

The background features a detailed engraving of Paracelsus, a Swiss physician and alchemist. He is depicted with a long, curly beard and hair, wearing a dark, patterned robe. He holds a staff with a cross at the top in his right hand and a book in his left. The entire image is rendered in a light gray tone. Overlaid on this background is a large, semi-transparent watermark that reads "On the Foundations of Animistic Spirit Practice in Paracelsus's Works" in a stylized, vertical font.

On the Foundations of
Animistic Spirit Practice
in Paracelsus's Works

Frater Acher
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„Alterius non sit, qui suus esse potest“

*Let them not be another's [servant]
who can be their own [master].*

– Paracelsus

INTRODUCTION

One of the essential premises of Paracelsian medicine is the foundational assumption that each man has an inner firmament, which is responsive to, but holds the potential to operate independently of the celestial firmament. Thus, there is only one sky in the macrocosm, but another sky and horizon within each human.

As we will see, this simple idea led Paracelsus to develop a unique and highly complex constitution of the *inner man*. While rarely studied, it provides the essential foundation for his many breakthrough insights on the causes and treatments of diseases, as well as on the animistic spirit-practice underlying his medical, philosophical and theological writings. The multilayered concept of the inner firmament indeed can be understood as the theoretical bridge via which Paracelsus led Late Medieval thinking into a new era.

Given the broad consequences of this framework, and the fact that Paracelsus continued to develop it over the course of more than twenty years of research, experimentation and writing, the present essay cannot do it justice. Rather, it is meant as an initial outline for further studies.

In the spirit of Paracelsus's work, such studies should expand both deeper into the man's massive oeuvre, and help us bring his wisdom into the 21st century. Equally, they have to expand into our own personal practice, and help us turn, test and develop the words of this genius on the anvil of our own experience.

LVX,

Frater Acher

May the serpent bite its tail.

THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION

In Western Magic we often speak of an inner Divine flame, which each man holds in their soul. This spark forms a tie between each soul and Divinity in its unformed state, from which all souls once emanated. It is in this sense that man holds the potential to become divine, not in their embodied form, but in excavating and consciously reconnecting with this divine spark that is embedded into their heart-space.

Paracelsus's inner firmament is conceived in the exact same manner: In addition to a divine spark man also holds sparks of the seven planets comprising our solar system or macrocosm. These sparks are not hidden or hibernating within us, but take a most active role: It's the weave of these seven sparks – or planetary intelligences and cosmic forces – which continuously interact with the four elements.

The elements in turn, according to Paracelsus, are not at all the tangible representations of fire, air, water and earth, but their inner alchemical principles. The four elements provide the essential building blocks of all subtle and material creation.¹

Together, these twelve generative and destructive principles – seven celestial sparks and four elementary forces – define, create, adjust and evolve the state of man's physical and psychological constitution at any given moment in time.²

As it was critical to any successful act of healing or magic, Paracelsus then very explicitly describes the way in which this process comes to life: He separates out the corporal substances – among these first flesh, bones and blood – from all the incorporeal forces within a human body. The latter he identifies as the various facets of the inner firmament, for anything that “is not corporeal, that same is a star, an astrum”³. The collective of all these inner stars, or inner *senses* as he calls them as well, is what establishes the human soul.

The properties of one's soul, thus, are defined by the condition of one's inner firmament. And yet again, this firmament fans out into a sevenfold realm: In descending order of creation these are (1) the realm of the apocalyptic stars⁴, (2) the stars of the ascendants, (3-6) the stars of the

four realms of the elements, and finally (7) the stars ruling over the realm of imagination.⁵

With that, we begin to see the complexity and yet the expressed clarity of the constitution of the inner firmament or human soul within Paracelsus's work. Specifically, he calls out that in order to become a "whole astronomer" one has to consider all of these seven realms and the diverse manifestations of the celestial forces within them. To illustrate the importance of this insight, Paracelsus gives the following example:

I present this only because it is not enough, nor is it sufficiently spoken about in astrology, to recognize Mars in the sky alone, where it looks like a glowing coal. But above it there is another Mars and four in the four elements and one more in the imagination. What is this blacksmith who can only make a horseshoe and not the nail? What is the carpenter who can make only chips and not joints? In an art everything should be perfect and united, and there nothing should be excluded, but what belongs together, that should be learned together.⁶ – PARACELUS

As microcosm and macrocosm, of course, mirror each other, we find the same realms on both sides – and the human experience caught up in the middle of it.

