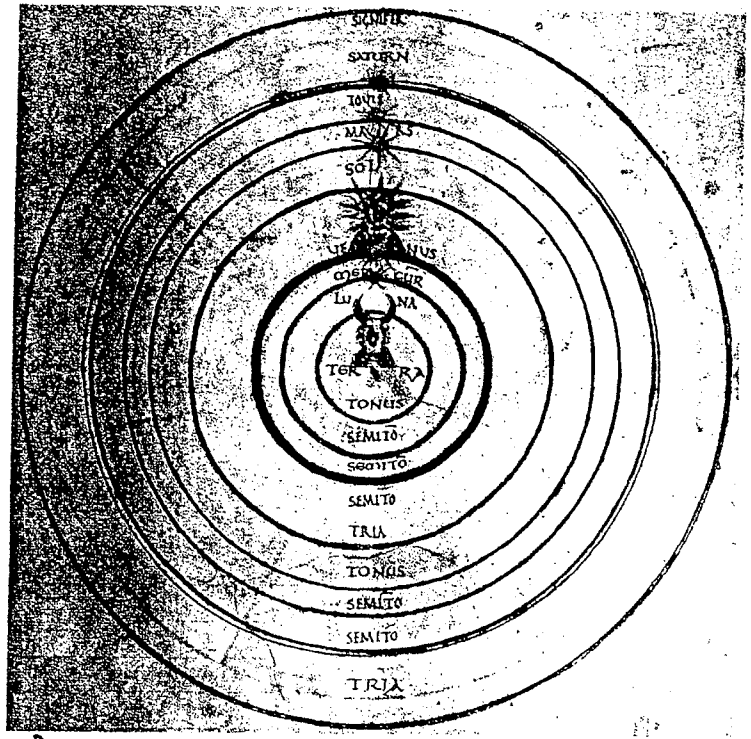
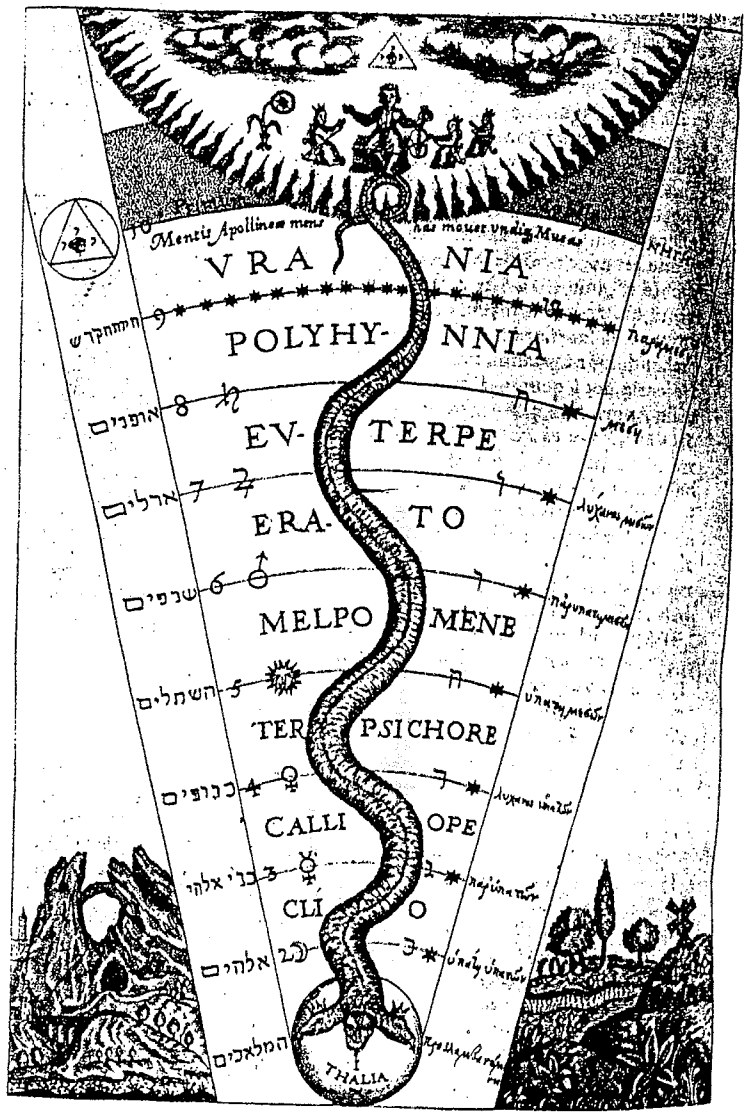


Diagram of the Ptolemaic cosmos giving the intervals meant to correspond to the distances between the heavenly bodies and their various speeds: Earth – Moon: a whole tone, Moon – Mercury – Venus: a semitone each, Venus – Sun: three semitones, Sun – Mars: a whole tone, Mars – Jupiter – Saturn: a semitone each, Saturn – fixed stars: three whole tones.

Astronomical manuscript anthology, Salzburg, c. A.D. 820



The assignment of the nine spheres to the nine Muses was the result of a harmonic vision by the Neo-Pythagorean, Martianus Capella (5th century A.D.). The scale covers a full octave.

The concord is conducted by Apollo, the Prime Mover. Flowing rhythmically through the spheres is the Egyptian serpent of the life-force. Its three heads represent the divine trinity in the three dimensions of space and the three aspects of time.

Tragedy is assigned to the sun, comedy to the earth.

