

Intermediate Gnostic Psychology – Notes 1

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External Influences and the Human Machine

From the Gnostic point of view, people are machines governed by external influences. If you think there is something that chooses its own path, something that can stand against mechanization; you think that not everything is equally mechanical. Everything that occurs to a person, all that is done by them, all that comes from them: all this happens in exactly the same way as rain falls as a result of a change in the temperature in the higher regions of the atmosphere or the surrounding clouds, as snow melts under the rays of the sun, as dust rises with the wind.

Humanity is acted upon simultaneously by influences proceeding from various sources and different worlds: influences from other planets, from the moon, from the sun, from the stars, etc. All these influences act simultaneously; one influence predominates at one moment and another influence at another moment. So, for the human being there is a certain possibility of making a choice of influences; in other words, of passing from one influence to another.

To explain how, we need to first understanding one thing: it is impossible to become free from one influence without becoming subject to another. **The whole thing (all work upon oneself) consists of choosing the influence to which you wish to subject yourself, and actually falling under this influence.** So, it is necessary to know which influence is the more profitable.

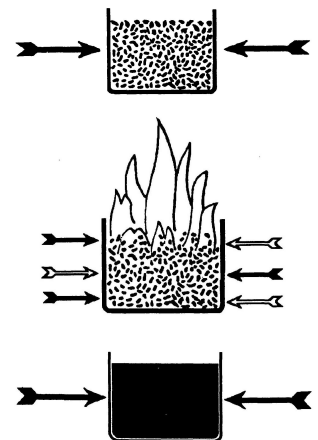
Inner Struggle and the Crystallization of Something Permanent

In order to be able to speak of any kind of future life there must be a certain crystallization, a certain fusion of one's inner qualities, in order to acquire a certain independence from external influences. In certain cases of fuller crystallization what people call 'reincarnation' may be possible after death, and, in other cases, what people call 'existence on the other side'. In both cases it is the continuation of life with the Astral body and with the other Superior Existential Bodies of the Being.

What does the expression 'Astral body' mean? Many esoteric systems that use this expression state that *all persons* have an Astral body. This is somewhat wrong. All people have a Lunar Astral body (or Body of Desires), but not all people have a Solar Astral body (and therefore are liberated from the Body of Desires). The 'Solar Astral body' is obtained by means of 'fusion', by means of terribly hard inner work and struggle, rarely is the human being born with it.

Very few people acquire a Solar Astral body. If it is formed, then it may continue to live after the death of the physical body. It is not immortal, but it can live long after physical death. Fusion, inner unity, is obtained by means of 'friction', by the internal struggle. If a man lives without inner struggle, if he goes wherever he is drawn or wherever the wind blows, he will remain such as he is. But if a struggle begins in him, and if there is a definite line in this struggle, then (gradually) permanent traits begin to form themselves, and he begins to 'crystallize'. Crystallization is possible through inner struggle, the struggle against oneself.

In such a way people can generate in themselves an enormous inner strength; they can endure torture; they can get what they want. This means that there is now in them something solid, something permanent. Such people can become immortal if they learn to properly direct themselves. In order to win the inner struggle, sacrifice is necessary... If nothing is sacrificed nothing is obtained (an exchange is needed) and it is necessary to sacrifice something precious in the moment, to sacrifice for a long time and to sacrifice a great deal. "You get out what you put in."



The Four Bodies of a Complete Human Being or Solar ‘Man’

According to an ancient teaching a human being who has attained the full development possible, a 'man' in the fullest sense of the word, *consists of four bodies*. These four bodies are composed of substances which gradually become finer and finer, which mutually interpenetrate one another, and which form four independent organisms, standing in a definite relationship to one another but capable of independent action.

The reason why it is possible for four bodies to exist is that the human organism, that is, the physical body, has such a complex organization that, under certain conditions, a new independent organism can grow in it, affording a much more convenient and responsive instrument for the activity of consciousness than the physical body. The consciousness manifested in this new body is capable of governing it, and it has full power and full control over the physical body.

In this second body (the Solar Astral), under certain conditions, a third body (the Solar Mental) can grow, again having characteristics of its own. The consciousness manifested in this third body has full power and control over the first two bodies; and the third body possesses the possibility of acquiring knowledge inaccessible either to the first or to the second body. In the third body, under certain conditions, a fourth body (the Solar Causal) can grow, which differs as much from the third as the third differs from the second and the second from the first. The consciousness manifested in the fourth body has full control over the first three bodies and itself. These four bodies are defined in different teachings in various ways:

	1st body	2nd body	3rd body	4th body
Christian Term	Carnal body	Natural body	Spiritual body	Divine body
Theosophical Term	Physical body	Astral body	Mental body	Causal body
Eastern Term	"Carriage" (body)	"Horse" (feelings, desires)	"Driver" (mind)	"Master" (consciousness, willpower)
Egyptian Term	The Mummy	The “Ka”	The “Ba”	The “Ku”

But almost all these teachings (while repeating in a more or less familiar form the definitions and divisions of the ancient teaching) have forgotten or omitted its most important feature, which is: that **the human being is not born with the finer bodies**, and that **they can only be created in us if favorable conditions (both internal and external) are present**. The chief difference between the functions of a person possessing the Physical body only and the functions of the *Solar bodies*, is that, in the first case, the functions of the Physical body govern all the other functions (everything is governed by the Physical body) which, in its turn, is governed by external influences; where as in the second case, the command or control emanates from the higher body, the Solar Causal body or Body of Conscious Willpower.

	1st body	2nd body	3rd body	4th body
1st body governs the rest →	Automaton working by external influences	Desires produced by automaton	Thoughts proceeding from desires	Different and contradictory "wills" created by desires

First case: The sleeping Human-Machine, who is the victim of external influences and effects

	1st body	2nd body	3rd body	4th body
4th body commands the others ←	Body obeying desires and emotions which are subject to intelligence	Emotional powers and desires obeying thought and intelligence	Thinking functions obeying consciousness and will	True Individuality, Awakened Consciousness, Real willpower.

Second case: The developed Human Being or Solar ‘Man’, who creates causes