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Appendix A: Diagrams illustrating the progressive governance of the four elements-cycle by each element in turn

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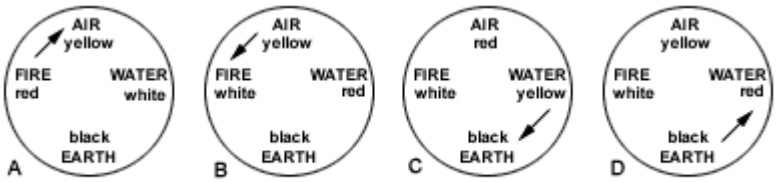
APPENDIX A.

DIAGRAMS ILLUSTRATING THE PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS-CYCLE BY EACH ELEMENT IN TURN

The following paradigms are excerpted from Chapter II of *Greek Color Theory and the Four Elements*. They are intended to clarify the relationship of the four elements together with their colors) among themselves in respect to their shifting dynamic functions. The positioning of the diagrams in sequence demonstrates—although this was only later realized—the statement of Empedokles about the temporal quality of the elements:

> These elements and forces are to be understood as equally strong and coeval, yet each of them has a different function, each has its own characteristic and *in the rounds of time they take their turn being dominant.*



III. 4

Notes to Illustration 4

Fire is the creative principle in (B), (C), (D), hence white; it materializes only in A, hence red (physical).

Air expands in (A), (B), hence yellow and increases its efforts to do so in (D) hence really a deeper yellow; it loses this quality by taking on weight in (C), hence red (immobility).

Water is the least stable in color. In (A) it is white (diminishingly physical). In (B) water signifies (retains) liquidity even in distillation (oxygen) hence red, yet it also becomes gaseous (hydrogen) thus tending toward yellow; in (C) it achieves maximum movement (yellow) and in (D) it tends toward immobility (red).

Earth is always stable to the extent that it remains the darker part in any condition. In principle, yellow is the color of dispersal, black of concentration, red of intensity or arrested movement and white of non-physicality or minimal physicality.

In all cases the colors share the tendency of the elements to mix themselves constantly and must therefore be taken as in constant gradation from one to the other.

It must be emphasized that the foregoing schemata and chart relate to the macrocosmos, that is, more precisely, the universal, external and objective—as it were—basis of physical/physiological processes. Whatever echoes or premonitions of such considerations may be discernible in the ancient literary tradition (probably even including the medical writings) seem to be related to the macrocosmic sphere. However, Goethe's great pioneering work on the psychological and mental/moral aspects of color implicates another dimension to this problem, namely, the microcosmic or individuated realm. Therefore, it would be unconscionable for the modern investigator not to attempt to understand the implications of elements and colors on the specific level of the human being, whose form and being—physical, physiological, psychological and mental/moral—constantly interact with the macrocosmos.

In structuring the macrocosmic pictures, I employed, as explained above, the hierarchical evolutionary principle of organization: fire, air, water and earth (as solid matter, the finished product of evolution). By contrast, since the psychological and mental/moral effects of interaction can only be realized by an individual consciousness, the microcosmic series (Ill. 5) is therefore organized according to the biographical principle, wherein the order is exactly reversed: the human being begins with earth (physicality) at birth and rises in the end (ideally) to mental/moral ripeness.

Ill. 5

Notes to Illustration 5

Earth is implicit in life processes at all stages providing physicality or its shadow, hence always black.

Water is more subject to movement in (F)-(G), hence yellow but more balanced and stable in (E) and (H), hence red.

Air is more subject to movement in (E) and (H), hence yellow but more stable and dense in (F) and (G), hence red.

Fire is the invisible presupposition of all processes, hence white throughout.

A comparison of the two sets of figures shows that only the color of earth (matter) remains constant in all cases. Further, only the picture for the dominance of water

accords both macrocosmically and microcosmically with the original table that served as the point of departure for the study of variations. That original table was obtained from an analysis of the characteristic colors of Archaic ceramics. Yet, quite apart from color altogether, it had appeared from the analysis of sculptural form that Greeks of the Archaic period were at a stage of development that took for its concern the aqueous constitution of man (water-man).

Correspondence of the color series occurs at the earth stage as well as at the water stage of the two systems. Logically this is to be expected, since an individual human being is, as far as physical/ physiological aspects are concerned, identical materially and constitutionally with the surrounding macrocosmic environment. As far as the air stage is concerned, the air-being (soul) corresponds to the color arrangement of the macrocosmic water stage, whereas the individual fire-being (mind) is in accord with the colors of the macrocosmic air stage. This amounts to a chiastic relationship. Tentatively one might argue that individual souls are necessarily limited by a common parameter emotionally, that is, by a certain given range of possible human emotions, whereas individual minds (I-beings) have—theoretically—unlimited freedom to transcend cultural parameters into the sphere of uniquely original creativity. If there is an intelligible pattern in this, it must be stressed that the working out of the tables took place at a comparatively early stage of this study with sole concentration on the separate processual conditions; patterns and implications like those just discussed were not noticed until later.