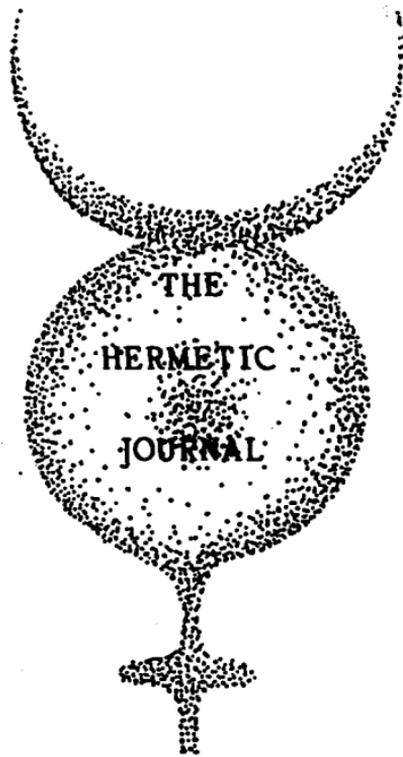


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EDITORIAL

As I was finalising the articles and layout for this issue of the Journal, news began to filter through of a fire at a nuclear power plant in Russia spreading radioactive pollution over much of Northern Europe. It was equally dismaying that the authorities involved seemed to be trying to keep the details of the incident secret from the affected population. Only a few weeks ago, I also listened with alarm as F1-11 bombers from an airbase only a few miles from my present home, roared overhead on their way to kill people in Libya. I am not interested in pursuing in the pages of this Journal the political dimensions of such incidents, but I feel that we as esotericists must try to examine just what such things mean and exactly what energies drive them and motivate the

individuals responsible for allowing such horrors to arise.

I was drawn to re-read my article in HJ number 3 on the 'Spiritual Implications of Nuclear Power' (written just before the Three Mile Island incident) and still stand by the idea I discussed there, that with radioactive substances a threshold is crossed into a realm inimical to life. Such an anti-nuclear posture is in fact not a negative reaction to new technology but rather arises out of a positive reverence for the current of life forces and a sensing of the indwelling spiritual archetype seeking to manifest through living beings.

I believe we must come to see that those who actively work encouraging the development of nuclear power fail to grasp the importance to our planet of the spiritual current carried by living beings. They are blind to the spiritual import of the etheric world.

With regard to the conflict between East and West, and also between the restrictive authority of the state and the destructive energies of terrorism, these seem often to be caught up in a maniacal cycle of shifting polarities in which each side childishly seeks reprisals against the other. Our political masters and the so-called 'freedom' fighters retreat into a psychology of tit-for-tat absurdity one can perhaps excuse young children for exhibiting, but is embarrassingly and dangerously out of place in responsible adults. The politicians picture the terrorist 'freedom' fighters in the blackest terms (and vice versa), and we who can only stand and watch, are left gasping with astonishment as we realise these people are quite unconscious that they are merely picturing and projecting their own interior blackness onto the opposite faction. To each side, the other is but the dualistic shadow of their own inner conflicts. Indeed, one realises with growing horror that these people who hold so much power in deciding the direction of global events, are entirely unaware of their own shadow, their inner dragon. We live in a world in which those in power are singularly blind to the dynamics of their own inner conflicts.

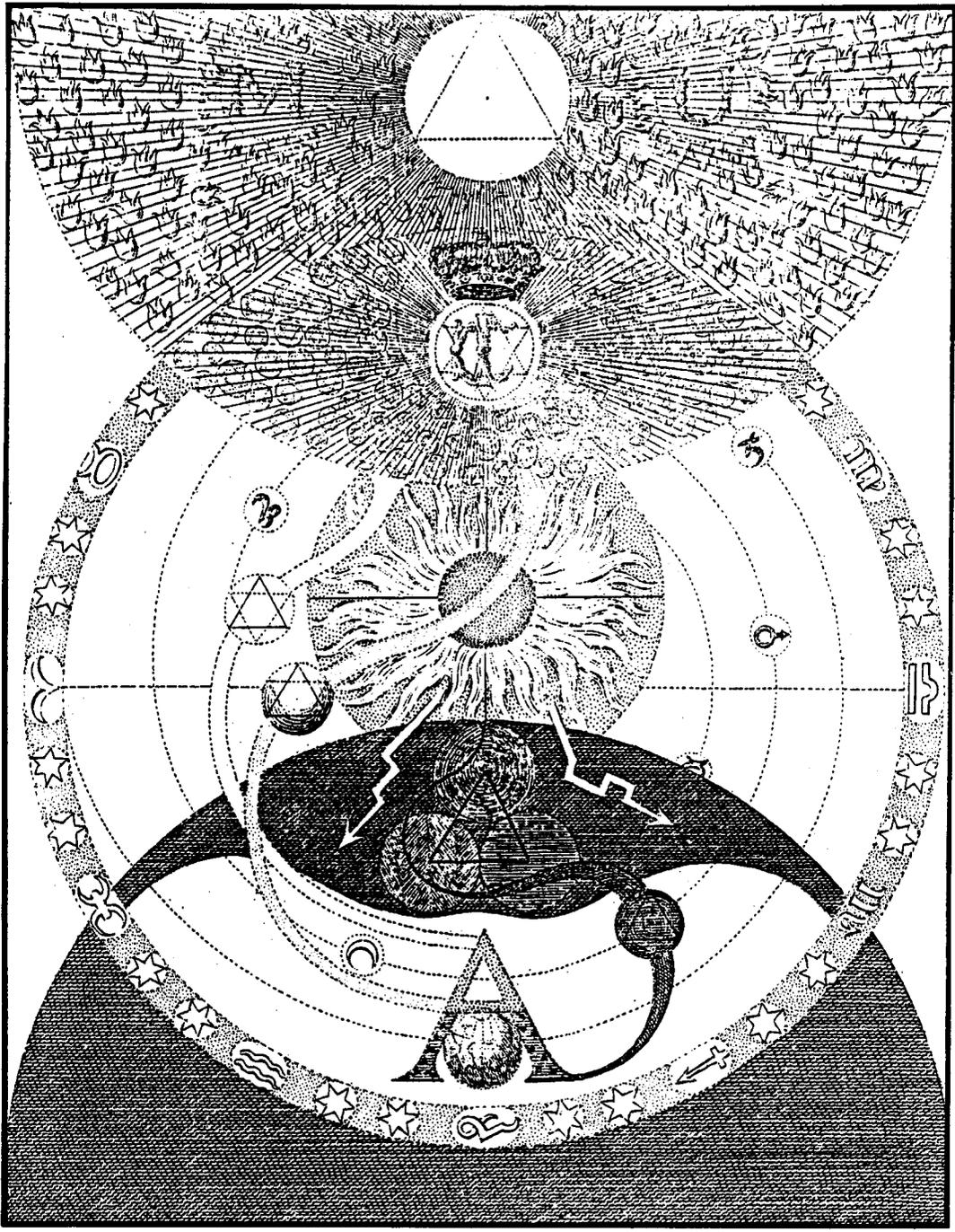
If we try to penetrate beneath the surface of these outer horrors we find that they arise from an inability of people (both the individuals chosen to represent us in the political sphere, and in a wider collective sense) to integrate within their own being the Dragon forces. The dualistic splitting of these forces is so dangerous to the spiritual potential bound up in humanity. As individuals our inner development requires an encounter and relationship with our interior darkness. Collectively, the future development of humanity surely can only arise out of relationships established between the different political and social factions. No such group can be entirely held down, repressed and sealed up by the

restrictive power of the state for ever - just as the latest accident has demonstrated the radioactive products of nuclear power cannot be sealed up for all time from encountering the life sphere, no matter how articulately the representatives of the state and the nuclear industry argue that radioactivity can be safely contained.

Over many millions of years life on this planet has adapted to the background radiation and the naturally occurring radio-isotopes, and indeed has been able to use this as a mechanism of producing new potential genetic mutations. However, if one purifies and brings certain radioactive substances together in a reactor then a process is set in train than can only lead to the destruction of life. A parallel surely exists with the terrorists or 'freedom' fighters. They arise from the frustration (sometimes of centuries!) of having their rights restricted by powerful interests and states. It may well be that these states should learn the lesson that one cannot expect to be able to seal up and restrict these people's freedom without it resulting in the pollution of terrorist attacks.

As students of esotericism we can learn a profound personal lesson from contemplating the fact that these outer horrors merely mirror interior conflicts, pledging ourselves to becoming more aware of and revering the profound significance of the life forces, and seeking to become more consciously to terms with our own interior dragons. It is the path of the alchemist, to find the living spiritual tincture that weaves behind the outer material form, and to befriend our inner dragon and learn from this encounter our own fullness of potential. The outer horrors have been with humanity throughout all our history, and this age provides as much as any previous a constant spur for us to begin and continue the Great Work. These apocalyptic times may also be a source of revelation.

Adam McLean



## GNOSTIC MAGIC AND JACOB BOEHME

by Harald Sundt III ◉

Perhaps as proxy for an Invisible Hierophant, (as Jeheshuah spake as Sophia-made-visible for his father), Mary Anne South, in commenting on the Golden Treatise, says:

"The philosophic water...divided into four parts...called elements. First, the one part, being divided, produces two, which are as agent and patient in the ethereal world; further afterwards, from their conjunction, three are said to be made - manifest as body, soul, and spirit, which co-operating together in the unity of the same spirit, beget all things, giving birth to the whole substratal nature."

(Atwood, M.A.: A Suggestive Inquiry, p. 107)

Here we see the singular crisis of all mature Hermetic or Gnostic thought. How does the One, indivisible and All-Good, (as well as Transcendent and Invisible), ever fall into visible manifestation as the mixed and multiple War of motivation and morals staged by Nature before our eyes?

The Absolute Essential Unity every mystic and poet must believe in, somehow produces and co-exists congruently with an evil Twin: the agonizing turmoil of unrelentless fecund Generation. It is the work of Theurgy to tame the seething mass of Dragons in the Dark Sphere so one foot can be planted firmly in Both Spheres, so that the Magus, (like the Bodhi-sattva who courses in the center-of-gravity between Samsara and Nirvana), can bring Countenance into confrontation with Countenance, in Equilibrium of Balance.

This dialectic-struggle of Churning Smoke and Serene Invisible Light is the mechanism of the Boehmist "Way to Christ". Just as the One went into Two, we, by ascending and becoming the Middle Pillar in the Tree of Life, establish the Third, the Reconciler, so the Three can go back into One.

The heart of this Mystery, the Device by which duality expresses a Hidden Unity is as Miss South vouched:

..."Desires are Images  
and Will their Act."  
(ibid. P. 207)

Jacob Boehme puts it thus:

19. "So also we are to consider man: He stands and lives in three worlds. The first is the eternal dark-world, the centrum of eternal nature, which begets the fire, the source of suffering; the second is the eternal light world, which begets eternal joy, and is the divine dwelling place in which the spirit of God dwells, in which the spirit of Christ takes on

human being...; the third world is the external visible (world), the four elements and visible stars."

Boehme, J.; The Way to Christ. p. 143)

Thus the visible universe is like a membrane dividing - two invisible Spheres, or a reed which vibrates sounding its note when breath divides, passing above and below it. Boehme's root-Image is of a Fire which burns seeking the realization of its own essence as a source. When, in its agony it recognizes the root of its own manifestation lay in the mystery unmanifest, then the centre-of-gravity shifts from a lower to a higher focii of an Ellipse, and what had been a burning becomes Illumination. In other words, Fire has two inseparable essences: burning and light. When we recognize the Invisible God above us, then the vehicle of the elements, IHVH, the Demiurge, takes into itself the proper Angel of the Holy Spirit, Sh, and becomes the redeemer IShVH, Yeheshvah, Jesus. This transformation of the Jealous God of the Old Testament into the Messenger from the Transcendant God of Love of the Gospels is the great revelation of Johann Reuchlin in his de Arte Cabalistica of 1517. Writing 100 years later Boehme would say:

"...the inner dark and fire-world...according to which God names Himself a strong, jealous God and a destructive fire... The other characteristic of the breath of God is the source-spirit of the light, out of the great fiery love's desire, out of great meekness, according to which God calls Himself a loving, merciful God." (ibid. p. 143)

This thinking is strongly reminiscent of the great Gnostic-Christian theologian Marcion of Sinope in Pontus who sees a radical departure in the message of Jesus from what had gone before, building on what Jesus said, rather than what the gospel-writers claimed he meant, Marcion announced that Jesus: "... has saved us from the world and its god in order to make us children of a new and alien God." (Jonas, Hans; The Gnostic Religion, p. 139)

What Boehme is doing is very much like taking Marcion's characterizations of the Old and New Testament "Gods", and making them the dialectic-manifest components of a single Truth, whose very vitality springs from the tension of these two polarized Natures. Boehme, with the Gnostics, refuses to sidestep the problem of Evil, and embraces dualist terminology lustily, driving rational language past the brink of its limits, until Fusion burns away the Blasted Tower of matter-enchained thought. Boehme concedes this:

4. "For the eternal nature has produced nothing in its desires, except a likeness out of itself; and if there were not an everlasting mixing, there would be an eternal peace in nature, but so nature would not be revealed and made manifest; so that each thing elevates itself, and would go out of the combat into the still rest,"...