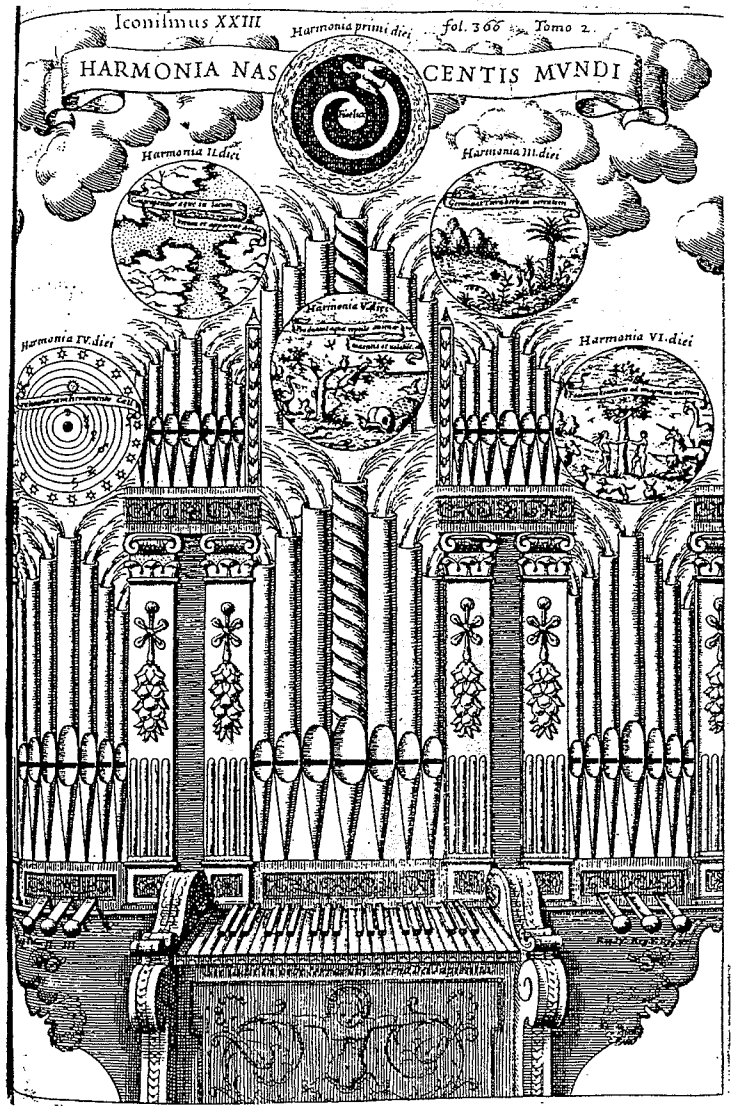
A. Kircher, Ars magna lucis, Rome, 1665

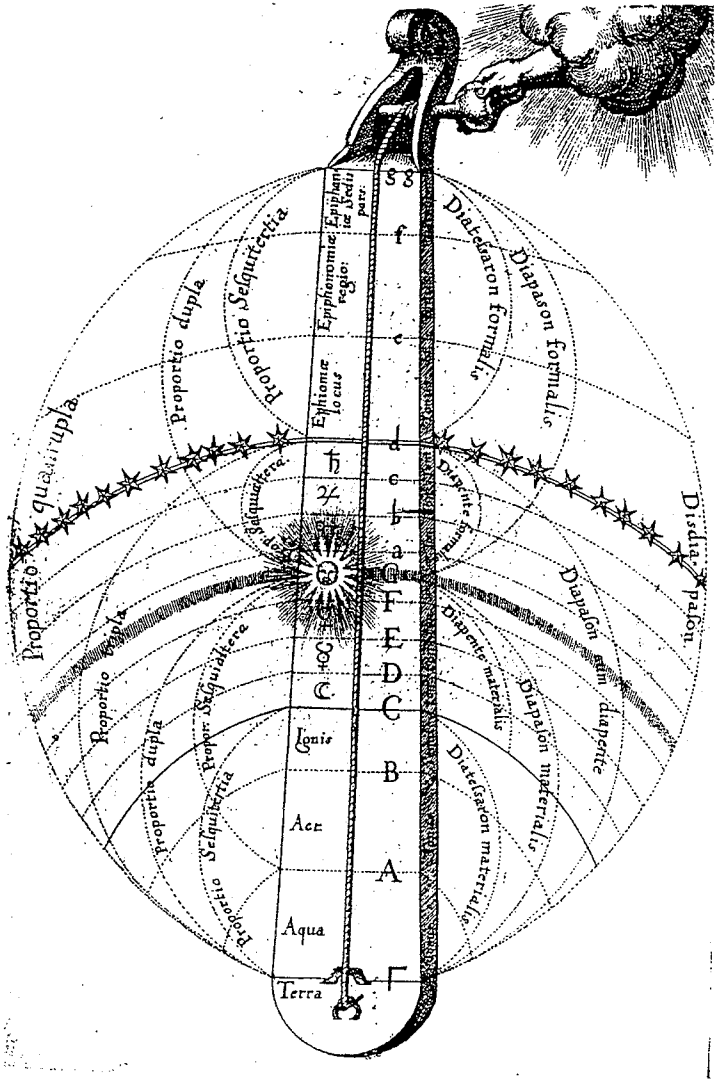
MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

In his *Musurgia universalis* (of the miraculous power and effect of consonances and dissonances) Kircher developed the idea of God as an organ-builder and organist, and compared the six-day labour of creation with the six registers of a cosmic organ.

Like Fludd, Kircher divided the various zones of Heaven and Earth into octaves. The organist's art appeared primarily in the accord of the four elements.

A. Kircher, Musurgia universalis, Rome, 1650





According to Fludd, "the monochord is the internal principle which, from the centre of the whole, brings about the harmony of all life in the cosmos."

By altering the tension of the strings, God, the "Great Chord", is able to determine the density of all materials between Empyreum and Earth.

The instrument is divided in half into an upper, ideal, active octave and a lower, material, passive octave, and these are in turn divided into fourths and fifths. On these intervals the upper, principle of light moves down into dark matter, and at their intersection the sun assumes the power of transformation.

R. Fludd, Utriusque Cosmi, Vol. I, Oppenheim, 1617

THE MEDIEVAL & ELIZABETHAN WORLD PICTURE

(1)

Alexander Pope
"An Essay on Man"
(1733-4)
Epistle I

IX

What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspired to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repined
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another, in this general frame;
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains
The great Directing Mind of all ordains.
All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent;
Spreads undivided, operates unspent!
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.

Edmund Spenser
"Hymn of Love"
(1596)

The earth the air the water and the fire
Then gan to range themselves in huge array
And with contrary forces to conspire
Each against other by all means they may,
Threat'ning their own confusion and decay:
Air hated earth and water hated fire,
Till Love relented their rebellious ire.

He then them took and, tempering goodly well
Their contrary dislikes with loved means,
Did place them all in order and compel
To keep themselves within their sundry reigns
Together linkt with adamantine chains:
Yet so as that in every living wight
They mix themselves and show their kindly might.

So ever since they firmly have remained
And duly well observed his behest,
Through which now all these things that are contained
Within this goodly cope, both most and least,
Their being have.

Richard Hooker
"Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity"
(1594-7)

Now if nature should intermit her course and leave altogether, though it were but for a while, the observation of her own laws; if those principal and mother elements of the world, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which now they have; if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions and by irregular volubility turn themselves any way as it might happen; if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his unwearied course, should as it were through a languishing faintness begin to stand and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from her beaten way, the times and seasons of the year blend themselves by disordered and confused mixture, the winds breathe out their last gasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away as children at the withered breasts of their mother no longer able to yield them relief: what would become of man himself, whom these things now do all serve? See we not plainly that obedience of creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world?

