

**SRICF** **NEWS**  
*Golden State College*

March 2026

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 From The Editor:

In the Service of Light,  
Learning, and Fraternal Ascent  
*R.W. Joseph Dongo, IX<sup>o</sup> et  
Philologus Adeptus Major*

With reverence and gratitude, we present this year's issue of the *Golden State College Newsletter*, a humble yet meaningful offering in the continuing life of our beloved College. Each annual edition is more than a chronicle of convocations, papers, and programs. It is, in its own way, a lamp set upon the table: a witness to labor faithfully undertaken, to minds disciplined by study, and to hearts united in the quiet pursuit of wisdom.

The work of a Rosicrucian College is never measured solely by numbers, and yet numbers may at times reveal the hidden growth of the inner temple. During the year 2025, the Golden State College welcomed **six new members**, inducted **seven additional Fratres into the Philologi Societas**, bringing

# Hermetic Alchemy In The Qabalah And The Golden Dawn

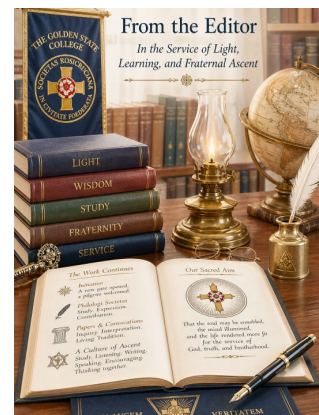
*R.W. Robert Word, VIII<sup>o</sup>*

Among the few qabalistic treatises addressing the question of hermetic alchemy and correspondences to the Tree of Life, one must point to a book titled the Aesch Mezareph or Purifying Fire. It is a chymico-qabalistic treatise collected from the Qabala Denudata of Knorr von Rosenroth, originally composed in Latin. Circa 1714 it was

that honored body to **twenty-one members**, and heard eight **papers presented across four convocations**. These are not merely accomplishments to be recorded. They are signs of vitality. They are evidence that the sacred flame entrusted to us continues to burn with steadiness and purpose.

Every initiation is a solemn affirmation that the Work goes on. It is the opening of a new gate, the reception of another seeker into a tradition at once ancient and ever new. In a world often distracted by haste and outward clamor, it is no small thing that thoughtful men still seek admission into a fellowship devoted to reflection, reverence, and the disciplined search for truth. To initiate is not merely to increase our number. It is to extend the chain of transmission, to place into worthy hands the tools of contemplation, and to invite another pilgrim onto the path of inner refinement.

The continued growth of the



**Philologi Societas** is equally heartening. It stands as a visible token of an invisible virtue: the willingness to labor in study, to shape thought into language, and to contribute to the intellectual treasury of the College. In every age, the written word has been among the noblest vehicles of preservation and illumination. A paper thoughtfully prepared, carefully delivered, and fraternally received is more than an academic exercise. It is an offering. It is the fruit of meditation ripened into expression. It

### Special points of interest:

- Grand Commandery Grand Session on May 15th, 2026
- Grand Chapter Grand Session on May 16th, 2026
- Grand Council Grand Session on May 18th, 2026
- Golden State College Annual Convocation on May 24th, at 1:30 PM
- CA Grand Lodge Annual Communication on October 24-25th, 2026 in San Francisco
- SRICF High Council Annual Meeting on November 14-15th, 2026 in Louisville, KY

ed near the town of Tzfat, or Sefed, in modern Israel. The latter town is considered by many to be the greatest center of Qabalistic learning in the world.

My edition of the Aesch Mezareph stems from the Collectanea Hermetica, edited by W. Wynn Westcott, who was the supreme magus of the SRIA for a number of





## Hermetic Alchemy In The Qabalah And The Golden Dawn ...

Continued from Page 1

years, as well as the co-founder of an occult society known as the Order of the Golden Dawn. This edition was published by the Occult Research Press located in New York City.

As we shall see, the Aesch Mezareph sets forth teachings of hermetic alchemy in correspondence with the Tree of Life which can also be found in the Order of the Golden Dawn. We may assume that Wynn Westcott derived these Golden Dawn teachings through consulting the Aesch Mezareph, since the teachings are identical. In order to demonstrate this fact, I shall quote directly from the Aesch Mezareph and also display photographed images from original documents of the Golden Dawn in my possession.

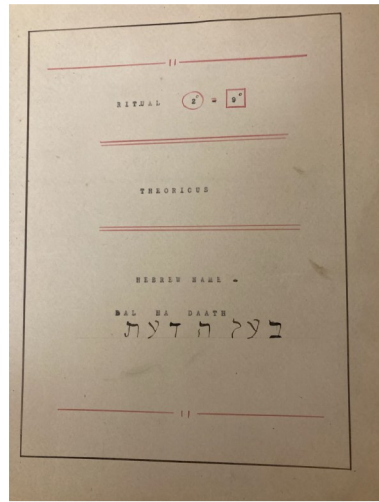
By the time the Golden Dawn reached New York City, the use of the name Golden Dawn itself had been abandoned, and the Order instead had adopted the name Rosicrucian Order of AO, also known in the U.S. as the Hermetic Order of AO. Thus, Temple number IX of the Rosicrucian Order of AO became active in New York City by circa 1904. Here I shall display documents coming from Thoth Hermes IX dealing with the question at hand.

The main components of alchemical theory consist of three principles of mercury, sulphur, and salt, as well as seven metals lead, tin, iron, gold, mercury, and silver. The objects of alchemy consisted in making the Philosophoher's Stone which could be used for transmutation, and the medicine of metals, which could be used to heal diseases and extend life span.

The Aesch Mezareph provides a correspondence between these components of alchemical theory and the Sephiroth on the Tree of Life. The Order of the Golden

Dawn taught exactly the same correspondences. In Thoth Hermes Temple, the correspondences were set forth in the Theoricus Grade, or 2=9, during the second point of the Ritual.

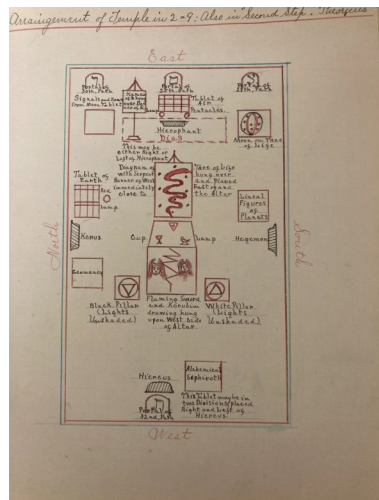
The cover sheet of the Ritual



from Thoth Hermes is displayed in the following image:

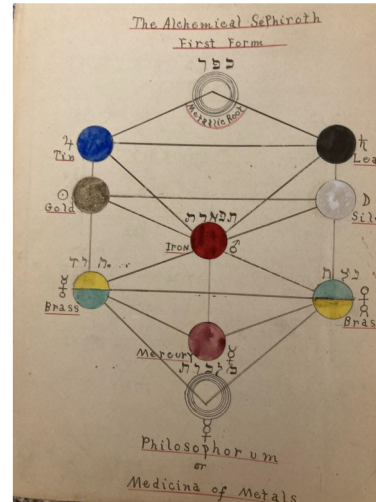
In the Order of the Golden Dawn, the grade of Theoricus had the Hebrew name Bal ha Daath, meaning Master of Knowledge.

The floor plan for the grade of Theoricus shows a pair of diagrams on the western side of the Temple addressing the question of the tree of life attributions of the principles of alchemical theory, setting forth two different



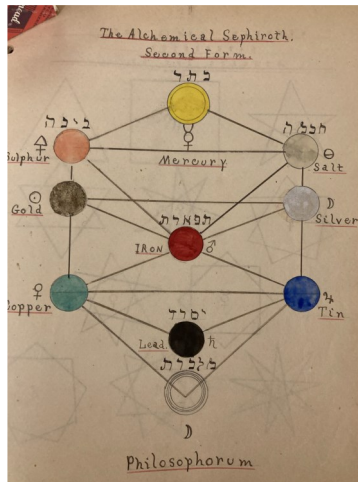
attributions, and called the Alchemical Sephiroth:

The first of the two diagrams as



displayed in Thoth Hermes IX is depicted as follows:

The second of the two diagrams



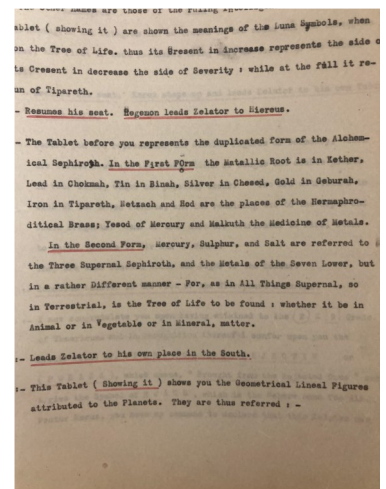
of alchemical sephiroth as shown in Thoth Hermes IX is depicted as follows:

The teachings of the Golden Dawn on the alchemical sephiroth are set forth in the ritual, and describing the tablets:

Next, I shall quote from the Aesch Mezareph itself in order to locate precisely the same teachings. They are found right away in the first chapter of the Aesch Mezareph, and like the Golden Dawn, also set forth two



"Thus we have shown by consulting original documents of the Golden Dawn, and the Aesch Mezareph itself, how Wynn Westcott as a co-founder of the Order of the Golden Dawn, derived its original teachings by consulting such qabalistic treatises as the Aesch Mezareph."







### OFFICERS JUNE 2025 to MAY 2026

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Chief Adept    | Ara Maloyan, IX°, KGC   |
| Celebrant      | Patrick Muldoon, VII°   |
| Exponent       | Isaac Dikeocha, VII°    |
| Treasurer      | Evan Brewer, VIII°      |
| Secretary      | Joseph Dongo, IX°       |
| 1st Ancient    | Jonathan Prestage, VII° |
| 2nd Ancient    | Carl Brickner, VI°      |
| 3rd Ancient    | Thomas Ellison, VI°     |
| 4th Ancient    | Vacant                  |
| Conductor      | Richard Fonseca, IV°    |
| Herald         | Roberto Diaz, IV°       |
| Torch Bearer   | Michael Tarver, IV°     |
| Acolyte        | David Kampschafer, V°   |
| Prelate        | Vacant                  |
| Web./Lib.      | Patrick G. Bailey, IX°  |
| Officers Coach | Efren Prado, VIII°      |

### From the Editor Continued from Page 1

is a contribution to that great conversation through which one generation of Fratres strengthens the next.

So too, the six papers presented in our convocations during 2025 deserve special note and appreciation. These papers remind us that the College is not a passive repository of inherited wisdom, but a living workshop of inquiry and interpretation. Within such efforts, one sees the true spirit of Rosicrucian Masonry: not content with the mere possession of symbols, but seeking their inward meaning; not satisfied with form alone, but striving toward understanding; not stopping at admiration of the Light, but endeavoring to walk by it.

What is being built among us is therefore more than a successful year. It is a culture. It is a culture of study, of listening, of writing, of speaking, of encouraging, and of thinking together under the discipline of our sacred tradition. Such a culture does not emerge by accident. It is formed by fidelity. It is sus-

tained by example. It is strengthened whenever a Frater chooses to prepare a paper, to attend with intention, to mentor a newer member, or to take seriously the call to deeper understanding.

This is the quiet grandeur of our College. Ours is not the labor of spectacle, but of substance. We build without noise. We advance without boasting. We serve the Light not by proclamation alone, but by patient effort, thoughtful discourse, and fraternal devotion. If our work is sometimes hidden from the world, it is because much of what is most sacred grows in silence, as roots deepen before branches rise.

May this issue of the newsletter therefore be received not only as a report, but as an exhortation. Let it encourage the newer Frater to take up the discipline of study with eagerness. Let it inspire the seasoned Frater to continue sharing the fruits of long reflection. Let it remind us all that the strength of the College lies not merely in meeting together, but in ascending together: from curiosity to knowledge, from knowledge to wisdom, and from wisdom to service.

