

LIBRA

Libra, the Scales, is a positive sign, air in being. The sun stands in this house at the beginning of autumn as it passes the equator to commence the winter. The ruling planet is Venus.

The special characteristics of this sign are balance and harmony. That is why the composition of the painting, like that of Gemini, has been kept symmetrical. In Libra, the accent is on the soul. In the six former signs the emphasis was placed on the evolving self; the non-self is central to the way experience is gained through the following six signs.

Venus, goddess of love, harmony and beauty, rules here. The point of Libra is, above all, the balance between head and heart, intelligence and feeling. To the symbolism surrounding this sign I have added Mercury, ruler of knowledge, in his Egyptian form of Thoth (1) and, correspondingly, the goddess Venus in her Egyptian form as Hathor, goddess of festivity and love, with her cow's ears and horns. (2) Both figures keep the scales in balance. In one scale lies a heart, in its Egyptian symbolic form of an urn. (3) The feather of *ma'at* is in the other. (4) Here again we have the judgement of souls, clearly linked though with loving wisdom.

Mercury is placed to the left and Venus to the right of the scales in accordance with the Cabbala where Hod, the sephira that rules over man's intellect, is at the bottom of the left tree of the pillar of life (the pillar of severity) with Netsah, feeling, standing opposite at the bottom of the right-hand pillar, that of mercy. In this way perfect balance is again expressed between reason and emotion. Both have absolute need of each other. Reason without emotion is sterile and deadly. Emotion without correcting reason is no more than sentimentality and creates chaos. Each is dangerous without the presence of the opposite pole.

Netsah is the seventh sephira. That is why there is a seven-pointed star between Hathor's horns. (5) Under this is the astrological sign of Venus. (6) Hathor



is holding a *sistrum*, the ritual ringing instrument of the Hathor priestesses. The horizontal rods that snake round the frame suggest the four elements that sound together harmoniously in the cosmos. (7) The famous snakes of Mercury's staff (the negative and positive powers united in harmony) coil round the Ibis-headed Thoth. (8) He holds in his hand the Ankh cross: symbol of immortality in ancient Egypt. (9) The astrological sign of the planet Mercury is in the centre of his girdle. (10)

The harmoniously resolved dualism of the sign of Libra is further illustrated by two Assyrian sphinxes at the bottom of the painting. (11) These refer back to the Tarot card associated with the sign of Libra, the 'victory chariot'. Here the two sphinxes that pull the chariot represent the opposing cosmic powers harmoniously operating together in harness. In the painting, the mystery animals also represent the symbols of the four elements, both positive (male sphinx) and negative (female sphinx): the head is the element of water, the lion's forepaws fire, the wings air and the hindquarters of the ox earth. A complete analogy to the four creatures of Ezekiel's vision and the four Evangelical symbols of the previous sign, Virgo. The black and white tiled floor is another reference to the harmonious working of the pole's powers at the cosmos's foundations. (12) It is also the floor of the freemason temple. The lily in the foreground represents serenity, the result of perfect balance between head and heart. (13)

There is another freemason symbol in the middle of the tiled floor: an altar in the form of a cube. (14) The cube represents the foundation because it is made up of squares. This cube is the 'cornerstone,' the Christ. It is the philosopher's stone of alchemy. This 'holy altar in the temple where the Light of the Spirits' (15) always burns and never dies' was the Hindu symbol for our sign of Libra. The cube ought, strictly speaking, to be black, not transparent. I have painted it as crystal however in order to show the ball, the golden embryo, (16) contained inside and on which the as-