Each human is constantly exposed to, touched and affected by a complex weave of dynamic external forces. Just as within man, so on the outside these forces are made up by the four elements as well as the seven major celestial influences. Collectively, these forces have no interest in man's health or sickness, in the human species's prosperous evolution or degenerative destruction. Because they operate against a wider and broader weave of purpose than just the human domain. The way these macrocosmic forces affect the human sphere, thus, is a side-effect of each of these forces pursuing their own inherent nature, as embedded into the vast weave of the macrocosm.

So, according to Paracelsus, if nothing else interfered with man's constitution, our species would be a plaything of the weave of chthonic and celestial cosmic forces. Compare it to a game of chess: The four elements construct the corporal figures, the celestial movers define the rules of

manoeuvres. For anybody entangled into playing the game the way a chess figure *looks* and the way it *manoeuvres* on the board would not appear as two separate things, but woven into one entity. A pawn is a pawn, both because of how they look and the way they are able to move on the board. In the same way, elementary and celestial influences come together to set into motion and continuously keep spinning the wheel we call evolution.

Your liver, your lungs, your body, you yourself, we are all constructed according to the same principles of combining celestial influences (ability to manoeuvre or do) and elementary forces (substance generating powers). Now we begin to see the essential ecology inherent in Paracelsus' cosmos: Any element of creation, may it be a single blood particle or the entire human species is but a figure on the endless chess-board of creation. The players of this game are *all of us*, each single object of creation following the inner choir of its inherent firmament. The aim of this game is not at all for 'man to win', but for creation to recognise itself.

THE INNER ASCENDANT

*The imprint, that is according to Paracelsus's word usage the inner compulsion. Not out of the outside, not out of the "boundaries" that take place in any material order, only out of the inner compulsion, the essence, the being happens, - only the imprint, the astrum, the "life-force" lets that develop which is laid out in a body. Therefore, it is not the disease, its material appearance, but what made it, its incorporeal cause, that must be recognized and attacked in its nature, and one must act against the ascendants, that is, against what gives birth to them, what drives them, and not against a body.*⁷ – WILL-ERICH PEUCKERT

Now that we have understood the general design of the human constitution according to Paracelsus, let's unravel the particular function of the Paracelsian ascendant.

Despite the complexity of the term, it is with this function that Paracelsus gave us a most precise idea of a what guides and rules over a human's ability to manoeuvre on the chessboard called creation.

Since Hellenistic times in astrology the ascendant signifies the zodiacal sign rising during the hour of one's birth, which holds particular relevance and power over determining one's fate.⁸ Equally, each moment or hour holds their own ascendant, colouring it in its particular and dominant quality.⁹

It is in this sense that in Paracelsian language the term *ascendant* can either be read in the sense of a *disposition* (if referring to one's ascendant of birth) or as a dominant *driving force* (if referring to a moment in time).

Finally, there is a third meaning of the word *ascendant*, and unfortunately, it is here that things turn slightly more complex. In addition to the quality of one's constitution or the quality of time, the term ascendant is also used to determine a *spirit* that holds an elevated or dominant position over us.

In the Late Medieval techniques of deriving the name of one's *holydaimon* from one's birth chart, we often see two of these meanings collapse, and one's daimon's name is derived from the planet associated with the rising sign on one's birth chart.

With Paracelsus, however, these are two discrete meanings of the term ascendant.

So in summary, we can read the term ascendant in three differing yet interrelated senses: To describe one's constitution, to describe the dominant quality of a moment in time, or to describe the dominant spirit guiding one's life. The latter, though, does not need to remain one and the same over the course of one's life, but can be altered. Finally, not only man as a whole is assigned an ascendant, but each component part of the 'microcosm' receives their own dynamic ascendant. Thus inner organs, diseases, qualities of time or locations, all hold their own ascendants.

With this in mind, let's take the time to read several longer direct quotes from Paracelsus's writings on the ascendant.

The following passages have been taken from Paracelsus's vast oeuvre, to illustrate the depth of his thinking on the nature of the ascendant. At the same time, each quote presumes the reader is familiar not only with common medical and astrological knowledge of the Late Middle Ages, but also with Paracelsus's particular language and terminology. Despite these natural limitations when quoting Paracelsus out of context, I still believe collectively these sections provide not only rich food for reflections, but an accurate initial outline of the composition of the Paracelsian ascendant.