**Members meet on Sundays in February (4th), May (4th), August (4th), and November (3rd) At 2:00 PM**



**During February and August:**  
At the Los Altos Lodge No. 712  
Masonic Temple  
146 Main Street, Los Altos, CA  
94022-2905



**And in May and November**  
At the Woodland Lodge No. 81  
Masonic Temple  
228 Palm Ave, Woodland, CA  
95695

We also acknowledge with gratitude the broader fellowship of the Society and the resources that sustain our common labor. Those who wish to explore further the life and mission of the Society may do so through the High Council website and the page of the Golden State College, where additional materials and information may be found.

As this new issue goes forth, may it stand as a testimony that the Golden State College continues to fulfill its noble purpose. May our studies remain earnest, our fellowship steadfast, and our aspirations worthy of the great inheritance we have received. And may the Divine Light, which no darkness can overcome, continue to guide our minds, strengthen our labors, and sanctify our fraternity.

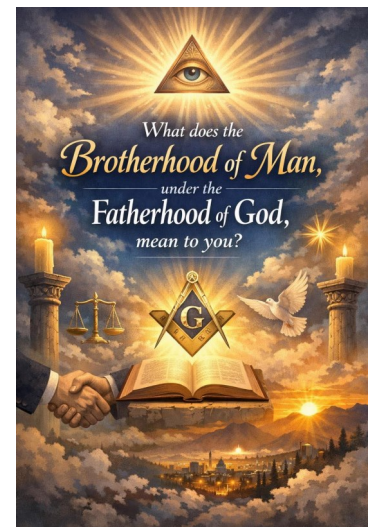
For in the end, all true Rosicrucian work is ordered toward the same sacred aim: that the soul may be ennobled, the mind illumined, and the life rendered more fit for the service of God, truth, and brotherhood.

Joseph Dongo, IX°



Los Altos Masonic Lodge No. 712

“May this issue of the newsletter therefore be received not only as a report, but as an exhortation... that the strength of the College lies not merely in meeting together, but in ascending together: from curiosity to knowledge, from knowledge to wisdom, and from wisdom to service.”





## Hermetic Alchemy In The Qabalah and the Golden Dawn *Continued from Page 2*

different sets of attributions of the alchemical principles to the sephiroth of the Tree of Life:

"But know, that the Mysteries of this Wisdom, differ not from the superior Mysteries of the Kabbalah . . . Therefore the Metallic Root here possesseth the place of Kether, which hath an occult Nature, involved in great obscurity ..."

"Lead hath the place of Chokmah, because Chokmah immediately proceeds from Kether, as it immediately comes from the Metallic Root, and in Enigmatic similes, it is called the "Father.."

"Tin possesseth the place of Binah, showing Age, by its grayness, and shadowing forth Severity and Judicial Rigor, by its Crackling ..."

"Silver is placed under the class of Chesed, by all the Masters of the Kabbalah, chiefly for its Color and Use ..."

"Thus far the White Natures. Now follow the Red . . . Gold is placed under Geburah, according to the most common opinion of the Kabbalists; Job 37:22 also tells us that gold cometh from the north, not only for its color, but for the sake of its heat and Sulphur ..."

"Iron is referred to Tiphareth, for he is like a Man of War according to Exodus 15:2, ..."

"Netzach and Hod are the two Median places of the body, ... and refer to the Hermaphroditic Brass ..."

"Yesod is Argent vive (mercury). For to this, the name Living is characteristically given; and this living water is in every case the Foundation of all Nature and of the Metallic Art ..."

"But the true Medicine of Metals is referred to Malkuth, for many reasons, because it represents

the rest of nature under the metamorphoses of gold and silver, right and left, judgement and mercy, ..."

Thus, this portion of the Aesch Mezareph has set forth precisely the same attributions to the Tree of Life as that shown in the first to the two diagrams. Chapter one of the Aesch Mezareph then proceeds to set forth the attributions of the second of the two diagrams:

"...But if anyone hath placed these things in another order, I shall not contend with him, inasmuch as all systems tend to the one truth ..."

"For it may be said, the three Supernals are the three fountains of metallic things. The thick water is Kether, Salt is Chokmah, and Sulphur is Binah ...And so, the seven inferior will represent the seven metals, viz., Gedulah and Geburah, Silver and Gold; Tiphareth, iron; Netzach and Hod, tin and copper, Yesod Lead; and Malkuth will be the metallic woman, and the luna of the wise men, and the field into which the seeds of secret minerals ought to be cast, that is the Water of Gold, as this name occurs, Genesis 36:39.

In this way, we see that the remainder of chapter one of the Aesch Mezareph sets forth essentially the same attributions which are shown in the second of the two diagrams.

Thus we have shown by consulting original documents of the Golden Dawn, and the Aesch Mezareph itself, how Wynn Westcott as a co-founder of the Order of the Golden Dawn, derived its original teachings by consulting such qabalistic treatises as the Aesch Mezareph. ✚

Robert Word, VIII°

## ✚ Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism By R.W. Edgar W. Fentum, IX° et Philologus Philosophus

**E**lias Ashmole's remarkable journey began on 23rd May 1617 in the historic, cultural city of Lichfield, Staffordshire, England. He was born to Anne nee Bowyer and Simon Ashmole. At his christening in the Protestant Church of Saint Mary, something unexpected happened. His godfather, a well-regarded church warden, surprised Elias's parents by choosing the name Elias on the spot during the ceremony. The name comes from Mark 8:28—where Jesus is compared to Elijah (Elias in Greek)—so it carries a lot of spiritual weight.

Elias's father Simon Ashmole (1589-1634) hailed from a middle-class background whose father was Mayor of Litchfield. Litchfield in the 1600's was considered a small but elite city with a strong Christian background and thriving commerce. Simon Ashmole did not follow in his older brothers' steps towards public recognition and settle to be a saddler in his own business. Elias quoted about his father '*an honest fair conditioned man and kind to others, yet through ill husbandry became a great enemy to himself and his family.*' A strong hint that he was not a good supportive father! Elias was the second of five children and relied on his mother Anne for comfort and support. Anne Bowyer was the daughter of a wealthy family from Coventry who brought an inheritance with her. However, by the time Elias was born the wealth she inherited was no more. This is yet another clear indication that his father likely squandered the family's wealth, forcing his mother to take up needlework to supplement



23rd May 1617 – 18<sup>th</sup> May 1692 (74 years)

*Ex Uno Omnia Motto from one came all*

"Elias Ashmole (1617–1692) stands as an inspiring figure of the 17th century, whose vision and curiosity helped shape British history... He serves as a beacon for all who seek to bridge worlds—uniting Renaissance magic with Enlightenment science—and reminds us that his curiosity and dedication left a lasting impact on Rosicrucianism and may have been absorbed into Freemasonry."







## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism

*Continued from Page 4*

their income. Anne Ashmore was a distant relative of Baron Pagitt who was a Solicitor and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Elias Ashmore developed a friendship with Baron Pagitt's son.

Elias Ashmore's story of his early life is a tapestry woven with faith, tradition, and an insatiable curiosity about life's mysteries Tobias Churton: *'Elias owed his mother a great deal for perspicuity, wisdom and solid common sense.'* His mother, Anne was a poet and rendered great encouragement to Elias in those early years. *'Ashmore also maintained a lifelong interest in various aspects of magick<sup>1</sup>, especially in attempts to make spirits appear. Ashmore collected Dee's manuscripts, gathered all the information he could from Dee's son Arthur, and planned a biography of the great magician. The biography never appeared, but the figure of Dee continued to haunt Ashmore for the rest of his life.'* Quote from Ashmore.com. It is noteworthy that from these humble beginnings emerged a profound scholar and founder of the famous Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

He attended Litchfield Grammar School, where he distinguished himself as an outstanding scholar. A devoted Protestant Christian within the Church of England, he enriched his many talents by singing in

the choir and contributing musically. His steadfast support for tradition and the monarchy was unwavering. Ashmore lived through challenging years between 1639 and 1651—a period marked by significant conflict across England, Scotland, and Ireland. In 1633, he moved to London; with the encouragement of Baron James Paget, he was able to fulfil his ambition of becoming a solicitor and building his own business. From this point on, it was clear that his attitude was driven by a straightforward wish for financial security and acknowledgment - intellectual, spiritual, and social.

His marriage to Eleanor Mainwaring in 1638 was a significant romantic move—it gave him useful connections through her Oxford-based family and brought some financial security thanks to her inheritance. Eleanor was 14 years older than Elias and sadly suffered a miscarriage. They lived in a family home at Smallwood, Cheshire and she died just four years later in 1641—a harsh blow by any measure that left him with a small income. Elias was eager to find a replacement and courted many wealthy women.

### CIVIL WARS 1642-1651

On 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1642, in the city of Nottingham, King Charles I's declaration of war resulted in the First Civil War—a time of real turmoil. During this chaos, Ashmore, who abandoned his legal practice in London moved to Oxford left for Cheshire to be with his late wife's family. He was appointed King Charles I Commissioner of Excise and was responsible for raising much-needed funds from Lichfield to support the Stuart monarchy. He also accepted a commission as a Captain in the King's army within an artillery regiment.

## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, and Esoteric Legacy...

By V.W Gregory Peters, V<sup>o</sup>et  
Philologus Zelator

*This paper was inspired by some conversations with good friend and Right Worthy Frater Edgar Fentum*

### Introduction

Zoroastrianism, originating in ancient Persia, stands as one of the world's oldest continuously practiced monotheistic religions, founded by the prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra). Most authorities place its establishment between 1500–1000 BCE in the eastern Iranian regions, though esoteric traditions claim far earlier origins. At its theological core is the worship of Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, and a cosmic dualistic framework depicting the eternal struggle between good (asha, truth/order) and evil (druj, falsehood/chaos). Its profound ethical imperative, encapsulated in the triad of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds" (Humata, Hukhta, Huvarshta), guides adherents in contributing to the cosmic battle against evil forces.

Historically significant as the state religion of successive Persian empires, Zoroastrianism's theological innovations reverberated throughout the ancient world, influencing Judaism during the Babylonian exile, and subsequently shaping elements of Christianity and Islam. Perhaps less recognized but equally profound is its imprint on numerous esoteric traditions such as Kabbalah, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Theosophy, and Western occultism. The dualistic cosmology, angelology, eschatology, and emphasis on inner light that



*"Its profound ethical imperative, encapsulated in the triad of 'Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds' (Humata, Hukhta, Huvarshta), guides adherents in contributing to the cosmic battle against evil forces."*

Magick (spelled with a 'k' to distinguish it from stage magic) is the art and science of causing change to occur in conformity with your will, using focused consciousness, rituals, and natural energies to manifest desired outcomes, essentially bridging the seen and unseen worlds for personal transformation or to influence reality. It's a spiritual practice involving intent, symbolism, and energy work, not supernatural powers, aiming to align personal will with universal forces for practical, often profound, results like self-mastery, healing, or prosperity. Google



## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism ... Continued from Page 5

even though he never saw action, it reflects his allegiance and support of the Monarchy. The Civil War dragged on with Oliver Cromwell's Parliamentary Army, named 'Roundhead' squaring up against the King's supporters, known as 'Cavaliers.'

The First Civil war ended in 1646 with the Parliamentarians under Oliver Cromwell defeating the Cavaliers and the capture of King Charles. King Charles I was imprisoned at Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight, before being taken to London for execution by losing his head on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1649. When hostilities ended, Ashmole swore an oath to the Parliamentarians not to oppose Parliament or return to London—but he did not stick to either part. He went back to London to resume his legal work to top up his reduced finances with whatever modest earnings he could make from his practice.

During the First Civil War, King Charles's son (1630–1685) was sent off to France and stayed there until after his father was executed. He then returned to Scotland, determined to avenge his father's death, and raised an army that sparked the Second

Civil War in 1648. Meanwhile, Elias Ashmole led a quiet life devoted to studying mathematics, astronomy, and astrology. The conflict ended with another win for Oliver Cromwell's 'Roundheads'. Charles managed to avoid capture and fled to the Netherlands.