THE MEDIEVAL & ELIZABETHAN WORLD PICTURE

(2)

Ovid
"Metamorphoses"
(C1 BC)

Nor can these elements stand at a stay,
But by exchanging alter every day.
Th' eternal world four bodies comprehends
Ingend'ring all. The heavy earth discends,
So water, clogg'd with weight; two, light, aspire,
Depresst by none, pure air and purer fire.
And, though they have their several seats, yet all
Of these are made, to these again they fall.
Resolved earth to water rarifies;
To air extenuated waters rise;
The air, when it itself again refines,
To elemental fire extracted shines.
They in like order back again repair:
The grosser fire condenseth into air;
Air into water; water, thick'ning, then
Grows solid and converts to earth again.
None holds his own: for nature ever joys
In change and with new forms the old supplies.
In all the world not any perish quite,
But only are in various habits dight:
For, to begin to be what we before
Were not, is to be born; to die, no more
Than ceasing to be such. Although the frame
Be changeable, the substance is the same.

Sir John Fortescue
"On the Law of Nature" (1461-3)

In this order hot things are in harmony with cold, dry with moist, heavy with light, great with little, high with low. In this order angel is set over angel, rank upon rank in the kingdom of heaven; man is set over man, beast over beast, bird over bird, and fish over fish, on the earth in the air and in the sea: so that there is no worm that crawls upon the ground, no bird that flies on high, no fish that swims in the depths, which the chain of this order does not bind in most harmonious concord. Hell alone, inhabited by none but sinners, asserts its claim to escape the embraces of this order. . . . God created as many different kinds of things as he did creatures, so that there is no creature which does not differ in some respect from all other creatures and by which it is in some respect superior or inferior to all the rest. So that from the highest angel down to the lowest of his kind there is absolutely not found an angel that has not a superior and inferior; nor from man down to the meanest worm is there any creature which is not in some respect superior to one creature and inferior to another. So that there is nothing which the bond of order does not embrace.

Shakespeare
"Timon of Athens"
(1607-8)

The sun's a thief and with his great attraction
Robs the vast sea. The moon's an arrant thief,
And her pale fire she snatches from the sun.
The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
The moon into salt tears. The earth's a thief,
That feeds and breeds by a composture stol'n
From gen'ral excrement.

Ranulf Higden
"Polychronicon" (C14)

In the universal order of things the top of an inferior class touches the bottom of a superior; as for instance oysters, which, occupying as it were the lowest position in the class of animals, scarcely rise above the life of plants, because they cling to the earth without motion and possess the sense of touch alone. The upper surface of the earth is in contact with the lower surface of water; the highest part of the waters touches the lowest part of the air, and so by a ladder of ascent to the outermost sphere of the universe. So also the noblest entity in the category of bodies, the human body, when its humours are evenly balanced, touches the fringe of the next class above it, namely the human soul, which occupies the lowest rank in the spiritual order.

THE MEDIEVAL & ELIZABETHAN WORLD PICTURE

3

Alexander Pope
"An Essay on Man"
Epistle I

VIII

See, through this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
Above, how high, progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being! which from God began,
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing. – On superior powers
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or tenth thousandth, breaks the chain alike.
And, if each system in gradation roll
Alike essential to the amazing whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the whole must fall.
Let earth, unbalanced, from her orbit fly,
Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
Heaven's whole foundations to their centre nod,
And Nature trembles to the throne of God.

VI

What would this man? Now upward will he soar,
And little less than angel, would be more;
Now looking downwards, just as grieved appears,
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use all creatures if he call,
Say what their use, had he the powers of all?
Nature to these, without profusion, kind,
The proper organs, proper powers assign'd;
Each seeming what compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
All in exact proportion to the state;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.
Each beast, each insect, happy in its own:
Is Heaven unkind to man, and man alone?
Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
Be pleased with nothing, if not blest with all?
The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
No powers of body or of soul to share,
But what his Nature and his state can bear.
Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
Say what the use, were finer optics given,
To inspect a mite, not comprehend the heaven?
Or touch, if trembling alive all o'er,
To smart and agonise at every pore?
Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
If Nature thunder'd in his opening ears,
And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
How would he wish that Heaven had left him still
The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill?
Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives and what denies?

Henry Peacham
"The Complete Gentleman" (1661)

If we consider arightly the frame of the whole universe and method of the all-excellent wisdom in her work as creating the forms of things infinitely divers, so according to dignity of essence and virtue in effect, we must acknowledge the same to hold a sovereignty and transcendent predominance as well of rule as place each over either. Among the heavenly bodies we see the nobler orbs and of greatest influence to be raised aloft, the less effectual depressed. Of elements the fire, the most pure and operative, to hold the highest place. The lion we say is king of beasts, the eagle chief of birds, the whale and whirlpool among fishes, Jupiter's oak the forest's king. Among flowers we most admire and esteem the rose, among fruit the pomeroy and queen-apple; among stones we value above all the diamond, metals gold and silver. And since we know to transfer their inward excellence and virtues to their species successively, shall we not acknowledge a nobility in man of greater perfection, of nobler form, and prince of these?

Romei 'Courtier's Academy' (C16 translation)

That most excellent and great God, having with all beauty bedecked the celestial regions with angelic spirits, furnishing the heavenly spheres with souls eternal and having replenished this inferior part with all manner of plants herbs and living creatures, the divine majesty, desirous to have an artificer who might consider the reason of so high a work, admire the greatness and love the beauty thereof, in the end made man, being of all worldly creatures the most miraculous. But this divine workman, having before the creation of man dispensed proportionably of his treasures to all creatures and every kind of living thing, prescribing unto them infallible laws, as to plants nourishment to living creatures sense and to angels understanding, and doubting with what manner of life he should adorn this his new heir, this divine artificer in the end determined to make him, unto whom he could not assign anything in proper, partaker of all that which the others enjoyed but in particular. Whereupon, calling unto him he said: Live, O Adam, in what life pleaseth thee best and take unto thyself those gifts which thou esteemest most dear. From this so liberal a grant had our free will its original, so that it is in our power to live like a plant, living creature, like a man, and lastly like an angel; for if a man addict himself only to feeding and nourishment he becometh a plant, if to things sensual he is a brute beast, if to things reasonable and civil he groweth a celestial creature; but if he exalt the beautiful gift of his mind to things invisible and divine he transformeth himself into an angel and, to conclude, becometh the son of God.

Photius 'Life of Pythagoras'

Man is called a little world not because he is composed of the four elements (for so are all the beasts, even the meanest) but because he possesses all the faculties of the universe. For in the universe there are gods, the four elements, the dumb beasts, and the plants. Of all these man possesses the faculties: for he possesses the godlike faculty of reason: and the nature of the elements, which consists in nourishment growth and reproduction. In each of these faculties he is deficient; just as the competitor in the pentathlon, while possessing the faculty to exercise each part of it, is yet inferior to the athlete who specializes in one part only; so man though he possesses all the faculties is deficient in each. For we possess the faculty of reason less eminently than the gods; in the same way the elements are less abundant in us than in the elements themselves; our energies and desires are weaker than the beasts'; our powers of nurture and of growth are less than the plants'. Whence, being an amalgam of many and varied elements, we find our life difficult to order. For every other creature is guided by one principle; but we are pulled in different directions by our different faculties. For instance at one time we are drawn towards the better by the god-like element, at another time towards the worse by the domination of the bestial element, within us.

