Supplement to the Lecture

The following supplement was added to the lecture, *The Myth of the Third Millennium*, because of certain topics that were touched on in both the lecture and the New Year Reading 2009.

**Angels, Devas, Nature Spirits and Elementals**

One of the most confusing ideas that come towards us when we first encounter the teachings of the Western Spiritual Tradition is that “God” is no longer singular. As a saying from the beginnings of Greek philosophy has it:

> All things are full of gods.
> (Attributed to Thales of Miletus by Aristotle)

To those of us brought up in the traditional Christian church (especially the Protestant version of it) this seems like the worst kind of blasphemy. After all, as the Nicene Creed puts it:

> I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. ... 

Of course, the creed then goes on to confuse the issue by introducing what appear to the outsider to be two more gods: the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. Never let it be said that logic and common sense ever stood in the way of a good theological paradox!

The idea that the universe is populated by (normally) invisible spiritual beings was much more acceptable to the Medieval Christian. Angels, Archangels and a whole panoply of spirits (both good and evil) were part of every day life and worship. In this supplement I want to examine (briefly) some of these beings as they are known to us in what we call the Western Spiritual Tradition, or as Mario would call it, the Occult Tradition.

**Angels**

Angels are, of course, part and parcel of the Christian tradition. Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus to Mary; Michael makes war against the dragon. The book of Revelation in particular is filled with angels. Our word angel comes from the Greek word *aggelos* – which means literally *messenger*. The role of Gabriel, for example, is to deliver a message. Christian theology understood that angels were intermediaries between God and the world of men. They came to give a message to certain people.

In the Old Testament, angels are described as men. When God decides to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18-19) three men arrive to visit Abraham. These are the angels who have been sent as messengers to deliver God’s plans and also to carry out his purpose.

In the early Christian era, angels acquired wings. This may have been a result of adapting statues of the Greek goddess of victory (Nike) who was traditionally shown as winged. The picture below is a traditional depiction of an angelic visitation:
There is a huge literature on angels. It seems that today every second psychic is talking to angels or passing on angel wisdom or channelling angels or producing packs of “Angel Cards”. In the Western tradition angels are associated with us on a one-to-one basis. They work within the astral bodies changing the way we become able to respond to others. If we become open to this work, then the shell of astral selfishness that normally surrounds us will soften and we shall become able to embrace others in the true sense of sharing that we spoke about in the lecture.

The Guardian Angel
It is part and parcel of Western tradition that we have one angel who has a personal relationship with us. This is our “Guardian” angel. Catholic theology declares that every soul acquires a guardian angel at birth and this angel guides and guards us throughout our life. There are many stories where people have been miraculously saved through the intervention of a voice, or a mysterious force. Both Steiner and Mario affirmed the existence of guardian angels. Mario’s views on Guardian angels are found in the next appendix (Guides and Guardian Angels – Some Thoughts).

The Hierarchy
In our tradition, angels are part of a nine-fold hierarchy. Above the angels are the Archangels, then the Archai and so on. The hierarchy is described in Appendix 2.
Devas

The word *Deva* is a Sanskrit word. It means literally, “Shining One”. Really a Deva is an angel or perhaps an even higher spiritual being. It is a very useful word, however, because it enables us to separate the functions of angels. We have normally talked about angels as they relate to us. Thus we have a “Guardian Angel”; angels work within our subtle bodies; they rule cities – Archangels rule nations; angels act as messengers between humans and the Godhead. This however, is a rather limited view of the work of the angels. The angelic beings work throughout the whole of creation and the work of a particular being might only be tangential to our own narrow, limited human existence. Those angelic beings who work within the realm of Nature are the Devas.