Since now in man lies heaven, and [as it] cannot be otherwise, know this, all you physicians, that in man lie all ascendants. Now who will claim that man is subject to one [single] ascendant, but only the outer parched astronomer? The physician must make this clear and discover it; for as many ascendants as heaven is capable of, so many is man capable of. Thus man is put into many hundred beings. [...] For heaven is man, and man is heaven, and all men are one heaven, and heaven only one man.¹⁰ – PARACELUSUS

If the ascendant can find the sick to strangle [them], the ascendant can also find the sick to sustain [them]. Everything is double; where disease is medicine, where medicine is disease.¹¹ – PARACELUSUS

Let us suppose that one had come from Granada and was arriving in Cologne and wanted to go to Gdansk; now another would have come from London and also wanted to go to Gdansk and would also arrive in Cologne, and in Cologne they would come together to an inn. And in the same inn one would already be there; and the three would sit together and convince that the third also wanted to go to Gdansk. Now the three would go together, so the first two would lead the third, who would now come from Cologne and would not have wanted to go out there, but since he had come into the company, it would take him with it. Now it follows that this one, who has been in Cologne, receives his nature in this manner: where the two come, there he also comes. They come to Danzig, etc., there he also comes, and thus with the two beings that of the third is also found. So it is there too. If a child is born, be it what it may, pilgrims pass through there and also come to the city, that is the firmament. Now the child follows the same pilgrims, goes with them, if it has found them on the road, and does not know itself, where from and where to, because it has never been on earth, can nor know anything on it. So the messengers take it and lead it.¹² – PARACELSUS

But now it may happen that the child obtains a different messenger, a father, a praeceptor¹³, who shows the child other things than the pilgrims [...] Now about that so are also spirits in heaven. And the same spirit is also there, and also pleads that he be a pilgrim and lead the child a different way, not as the stars have to lead him, but according to his will. Now I suppose that such a spirit would also be mixed in there and would also be an ascendant together with the others; now it is necessary that this ascendant is also recognized, because it will do more than the stars; because in the ascendants, which are spirits, there is gambling, drinking, whoring, courting, warring, cursing, breaking of oaths, blasphemy, stealing, murdering, robbing [...].¹⁴ – PARACELSUS

Know that we do not bring an ascendant with us from birth, we take it ourselves. Thus, if a man wants to lie, he finds his ascendant in heaven; if he wants to be truthful, he finds his ascendant; if he wants to court, he finds his ascendant; if he wants to steal, he finds his ascendant, and so with all things.¹⁵ – PARACELSUS

Because the inexperienced astronomers speak wrongly about the

nativities and ascendants. As I am born under Scorpio and as I come under Aries, I am an Arietist and Scorpio has nothing more to do with me, therefore Aries no longer remains my Ascendant, for as long as I submit myself [to the revolving influences of the stars], as I have written in de nativitatibus. Therefore here the manner is to be changed after the way of the firmament, and [the goal is to] never make oneself submissive to another ascendant and conjunction. As even if I were born to be hanged and if the spiritus firmamenti were thus in me, as we then have of the spiritibus humanis, if I want it to be broken I move under another planet and leave the former, thus it is broken. And even if the inclination remains with me, the effect is not there. So often a pious man becomes a thief and an evil influence in the outer perception of men, as is written in de spiritibus.¹⁶ – PARACELUS

Every thing that is in the human body has its own ascendant in itself. That is the same ascendant, his own heaven, which serves it alone and nothing for the other members. The origin of this woe thus takes itself from the ascendant, which you may also call constellationem particularem. If a member has a displaced sky and ascendant, the pain is here now. [...] Because heaven in its potency is equal to [human] reason that does one thing today and another tomorrow. And since we and heaven are one creature, we are also the same. For our reason is no more than heaven and heaven no more than reason. So man makes his order as he wants, so heaven does it too. Man is thoughtful according to his reason, but heaven is not thoughtful, but the unified potential in both is the same, thoughtful and rash. So we form heaven and heaven forms us, that we go wrong ways on both sides as long as we build on ourselves. Because it is possible for heaven to err and to go astray, so it is also possible for our reason. And if it is possible for us, it is also possible for heaven. We understand that there is a being above all of this, which we must pursue, which is alone without error, and not after our kind. Because if we go after ourselves, we go into diseases, just as heaven leads to them, if it is not as it should be. [...] Now the sky has its course and as long as the course, so long is the woe. If this is to be turned around, the subjectum must strongly resist it. So then when he [sky] sees it, his course is over, and in that manner the limb will be closed [to the displaced celestial influence], just like someone who flees the winter in