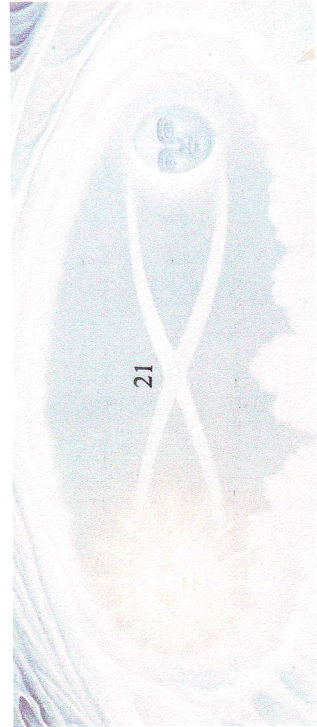
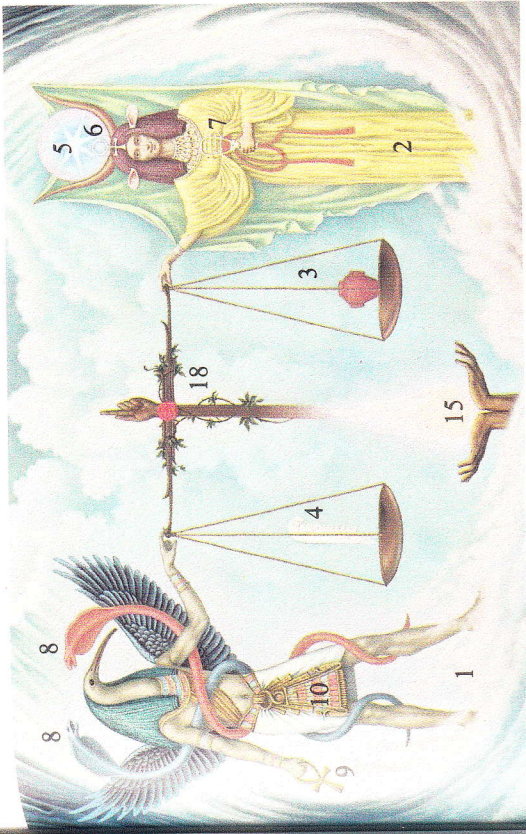
trological sign for Libra has been drawn (17) (again within a seven-pointed star because Venus stays linked with Netsah, the seventh sephira of the tree).

If the cube were opened out, the six surfaces would form the Christian cross and the golden embryo would be lying in the centre of the cross, a direct reference to the Rosicrucian belief where the rose is also placed in the centre of the cross (notice the rose-cross form in the scales above). (18) I chose the sign of the rose cross because the Rosicrucians strove for balance between head and heart in the forming of the perfect person.

The red rose is the flower of Venus because it stands for self-sacrificing love. (19)

Then some other symbols which also refer to various aspects of 'the conjunction of opposites'.

The Chinese Yang-Yin symbol in connection with the poles in the concentrated primordial matter. (20) Above that, in the oo shape (the lemniscate, symbol of infinity), the two polar powers of sun and moon, spirit and soul, which affect each other eternally. (21)



SCORPIO

Scorpio, the scorpion, is a negative sign, water in being. The sun stands in Scorpio at the end of October, the wine month, the fruit month *par excellence*, the time when leaves fall and the plant kingdom turns in on itself, slowly preparing for winter.

Mars used to be the ruler but this was changed to Pluto in 1930 after the discovery of the planet. I have kept to the old sign of Mars.

Scorpio is a battlefield of intense psychic collisions and deep experiences. This is immediately evident from the symbolism linked to the sign in ancient cultures. In ancient Indian writings, the scorpion is referred to as the 'dark serpent'. It is also the seven-headed dragon that Hercules killed; Apep, the snake of darkness, killed by Horus, son of Osiris, in Egyptian mythology; the dragon killed by St George; and the snake of paradise who brought death and yet, with it, the knowledge of good and evil. It is also the eagle as this sign is sometimes illustrated in the modern English zodiac. It even represents Satan.

If one wanted to sum up the nature of this sign in a few words, then one would say: awareness of the most fundamental facets of life and transformation of the primary forces.

Scorpio is about the libido, the power of creation, as well as love, birth, death and resurrection. A Scorpio native delves deeply into the problems connected with all these and is constantly occupied with them; he struggles continuously against those principles in him. In affliction, he is perverse and destructive. If he conquers his poisonous sting he turns into a mystic or a doctor, doing good to his fellow people. Yet he throws himself into everything with an intensity given by Mars, who rules over him.

I have particularly tried to express in this painting the essence of the creative power that is released through the death of the baser nature to transmute the human into a risen being.