Pope 'An Essay on Man' Epistle II

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great.
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confused;
Still by himself abused or disabused;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

Thomas Starkey 'Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset'

Like as in every man there is a body and also a soul in whose flourishing and prosperous state both together standeth the weal and felicity of man; so likewise there is in every commonalty city and country as it were a politic body and another thing also resembling the soul of man, in whose flourishing both together resteth also the true common weal. This body is nothing else but the multitude of people, the number of citizens in every commonalty city or country. The thing which is resembled to the soul is civil order and politic law, administered by officers and rulers. For like as the body in every man receiveth his life by virtue of the soul and is governed thereby, so doth the multitude of people in every country receive, as it were, civil life by laws well administered by good officers and wise rulers, by whom they be governed and kept in politic order.

Nicholas Breton 'A Murmurer' (C16)

God made all the parts of the body for the soul and with the soul to serve him, and all the subjects in a kingdom to serve their king and with their king to serve him. If the head of the body ache, will not the heart be greatly grieved, and every part feel his part of the pain of it? And shall a king in his will be displeased and the heart of his kingdom (the hearts of his subjects) not have a feeling of it? Can the eye of the body be hurt or grieved, and neither the head heart nor any other member be touched with the pain of it? No more can the council, the eye of the commonwealth, be disturbed, but the king will find it and the commonwealth will feel it. Can the hand, the artificer, be hurt but the commonwealth will find the lack of it, the eye with pity will behold it, and the head with the eye, the king with the council, take care for the help of it? Can the labourer, the foot, be wounded, but the body of the state will feel it, the head be careful, the eye searchful and the hand be painful in the cure of it? And can the commonwealth, the body, be diseased, but the king, his council and every true subject will put to his hand for the help of it?

John Dryden
"A Song for St Cecilia's Day,
1687"

From Harmony, from Heav'nly Harmony
This Universal Frame began.
When Nature underneath a heap
Of jarring Atoms lay,
And cou'd not heave her Head,
The tuneful Voice was heard from high,
Arise ye more than dead.
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry
In order to their stations leap,
And Musick's Pow'r obey.
From Harmony, from Heav'nly Harmony
This Universal Frame began:
From Harmony to Harmony
Through all the compass of the Notes it ran,
The Diapason closing full in Man.

Grand Chorus

As from the pow'r of Sacred Lays
The Spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the bless'd above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling Pageant shall devour,
The Trumpet *shall be heard on high,*
The Dead shall live, the Living die,
And Musick *shall untune the Sky.*

Milton "Arcades"
1633

But els in deep of night when drowsines
Hath lockt up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial *Sirens* harmony,
That sit upon the nine enfolded Sphears,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the Adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
Such sweet compulsion doth in music ly,
To lull the daughters of *Necessity*,
And keep unsteddy Nature to her law,
And the low world in measur'd motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould with grosse unpurged ear.

Shakespeare "Merchant of Venice"
1596

Lorenzo. How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

"Mirror of the World" 1480

If the first man that God formed ever, which was Adam, had gone fro the first day that he was made and created twenty-five miles every day, yet should he not have comen thither, but should yet have the space of seven hundred and thirteen year to go at the time when this volume was performed by the very author. Or if there were a great stone which should fall fro thence unto the earth it should be an hundred year ere it came to the ground.

Shakespeare
'Troilus and Cressida'
Ulysses: (1602)

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degree priority and place
Insisture course proportion season form
Office and custom, in all line of order;
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol
In noble eminence enthron'd and spher'd
Amidst the other, whose med'cinable eye
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil
And posts like the commandment of a king,

Sans check, to good and bad. But when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues and what portents, what mutiny,
What raging of the sea, shaking of earth,
Commotion in the winds, frights changes horrors,
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixture. Oh, when degree is shak'd,
Which is the ladder to all high designs,
The enterprise is sick. How could communities,
Degrees in schools and brotherhoods in cities,
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,
The primogenitive and due of birth,
Prerogative of age, crowns sceptres laurels,
But by degree stand in authentic place?
Take but degree away, untune that string,
And hark, what discord follows. Each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy. The bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores
And make a sop of all this solid globe.
Strength should be lord to imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead.
This chaos, when degree is suffocate,
Follows the choking.

Sir John Davies
'Orchestra' (1596)

DAUNCING (bright Lady) then began to be,
When the first seedes whereof the world did spring,
The Fire, Ayre, Earth, and water – did agree,
By Loves perswasion, – Nature's mighty King, –
To leave their first disordred combating;
And in a daunce such measure to observe,
As all the world their motion should preserve.

Since when they still are carried in a round,
And changing, come one in anothers place,
Yet doe they neyther mingle nor confound,
But every one doth keepe the bounded space
Wherein the daunce doth bid it turne or trace:
This wondrous myracle did Love devise
For Dauncing is Loves proper exercise.

Like this, he fram'd the Gods' eternall bower,
And of a shapelesse and confused masse
By his through-piercing and digesting power
The turning vault of heaven framed was:
Whose starrie wheeles he hath so made to passe,
As that their movings doe a musick frame
And they themselves, still daunce unto the same.

For that brave Sunne the Father of the Day,
Doth love this Earth, the Mother of the Night,
And like a revellour in rich array,
Doth daunce his Galliard in his Lemmans sight,
Both back, and forth, and side-wayes, passing light,
His gallant grace doth so the Gods amaze,
That all stand still and at his beautie gaze.

But see the Earth, when he approcheth neere,
How she for joy doth spring and sweetly smile;
But see againe her sad and heavie cheere
When changing places he retires a while:
But those black clouds he shortly will exile,
And make them all before his presence flye,
As mists consum'd before his cheerefull eye.

For loe the Sea that fleets about the Land,
And like a girdle clips her solide waist,
Musick and measure both doth understand:
For his great Chrystall eye is alwayes cast
Up to the Moone, and on her fixed fast.
And as she daunceth in her pallid spheere,
So daunceth he about the Center heere.

Sometimes his proud greene waves in order set,
One after other flow unto the shore,
Which when they have with many kisses wet,
They ebb away in order as before;
And to make knowne his Courtly Love the more,
He oft doth lay aside his three-forkt Mace,
And with his armes the timerous Earth embrace.

Onely the Earth doth stand for ever still,
Her rocks remove not, nor her mountaines meete,
(Although some witts enricht with Learnings skill
Say heav'n stands firme, and that the Earth doth fleete
And swiftly turneth underneath their feete)
Yet though the Earth is ever stedfast seene,
On her broad breast hath Dauncing ever beene.