In the last twenty years the ancient practices of Shamanism have made a reappearance amongst Western culture. This ranges from North American Indian traditions such as the Medicine Wheel, to Neo Pagans and Voodoo. The shamanic world-view could be described as follows:

*As a loose generalisation, it is possible to draw a composite picture of the worldview of the shaman. The universe is multi-layered, with both a celestial overworld and a chthonic underworld, with appropriate spirit rulers and other denizens. There are also rulers of the principle directions or quarters. The levels of the universe are connected by a central axis, the axis mundi which appears as a sky ladder or worldtree. It is via this central axis that the shaman gains entry to all the levels of the universe.*

“Walking Between the Worlds: Techniques of Modern Shamanism”, Phil Hines

This picture of a world that is permeated with spirit and where all life is sacred appeals to many people who have an instinctive knowledge that the scientific world view is, in the end, a sterile one. The tradition of the occultist, the Western Spiritual Tradition, as expressed by Mario would agree. Remember, “All things are full of gods”! Mario was once asked what he meant by “a god”. He said that basically any member of the hierarchy that is on a higher level of evolution than are we, is a god to us! The Devas, then could be called “the gods of nature”.

In the twentieth century we were fortunate that a talented clairvoyant, Geoffrey Hodson, teamed up with a gifted artist, Ethelwynne M. Quail. In the classic book, “Kingdom of the Gods”, they record for us, a number of paintings of his impressions of Devas and other spiritual beings.

Hodson found that Devas were generally associated with a physical feature, like a mountain, or a geographical locality.
Observed in the peaks of the Hottentots Hollands Mountains in Cape Province, South Africa. The central figure was at least 80ft tall. The uprush of golden fiery power above the head was particularly brilliant. Geoffrey Hodson, “Kingdom of the Gods”

The next picture Hodson called, the Archangel of Bethelda. Hodson recorded a conversation
with this deva (it is given in full in Appendix 3):


The Devas are members of what we might call the “Angelic Kingdom”. Hodson also recorded angels who had other roles, for example in healing.
The first image on the right records a vision of Hodson’s of healing angel bathing a patient in love and energy.

Some years after *The Kingdom of the Gods* was published, Hodson recorded a number of visions from his experiences in New Zealand. Many of these are of Devas associated with landscape features. The image that follows is a picture of a Deva in Cornwall Park. This is a park in Auckland that is adjacent to the Auckland Hospital. What is remarkable about this picture is that the Deva of the park has entered into a healing relationship with the neighbouring hospital.

Hodson’s comments about the picture are placed on the right of the image.

> The ministration of the Cornwall Park Deva is seen to include help rendered on behalf of the unfortunate people at the Green Lane Hospital admitted as patients and those visiting. It was also observed that the intellects of the physicians who are sufficiently responsive sometimes receive guidance in the form of tendencies to respond to instinctual ideas - especially when a mystery exists concerning a patient’s condition. This service also applies on occasion to matrons and nurses who, without being aware of the fact, receive flashes of intuition which often, unconsciously to themselves, indicate special methods of treatment and general care.

Geoffrey Hodson, “Clairvoyant Investigations”

Interestingly, since Hodson and Quail published their ethereal pictures, the same general forms have been recorded by other clairvoyant artists.
Angels of Kundalini Fire are a particularly specialised type of being who work to raise and spiritualise the physical world. Kundalini fire is a metaphysical substance that is buried within the denseness of matter. It is an aspect of the archetypal fire of Creation. It is accessed, transformed and released by specialised angels and devas and has an awakening effect on all of nature, including humankind. The Angel of Kundalini Fire pictured here is the largest and most active of thirteen such angels spread across central Australia. The form of the angel is made entirely of vigorously flickering and flaring energies which light up and stimulate the surrounding area and spread for great distances. The immense intelligence of this great being draws in, processes and distributes immeasurable quantities of power.

John and Lyn St. Clair-Thomas
Elementals

This group of beings is very broad. In one sense we have met representatives of the elementals and the nature spirits in the angelic beings known as devas.

An elemental is a being who either lives in an element (Fire, Earth, Air or Water) or has a rulership over that element. In the Western tradition, each element has an overall ruler called the Regent of that element. The names we give to these elemental rulers are:

- Archangel Michael: Ruler of air
- Archangel Uriel: Ruler of earth
- Archangel Raphael: Ruler of Fire
- Archangel Gabriel: Ruler of Water

There are elemental angels or devas who work below the rulers. We have met an example of a Fire deva in the Kundalini Deva on the previous page. Devas who work with the earth, for example, mountains and landscapes might be described as Earth Devas. Hodson rarely observed water elementals, but the following picture comes from Kingdom of the Gods.

