

## Dankness and Cathedrals

There is a subtly tidal dankness that ebbs and flows in old cathedrals. The cathedral's rock-wall surfaces are pocked with millions of moist, microscopic dimples. And the surrounding air, relatively nimble and dry, happens across these porous surfaces, pulling with slow, randomized tenacity a cooling vapor from their minuscule, stony wells. This vapor gathers and flows first from the turreted apses where less air volume to wall surface results in higher humidity and fractionally more pressure. In these inverse chimneys, the air thickens with dankness most quickly, and then pours slowly downward, building, as it falls, a cumulating, humid momentum. Driven down by weight, coolness, and the light squeeze of air in the rigid tower, the dank creeps to the ground where, on impact, it tumbles in a slow-motion tumult and then flattens out across the floor. In a cathedral with apses at six points, four in the corners and two in the middle of the length of two opposing sides, the dank will pour down as described from each of the six points at a more or less equal rate to the floor where all six currents will meet and buckle upwards in one low, slow, fountainous splash in the center of the nave. When the cathedral's doors are closed for long periods of time, this contained fall-and-fountain cycle will pool cold, sober air up from the floor about the shins and pews and books. The rising and settling of bodies, and the turning of pages, churns the dank, blowing off feathery fragments that are occasionally inhaled and then murmured back out into the engulfing distances, generally gray and strewn with incense, chants, and the glint of chalices.

## Cherry Blossoms

Coaxed by a celebrated, springtime seam of light, air, and maturation, cherry tree blossoms snap out in prolific clusters, white or pink, against barked wood. Unfurled into the aptly angled world, the blossoms seep their spores all strung with the oily strands of floral volatiles. When the day is still and cold, the scent is packed tightly in small volumes around each source-point blossom. When it is warm the scents dilate and merge about their tree into a single billowing redolence that in a breeze is drawn and thinned downwind, or in a gust tumultuously scattered. Delicate spawning playthings of hazard, these airborne baths hang and flow and happen onto bodies, inciting honeybees and office workers among the happenstance cloud forms and philosophies of nothing.

## ***How Many Elements?***

### ***Contemporary Debates***

*Some atmosphericists argue that the six atmospheric elements should be reduced to one at-bottom element, predicted but unobservable, that they call HAECCEITY. Others claim that there is no such fundament, but instead an infinitely proliferating number of elements that mingle throughout all dimensions in always singular ways. Ironically, both camps seek a one — for the reductionists it is the single one underlying all atmospheres that cannot be experienced in itself, whereas for the singularists it is the innumerable single ones that permeate the particularity of every atmosphere and are necessarily experienced in themselves. This text works with the six elements, not as a compromise between the two but rather as a primer for the undecided, and to this end the reader might note instances of his or her own sense that there is something less below, or something more beyond.*

## Certain Doings of Dogs and Cats

The dog circles its chosen resting place to overwrite, with its own trailing scent, any lingering distractions of otherness. It thus creates in the air a circular atmospheric bridge of willfully solipsistic design — a temporary transition from wakeful wariness to slumbering, self-fulfilling security. While it's tempting to construe the zig-zagging walk of cats as a similar demonstration of their atmospheric hyper-sensitivity — a dodging and feinting about ambient rustlings — the zig-zags don't play around external impingements as much as they project from the cat's proclivities: the zig-zagging is a display of domesticated dexterity, the swagger of a predator curbed into the selected animal's jaunty, nimble, nervous dance.