

Geocosmology, Hermeticism & the Great Instauration



A description of Geocosmology as a Hermetic science of the mysteries and an important part of Francis Bacon's Great Instauration.

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Geocosmology

The word 'geocosmology' was invented as a combination of two words, 'geomancy' and 'cosmology'.¹ It is expressly intended to refer to the science and art of geomancy and cosmology and their interrelationship or interface.

Geomancy means 'earth divination' and is, fundamentally, a practical science of earth energy, form and consciousness, including that of the human body and psyche as well as of the planet with its landscape and man-made environment.

Cosmology, the complement to geomancy, is a science of wisdom and metaphysical truths, including that of the stars, the heavens and the spiritual archetypes or angels of the universe. It is a science of spiritual energy, form and consciousness.

Divination is the art of sensing, intuiting, perceiving and being inspired, which, when coupled with the rational faculty, culminates in understanding.

Geocosmology could be summarised as the ability to perceive the divine in nature; that is to say, to see and understand the spiritual design—the wisdom and its archetypal forms or patterns—that underlie the energetic and outer forms of nature, particularly the landscape. Such patterns include the so-called 'wheel of life' (i.e. chakra), the chakra system and the 'tree of life'. They originate in the cosmic mind but interpenetrate and organise matter, existing at the etheric interface of mind with matter.

An analogy would be the ability to perceive the geometry that underlies the architecture of a Gothic cathedral, which the architect used in its design. Such geometry would not necessarily be seen, at least not easily, in the outer form of the building and by the outer senses, but to a trained eye it can be seen or discovered. Moreover, such geometry is a fundamental mathematical expression of the spiritual wisdom underlying the very meaning and purpose of the building; thus, by perceiving the geometry, it is possible to understand better the wisdom that has inspired the architect and is enshrined in the architecture, and how and why the architecture functions as it does.

Traditionally, in the mystery schools, it is said that the wisdom itself is the real architect, and that this wisdom is hidden or buried in the architecture. This has been described metaphorically as the architect being interred in the foundations of the building, as its foundation sacrifice. As the divine wisdom is also known as the Logos or Word (i.e. the Creator or that which designs and organises chaos into a divine order and form), the buried or incarnate Word has come to be known as 'the Lost Word'. Even today the fundamental

purpose of Freemasonry is the search for, discovery and knowledge of this Lost Word, the divine Architect of the soul ('the Temple') and the body ('the Lodge'). The ultimate aim is that each soul should become an architect in his or her own right, in imitation of the divine Architect. To accomplish this fully means that we should focus not just on our own soul and body but also on the soul and body of the whole wide world.

The full sense and purpose of geocosmology is the science and art of doing the right thing in the right place at the right time and with the right orientation. Moreover, since the wisdom itself is the creative, organising aspect of the divine love, therefore the right thing to do will also be the most loving and appropriate thing to do, and be done with love. This would be the true image or imitation of what Francis Bacon referred to as "the work that God worketh from the beginning to the end" (a biblical quote).² This work is none other than love in action, the expression or manifestation of God, the Divine Love or All-Good, whose nature is Goodness.

Besides equating this divine work or manifestation of the All-Good with what the Greeks and Thracians called Eros (Roman: Cupid), the First-Born, Bacon identified it as the summary law of being and nature, the law of Love. Bacon considered that this, above all else, was what we should endeavour to know; although he doubted that we would ever fully know it, because to know it we would have to practice it. Nevertheless, we should try. Such work would be one of charity or philanthropy.

This, of course, is why the initiatic training in Freemasonry concerns human morality, and the work that Freemasons dedicate themselves to do is charitable work. Christianity, Buddhism and other good religions or traditions are essentially similar in their primary purpose and teaching. It may not of course be fully understood or practised, but then we are all in the process of learning how to do better, and some are more advanced in this than others. Charity is love in action, and this means doing the right thing in the right place at the right time and with the right orientation or purpose.