(Boehme, Jacob; Signatura Rerum, p. 13)

It is many centuries between the Great Gnostic-Hermetic Era and the late 16th Century but allows me to examine one theme; Boehme's characterization of the Twin Wrath-Fire and Love-Light.

"This is the original of enmity, that nature opposes free-will..

We are given this formula; (ibid. p. 15):

|                  |           |           |             |             |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| First Principle  | : SPIRIT  | : SULPHUR | : Nature    | : Wrath-God |
| Second Principle | : LOVE    | : MERCURY | : Free-Will | : Jesus     |
| Third Principle  | : ESSENCE | : SALT    | : -----     | : -----     |

This revolution of Sulphurous Wrath Spirit and Son of God around the Invisible Balance of the Two, (making a Trinity), is the ancient core of the Western Mystery Tradition. Going back to the famous literature attributed to Hermes-Trismegistus, in the "Poimandres", Libellvs I of the Corpvs Hermeticum, we read:

"...I saw the darkness changing into a watery substance, which was unspeakably tossed about, and gave forth smoke as from fire; and I heard it making an indescribable sound of lamentation...But from the Light there came forth a holy Word (Logos), which took its stand upon the watery substance; and methought this Word was the voice of the Light."  
(Hermetica, Vol. I., P. 117, ed. Scott)

The Poimandres goes on to relate how the world was created by the union of the two natures, so in every Man, the Cosmos is reiterated. But let us focus on this Duality of Turbulence and Light. The Gnostic jibe at Jehovah, (or Sakla or Ialdaboath as they called him), was that he didn't recognize the Invisible God above him! This "lack of recognition as to the true source" is in essence emotionally identical to the state of the soul still wandering in the "Wrath of God". This process is explained in the Gnostic The Paraphrase of Shem:

"...before I (the Savior) appeared...there was Light and Darkness and there was Spirit between them...The Light was wind full of attentiveness and reason...the Darkness was wind in (...) waters. He possessed mind wrapped in a chaotic fire. And the spirit between them was a gentle, humble light. These are the three root...and the Darkness came up wrapped in vile ignorance...When I, (Oh) Shem, appeared...in it in order that the Darkness might become dark to himself...in order that the Darkness might become free...,"

(The Nag Hammadi Library, ed. Robinson, p. 309-310)

Who were the original divine forces behind this burning, bitter (as Boehme himself called it, with the author of this Paraphrase), Darkness of churning Smoke and this Light and its Spirit?

The key lay in Plutarch and his Concerning the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, where he says:

"For that "Isis", is Greek, and (so is) "Typhon - in that he's foe unto the Goddess, and is "puffed up" through (his) unknowing and deceit..."

(Thrice Greatest Hermes, Vol. I., p. 262, ed. Mead)

The Wrathfire of the Hidden-God is Typhon or his earlier form, Set. And his eternal opponent is none other than Horus, son of Osiris. Here "puffed up" is literally "wrapped in smoke". This means his intelligence is "darkened", i.e., poisoned with conceit. Plutarch goes on to describe how Isis teaches all those who desire "to become sober" the Art of becoming Divine. This word, Theioseos, comes from the root Theioo which means to "smoke with sulphur and so purify", or "make divine."

Is not this the purging, necessary struggle of which Boehme claims gives birth to the Light of Mercury out of the principle of Sulphur?

And what is more, "wrapped in smoke", TUPHON, is itself a pious pun for Typhon himself!

In the Paraphrase, the Darkness "(and) the water became a cloud...The chaotic fire...went there." In becoming sensually aroused, the Darkness "...dissolved down to the depths of Nature. It mingled with the power of the bitterness of Darkness." Boehme points to this same spiritual reality:

"The Bitterness is in the strong Attracting...so that it becomes wholly aking, (anxious or vexed.) For Example. in Man, when he is enraged how his Spirit attracts itself, which makes him bitter and trembling...so that he burns in Malice..."

(Boehme, Jacob: *The Three Principles*, p. 15)

This Sulphur is the Alchemical Heat for transformation that dries the body, then blackens it, until white pearls of dew emerge, to quench the Dark Night of the Soul.

It is too daring to claim a secret society or lineage connecting the priests of Thebes and Bubastis with the Gnostic Christians, Hermeticists and finally, Jacob Boehme and the Inner Order of the Golden Dawn.

So, knowing, I will keep silent. (As Thoth over the Cross Beam of the Balances).

#### A closing note

Dr Alfred Jeremias, in his *The Babylonian Conception of Heaven and Hell*, (David Nutt, London, 1902), notes that the Mistress of the Underworld called ALLATU, (the Mighty One), or ERESHKIGAL, (The Mistress of the Great Place), was a Lion Headed Goddess. Indeed, those deities pointing to that aspect of fertility which connotes Birth as the Gate into the World where All Things Die, (our World), have Lion Heads. This is the case with Ialdaboath, the abortion child of Fallen Wisdom, Pistis Sophia, whose Fall created the condition of our defective Cosmos, which he rules. The Gnostic-Hermetics also had another thread to weave into the cloth of their radical reinterpretation of the Universe. In Edgar Hennekes *New Testament Apocrypha*, we, (on page 345), discover that the Pagans and Gnostics had identified the God of the Jews with an Ass. This Typhonian Beast provides a ready symbolic mechanism for depicting Jehovah as a SET figure.

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## THE SCRYERS OF JOHN DEE

Chris Pickering    ◉

Influenced in his youth by notable figures such as the Calvinist Sir John Cheke, Eirenicist Guillaume Postel and Magus Hieronymous Cardan, John Dee is one of the sixteenth century's lesser known reformers. His work ranged from his production of Aristophanes eirenic 'Pax', to being an informal advisor to Queen Elizabeth on matters including a proposed Anglican adaptation of the new Catholic Gregorian calendar. Throughout his career Dee was convinced that he was a divine agent among men, and at length came to take up the unorthodox art of crystal scrying. He did not fall back upon this practice in desperation of other fruitless studies, but rather, due to a realisation that universal reformation could only be come at by divine intervention, as he explained to his God in a supplicational prayer prefacing the 'Libri Mysteriorum':

"I have from my youth up, desyred & prayed unto thee for pure & sownd wisdome and understanding...as by which, thy wisdome goodnes & powre bestowed in the frame of the world might be brought, in some bowntifull measure under the Talent of my capacitie, to thy honor & glory, & the benefit of thy Servants, my brethern & Sistern...many yeers, in many places, far and nere, in many bokes, & sundry languages, I have sowght, & studyed; and with sundry men conferred, and with my owne reasonable discourse labored, whereby to fynde or get some ynckling, glyms, or beame of such the foresaid radicall truthes: But, (to be brief) after all my forsaid endeavor I could fynde no other way, to such true wisdome atteyning, but by thy extraordinary gift: and by no vulgar schole doctrine, or humane Invention. And, seing, I have red in thy bokes, & records... Considering, the Shewstone, which the high Priests did use, by thy owne ordering: wherein they had lights and Judgments in theyr great dowtes: and considering also that thou (O God) didst not refuse to instruct thy prophets, (then, called Seers)... I was sufficiently towght and confirmed, that this wisdome could not be come by at mans hand or by human powre, but only from thee (O God) mediately or immediately." [1]

This change of direction "from things transitorie, and momentarie... to have some perceiverance of immortality" [2] caused Dee to enter scrying in 1581. 'The Private Diary' for this year tells us that Dee heard strange noises in the night and recorded unusual dreams, and writers have noted that "the advent of the dreams coincided with his devoting more of his time to the studies of the occult and the art of scrying" [3]. Dee's sudded interest in practical occultism has even been

explained as creating excess psychic energy in the household which caused the knocking noises and mysterious fires. But this over emphasis on simple dreams seems to be reading too much into the situation.

Dee had been accused of conjuring - the classification given to the art by the ignorant - prior to 1581, principally by John Foxe in 1563 [4]. However, this was probably based upon the charge levied and dismissed in 1555 that Dee had conjured demons, and not upon any misinterpretation of angelic scrying performed at such an early date. The often quoted evidence of Dee's first known attempt - "I had sight in Chrystallo offerd me, and I saw" - gives us the date of 25th May 1581 as his entry into scrying [5]. It does not seem probable that John Dee himself endeavoured to gaze into a crystal speculum. He was too bound up in a tradition dictating that scrying could only be attained through the employment of an innocent youth. Dee's sight, in this passage from 'The Private Diary', could only have been through a scryer since he always maintained that he could not see or hear and required a scryer to be his eyes and ears into the angelic world "that I might write after his voyce" [6].

A change in Dee's lifestyle circa 1580 facilitated personal philosophical experimentation at home replacing voyages around Europe to consult great scholars. His mother had died and left him the adequate Mortlake property, and he had taken a wife and commenced a family life in order to satisfy his personal morals [7]. This household contained various servants which Dee felt it his duty to employ, just as he expected his own employment to be a public appointment. The twenty-eight year old Roger Cooke believed he held an honoured position under John Dee when his master revealed an alchemical opus to him on 28th December 1579 [8]. Alchemy had been refined within Renaissance magia to a spiritual art, as typified by 'Monas Hieroglyphica'; and though practical experimentation remained as a paradigm to guide and inspire the magus, for Dee the central theurgic practice was angel magic. Despite this and the fact that there is no evidence that alchemy had any direct role in Dee's scrying, his scryers were often also alchemical aspirants, the angels often employed alchemical allegories, and his alchemy often coincided with the periods of scrying.

Through the limited success in 1581 (and especially on 25th May) of two unnamed scryers, Dee's blessing to receive the ministry of divine angels was confirmed. Roger Cooke may possibly have been one of these two. Cooke left Dee's employ on 7th September, angry that he had been barred from an important alchemical experiment [9]. The 'Dictionary of National Biography' article on him adds: "After this Cooke seems to have set up for himself. An almanack for 1585 bears his name". It is known that he was in the service of a Mr Anthony at some point during the period 1581-1600.

Then in the latter half of 1581 Dee encountered a third youth called Barnabas Saul, "(a master of Arts and a preacher of thy word admitted) accounted as a good Seer, and scryer of Spirituall apparitions, in Christalline receptacle, or in open air" [10]. Saul's ability was proven on 9th October when he "was strangely trubled by a spirituall creature" [11], and he was employed as resident scryer. "Thereuppon trying him and using him, I fownd great diversity betwene his private usual manner, and intent of practice; and my pure, sincere, devowte, & faithfull prayer". Dee recounts how Saul had to be saved from the devil Maherion which the impure scryer had invoked [12]. The good angels agreed never to appear through Saul again and Dee preserved the record of one of the sittings

under Saul's seership as a warrant for recording and scrutinising the scrying experiments [13]. This incident may have been the subject of a prosecution brought against Saul which lasted until 12th February 1582 when "Saul his inditement being by lawfownd insufficient at Westminster Hall... March 6th, Barnabas Saul cam this day... He confessed that he neyther hard or saw any spirituall creature any more" [11].

It appears by Dee's approach to Saul and the scrying exercises at this date that he believed God would appoint a true seer to him, just as he believed that he had been appointed as a true agent to God. And that the employment of various scryers was to "help in my forsayd Studies: tyll, thow (O heavenly father) woldest by thy unsearchable provydence, send me some apter man or means thereto" [15]. Though Dee would never have tested his God by searching among men for this appointed companion, he did continue to look for this trait in candidates interviewed to replace Saul, apparently aided by his acquaintance Mr Clerkson. "March 1st, Mr Clerkson brought Magnus to me at Mortlake, and so went that day agayn... March 8th, Mr Clerkson and his frende cam to my howse" [16]. No further information on Magnus can be found, but it is known that Clerkson's other friend was Edward Talbot.

The following day Talbot dined at Mortlake and talked "a great deale of Barnabas nowghty dealing towards me... that a spirituall creature told him that Barnabas had censured both Mr Clerkson and me" [17]. At a later date this newcomer confessed that he had been sent to trick Dee into admitting dealing with wicked spirits. Then 10th March 1582 "Mr Edward Talbot cam to my howse, and he being willing and desyrous to see or shew some thing in spirituall practice... on his knees att my desk (setting the stone before him) fell to prayer and entreaty... And within one quarter of an howre (or less) he had sight" [18]. Talbot was employed as resident scryer for £20 per annum, enabling Dee to establish regular and frequent contact with the angels.