I have placed the astrological symbol of Mars in a

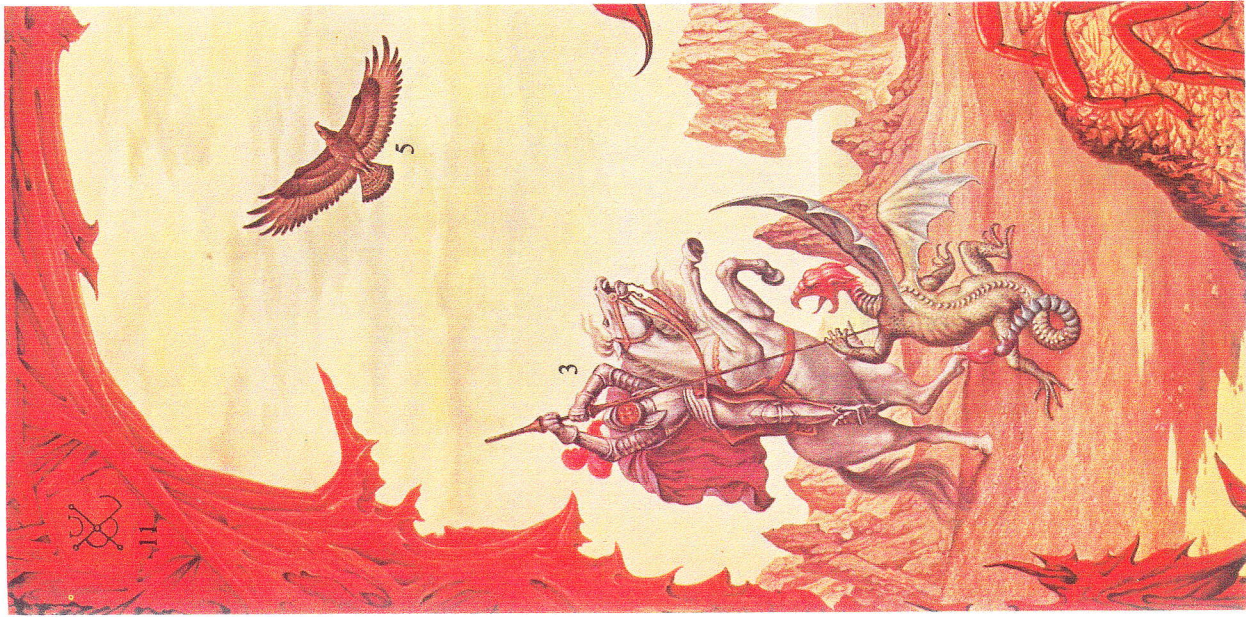


dodecahedron (1). This regular twelve-sided surface is one of the Pythagorean structures. As we have just seen, the pentagon, the five-sided surface, is associated with the planet Mars because Mars is allotted to Geburah, the fifth sephira, on the left pillar of the cabbalistic tree of life, the pillar of severity. The pentagon also, however, symbolizes the human being with his five senses who fills a pentagram with his arms and legs outstretched. The dodecahedron is made up of twelve pentagrams and that is why I have used it to symbolize man's voyage along the path to consciousness through the twelve phases of the zodiac. In this case, man is in the phase of the scorpion. He strives to find out what state he has reached but can only see the reflection of this in the surface of the sea of his consciousness; this surface is constantly changing as his own emotions change, so giving a very misleading image. (2) His emotions block his insight and therefore prevent him rising to a higher level. His instincts are his poisonous sting, the dragon of his lower nature that he has to fight, like St George (3) who represents his higher nature. He must become a yogi, a mystic, to transform the basic powers inside him in a long drawn out process of self-discipline. (4) He will then rise from this sublimation like an eagle, the royal soul bird that flies to the sun. (5) The old self dies (6) and a new person is born as a child. (7)

The cup of the old life is drained and knocked over. (8) It is no longer of any use. It is replaced by a new (because nobody puts new wine into old bottles) in which the light of the Spirit will go on burning. (9) This is how the 'dark serpent' who brought death to naivety and innocence in paradise yet makes a new person possible by bringing with him the knowledge of 'good' and 'evil'. (10)

I have tried to express the character of the lower Scorpio in the intricate pointed and hooked shapes of the frame. The colours are, of course, shades of a poisonous red because of Mars.

The magic signs are: (top left) the planetary seal of Phaleg, belonging to Mars, (11) and (right) the signature of the intelligence Graphiel. (12)