Below the angelic level again, there are lesser beings that live in the element. Traditionally these are named:
Angels, Devas, Elementals and Nature Spirits

Fire       Salamanders
Earth      Gnomes
Air        Sylphs
Water      Undines

Older pictures show these beings as quite concrete. Once again, since Hodson and Quail published their pictures, conceptions of the elementals have become very ethereal:

Salamander – Paracelsus

Gnomes

“The type of gnome most frequently seen is the brownie, or elf, a mischevous and grotesque little creature from twelve to eighteen inches high, usually dressed in green or russet brown. Most of them appear as very aged, often with long white beards, and their figures are inclined to rotundity. They can be seen scampering out of holes in the stumps of trees and sometimes they vanish by actually dissolving into the tree itself.” Paracelsus

On of the earliest mention of gnomes comes from the Roman invasion of the Carpathian mountains (the word “gnome” comes from the Latin “gnomus”)

The roman sergeant Publius Octavus wrote in 470 AC :

“Today I saw a tiny person with my very eyes. He wore a red hat, and a blue shirt. He had a white beard and was wearing green trousers. I talked to him several times. He said he was descendant of a race called kuwalden. He used to heal diseased animals and liked to drink milk”.

Salamander – Hodson
The Danish clairvoyant, Eskild Tjalve has produced the following portrayal of gnomes:

Finally, sylphs or air elementals are the clairvoyant equivalent of the conventional fairy:
Angels, Devas, Elementals and Nature Spirits

Conventional fairy representations as beautiful young women with wings.

* Sylph – John and Lyn St Clair-Thomas
* Sylphs at Melbourne Botanic Gardens

**Nature Spirits**

This is the final group of spiritual beings we shall look at. We have already used the term “fairies” to denote the elemental air spirits – the sylphs. If we look even more closely at the world of Nature, we shall find that each tree, each shrub, each plant has its own spirit associated with it. Perhaps these are what people who have experienced moments of involuntary clairvoyance have meant by the term “fairy” also.
Supplement to the Lecture

A tree nature-spirit – Geoffrey Hodson

Lord of the tree-ferns – Geoffrey Hodson
Angels, Devas, Elementals and Nature Spirits

A rose nature-spirit – Melbourne Botanic Gardens

Magnolia nature-spirits (Magnolia “fairies”) – Melbourne Botanic Gardens
Everything is full of gods…

By now the truth behind this saying should have become apparent. Everywhere we look with clairvoyant perception, we find spiritual beings. These range from the highest beings who govern planets down to tiny elementals and nature spirits who fulfil tasks in bringing life to plants.

In the next thousand years (and no doubt well before this!) our relationship with the spiritual worlds will become of tremendous importance. Spiritual vision reveals that uncountable myriads of spiritual beings strive with all their might to bring life to every aspect of our planet. Even the mountains and the deserts have a life and a beingness, whether we recognise this or not. There is, however, one being who is capable of destroying all the creative efforts of the hierarchy. This being is, of course, humanity. Amongst some of the elemental beings there has arisen a huge anger. Rev Mario referred to this in some of his Centre Readings when he said that “Mother Earth” is angry. Freak weather events such as tornadoes and hurricanes are part of this anger. So are droughts, bushfires and floods.

In order to realign our human goals and needs with the spiritual worlds, we need mediators. A mediator of necessity must be able to span and experience in some way these two worlds. The Order of Melchizedek has an important role to play here, for our very soul purpose is to mediate. How this may come to be is hinted at in the lecture on the *Myth of the Third Millennium* and also in the New Year Reading 2009. Perhaps this is one of the greatest purposes of the “Free” priesthood, for this expression of the priesthood has the potential to enter into the spiritual worlds in a very real and thinking way and act to unite these energies with the energies of humanity.
Galadriel – the Earth Mother

At one stage the Elf Queen of the Lord of the Rings is referred to as “the earth mother”. We complete this supplement, with Geoffrey Hodson’s beautiful vision of the earth mother.
Appendix 1: Guides and Guardian Angels – some thoughts

Years ago, when I first arrived at the Centre – I had the opportunity to take Mario to dinner – here I besieged him with all the questions I had always wanted answered. I remember asking him about the concept of the “Guardian Angel”. Mario announced that not only did we have ‘a’ Guardian Angel – we had two of them!