An apparently important of Dee's theurgic beliefs, Edward Talbot was urged to take a wife. "E.T. wold not willingly now deale with the former Creatures, utterly dislikeing and discrediting them, bycause they willed him to marry." That same day, "May 4th, Mr Talbot went" [19]. 20th May a Robert Gardner of Shrewsbury heartened Dee with talk of a heavenly revelation of the philosophers stone and "May 23rd, Robert Gardner declared unto me a cereyn great philosophical secret, as he had termed it, of a spirituall creatuer, and was this day willed to come to me and declare it, which was solemnly done" [20]. Gardner had been in Dee's service from 29th September 1581 to 11th January 1582 before leaving to work for Sir William Herbert, and took advantage of Talbot's absence to visit Dee again 24th-26th July 1582 [21]. Despite, or perhaps because of Gardner's reappearance as a prospective scryer, Edward Talbot paid Dee a friendly visit on 13th July. By 15th November Talbot had returned to Mortlake unhappily married and resumed scrying under his true name - Edward Kelley [22].

In truth there is no conclusive evidence to confirm that Talbot and Kelley were one and the same, but writers have always assumed so and there is no cause to doubt such an assumption. Edward Kelley was born in Worcester on 1st August 1555, but the rest of his life until 1582 cannot be recounted with detail or certainty. Various stories tell how he studied at Oxford University and he was a notary or apothecary in the Worcester and London areas. John Weever's claim that Kelley committed necromancy is totally unfounded and the story that Kelley had his ears clipped for forgery is probably untrue.

Not only was Edward Kelley Dee's most well known scryer, it was around Kelley and Dee together that the ritual and paraphernalia of Dee's unique system of magic was formed. Kelley was, for Dee, the seer that God had appointed to him and was specifically included in the angel's revelations for Dee's divine agency. The scrying career of Kelley under Dee cannot be done justice in the present article and can be found in the 'Libri Mysteriorum', the surviving pieces of which have all now been published. Yet I must comment that both Kelley's nefarious past and Dee's credulous trust in him have yet to be proven, despite being taken as such by writers ever since.

At length Edward Kelley's duties as scryer fell behind as he entered into the alchemical pursuit and finally the "wife-swap" episode at Trebona heralded the end of the Dee-Kelley union [23]. The two men parted on bad terms in 1589: Kelley to Prague, and Dee to Bremen complaining how his theurgy had been hindered. But Dee never relinquished hope of a reunion, even though the parting seemed quite final and the scrying crystal was passed onto the royal patrons. Kelley had other ideas: he received imperial patronage and even aroused the interest of Elizabeth's government. Despite this, Dee retained a fond memory of his adventures and was able to keep in contact with this scryer through snippets of news and by letter as late as August 1595 [24].

Whilst at Manchester as the Warden of Christ's Church College, John Dee attempted to recruit a new scryer to recapture the past glory, but his angel theurgy was hindered by the college fellows and tenants. By 8th September 1597 he must have attempted to resume scrying experiments for he complained how college affairs "have altered, yea barred and stayed my whole course of life and bereaved me of my so many yerres contynued Joyes, taken in my most esteemed studies and exercises" [25]. This aggravation reached a height in 1603 when Samuel Harsnet, later Archbishop of York, attacked him in 'A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures'. Dee even petitioned King James and the House of Commons and republished his 'Discourse Apologetical' in the hope of ending the continual accusations made against him.

28th January 1594 "Robert Wood visited with spirituall creatures, had comfort by conference" [26]. Francis Nicholls - student in "fixing lunam" - may have been another of Dee's scryers at Manchester. Fixing the moon may be interpreted as either astronomy or alchemy: whatever the case, it was such apprentices that Dee tested for seership and Nicholls was a constant companion of Dee's more well known scryer, Bartholomew Hickman. Born 25th August 1554 at Shugborough, Hickman was recommended to Dee, 22nd June 1579, and may have been tested as a scryer at some time before the arrival of Edward Kelley. He visited Dee frequently, 1590 onwards, and received payments from 27th August 1595 [27]. Unfortunately Hickman proved to be a fraud and 29th September 1600 Dee burnt "all Bartholomew Hikman his untrue actions". "All Barthilmews reports of sight and hering spirituall wer burnt", adds a second note [28].

On the following day Roger Cooke returned as Dee's assistant after an absence of nine years - it is such timing that makes Cooke even more plausible as one of Dee's scryers. However, only alchemy and not scrying seems to have been Cooke's use from 1600 onwards. 19th March 1601, Dee received a long letter from Hickman, probably some form of apology, for Dee reinstated him as principal scryer - as shown by stray papers in the later 'Libri Mysteriorum' covering 20th March to 7th September 1607

[29]. Unlike Kelley, Hickman appears to have only been able to invoke the angel Raphael, yet it was in the shadow of Kelley's previous work that the 1607 scrying took place. Dee was anticipating a repeat of the 1583-89 mission through Europe and tells us "Bartholomew and I talked of divers of my doings with Mr Kelley" [30].

In this plan for a renewed theurgic odyssey John Pontoys was to have been Dee's divinely appointed scryer, but Dee died two years later without having embarked on this voyage and there is no indication that Pontoys ever became his scryer. Yet an interesting lead can be picked up: for Pontoys (born 12th September 1565) was the steward of a Mr Staper who is depicted as being nothing but sympathetic and amenable to Dee's angelic theurgy. It was at Staper's house that Dee dined with Dr Richard Napier on 2nd July 1604 and with Dr Simon Forman on 26th July 1604 [31]. Napier and his teacher Forman were both scryers in whose mixed libraries has been discovered a copy of Dee's 'De heptarchia mystica' treatise on the angels - written on Dee's own paper in Dee's own handwriting [32]. However, Napier and Forman were magicians in their own rights and it is unlikely that they could ever have scryed for Dee.

When his angel magic has been the subject of much of the interest in John Dee, it seems inadequate that basic questions, such as the identities of his many scryers, remain unexplored. In the limited research for this article, other figures, in addition to those mentioned above, were examined as possible scryers of John Dee. Such as "Charles Sledd, an apothecary, who used the crystal, and had a very perfect sight" [33]. Sled is mentioned twice in the 'Libri Mysteriorum' but Dee probably never employed him as a scryer, being told by the angel Galvah: "I know him not: nor any name hath he with us... Trouble me no more with him" [34]. One figure who cannot be dismissed so easily is Morrice Kyffin, who was in Dee's service until 25th October 1581 before becoming alchemical assistant to Sir Thomas Wilks, and paid Dee a visit during Edward Kelley's absence on 14th June 1582 [35]. If Dee also tested this alchemist as a possible scryer, like Cooke, Kyffin would be a plausible choice as one of the two seers Dee said he employed before Saul.

A further figure can be added to the list, the scryer John Windor who claimed to have visited Dee at Mortlake and consulted his angelic writings [36]. There is no possibility that Windor was ever scryer for Dee and his contact with Dee was probably a fabrication since he was under interrogation for sorcery at the time he made the claim. It is a testament to the popular image of John Dee in the 1590's and the 16th century that even those in his company were possible conjurers.

## NOTES

1 John Dee 'Five Books of Mystical Exercises', ed. Joseph Peterson (published 1985 by Magnum Opus), p. 7. These mediators are, of course, divine angels. Together with his 'Discourse Apologetical' this whole prayer, pp 7-8, is the principal source on this transitional period in Dee's career.

2 John Dee, 'A Letter Containing a most briefe Discourse Apologetically...' in 'Autobiographical Tracts...', ed. James Crossley (Manchester, 1851), p. 72.

3 John Dee, 'The Private Diary...', ed. James Orchard Halliwell (London 1842), pp. 10,11; Ricard Deacon, 'John Dee', (London 1968), p. 111.

- 4 John Foxe 'Actes and Monuments', (London 1563), pp. 1412ff.
- 5 'Private Diary', p. 11. The word Chrystallo - like other entries concerning philosophical affairs in this domestic diary - was transliterated into Greek characters.
- 6 'Mystical Exercises', p. 9.
- 7 Dee was delighted at the marriage of his patron the Count Rosenberg in 1536, and considered Emperor Maximilian's batchelorhood as a sin.
- 8 'Private Diary', p. 7.
- 9 'Private Diary', pp. 11-13.
- 10 'Mystical Exercises', p. 8.
- 11 'Private Diary', p. 13.
- 12 'Mystical Exercises', pp. 8,14.
- 13 'Mystical Exercises', p. 8. Some of the records of scrying performed in 1581 survived at least until 18th April 1583 when Edward Kelley discovered them in a bricked up chimney: vide ibid, p. 198. There is no trace of these manuscripts after 1583.
- 14 'Private Diary', p. 14.
- 15 'Mystical Exercises', p. 8.
- 16 'Private Diary', p. 14.
- 17 'Private Dairy', pp. 14-15.
- 18 'Mystical Exercises', p. 11.
- 19 'Mystical Exercises', pp. 76,79; 'Private Dairy', p. 15.
- 20 'Private Diary', p. 15.
- 21 'Private Dairy', pp. 13, 16.
- 22 'Private Dairy', p. 16; 'Mystical Exercises', pp. 83ff.
- 23 On this decline vide John Dee 'A True & Faithful Relation..', ed. Meric Casaubon (London 1659), part two, pp. 1-31.
- 24 For this communication vide 'Private Diary', pp. 32-35, 46-54. Kelley was dead by the end of November 1595.
- 25 Harleian MS 249, article 13, folio 104 v. This is a letter, folios 104-105, to Sir Edward Dyer, his friend in court.
- 26 'Private Diary', p. 48.
- 27 'Private Diary', pp. 1, 5, 53.
- 28 'Private Diary', p. 63; Ashmole MS 488. For some reason Halliwell included the latter note in the footnotes and not the text of 'The Private Diary' which is taken from Ashmole MSS 487,488.
- 29 'True & Faithful Relation', part three, pp. 32-45.
- 30 'True & Faithful Relation', part three, p. 40.
- 31 Ashmole MS 1488, folio 21 v; 'The Case Books of Simon Forman', ed. A.L.Rowse (London 1976), p. 197.
- 32 Additional MS 36,674. This treatise has been published by Magnum Opus (Edinburgh 1983) in which editor Robert Turner notes this point: vide p. 7. The Dee-Napier-Forman link deserves further research.
- 33 William Lilly 'The Lives of...Elias Ashmole and William Lilly', ed. T. Davies (London 1774), p. 39.
- 34 'Mystical Exercises', p. 163; 'True & Faithful Relation', part one, p. 17.
- 35 'Private Diary', pp. 10, 15, 48.
- 36 Lilly 'The Lives', p. 145.

## THE EQUINOXES AND SOLSTICES : AN INTERPRETATION

Introduction and Notes by Graham Knight ◉

### Part 1 : The Summer Solstice

Since the following Ceremony employs most of the basic rules of Ceremonial Magic, it seems useful to begin with an introduction to the structure and nature of group conjuration.

Every Ceremony has a goal - Invocation (the Calling down of a deific Form), Evocation (the calling up of an Elemental or daemonic Form), or Consecration (of a Talisman, Weapon, etc). Often a Ceremony will contain a mixture of these three.

Basic to all is the creation and consecration of the Temple. A space is created - in the three dimensions, in time, in the imagination - and in it an event is organised and celebrated.

Before all else the Temple is opened by means of the 'Opening of the Veil' gesture. Though brief and simple, this is in some ways the most significant moment in the whole Ceremony, for it opens a door, both of ingress and egress, allowing for the interchange of the spiritual and the material. It is therefore always done by Air acting as Magus.

Then the Temple is cleansed and sealed - for an Equinox or Solstice this is done in the four Elements - in more dangerous Ceremonies more elaborate precautions might be taken.

A Ceremony must weave a web of allusion, or repetition and symbolism, by means of which an idea may be stated, elaborated and sent out as a Call that is both image and Path. It is a sacrifice of communal energy ; an astral incense used by the Powers so that they may descend into the Temple.

The purpose of the Ceremony is stated and elaborated, then the Powers under whose authority the Work is undertaken are conjured in turn, each being used as a commanding voice over the next layer - thus for example, god to archangel to angel, god-Name to Elemental King to Elemental - contrary to some corrupt Goetias, the magician does not batter down these forces, but rather clothes him or herself in their strength and speaks in their Name. Therefore it is important that the imagery employed always links higher manifestations of energy with their realisation in the human sphere - it must always be made clear what role the individual plays in the cosmic drama. This is the crucial point in the Ceremony - when it is made clear that the result is the responsibility of those performing it.

At the end of a Ceremony, the Temple should be returned to its normal

balance, and all doorways sealed.