Hermeticism

Geomancy and cosmology are, respectively, the Hermetic sciences of earth and heaven. They complement each other and go together like twins or lovers. The higher lies behind and is revealed in the lower, and the lower gives the clues to and knowledge of the higher. They each affect each other and, ultimately, can be married together.

The 'face' or interface of the two is an etheric world of great wonder and delight. This 'face' is symbolised by our planet's landscape, the interface between the atmosphere and space beyond (i.e. heaven/above) and the more watery and solid earth (i.e. earth/below). Because of the symbolic association, in the landscape, on the stage of the world, the love-magic can be performed.

We all live, work and play on this planetary stage, acting our parts as best we can (or not, as the case might be). Naturally, it is helpful to get to know not only our parts but also the whole story. Moreover, it is helpful to get to know the design of the theatre in which the play is being performed, so that we learn what it is capable of and how best to use it.

The famous Emerald Tablet teaching of Hermes Trismegistus is often summed up in the words, “As above so below, as below so above, for the doing of the Great Work.” This teaching, which refers to the harmonising and marriage of the opposites, is also Kabbalistic and Christian teaching, although phrased differently. It is also Baconian.

In illustration of this above-below, immortal-mortal principle, most of the *Corpus Hermetica* texts are presented in the form of a dialogue in which a teacher enlightens a disciple. In the first book it involves a discussion between Pymander and Hermes, in which Pymander teaches the secrets of the universe to Hermes. Pymander (Poimandres) means ‘the Shepherd of Man’ and refers to the Nous or Divine Mind—the Universal Spirit and Word of God (i.e. Messiah or Christ). Pymander is the immortal; Hermes is the mortal. Later books are generally of Hermes teaching others such as Asclepius and his son Tat.

The Gemini myth is another way of illustrating the immortal-mortal, heavenly-earthly, cosmological-geomantic principle.

The word ‘geocosmology’ is intended to convey this same idea, being a blend of the two words, ‘geomancy’ and ‘cosmology’—the one relating to the earth and nature (the mortal realm), the other to the heavens and divine wisdom (the immortal realm). The secret is that heaven and earth interpenetrate and interface with each other, with the former influencing and moulding the latter, and the latter responding and enabling, as far as it can or wants, the manifestation of the former. The harmonising and uniting of the two is, as it were, a love affair. As human beings, we can help this process, the key to such help being our love, consciousness and willingness.

The Great Instauration

Francis Bacon adopted this Hermetic teaching as his primary guide and design for his Great Instauration. Hence, for instance, he said that there were two sacred ‘Books’ that we should study and be conversant with—the Book of God’s Word and the Book of God’s Works—Divinity and Philosophy. God’s Word is the divine Wisdom; God’s Works refer to Nature: in other words, heaven and earth, or above and below.

In his *Advancement of Learning*,³ Bacon describes the knowledge of these as the waters that descend from above (the heavens) and the waters that spring from beneath (the earth). The knowledge of God’s Word is inspired into us, via the human heart, as divine revelation, whilst the knowledge of God’s Works is acquired via the reports of the senses and notions of the mind. He calls these two knowledges or illuminations, Divinity and Philosophy respectively. Moreover, he describes Divinity metaphorically as the mistress and Philosophy as her handmaiden. The latter is the servant to the former. The mistress is divine; the handmaiden is mortal. The mistress is Sophia, the divine wisdom; the handmaiden is Philosophy (i.e. *philosophia*), the lover of wisdom. To use another metaphor, which could be female-female, male-female, female-male or male-male, these two are the Lover and Beloved.

Bacon uses the word ‘Book’ as a metaphor for what is known of either Divinity or Philosophy, in terms of both traditional and modern knowledge: in other words, our body of knowledge. The Book of God’s Word consists of the sacred scriptures, visions and prophecies, and what is inspired into our own hearts and speaks to our minds as the inner voice of God. The Book

of God's Works consists of our body of philosophy and science as regards the nature of divinity, humanity and nature (the outer world).