*a room or the heat in a cellar.*¹⁷ – PARACELUS

*Now understand also that in man lie the children of the ascendants, that is, of the heavenly body, in the same way as Adam is to be understood against his father, that is, against heaven and earth. [...] So also know that man has in himself the attracting power from heaven. From this it follows that the inner ascendants, signs, planets, etc., if they rule in the course of the microcosm and come into the desire [i.e. astrological activation] of the outer firmament, they attract these [influences] to themselves like the earth attracts the rain. If that celestial attraction is healthy, it is good; if not, it is poison.*¹⁸ – PARACELUS



In essence, we see Paracelsus's *ascendant* connected to time and dynamic movement: Just as the horizon line of heaven is in constant motion, constantly revealing another sign, another planet, so too the human constitution is constantly changing in tune with these tides.¹⁹ Thus, Paracelsus confronts us with a human constitution that is far less fixed and determined than one might think: Man's ascendant does not remain stable and fixed, but moves with (or at least is influenced and superimposed by) the tides of time. Moreover, man stands between the firmament of the macrocosm and their own inner microcosm, and holds the Herculean responsibility of correcting deviations, aberrations, or overexposures in the constellations that arise between these two firmaments.

It is important to point out that Paracelsus's astrological exposition is not equal to *Electional astrology*.

The latter is focussed on determining the right moment in time for any particular activity, and holds specific relevance in ritual magic. According to Electional astrology the macrocosm is a complex and constantly moving lock, made up of many concentric celestial wheels, arcs and interdependent influences. Depending on the position of each component in time, this celestial lock 'opens' to specific influences and thus supports or undermines human acts that stand in specific resonance with these conditions. The planetary days and hours of the Medieval grimoire tradition are a most basic and reduced form of such technique.

Paracelsus is advocating for a similar approach to astrological influences, that is essentially conditioned by time. However, he transcends it in a most critical point: According to Paracelsus it is not only about observing the macrocosm and identifying its astrological patterns to understand when they 'lock' into the relevant 'combination' that enables and supports our human acts.

Additionally, and most importantly, it is also the conditioning of the microcosm in time, with its many inner realms, that equally is experiencing its own tides and dynamics. Thus, the ascendant observed in the outer firmament at any moment in time is only half of the equation, as one also has to understand the ascendant on the inner firmament of each man, organ, herb, stone. etc..

It is in this sense that both Electional astrology and Paracelsus would have criticized the reductionist approach of e.g. most Late Medieval herbals of associating a particular herb with a particular planet, and not taking into account the tides of time to determine its poisonous or healing effects.

However, equally, Paracelsus's would have criticised Electional astrology as only seeing one side of the coin, by considering the macrocosm in constant motion, and yet the microcosm's *inner firmament* as fixed and imprinted for good during its moment of birth.²⁰

Now, the specific task Paracelsus assigns to each human is to carefully balance out the dynamics of outer and inner firmaments. He asserts that, no human can accomplish this task by themselves, but we all depend on divine assistance. For the human mind with all its reason and ratio is just as fallible as the celestial macrocosm in achieving perfect balance – or at least a somewhat graceful motion through the storms of cosmic tides. Each one of us, therefore, depends on a “being that is above all of this”, and the ability to create communion and to receive guidance from this source that resides beyond the sublunar realm.

A monotheistical mystical reading would identify this being as capital-G God; a magical reading, however, could insert any kind of spirit into this equation, whose influence and guidance aligns to our present purpose.

Paracelsus explicitly states that once we are able to consciously assign our ascendant-spirit than these “will do more than the stars”.

Regrettably, in real life for most humans this process happens entirely unconsciously and automatically. Thus, their ascendant-spirits are not only of volatile and temporary nature, but also more attuned to enable egotistical desires, hedonistic pleasures and morbid habits than fulfilment of their human “potentia”.

CONCLUSIONS

To summarise, the Paracelsian ascendant does not only portray humankind as a spirit-interfacing species. Instead, and on a much more ambitious scale, it recognises each living cell, each minuscule aspect of the vast hive of creation as infused with spirit consciousness.

Thus, it dissolves the artificial boundaries between man and the world. Instead, it outlines an Early Modern animistic worldview: Paracelsus recognises the human spirit as essentially enlaced into a spirit ecosystem that begins with our blood cells and extends out, as far as the Empyrean Heaven.

