When the universe was young, the first stars were born as vast spheres of hydrogen, which over millions of years produced helium and then carbon, neon and oxygen, each alchemical step releasing more and more magnesium. The first substantial, non-gaseous elements fabricated in the process of stellar synthesis were magnesium and carbon, which, if joined together by means of oxygen, form the carbonate of magnesium: the first molecule – the mother molecule! This is a natural process, for when magnesium, a very light, soft, silvery-white metal, is exposed to air, a protective surface coating of the carbonate forms, preventing further oxidation. By the same analogy, Magnesium carbonate (Mag carb) may also be considered the first child of the universe.

The shamanic perspective
Homeopathy is the art of unravelling mysteries and symbols, of interpreting in the light of external features of appearance and demeanour, and the language of symptoms and signs, the inner reality of the patient. The same analytical process is used to unlock and understand the inner mystery or healing power of a remedy. The shamans of ancient and primitive cultures were weavers of myth, magic and medicine. They were aware that behind the tangible world of forms and events lies a deeper, unseen, timeless reality, embodying an absolute truth of which the manifest world is but a symbol. In contemplating an earthly object or happening, they were consciously in the presence of its spiritual counterpart. Similarly, homeopathic
proving enable us to peer behind the veil of physical phenomena and view this higher dimension. Combining this knowledge with the insight of a medicine man of old, we are able to ponder the awful plight of the first, hypothetical molecule of the creation.

One alone

It is solitary, isolated and alone, exposed to an extremely hostile and unfamiliar environment. It has descended from the security and tranquillity of the oceanic field of energy from which all matter emerges. This is analogous to being cast out of a heavenly paradise, or a sensitive being’s experience of severance from mother at birth or, more traumatically, being snatched from the symbiotic bliss of the uterine, amniotic fluid by a pair of latex-gloved hands during Caesarean section. We can anticipate that the holding environment into which the child is born is not consistently supportive, nurturing and caring. Unconsciously, the child will not feel that it can count on being protected, understood, loved and made to feel valuable. The child or adult may have a deep, inexplicable sense that they have been deserted and forsaken, or that they will be abandoned. They may feel utterly friendless. Understandably, they often suffer from homesickness – a longing for the paradise that was. Highly significant are dreams of going on a journey; of fire burning brightly and of shrivelling out with fear; of cheeks and back being burnt by a fiery light; being thrown from a moving vehicle into a grave; of going astray – of being lost in a forest, or at home; and of unsuccessful efforts to find the way in one’s own house. The cosmos is our home and each one of us is a unique expression of its oneness, but as the ego-personality develops as a compensatory defence structure to deal with the impingements of a seemingly unreliable, unfriendly environment, we lose our sense of immortality and oneness with the cosmos, and experience ourselves as discrete, solitary and mortal: we go astray – especially if we are a Mag carb!

Loss of basic trust

The dreams of Mag carb reveal so much about the filters of doubt and fear that obscure a life perspective due to early life experiences in an unsupportive environment: dreams of unsuccessful attempts to do various things, of misfortune, difficulties, danger, quarrels, fights, robbers breaking into the house and attempting to kill them, of accidents, casualties, mutilation, body parts, dead bodies of relatives, graves and funerals. They also have awful fears of pain, suffering, disease, violence, misfortune, intruders and rape. All indicative of a fearful, troubled mind, filled with negativity and lack of basic trust.

What experiences could have caused such forebodings?

The forsaken one

It was Kent who first recognised the relationship between Mag carb and the deprived child. Sometimes the deprivation is as simple as failing to bond due to separation from mother (for example incubation) or not being breastfed, but since Kent’s observation, the remedy has won its laurels in the treatment of children who have been orphaned, or who, more critically, have lost their mother; children who are illegitimate and have been adopted or fostered; and all those children, who, though neither orphaned nor adopted, are neglected, abandoned, rejected or unwanted. Mag carb is frequently the remedy for children born into a war zone, children of unhappy homes, of quarrelling or divorced parents. They feel, consciously or unconsciously, abandoned, rejected, neglected and unloved and therefore unlovable and without worth, and are haunted by the fear that the family will break apart.

The neglected one

This neglected child will often seek attention in the only way it knows how: by throwing tantrums, by being naughty, destructive, disobedient, aggressive, hyperactive and noisy, and sometimes by head-banging. Others, in contrast, become weepy, timid, withdrawn and sulky, and very emotional or fearful at twilight. Mag carb suits the two extremes of infant behaviour: the tyrant and the wimp, and oscillations between the two. Chamomilla may often temporarily improve the behaviour of the tyrant and Pulsatilla that of the wimp, but it is often only after Mag carb has been given that an ongoing strengthening of the child’s ability to cope with neglect and lack of love is witnessed. Mag carb is often the fundamental remedy standing behind the presentation of the Chamomilla or Pulsatilla archetype.