After Cromwell died in 1658, Charles II made his way back to London in 1660 and was crowned on 23rd April 1661. His return was met with huge enthusiasm from Londoners. It marked the revival of arts, culture and the Church of England. This period is often referred to as the English Commonwealth.

Before he officially became king, Charles II appointed Ashmole as Windsor Herald as well as Controller and Accountant General—rewards for his loyalty to the Stuart family. These roles gave Ashmole significant standing at court and helped him financially, socially, and in pursuing his interests in metaphysics and mysticism.

It is noteworthy that Elias was deeply involved in research and focus on history, botany, alche-

my, astrology, nature, cryptography, and esotericism. His perspective found in his comment: *'whether Mercurius shall ever attain to a perfection in magick and astrology.'* His preoccupation with astrology led him to predictions and magick. During his time at Oxford, Ashmole's steadfast commitment to his studies and his genuine efforts to forge meaningful connections with fellow scholars greatly broadened his horizons and deeply enriched his intellectual journey. He received an honorary Doctorate after his donation of his extensive library and collections to Oxford University culminating in the first public museum in 1683.

In July 1646, Ashmole received the tragic news of his mother's passing from the Plague, alongside many others residents in Lichfield.

In 1649, he married Lady Mary Mainwaring, no relation to his first wife Eleanor Mainwaring. Lady Mary was twenty years older than Elias, had been married three times and the widow of Lord Mainwaring. This union opened doors for Elias—he gained access to elite circles and



The Seeker of Hidden Light

*“Elias Ashmole deeply revered Dr. John Dee... bridging Renaissance magic with early modern natural philosophy... making Dee's work central to understanding the 'Rosicrucian Enlightenment'.”*

## ♦ The Rosicrucian Mission... By W Peter Cardilla, IV<sup>o</sup> et Philologus Practicus

**A**s Fratres of the Societas Rosicruciana, ours is a special course within Freemasonry. Always in line with the greater ideals of the Fraternity, our path as Rosicrucians traverses a symbolic landscape unfamiliar to many. The aim of the S.R.I.C.F. is clearly stated.

The aim of the Society is to afford mutual aid and encouragement in working out the great problems of Life, and in searching out the secrets of Nature; to

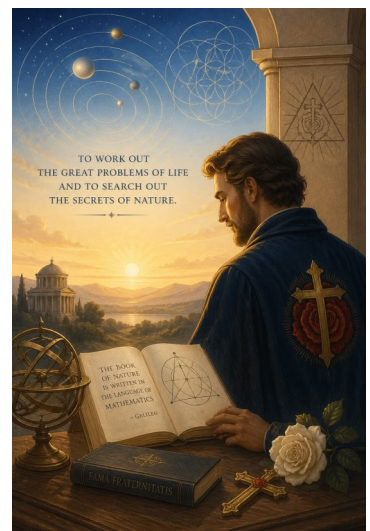
facilitate the study of the system of Philosophy founded upon the Kabbalah and the doctrines of Hermes Trismegistus, which was inculcated by the original Fratres Rosae Crucis, A.D. 1450; and to investigate the meaning and symbolism of all that now remains of the wisdom, art and literature of the ancient world.”

### The “Great Problems of Life”

Freemasons understand that eventually every life includes misfortune. Though masons are always

ready to help in times of distress, that isn't what's meant by “working out the great problems of Life.” Life, and all of existence, is a great mystery. Hundreds of years ago, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz asked why there is something here instead of nothing. It was a good question. We still don't know the answer.

Even if we don't know exactly why, we all agree that the Universe and everything in it, in-



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## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism ...Continued from Page 6

secured much-needed funding for his research and collection of manuscripts and books. However, their relationship soured badly; Lady Mary even threatened divorce but did not go through with it as she died in 1668. Despite their troubled marriage, it is only fair to acknowledge that she played a significant part in helping him expand his library and pursue research that pushed forward his career.

There is little doubt that Elias sought women who would help him financially and appease his sexual appetite. 'Mrs. Thornborough sent for me and I found her in bed.' ..... 'this night from 10 to 12 I discoursed with Mrs. Wall in her bedchamber exercised some love for me.' ..... Mrs. Marsh consented to come undressed.' Quotations from Elias Diary!

Elias Ashmole entered a third marriage with Elizabeth Dugdale, daughter of the esteemed scholar Sir William Dugdale on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1668. This alliance not only connected him with another influential family but also strengthened his standing within scholarly circles. She remained his wife until his death in 1692. Each step and relationship contributed greatly—not only to his intellectual pursuits, professional accomplishments, and reputation among the aristocracy but also to his personal and financial growth.

**KING CHARLES II 1649 – 1651 and James II 1685 – 1688**

Ashmole's unwavering support of the Stuarts was recognized by King Charles II when he was crowned King. Elias received appointments that restored his income and allowed him to increase his collection of manuscripts and books. King Charles

supported Science and philosophy that led to granting a charter for the Imperial College of which Elias Ashmole, Sir Robert Morey, Robert Boyle and Isaac Newton were founding members. King Charles II was a supporter of Freemasonry but was never a Freemason.

King James who followed King Charles II was a strict Catholic and his reign seriously caused a rift as he tried to convert Protestant England to Catholicism. During James II reign the King James Bible was published. In 1688 the Glorious Revolution in 1650-51 resulted in a coup and James II fled to France. Mary II and William III took over the throne jointly and established a Protestant succession to the throne of England that exists today. It is difficult to say to what impact James II had on Freemasonry as there are various versions.

#### FREEMASONRY AND ROSICRUCIANISM

The mid-1600's saw a transition from declining Operative Lodges accepting Speculative Freemasonry. Many sources claim Elias Ashmole was the first Freemason – false! Sir Robert Morey was listed as a Freemason in Newcastle, Yorkshire on May 20<sup>th</sup> 1641. Ashmole became a Freemason with two companions on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1646 at Warrington in Cheshire. He later reflected of this occasion:

*"I was made a Free Mason at Warrington in Lancashire with Coll Henry Mainwaring of Kerincham in Cheshire. The names of those who were then in the Lodge, Mr. Rich Penton, Warden, Mr. Charles Collier, Mr. Rich, Sankey, Henry Littler John Ellam, Rich Ellam and Hugh Brewer." The above quotation is from his diary. It is proba-*

ble that there were speculative Masons already in the Lodge. According to Tobias Churton, in his book about Elias Churton explains that Freemasonry was well supported in the county of Staffordshire. Another claim from Jim Harris 'Rule of Secrecy' Page 257 states. 'Rosicrucian leader Christopher Wren and Elias Ashmole firmly established Rosicrucianism-based Speculative Freemasonry. It's known that Sir Christopher Wren was in the Royal Society but there is no clear evidence that he became a Freemason' It further states '..... drew up the three existent basic Masonic degrees...' False! The third degree was not recorded until about 1720 and Ashmole died in 1692. It is probable that only the Entered Apprentice and Fellow of the Craft were conferred on Speculative Masons.

There is ample evidence that Elias was steeped in studying aspects of Rosicrucianism as indicated in Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum and his search for nature, spirituality, astrology, alchemy, science, Greek Hermeticism, esotericism together with his status as 'Magus' among the great minds of that era including Zoroastrianism (one of the world's oldest monotheistic concepts, reputed to have originated in Persia, now known as Iran, around 4000 BCE. Precisely dating the emergence of the cult or pagan practices that led to Zoroastrianism is speculative and varies according to different sources. Greek scholars attribute the concept to 6350 BCE, while Chinese research suggests findings in China around 1676 BCE.

It is believed that the concept of Zoroastrianism developed from its ancient pagan origins. It was through the teachings of Zoroas-

And he removed from there to a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east...  
—Genesis 12:8

"There is ample evidence that Elias was steeped in studying aspects of Rosicrucianism... his search for nature, spirituality, astrology, alchemy, science, Greek Hermeticism, and esotericism... viewing himself in a transformation between heaven and earthly presence."



## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism –Continued from Page 7

ter, also known as Zarathustra, around the 6th century BCE during the reign of Cyrus the Great, ruler of the Persian Empire that it developed and became a recognized religion with religious practices and worship. The religion thrived until the rise of Islam in the 7th century CE, which forced many followers to flee, arriving in India during the 8th century CE, where they are known as Parsees or Parsis, derived from the word Persian). In his diary there is a comment that suggests he regretted not becoming a Rosicrucian member. Throughout his esteemed life—as lawyer, politician, officer in the King's army, astrologer, anti-quarian, alchemist; student of magick and founder of the Ashmolean Museum and as a Freemason. Ashmole earned admiration far and wide for his many contributions.

**HERMETICISM DEFINED**

“Technical Hermetica: *“The basic idea ... is the notion that all things that exist, both in the spiritual and in the material world, in some way or another are interconnected. This universal sympathia could be the basis for quite different practices (e.g. magic and alchemy).”* (Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism. ‘A system of theological and mystical philosophy that developed around the second century (CE). Believers came to accept that the texts were much older than they really were, possibly even predating Moses and the Old Testament. The Hermetical works are assigned to the authorship of Hermes Trismegistus (Hermes Trice Greatesto but were composed by several anonymous individuals.’

Hermeticism is a philosophical concept ascribed to Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus. It is derived from Alexandria and considered a fusion of Greek and Egyptian

philosophy. There is a claim by St. Augustine (354 – 450 C.E.) that credited Hermeticism to be from the time of Abraham 1800 B.C.E. There is no evidence to support the claim.

Hermes is a mythological name of the messenger to the Greek Gods. He was worshiped as an Olympian god and patron to shepherds, athletes, orators, travelers and commerce. Mercury or Mercurius is the mythological name of the messenger to the Roman Gods. These two names came together during the Greco-Roman expansion of the Roman Empire and transition of Greco-Roman cultures.

Trismegistus means ‘thrice great’, ‘Thrice greatest’ or ‘three times great’ as explained in the Emerald Tablet.

Thoth<sup>2</sup> was one of the important Egyptian gods during the Hellenistic period from 350 B.C.E to about 30 B.C.E. Thoth was considered to be the seat of intelligence and the tongue (or messenger) of the sun god Ra. He is depicted as a man with the head of an ibis or sometimes with the head and body of a baboon. He is considered as the arbiter of the dead and judge of all moral and divine law. He is credited with the 365-day year, invention of writing and the cult of the Ogdoad<sup>3</sup> belief system.

The writing ascribed to Hermes

<sup>2</sup>Thoth was considered one of the important Egyptian deities as the seat of intelligence and the tongue (or messenger) of the sun god Ra. He is depicted as a man with the head of an ibis or sometimes with the head of a baboon.

<sup>3</sup>EIGHT - Refers to Hathor and Thoth of Egyptian Mythology approximately 2500 B.C.E. In Gnosticism refers to the 7 Palaces of Heaven plus a special place called the Ogdoad. Found in the Ordo Aurum Solis as the ‘Ogdoadic Tradition’

<sup>5</sup>Prisca Theologia – concept of a primordial or universal tradition of wisdom that is an underlying theology in all religions that was given by God to man and can be seen in Freemasonry in ‘Anderson’s Constitution’ of 1723

<sup>6</sup>Book of the Dead

Trismegistus originated in Egypt in the name of Thoth<sup>4</sup>. These writings by Thoth were claimed or added to by the Greeks under the name of Hermes Trismegistus, by which name Hermeticism became universally known.

Hermeticism, therefore, is a fusion of Greek, Roman and Egyptian philosophical beliefs. In later years many of these precepts were adapted to Christian, Jewish, Islamic and Kabbalistic teachings<sup>5</sup> and later became absorbed into Rosicrucianism.