Bacon rightly says that we should take care not to confuse these two together—the inner voice of wisdom (Divinity) and the thoughts of our rational mind (Philosophy)—which, unfortunately, it is sometimes too easy to do; but on the contrary we should be clear about which is which and allow them to work together as mistress and handmaiden, or teacher and pupil, or lover and beloved.

Besides a 'Book', Bacon symbolised each of these knowledges as a 'Temple' or 'Pyramid'—the Pyramid of Divinity and Pyramid of Philosophy—which we have to build. The double pyramid symbolism is a three-dimensional representation of the double A ('AA'), a key esoteric signature of the mystery school and tradition of which Francis Bacon was a master.

When these two are brought together in a mystical marriage, then the single Temple of Light is a metaphor for this union. In this instance the twin pillars or 'Great Pillars' that stand at the entrance to Solomon's Temple, *Iachin* and *Boaz*, are symbols for Divinity and Philosophy respectively, as well as for other polarities. The imagery of the Great Pillars is used on the title pages of the major works published by Francis Bacon in illustration of his Great Instauration.

In a more esoteric or subtle imagery, Divinity and Philosophy are represented by the two altars in the Temple of Solomon—the high (crown) altar or Ark of the Covenant, and the heart altar or altar of incense. The gold-covered Ark of the Covenant is the 'Seat of Mercy' or throne of the Presence of God; the white double-cubed altar of incense is the table on which the high priest or philosopher-priest makes the offering of incense that represents his service to the Divine. The Presence of God is called, in Hebrew, the *Shekhinah*, which is understood as being feminine, like the Greek *Sophia*. The burning of incense is associated with the myth of the phoenix—the true philosopher-priest being symbolised by the phoenix.

Atlantis

The Judaic/Hebraic wisdom tradition, and hence the Christian tradition, is said to be derived from Enoch, the high initiate and king of Atlantis. As King of Atlantis, Enoch was known as Atlas. Whereas *Enoch* means 'Initiate', *Atlas* means 'Pillar'. Thus, the Great Pillars are also known as the Pillars of Atlas. They are also known as the Pillars of Hercules, Atlas's twin brother who helped Atlas. They are said to hold heaven and earth apart. They also join or unite heaven and earth.

Atlas and Hercules are the Atlantean archetypes of the Gemini. The task of holding heaven and earth apart is that of Atlas, but his brother Hercules shares the task for a certain time so as to give Atlas a rest. The twin brothers together also represent the twin pillars, with Atlas signifying the right-hand Pillar of Wisdom (i.e. *Iachin*) and Hercules signifying the left-hand Pillar of Strength (i.e. *Boaz*). They relate to each other as teacher to pupil, and as immortal to mortal. It was Atlas (Enoch) who attained to the highest heaven and initiation, to become one with the Spirit of the Messiah (i.e. Christ). He was the first human soul to become immortalised or "raised up" in his physical body (i.e. Christed). So, whereas Atlas is the immortalised teacher of wisdom, the mortal Hercules is associated with the act of service known as 'the Twelve Labours'.

Atlas is the original Hermes Trismegistus, the 'Thrice-Greatest'—the greatest philosopher, the greatest priest and the greatest king; or, as Francis Bacon said, the one who had "the power and fortune of a king, the knowledge and illumination of a priest, and the learning and universality of a philosopher." The Atlantean wisdom tradition, which underlies the Egyptian, Chaldean, Hebraic, Judaic, Thracian, Greek, Roman and Christian traditions, is the Hermetic wisdom tradition.

It is not by chance, therefore, that Bacon provided an allegorical illustration of his Great Instauration in action in a utopian fable that he called *The New Atlantis*.

Geocosmological Pilgrimage

In geocosmological pilgrimages we learn to recognise and work with the heavenly and the earthly aspects of life within ourselves and within the landscape, in as true a Hermetic fashion as possible.

Each geocosmological pilgrimage is intended to be a conscious labour of love, and also one of communion, thanksgiving and joy. This is not just an approach to life promoted by most of the great religions and philosophies, especially the Orphic, Hermetic and Christian, but it is also the means, according to Bacon, by which the Pyramids of Divinity and Philosophy are built and the Great Instauration is achieved—the Great Instauration referring to the restoration of paradise on Earth, but in a fuller knowledge of truth than that of the first Eden.