*The life of every thing is a spiritual being, an invisible and incomprehensible thing and a spirit and a spiritual thing.*²¹ – PARACELUSUS

*The spirit in the body is incomprehensible, invisible [...] The same spirit is essential, sensitive, visible and tangible to other spirits [...] I have a spirit, the other one has one as well; the spirits know each other [...] they practice their language with each other.*²² – PARACELUSUS

*For the cause of diseases is not physical; therefore spirit is to be used against spirit.*²³ – PARACELUSUS

This now is the consequence that Paracelsus wants each of us to recognise and adapt to: His anthroposophical cosmology is an open revolt against a worldview of fixed beliefs and orthodox truths. Instead, each diagnosis, each day is meant to be a new expedition. Each hour calls us to take a fresh glance at what is happening in this present moment. Because not only time flows in a merciless, never-ending stream, but all of reality does. And with it does the definition of *what is true right now*.

Finding truth, forming identity, gaining solid ground of where we stand in this world is not a once-in-a-lifetime event. Identifying one's ascendant and all the character-forming forces rippling out into our lives from them, is an ever evolving stream of interwoven forces, moments, and opportunities.

So while there is no solid ground for man to retreat to, in order to pin down their personal identity, character or essence, Paracelsus offers a different kind of safety: It is not to be found in any axiomatic insights over *who were are*, but in the presence of the community of spirits with whom *we are together with*.

Stopping the stream of reality, only to land with fixed and tied-down truths, is a most foolish adventure to waste a life on. Finding the swarm of beings that flow with us in this stream, beginning to see and account for one's own importance to this hive of living spirits, however, is a most prosperous endeavour.

Paracelsus might have even called the latter *a good life*.

PRACTICAL OUTLOOK

Let's conclude this chapter with a few forward-looking, pragmatic reflections. What then, you might ask, can I take for my own animistic-spirit practice from the concept of the Paracelsian ascendant? As you would expect, neither Paracelsus nor I would offer a fixed answer to this question. Instead, let's open the vista towards a few essential questions for your own practical explorations.

- Paracelsus acknowledges that “the spirits know each other [...] they practice their speech with each other”. This then seems to be the gateway skill of the magician, to switch their human, outer senses for their inner ones and to learn to speak and listen in the *language of spirits*.²⁴ When you look at your own practice today, what is your learning laboratory, what are your practical experiments to build this capability within yourself?
- If we break down the above reality into the reality of our own bodies, we understand that each organ within us holds its own spirit, its own fluctuating ascendant, and its unique vibrating chord of *sympathy* into the macrocosm around us. Josephine McCarthy's book *Magical Healing* (TaDehent Books, 2019) offers plenty of practical exercise to begin working as a medical mage in a Paracelsian sense. Especially relevant, in our present context, are the two chapters on *Visionary Healing*, as well as the final one on *Self-Healing and Maintenance*.
- Return to the quote above where Paracelsus speaks of the travelling spirits (from Granada and London via Cologne to Gdansk), who found your soul in a pub, and took you along on their ride. – How does this reality translate to your present biography? How much are you journeying on your own path, versus following your stars's journeys as a passenger? Recall what Paracelsus stated in no ambiguous terms about our ascendants: The one who wants to become a liar will find a star that allows him to do so; and yet the one who was determined by their ascendant to end as a hanged man, can still revert and change their inherent patterns.

Once you have thought about how these realities apply to your own present life, bring in another thought for meditation: How do Paracelsus's reflections apply to the magic you practice? Elementary, daimonic, chthonic or celestial magic, whatever your practice or path – in which manner are you attempting to redraw the image of yourself through this work? As magicians, we are all golems of mysterious clay and our own co-creation. Who will you be?

- Finally, under whose tutelage or guardianship do you intend to undertake this work? As Paracelsus mentioned, it is possible for heaven to err as well as for human reason. As long as we blindly follow either the stars or our own feeble human will, we are likely to *walk into disease*. But to break the *c(o)urses of ego and astrum* and to liberate ourselves so we can truly choose our own path, we have to “strongly resist” as well as to unite ourselves with “a being above all of this”.

Depending on the magical work at hands, I have united forces with a broad array of spirits – from chthonic land beings to underground mountain spirits, from Olympian intelligences to Ancient Egyptian deities. Our choice of magical and spiritual allegiances is endless. And yet, what I can confirm from lived experience is that each choice I made had irreversible consequences. It shaped the golem I am becoming to be in ways that I could not traverse backwards on. Call it an oath, a pact, an initiation, whatever man-made term fits your practice and paradigm. Deciding and acting upon whom we choose to share a swarm, a hive, a skin with, counts among the most essential choices we will make in our lives. Choose wisely, magician.