CHIVALRY AND COURTLY LOVE

CHIVALRY

'Chivalry' in it **narrow sense** denotes **collectively all those warriors who had formally and ceremonially taken up knighthood**. In its **wider and more ambiguous sense** it is used to describe **"the obligations, estate and style of life of those entitled, on account of their birth, to aspire to knighthood, but who may or may not be knights in fact"**.

Maurice Keen, whose definition this is, has remarked on the elusive nature of the term, which is rather "an evocative word, conjuring up images in the mind", than a precise term:

> One can define within reasonably close limits what is meant by the word knight, the French *chevalier*: it denotes a man of aristocratic standing and probably of noble ancestry, who is capable, if called upon, of equipping himself with a war horse and the arms of a heavy cavalryman, and who has been through certain rituals that make him what he is – who has been 'dubbed' to knighthood. But chivalry, the abstraction from *chevalier*, is not so easily pinned down. It is a word that was used in the middle ages with different meanings and shades of meaning by different writers and in different contexts. Sometimes, especially in earlier texts, it means no more than a body of heavy armed horsemen, a collective of *chevaliers*. Sometimes chivalry is spoken of as an order, as if knighthood could be compared to an order of religion: sometimes it is spoken of as an estate, a social class – the warrior class whose martial function, according to medieval writers, was to defend the *patria* and the Church. Sometimes it is used to encapsulate a code of values apposite to this order or estate. Chivalry cannot be divorced from the martial world of the mounted warrior: it cannot be divorced from aristocracy, because knights commonly were men of high lineage: and from the middle of the twelfth century on it very frequently carries ethical or religious overtones. But it remains a word elusive of definition, tonal rather than precise in its implications.

The classic virtues of good knighthood are predictably qualities which were already highly esteemed in the Germanic war band – **honour, prowess, courage, hardiness, truthfulness, loyalty, generosity and the free and frank bearing which bespoke of good birth and virtue**. As the warrior rose on the social scale, **nobility** and **courtesy**, **administrative ability** and his role as **the protector of the community** became pronounced.
His first duty was **to defend the faith of Christ against unbelievers**, which would win him honour in this world and the next, but a close **second** was his **duty to protect his temporal lord and the territories entrusted to him**, where he was to pursue all malefactors and defend the weak. He had to be **wise** and **able to mete out justice**, **administer his estates well**, so that he could **support his rank** and **keep an open house befitting his station in life**. He was expected to be **in constant training**, hunting wild beasts and seeking jousts and tournaments to test and improve his skills. He should be **valorous** and **charitable** and his **motives for seeking knighthood should be pure**. He must **prize honour above all** and take care his **reputation was not tarnished by 'reproach'**. His **greatest achievement** was **renown won among his peers for feats of arms** and here a gradation evolved on the principle of **'he who achieves more is the more worthy'**. One could start one's career by winning acclaim at jousts and tournaments, then go on to winning greater honour in war in one's own land and then as a crusader in distant and foreign parts.

The blemishes. **A *chevalier sans reproche***, a knight without blemish **should eschew pride, false-swearing, idleness, lechery and treason. Treason** was the darkest of crimes, the ultimate treason being **slaying one's lord**, but equally heinous was **adultery with his wife** or **surrendering his castle**. **Cowardice in the field** was another grave offence, gross cowardice, like treason, punishable by death and lesser instances involving loss of status and removal of insignia. Public disgrace was likewise the punishment for **breach of faith**, the failure to pay ransom when taken prisoner and freed to return home to raise it. **Dishonourable conduct**

toward women involved **marrying below one's estate**, **slandering women** and **raping them**. Access to the company of honourable knights was barred to **hardened excommunicates, violators of churches, murderers of malice prepense, arsonists, robbers and pirates.**

COURTLY LOVE

The knight striving for ever greater fame in his profession of arms could find an added spur to his ambition and solace in the harsh male world of constant competition in the **favour to be found with ladies**. With the advances in building techniques and improved standards of living, the members of the rough and ready war band had to rethink their attitude to women. A way had to be found to protect the few noblewomen now living amidst the ever-increasing armies of retainers in what amounted to barrack-room conditions in the new castles and baronial halls. As the prime functions of marriage were dynastic aggrandizement and the preservation of the purity of the lineage, sexual relations between the seigneur's wife, daughters or female wards were out of bounds for the socially inferior retainers. A means had to be devised to channel the sexual energies of the hot-headed young men growing up or serving in the household into socially acceptable behaviour which would not harm their own career prospects nor damage the marriageability of the ladies.

The culture of courtly love, which came into being as a response to this need, **removed the lady from within the reach of her social inferiors by putting her on a pedestal**, yet allowed the men around her **to focus their desire on her person in an asexual and rigidly controlled way**. She could be **worshipped from afar**, **respectfully** and **secretly**, her favour could be sought **discreetly** yet **publicly** by becoming her **champion** in jousts and tournaments, she could be **the object of agonized outpourings of the heart in poetry and song,** yet her reputation would not be tarnished if all this was done according to established conventions.

The cult of the lady, **the knight's service of the object of his secret desire in a spirit of feudal submission and near-religious fervour**, took centuries to develop and owed its evolution to a number of powerful influences working together. Its sources are varied and still a matter of debate, so below only the main currents shaping it are indicated.

The **term 'courtly love'** itself is an **unhistorical** one, having been invented in the 19th century. Despite its sometimes problematized nature, it aptly describes **the shift in cultural attitudes concerning human emotions and sexuality** which found its expression in the **chivalric romances of love**, the chief vehicles of formulating and expounding the new ideal which came into being as a result of **a revolution in sensibility in Europe in the twelfth century**. Human emotion, no longer regarded as a disease of the will and an enemy of reason, started to be viewed as having the potential of inspiring nobility of behaviour. The Church, in the process of overhauling itself, seized upon this potential to encourage a more personal attitude to religion. **Human love in its various forms – sexual, conjugal, maternal, filial – could be seen as a preliminary image of what it meant to love God**. Patterns of devotion were changing. Christ Pantokrator, the Ruler of the Universe of Byzantine art, staring forbiddingly down from church apses, was supplanted by **the tortured Son of God in extremis** on the Gothic crucifix, an object of loyalty and compassion. Similarly, **the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin, a gracious lady and loving mother**, could be worshipped in her own right. It had not always been so. The early church fathers had seen woman as the serpent's ally and tool in man's fall from grace. The dogma which set chastity at a premium was highly suspicious of the female sexual allure and went to extremes trying to curtail it.