Why are there two angels? There are two ways in which the term “Guardian angel” might be understood. Max Heindel – the founder of the Rosicrucian Fellowship and a writer of whom Mario thought very highly, said that the Guardian Angel was the second of two entities occultists call the Dweller on the Threshold.

The first “Dweller” is a composite of all our bad deeds and negative karma, accumulated for aeons of time. It appears to us as a most fearful demonic form – and must be faced by the individual at a certain point in their spiritual progress. Sometimes when people are deeply distressed because they only seem to see themselves as bad, negative or even evil – they are (subconsciously) encountering this Dweller. The key to passing the first Dweller is to recognise that, yes we are all these negative qualities and we must absorb this into self in order to transform it.

The second “Dweller” is, on the other hand, a composite of our good qualities. Once we have exhibited a certain courage which enables us to pass the first Dweller, then we are able to receive the encouragement of the second – which at all times guides and summons us to greater consciousness. So this “Dweller on the threshold” is the first way of understanding a Guardian Angel.

The second way of understanding the Guardian angel is that it is an actual “angel” – with whom we are associated. This association began when we were still part of a group consciousness – many hundreds of thousands of years ago. The work of the angel was to unite this group consciousness through the expression of love. Now the position is different. The more we emanate love – the more we “feed” the angel and more we become free from the angel. I think that Stephen Cugley put it well when he said:

“Every human being has a guardian angel who watches over you and acts as your spiritual consciousness until such time as your I AM is sufficiently evolved to fulfil this task.”

(There is a lovely parallel in the writings of St Ambrose who said that saints lose their guardian angels so that they might have a greater struggle and persevere!)

How do we come in contact with our Guardian Angel? It is through expressing love in our lives and cultivating the growth of the “I AM”. Conversely this means, that if you have a person who is neither cultivating their “I AM” nor expressing a great deal of love – it is unlikely that they are in touch with their Guardian angel! The angel works through our expressions of love – and especially love for those in a wider social sense than our family or partner. Mother Teresa, for example, may be a good example of someone who was deeply in touch with her Guardian Angel.

Rudolf Steiner says that the Guardian Angel is the first spiritual consciousness that we come...
into contact with:

“When a man’s attitude to the spiritual world is merely that of the “enlightened” Church today, his relationship to the spiritual world — even if it is only in his feeling — is of a definite kind; it is simply a relationship with his Guardian Angel, the Angelos with whom he is, in fact, connected. And this Angelos — the only Being with whom he is able to feel related — he calls his God; if he is a Christian he calls him Christ; he confuses his Angelos with Christ.”

(Rudolf Steiner - Behind the Scenes of External Happenings – Lecture 2)

Then we come to “Guides”. Mario indicated that a person’s “guide” may be either a past life which is coming strongly into consciousness — or it may be an actual departed soul, which for some reason or other has been strongly attracted to the person. In both cases, it is not really a very healthy situation for an individual to rely for advice on a “guide”.

I think that there are many ways in which we are influenced from spirit — some are good, others not so good. There are Nature spirits, angels, archangels, departed souls, past lives, energies created by others — especially our parents — it’s pretty complicated! Just to finish, here is Mario talking about influences in the aura:

**COULD YOU COMMENT ON THE AURA AND HOW IT GROWS FROM CHILDHOOD INTO ADULTHOOD, TALKING ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE NATURE SPIRITS AND DREAMS ETC.?**

I think that would be a bit difficult because you see the aura of a child is very hazy, the child is under the guardianship of angels and archangels, folk-spirits, if you like, up until a certain particular time in life, and that can vary from individual to individual, but you can generally say it eliminates about the 21 years of age. Then there is no longer the guardianship, then it becomes the ‘guiding’ levels. So that a child born under a specific sign, or specific calling, may have the guardianship of an archangel for the rest of their life, but in the beginning it is the guardianship in other words, you can’t get away from it, and St. Paul actually mentions this in Galatians, and then it becomes the guide that guides the person in situation, so for a specific reason a person has to be Australian, or Philippino, or has to be Japanese, for a particular reason then they have to stay there and that would be the work of the archangels.