In our modern Western world today, we still find ourselves surrounded by echos of Paracelsus's innovations, such as in chemotherapy or homeopathy.²⁵ What has been largely overlooked, however, is that Paracelsus also established the foundation for a modern animistic worldview and spirit practice. This practice was intended to be applied to and explored in various disciplines, such as medicine, chemistry, theology, astrology, and practical magic. It is upon us, to restore this knowledge and practice today.

ENDNOTES

1 The building blocks of the elements themselves are constituted by the three dynamic principles of Sulphur, Sal and Mercury. These latter principles, however, operate below the threshold of material matter as we observe it. A modern comparison of atoms (equivalent to the realm of the elements) and quarks (equivalent to the operating level of sal, sulphur, mercury) might help to illustrate how these two levels of creation are mutually dependent and interlaced in Paracelsus's worldview.

2 see: Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band XII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1932, pp 495

3 see: Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band XII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1932, p. 495

4 The term 'apocalyptic' should be read in its original Greek meaning in this context, i.e. as *uncovering*, or *revealing*. In the spirit of John's Book of Revelation, for which he held great respect, Paracelsus uses the term often to relate to prophetic divination. In this context, the 'apocalyptic stars', thus, are the fixed stars of the outer firmament. (For Paracelsus's specific use word the word see e.g. Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band XIV, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1933, p. 188)

5 see: Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band XII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1932, p. 495

6 "Solches lege ich allein deshalb dar, da es nicht ausreicht noch genügend darüber gesprochen wird in der Astrologie den Mars nur im Himmel zu erkennen, der doch nur einem glühenden Kohlen gleich aussieht. Sondern über demselbigen ist ein anderer Mars und vier in den vier Elementen und noch einer in der Imagination. Was ist das für ein Schmied, der nur ein Hufeisen machen kann und den Nagel nicht? Was ist der Zimmermann, der nur Späne machen kann und nicht Fugen? Es soll in einer Kunst alles vollkommen sein und liegen, und da soll nichts ausgenommen werden, sondern was zusammen gehört, das soll

zusammengelernt werden.“ — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band XII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1932, p. 496

7 “Die Imprimierung, das ist nach Paracelsi Wortgebrauch der innere Zwang. Nicht aus dem Äußeren, nicht aus den in irgendwelchen materiellen Ordnungen sich vollziehenden „Grenzen“, nur aus dem inneren Zwang, dem Wesen heraus geschieht das Sein, — nur die Impressio, das astrum, die „Lebenskraft“ läßt das in einem Körper Angelegte sich entwickeln. Deshalb auch muß nicht so die Krankheit, ihre materielle Erscheinung, sondern was sie gemacht hat, ihre unkörperliche Ursache, in seiner Natur erkannt und angegriffen werden, und wider die Aszendenten muß man handeln, also wider dieses sie Gebärende, Treibende, und nicht wider einen Leib.“ — Peuckert, Will-Erich; *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, Stuttgart-Berlin: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1941, p. 201

8 Peuckert, Will-Erich; *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, Stuttgart-Berlin: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1941, p. 281

9 From a perspective of ritual magic, it is here that Paracelsian cosmology connects with the idea of the planteray rulers of the day-time and night-time hours.

10 “Dieweil nun im Menschen der Himmel liegt und [es] nicht anders sein mag, so wisset hierin, ihr Ärzte alle, dass im Menschen liegen alle Ascendenten. Nun wer will behaupten, dass der Menschen einem [einzigem] Ascendenten unterworfen sei, als allein der äussere ausgedorrte Astronom? Der Arzt muss das klar machen und entdecken; denn so viele Ascendenten der Himmel vermag, so viele vermag der Mensch. Also wird der Mensch in viele hundert Wesen gesetzt. [...] Denn der Himmel ist der Mensch und der Mensch ist der Himmel und alle Menschen ein Himmel und der Himmel nur ein Mensch.“ — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band VIII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1924, p.99-100

11 “Kann der Aszendent den Kranken finden [um ihn] zu würgen, so kann auch der Aszendent den Kranken finden [um ihn] zu erhalten. Es ist ein jegliches doppelt; wo Krankheit da Arznei, wo Arznei da Krankheit.“ — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band III, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1930, p. 108