SAGITTARIUS

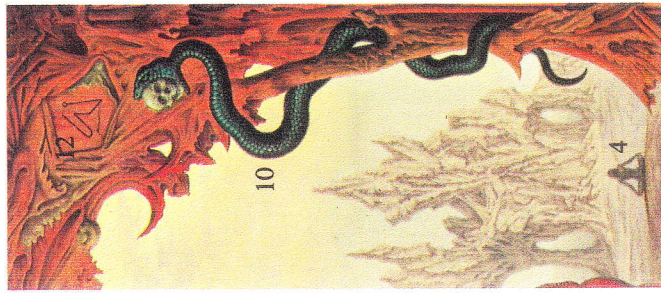
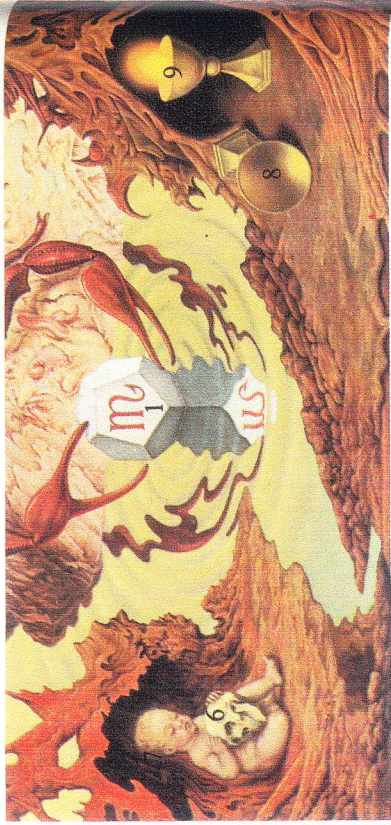
Sagittarius, the archer, is a positive sign, the last of the three fire signs, so fire in resolution.

The sun stands in this sign at the end of November, the month of slaughter, the time when the animal world goes into hibernation, rest and death, yet also the time when inner spiritual life reaches a peak. Jupiter is the ruling planet.

The experiences gained have been analysed under Virgo, balanced under Libra and sorted out (the ephemeral from the lasting) under Scorpio. Under Sagittarius, the self is projected on to this material and, together, they are formed into something completely new: the ideal new image of man. The Sagittarius native is, before all else, an idealist who aims his arrows at a raised target. The Sagittarian plunges himself into the ideas he has acquired, this being represented by the setting sun of the Chinese zodiac, (1) the ancient Chinese symbol for this sign. (The modern Chinese zodiac has a tiger, which refers to the firmness of the sign.)

The self and non-self are joined together under Sagittarius to make the all-self, hereby resolving the dualism of the sign of Gemini. The first fruits of consciousness now come into being. Sagittarius's motto is synthesis, the picture of the centaur being a good example: the horseman. The Scorpio native must continue to struggle with the animal in his nature (the ruler of Scorpio is Mars) but this conflict is harmoniously resolved in the Sagittarian (the generosity of the ruling Jupiter). Here the instinctive is logically linked with the spiritual; it becomes the vehicle, the mount. That is why the church Christianized the Sagittarian feast of the winter solstice, by proposing saints in the place of other pagan horsemen: St Nicholas, for example, and St Martin. They are also typical saints of good deeds (Jupiter again).

The urge for unity of experience in the Sagittarian expresses itself especially in his great love for nature, particularly for animals and horses, since he is himself half horse. The Sagittarian stays in touch with his



origins and although he aims high in his idealism, his feet stay firmly on Mother Earth, who will never disappoint him. He is inspired, above all, by the generosity of Jupiter. That is why Jupiter, the supreme god throned in the clouds, lights the arrows of idealism with his heavenly fire which the archer cannot help shooting. (2) It is the same Jupiter's generosity (the planet Jupiter is associated with Hesus, the fourth sephira on the right pillar, that of generosity) that rules over the luxuriant growth of the plant kingdom. (3) I have depicted this Jupiter power in the form of the plant-inspiring dryads and elves (4) while the air spirits, the sylphs, carry the Jupiter powers through the air in the form of rain clouds. (5)

