

THE TERM TRIA PRIMA OF PARACELSUS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED

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ABSTRACT

Cosmology has been formulated with four cosmic elements Water, Earth, Air and Heat (Fire). They are really the raw materials of creation. As final products in man there is Body, Spirit, and Soul. As inorganic substances they would be Salt, Mercury and Sulphur. But these as forms of matter would be Solid, Liquid and Gas (potentially). Thus the Tria Prima of Paracelsus is justifiable as representing the final or end products of creation.

When man tried to study his environment he realized that he was on dry land but the surface of the earth could be divided as covered by water and dry land, better called here the earth. And of these two, water covered the larger portion of the surface of globe. As result water and earth became two cosmic elements. Then it was established that air was everywhere on the surface of the globe. Accordingly Air became the third cosmic element. Finally the heat of the sun raised the temperature of every thing on earth. Hence Heat became the fourth cosmic element. Now to convey these facts they resorted to symbolism, as a concise method of expression.

The result was the symbol of cosmology, Water Air and Earth being forms of matter were tangible themselves but Heat being energy had to be symbolized by a tangible entity. Fire then was selected as the symbol of heat. Thus resulted four cosmic elements as Water, Air, Earth and Fire. By their homogeneous and extensive nature they were like raw materials of creation from which later on arose the final end products of creation. These however never appeared in any symbol of cosmology. The one who missed this most was the alchemist, Paracelsus (1). He took man as the model of creation, and man was constituted of three items, Body, Soul and Spirit. These were the Tria

Prima, the three principal constituents of man. On that basis there must correspondingly be three constituents even the final inorganic forms of creation. In this case the Tria Prima would be of generic nature applicable to any substance as creation. He took spirit and projected it as Mercury. This because Mercury like gold is everlasting and spirit would also be such. Then it is sublimable which further allies it to spirit. Briefly spirit = Mercury. Body is material and has a definite form. Here comes common salt which has a crystalline shape of its own. Above all salt, as present in solution in sea water would be the largest single substance as creation on this globe. Salt then was selected as one of the Tria Prima by Paracelsus. Finally was left soul which was to find a corresponding entity among the inorganic substances when cosmology was considered as heaping to formulation of Tria Prima, Water = Mercury, Earth = Salt, then were left Heat and Air as the other two cosmic elements. In themselves specially heat is nontangible. It was now possible to represent Heat by an entity which would be potentially Heat. Sulphur appeared to be a substance which is ignitable and burns without leaving any residue.

On this account it was conceived as being potentially Heat. Further Sulphur on burning becomes the gas, sulphur dioxide and as such sulphur would also be considered as potential gas hence potential air. Sulphur then symbolized potential Heat and potential Air. Although the idea of soul could not suggest sulphur but cosmology did help in finding sulphur as representing Air and Heat. We then have the following corresponding entities.

Body = Earth = Salt

Spirit = Water = Mercury

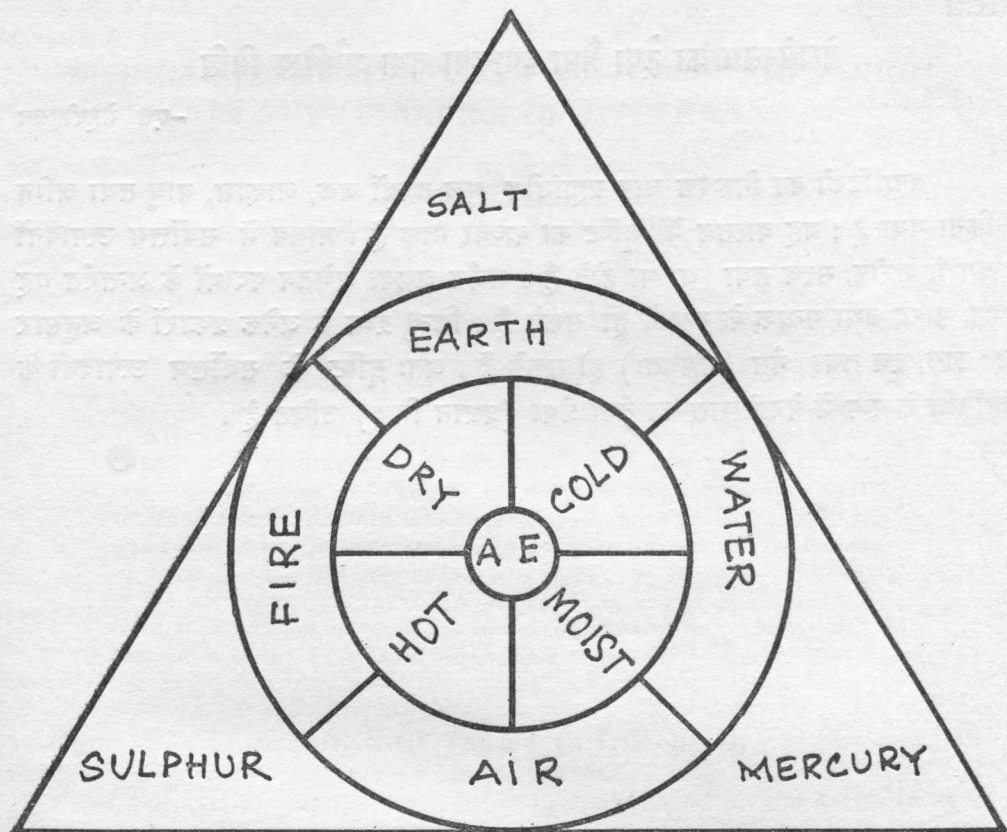
Soul = Air + Heat = Sulphur

A critical consideration will indicate that according to their physical properties Salt is a solid, Mercury is liquid, and Sulphur potentially gas, as explained above. Thus the tria prima does represent the three forms of matter as solid, liquid and potentially gas.

REFERENCE :

Mahdihassan, S. (1989). The Arabian Origin of the term Alcool and Tria Prima used by Paracelsus.

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1. Symbol of Existence four cosmic elements as raw material of creation, and three entities as the final products. These as Salt = Solid, Mercury = Liquid and Sulphur = Air + Heat (potentially) AE = A ether.

सारांश

पेरासेल्सस का ट्रैया प्रैमा व्याख्या तथा औचित्य सिद्धि

-एस. मेहदीहसन

ब्रह्मांडिकी का निरूपण चार ब्रह्मांडीय मूल तत्त्वों जल, आकाश, वायु तथा अग्नि से किया गया है। यह वास्तव में सृष्टि का कच्चा माल हैं। मानव में सर्वोत्तम उत्पादनों के रूप में शरीर, सत्त्व तथा आत्मा होते हैं। अजैव अथवा अचेतन पदार्थों के अन्तर्गत यह लवण, पारद तथा गन्धक के रूप में हो सकते हैं। किन्तु द्रव्य के अनेक प्रकारों के अनुसार यह ठोस, द्रव तथा गैस (संभवतः) हो सकते हैं। अतः सृष्टि के सर्वोत्तम उत्पादनों के प्रतिनिधि के रूप में पेरासेल्सस का ट्रैया प्रैमा (प्रधान त्रिक) उचित है।