12 *“Ich setze, es käme einer gegangen von Granaten und käme gen Köln und wollte gen Danzken (Danzig); nun käme einer von Lunden (London) und wollte auch gen Danzken und käme auch gen Köln, und zu Köln kämen sie zusammen in ein Wirtshaus. Und in demselbigen Wirtshaus wäre einer vergebens da; und die drei säßen zusammen und würden eins, daß der auch gen Danzken wollt. Nun die drei zögen miteinander, so führen die ersten zweien den dritten, der nun aus Köln käme und nicht da hinaus gewollt hätte, sondern da ist er in die Gesellschaft gekommen, die zeucht ihn mit sich. Nun folgt auf das, daß dieser, der zu Köln ist gesein, seine Natur empfängt also: wo die zween hinkommen, da kommt er auch hin. Sie kommen gen Danzken usw., da kommt der auch hin, und also bei der zweien Wesen wird das des dritten auch gefunden. Also ist es da auch. So ein Kind geboren wird, es sei, wie es wolle, so ziehen Pilger da durch und kommen auch in die Stadt, das ist das Firmament. Nun folgt das Kind denselbigen Pilgern nach, geht mit ihnen, so es sie doch auf der Straße gefunden hat, und weiß selbst nicht, wo aus und wohin, denn es ist nie auf Erden gesein, kann noch weiß nichts auf ihr. Alsonehmens die Boten an und führen es.”* — Paracelsus, in: Peuckert, Will-Erich; *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, Stuttgart-Berlin: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1941, p. 281

13 Latin for teacher, instructor, tutor, preceptor

14 *“Nun aber mag sichs begeben, daß das Kind einen andern Boten erlangt, einen Vater, einen Praeceptoren, der das Kind auf andere Sachen zeucht denn die Pilger... Nun über das so sind auch Geist im Himmel. Und derselbige Geist ist auch da und fleißt sich auch, daß er ein Pilger sei und das Kind führe einen andern Weg, nicht wie die Stern an ihm zu führen haben, sondern seinem Willen nach. Nun setze ich, ein solcher Geist wäre da auch eingemischt und wäre auch ein ascendens mitsamt den andern; jetzt ist not, daß dieser ascendens auch erkannt werde, denn er wird mehr ausrichten, denn die Sterne; denn in den Ascendenten, die Geister sind, da ist Spielen, Saufen, Huren, Buhlen, Kriegen, Fluchen, Ehbrechen, Gotteslästerung, Stehlen, Morden, Rauben...”* — Paracelsus, in: Peuckert, Will-Erich; *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, Stuttgart-Berlin: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1941, p. 282

15 *„Wisset, daß wir von Geburt keinen Ascendenten mit uns bringen, wir nehmen ihn uns selbst. Also findet einer im Himmel, will er lügen, seinen Ascendenten, will er wahrhaftig sein, seinen Ascendenten, will er buhlen, seinen Ascendenten, will*

er stehlen, dergleichen, also mit allen Dingen.“ — Paracelsus, in: Peuckert, Will-Erich; *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, Stuttgart-Berlin: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1941, p. 282

16 *”Denn falsch reden die unerfahrenen Astronomen von den Nativitäten und Aszendenten. Als ich bin geboren unter dem Skorpion und so ich komme unter den Aries, so bin ich ein Arietist und Skorpion hat nichts da mit mir mehr zu schaffen, darum bleibt er nicht länger mein Aszendent, denn so lange ich mich unterwerfe als ich de nativitatibus geschrieben habe. Darum hier die Art nach des Firmaments Art zu verändern ist und sich nimmer unterwerflich machen einem anderen Aszendenten und Konjunktion. Als auch so ich geboren wäre erhängt zu werden und wär der spiritus firmamenti also in mir, wie wir dann den spiritibus humanis haben, will ich das gebrochen werden zeuch ich unter einem anderen Planeten und lasse den stehen, so ist er gebrochen. Und ob mir schon die Art bleibt so ist doch der Effekt nicht da. Also wird oft ein frommer Mann ein Dieb und einer bösen Influenz, als de spiritibus geschrieben steht, de externis sensibus hominum.”* — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band III, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1930, p. 18