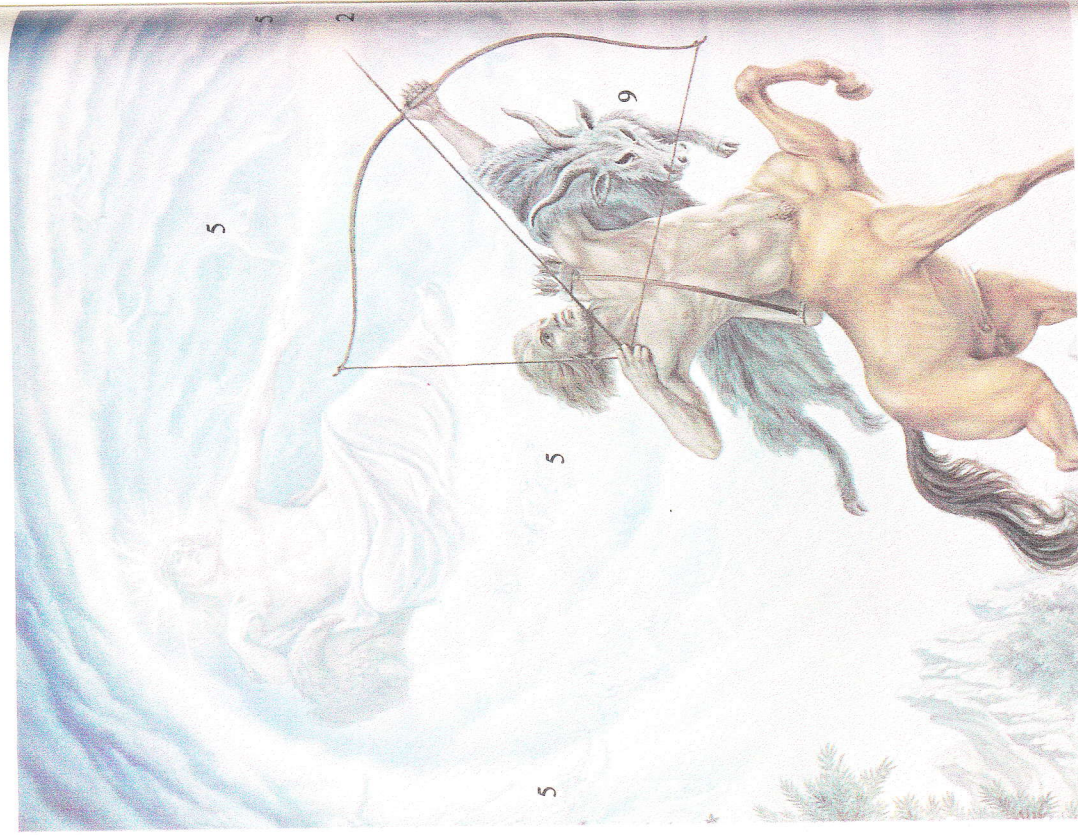
The Sagittarian develops by forgetting his stallion body in his passion (because, as da Vinci said, 'passion of the spirit excludes passion of the senses') and this body becomes white and serene; it turns into a unicorn, ancient symbol of chastity. (6) He is the mythological centaur Chiron then, too, teacher of Asclepius the god of healing, and many heroes such as Hercules, Jason and Achilles. He also becomes the Hermit of the ninth Tarot card who, as the wandering wise man, lights the way of others with his lamp of instruction. (7) The Sagittarian becomes the square door of the cave of consecration and the Mysteries, the square of construction which has four steps leading to it (four being Jupiter's number). (8)

Over his arm he bears as trophy the skin of the Ram, the golden fleece. The first fire sign has finally found resolution in the last fire sign Sagittarius, the fire power now being aimed at the non-self instead of the self. (9)

The magical seals are as follows:

The symbolic sign of Sagittarius on the door; (10) above that, in the middle of the semi-circular arch, the astrological sign of Jupiter; (11) to the left of the arch the sign of the planetary spirit Hismael. (12) To the right, that of the planetary intelligence Iophiel. (13) Bottom left, in red in a cartouche in the frame, the seal of the Olympic planetary spirit Bethor. (14) Under





that, in black, the sign of Sachiel. (15) Bottom right-hand corner, in a cartouche, Jupiter's own seal. (16)



CAPRICORN

Capricorn, the mountain goat or ibex, is a negative sign, the third earth sign, so earth in resolution. This is the sign at the beginning of winter when the sun is at its lowest; the arc of the sun is at its shallowest and the darkness outside and rest and hibernation in nature are at their peak, and the embryo is laid for the new coming light that begins to grow from this moment on. Saturn is the ruler.

It is this natural event that I have taken as my *leitmotif* in conceiving this painting.

The background of the picture forms a great skull, (1) the symbol of death, through which the sun rises. (2) The sun's rays push the darker firmament aside (3) to cast a golden gleam over the rocky landscape. This return of the light brings new life with it, illustrated by the small children breaking loose from the Saturnian rocks, (4) and, similarly, by Apollo the sun god who wrenches himself away from the dark clutches, crushing the snake Apep, Egyptian symbol of darkness, under his foot. (5) The sun hero Hercules also pins a crocodile down under his foot - an Egyptian symbol analogous to Apep - while he squeezes a snake to death in his other hand. (6) In Greek mythology, Hercules carried out his first heroic deed by killing two snakes that fell on him while still only in his cradle.