The task of the angels would be much more complex in the sense that they have to also keep the person safe. So, in terms of accidents you will find that the person who is accident-prone is a person who has no relationship with the angels, or the angels have no power to interfere. Generally you find that people who are weak-minded, who are topsy-turvy, which means that they are too much under the influence of Ahriman, rather than under the influence of the angels. But how this precisely co-relates varies from individual to individual really. Because you can have people who are 40 years of age and still never have grown up in terms of the spiritual soul levels and therefore their soul is still activated by what I would call the feeling, no, the sensation, because the soul is the one who uses the senses (not the body, the body only expresses). The soul takes in so the soul can only, through the senses, so the sense, the feelings and the will, these are the three aspects of the soul. And if, say in a child, where the will level can be tremendously strong, and also the feeling and the sense level can be very strong, but if that is not co-related with the physical body and with the spirit itself, then you
get what we call an immature, adult person who therefore still needs, very much, the direction of the angels and archangels.

**Appendix 2: The Hierarchies**

In esoteric tradition we have always understood that there are nine hierarchies of heavenly beings which “mediate” as it were between the godhead and the physical world. In the Cosmic Mass these are named as:

“…thrones, dominions, archai, mights and powers … cherubim and seraphim … angels and archangels…”

The source of much of this knowledge is found in the writings of a writer known to us as “Dionysios the Areopagite”. This person appears to have been writing about the fifth century after Christ. A certain “Dionysios the Areopagite” is found in the book of Acts where Paul is visiting Athens:

*Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.* (Acts 17:34)

According to esoteric tradition, Paul founded the first school of esoteric Christianity with “Dionysius”. To be a member of the Areopagus meant that Dionysios would have been a trained philosopher. This school maintained itself – firstly in public and then later in secret, and the teachings of the school were given publicly again in the fifth century by a member of the school who named himself after the founder as “Dionysios the Aeropagite”.

Today, “philosophy” doesn’t have a really good reputation. We tend to consign it to a kind of intellectual speculation – often revolving around the meaning of words. To the Greeks, however, “philosophy” was the study of God. The Greek philosophical schools developed an understanding of the Godhead as a Unity from which emanated hierarchies of spiritual beings. To be a philosopher also meant to experience the divinity. This becomes evident when we read the lives of the philosophers. According to later Platonist philosophers, the Godhead begins as the “One” – and because of its innate nature which is to create – it then “emanates” the spiritual beings which we know as the hierarchies. It was the C5 Dionysios (scholars refer to him as “pseudo-Dionysios”) who put the philosophical hierarchies into a Christian context. The diagram gives a rough idea of the hierarchies according to Dionysios.
As you can see, there are three “layers” of spiritual beings. Each layer contains a trinity of spiritual beings. Thus the closest layer to the Godhead contains the Cherubim, Thrones and Seraphim. In occult understanding these beings are no longer involved in human evolution. The next layer contains the Dominions, Mights and Powers, whilst the third layer contains Archai, Angels and Archangels.

We can also note that the being in each layer is a “copy”, or as Plato and Paul (in Hebrews) calls it, a “resemblance” of the being in the layer above. This means that, for example, the Cherubim, Dominions and Archai are expressions of the same aspect of the Godhead. The Thrones, Mights and Angels are similarly expressions of a different aspect; and the Seraphim, Powers and Archangels again are expressions of the third aspect of divinity.

Just what these “aspects” of divinity are is a good question. Again, the Platonist philosophers are very helpful here. The first manifestation of divinity in the Platonist (aka “neo-Platonist”) philosophy is called:

Being – Mind – Soul

The third diagram should make this a bit clearer. Here I have replaced the Cherubim, Thrones and Seraphim with their philosophical equivalents: Being, Mind and Soul.

This means then that the Dominions and Archai are expressions of “being”; the Mights and the Angels of Mind; and the Powers and Archangels expressions of “soul”.