17 *“Ein jegliches Ding, so im Leib des Menschen ist, hat in ihm selbst sein eigen Aszendenten. Das ist der selbe Aszendent, sein eigener Himmel, der ihm allein dient und den anderen Gliedern nichts. Aus dem Aszendenten, den ihr auch constellationem particularem heissen mögen, nimmt sich der Ursprung dieses Wehes also. So ein Glied einen verrückten Himmel und Aszendenten hat, so ist jetzt das Weh da. [...] Denn der Himmel in seiner Potenz ist gleich der Vernunft, die heute das macht und morgen ein anderes. Und dieweil wir und der Himmel ein Geschöpf sind, so sind wir auch gleich. Denn unsere Vernunft ist nicht mehr als der Himmel und der Himmel nicht mehr als sie. Also macht der Mensch seine Ordnung, wie er will, also machts auch der Himmel. Der Mensch ist besinnt nach seiner Vernunft, der Himmel aber ist nicht besinnt, aber die einig potentia in beiden gleich, besinnt und unbesinnt. Also praefigurieren wir den Himmel und der Himmel uns, das zu beiden Seiten Irrwege gehen, so wir auf uns selbst bauen. Denn dem Himmel möglich ist zu fehlen und Irrwege zu gehen, so ist es auch unserer Vernunft möglich. Und ob es uns möglich ist, so ist es auch dem Himmel möglich. Dabei verstehen wir, dass ein Wesen ist über dies alles, dem selbigen müssen wir nachgehen, das ist allein ohne Irrung, und nicht nach uns. Denn so*

wir uns nachgehen, so gehen wir in die Krankheiten, wie auch der Himmel darein geht, so er nicht ist, wie er sein soll. [...] Nun hat der Himmel seinen Lauf und so lange der Lauf, so lange ist das Weh. So nun das soll gewendet werden, so muss das subjectum ihm stark widerstehen. Also dann so er [der Himmel] das sieht, so ist sein Lauf aus, und das also, das das selbige Glied verschlossen wird, wie einer, der den Winter in einer Stuben flieht, oder die Hitze in einem Keller.” — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band I, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1929, p. 154-158

18 “Nun also verstehe auch das, dass im Menschen die Kinder der Aszendenten liegen, das ist, des Gestirns, in der gleichen Weise wie Adam gegen seinen Vater zu verstehen ist, das ist gegen Himmel und Erden. [...] Also wisset auch auch dass der Mensch die anziehende Kraft hat in sich vom Himmel. Aus dem folgt nun, dass die inneren Aszendenten, Signa, Planeten, etc. so sie herrschen im Lauf des Mikrokosmos und kommen in die Begierlichkeit [d.h. die astrologische Auslösung] des äusseren Firmaments, so ziehen sie diese an sich wie die Erde den Regen. Ist jene himmlische Anziehung gesund, so ist sie gut, wo nicht, da ist sie Gift.” — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band VIII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1924, p. 166

19 see: Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band VII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1932, p. 284-286, or Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band VIII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1932, p. 110

20 For further reading on this topic see: Peuckert, Will-Erich; *Astrologie - Geschichte der Geheimwissenschaften, Band 1*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1960 or more specifically as it relates to ritual magic: Lehman, Lee; *The Conjunction of Electional Astrology and Magic*, in: Coppock, Austin; Schulke, Daniel (ed.); *The Celestial Art - Essays on Astrological Magic*, s.l.: Three Hands Press, 2018, p. 27-56

21 “Das Leben eines jeden Dinges ist ein spiritualisch Wesen, ein unsichtbares und unbegreifliches Ding und ein Geist und ein geistlich Ding.” — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band XI, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1928, p. 329

22 “Der Spiritus im Leib ist unbegreiflich, unsichtig [...] Der selbige Geist ist wesentlich, empfindlich, sichtlich und greiflich anderen Geistern [...] Ich habe einen Geist, der andere hat einen; die Geister kennen einander [...] sie üben ihre Sprache miteinander.“ — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band I, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1929, p. 217

23 “Denn die Ursache der Krankheiten sind nicht körperlich; darum Geist gegen Geist gebraucht werden soll.” — Sudhoff, Karl (ed.); *Theophrastus von Hohenheim, gen. Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke*, Band VIII, München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1924, p. 178

24 For further reading on this topic as a cornerstone of Paracelsus’s teachings See: Pagel, Walter; *Das Medizinische Weltbild des Paracelsus, seine Zusammenhänge mit Neuplatonismus und Gnosis*, Kosmosophie, Band I, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1962, p. 73-75

25 For a balanced summary of Paracelsus’s medical legacy and innovations see: Pagel, Walter; *Das Medizinische Weltbild des Paracelsus, seine Zusammenhänge mit Neuplatonismus und Gnosis*, Kosmosophie, Band I, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1962, p. 27-32