Mariolatry first emerges in the **sixth** and **seventh** centuries, but as a cult it developed slowly, the Virgin remaining on a par with the other saints until the sea-change of the late eleventh and early twelfth century. The cult of Mary emerges and runs parallel with the chivalric idealization of women and eventually takes over many secular expressions of chivalric love.

For the refinement of sexual passion into a cult of an idealized woman to take place the rough warrior of the primitive war band had to undergo **a cultural transformation**. This became possible when his new administrative duties took him to the king's or a great nobleman's court where he came into contact with a far superior culture than his own. The courts were run by well-educated clerics who around the year **1000,** when the world did not come to an end as many had feared, had largely abandoned their contempt of the world to embrace the new ideal of carving out a career at the rapidly growing courts of great men. A system of education came into being for training these new administrators which laid a heavy stress on ***elegantia morum***, the so necessary for the courtier sophistication of manners and morals. The 'courtly' virtues these men prized – "**affability, friendliness, a benign countenance; moderation and measured conduct, gentleness, temperate moods and reticence about [one's] accomplishments**" - have ever since formed an integral part of courteous behaviour.

Courtly manners are the essential prerequisite for seeing love as an elevated form of service, the word **'courtly'** (*curialis*) characteristically emerging around **1060-80**, being coincidental with 'chivalry'. The appearance of the chivalrous cult of the lady was greatly facilitated by the **by-product of the eleventh-century monastic reform and revival – a new emphasis on education**. Intellectual currents at work inside and outside the Church in Christendom brought into fresh focus **the legacy of ancient Rome**. The new enthusiasm first manifested itself in a spate of **Rome-inspired law-making** but soon the re-creation and transmission of the example of Rome permeated almost all spheres of thought and art**. In monastic and episcopal schools** the **secular literature of imperial Rome** was used to improve the students' Latin skills. The works of **Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal and others** were read aloud at meal times or privately in the hours of recreation. The schools' graduates, depending on their means and ability, went on to careers both in Church and State ranging from high officialdom at the court to the stewardship of some humble manor. **Trained in the classics**, but due to the nature of their employment **in touch with the aspirations and realities of medieval secular society**, the **clerks** were ideally placed to formulate the new attitude to women which makes its appearance in **the second half of the twelfth century** and transforms **the *chanson de geste***, the epic song of manly deeds, into **the chivalric romance of love.**

The chivalric romance of love

The new type of courtly narrative which emerges **after 1150** fuses **epic action and Ovidian sentiment**. The ***chansons***, reflecting **the values of the war band**, had **ignored the relationship between the sexes**. The occasional women who find mention in them remain shadowy figures in the background to the action, cast in the minor roles of mothers, sisters, brides or prizes of war. However, the classical epics which had inspired these songs of deeds had also celebrated noble women with a far wider range of roles available to them. Moreover, whether passive or active, these women were passionately involved with the men who often wronged but could not ignore them.

When the clerks undertook to revitalize the epic in the changed emotional climate of the twelfth century, they looked for inspiration chiefly to the works of **Ovid**. Little known in the West before the twelfth-century renaissance of learning, Ovid spoke directly to men who after

centuries of self-abnegation had found new pride and pleasure not in the hereafter but in the here and now.

Ovid became **the favourite Latin poet of the Middle Ages**. In ***Ars amatoria* (*Art of Love*)** and ***Remedia amoris (Remedies of Love)*** he had dissected ironically the psychology and physiology of love and in the ***Metamorphoses*,** his encyclopaedic masterpiece, given the Europeans their most inspirational collection of fabulous tales with miraculous transformations at the end. Yet this slick **cynic** and imaginative storyteller was also a **romantic** and a **moralist** who alone among the major poets since Homer had written with such sympathetic interest about married love. The Ovidian lover, as he appears in *Ars amatoria* though, is **a slave of passion who worships god Amor and his lady whose every whim he tries to gratify in order to win sexual favours**. Ovid's attitude to love is **mock-reverent** and **wholly pragmatic** and as such could not serve as the lone model for the highly serious cult of love of the troubadours.

The philosophy of courtly love, which perceives **sexual love as intrinsically ennobling**, while undoubtedly borrowing from Ovid, owes its idealism to **Plato** and his **Neoplatonic followers**. Plato's doctrine of the **two worlds**, one **eternal** and intelligible where "**ideas**" or "**forms**" dwell, and the other the **sense-world of time and change**, and the **soul**, **simultaneously cosmic and human**, acting as an **intermediary** between them, was elaborated further in the third century by **Plotinus**, the founder and supreme exponent of Neoplatonism. At the heart of Plotinus's teaching is **contemplative desire**, the soul's progress through a hierarchy of spheres back to its original source – the One and the Good – from which all spheres originally emanate in descending order down to the world of sense. The hierarchy of reality has also two principles below their ineffable source**.** The divine mind**,** which is identical with Plato's forms or ideas, is the level of purely intuitive thought, at once perfect intelligence and true reality. The second principle is the soul, which extends from the world of the intellect down to material bodies, and its principal characteristic is discursive reasoning. **The soul is constantly striving, while the intellect is changeless and eternal. The soul can reach up into intellect, and fully illuminated, ascend to the One and the Good** which, as its first principle, fills the whole universe and is accessible to all, depending on the capacity of the individuals to receive it. **It is a philosophy of the constant striving of the soul to be reunited with its original source**:

> The sole object of the good and wise man, the supreme goal of human endeavour, is to return to the Good and be united to it in the union of love which is beyond and above the contemplation of intellect, by the power coming from the Good, the impulse of return which is constitutive of his very being. First he must detach himself from the worldly desires and concerns of his lower self, the composite being of body and soul, by rigorous intellectual and moral discipline, inspired always by love and helped on his way at first by contemplation of the beauty of the world of the senses – which, rightly contemplated, will lead him back to the intelligible beauty of which it is a reflection. As he becomes perfect in intelligence and virtue (for Plotinus the two kinds of perfection are inseparable), the philosopher will rediscover his true and eternal self, which is intellect, or rather soul perfectly conformed to intellect, and wake to its life. Then he is ready to go on to the One when the One manifests itself and brings him to union.

Neoplatonism came into Christian theology above all through the writings of **St Augustine**, the early Cappadocian theologians and the mystical theology of the

pseudonymous **"Dionysius the Areopagite"**. It became diluted and diffused in traditional Christian theology and can be detected in early European metaphysics, moral philosophy, logic, science and art.