Literature is full of mythological references to the Greek Hermes, to the Roman Mercury and to the Egyptian Thoth. Hermes is linked to the culture of the Mycenaean era of 1600-1100 B.C.E. The mysteries of Thoth the ‘Scribe of the Gods’ in early Egyptian mythology relate to astronomy, astrology, religious incantations, rituals and prayers that helped the soul to pass into the afterlife<sup>6</sup>.

It is uncertain that Hermes/Thoth was an individual and it has been suggested that the philosophy developed or was created over centuries by a ‘school’. Hermeticism incorporated:

1. Alchemy - Transmutation of base metal into gold but particularly the spiritual purification of the soul<sup>7</sup>. The ‘Elixir of Life’ and the ‘Philosopher’s Stone’ were sought but never attained by early Alchemists. It is the forerunner of Chemistry. ‘...the philosophical Elixir, whose divine virtues wise men so much admire and fools condemn because their blinded eyes cannot penetrate within to the centre of the mystery<sup>8</sup>.’

2. Astrology - is a pseudo sci-

<sup>7</sup>Atwood Pg. 98

<sup>8</sup>Atwood Pg. 101

<sup>9</sup>Atwood Pgs. 500-520



“Elias Ashmole (1617–1692) stands as an inspiring figure of the 17th century, whose vision and curiosity helped shape British history... He serves as a beacon for all who seek to bridge worlds—uniting Renaissance magic with Enlightenment science—and reminds us that his curiosity and dedication left a lasting impact on Rosicrucianism and may have been absorbed into Freemasonry.”



# Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Foederatis

## NEWS

### Golden State College

## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, and Esoteric Legacy – Continued from Page 5

characterize these later mystical systems bear unmistakable Zoroastrian echoes.

### Historical Development The Prophet Zoroaster

Zoroaster (Zarathustra in Avestan) remains a figure shrouded in historical ambiguity. Modern scholarship generally places his life between 1500–1000 BCE, though historical sources offer wildly divergent chronologies: Greek accounts suggest 6350 BCE, Persian texts propose 600 BCE, while various esoteric traditions claim far earlier origins connecting him to primordial wisdom traditions. This chronological uncertainty has contributed to Zoroaster's mystique within esoteric circles.

According to Albert Pike, Zoroaster was seen not merely as a religious reformer but as a vessel of ancient primordial wisdom. In *Morals and Dogma*, Pike considered him a transmitter of sacred truths that linked Eastern and Western esoteric traditions: "The doctrine of Zoroaster was the most perfect mediation between the visible and invisible worlds, taught by genius in earlier ages". Helena Blavatsky, co-founder of the Theosophical Society, described him as a "divine seer" who preserved Chaldean and Aryan gnosis for future generations.

Linguistic and textual evidence suggests Zoroaster likely lived in eastern Iran, with proposed locations including Sistan, Herat, or Bactria. According to Zoroastrian tradition, at age 30, during the spring Nowruz festival, Zoroaster received a profound vision from Vohu Manah ("Good Mind"), a divine being sent by Ahura Mazda. This revelation inspired his radical reform of the prevailing polytheistic religion, elevating Ahura Mazda as the

supreme deity while recategorizing other Indo-Iranian deities such as Mithra and Anahita as subordinate spirits (yazatas) in service to the divine order.

### Imperial Periods

Zoroastrianism achieved its first significant political recognition when it became the state religion under the Achaemenid Empire (c. 550–330 BCE). Cyrus the Great, widely believed to be a devout Zoroastrian, ruled according to principles of *asha* (truth and righteousness), establishing a reputation for religious tolerance that extended to the Jewish exiles in Babylon, whom he permitted to return to Jerusalem. The famous Cyrus Cylinder, while not explicitly Zoroastrian, reflects ethical principles aligned with the religion's emphasis on justice and truth.

Darius I and Xerxes further integrated Zoroastrianism into imperial governance, with Darius restoring cult shrines throughout the empire and inscribing his devotion to Ahura Mazda in the Behistun inscription: "By the grace of Ahura Mazda I am king; Ahura Mazda bestowed the kingdom upon me." Archaeological evidence from Persepolis reveals architectural symbolism reflecting Zoroastrian cosmological principles, including representations of seasonal equinoxes aligned with religious festivals.

During this period, the religion spread along the Silk Road, influencing regions from China to the Mediterranean. Cultural exchange with Greek philosophy began, with Zoroastrian concepts entering Hellenic thought through figures like Pythagoras, who some esoteric traditions claim studied with Persian Magi.

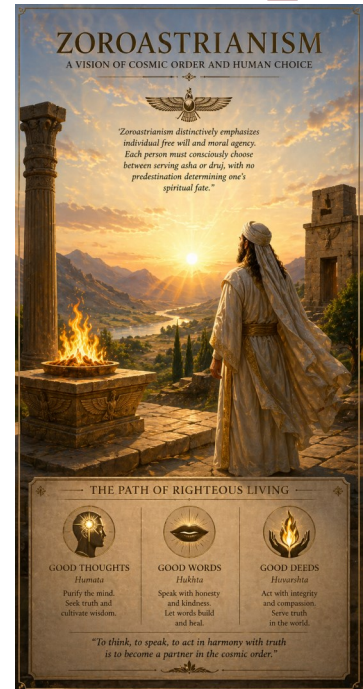
The conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great in 330 BCE initiated a period of decline for Zoroastrianism under Hellenic rule. Greek accounts mention the destruction of Zoroastrian texts, and Hellenistic cultural influences challenged traditional practices. However, esoteric traditions maintain that during this period, key mystical aspects of Zoroastrianism were preserved in mystery schools that synthesized Persian wisdom with Greek philosophical frameworks.

The Parthian Empire (247 BCE–224 CE) witnessed a resurgence of Zoroastrianism following Hellenistic decline. Archaeological evidence from this period reveals fire temples established across the empire, though documentary evidence remains limited. The Arsacid dynasty patronized the religion while maintaining the Achaemenid tradition of religious tolerance.

The Sasanian Empire (224–651 CE) marked the apex of Zoroastrianism as a state religion. Under Ardashir I and subsequent rulers, Zoroastrian doctrine was standardized, and the Avesta was canonized in written form after centuries of oral transmission.

During this era, the Zoroastrian priesthood (*mobads*) gained significant political power, sometimes leading to religious intolerance toward Christians and Manichaeans. The religious academy at Gundeshapur became a center of learning where Zoroastrian thought encountered Greek, Indian, and Christian intellectual traditions, creating a syncretic environment that preserved and transmitted knowledge after the fall of the Western Roman Empire.

Page 9



The Sacred Path: Aligning Thought, Word, and Deed

"Zoroastrianism endures not only as a historical religion but as a radiant symbol of humanity's quest for truth, order, and spiritual transcendence."





## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, and Esoteric Legacy—Continued from Page 9

### Decline and Diaspora

The Muslim conquest of Persia in 651 CE precipitated a dramatic decline in Zoroastrianism.

While initial Arab policy permitted Zoroastrians status as *dhimmis* (protected religious minorities), alongside Jews and Christians, practical implementation varied widely by region and era. Many fire temples were destroyed or repurposed as mosques, and adherents faced pressure to convert or persecution. Many texts were destroyed and priestly lineages vanished.

In 936 CE, a significant group of Zoroastrians fled religious perse-

### The Rosicrucian Mission—Continued from Page 6

cluding us, exists. Why do we exist? How did we come to exist? How should we continue to exist? What does it mean to exist? At their essence, all our big questions—questions of religion, ethics, philosophy, and science—are all questions about existence.

### SECRETS OF NATURE

Further, we aim to support each other in "searching out the secrets of Nature." Everything that exists, wherever it may be, conforms to the permanent, immutable laws of nature. The value of cooperating with these laws was understood even to ancient civilizations. Zosimos of Panopolis, the earliest alchemist known to history, believed no effort opposed to the laws of nature could succeed, and he paid close attention to the world around him.<sup>1</sup> Though we've been at it for a long time now, humans have still only managed to study a relative-

cution, sailing from Hormuz to Gujarat, India, forming what would become the Parsi community. Local ruler Jadi Rana reportedly granted asylum on condition that the refugees adopt local language and dress while maintaining religious practices. This community flourished particularly under British colonial rule, when Parsi entrepreneurs established commercial and intellectual prominence in Bombay (now Mumbai). There is still a Parsi community in Bombay to this day.

### Theological Framework Monotheism and Dualism

Zoroastrianism presents a theological system that is primarily monotheistic while incorporating a dualistic cosmology. At its apex stands Ahura Mazda, the "Wise Lord," the creator of all that is good, conceived as supreme, transcendent, and uniquely uncreated.

The cosmology is centered on the cosmic struggle between Ahura Mazda's creative force and Angra Mainyu (Ahriman), the destructive spirit who chose to embody *druj* (falsehood/chaos).

This central opposition between *asha* (truth/order) and *druj* is echoed in numerous later mystical traditions such as Kabbalah, where the Tree of Life represents divine harmony and the Sitra Achra ("Other Side") represents chaotic opposition.

This dynamic tension between monotheistic worship and dualistic cosmology has intrigued esoteric thinkers for millennia. The Zoroastrian solution—positing evil as a force choosing opposition to good, rather than as an emanation from the divine—offered a resolution to the theological problem of evil that

would influence both mainstream religious development and esoteric interpretations across traditions.

### Divine Emanations

The Amesha Spenta (Bounteous Immortals) function as emanations or aspects of Ahura Mazda, representing divine qualities manifested in creation:

1. **Vohu Manah** (Good Mind/Purpose): Divine wisdom and benevolent intention
2. **Asha Vahishta** (Best Truth/Order): Cosmic order and righteous law
3. **Khshathra Vairya** (Desirable Dominion): Divine authority and ideal governance
4. **Spenta Armaiti** (Holy Devotion): Devotion and right-mindedness
5. **Haurvatat** (Wholeness/Perfection): Integrity and health
6. **Ameretat** (Immortality): Deathlessness and renewal

These divine emanations can be interpreted analogously to the Sephirot in Kabbalah or the planetary intelligences in Hermeticism, as manifestations of divine qualities that bridge transcendence and immanence. Gerald Massey, in his esoteric studies of comparative religion, argued that such divine personifications were ancient symbolic representations of cosmic principles rather than polytheistic deities. Pike also saw these emanations as reflections of divine archetypes understood in Masonic and Hermetic symbolism.

Historically, these abstract principles became increasingly personified in later Zoroastrian practice, functioning as angelic beings (*yazatas*) worthy of veneration though subordinate to Ahura Mazda. This elab-



Two Paths, One Soul: The Eternal Contest of Truth and Falsehood

*"As one of the earliest articulated systems of cosmic dualism, free will, and moral responsibility, it shaped Western monotheism and contributed profoundly to the metaphysical currents of mysticism and esoterica."*

<sup>1</sup>Grimes, *Becoming Gold*.

<sup>2</sup>Shyfrin, *From Infinity to Man*







## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism...Continued from Page 8

ences which claims that the relative position of celestial bodies can influence and provide information about individuals, human affairs and other "earthly" matters. In Hermeticism both Astronomy and Astrology are integrated. The search of the fixed position of the planets and movements of celestial bodies is evidenced in the standing stones of Stonehenge, Avebury, Pyramids of Egypt, South America Mayan structures and pictographs, in the culture of China and India. Astrology was the core of the Hermetic Tradition.

3. Theurgy - Art of Divine works, prayer, ritual and contemplation that are invoked through the conscious will to assist in an improvement of 'self'. This may be manifested in both 'good' (white magick) and 'evil' (black magick). 'Magick' as stated at the beginning of this Paper. 'The six Keys of Eudoxus'. Many practitioners of alchemy pursued it. The elixir of life was also said to be able to create life. It is related to the myths of Enoch, Thoth, and Hermes Trismegistus, all of whom in various tales are said to have drunk "the white drops" (liquid gold) and thus achieved immor-

ality. It is also associated with the Qur'an's Al Khidr ('The Green Man'), and is mentioned in one of the Nag Hammadi texts *but particularly the spiritual purification of the soul. It is the forerunner of Chemistry*.