Besides this macrocosmic symbolism relating to the return of the sun, there is also a microcosmic meaning to the sign, a statement for the self-evolving human being born under it: that he should realize his potential. As archer in the former sign, he aimed his arrows of thought at a raised target. Now he should realize these ideals in steady, hard work. The goat climbs higher and higher up the mountain and does not rest before reaching the lonely peak.

There is, however, a firm law of nature that every action summons up a counter-action. So here, too, the Capricorn native meets his Saturn, his opponent.

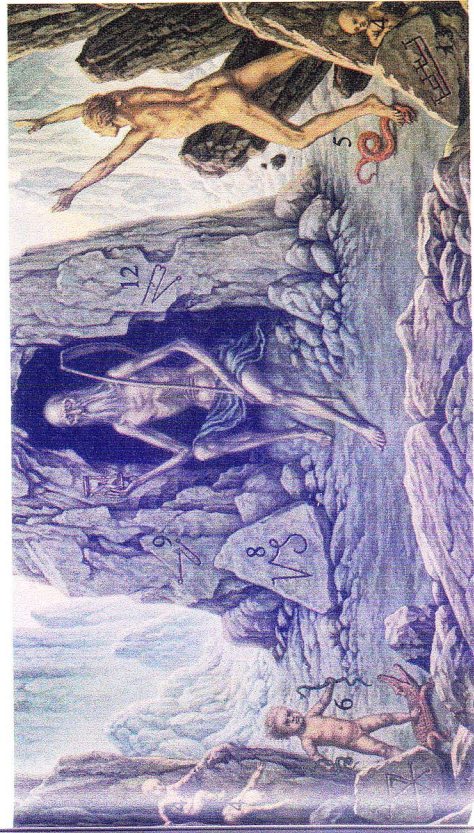
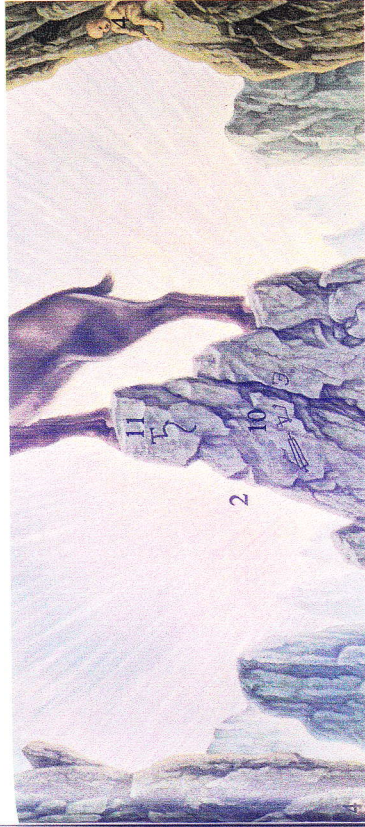
It is a generally held misconception that Saturn is



a maleficent and cursed planet. In fact, it only brings misfortune in the materialist sense. Spiritually, the opposite is true. Saturn, the crystallizing principle or Chronos, time, provides opposition through which each work is judged and eventually finds its correct form. Saturn, who brings us the obstacles and problems, is the great teacher and initiator. No work can be called complete that has not been expressed in firm matter and has not withstood the test of time.

Initiation takes place in the cave, in the deepest depths of the kingdom of Saturn. All sun gods and heroes were born, hidden or brought up in a rocky cavern at a time when the light was at its weakest - Mitra, for example, Hermes, Zeus, Apollo, Dionysus and even Christ who came to earth in a rocky stable. That is why I have painted Saturn as Father Time, in front of a cave, a gateway.

Now come the magical seals of the planet Saturn and its hierarchy of angels and spirits: left, the planetary seal is engraved in a stone next to the small Hercules. (7) To the left of the cave is a triangular stone because three is the number of Saturn. This is particularly associated with Binah in the Cabbalistic tree of life. Binah is the third sephira at the top of the left pillar of severity. The astrological symbol of Capricorn is engraved in this stone. (8) Just above that is the sign of the planetary spirit Zazel. (9) Above the cave the threefold signature of the archangel Cassiel. (10) Right under the goat's hooves is the astrological signature of the planet Saturn. (11) To the right of the entrance to the cave, engraved in the stone, is the sign of the planetary intelligence Agiel. (12) In the bottom right-hand corner, on a stone, is the seal of the planetary spirit Aratron. (13)



AQUARIUS

Aquarius, the Water Carrier, is a positive sign, the last of the air triangle, so air in resolution. The sun is in Aquarius at the end of January when the deepest darkness gives way increasingly to light.