Bipolarity

These conflicting emotional pictures are predictable of an adolescent and adult tendency to swinging moods, characterised by periods of high energy, elation and often brilliant creativity, eventually lapsing into apathy, inertia and depression. A fundamentally loving, caring, sweet nature, concerned about the welfare of animals, humanity and the planet, yet prone to attacks of rage or despondency. In the most pathological cases this may amount to a bipolar disorder and even manic-depressive psychosis. When we consider the properties of magnesium these seemingly incompatible contrasts become understandable. Metallic magnesium can be ignited in an ordinary, oxygen atmosphere, burning violently with a dazzling, blinding light and intense heat. It can be extremely destructive. This highly inflammable quality is symbolic of an unpredictably volatile personality given to impulsive and reactive outbursts of anger. The phenomena intrinsic to magnesium are clearly energy and light, and this is true of its most creative function upon which all aerobic life depends: its role in photosynthesis. Central to the utilisation of solar, light energy lies the chlorophyll molecule and central to the chlorophyll molecule lies magnesium. Without magnesium there would be no chlorophyll, no oxygen-rich atmosphere, no protective ozone layer and nature would not be green. The symbolic essence of green is peace, harmony, renewal, abundance, trust, joy, love and balance, the very antithesis of its obverse: instability, negativity and destruction. In all cultures green is the colour of Mother Nature and of womanhood; it is universally asso-
Mag carb is her material representative and as such shares her mythology.

The Eleusinian mysteries
The most sacred and solemn of all the religious ceremonies celebrated by the ancient Greeks was observed every fifth year at Eleusis in Attica. By way of their eminence, these initiatory rites were often simply referred to as “the mysteries”. For 2000 years the Eleusinian mysteries played a pivotal role in the spiritual life of the Hellenic world. The festival was sacred to the goddess Demeter (Ceres) and her daughter Kore.

Demeter was a fertility goddess, an Earth-mother goddess, equivalent to Mother Earth herself and specifically the goddess of grain and crops. Through union with her brother Zeus, high god of Olympus, Demeter had her only daughter Kore, whom her uncle Hades, god of the underworld, desired. Hades approached Zeus for leave to marry the beautiful Kore. Zeus, reluctant to offend his brother, yet knowing that Demeter would never forgive him if he committed Kore to an eternity in the underworld, devised a plan. He advised that Kore partake of the food of the dead. Whilst she pined for her mother, nothing had passed her lips, but as she approached Hermes’ chariot, the wily Hades professed her some pomegranate seeds, seemingly as a token of goodwill. The innocent Kore accepted his offering and doomed herself to become her rapist’s bride.

To avert disaster, Zeus was forced to capitulate and sent his messenger son Hermes (Mercury) to Hades commanding that he restore Kore to her mother. Unknown to Kore, she could only return to the world of the living if she had not partaken of the food of the dead. Whilst she pined for her mother, nothing had passed her lips, but as she approached Hermes’ chariot, the wily Hades professed her some pomegranate seeds, seemingly as a token of goodwill. The innocent Kore accepted his offering and doomed herself to become her rapist’s bride.

Demeter’s initial joy at the prospect of reunion was transformed into the deep despondency and despair. Winter harshly denudes and freezes the Earth, bringing especially in the most northerly climes, a sense of rejection, loneliness, abandonment, vulnerability and despair: the despondency of Demeter, the pining of Kore. Spring brings the budding of new life and the uplifting energy of green, bringing hope and joy and restoring the Earth to us as both mother and nurse: the return of Persephone! These are the mysteries imbedded in the psyche of Mag carb, which they so often have to live out in their life experience.

The mediator
Magnesium embodies all that green symbolises and is the element representing nature’s energising, nurturing and harmonising power. It is central to the homeostasis (balanced function) of all life forms, the essential activator (catalyst) of the enzymatic reactions that maintain function and life. As a catalyst it initiates, presides over and conducts reactions, yet remains detached: a characteristic of those who, whilst giving advice and support, maintain an impartial, objective and uncompromised stance; those who can mediate and arbitrate without partiality, bringing justice, reconciliation and peace through a Solomon-like wisdom. Magnesium, more than any other element, displays the supporting, nurturing and protective, yet objective and uncompromising love of the wise mother. No mother can be more wise and caring, yet more forbidding, stern and relentless than Mother Nature.

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The dark father/lover
This myth is multifaceted. It explicitly exposes the selfish, manipulative, oppressive and rapacious attitude of the patriarchy towards the feminine principle. In psychological terms, Hades represents the dark aspect of Zeus: the destructive, misogynistic father. Zeus is the accomplice in Kore’s abduction and subsequent rape by his brother. By his silent passivity and his indifference to her cries for help, he condones and vicariously participates in the act. In this role he is the perverted father.