The Temple is opened and closed, and the presiding Magus positioned in the East. For these Ceremonies, symbols are apportioned as follows :

|         |             |         |        |
|---------|-------------|---------|--------|
| EAST    | SOUTH       | WEST    | NORTH  |
| AIR     | FIRE        | WATER   | EARTH  |
| SYLPHS  | SALAMANDERS | UNDINES | GNOMES |
| PARALDA | DJIN        | NIKSA   | GHOB   |

These being respectively, direction, Element, Elemental, and Elemental King.

### SUMMER SOLSTICE

(All face East - Central Altar with the four elements and Cup of wine)

1 Hekas Hekas este bibeloi !

[Spoken by Magus as he performs the gesture of 'Opening the Veils']  
[The 4 Quarters, as the Elements, in turn purify and consecrate]

The womb of the Earth is granted issue.

The Lords of the Air receive Her child.

Golden is his Form, dark the shadow of his passing.

5 Hawk-headed, twin-being, centre and balance.

Now do we praise Sol in his triumph,  
golden passion clad in shining green:

and we do Invoke the Perfect Man

to dwell amongst us - the secret heart,

10 the Bridegroom sent to claim His Kingdom

Thou art the treasure of the Earth

the secret crown, yielded up by the ministers of Ghob;

to be revealed in daylight,

gleaming and perfect.

15 Thou art the pearl restored,

the coral of true kingship -

red and bountiful as the womb of Matrona.

I - The upright solar male

whose being is to pierce.

20 O - The Ark that carries life,

the ripened earth.

A - The balance, man as god

the Will triumphant

glorying in its power !

25 These do we praise conjoined as IAO

[as IAO (pronounced ee-ah-or) is spoken, the celebrant turns to face outward from the Circle. Each in turn clockwise around the Circle

pronounces IAO and does likewise. A pause.]

We are bathed within the fullness of thy Splendour  
and our flesh is pierced by golden rays.  
Passionate father, imbue our souls  
with longing for your vision -  
30 scorch out all sloth and pride,  
that our hearts may be enflamed,  
the blossoms awakened  
by the rigour of your Call.

There is no part of me  
35 that is not of the gods:  
I stride, I rise, I sing with the Dawn.  
In the day of the Solstice  
I invoke the company of the Gods  
and I walk with them.

40 Thou art the heart of the Tree.

Thou art the perfect Form for which our soul sparks yearn.

May we learn of union, may the secret Path be revealed  
unto our purified sight.

Thou perfect before the Fall, dispersed and hidden now  
45 amidst the shells, redeemer and redeemed.

[All turn inwards, facing the central Altar. Make joint gesture of union  
above the wine.]

We who are united now, fragments of the Great Soul, whose  
bodies are the Limbs of your Body : may our union  
prefigure thy redemption.

May we so balance left and right  
50 as to attain the middle way,  
ascending straight to the Tree's soul -  
the Perfect Man  
arms outstretched in Thy praise.

[Fire burns Abramelin Incense. Hands are withdrawn. Each makes the  
gesture of 'Osiris risen'.]

As the smoke arises  
so may my soul ascend  
56 unto the lower Eden.

[Wine is now offered around the Circle by West. Hands are linked and  
individual blessings or aspirations spoken. The Temple is closed - by  
reversing the gesture of 'Opening the Veil', and by the Magus  
proclaiming the identity of the Temple across the sealed Pathway.]

The central function of the Ceremony is to celebrate the triumph of Sol and to associate this with the progress of illumination within the individual. To this end, the Ceremony is divided into two sections - in the first (lines 1 -33) the solar victory is elemental and symbolic of spiritual awakening in its widest sense, whilst in the second (lines 34 onwards) it is the individual who speaks, as one who desires a parallel experience within his or her own Self.

The first four sections (lines 2 - 17) are normally taken by the elemental quarters. They state the exoteric meaning of the Work, descending, as it were, from the golden solar lord to the penetration of this ideal into the earthen darkness.

The division and re-unification of IAO (the cry of illumination in the Eleusinian mysteries) suggests the male/female division and subsequent union, whilst via A as the pentagram making the first allusion to individual enlightenment (lines 18 - 25). Thus the section commencing "we are bathed" (lines 26 -33) begins to discuss the heat/light/knowledge complex as pertaining to one's own experience, and concludes the first half of the Ceremony.

Now (lines 34 onwards) the individual speaks directly as 'I', and it is in this sense that there follow a series of single statements and replies that parallel the previous IAO sections; and that culminate in the consecration of the wine (following line 45).

The final sections (lines 46 to end) refer back to the earlier symbolism - to the pentagram and to the union of the individual soul with the Great Soul.

Concerning the symbolism used : Since these are Solstice/Equinox Cereomies, they are closely associated with the elements and the changing seasons, but they attempt to transcend this level and align such changes with the Gnostic and Kabbalistic myths of death and rebirth within both Earth and the Pleroma. Note, especially in the second half of the Ceremony, the gradual introduction of the myth concerning the Fall and the resurrection of the limbs of the Great Man, the Kabbalistic Adamas, and the belief that "our union pre-figures thy redemption", this reciprocal redemption being at the heart of all Gnostic systems.



ETHERIC

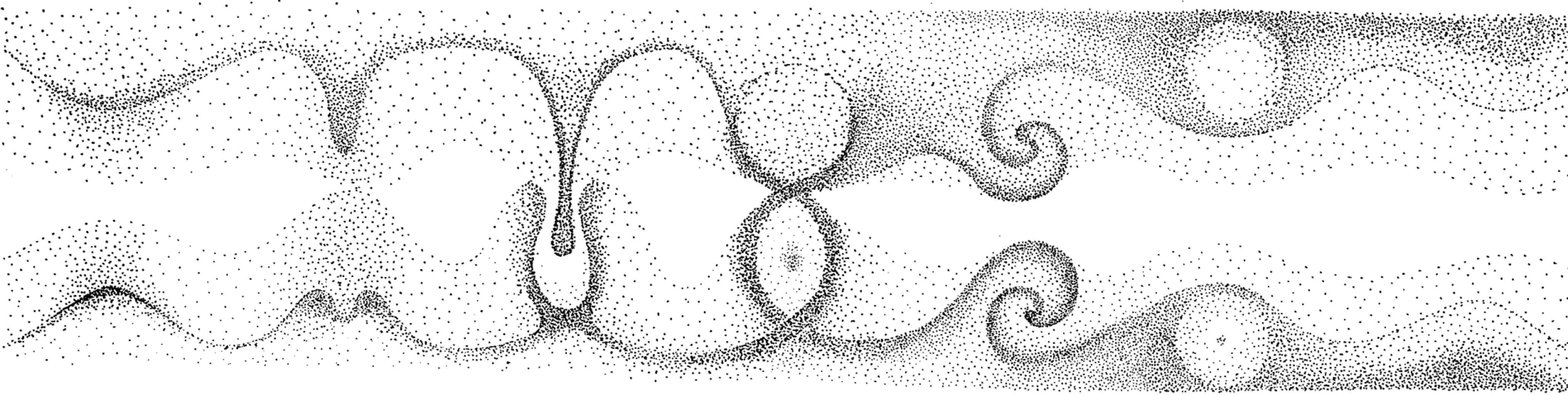
EMBLEMS

Adam McLean ◉

We are all no doubt familiar with the fact that the spiritual message of the hermetic tradition has been to a great extent transmitted through the medium of emblematical figures. We can trace through early manuscripts how this method of symbolising esoteric ideas was creatively explored during the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, and reached certain codified forms in the late 16th century. The symbolic language - animal and bird forms, abstract symbols and geometric patterns, alchemical kings and queens, etc - evolved over many centuries, being eventually made public and widely promoted by the master engravers of the hermetic emblem books which appeared in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Anyone with sensitivity to these matters, will quickly realise that these emblematic expressions of esoteric wisdom have a coherence, strength and integrity that makes them powerful vehicles for the spiritual ideas woven into their forms.

The rigidity and stiff formalism of their symbols, does however create a barrier for some people. The fixed, hard edged formality of the emblematic symbols is often found to contrast so greatly with the ever-changing quantum flow of our interior world, that some people are unable to find any way of using them as the basis for their meditations. They find it hard to inwardly picture such stark rigid symbols amongst the flowing patterns of their inner life.

Of course, there is no real contradiction here. The emblems must, indeed, be worked upon before we can actively begin to meditate upon their substance. It is not the hard-edged symbols that are important, but rather the spiritual essence that lives behind the symbols that provides the basis for our interior work. I have described this process often in articles and commentaries on emblem sequences, sometimes using an image of "breathing in the essence" of the symbols, where one does not merely internalise the rigid shapes of the emblem's symbols, but allows oneself to absorb on some more subtle (even unconscious level)



their spiritual essence. I have often laid stress upon surrounding ourselves with the symbols we wish to work with, placing them on the walls of our study, copying or painting them, or even transposing them to some other medium.

The hermetic emblems of the 16th and 17th centuries are, of course, only one codification of spiritual ideas, and we must guard against any tendency to place them on the pedestal of an 'absolute and final expression' of these ideas. The spiritual and metaphysical philosophy underlying the hermetic tradition continues to evolve and reflect its ideas in outer symbols, and there is no absolute reason why we should be slavishly bound to the past achievements of the great engravers. We should feel free to explore other channels, other media, for our contemporary emblems.

I would like just to illustrate one way of working in this manner, by showing an emblem sequence, one of a series I have been working with over the past six months or so. This emblem sequence was initially experienced as a series of spiritual forms, and only later did I manage to find a way of representing it on paper. This particular sequence reflects the etheric-spiritual forces involved in an inner meeting of polarities, and we can picture this as the interaction of the above and the below, or the relationship of the spiritual and the material realms, the linking of conscious and unconscious elements in our soul, or the interpenetration of the inner etheric sexual polarities of male and female. There are many other sheres to which this archetypal process can be applied. The early 17th century hermeticists might have used the figure overleaf to symbolise much the same essential process.

Here I show a sequence of seven etheric 'emblems', each flowing into the other, illustrating an evolving relationship between polarities (of above and below) moving from left to right. We begin at a point where the polarities (the above and the below) sense one another and begin to reach out to touch. The above densifies and descends at the second

stage, but the forces below cannot of themselves reach up and touch the above realm, thus their upwards progress is held back by the density of the lower vehicle, and part of their forces collapses to form a depression or cup. At the third stage, the deep descent of the forces from above attracts and helps mould the lower forces into a womb like calx, allowing them in a sense to flower. Thus the upper realm interpenetrates the lower forces, though they do not inwardly touch at this stage. This dynamic state is, of course, unstable, dependent on the attractive charge of the polarities, and in the fourth phase we find this instability of the rise and fall of forces, has temporarily achieved an equilibrium in the interweaving and twisting around of the streams from above and below in the caduceus form. In this central part of the process, the essences of the above and below flow into one another in an exchange of forces. In the fifth stage the momentum of forces arising from below (and forces descending from above), splits off in the spiralling forms. Although the above and below are no longer directly connected, each now holds in their realm part of the others forces, and this creates the dynamic interweaving in the vortices, so this stage represents an inner meeting of the polarities. (These vortices can be seen as the Ouroboros). This carries on to the sixth stage when the dynamic energies have become inwardly digested and there remains a sphere or space of new potential or possibility. This slowly fades and moves further inwards into the height of the above and into the depths of the below, to sow seeds for a new stage to begin.

I believe the particular sequence I have chosen here, can be used to effect in our meditations, as the archetypal living process it reflects, is the basis of many of the processes going on in our souls. This etheric process lies at the root of many esoteric practices, it is reflected in the process of interiorisation in meditation, in ritual invocation, and can be found at the root of individual artistic creativity.

This illustration is taken from an 18th century manuscript, *Les cinq livres* of N. Valois, Ms 3019 in the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal in Paris. On the left we see an alchemist seated beneath a hollow tree, his scales at his feet, beholding in wonder a spiritual tableaux. He shares this vision with the past masters of the art, who we see inside the tree of tradition.

He sees three hills in front of him, on each of which stands a female figure. That on the left has red robes, while that on the right is clothed in white. They represent the polarities of the red and white stones or tinctures, which are to be synthesised by the central figure in a dark robe.

The figure of the left holds a skull and the black wings of a crow or raven. At her feet is a bull.

The figure on the right holds a snake and the tail of a peacock. At her feet is an eagle.

The Red Stone is attained by working through the Nigredo (Raven or black Crow stage), and mastering the forces of life and death, as is indicated by the skull. This must become fixed in the earthly realm, thus the symbol of the bull. This process is described often in alchemical texts.

The White Stone requires that we go through the alchemical stage of the peacock's tail and grasp the essence of the ouroboros serpent. This must be done on a more subtle and airy level than that of the Red Stone, and thus is under the rule of the eagle.