From the twelfth century onward its influence was reinforced by the **Europeans' contact with Islam.** The first mass encounter of Christians with the Muslim world occurred in the second half of the eleventh century with the **crusaders' advance in Spain, Sicily and the Holy Land**. Both religions were aware of their common origin in the same Near Eastern monotheistic tradition and borrowed from each other extensively, though selectively. Having examined and tossed aside their common religious inheritance with the Muslims, Western Christianity held on to their shared intellectual one. The impact on the development of Christian philosophy of **the Greek metaphysical and scientific thought**, transmitted through **the commentaries of the ninth-century philosophers of Baghdad** and made accessible to Western scholars through **translations from the Arabic in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries**, is so great that it cannot be quantified. The corpus of Greek Platonic and Neoplatonic texts thus made available revitalized Augustinianism in the twelfth century and inspired the great flowering of scholastic philosophy in the thirteenth. The Neoplatonic doctrine of love also entered European literature through contact with the **mystical philosophy and poetry of Muslim Spain** which sought **to discover spiritual significance in passionate relationships**. Treatises like the Andalusian religious philosopher **Ibn Hazm**'s *Tawq alhamamaw*, drawing upon eastern textbooks on love and Platonic philosophy, can be shown to have influenced the troubadours of southern France in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.

Courtly love as a set of ideas, but not yet a doctrine, appears in the songs of the **troubadours** of eleventh-century **Provence** which was ideally placed to benefit from the cross-currents of ideas due to its location between east and west, north and south. The courts of Provence were small, yet wealthy, the sporadic warefare of the nobles was not too devastating, the atmosphere was relaxed and beneficial to cultivating personal relationships with women who enjoyed greater freedom and a higher legal and social standing than was customary in the harsher and more pragmatic north. High-born ladies of considerable personal power may have become bored with the monotonous eulogy of martial deeds and desired something which would also interest them. **The troubadours took the courtly virtues of imperial Germany and infused them with personal immediacy.**

From early on courtly love was claimed by its proponents as the **privilege of the knightly class**, brushing aside as rivals the monks and clerics who had taught the knight his manners. The **relationship between the lover and his lady** in troubadour poetry is **akin to feudal service** from which it borrows its language, yet it is seen as **transcending established conventions**. The lover may pledge himself to his lady as her vassal, in the hope of a reward for his service, but he seeks his lady's love **not for personal enrichment or dynastic considerations**, as he would in marriage, but **because he desires her as a person and hopes to be judged by her by his own achievements, not his rank or wealth**. The **lover's suit** is **long** and **arduous** and he has to **earn his favour by noble deeds**. As this is not courtship leading to marriage, the lovers being either already married or socially incompatible, **secrecy** is vital. Nevertheless, despite his love remaining a close-guarded secret, **the lover should love one lady only and not diminish his own worth by being promiscuous**. Love has to be **reciprocated** and **freely given** and **might sometimes be rewarded by physical joys**. The **ennobling element** in such relationships would be the **suspense** and the **unalleviated emotional turmoil** which, intensified by **restraint** the lover **imposes on himself**, either to

heighten his ecstasy or for fear of destroying his desire by its consummation, would **refine his feelings** so that he could **aspire to the lofty heights were his lady dwelt**. Though seemingly overwhelmed by his lady's charms, the **chief concern** of the troubadour poet is not extolling the woman he loves but **the progress of the lover's moral self**. Love is seen as **enhancing virtue** and **helping to suppress vice**, thus **contributing to nobleness of conduct.** A courteous knight in his courtship was expected to display the already familiar knightly virtues of **largesse, humility, valour, noble and frank manners, loyalty, honour and truthfulness**. **Courtesy (*cortesia*)** meant **courtly behaviour** but also the awareness on the part of the knight of what constitutes **good measure (*mezura*)**. He was to avoid extremes of behaviour and display and aspire to **the golden mean** in all his undertakings. If he was accomplished enough in his pursuits and suit, winning the esteem of his lady and admiration for his correct behaviour from his peers, he was seen as capable of ***pretz* or prowess**. His accomplishments, whether rewarded by the lady or not, were seen as capable of inducing in the knight a special state of mind, ***jovens*,** meaning a combination of **youthful joy, lightness of heart and generosity**, which is a reward in itself**. The lover's ultimate prize** would be ***joy d'amour***, which could **range from physical satisfaction to an almost mystical ecstasy**, but it chiefly signified the lover's **moral improvement** which he has attained through the spiritual love of his lady. In its purest form *joy d'amour* meant **self-imposed restraint to postpone or forego consummation**, both to prolong the enjoyment of anticipation and not diminish the worth of the loved one by harming her reputation. **The almost indefinite suspense and sublimation of erotic desire, known as *fin' amors***, was too high an ideal for most men who aspired to improve themselves through love and they could fall victim to ***amars* (faithless love)** and **commit adultery**. Their human weakness does not discredit the high ideal though. The troubadour love is not by nature adulterous, designed to wreck marriages. It saw itself as above social conventions, disregarding marital ties which had nothing whatsoever to do with love, and claimed as its ideal **the truest union of two souls**.

The doctrine of courtly love soon spread to northern France, Italy, Germany, Spain and England. It was absorbed by the emerging genre of chivalric romance which combined the epic action of the chansons and the cult of the lady with the dark mysticism of the Celtic heritage of Britain. The service of the lady becomes an integral part of the adventures of the questing knight as he journeys from engagement to engagement. The huge popularity of the best of them, Lancelot, whom Chrétien de Troyes had originally called into being at the behest of Countess Marie of Champagne to provide a courtly lover for King Arthur's queen Guinevere, attests to the pertinence of the ideal to his admirers and indicates the wide possibilities of identification. Lancelot, the dedicated lover of his queen and the most exemplary vassal of his king, embodies all the conflicting loyalties and emotional tribulations of a knight enamoured of a lady who reciprocates his love but who has to be worshipped from afar in order not to disrupt the bonds of vassalage which bind him to her and her husband, his liege lord. That the tensions in such relationships could all too often become insurmountable and lead to socially disruptive behaviour is recognized by the unhappy end of this most cherished of medieval love stories. Despite his best intentions, Lancelot's love will lead to civil war, the dispersal of the Round Table and his king's death. His penance will be madness and his punishment the denial of the attainment of the Holy Grail, the symbol of spiritual contentment.

ROMANCE

romanz - the vernacular/vulgar form of Latin ∋ secular texts written in it ∌ particular types of literature favoured by the lay aristocracy

Aristotle *Poetics* about fiction:

1) **mythic** - the hero is superior in kind to other men and their environment because he is divine;
2) **romantic** - the hero is superior to other men in degree;
3) **mimetic/realistic** - the hero is superior to neither men nor the environment.

Literature in the romance mode is poised between the mythic and the mimetic (it represents life as it is and as it might be; i.e. as imperfect reality and imagined perfection).