Aquarius's ruling planet used to be Saturn but since the discovery of Uranus in 1781, this planet was attributed to Aquarius because many facets of the sign were not satisfactorily explained by the influence of Saturn.

As far as man's path of development through the zodiac is concerned, this eleventh sign is characterized by *transcendence* and *fluidity of movement* across all borders.

Having climbed the mountain in his Capricorn phase to renew himself, man pours the living waters of his new insight from the height of his acquired consciousness over those who are still in the valley below. He is the humanist who will not rest before he has imparted his new knowledge to others.

The border between the self and the non-self is not respected here. Far from it. The Aquarian lives in total awareness of the unity and kinship of his fellow men. The consciousness of self in this phase does exist but it is pushed to the background, and, as this is done, the borders are broken down.

This blurring of borders, especially in the macro-cosmic sense, between power and matter, spirit and body, is the basic characteristic of our present day. In astrological circles this is attributed to the new spirit that under the influence of Aquarius is poured out over the world and to which everyone must react.

This thought has been my *leitmotif* in the painting of the sign.

I wish briefly to examine the Aquarian influence. The moment in spring when the days are the same length as the nights, the spring equinox, does not always fall under the same sign of the zodiac; it changes because the sloping axis of the earth makes a slowly spinning movement: it moves back over thirty degrees

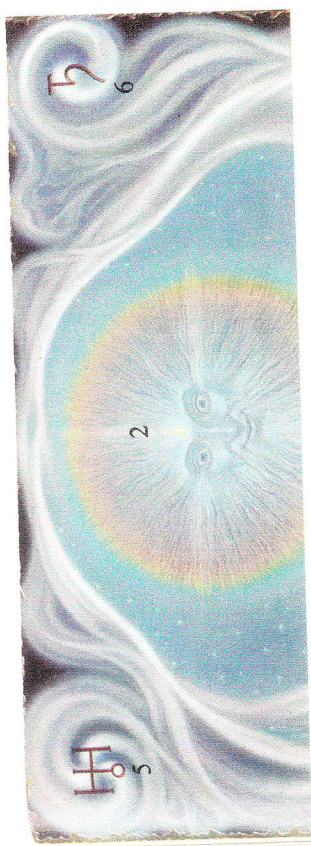


in 2,156 years. Shortly before the universal adoption of the Roman calendar, the spring equinox left Aries and entered the sign of Pisces; it will soon be entering Aquarius. Tradition has it that when this equinox enters another sign, a new spirit will be awakened in the people. When it entered the sign of Pisces, the Christian religion came into being. The symbolism of the fish is very obvious here: most of the first disciples were fishermen, and they later became fishers of men. The multiplicity of bread and fish speaks for itself too, just as the bishop's mitre which takes the form of a fish's head. In the oldest paintings and in the catacombs, the fish is often used as a symbol for Christ. They say that every age (cosmic century) possesses its own particular spirit. The Pisces age was ruled by devotion and a readiness to sacrifice. Belief, hope and love were the virtues of the time, as were modesty and gentle courage. These were the ideals, however much they may or may not have been realized. The Piscean age also saw the contradictory depths of intolerance and materialism. Knowledge and philosophy became more and more materialistic in slant. Towards the end of the age came wars and mass murders whose extent and horror the world had not previously known.

Although we are not yet out of this stage, there has been a visible change since the French Revolution; the beginning of a new spiritual condition, particularly among the modern younger generation. This is where the glimmerings of a new age can be seen.

Although the equinox has not yet entered the sign of Aquarius, the influences of the old and the new are clearly overlapping. Next to or under the established order that is obviously approaching its end and is draining itself in a large-scale cultural and economic débâcle, a lot is going on that points in a completely different direction.

Since the discovery of radium and the subsequent discovery that atoms can, after all, be split, our materialistic image of the world is quickly breaking down. Knowledge is transcending itself. Parapsychology, which has broken through our image and space, is an



example of this. Where one used to see man in totally mechanical terms, one thinks now more and more in terms of fields of power. Given the splitting of the atom, matter appears to be an aspect of energy and vice versa.

The occult, too, magic and astrology, are no longer so lightly dismissed as superstition, but are cautiously being examined by forward-looking scientists.