Both of these figures stand upon small hills, within which we see two pillars. Under the hill of the Red Stone a male and a female figure approach the pillars and then lie down between them. On the further side of the pillars two cubes or stones are set one upon the other with a snake below. The stones set upon each other point to the copulation or conjunction of the male and the female aspects of the process. The scene is much the same in the hill under the figure in white, however, here the male and female figures are departing rather than approaching the pillars. Thus the Red Stone requires an active working of the conjunctio, while the white is a more receptive passive stage.

The figure that stands on a higher hill mediating between these two, unites these polarities. Thus in the hill below her we see a single cube or stone, having a dark and a light shadow. The double cubes of the other figures are united here in a unified Philosopher's Stone which bears both facets within itself.

This central figure is winged (her right wing being a reddish yellow, the other yellowish white in tone). She holds in her right hand a cornucopia or horn of plenty, and in her left hand a mirror. The red and white robed female figures are chained respectively to these two symbolic objects. The cornucopia with its abundance of the fruits of the earth, points to the Red Stone as manifesting the bountiful beauty of the earthly world. The mirror on the other hand reflects the heavenly beauty of the more subtle white robed figure.

The central figure wears a dark robe bearing many eyes, symbolising her all seeing spiritual vision. She in turn is chained to a heart that stands in the heavens above. At her feet are a lion and a dog, representing both facets of the animal forces, the wildness of the lion and the tame service of the dog.



*A Collection of Sacred-Magick.Com* ♣ *The Esoteric Library*

These three seem to compose a triple goddess of alchemy. They are like the three Graces, and we see quite clearly they are indeed dancing to the flute played by a small male figure in an orange robe standing in front of the central hill. He is a mercury or pan figure actively inspiring through his music the alchemical dance of the three nymphs.

## SAINT-YVES D'ALVEYDRE AND THE AGARTHIAN CONNECTION

Joscelyn Godwin ◉

### Part 1 : Saint-Yves d'Alveydre

In 1884 the French occultist Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (1842-1909) began to study Sanskrit. Having just published a massive book on the secret history of the world, called *Mission des Juifs* [1] ('Mission of the Jews'), he was anxious to deepen his understanding of the sacred languages in whose characters, he was sure, the greatest arcana lay hidden. From Hebrew, which had already revealed much to him, the next step was clearly to the parent of all the Indo-European languages.

Saint-Yves' Sanskrit teacher signed his name 'Hardjji Scharipf'; [2] we will adopt the simpler orthography of Haji Sharif. Born on 25 December, 1838, he is said to have left India after the Revolt of the Cipayes (1857) and to have set up at Le Havre as a bird-seller and professor of Oriental languages. [3] His name may have been a pseudonym; he may have been an Afghan; some say he was a prince. In short, much rumour and speculation have surrounded him, and most writers on Saint-Yves do not take him very seriously, perhaps influenced by a photograph [4] in which, as one of them says, he does look rather like someone got up as a Turk for a fancy-dress ball. [5] But in this article we shall keep to what is definitely ascertainable from books and manuscripts, though not widely known even in France.

By 1882 Sharif was writing out, in beautiful script, an elaborate Sanskrit grammar. [6] He wrote it in French, with notes that show a command of English, Hebrew and Arabic, too. Sometimes he added explanations, such as one of Hindu mortuary customs which he signed 'H.S.' He criticized the theories of other grammarians, especially the British ones who thought they understood Sanskrit perfectly. At one point, having quoted a passage from the *Laws of Manu* that mentions a Great Deluge, he remarked on how foolish it is to take the Hindu and Hebrew flood stories literally. From this manuscript, which remained in the hands of Saint-Yves, one can see that Sharif was a serious philologist, at least.

Haji Sharif lived in a northern suburb of Paris, Levallois-Perret. He enjoyed the friendship of an army officer, General F. Dumont, who put him in touch with Saint-Yves. [7] The latter lived on the Rue Vernet, near the Etoile, in a luxurious house to which he had moved on his marriage in 1877. Their Sanskrit lessons began on 8 June, 1885, and continued for a year and a half at least, taking place regularly on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. [8] Saint-Yves' wife Marie-Victoire, a

very independent and cultured lady, joined in at least the earlier lessons. [9] Each day Haji would write out carefully a lesson of grammar and a reading from some Sanskrit classic such as the *Laws of Manu*, or, towards the end of the course, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In the corner of every page, as in his grammar of 1882, he signed a monogram: I do not know Sanskrit, but I am impressed by the methodical work and the progress that Saint-Yves evidently made under his tutelage.



Mystery enters the picture in the heading of the very first lesson:

Première leçon de la langue Sanscrite  
à Mr. le Marq. De St. Yves D'Alveydre  
Paris ce 8 Juin 1885  
Manavirt 25; Mithûna 55,645  
de guru Pandit H.S. Bagwandass  
de la grande école Agarthienne



What was this 'Great Agarthian School' of which Haji claimed to be a Pandit (professor)? Saint-Yves must have asked him, and received an answer, though not perhaps as full an answer as he would have liked. He might already have read in the books of the popular travel-writer and historian Louis Jacolliot [10] of an 'Asgartha', supposedly a great city of the ancient Indian priest-kings, the 'Brahmatras'. Does such a place still exist, then? Apparently Saint-Yves was given to believe so, and, what is more, that it preserves a language and a script, known as 'Vattan', that are the primordial ones of mankind. For someone in quest of the secret and sacred roots of language, the mention of such things must have been unbearably exciting.

On 25 October, 1885, curiosity overcame Saint-Yves. The lesson of the day was the beginning of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, on which Haji had noted the date of its context: '51,900 (la confusion des langues, etc.)'. Conversation on the confusion of tongues must have led to the subject of the previous language of humanity. Might Saint-Yves learn it now? If not, perhaps Haji would at least be good enough to spell Saint-Yves' name in Vattanian characters? The guru obliged, writing it on the back of the lesson sheet and adding wryly: 'Ici selon votre ardent désir, mais cependant vous n'est [sic] pas encore assez preparer [sic] pour la Vattan (pianô et sanô!)' i.e., 'Here, according to your ardent desire; but really you are not yet sufficiently prepared for Vattan. Slowly and surely!' (referring to the Italian proverb 'qui va piano va sano'). Later, he must have taught Saint-Yves the Vattan alphabet and the principles behind its forms. On the back of the lesson for 13 January, 1886, there is a caption: 'Modèle des éléments vattaniques pour le seul rite Agarthien, à l'usage des Initiés', i.e. 'Model of Vattanian elements for the Agarthian rite alone, for the use of Initiates.' Perhaps the elements were delivered at the same lesson, on a separate sheet.

The occultist Papus (=Gérard Encausse) would write with characteristic overstatement, well within Saint-Yves' lifetime, that the Marquis 'was initiated into the tradition of the Orient by two of the greatest dignitaries of the Brahmanic Church [sic], of whom one was the Brahmatma of the holy centres of India. Like all the pupils of the true Oriental initiation, he possesses all the teaching notebooks, of which every page is countersigned by the Brahmin responsible for the transmission of the holy word.' [11] One of these notebooks exists [12]; it is rich in entries in Haji's handwriting and in Agarthian references.

Inside the front cover, Haji has written his address. One page bears the date MDCCCLXXXVI. There are several informal conversations written out in Sanskrit with word-by-word French translations, from which we extract these phrases:

Le gourou notre le nom Hajji Shariph B.V.D. [this name in Sanskrit letters only] de la ville Bombay de l'agarttha cardinale dans l'Inde.

...comment a-t-il pu étant sorti d'agarttha. [13]

I.e. 'Our guru Haji Sharif Bagwandas by name, of the town of Bombay of cardinal Agarttha in India,' and '...how was he able to leave Agarttha?'

On another page, out of any context, is written 'La [sic] première divine argatienne-journal' - 'The first divine Agarthian journal.' On the last page, Haji has pencilled a prayer with some Vattanian symbols, of which I can only decipher one:

Maître de l'Univers et Protecteur de la terre sainte Agarttha [this word in Vattan], au nom de l'.... moi, qui est le tien et mes pensées sont à toi et en toi. Accordez moi le .... de ta sublime bonté à titre d'un yogi Dwyà en âme et corps--de quel voeu je ne me departerais jamais.

Om Sat tat, Brahma Visnu Civa isan têt Ha-hi-Ho-Hva avoh!

I.e. 'Master of the Universe and Protector of the holy land Agarttha, in the name of the .... grant me, who am thine and whose thoughts are upon thee and in thee, the .... of thy sublime goodness, as a Yogi twice-born in soul and body--from which vow I will never depart, etc'

Finally, there are words written in Vattanian characters both by Haji Sharif and by Saint-Yves, which reappear in the undeciphered dedication to Saint-Yves' book *Mission de l'Inde*. [14]. It is plain that by the time this notebook was being compiled, Agarttha and its primordial language Vattan had become subjects for study and conversation. But this is a sketchy and disorganised notebook, mostly written in pencil. It marks the transition of Saint-Yves' interests from pure Sanskrit to a kind of comparative Hermeticism.

The core and the key to this synthesis are to be found in a large notebook modestly catalogued by Saint-Yves as 'Notes diverses'. [15] Partly calligraphed in red and gold ink, using all four of Saint-Yves' distinct handwritings, it contains invocations, sigils, many alphabets; designs and arabesques made from Sanskrit and Vattanian letters; a list of Vedic and Biblical names encoded in a so-called 'Hermetic or Raphaelic Alphabet'; [16] eighty 'Vedic' symbols representing cosmogonic development; [17] a passage on the 'Hermetic Significance of the Zodiac' encoded in planet and zodiac signs; correlations of these signs with angels, Vattanian, Sanskrit, Hebrew and Hermetic characters; breathing exercises for the hearing of the inner 'M' and for soul-travel; [18] notes on the properties of herbs; alchemical recipes. It is interesting that Haji signs all these pages with his monogram, even the ones derived purely from Western esotericism. The signature, which here has the form



degenerates until it is nothing more than a little cross.

Then, in the middle of a section on 'Magic botanique', it disappears for good. Was it from this point on that Saint-Yves was left to his own devices? There are a few more pages of the same kind of material, then the notebook resumes with an entirely new series of notes, dated ten years later.

Saint-Yves seems to have been searching for a way to relate Western Hermeticism of the Renaissance type (alchemy, Kabbalah, magical correspondences) to Hindu cosmogony and metaphysics, as expressed in the

primordial symbols of Vattan. But his methods were practical as well as theoretical. At one point, early in his marriage, it is fairly certain that he had experimented with operative alchemy. [19] He also had psychic gifts, about which more later. Encoded in Vattanian characters in this same notebook, we can decipher the following psychic warning:

Se méfier dans 18 mois ou 2 ans d'un assassinat de ma femme par un russe blond en automne. Rester à pris cet automne près de Marie. A ♀ 17 juin 87. Somnambule de degio [?]. [20]

I.e. 'Beware in 18 months or two years of an assassination of my wife by a blond Russian in autumn. Stay occupied this autumn close to Marie. On Friday, 17 June, 1887. Clairvoyance of [?].'

In point of fact, Marie-Victoire (who was Russian, with very lofty political connections) did not die until 7 June, 1895, at the age of 67, after which she continued to manifest as Saint-Yves' 'Angel' and inspirer of his later work.

But we must go back to 1886, the year of Sanskrit lessons and Agarthian conversations. Did Haji know that Saint-Yves was writing another book under the influence of his Oriental studies? *Mission de l'Inde en Europe; Mission d'Europe en Asie* was finished and printed that year for publication by Calmann Lévy, who had previously issued Saint-Yves' *Mission des Souverains, Mission des Ouvriers, and Mission des Juifs*. Then Saint-Yves withdrew the book, destroying every copy but one. After his death this passed to Papus, the prime mover of the 'Amis de Saint-Yves', who published it, with some omissions, in 1910. Another copy, it turned out recently, had been secreted by the printer Lahure, and this second one served as the basis for the complete re-edition of 1981. [21]

*Mission de l'Inde*, to put it bluntly, takes the lid off Agartha. We learn that it is a hidden land somewhere in the East, below the surface of the earth, where a population of millions is ruled by a Sovereign Pontiff, the 'Brahatmah', and his two colleagues the 'Mahatma' and the 'Mahanga'. This realm, Saint-Yves explains, was transferred underground and concealed from the surface-dwellers at the start of the Kali-Yuga, which he dates at about 3200 BC. Agartha has long enjoyed the benefits of a technology advanced far beyond our own: gas lighting, railways, air travel, etc. Its government is the ideal one of 'Synarchy' which the surface races have lost since the schism that broke the Universal Empire in the fourth millenium BC and which Moses, Jesus, and Saint-Yves strove to reinstate. (This was the theme of *Mission des Juifs*.) Now and then Agartha sends emissaries to the upper world, of which it has perfect knowledge. Not only the latest discoveries of modern man, but the whole wisdom of the ages is enshrined in its libraries, engraved on stone in Vattanian characters. Among its secrets are those of the relationship of soul to body, and of the means to keep departed souls in communication with incarnate ones. When our world adopts Synarchical government, the time will be ripe for Agartha to reveal itself and to shower its spiritual and temporal benefits on us. To further this, Saint-Yves includes in the book open letters to the Queen of England, the Emperor of Russia, and the Pope, inviting them to use their power to hasten the event. There is much more in the book of an extremely bizarre nature, rather as if Bacon's *New Atlantis* had been rewritten by Jules Verne and C.W. Leadbeater.