Dr. Carl Jung saw Alchemy as a spiritual improvement of the individual through discovery of self and psyche and the integration of the whole. In Freemasonry we refer to 'making good men into better men and better Masons.' He did not believe in the: *'...physical aspect of alchemy but rather as transition of the psyche from fragmentation to whole.'*

The Elixir of Life is equated with the Philosopher's Stone as a means of indefinitely prolonging life and even creating life. There are no such formulae known to exist yet the search spread worldwide.

In the Middle Ages Paracelsus disregarded much of the magic of Alchemy and brought Chemistry into medicine. He connected the three primus as Sulfur embodied the soul, (the emotions and desires); Salt repre-

sented the body; Mercury epitomized the spirit (imagination, moral judgment, and the higher mental faculties).

He considered that health was a balance of harmony between the body and Nature – thus aligning himself with Hermeticism and the Macrocosm /Microcosm concept.

Mary Ann Atwood states. *"There are three things necessary for the attainment of Hermetic science: viz., study, experience and the divine benediction; and these depend upon each other; study is required for the theory and this for entering into the central experience, which in the Universal Spirit, is not found without God<sup>10</sup>."*

The only extant documents were the 'Corpus Hermeticum and Asclepius' that is made up of 15 tractates. 'The Divine Poimandres – the Shepard of Men' and 'The Emerald Tablet or Tables'. A later work known as 'Kybalion' was written in 1908 to explain Hermeticism by an anonymous group calling themselves 'The Three Initiates'<sup>11</sup>. The most re-



Between Crown and Cosmos

"From this point on, it was clear that his attitude was driven by a straightforward wish for financial security and acknowledgment—intellectual, spiritual, and social."

## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, and Esoteric Legacy—Continued from Page 10

orate angelology influenced Jewish apocalyptic literature during the Babylonian exile and subsequently shaped Christian and Islamic angelology.

## Ethical Imperatives

The ethical triad "Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds" (Humata, Hukhta, Huvarshta) serves as the core spiritual imperative for Zoroastrians. This emphasis on aligning thought, speech, and action represents a sophisticated moral philosophy that

recognizes the interconnection between internal states and external behaviors. The Gathas emphasize that ethical choices have cosmic significance, contributing to either the advancement of asha or its diminishment.

Zoroastrianism distinctively emphasizes individual free will and moral agency. Each person must consciously choose between serving asha or druj, with no predestination determining one's spiritual fate. This radical commitment to moral auton-

omy distinguishes Zoroastrianism from deterministic systems and establishes personal responsibility as central to spiritual life.

The religion further emphasizes charity (*radih*) and the spiritual equality of men and women as essential in manifesting asha in human society. The Ashem Vohu prayer concisely captures this ethical orientation: "Righteousness is the best good, a blessing it is; a blessing be to that which is righteousness for the sake of the best





## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, and Esoteric Legacy – Continued from Page 11

righteousness." This sentiment resonates profoundly with Kabbalistic and Gnostic calls for inner rectification (*tikkun*) and purity of intention.

### Cosmology and Eschatology

Zoroastrian cosmology teaches that Ahura Mazda created the spiritual (*menog*) world first, followed by the material (*getig*) world, with assistance from the Amesha Spenta and Yazatas.

Creation unfolds in cosmic time spanning 12,000 years divided into four 3,000-year epochs. We currently live in the final epoch, characterized by intensified struggle between good and evil forces.

The soul's journey after death involves a three-day period of reflection beside the body, during which prayers by the living provide spiritual assistance. The soul then crosses the Chinvat Bridge, where it is judged by Rashnu, who weighs its deeds with perfect justice. The righteous enter the House of Song (Garothman), experiencing divine presence and joy. The wicked descend into the House of Lies (Druj-demana), experiencing separation and darkness proportional to their evil deeds. Those of balanced deeds dwell temporarily in Hamistakan, a middle realm, until the final renewal.

At Frashokereti (Making Wonderful/Renewal), the end-time transformation, the Saoshyant (World-Savior) will emerge from Zoroaster's lineage to lead a final cosmic battle against evil.

The dead will be resurrected, and all souls will pass through a river of molten metal that purifies the righteous and punishes the wicked. Ultimately, Angra Mainyu will be defeated, creation will be restored to perfect harmony with asha, and time will transform

from linear to cyclical perfection.

These eschatological themes parallel those in Gnosticism and Kabbalah, where the world is restored to a divine state through messianic or cosmic intervention. Esoteric traditions, including those explored by Blavatsky and the Theosophists, interpret this eschatology as symbolic of the soul's inner alchemy and divine reunification. This is the transformation of consciousness from duality to unity.

### Ritual Practice and Sacred Space

#### Fire Temples and Sacred Elements

Zoroastrian worship centers fundamentally on purity and reverence for fire (*atar*), which serves as the supreme symbol of divine wisdom and Ahura Mazda's presence. Fire temples (*dar-e mehr* or *atashkadeh*) house sacred fires tended by priests who undergo extensive purification rituals before approaching the flame. These fires are categorized hierarchically:

- 1. Atash Behram** (Fire of Victory): The highest-grade fire, established through elaborate consecration involving 16 different fire sources
- 2. Atash Adaran** (Fire of Fires): A medium-grade fire established from four sources
- 3. Atash Dadgah** (Court Fire): The common fire used in household worship

The temple architecture typically features a central chamber (*sanctum*) housing the fire, with surrounding spaces for worshippers. The fire is never extinguished and is fed with sandalwood and frankincense at five daily prayer times corresponding to divisions of the day under the protection of different divinities.

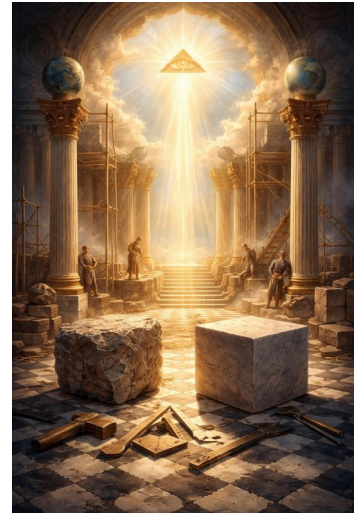
Beyond fire, Zoroastrianism recognizes several sacred elements that must be protected from pollution: earth, water, air, and plants. This reverence for the elements has led some esoteric commentators to connect Zoroastrianism with alchemical traditions that similarly emphasize the spiritual significance of elemental forces. The Hermetic maxim "As above, so below" finds resonance in the Zoroastrian understanding that physical elements reflect spiritual realities.

### Liturgical Practices

The central Zoroastrian ceremony is the Yasna, a complex ritual involving the preparation of haoma (a sacred drink), recitations from the Avesta, and offerings to fire. Only ordained priests (*mobads*) who have undergone purification rituals may perform the full Yasna, which serves as a reenactment of creation and strengthens the cosmic order against chaos.

Purification rites like *ab-zohr* (water libation) and *padyab* (ritual washing with nirang) are key to maintaining ritual purity. Before prayers, worshippers perform the *kusti* ritual, unwinding and rewinding a sacred cord around the waist while reciting prayers, symbolizing recommitment to the ethical triad.

The veneration of light is particularly significant in daily practice. Fire represents divine order (*asha*) and parallels the Kabbalistic *Ein Sof Aur* (Infinite Light), the first emanation from the divine source. In Hermetic thought, light is the primal substance of spirit, a concept shared with Zoroastrian imagery of fire and illumination. Pike viewed light as the sacred



"This emphasis on aligning thought, speech, and action represents a sophisticated moral philosophy that recognizes the interconnection between internal states and external behaviors."



**Zoroastrianism:  
Origins,  
Theology, And  
Esoteric  
Legacy**—Continued  
from Page 12

thread uniting divine wisdom across traditions: "Light is the equilibrium of Shadow and Lucidity... it is the life of everything, and embraces everything... it was the principle of the Doctrine of Zoroaster" (Pike 278–279).

**Lifecycle Rituals**

Death rituals in traditional Zoroastrianism avoid contamination of the sacred elements: corpses, considered temporarily possessed by the corpse-demon (*nasu*), are placed on Towers of Silence (*dakhmas*) for excarnation by vultures and natural elements, a practice that has faced adaptation in modern urban environments due to practical constraints. This reverence for elemental purity extends to birth rituals as well, with elaborate purification ceremonies for mother and child.

Many working examples of these towers are still in use in modern Mumbai by the Parsi communities.

Initiation into the faith occurs through the Navjote ceremony, typically performed between ages 7–15, when a child is invested with the *sudreh* (sacred shirt) and *kusti* (sacred cord). This initiatory ritual has been compared by esotericists to similar rites of passage in Western mystery traditions, where the candidate receives symbolic garments representing their new spiritual identity and responsibilities.

**Calendar and Festivals**

The Zoroastrian calendar divides the year into 12 months of 30 days, with each day dedicated to a divinity. Major festivals include:

1. **Nowruz** (New Day): Spring

**“One Magical Movement From  
Kether To Malkuth”<sup>1</sup>: The  
Holographic Nature of Our  
Reality**—By W. Casey Lowe, IV<sup>o</sup> et  
Philologus Zelator

*“For only the soul that has beheld truth may enter into this our human form...passing from a plurality of perceptions to a unity gathered together by reasoning..”<sup>2</sup> - Plato’s Phaedrus*

For many, the term “hologram” might conjure up images of the U.S.S. Enterprise’s holodeck from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* or a pop star’s posthumous performance on a Las Vegas stage. However, the entire nature of our reality may likely be holographic, according to a school of thought within quantum physics. This complex concept can be illustrated by an analogy drawn from Hindu doctrine: the idea of Indra’s Net. Indra is an ancient Vedic deity in Hinduism, and a guardian deity in Buddhism. Indra’s Net is an infinitely large net of cords hanging over Indra’s palace on Mount Meru, a location considered the axis mundi of Hindu and Buddhist cosmology. This massive mesh holds multifaceted jewels at each vertex. Each of those jewels reflects every other jewel in the net. Thus, each jewel contains all of the information encoded in the whole net because each jewel contains the reflection of all of the other jewels comprising that net. Therefore, ancient spirituality seems to describe an existential concept that contemporary science is only beginning to explore.

However, the holographic model is not limited to Eastern Spirituality. It also validates the work of Western mystics and philosophers from Plato to Twentieth Century Tradition-

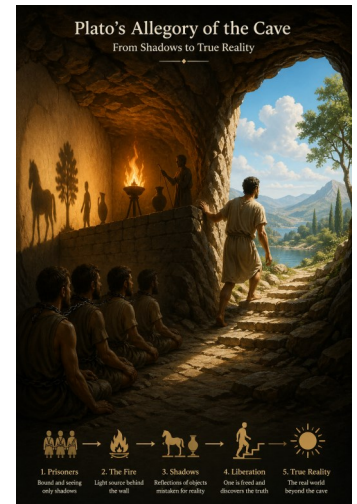
alists. In fact, the holographic model even provides a scientific framework for the Christian trinity, as discussed herein.

**Plato’s Primordial Idea**

Over two thousand years ago, the Greek philosopher Plato surmised that the Good is the cause of everything beautiful in both the visible and invisible worlds. Plato posited that a person becomes wise by expressing knowledge in conduct and in work, a premise that rings true in both private and public life. Plato also recognized a fundamental difference between the World of Ideas (i.e. a metaphysical, archetypal realm) and the World of Appearances (i.e. the sensory world or material reality).

However, the Divine manifests in both worlds through the same Law of the Good. For Plato, Creation is the result of Divine Love. Thus, the universe, nature, and humanity are manifested by an outward expansion of that Divine Love.

