

*Philippus Theophrastus Bombast
Spirit orders, matter obeys.*



The relation between the human physiognomy and that of a brute by Charles Le Brun, Wellcome Images

From Dr. Franz Hartmann (*Comp., Tr. & Annot.*). *The Life of Philippus Theophrastus Bombast, of Hohenheim, Known by the Name of Paracelsus, and the Substance of His Teachings, concerning Cosmology, Anthropology, Pneumatology, Magic and Sorcery, Medicine, Alchemy and Astrology, Philosophy and Theosophy*. Extracted and translated from his rare and extensive works, and from some unpublished manuscripts. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co Ltd., Broadway House, 68-74 Carter Lane, E.C. (2nd ed., 1932) Page numbers in this study correspond to the Philaletheians edition of "Paracelsus by Franz Hartmann." Consult full text in our Buddhas and Initiates Series.

Spirit orders, matter obeys, imagination directs, body executes.

"The whole world is like a man and a woman, and has also its *anima* and its *spiritus imaginatus*; only much stronger and more powerfully than man." The spirit orders, the will (matter) obeys; thought (imagination) directs, the soul (the body) executes and produces, be it intellectually or without intelligence.¹

The mind is a field into which imagination man throws the seeds of desire.

The mind of man modifies the universal mind, which in turn brings about changes in the atmosphere, winds, rains, storms, hail, and lightning.

The astral currents created by the imagination of the Macrocosmos act upon the Microcosmos, and produce certain states in the latter, and thus also the astral currents produced by the imagination and will of man produce certain states in external Nature, and these currents reach very far, because the power of the imagination reaches as far as thought can go. The physiological processes taking place in the body of living beings are caused by their life currents, and the physiological and meteorological processes taking place in the great organism of Nature are caused by the life currents of Nature as a whole. The astral currents of either act upon the other, either consciously or unconsciously, and if this fact is properly understood it will cease to appear incredible that the mind of man can produce changes in the universal mind, which will cause changes in the atmosphere, winds and rains, storms, hail, and lightning, or that evil may be changed into good by the power of faith. "Heaven [the mind] is a field into which the imagination of man throws the seeds. Nature is an artist that develops the seeds, and what is caused by Nature may be imitated by Art." (*De Sagis et eorum Operibus*)²

¹ Ch. 6, "Magic and Sorcery," p. 105 fn.

² *ibid.*, p. 105

Character shapes form. Form is revealed by physiognomy.

Form is nothing but an appearance representing a character, and the character shapes the form. If the character of a person is thoroughly evil, it will cause the astral form to assume a hideous form. Therefore the souls of the depraved appear in animal shapes.¹

Forms and objects are manifestations of certain vibrations of will.

The whole universe is divine will in perpetual motion.

“Pneuma” or “soul,” means a semi-material spirit, an essence or form which is neither “material,” in the common acceptation of this term, nor pure spirit. It is (like everything else in the universe) a form of will, and may be with or without any intelligence. Usually it means the connecting link between spirit and body; but there are beings who belong entirely to the realm of the soul and have no such bodies as are commonly called “material.”

It may be said that the soul is a certain state of activity of the will, and the same may be said of the physical body; for if we look at the universe as being a manifestation of will in motion, then all forms and objects that we know of, or which we can imagine, are certain vibrations of will. Thus we may look upon physical nature as being constituted of a low order of vibrations; upon the soul as a higher octave of the same, and of spirit as one higher still. If the physical body dies, the lower octave ceases to sound; but the higher one continues and will continue to vibrate as long as it is in contact with the highest; but if the spirit has become separated from it, it will sooner or later cease its activity. Thus if man dies the soul remains, and its higher essences go to form the substance of the body of the paradisiacal man, “the man of the new Olymp,” and the lower essences of the soul, from which the spirit has departed, dissolve in the astral elements to which they belong, as the earthly body dissolves in the elements of the earth.²



¹ Ch. 5, “Pneumatology,” p. 85

² *ibid.*, p. 78