Just as Bacon said that his method was initiatic, there is a science and art to geocosmological pilgrimage which is an initiatic process.

Initiatic Process

The initiatic process can be summed up as loving, understanding and service (or faith, hope and charity)—the first three degrees of initiation. As a refinement, this goes hand in hand with doing the right thing in the right place at the right time, coupled with loving whoever one is with, whatever one is doing, wherever one is—or at least trying one's best to do all this. If we can do this well, we can reach a level of joy, which is an illumination. This is the aim of each pilgrim, with the overall aim of the pilgrimage to help facilitate the raising of human consciousness and the building of the etheric light body of the world—the planetary temple of light—by bringing joy to and sharing joy with the world.

If nothing else, it is a training for life. It can help us to gain insights and knowledge of various laws of life previously unknown or only partly known, of how they manifest in us and our environment, and of how we can use them to do good. It also helps us to understand and practice what Bacon taught and urged us to do: to read and become proficient in the Book of God's Word and Book of God's Works, and help build the Pyramids of Divinity and Philosophy.

The Mystery

Besides following our own inspirations and studies of nature, and knowledge handed down, we have a good guide to this—a guide that Bacon and his Rosicrucian fraternity also used, as did the mystery schools before and since then. This guide is the mystery. A mystery is a drama

in which we are the actors, and each mystery is based on a profound story that enables the drama to be capable of revealing and clarifying the secrets of life.

Each geocosmological pilgrimage is a mystery, providing a deep experience together with new discoveries and revelations of truth. Not only do we deliberately design each pilgrimage as a mystery, using the knowledge we have of these things and the landscape, but also, once the journey has started, we usually find that we are in a greater underlying mystery which is gradually revealed to us as we go along.

As an initial overall guide, however, we have the great myths that describe the mystery or mysteries in suitable allegorical terms. Each myth has a multi-layered reality behind its allegory that relates both to spiritual laws, processes and archetypes, and also to nature, ourselves and the landscape. Every great myth and mystery has a connection to the landscape, which is, as Shakespeare said, the stage on which we play our parts.

The great guiding myths that we use and which provide a context for us to work in, are primarily those of Europa and the Bull, Leda and the Swan, and the Holy Grail. These myths are particularly related to the landscape of Europe and describe a great mystery that is to do with giving birth to or sounding the Word of God and raising consciousness to a level of illumination, in both an individual and also a planetary sense. These are myths with which Bacon and the Rosicrucians worked, all for the purpose of what Bacon calls the Great Instauration and inauguration of a Golden Age on Earth, as in Atlantis of old.

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Endnotes

¹ The word was invented by Peter Dawkins.

² *Ecclesiastes* iii, 11.

³ Two versions of the quotes are: -

The knowledge of man is as the waters, some descending from above, and some springing from beneath; the one informed by the light of nature, the other inspired by divine revelation. The light of nature consisteth in the notions of the mind and the reports of the senses... So then, according to these two differing illuminations or originals, knowledge is first of all divided into Divinity and Philosophy.

Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning* (1605), Bk II.

Knowledge is like waters: some waters descend from the Heavens, some spring from the Earth. So the Primary Partition of Sciences is to be derived from their fountains: some are seated above, some are here beneath. For all knowledge proceeds from a two-fold information: either from Divine inspiration, or from external Sense. As for that knowledge which is infused by instruction, that is cumulative, not original; as it is in waters, which besides the headsprings are increased by the reception of other rivers that fall into them. Wherefore we will divide Sciences into Theology and Philosophy. By Theology we understand Inspired or Sacred Divinity, not

Natural, of which we are to speak anon. But this Inspired Theology we reserve for the last place, that we may close up this work with it; seeing it is the Port and Sabbath of all human contemplations.

Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning* (1640), Bk III, i.