Therefore, the Supreme Principle of Creation depends on One Idea and One Reality, which manifests on the earth plane in multiplicity, according to Plato. That Primordial Idea comprises the foundation of Being and the basis of all true knowledge. Accordingly, to *know* is to truly understand the Idea of everything, and to be one with that Idea. Furthermore, comprehension of that unity can only be obtained by studying divine laws, especially those pertaining to Beauty, the Good, and Truth, and how those divine laws manifest on the spiritual and physical planes. Thus, the World of Ideas and the World of Appear-



From Shadows to Light:  
The Journey from Illusion  
to Reality

“Thus, the Sages of the Ancient World...shared virtually the same conception of our reality as some contemporary physicists...those similarities also underscore the validity of intuitive knowledge...we may be able to discover more about our reality by looking deeply within ourselves...”



## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, And Esoteric Legacy... Continued from Page 13

equinox celebration marking the new year

2. **Tirgan:** Midsummer festival honoring the yazata Tishtrya (Sirius star)

3. **Mehregan:** Autumn festival dedicated to Mithra, covenant, and friendship

4. **Yalda:** Winter solstice celebration of light's triumph over darkness

5. **Sadeh:** Mid-winter festival involving fire-jumping

6. **Gahambars:** Six seasonal festivals marking pastoral and agricultural cycles

These festivals connect cosmic cycles with human activity and divine presence, a recurring theme in esoteric traditions that emphasizes the connection between microcosm and macrocosm.

The celebration of solstices and equinoxes particularly resonates with Western mystery traditions that similarly mark these astronomical events as spiritually significant moments of energetic transition.

## Sacred Texts and Hermeticism The Avestan Canon

The Avesta is the sacred Zoroastrian canon, written in the ancient Avestan language. Its components include:

1. **Gathas:** 17 hymns composed by Zoroaster himself, representing the most sacred texts.

These poetic verses emphasize personal devotion to Ahura Mazda and moral integrity.

Their archaic language suggests their authenticity as originating

## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism...Continued from Page 11

cent discovery of Hermetic material was in 1945 at Nag Hammadi with the Dead Sea Scrolls<sup>12</sup>.

The core to the Hermetic Mystery is a summation of 'As Above – So Below' contained in the Emerald Tablets. The actual text of that maxim, as translated by Dennis W. Hauck is *"That which is Below corresponds to that which is Above, and that which is Above corresponds to that which is Below, to accomplish the miracle of the One Thing"*.

One of the original translations of the 'Emerald Table or Tablets' is by Jabir ibn Hayyan (721-815 C.E.)<sup>13</sup>

1) *Truth! Certainty! That in which there is no doubt!*

2) *That which is above is from that which is below, and that which is below is from that which is above, working the miracles of one.*

3) *As all things were from one.*

4) *Its father is the Sun and its mother the Moon.*

5) *The Earth carried it in her belly, and the Wind nourished it in her belly,*

6) *as Earth which shall become Fire.*

7) *Feed the Earth from that which is subtle, with the greatest power.*

8) *It ascends from the earth to the heaven and becomes ruler over that which is above and that which is below.*

9) *And I have already explained the meaning of the whole of this in two of these books of mine<sup>14</sup>.*

<sup>10</sup>Ch III Pg 105 'A suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery

<sup>11</sup>Now attributed to William Atkinson 1862-1932

<sup>12</sup>James M. Robinson 'Nag Hammadi Library – Asclepius VI,8 21-29 & The Thunder – Perfect Mind V13, 1-21, 32'

<sup>12</sup>A chemist and alchemist, astronomer and astrologer, engineer, geologist, philosopher, physicist, and pharmacist and physician. He is considered by some to be the "father of chemistry." His ethnic background is not clear; although some sources state that he was an Arab other sources introduce him as Persian.

In the first, second and third Century C.E. Hermeticism was part of the abundance of religious and metaphysical philosophy that included Christianity, Gnosticism<sup>15</sup>, Rites of Mithras<sup>16</sup> and Neo-Platonism<sup>17</sup> (Saccas and Plotinus 205-270 C.E.) The teachings of Hermeticism are said to embody philosophy and basic concepts central to all religions. Hermeticism ascribes to God as 'the One' and mankind as part of the 'All'; the microcosm and the macrocosm.

The interest in Hermes Trismegistus was subsequent upon writings and teachings rediscovered and translated from Aramaic to Greek between the

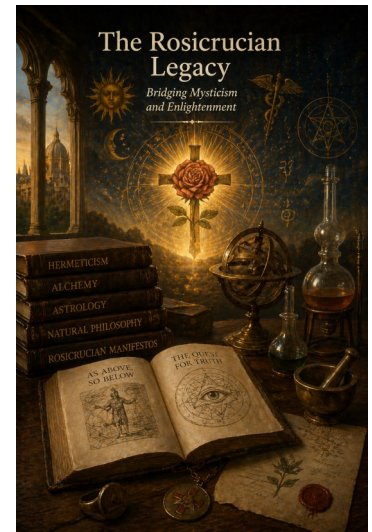
<sup>14</sup>The Tablet probably first appeared in the West in editions of the pseudo-Aristotlean 'Secretum Secretorum' which was actually a translation of the Kitab Sirr al-Asar, a book of advice to kings which was translated into Latin by Johannes Hispalensis c. 1140 C. E. and by Philip of Tripoli c.1243 C. E. Other translations of the Tablet may have been made during the same period by Plato of Tivoli and Hugh of Santalla, perhaps from different sources. The date of the Kitab Sirr al-Asar is uncertain, though c.800 C. E. has been suggested and it is not clear when the tablet became part of this work.

<sup>15</sup>Tobias Churton 'Gnostic Philosophy'. A reconciliation of many religious sects and concepts (including Valentinianism) with a belief in an oral tradition passed down by Jesus. Emanations of a superior God recognized as 'One' or 'Monad'

<sup>16</sup>Religion of the Roman military during the 1-3<sup>rd</sup> Century C.E. Mithras said to be born out of a rock. Many Temples survive

<sup>17</sup>Manly P. Hall. Neo-Platonism. The concept of 'ONE' as being the source of all life. A philosophy of Plato (428 – 348 B.C.E.) developed to include the mystical aspect and founded upon idealism through moderation and enlightenment to enable an individual to attain a higher consciousness. Neo-Platonism developed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century C.E.

<sup>18</sup>An ancient language of about 3000 years and the ancestral language of Arabic and Hebrew that was found in the N.E. Middle East in what is now Iraq, Iran, Israel and Turkey. It was the language at the building of the Second Temple (539 B.C.E.) of Jesus



As Above, So Below: The Hermetic Light

From this point on, it was clear that his attitude was driven by a straightforward wish for financial security and acknowledgment—intellectual, spiritual, and social."





1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Century C.E.

Sir Petrie Flinders (1853-1942 B.C.E.) claims the original writings to be from a period dated between 500 – 200 B.C.E. Walter Scott claims that they were written during the 1st Century C.E. G. S. Mead asserts the writings to be contemporary with Plato (428 – 328 B.C.E.). Isaac Casaubon (1559 – 1614 C.E.) examined the texts in 1614 and proclaimed them to belong to the first century of the current millennium. If any of these texts were copied from an older original source - this cannot be determined.

From the decline of the Roman Empire in about 450 C.E. to the



Spiritual  
ABOVE  
Physical  
BELOW  
that which is above is  
Macrocosm - Microcosm  
as that which is below'

period of Enlightenment in 1688-1789 C.E. during the Dark Ages Christianity became the dominant religion. Hermetic prophesies of a Messiah made Hermeticism acceptable to Christianity and during the Dark Ages there was an ambivalent attitude towards Hermeticism

### NEO-PLATONISM

Neo-Platonism is mainly derived from the idealism of Plato (428/427 – 348/347 BCE); the metaphysics of Aristotle (384-322 BCE) and the mysticism of Pythagoras (570-495 BCE) from

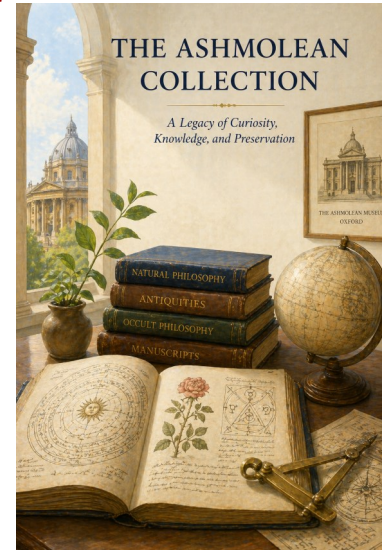
which politics was removed. The philosophy was absorbed into Christianity, Islam (Sufism<sup>19</sup>) and compatible with earlier religious thinking of Judaism, Zoroastrianism<sup>20</sup> and Hinduism. It influenced medieval art and literature<sup>21</sup>. Neo-Platonism was developed in the Third Century CE by Plotinus from the teachings of the Platonist, Ammonius Saccas<sup>22</sup>.

The main thrust of the philosophy is derived from Plato's concept of the 'One' (Monad), 'Forms'<sup>23</sup> and 'Soul'<sup>24</sup> and the allegory of the 'Cave' but differed from Plato as it centered on Mysticism.

The concept of Plotinus, who was a Pagan, is that the 'One' came into being and from this Divine power overflowed the *emanation*<sup>25</sup>. The first *emanation* from the 'One' is both 'part of the Universe' and 'beyond existence'<sup>26</sup>. This first emanation of the Spirit (Nous)/ Intelligence

contemplates the One and spins off Forms that creates the third *emanation* of the World Soul. The world Soul then emanates the Individual Soul and into the Material World. These second and third emanations diminish (like a copy of a copy) and are less than the One. The material world is good, perfect and embraces the 'All'. (These four worlds are shown on Pages 11 and 17)

The 'All' is explained in Plotinus Ennead IV - 4 Tractate, No 32. (Referred to as: IV 4.32). It requires a stretch of the mind to grasp the concept. I see it as an artist who paints a picture; the picture is the combination of the artist's mental conception and the application of his physical skill. The picture and artist are separate but come together on the canvas. The artist may leave the picture many times (much as we may approach and depart from



A Treasury of Light and Learning

"The core to the Hermetic Mystery is a summation of 'As Above – So Below'... 'That which is Below corresponds to that which is Above, and that which is Above corresponds to that which is Below, to accomplish the miracle of the One Thing.'"



Masonic ritual in the Fellowcraft degree: 'From a point [*Creation* – *World of Divinity* - *God*] to a line, [*Spirit* – *World of Creation*] from a line to a superface [*Soul/Psyche* – *world of Formation*- *unconscious*] and from a superface to a sold [*earth* – *world of physicality*]<sup>27</sup>

<sup>18</sup>**Sufism** is the name for the inner or esoteric and mystical dimension of Islam – considered the compassionate side of Islam

<sup>20</sup>Founded by the Iranian prophet and reformer Zoroaster in the 6th century BC, Zoroastrianism contains both monotheistic and dualistic features. Its concepts of one God, judgment, heaven and hell likely influenced the major Western religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Driven out of Iran by the Muslims in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century CE it moved to what is now Pakistan as the Parsi or Parsee religion.

<sup>21</sup>ART Michelangelo, Botticelli, Donatello. Poetry Donne to name a few.

<sup>22</sup>**Ammonius Saccas** (175 -242 CE) (Ancient Greek: Ἀμμόνιος Σακκάς) was a Greek philosopher from Alexandria. He is mainly known as the teacher of Plotinus, from 232 to 243.

<sup>23</sup>**Forms** as a Material (through sensation) and Immaterial (ideas) – reference the allegory of Plato's 'Cave'

<sup>24</sup>**Soul** Stanford Encyclopedia '... soul is the distinguishing mark of all living things, including plants, the Greek notion of soul is, as we have seen already, broader than our concept of mind.'