Another myth relates that Zeus, himself, was the first to seduce and despoil
erful co-dependency of a needy or victim daughter and an over-solicitous, protective mother. They may be so entwined that they represent a single mother/daughter archetype: Magnesium carbonate. Although most often pertaining to a mother/daughter relationship, these Mag carb bonds or bondage exist essentially between a parent and child, irrespective of gender.

The trials of motherhood
Mag carb is often the remedy for a young woman in whom the biological need to be a mother is an intense longing and a driving force. Any tardiness in falling pregnant becomes a crisis and even a tragedy in her life, plunging her into depression and despair. Even the sight of a pregnant woman can stir feelings of resentment and envy. Once she is blessed with children, Mag carb may become a hovering mother, overprotective, always too concerned and worried about their welfare, and too involved in and vulnerable to the ups and downs of their lives. When they reach puberty, every suitor is seen as a potential Hades. Like the narcissus (the hubris of beauty), the ever dangerous and seductive pomegranate seed is symbolic of the emotions and situations, which can trap the innocent and unwary in an abusive relationship. They are the red of passion – a fatal attraction, and the fruit of passion – an unwanted pregnancy, but they may also be the spiked drink that leads to date rape. Mag carb can be the remedy for the rape victim and for her mother.

Significant dreams linking Mag carb to the myth are: “picking flowers (gathering fruit) in a garden” and “dreams, after midnight, of marrying one she did not like” – a wedding to the dark lord of the underworld!

The empty nest
The Mag carb mother needs her child to need her and she will foster dependency in her offspring by making herself dispensable to them. When her daughter is “lost” – through a relationship or marriage that distances her, by becoming independent, by moving away from home or living abroad – Mag carb will suffer from empty-nest syndrome. Like the goddess, she ceases to function and descends into desolation and despair, her life becoming empty and barren. Her Mag carb daughter, confined by marriage to a dominant, restrictive man, will pine for her mother. Her world freezes over, but the pomegranate seeds may still bind her. By erosion her love dies and so also her sexuality. If Mag carb cannot react explosively, then passive aggression is her mode of response: the withdrawal of her functions, her femininity and her compliance – an indirect expression of her hostility and resentment.

The exhausted mother/housewife
If the archetypal drive towards motherhood holds sway, particularly when fortified by religious persuasion, the Mag carb woman may go from one pregnancy to another. Mag carb, like Sepia, is a remedy for the worn out mother and housewife: a grown up Cinderella at everyone’s beck and call. The ugly sisters are her entire family. This is not living, it is surviving, coping, striving and enduring, often without acknowledgment or appreciation, taken for granted, taken advantage of and abused. They have to sacrifice their preferences, deny and suppress their needs in the service of husband and family. This is a state of negative green: unquestioning resignation, self-abnegation and hopelessness – the state of nature in many parts of the world.

Love and friendship
Green is the colour of the fourth or heart chakra, the spinning vortex of life energy in which the consciousness of love is seated. Green (and hence magnesium) lies at the heart or centre of the spectrum providing a bridge or gateway between blue and yellow, uniting respectively wisdom and clarity. Yellow provides the energy, will and confidence to communicate the wisdom of blue, and green applies it with skill, consideration and love. Likewise, Mag carb acts as bridge or mediator, a reconciler of opposites, able to settle fundamental divisions and smooth the way for accord and compromise; it provides a gateway for deep and lasting friendship – and the password is love!

Mag carb stands at the interface between the conscious and the unconscious. The Magnesium archetype will repress, often out of memory, disturbing, intense and painful emotions. Persephone is the pre-eminent symbol of unconscious repression. The archetype is not at ease with its emotions and practices avoidance, maintaining a controlled and restrained demeanour even in situations of great adversity. This veneer of calm, unemotional composure and proud stoicism is the pseudo-harmony of emotional stagnation, the worst state of negative green. This green is also the colour of putrefaction and decay, indicative of the erosive, destructive and even cancerous consequences of emotions denied or repressed. Just as there a green of vigour and life, there is also a green of sickness and death.

Mag carb can unlock the deep and the hidden. Through its bridging effect, it mediates the release of unconsciously repressed energy into the conscious. It causes inhibited and bottled emotions to surface and opens up the dream pathways, providing insight into the cause and foundation of our physical and psychological illness. At its highest level, Mag carb facilitates a descent into the personal underworld to set free the untapped powers that lie dormant and unrealised in the fathomless depths of the psyche. It restores a spiritual harvest which furnishes the supplicant with the most hallowed bread of all: an abiding trust that fears neither life nor death.