Perhaps the oddest thing of all is Saint-Yves' own stance. Far from presenting himself as an authorised spokesman for Agartha, he admits that he is a spy. Dedicating the book 'To the Sovereign Pontiff, who

wears the Tiara of Seven Crowns; to the present Brahatma of the ancient Metropolitan Paradise of the Cycle of the Lamb and of the Ram', and signing it with his own name in Vattanian characters (just as Haji had written it out for him), he expatiates on how astounded this great dignitary will be to read the work, wondering how human eyes could have penetrated the innermost sanctuaries of his realm. Saint-Yves explains that he is a 'spontaneous initiate', [22] bound by oath of secrecy to no one, and that the Brahatma, once over his shock, will admit the wisdom of what he has dared to reveal. 'I do not owe my synarchical illuminations on the past [i.e. *Mission des Juifs*] and on the present [i.e. *Mission de l'Inde*] to the will of any Asiatic initiate presently existing, but to certain indications of an august man, now dead, of whom I spoke in *Mission des Juifs*. [23]

The 'august man' in question was Frédéric Auguste Demetz, the principal of a kind of borstal school in which Saint-Yves spent his teens. [24] What exactly Demetz taught his pupil is not known; it was probably more in the line of social theory than anything psychic or initiatic. However, in his first book, *Clefs de l'Orient* (1877), Saint-Yves was writing with the confidence of an eyewitness of the psychic phenomena accompanying birth, death, and the relation between the sexes. [25] In *Mission de l'Inde* he seems to have extended his psychic vision rather further, to say the least, and one can glean from here and there an idea of his methods. In the book itself there is a passage describing in detail how the Agarthian initiates travel in their souls while their bodies sleep. [26] Then there is the passage in the notebook already mentioned, on yogic exercises for separating the soul from the body. Thirdly, there is this snippet of occult gossip in a conversation with Saint-Yves, recorded on 16 August, 1896, by a visitor whom I have not yet been able to identify:

He has talked to Papus and [Stanislas de] Guaita, but did not tell them what they wanted to know: the method of disengaging and re-engaging oneself in the astral body. It is dangerous: 'I don't want (he said) to put a loaded revolver into your hands which you don't know how to use.' [27]

Saint-Yves evidently possessed this 'somnambulistic' faculty, and used it to gather the information he presents in *Mission de l'Inde*. But did he gather it, as he claimed, from spying on a physical Agartha beneath the surface of the earth; from his own projected fantasies or hallucinations; or from some non-physical 'place' or state, which can be visited under certain conditions, but onto whose objective reality the subjective psyche may well embroider its own expectations and prejudices? Certainly many details in the book, as René Guénon has shown (see below), are easily interpretable in the context of traditional symbolism. But it does not seem that Saint-Yves looked on *Mission de l'Inde* as a symbolic work, like the *Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz* perhaps.

I do not think that Haji Sharif read or had anything to do with the creation of *Mission de l'Inde*. From the manuscripts one can see that he did talk with Saint-Yves about an 'Agartha', and that he acknowledged a title from a 'school' of that name that had 'initiates' and 'rites'. But that is far from associating him with the interpretations his pupil put on it. To cite a modern parallel, there are people who call themselves Rosicrucians without necessarily believing that Christian Rosenkreutz's tomb still exists somewhere in Germany. Neither does a Buddhist of the Pure Land School situate the Western Paradise of Amitabha on the map of

the world.

Various reasons have been put forward for the withdrawal of the book. Jules Bois, in *Le Monde Invisible* (1902), unkindly wrote that Saint-Yves' Brahmin teacher repudiated his pupil's 'infantile mysticism', being disgusted by the 'fantastic interpretations that this gracious but cracked brain gave to his lessons.' Bois attributes to Saint-Yves the excuse that the said Brahmin had menaced him with the 'dagger of the initiates' if he revealed these secrets, but says that in point of fact he merely threatened a lawsuit. [29] Perhaps Bois, who had fought with Papus and de Guaita, was hoping for another duel! His last idea, at least, seems most implausible. Jean Saunier, the foremost expert on Saint-Yves and his only modern biographer, adduces Haji's very cordial letter of 24 December, 1887 as evidence that the two men were still on excellent terms. [30]

I think that Saint-Yves, as he says himself in the book, had determined quite independently to publish his 'researches' for the benefit of humanity, but that he had a change of heart for reasons of his own. He certainly did not withdraw the book out of a feeling that his Agartha might after all have been an illusion. He mentions it, with its triple hierarchy, in his epic poem of 1890, *Jeanne d'Arc Victorieuse*. [31] In the conversations of 1896 he tells his visitor that there exists a secret 'Superior University' with a 'High Priest' who is currently an Ethiopian, and other details just as they appeared in the book. Finally, he mentions it, in veiled terms, in *l'Archéomètre*, the major work of his last years.

But other reasons are not far to seek. In July, 1885 Victor Meunier had written a review showing that *Mission des Juifs* had plagiarised lavishly from Fabre d'Olivet's books (especially from his *Histoire Philosophique du Genre Humain*, 1822). [31] That was embarrassing enough, and Saint-Yves' excuses never really exonerated him. But there was worse to come. In 1886, Claire Vautier, an ex-opera singer, published a novel called *Monsieur le Marquis*, in which Saint-Yves, transparently presented as 'Saint-Emme', was given the most humiliating exposure as the lover who had seduced and abandoned her, lured by a rich marriage. [32] The book was all the more cruel for being extremely close to the truth: so close that Jean Saunier considers many of Saint-Emme's speeches as plausible evidence of the Marquis' own experiences and philosophy. And one has only to glance through Vautier's other novels (*Dans la Boue*, *Femme et Prêtre*, *Adultère et Divorce*, etc) to see that she could not possibly have invented them herself.

In 1886, besides his Sanskrit studies and Agarthian visions, Saint-Yves' external and political activities on behalf of Synarchy were coming to a head with the formation of a Press Union, deputations to the President, etc. [34] I do not think that he wanted to risk the mockery and ridicule that would have followed publication of a book that made the extravagant claims of *Mission de l'Inde*, and the harm it would have done to the credibility of the other, more worldly wing of his campaign. And perhaps even he had been hurt too much.

The full public revelation of his Agartha was therefore withheld for the duration of Saint-Yves' lifetime, and for the rest of his life he refrained from publishing any significant doctrinal works. His own ill-health and that of his wife doubtless had much to do with his retreat from public activity into a sort of refined hermitry in Versailles. However, in 1896, after Marie's death, he returned to the Hermetic notebook which he had begun ten years earlier with Haji's

collaboration and, inspired by her continuing presence, filled it with further schemes and developments to which he now gave the name of 'Archeometry'. He would work for another dozen years on this universal system of knowledge, leaving behind enough material for his disciples to compile imposing posthumous works. [35]

Jean Reyor (=Marcel Clavelle), one of the editors of *Etudes Traditionnelles* and a close associate of René Guénon, opened up another dimension of Saint-Yves' Indian connections in an important article of 1935. He wrote that some Hindus, concerned to give to the West certain forgotten traditional doctrines, had fastened on Saint-Yves as one who in his 'Missions' had shown suitable tendencies. But since this project did not succeed as planned, he received only incomplete doctrines, and was finally judged unsuitable and left to himself. Saint-Yves strove for the rest of his life, said Reyor, to make something of these incomplete doctrines, and his Archeometry was the result. [36]

Some years later, in his preface to the 1948 edition of Saint-Yves' *Mission des Souverains, par l'un d'eux* (first published 1882), Reyor gave some further details:

It seems that Saint-Yves entered into relations from 1885 onwards not with a Hindu but with an Afghan, the 'prince' Hardjij [sic] Scharipf, who had without doubt a large part in the composition of [*Mission de l'Inde*]. Later, at a date which we cannot specify precisely, Saint-Yves was in contact with a Hindu, far more 'serious' than Hardjij Scharipf, we believe, and who originated from North India. It was probably the information, albeit fragmentary, received from this source, that was at the origin of Saint-Yves' work on *L'Archéomètre*, a work which, left in an embryonic state, was published in the volume carrying this title after the death of the author. [37]

This second Indian is often referred to by writers on Saint-Yves, but has never been named. The only primary evidence I have found for him is in Saint-Yves' own analytic index to his notebooks. Here he lists one notebook as 'Enseignement secret des Brahmes à moi communiqué par le Rishi Bagwandas-Raji-Shrin', i.e. 'Secret teaching of the Brahmins, communicated to me by ...' etc. This name, which seems to consist entirely of honorifics, may be that of the 'more serious' guru, but in the course of these notes, Saint-Yves also writes 'Haji says...' The teachings in question, which are essential to the genesis of Archeometry, connect some of the Vattanian symbols with theogonic, cosmogonic, and psychogonic events, amplified with Hebrew and Sanskrit roots. [38] They consist of only a few pages, without any monogram of Brahmanic approval such as Haji was wont to add. Saint-Yves would develop them at length in an essay which exists in several careful manuscript drafts as well as in the essay published as part of *L'Archéomètre*, '*L'Archéomètre et la Tradition Orientale*'. But his archeometric work did not begin until after the revelations of 1896, attributed directly to Marie-Victoire's posthumous inspiration.

Reyor's implication that these Oriental contacts were part of a deliberate action on someone's part to introduce certain ideas to the West invites one to look for exactly what it was that may have attracted 'them' to Saint-Yves in 1885. The general consensus is that it was *Mission des Juifs* in particular. Now in the long preamble of that work, devoted to such topics as the Ages of the World and the advanced sciences of Antiquity, Saint-Yves suddenly breaks in to announce his discovery, on 3 January, 1884, of a letter from 'one of the affiliates

of the great Fraternity of the Himalayas.' This long letter, which he translates [39] deals with science, India, cycles, miracles, thought-power and a variety of other subjects: its author is the Mahatma Koot Hoomi, and Saint-Yves has found it in the *Occult World* of A.P. Sinnett. It is, in fact, one of the famous *Mahatma Letters*, whose origin certainly takes a lot of explaining. Saint-Yves calls it a 'pure Orient pearl' set in his chapter, and remarks that 'Several thousand years ago, an initiate of the Ionian Mysteries could not have spoken better or more clearly if he had been present in thought at the actual spectacle of this world's events.'

Without digressing too far, one may recall here that nine years before, in 1875, Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott founded the Theosophical Society under the auspices of Mahatmas Koot Hoomi and Morya, residents of Shigatse in Tibet. In their letters to A.P. Sinnett, these Masters explained that this was a seven-year experiment (of whose wisdom some of their colleagues were dubious) to see if the West was receptive to what they had to offer. By 1882 it had become obvious that Sinnett--chosen for the experiment not as an initiate but as an 'ordinary' Westerner with journalistic gifts--had failed them, and the efforts of the Mahatmas (whoever or whatever one supposes them to have been) were henceforth concentrated on Blavatsky's own, far less accessible work.

Now, in 1885, certain Hindus make contact with Saint-Yves, who has shown himself sympathetic to Oriental doctrines and whose career as a social prophet and publicist is on the rise. Once contacted, he is encouraged to learn Sanskrit, to read the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and is given certain metaphysical teachings in an appropriately symbolic mode (the signs of Vattan). But we know the sequel: he gets carried away on the one hand by magical correspondences, alphabets, codes, and all the apparatus of the 'Hermetic notebook'; on the other, by astral travel to fantastic realms. And just as Sinnett never lost his modernist prejudices, thus disqualifying himself as a spokesman for Oriental tradition, so Saint-Yves never surrendered his conviction of Judaeo-Christian superiority. Although full of respect for the East, he would write in *l'Archéomètre* that it would eventually be necessary for India to be converted to a 'Christian and Catholic Order', with Sanskrit as its liturgical language! [40] In the words of Jean Reyor, 'It seems that Westerners, even when they manifest traditional tendencies, cannot resign themselves to not being superior to the rest of the world. One can believe that such an attitude contributed not a little to preventing Saint-Yves from profiting fully from the Oriental teachings which he had occasion to receive.' [41]

Perhaps for that very reason, Saint-Yves continued till the end of his life to enjoy the status of a sort of elder statesman of French esotericism, by now in full reaction against the East. Although he never belonged to any secret society, fraternity, or order, he was much revered by Papus, de Guaita, Barlet, and other eminences of the occultist 'fin de siècle'. Those whom he consented to receive in his retreat at Versailles left with impressive memories of his presence and conversation: [42] a lonely voyager, he seemed sublimely aloof from the innumerable sects, cults and quarrels of the time.