<sup>25</sup>Fifth Ennead First Tractate No 1 '... that the Soul is the author of all living things' and Webster: '...the origination of the world by a series of hierarchically descending radiations from the Godhead through intermediate stages to matter'

<sup>26</sup>Fifth Ennead First Tractate No 1 to 6

God's grace) but the artist leaves his distinctiveness on the canvas. When he finally leaves the completed canvas, it is part of the quintessence (*or ALL*) of the artist and the picture remains as an extension of the ONE. In the 'All' God is omnipresent and each entity animate or inanimate is his quin-

<sup>27</sup>MacNulty Pg 15. 'Freemasonry' Pg. 17 'Way of the Craftsman'



## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism ... Continued from Page 15

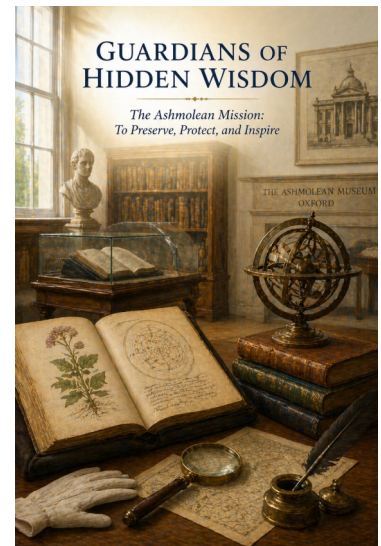
tessence. He is part of the existence and yet beyond the existence. "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21) Fr. Tom Worrel VII° reminded me of the oft times quotation "The One is the ALL and the ALL is the ONE".

was supported by Elias Ashmole to found his Museum Tradescantia which he inherited and added to the Ashmolean. Ashmore established this showcase of manuscripts, books and artifacts set the pattern for museums in the future. Oxford University undertook

tioned whether Mercurius would ever achieve perfection through magic or astrology—a reflection of the uncertainties that marked this chapter of his life.

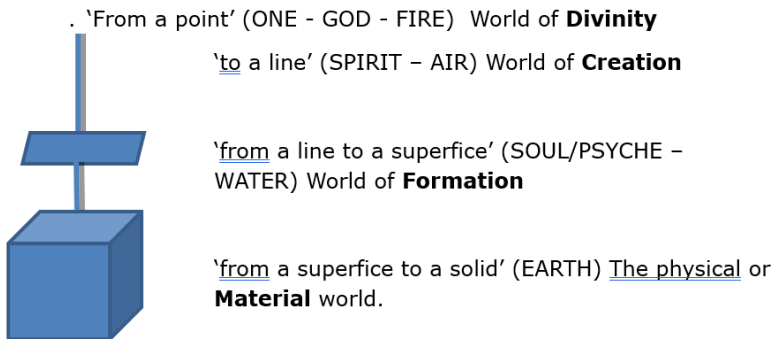
Somehow the wealth he accumulated dwindled. In 1650, Ashmole translated Arthur Dee's 'Fasciculus Chemicus', from Latin which covers everything from natural matter and preparation methods to weights used in alchemical processes—topics like the philosopher's fire and stone are all there. Dr. John Dee was revered by Ashmole and was a central figure that helped Ashmole in bridging the mystical, alchemical and occultism.

Ashmole, writing under a pseudonym, published 'Fasciculus Chemicus', which comprised translations from Latin of a script by Arthur Dee (1579–1651), the son of Dr. John Dee (1527–1608), using the pseudonym, James Hasolle. However, John Dee expressed his dissatisfaction with the translation. He wrote, 'I am sorry you or any man should take pains to translate any book of that art into English.' This work explores natural matter, the philosopher's fire, fermentation, and various other esoteric topics, including the philosopher's stone. While these endeavours undeniably advanced historical knowledge, it is essential not to romanticize them without scrutiny; we must assess both their accomplishments and shortcomings within their proper historical context. It is evident that Dr John Dee and John Milton had a significant influence on Elias Ashmole and served as important sources for his research and progressive studies This critical approach ultimately culminated in Ash-

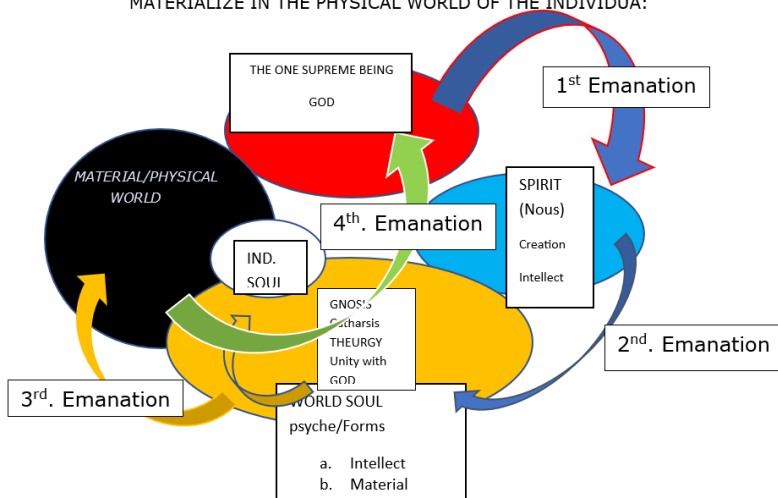


Stewards of Knowledge and Light

"The teachings of Hermeticism are said to embody philosophy and basic concepts central to all religions. Hermeticism ascribes to God as 'the One' and mankind as part of the 'All'."



EMINATIONS FLOW FROM THE ONE (GOD) THROUGH THE SPIRIT TO THE SOUL AND MATERIALIZE IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD OF THE INDIVIDUA:



Bro. W. Kirk MacNulty in 'The Way of the Craftsman' depicts four worlds:

- World of **Divinity** – Fire – calling
- World of Spirit – air – **creation**
- World of Psyche – water – **formation** (*id, ego unconscious - Jung*)
- World of Physicality - earth – making - **material**

### ASHMOLEAN

John Tradescant the Younger

to build a property that would serve the public as requested by Elias Ashmolen.

While it is important to recognize and appreciate Elias Ashmole's enduring legacy—shaped by his faithfulness, curiosity, and remarkable intellect—we must also approach his life with a measure of caution. After the war, the upheaval of his second marriage together with financial problems, Ashmole entered a period of uncertainty, turning to alchemy and astronomy in search of spiritual guidance. It is said he once ques-





## Elias Ashmore and Rosicrucianism Continued from Page 16

mole's seminal publication, 'Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum', a study of forms of chemical pharmacology and magic as related to astrology. He was also a founding member of the Royal Society.

Elias Ashmore deeply revered Dr. John Dee, collecting Dee's alchemical/occult writings, practicing his magic and preserving his legacy, even bequeathing Dee's portrait and manuscripts to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, Ashmore was a key figure in keeping Dee's mystical, esoteric knowledge alive and influential within the scientific world, bridging Renaissance magic with early modern natural philosophy. Ashmore saw Dee as a master magus, integrating Dee's angelic communication and alchemy into his own studies, making Dee's work central to understanding the "Rosicrucian Enlightenment".

Let us set the record straight: it is uncertain to what depth Elias dabbled in alchemical experiments himself, or if he simply followed in the footsteps of seasoned alchemists like William Backhouse—who, according to Elias's diary, "*invited me to a small part of grand sire Hermes' wealth.*" That little invitation eventually inspired Elias to publish 'Way to Bliss' which offers tips on dodging illness with diet, exercise, and sleep. And before you ask—yes, I am talking about 1650 AD here, not some trendy wellness blog from 2000 AD!

The 'Ashmore 782' is a collection of alchemical, hermetic, and esoteric manuscripts dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century housed in the Bodleian Library Oxford. It explores the mysteries of nature and the supernatural including witches.

### PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

The profound influence of Elias's meetings with the esteemed alchemist William Backhouse and

Rev Dr John Pordage, together with the inspiring theosophy of Jacob Bohme, is extensive. Their wisdom not only shaped Elias's own life but suggest that it impacts Freemasonry to this day. His study of spiritualism, alchemy and experiments seeking paths through microcosm/macrocosm for divine knowledge, spiritual purification and human destiny viewed himself in a transformation between heaven and earthly presence.

These influential figures and philosophies undoubtedly shaped his journey in many ways. William Backhouse (1593 – 1662) who was devoted to the esoteric became not only his mentor and spiritual guide but was revered as his alchemical father. Backhouse's, who was associated with Robert Fludd and Rosicrucianism, introduction of Elias to the fabled Philosopher's Stone—described in almost celestial terms as an Angelical Stone, Elixir of Life, imbued with divine powers, capable of unlocking spiritual alchemy and granting prophetic insight. The sheer magnitude of what can be said about the Philosopher's Stone is extensive; its legacy stretches back to 300 A.D. weaving through countless interpretations of different religious and spiritual traditions. There is little doubt that this impact Elias Ashmore lifelong in attempting to bring spirits to life. There is no evidence that he succeeded. In 1651 William Backhouse regarded Elias Ashmore as his spiritual son and heir and left his library and collections to Elias. This did cause some issues with Backhouse's wife. The impact of Backhouse death in 1662 followed by the death John Tradescant had a serious impact upon Elias Ashmore.

### IN CONCLUSION

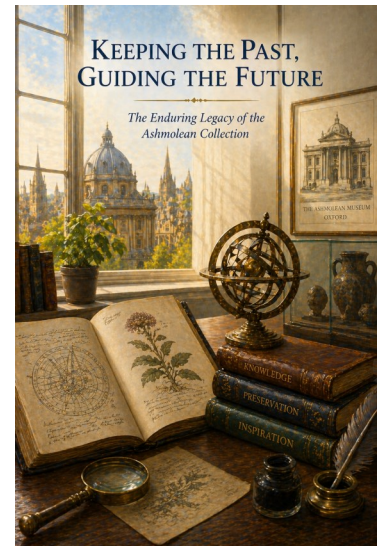
Elias Ashmore (1617–1692) stands as an inspiring figure of the 17th century, whose vision and curiosity helped shape British history. As a pioneering antiquarian, alchemist, and astrologer, Ashmore's legacy shines brightest in his founding of Britain's first public museum—the Ashmolean—through his donation of the Tradescant collection. His life was a remarkable tapestry woven from both empirical inquiry and mystical exploration, echoing the spirit of John Dee. His latter life was devoted to mystical and esotericism yet maintained his allegiance to the protestant Church of England where he presented prayer books to the cathedral in Litchfield. His allegiance and support is seen in his service to the Monarchy where was offered the prestigious post of 'Garter King of Arms' but rejected the offer. As an advocate for constitutional monarchy, Ashmore embodied a unique blend of tradition and progress. He serves as a beacon for all who seek to bridge worlds—uniting Renaissance magic with Enlightenment science—and reminds us that his curiosity and dedication left a lasting impact on Rosicrucianism and may have been absorbed into Freemasonry. He reported that he was invited in 1682 as a Senior Fellow to a Lodge in London.



### Edgar W. Fentum, IX<sup>o</sup>

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Hermeticism by Edgar W. Fentum  
Zoroastrianism by Edgar W. Fentum  
Bro. Guy Chandler for editing and suggestions



From Curiosity to Legacy

"He received an honorary Doctorate after his donation of his extensive library and collections to Oxford University, culminating in the first public museum in 1683."



## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, And Esoteric Legacy... Continued from Page 14

with the prophet.

2. **Yasna:** Liturgical texts used in ceremonies, including the Gathas plus additional material developed over centuries of practice.

3. **Visperad:** Supplements to the Yasna used during seasonal festivals (Gahambars).

4. **Vendidad** (Law Against Demons): Ritual and purity laws addressing purification, healing, and defense against evil influences.

5. **Khordeh Avesta** (Little Avesta): Prayers for daily devotion by laity, including the Yashts (hymns to various divine beings).

The original Avesta was reportedly far more extensive but suffered significant losses during Alexander's conquest of Persia. According to tradition, it originally comprised 21 *nasks* (books), of which only portions survive today. The surviving texts were primarily preserved through oral transmission until being committed to writing during the Sasanian period.

### Pahlavi Literature

Later Middle Persian (Pahlavi) texts provide essential theological and cosmological elaborations:

1. **Denkard** (Acts of Religion): A massive 9th-century compendium of theological treatises preserving much older material lost from the original Avesta.