These spiritual beings go by quite a variety of names – here is a little table which summarises some of them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominions</th>
<th>Kyriotetes</th>
<th>Spirits of Wisdom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thrones</td>
<td>Thronois</td>
<td>Spirits of Will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mights</td>
<td>Dunameis</td>
<td>Spirits of Motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powers</td>
<td>Exusia</td>
<td>Spirits of Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archai</td>
<td>Archai</td>
<td>Spirits of Beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archangels</td>
<td>Archangels</td>
<td>Spirits of Fire</td>
</tr>
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(Note: In “Occult Science”, the editors have noted that Steiner is not always consistent about these names – perhaps someone misread the MSS – however these are the names as translated from their Greek equivalents.)
Appendix 3: Geoffrey Hodson on Devas

THIS valley, which is about two miles long and one mile across, is in the charge of a nature-deva. [The word “deva” means “shining one,” and is the Indian name for angel; “deva” and “angel” are used throughout as referring to the same order of beings.] who seems to have come here in order to help forward the evolution of the life of the valley. Though he himself is a nature-spirit and would, therefore, be primarily interested in the evolving elemental and vegetable kingdoms, he also takes a close interest in the human inhabitants of the valley, and works for them when he can.

It is the evening of the day following our arrival, and we have climbed the hills, which rise out of the valley at its closed end, to a point from which we can look down upon the fields, houses and woods of which it is composed. As we are sitting gazing on the peaceful and beautiful scene the deva shows himself; hovering in the air over the tree tops before us, he bids us welcome to the valley.

When first seen he appeared to be about ten feet high, and his aura radiated from his form to a distance of about 100 yards on all sides. After our conversation, however, he extended or stretched it, until it reached right across the valley, as well as down to the little stream which runs through it; he then moved slowly down the valley, touching every living thing within it, giving to each a share of his own magnificently vital life force. His face is noble and beautiful, his eyes are dazzlingly bright, and look more like two centres of force than eyes, for they are not used to the same extent as ours, for the expression of thought and emotion. A benevolent welcome is expressed, not only through the smile which parts his lips, but in his whole bearing; he radiates his welcome upon us, just as he sheds his purificatory and quickening power on the whole valley.

The colours of his aura are brilliant and constantly changing, as they flow in waves and vortices outwards from the central form. The colour scheme changes minute by minute; now the predominating colour may be a deep royal blue with red and golden yellow and green sweeping across and through it, making eddies and waves of brilliant colour as they flow outwards in a continuous stream; now they change completely - there is a background of pale rose-du Barry, with a soft eau-de-nil, sky blue and the palest of yellows. Occasionally, where the mighty auric pinions are outlined in golden fire, he looks like a great bird with the edges of its wings lit up by the setting sun. There is a continual play of force, like a miniature Aurora Borealis, rising from his head, high up into the air, and in the middle of the head there is a blazing centre of light, which is the seat of the consciousness in the form. As I describe him, he has suddenly risen into the heavens, where he hovers so high up as to be almost invisible. Even at this height, however, he still holds the valley within his consciousness.

His character is an unusual combination of the deva’s vivid sense of freedom from all limitations and the human capacity for tenderness, deep concern for others, and love. I feel sure that every birth and death within the valley must be known to him, and that the pain, which accompanies both, is eased by him to the utmost of his power; for I see memory-forms in his aura, which show him taking within its glowing radiance the souls of those, who have but just died, sheltering them, and guiding them to a place of peace; I see that he watches the children at play, and the old folk taking their ease; he is, indeed, the guardian angel of the valley, and happy are they who live within his care. The hosts of lesser nature spirits obey
him, and I see the earth-men and the tree-men and the lower fairies answering to his touch as his power rushes out upon them; the elves and the brownies feel a sudden exaltation, the source of which they cannot fully comprehend, though they recognise it to be a constant feature of their lives; the fairies feel an added frolicsomeness and joy as he plays upon them with his radiant life. All Nature seems to be quickened by his presence here.

His influence gives a certain quality, a local Characteristic, a special atmosphere, distinctly noticeable throughout the whole length of the valley, which has a charm amounting almost to glamour; it must also affect every human being who lives here for any length of time, particularly those who are born and live within the continual play of his auric life, and there surely must be times when they feel the spirit of the deva upon them.