He was still there in 1908, when the young René Guénon (1886-1951) embarked on his esoteric career. Early in that year, certain members of Papus' Martinist Order (though certainly not Papus himself) received a message through automatic writing that they should form a new 'Order of

the Temple', of which the 21-year-old Guénon should be the head. It continued with over 40 table-rapping and automatic writing sessions. Saint-Yves' inspiration is evident in the opening ones: 'The Lost Word; the Origins of Language, the Vattan Alphabet and its derivatives... Archeometry and the origins of the red race...' etc. [43] But evidently Guénon's presence counted for even more, for as the summary of the sessions continues, one discovers--it may well be with astonishment--the titles of articles and even of books that he was subsequently to write: 'Being and Non-being... Symbolism of the Cross... Infinity and 'mathematical infinity'... Multiple States of Being.. Heaven and Earth, the Egg of the World, Upper and Lower Waters, Yin and Yang... Universal Possibility, the impossibility of reincarnation... Principles of infinitesimal calculus, the return to the Principle...' One might be reading an outline of Guénon's metaphysical works.

Archeometry was in the air at this time. Several people had seen the mysterious papers and diagrams that Saint-Yves' was slowly preparing, and it seems that a great part of them came into the hands of Guénon and his associates, either shortly before or just after Saint-Yves' death on 5 February, 1909. In December, Guénon, under one of his several aliases as the Gnostic Bishop Palingénus, co-founded a short-lived review *La Gnose*, in which were published thirteen articles explaining Archeometry, with learned footnotes in unmistakably Guénonian style. In 1910 Palingénus launched into an amazing series of articles on his own account in which he expounded some of the themes mentioned above, giving the essentials of what would become *Man and his Becoming according to the Védânta* (published 1925), *The Symbolism of the Cross* (1931), and *The Multiple States of Being* (1932): books that would give a new meaning to metaphysics in the West.

I have no doubt that around this time Guénon did receive Oriental doctrines by word of mouth, even though his instructors have never been satisfactorily identified. The proof is there in his works: no young man since Pico della Mirandola had been in such confident possession of the highest metaphysical doctrines. Guénon's case thus follows those of the Theosophical Society and of Saint-Yves as a third instance of research through psychic methods, combined with the intervention of mysterious Oriental initiates who seem to have selected their Western contacts with some particular revelation in mind.

Part II of this article will continue in the next issue

#### NOTES

1. Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1884, repr. Paris, Eds. Traditionnelles, 1971 (2 vols.)
2. Not 'Hardjij', as in most printed sources. See facsimile of his letter to Saint-Yves, 24 Dec., 1887, in *Mission de l'Inde*, Paris, Dorbon, 1910, repr. Nice, Bélisane, 1981, pl. X. This letter is the source of Haji's birthdate and address.
3. Jules Bois, *Le Monde Invisible*, Paris, Flammarion, 1902, pp.37-8
4. Reproduced in *Mission de l'Inde*, 1981, pl. III.
5. Marco Pallis, 'Les sources d'Ossendowsky', in *Sophia Perennis* (Teheran), vol.2, no.2 (1976), pp.72-89; reprinted in symposium *René Guénon*, Paris, L'Age d'Homme, 1984, pp.145-54, and in English as 'Ossendowski's Sources' in *Studies in Comparative Religion*, vol.15, no.1/2 (1983), pp.30-41.

6. This, together with Saint-Yves' Sanskrit lessons, is in the Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne, Ms. Carton no. 42. Saint-Yves' manuscripts were left to his step-children (he had none of his own), who gave many of them to the occultist Papus. It was the latter's son, Philippe Encausse, who gave them to the Sorbonne in 1938.

7. See Mission de l'Inde, 1981, pl. VIII, for Gen.Dumont's letter to Haji, dated 8 Jan., 1886.

8. There are 41 numbered lessons, mostly undated but with names of days in French and English, beginning 8 June, 1885, then regular dated lessons every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 Dec., 1885 to 10 Feb., 1886, and from 14 June to 12 Nov., 1886.

9. Heading of Lesson no. 3: 'Troisième leçon sanscrite à Monsieur e [sic] Madame la Marquise. H.S.' To save space in this article, French originals are only given for the quotations from manuscripts.

10. See especially Les Fils de Dieu, Paris, Lacroix, 1873, pp.263-6, quoted in Jean Saunier, Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, une Synarchie sans Enigme, Paris, Dervy, 1981, pp. 350-3.

11. Papus, Traité Élémentaire des Sciences Occultes, Paris, 1898, quoted in Saunier, op. cit., p.329.

12. Sorbonne Ms.1824. The Sanskrit notes are in the first two notebooks bound under this call-number.

13. Sorbonne Ms.1824, ff.47',48.

14. 1981 ed., pl. XI.

15. Sorbonne Ms.1823, ff. 117ff. Saint-Yves' analytical catalogue (Ms.1826, ff.310-86) lists 32 notebooks of which the Sorbonne Library possesses all but four. They are bound together under the call nos. Mss.1820-1826. Robert Amadou has published a brief survey of them in l'Initiation, 2-3 (1981), pp. 103-7, 136-40.

16. This is identified by Fred Gettings, A Dictionary of Occult, Hermetic and Alchemical Sigils, London, Studio Vista, 1978, p.40, as 'Adamic Script'. He calls it 'One of the numerous Secret Scripts derived from the Hebraic tradition of alphabets...but adapted for the Roman alphabet.' He traces it to Paul Christian, Histoire de la Magie, 1870.

17. These were redrawn twice for Saint-Yves' l'Archéomètre: Clef de toutes les Religions et de toutes les Sciences de l'Antiquité; Réforme Synthétique de tous les Arts Contemporains compiled by 'Les Amis de Saint-Yves', Paris, Dorbon, 1911, repr. Paris, Gutenberg, 1979, pp.153-4.

18. Reprinted in l'Archéomètre, pp.250-1.

19. See Saunier, op.cit., pp 147ff.

20. Sorbonne Ms.1823, f.152'.

21. See Intro. by Saunier to Mission de l'Inde, 1981.

22. Ibid., p.44. 23. Ibid., p.46.

24. Saunier, Saint-Yves, pp.54ff.

25. Clefs de l'Orient, Paris, Didier, 1877, repr. Nice, Bélisane,1980.

26. Mission de l'Inde, pp.130-5.

27. Notes contained in Sorbonne Ms. Carton 42.

28. Mission de l'Inde, pp.60-4, 74-6.

29. See Saunier's Intro. to ibid., p. VII. 30. See n.2.

31. Quoted in Saunier, Saint-Yves, pp.325f.

32. See Saunier, Saint-Yves, pp.284ff., and Léon Cellier, Fabre d'Olivet: Contribution à l'Etude des Aspects Religieuses du Romantisme, Paris, Nizet, 1953, pp. 385ff.

33. See Saunier, Saint-Yves, passim, but especially pp.132ff.

34. Ibid., ch.IV; also Saunier's La Synarchie, ou le Vieux Rêve d'une

Nouvelle Société, Paris, Grasset, 1971.

35. L'Archéomètre (the 1979 edition has nearly 500pp.) and also the series of articles in La Gnose, see note 44 below.

36. Jean Reyor, 'L'Archéomètre de Saint-Yves d'Alveydre', in La Voile d'Isis, 40 (July 1935), p.287.

37. Preface by 'XXX', which re-uses verbatim parts of Reyor's article cited above.

38. Sorbonne Ms.1823, ff.41ff.

39. Vol.I, pp.84-96.

40. L'Archéomètre, p.108.

41. Article cited in n.36, p.289. See also the important anonymous reply, 'A propos de Saint-Yves d'Alveydre', in La Voile d'Isis, 41 (March 1936), pp.108-13.

42. See Saunier, Saint-Yves, pp.389ff.,413f.

43. See Jean-Pierre Laurant, Le Sens Caché dans l'Oeuvre de René Guénon, Paris, Age d'Homme, 1975, pp.46ff. The report of the sessions was first published in Hiram, March, 1909; for further details see also Robert Amadou, 'L'Erreur Spirite de René Guénon', in Sphinx (Beaugency), No. 3/4 (Autumn 1978), 21 unpaginated pages; No.5 (Spring 1979), pp.45-60; No.7/8 (Autumn/Winter 1979), p.83.

## THE ORIGINS OF THE WESTERN TRADITION IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Stephen Ronan ◦

Western science and Western occult traditions present two very different attitudes to the search for truth. In Western science, knowledge is considered to be a linear progressive affair with every successive generation adding a little more to the sum total and gradually correcting the errors of the past. The Western esoteric tradition, on the other hand, has always been animated by a quest for a knowledge that lies buried in the past; a secret wisdom once known to the ancients but since lost. This 'secret wisdom' has sometimes been thought to have been passed from Moses to the elders of Israel, or from Hermes Trismegistus to Tat; or perhaps it was encapsulated in the proportions of the pyramids, or in the design of the tarot cards, or in some other form. And it has many names: the 'Secret Doctrine' or the 'Perennial Philosophy', the 'Kabbalah' (literally 'tradition'), or the 'Prisca Theologia' (First Theology), to mention only a few.

We shall see later on that the later Neoplatonists were the first people to develop a comprehensive esoteric system which they believed to be the hidden under-meaning discoverable in ancient philosophy, mythology and religious practice. What I should like to examine in this essay are the whys and hows of the development of this belief in a 'lost wisdom'. Unfortunately it will not be possible to outline the full Neoplatonic system here, but perhaps that can be tackled on another occasion.

As far back as the 5th century B.C., there seems to be an allusion to lost wisdom in Plato's *Cratylus* [1], where he says that the names of things were ordained by an ancient law-giver as representations of their true natures. However, it looks as if we have until the 2nd century A.D. and the writings of Celsus and Numenius to find the concept in a more fully developed form.

Celsus was an early Platonic opponent of Christianity who wrote around 160 A.D. He tells us "There is an ancient doctrine which has existed from the beginning, which has always been maintained by the wisest nations and cities and wise men" [2].

Numenius, active during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161 - 180 A.D.) [3], believed that "Truth has been revealed long ago to some select nations, but that it had been corrupted since by the endless subtleties and disputations of Greek, and especially post-platonic philosophers; for this reason he sought to reconstitute that primitive revelation by achieving a broad synthesis of all religions and superstitions" [4]. It is with Numenius, then, that the quest of the Western tradition starts in earnest. And Numenius is a fascinating figure. Not only does he stand immediately before the rise of Neoplatonism and as one of its most important sources, but he is the philosopher closest to the 'Platonic

Underworld' [5]; those currents of 'unofficial' Platonism which include the Hermetica, Alchemy, Gnosticism, the Chaldean Oracles and which gave rise to the Western tradition in general. It is regrettable that his works survive only in fragments [6]; but there is enough left of his On the Good to show it is in a hieratic style and is therefore much more like a Hermetic dialogue than a Platonic one [7]. Numenius is on the same quest as the Hermetica and with the same basic assumptions. The Hermetica themselves seem to have been written in Egyptian mysterio-osophical-cum-philosophical circles and are also an attempt to present an 'ancient doctrine' as handed down from Hermes Trismegistus to Tat [8], but these documents never managed to develop into a coherent and comprehensive system.

Although Numenius started on the road to find the grand reconciliation that would display the One True Doctrine behind all others, he did not produce a system which was capable of commanding the assent of those who followed him. Many of his insights - it is not possible to say how many - were incorporated into the teaching of Plotinus (about 204-270 A.D.). It is he who is generally acknowledged as the founder of Neoplatonism and he has also been called the "Father of Western Mysticism" [9]. For our present purposes it is his attitude to traditional myth and religion that concerns us, and here the evidence seems confused. Plotinus certainly used traditional myths to illustrate his thought but it is not clear to what extent he considered them to be divinely inspired [10]. What is certain is that he considered that the "ancients" had access to "scientific or innate knowledge" which allowed them to directly express spiritual realities in images rather than by roundabout explanations [11]. Yet, despite this, Plotinus' attitude to traditional religion was haughty and proud: when invited to attend a traditional festival by the pious Amelius, he left his disciples gaping with the reply "Let the Gods come to me rather than me to them" [12].

There is no doubt that Plotinus' illuminating exposition of the Platonic philosophy laid the groundwork for the later development of Neoplatonism, but it left unanswered some very important questions if philosophy and traditional religion were to draw closer together. Many of these questions were posed by Plotinus' chief disciple Porphyry (232-304 A.D.), in a famous letter to an Egyptian priest called Anebo. A reply was written by Iamblichus (about 242-326 A.D.) called On the Mysteries of Egypt, but usually quoted under its abbreviated Latin title De Mysteriis [13]. For the moment let us turn our attention to Porphyry's questions: these are decidedly searching and would have been guaranteed to produce a sense of discomfort in any unprepared 3rd century believer in religion or practitioner of the mysteries. Let us pick out some of the more important ones.