* With the coming of Christianity to western Europe (with its own oriental mythology) **Roman, Celtic and Teutonic myths** (stories in the mythic mode) lost their original religious significance;

* the discarded myths turned into **folk-tales** and **fairy-stories** (a subdivision of the romantic mode); they have a dream-like quality of wish-fulfilment (their disturbing and violent subject matter, their repetitions, magical transformations and changing identities express the unvoiced desires of the unconscious mind) and their universal appeal testifies to the universal nature of the emotions and experiences they express (maturation through struggle, gaining independence from parental influence, self-realization, integration with society); their surface symbolism expresses very real and fundamental realities (the fantastic adventures that befall the hero are there to test his powers and provide a variety of experiences necessary for his maturation; the material rewards at the end of his quest symbolize his achievements);

* to the folk-tale the **romance** proper adds a social ideal based not upon life as it is but upon a vision of what life could ideally be like if men were better than they are; this unattainable vision itself is projected into the past (the Golden Age) or into the distant future (sci-fi fiction); the special brand of this escapism depends on the social realities of the age in which a particular romance is written (selfless chivalry inspired by courtly love in the Middle Ages served to refine the naked brutality of the warrior class; the allegorical and pastoral romance of the Elizabethan age helped to educate courtiers for the service of the state; Gothic romances in the period of Enlightenment challenged the rule of reason and provided escape from a narrow bourgeois existence, especially for women forced to remain within the confines of their homes; modern sci-fi projects dreams of a happier society into the future and other worlds.)

Values expressed: **love, honour, valour, fear, self-knowledge**

Medium: **adventure**

Underlying structure: **quest**

Characters: **two-dimensional, stereotypical, representational rather than individual** (they are judged on the grounds of how close is their conduct to the ideal; good characters forward the ideal of the quest, bad characters work against it); the lack of the psychological dimension is compensated by the external events happening to the hero during his quest which are metaphors for his inner development.

Conventional motifs: **the court gathered round an archetypal feudal monarch who is the embodiment of chivalric values** (i.e. King Arthur, Charlemagne), **the mysterious challenge to those values which its reputation provoked** (i.e. the Holy Grail), **the solitary quest of the hero in hostile territory to answer that challenge, the temptations which beset him in welcoming wayside castles, the lovely woman**

wooed and won among a maze of adventures, the single combat against overwhelming odds or a monstrous opponent, the eventual victory against the challenger and triumphant return to court.

Origins:

* **C11 monastic revival**, its aim spiritual and theological enlightenment; the classical inheritance of history, grammar and logic used for the analytical study of the Latin language; for style and technique the secular literature of imperial Rome (Virgil, Ovid, Terence, Juvenal, Horace et al) was studied and also read for pleasure; clerics, literate in Latin and native speakers of *romanz* potential producers of vernacular literature; men from the lower orders of clerics, too ill-educated or lacking patronage (the wandering clergy - *clerici vagantes*) may have become trouvéres.
* c. 1100 ***Chanson de Roland***, the first French epic, provides the ideal of the loyal service of the King in times of civil and political trouble, revives the old imperial dream of the Golden Age when Christian Europe had been united under a political and military genius (Charlemagne) to drive back forces of paganism. This epic and its derivatives, the *chansons de geste*, are not romances proper as they ignore the idealized love between the sexes; women, when they appear at all, are either mothers, chaste wives or prizes of war.
* 1160 ***Roman d'Eneas***, an adaptation of Virgil's *Aeneid* introduces two passionate women in love with Aeneas: Dido, Queen of Carthage, and Lavinia, Aeneas' future wife. The matter of romantic love and the manner of its treatment are obviously borrowed from Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (Art of Love), *Remedia amoris* (Remedies of Love) and *Metamorphoses.*
* After 1150 **a new type of courtly narrative** emerges **fusing epic action and Ovidian sentiment.**
* 1170 **Marie de France's "lais" in imitation of Breton minstrels** introduce the concept of love as a fatal power defying social conventions and accepted morals.
* Contact with **Islam** (crusades in the Holy Land, Moors in Spain) - women as unattainable, unapproachable, to be worshipped from afar
* Emergence of **chivalric orders**: 1096-99 the First Crusade, Latin kingdoms established in the Holy Land, including Jerusalem; 1099 the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ (Hospitallers); 1119 the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon (Templars); 1143 the Teutonic Knights of St Mary's Hospital at Jerusalem;

1344 Edward III of England founds the Order of the Garter, the modern version of King Arthur's Round Table

The Matter of Britain: King Arthur and the Brotherhood of the Round Table:

* **Arthur** first appears in **Nennius**'s (?) ***Historia Brittonum,*** a C9 Latin manuscript: "There it was that the magnanimous Arthur, with all the kings and military force of Britain fought against the Saxons. And though there were many more noble than himself, yet he was twelve times chosen their commander, and as often conqueror." Nennius enlists twelve battles fought by Arthur, the most impressive of them having taken place in 518 at Mons Badonicus, a Mount Baddon, unidentifiable today.
* Arthur's contemporary **Gildas**, writing in the first half of C6, does not mention Arthur and dates a major British victory at Mons Badonicus around 500.
* A cautious modern opinion allows that Arthur may well have been a historical figure, a legendary military leader who led his people in their struggle against the invading Anglo-Saxons in the C5.

* **Geoffrey of Monmouth** (c. 1100-1155), an archdeacon in a Benedictine monastery in Wales, posing as a true chronicler, let his imagination run wild under the pretext that he was really translating an ancient Welsh history of Britain, found in Brittany and brought to him by a man who knew his reputation as an elegant writer of Latin verse and prose, when he produced his ***Historia Regum Britanniae*** (A History of British Kings). Inventing whole lists of kings hitherto unknown, he provided them with exact genealogies, wonderful deeds and place-names to associate them with. **King Arthur** emerges in this fable of history as a national hero of awesome magnitude, a powerful ruler who brings under his sway, beside the whole Britain, also Ireland, Iceland, Scandinavia and Gaul, challenges the Roman emperor himself, triumphantly crushes him and makes Romans his slaves. Going from victory to victory, he lives until the end of the C7.

* 1470 **Thomas Malory,** in his rambling prose compilation ***Le Morte d'Arthur*** gave individual stories of the Matter of Britain a definitive form and a fixed sequence.

* 1485 **William Caxton** printed Malory's book, editing and reordering it (Malory's original version was found only in 1934).

*1485 **Henry Tudor** defeats Richard III at Bosworth Field and claims the English crown. The **merging of Arthurian and Tudor identities** was encouraged all through the Tudor period, culminating at the end of C16 in **Edmund Spenser's** epic ***The Faerie Queen***, a medievalized romance of knight errantry in which Prince Arthur is on a quest through Faerie Land (Britain) in search of Gloriana, the Faerie Queen (Elizabeth I) whom he seeks to wed. On one level this marriage would symbolize the marriage of the past and present of Britain, both glorious, on others this union would symbolize the merging of the spirit of British monarchy with that of the eternal justice, Christian faith and the inner spirituality of man, all embodied by the different aspects of idealized Eliza.