On the social level, human rights and equality without regard to race and religion are now generally accepted norms, the result of the influence coming from Aquarius whose general characteristics are insight, equality, freedom from dogma, freedom of speech and, especially, kindred with all people. Differences and borders are blurred. Aquarius brings unity. That man has literally conquered the black power and left the earth to travel in space and because of that has begun to think in cosmic terms, is more than just symbolic.

I have built all these characteristics into the picture in vague, fluid forms which are borrowed from the spiralling air streams visibly formed in aerodynamic wind tunnels. (1) These movements represent the electro-magnetic waves of the new age that are poured out by the water carrier over the earth; everything is transcended through them.

The all-ruling Uranus radiates out over the world like a spiritual sun. (2)

Seven lotus flowers drink up this new current of power. They are the seven *chakras*. According to Tantric Hindu doctrine, seven psychic organs reside in the astral body of man and are linked to our central nervous system. As 'wheels' of psychic energy, they suck in the life power, the Prana, taking care of our vitality in the process.

Spiritual influences are taken in with the Prana, and these then determine our spiritual state. In this painting the flowers also form a Menorah, the holy seven-branched candlestick of the Jews representing the seven lights before God's throne. (3)

In the background the former ruler of Aquarius is

worked into the skull motif. It is the gateway of initiation, the gateway of Saturn. In the distance, the pilgrim passes through the gateway on his path of life to Mount Salvat where the raised castle of the Grail beckons him from the Universal Consciousness. (4)

Because Uranus was only discovered when the mediaeval system of magical correspondences had already been developed for some time, this planet has never been associated with the hierarchy of angels and intelligences. For the same reason, there are no references to the cabalistic tree of life. That is why I have only depicted the astrological signature of the new ruler Uranus (top left) (5) and the old ruler Saturn (top right). (6) Beneath the middle lotus flower the symbol of Aquarius is formed in the waves of power. (7)

The lines of the frame are borrowed from the flowing movements characteristic of Art Nouveau. This period in art was, in my opinion, the first clearly to show the Aquarian influence.



PISCES

Pisces, the Fishes, is a negative sign, the last of the water triangle, so water in resolution. The sun stands in this sign at the end of February when the last dead bits of winter are cleared up and nature slowly prepares itself for the beginning of a new cycle. Neptune is the ruling planet. Before 1846 when this planet was discovered, it was Jupiter.

The sign of Pisces forms the last phase in the path of human development through the twelve signs of the zodiac. Man will continue his path, starting the cycle again but this time on a higher spiral. In the Pisces sign, the resolution of form and the borders between sign and non-self fall away completely. They constantly overlapped under Aquarius but under Pisces they disappear from the consciousness. From the point of view of the material world this freedom of form is seen as sacrifice and death. Seen, however, from a spiritual point of view, it means liberation and birth in new, wider perspectives. Under this last sign the experiences gained in the now-ended cycle are abstracted. The contents are separated from the factual form. Only the essence of the experience remains.

The characteristics of the sign Pisces are therefore *synthesis, resolution and liberation*. The mystic comes under these headings as he turns away from the world of phenomena and, looking inwards, sinks into the primordial basis of all things from which he himself once came. The circle closes here. Life came once from the primordial ocean. Now it returns to it, more conscious and richer in experience. Is it then surprising that Neptune, god of the sea, has been attributed ruler of this water sign? The former ruler Jupiter did express the generosity, mercy and nurturing aspects of Pisces but it was not until the discovery of the planet Neptune that an explanation was provided for the urge to self-sacrifice and resolution in the sea of life of the Piscean mystic.

The sign of Pisces was originally illustrated by one fish or by the fish-man John. In Mesopotamia though



it was shown as a 'girdle', a rope or chord with which the fish were tied, swimming in opposite directions.

I have combined this latter idea with the Chinese Yang Yin sign: the depiction of absolute balance and the eternal play between the male and female principles within the revealed unity. It symbolizes the complete person of this last sign of the zodiac.

The girdle binding the two parts together is composed of the twelve signs of the zodiac which have been passed. (1)

The red fish which represents the active part of this person points downwards, diving into its inner world. (2) The blue fish, the passive part, represents the outside world because man has no more interest in the world of phenomena; it has become unreal to him. (3) His only reality is the immeasurable kingdom of the primordial oceans of his inner world.

Top left is the sign of Neptune. (4) Top right that of Jupiter (5) and bottom centre the symbol of Pisces. (6)