Since the Gods are supposed to dwell in the heavens, then why is cult directed towards them as though they dwelt on the earth or in the underworld? In fact, why is any cultic activity at all - prayers, sacrifices, ritual and so on - directed towards them, since this implies they can be influenced (and are therefore under the control of human beings)? And don't sacrifices, in particular, imply that the Gods are affected by physical substances (i.e. attracted by the smell of incense or the smoke of sacrifice), and are therefore physical and not spiritual beings? Although the Gods are meant to be beyond time and space, in particular elements or heavenly bodies - why? At certain cult centres, people are supposed to be inspired with a state of prophecy by breathing in fumes or drinking sacred water, but how can a spiritual force reside in a

physical substance? Worst of all, why are the Gods actually threatened in some rituals; and what does it say for these 'Gods' that they apparently submit to such vain and empty coercion? In addition, why do sacred rites use foreign and unintelligible sounds and words? Surely it is the concepts that matter and not their names in a particular language - unless the Gods are supposed to speak only certain languages!

Porphry questions and criticisms were eagerly seized upon by Christian writers like Augustine [14] and used to demonstrate the philosophical confusion and moral inferiority of Paganism. A cogent and effective answer was therefore in order, and this is just what Iamblichus gave to the Pagan world with his De Mysteriis. The work is a detailed justification of theurgy [15] and traditional religious practice.

It is not possible to do more here than indicate the basic lines of Iamblichus' reply to Porphyry's criticisms. One important idea Iamblichus makes much use of is that divine power and activity are boundless and are everywhere present to all things; limits only exist in the capacity of things to receive divine influence. For instance, the element of water may be sacred to a particular God, say Poseidon, but this does not mean that Poseidon's power is in any way limited to water; rather it shows that the characteristics of water make it particularly suitable to partake of Poseidon's influence. And the same argument applies to sacred places, sacred animals and plants and incenses, and so on and so forth. In fact, since the Gods have produced everything that exists, then those things sacred to them are their expressions of themselves at that particular level of reality. This is a most important doctrine which lies at the core of Iamblichus' understanding of theurgy and magic: everything employed in sacred rites, including the formulae, the ritual objects and the very rituals themselves, are signs or tokens (Gk. symbola, synthemata) of the Gods, in which they have directly expressed their own power [16]. By using these divine self-expressions like ladders the theurgist can ascend to the Gods. This is why, Iamblichus argues, theurgy is superior to philosophy, for the latter only makes use of human reasoning which, by itself, cannot lead to union with the Gods. This should not be taken to mean that the Gods can be forced down into the world to do man's bidding; rather they purify their worshippers and draw them up towards their own realm [17]. As for the use of threats, these are actually not directed to the Gods but rather towards irrational low-grade Daimonic forces which are naturally led by such forcible utterances. A theurgist does not utter such threats from the human level, but instead as a being imbued with authority by the divine symbola and synthemata. The use of such threats is only necessary in those rites where a completely pure divine language is not preserved [18].

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the De Mysteriis. Not only did it pave the way for the unification of Pagan philosophy and religion, but in this and his other works Iamblichus formulated the metaphysical structure and interpretative principles that enabled him and his followers - who include practically every Pagan philosopher and religious figure of note who came after him - to uncover the secret doctrine that lay hidden not only in the dialogues of Plato and the Pythagorean writings, but was also to be found in the Chaldean Oracles [19], the Orphic Poems, the Odyssey and Iliad of Homer, and the Theogony of Hesiod; not forgetting the myths of the Mystery Religions and those of 'sacred nations' like the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians et al.

It is not generally appreciated to how very great a degree Renaissance occultism and Kabbalistic metaphysics are dependant on

Iamblichean Neoplatonism [20]. As the full extent of the debt comes slowly to the surface it becomes more and more apparent that in a very real sense Iamblichus can be claimed to be the originator of the Western esoteric tradition, and the De Mysteriis as its manifesto.

If we turn our attention from the question of who was responsible for the development of the western tradition to that of why it developed, then one of the most important factors must be the rise of Christianity.

Because of differences and disputes both within Pagan philosophy and between different facets of Hellenistic culture as a whole, Christian writers [21] held a decided advantage in being able to represent Pagan culture and religion as a confused groping in the darkness, with the blind leading the blind. The Christians, of course, represented themselves as the bearers of the light which would dispel that darkness and, in an age which had not yet witnessed major Christian schism, this helped the Christian claim to spiritual superiority. Another Christian advantage - and possibly an even more important one - lay in their possession of authoritative inspired scriptures.

The above should help us to understand the very strong motivation that there was for the Neoplatonists to sort out differences within the fold of Hellenistic culture and adopt certain of their traditional writings [22] as having the authority of inspired utterances [23]. This accounts for the emphasis on 'reconciliation' and 'agreement' that one finds in their works: for Aristotle must be shown to be in basic agreement with Plato [24]; Homer with Orpheus; and everybody with the Chaldean Oracles. Now the upshot of all this was not, as might be expected, a stereotyped repetition of earlier views, but a riotous new growth which the 'authorities' from which it was extracted would have been hard put to recognise as their own. And yet, paradoxically enough, it often appears to be a logical working-out of previous ideas. The way in which Neoplatonic reinterpretation actually created new concepts has been well characterised by R.C. Kissling: concerning the Neoplatonic teachings about the astral body he noted, "(it) represents the 'reconciliation' of Plato and Aristotle on a subject which the former never taught and the latter was incapable of defining intelligibly" [25].

The more one looks at the rise of Neoplatonism in the ancient world, the more one is reminded of the rise of Kabbalah in medieval Judaism. And this should not be surprising because many of the problems and pressures faced by both groups were very similar:

"Like medieval Jewish philosophy, Kabbalah may be characterized as an esoteric 'ideology', a self-conscious reflection on the meaning of Judaism, the likes of which was not found in Talmudic writing. In the face of criticism from within - the sectarian Karaite critique of Rabbinic hermeneutics and authority - and the external critique of Judaism by Islamic and Christian philosophers, many members of the Rabbinic religious elite were thrust beyond the relatively un-selfconscious faith of their forbears. As the exoteric meaning of certain aspects of the Tradition was rendered problematic, emphasis was placed on uncovering its 'true', i.e. esoteric significance. Tradition was conserved and 'deepened' through systematic reinterpretation." [26]

With the full development of Neoplatonism, its exponents became prominent defenders of the faith and spiritual leaders of the Pagan community. This point is well made in a Ph.D. thesis by S.L. Karren [27], and is graphically represented in the appendix [28], where we find

various examples in which religious, mysteriosophical and philosophical traditions came to be invested in the same person. Perhaps the most striking example of this is to be found in the case of Proclus (410-484 A.D.) who, as the most outstanding Neoplatonist of his day, became the recipient of secret rites and theurgic techniques passed down through the family of Nestorius - probably the last Hierophant of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

In this way, the Neoplatonists became the inheritors of age-old mystery traditions which they integrated into their system of ideas and were to pass on to the Renaissance. And so they realized their dream of making "...the one comprehensive philosophy that should embrace all the garnered wisdom of the ancient world" [29].

## NOTES

1 Cratylus 430a-431e. It has been pointed out to me that the general idea goes back much further, at least to Homer (Iliad 14.291; 20.74. Cf. Plato Cratylus 391e et seq.). The idea is also implicit in the fall from the 'Golden Age' in Hesiod's Theogony, and, to some extent, in mythical 'falls from grace' in general. I owe many of these references to Gary Dunbar.

2 Origen Contra Celsum 1.14 (Cambridge 1965. Trans. H.Chadwick).

3 But his dates are uncertain. He may be drawing from the same source as Celsus, or he may even be the source of Celsus.

4 H. De Ley Macrobius and Numenius (Brussels 1972) pgs. 11-12.

5 The term was coined by John Dillon in his book The Middle Platonists (London 1977) to denote such writings as the Hermetica, the Chaldean Oracles and the Gnostic corpus which, although they were basically developments of Platonic and Pythagorean teaching, were closest to religious and mysteriosophical currents than to 'official' philosophy.

6 The standard edition is that of E. des Places Numenius: Fragments (Paris 1973). There is an earlier English edition by K.S. Guthrie Numenius of Apamea (London and New Jersey 1917). This is available as a reprint from Chthonios Books.

7 J. Dillon The Middle Platonists (London 1977) pg. 363.

8 Occasionally other mythological personages like Isis put in an appearance. Hermes Trismegistus is one form of the 'revealer' figure common in the Western tradition: see above page 35.

9 J.M. Rist Plotinus: The Road to Reality (Cambridge 1967) pg. 213.

10 The fact that he used the same mythical motifs to indicate different and mutually exclusive metaphysical levels (e.g. Zeus as the Soul, Nous or the One), cannot be taken as evidence - pace R.T. Wallis Neoplatonism (London 1972) page 135 - that Plotinus did not take myths seriously as a source of truth; he may have believed, like Porphyry after him, that myths were true in different ways on different levels. Nor can his alteration of the Prometheus myth (Enneads 4.3.14) prove the point: he may well have thought that the original myth had become distorted in the course of transmission. In fact, if Plotinus did not consider myths to be some sort of expression of truth, then what would be the sense in using them?

11 Enneads 5.8.6. Quoted by ennead, book and chapter.

12 Porphyry Life of Plotinus ch 10. An English translation of this work accompanies all the English editions of the Enneads. these are: K.S. Guthrie, New Jersey 1918; S. MacKenna, London 1963 (3rd edition) and A.H. Armstrong, London and Cambridge Mass. 1966-. MacKenna's translation

is 'poetic' but very misleading. That of Armstrong is preferable but has to date only reached as far as Ennead 5 (1984).

13 The standard edition is that of E. des Places Jamblique: Les Mystères d'Egypte (Paris 1966). This contains, like the edition of Numenius quoted in note 6 above, Greek text with a French translation. There exist two translations in English, those of Thomas Taylor (London 1821) and A. Wilder (London and New York 1911). Taylor's is very precise, but is difficult to read because of the impenetrable English style. Wilder's is much more accessible and is available from Chthonios Books.

14 City of God 10.11. Not without a tinge of hypocrisy, for most of Porphyry's criticisms could be just as well levelled against Christianity, and in particular the Old Testament.

15 Theurgy means 'divine work' (it comes from combining theology and thaumaturgy 'wonderworking'). It was coined to distinguish spiritual magic, which concentrated on raising the soul to the Gods, from goeteia which denotes vulgar witchcraft and sleight of hand.

16 De Mysteriis 2.11. Quoted by book and chapter.

17 Ibid. 1.12.

18 Ibid. 6.5-6.

19 Which have been called "The bible of the Neoplatonists" as far back as F. Cumont Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism (London 1911, reprinted since), pg. 279, n. 66. The Oracles are of unequalled importance in understanding the rise of the western tradition, and I hope to be able to devote more space to them in a future issue of the Hermetic Journal.

20 The links between Neoplatonism and the Renaissance are touched upon in chapter 6 of R.T. Wallis' Neoplatonism (London 1972) pgs. 160-178. The dependence of Kabbalah on Neoplatonism is recognised by G. Scholem in Kabbalah (Jerusalem 1974), page 45: "The Kabbalah, in its historical significance, can be defined as the product of the interpenetration of Jewish Gnosticism and Neoplatonism", and again page 96: "Inasmuch as early Kabbalah needed a theoretical foundation it was largely influenced by Neoplatonism". See also the index to that volume s.v. "Neoplatonism", together with the index to Scholem's earlier Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (New York 1954). However, specific instances of Neoplatonic influence need to be more fully examined, especially that underlying the structural principles at work in the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. I hope to make some contribution in this direction in the future.

21 Such as Augustine in the City of God, and Eusebius in Preparation for the Gospel.

22 For a list of Neoplatonic 'scriptures', see page 37 above

23 It must be said, however, that this never leads them to take on board ideas that they cannot rationally justify.

24 Although Aristotle's writings were not of quite 'scriptural' authority for the Neoplatonists.

25 R.C. Kissling The Ochema-Pneuma of the Neo-Platonists and the De Insomniis of Synesius of Cyrene in the American Journal of Philology (43,1922), pg. 318.

26 E.K. Ginsberg The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah (Ph.D. thesis 1984), page 4.

27 S.L. Karren Near Eastern Culture and Hellenistic Paedeia in Damascius' Life of Isidore (Ph.D. Thesis 1978).

28 Ibid. The Transmission of Secret Doctrine in Neoplatonic Schools, pages 156-158.

29 E.R. Dodds Proclus: The Elements of Theology (Oxford 1963), pg xxv.