

How did 12 Mineral Salts Become Associated with the 4 Elements? The Zodiac and the Body

Once upon a time, thousand of years ago, the ancient Babylonians began thinking about the human body and the constellations of the zodiac. Yet the first written mention of the human body being related to astrology was in an ancient Roman text, The Astronomican. Each sign of the Zodiac corresponded to a part of the body. Starting with the first sign, Aries was said to rule the head down to the last sign Pisces that ruled the feet. As knowledge of physiology grew, so did the idea that different signs ruled endocrine glands and the nervous system.

Later, there were contributions by the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates and in the 16th century, physician and alchemist Paracelsus,, postulated that the external world corresponded to the various parts of the internal world, as above so below. The 19th century brought homeopathic medicine into the picture. Homeopathy looks at health and illness as a reflection of balance one's vital life force or energy.

In the mid 19th century, a German physician, William Schuessler began investigating the role of minerals in human health. He believed that disease resulted from an imbalance of the minerals. Another great 19th century scientist Virchow influenced Schuessler's ideas. Virchow believed the human body to be a collection of invisible cells and that illness resulted from a breakdown of the individual cells. Schuessler combining this cellular theory and his theory about the minerals set about to isolate minerals from the tissues/cells of the human body. Getting ashy human remains, he detected 12 minerals salts, which he called "cell or tissue salts"

In early 20th century, Dr. George Washington Carey building on the work of Schuessler, developed modern astrological medicine. Trained in homeopathy, biochemistry, astrology and religion, Carey allocated each of the 12 cell salts to a sign of the Zodiac. Choice of salt to body part links back to the ancient body map and confirmed by linguistic and alchemical evidence. Later, based on their spiritual guidance, Carey and Isadora Perry expanded astrological cell salts beyond the physical; homeopathic cell salts could be used to raise consciousness to a higher spiritual and emotional plane.

Now I, a biochemist and medical scientist in the late 1970s, come into the picture. Reluctantly I agreed to photograph these mineral salts with my microscope. I received the 12 pure mineral salts, not homeopathic preparations. After completing the photography I detected a surprising pattern of 4 predominant shapes. One symbolic concept in astrology is the **four elements**. To my shock the shapes distributed themselves according to the 4 elements of air, water, fire and earth! Minerals associated with the earth element were round, air mineral salts were square, water curvy, and the fire sign minerals were hexagonal.

How was this possible – that the microscopic view of a mineral fit perfectly into its symbolic relationship to its element? Could I have uncovered, through scientific technology, a link between ancient mythology and modern biology. Not an easy idea for this mainstream academic scientist. Yet as I delved more into the symbols of astrology, these microscopic forms also confirmed to other ancient metaphysical elemental concepts and to their physical forms in nature. And so began the grand exploration of the elementals of life, what can they teach and show us. Can we use this symbol system to access deeper wisdom within and to know ourselves better?

How these photographs were taken.

At the time, I was a medical research scientist at the University of California Medical School, Taking a break from my lab one day I walked down to Golden Gate Park, went into the science museum and saw an art exhibit of chemicals of the brain taken with the same kind of microscope I used for my research My life changed forever from taking that break. I photographed the 12 mineral salts through an Olympus Interference Microscope, using 35mm slide film. The mineral salts are magnified 31x; the colors come from refraction of the white light of the microscope through 2 prisms on the microscope. Dr. Barrett says she is painting with light.