2. **Bundahishn** (Primal Creation): Detailed cosmogony explaining creation and eschatology.

3. **Arda Viraf Namag** (Book of Arda Viraf): Visionary account of a priest's journey through heaven and hell, simi-

lar to Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

4. **Selections of Zadspram:** Theological reflections on creation and spiritual matters.

5. **Shkand-gumanig Vizar** (Doubt-Dispelling Exposition): Apologetic text refuting other religions' criticisms.

These texts, similar to Gnostic scripture, portray a structured spiritual universe populated by divine beings and antagonistic forces. Gerald Massey suggested that such scriptures reflect a lineage of cosmic myths stretching back to Egypt and Chaldea, representing variations on primordial religious archetypes.

### Esoteric Interpretations

While orthodox Zoroastrianism emphasizes literal interpretation of texts, esoteric traditions have developed allegorical and mystical readings. The Persian Illuminationist (*Ishrāqī*) tradition, founded by Suhrawardi in the 12th century, synthesized Zoroastrian angelology and light mysticism with Neoplatonic philosophy, preserving esoteric Zoroastrian concepts within an Islamic framework.

Western esotericists have particularly focused on the Gathas as containing coded wisdom. Helena Blavatsky claimed the Gathas contained "the same philosophy as the Hindu Upanishads and the Pythagorean system of numerology" when properly decoded.

### Esoteric Legacy and Modern Influence

Beyond numbers, Zoroastrian thought continues to influence contemporary esoteric circles across multiple dimensions:

### Kabbalistic Connections

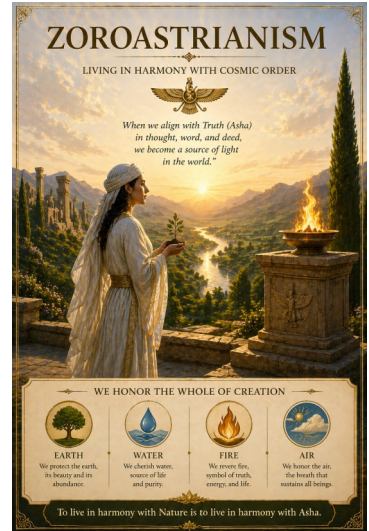
Kabbalistic scholars have noted parallels between Zoroastrian dualism and Lurianic concepts of divine contraction (*tzimtzum*) and cosmic repair (*tikkun*). Both traditions emphasize human participation in restoring divine order through ethical action and spiritual practice. Some scholars, including Gershom Scholem, have suggested Persian influence on Kabbalah's development during the Babylonian exile and subsequent Persian period.

The Zoroastrian hierarchy of divine emanations (Amesha Spenta) functionally parallels the Kabbalistic Sefirot, with both systems describing divine qualities manifesting through graded levels of reality. The cosmic battle between good and evil forces finds resonance in Kabbalistic concepts of divine sparks entrapped in materiality requiring liberation.

### Hermetic Traditions

Hermeticists view Zoroaster as an avatar of ancient wisdom tradition predating even Moses and Hermes Trismegistus. Renaissance Hermetic texts frequently cited "Zoroaster" alongside Hermes and Orpheus as primordial sages whose teachings contained coded spiritual truths. The ancient collection known as the *Chaldean Oracles*, long attributed to "Zoroaster" though likely dating from the 2nd century CE, became foundational to Renaissance magic and continues to influence contemporary Western esoteric practice.

The Hermetic emphasis on correspondences between macrocosm and microcosm finds parallel in Zoroastrian cosmology, where human ethical choices have cosmic consequences. The central Hermetic symbol of fire as transformative agent directly echoes Zoroastrian



Harmony of Creation:  
Living in Balance with  
the Sacred Elements

“The central opposition between *asha* (truth/order) and *druj* (falsehood/chaos) is echoed in numerous later mystical traditions...”





## Zoroastrianism: Origins, Theology, And Esoteric Legacy – Continued from Page 18

reverence for fire as the supreme symbol of divine presence and purification.

### Theosophical Interpretations

Theosophical writers from Helena Blavatsky onward have viewed Zoroastrianism as a fragment of the primordial "wisdom religion" from which all mystical traditions allegedly descend.

Blavatsky wrote extensively about Zoroaster in *The Secret Doctrine*, positioning him as an initiate who preserved ancient Atlantean wisdom for humanity: "Zoroaster was but a revivifier and transmitter of the great primitive wisdom of ancient Aryan and Chaldean initiates".

Later Theosophical commentators including Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater incorporated Zoroastrian concepts of divine fire and cosmic cycles into their elaborate cosmological systems.

The concept of *Frashokereti* (final renewal) particularly influenced Theosophical eschatology, with its vision of universal spiritual evolution culminating in cosmic reharmonization.

### Western Mystery Traditions

In Western mystery traditions, including Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, Zoroastrian dualism and initiatory fire rites are mirrored in the symbolic language of light, balance, and inner purification. Pike emphasized Zoroastrianism's role in forming the spiritual foundation of Masonic allegory, linking its emphasis on truth and purification to the initiatory journey of the soul: "The doctrines of Zoroaster were the best which the ancient Persians were fitted to receive... Every consistent Mason reverences

God and respects the Zend-Avesta as containing the history of the faith of a wise Theist".

The symbolic use of light and darkness in Masonic ritual echoes Zoroastrian emphasis on illumination as spiritual awareness. Some Masonic scholars have suggested connections between the chamber of reflection used in certain Masonic rites and Zoroastrian contemplative practices.

### Conclusion

Zoroastrianism's impact extends far beyond its relatively small contemporary following. As one of the earliest articulated systems of cosmic dualism, free will, and moral responsibility, it shaped Western monotheism and contributed profoundly to the metaphysical currents of mysticism and esoterica. Its ethical framework, emphasizing individual choice in the cosmic struggle between truth and falsehood, provided a revolutionary alternative to fatalistic religious systems of its era.

The religion's symbolism of light, particularly manifest in its reverence for sacred fire, threads through Western mystical traditions from the Chaldean Oracles to modern ceremonial magic. Its dualistic cosmology yet fundamentally optimistic worldview—ultimately predicting good's triumph over evil—has provided a template for numerous later spiritual systems seeking to reconcile divine perfection with worldly suffering.

Zoroastrianism endures not only as a historical religion but as a radiant symbol of humanity's quest for truth, order, and spiritual transcendence. Its core teachings—reverence for creation, personal responsibility,

and commitment to truth—offer wisdom that transcends particular religious boundaries.



Gregory Peters, V°

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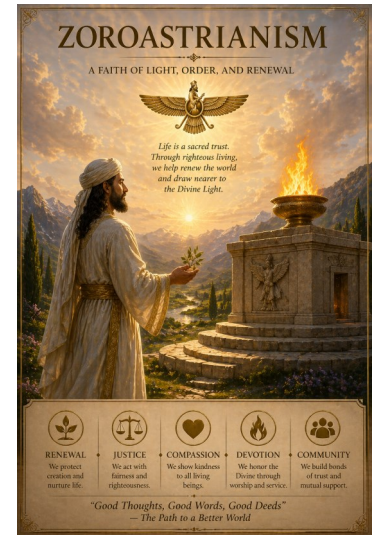
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The Flame of Renewal: Stewardship of Creation and the Divine Trust

"Zoroastrianism distinctively emphasizes individual free will and moral agency. Each person must consciously choose between serving asha or druj, with no predestination determining one's spiritual fate."



**Chakras and Tree of Life** By Worthy Dinesh Chhabra, IV<sup>o</sup>  
et Philologus Adeptus Minor

**T**he Chakras have become a popular topic in New Age thinking, alternative medicine, and Yoga, as has Kundalini, the serpent power which energizes them. But there is a growing gap between how the Chakras are viewed today and how they are regarded in traditional yogic literature. Today the chakras are used mainly for physical healing. This is different from, and at best preliminary too, the yogic process of self-realization, which is concerned with going beyond the body and mind. Opening the chakras requires a radical change in consciousness, which usually occurs only years of meditation. It is not a simple matter of emotional opening or physical cleansing. Today, chakras, like yoga, are defined in physical terms, which obscures their real purpose and function.

Over the past hundred years, the concept of the chakras, or subtle energy centers within the body, has seized Western imagination more than virtually any other teaching from the Yoga tradition. Yet, most of the concepts deriving from Sanskrit sources, the West (barring a handful of scholars) has almost totally failed to come to grips with what the Chakra-concept is meant in its original context and how one is supposed to practice with them.

What has happened with the chakras is analogous to what has happened to yoga itself. Yoga means meditation, defined as “the negation of the dualistic thought processes of the mind”. But today

yoga has come to mean primarily ASANA (yogic postures), which is only an aid to the attainment of yoga. Chakra (not “Shakra” as many people pronounce it) means “Wheel,” literally “that which revolves.” In yogic literature it refers to the Seven vital centers in the subtle or astral body, the body of life energy underlying the physical body. Their opening allows for the unfoldment of higher states of consciousness leading to the awareness of the Supreme Self.

**How do we define “CHAKRAS”?**

In the TANTRIK traditions, from which the concept derives, Chakras are focal points for meditation within the human body, visualized as structures of energy resembling discs or flowers at those points where a number of NADIS (channels or meridians) converge. They are conceptual structures yet are phenomenologically based, since they tend to be located where human beings experience emotional and / or spiritual energy, and since the form in which they are visualized reflects visionary experiences had by meditators.

Earlier I mentioned that the West has so far failed to understand Chakras. Let me clarify that by ‘the West’ I mean not only Euro-American culture but also the aspects of modern Indian culture that are informed by the Euro-American culture matrix. Since at this point, it is nearly impossible to find a form of Yoga in India not influenced by Euro-American ideas about it, when I use the term ‘Western’ I also include most of the teachings on yoga in

India today that exist in the English language.

For the most part, Western yoga understands almost nothing about the chakras that the original tradition thought was important about them. If you read a book like Anodea

Judith’s famous “Wheels of Life” or suchlike, it’s important to realize that you are not reading a work of yoga philosophy but of Western occultism.

‘But does that matter? ‘I’ve benefited so much from Anodea Judith’s book and others like it too, don’t take that away from us!’. Not going to and I can’t. Whatever benefit you’ve received, from whatever source, is real if you say it is. Just passing on the fact, when modern Western authors on the chakras imply, they are presenting ancient teachings, they’re not giving us the right information, because they can’t assess the validity of their own source materials (since they don’t read Sanskrit). Not claiming either older is intrinsically better or there is no spiritual value to Western occultism. I’m just approximating the historical truth in simple English words as best I can.

First off, to understand the basics of the Chakras, putting down the Six fundamental facts about chakras.

**There’s not just one chakra system in the original tradition, there are many**

So many! The theory of the subtle body and its energy centers called cakras (or Padmas (lotuses), adharas, lakshyas (focal points), etc.) comes from the tradition



The Luminous Path Within

“The purpose of opening the chakras is not to improve one’s capacity in the ordinary domains of human life but to go beyond our mortal and transient nature, seeking the immortal essence.”





## The Rosicrucian Mission ... Continued from Page 10

ly small portion of nature, and we have yet to grasp the full extent of the laws we do know about.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, much of what we found and can prove to be true, is counter-intuitive and seems at odds with our everyday experience.

The idea of our Universe appearing from nothing is unintuitive. The theories that explain the world around us — relativity and quantum physics — are, also, not intuitive. We understand these theories to be true, not because we can see them happen, but because experiments continue to demonstrate them mathematically. Galileo famously said "the laws of nature are written in the language of mathematics." Ironically, this opinion made him an enemy of the church and cost him his freedom. He spent the last years of his life banished from society while his ideas and character were publicly discredited.

Of course, Galileo was right. Mathematics not only explained the stars and planets, it empowered the cathedral-building stonemasons to fill medieval Europe with architecture among the finest and most inspiring the world has ever seen. And it was mathematics, along with physics, which also our first Rosicrucian manuscript, the *Fama Fraternitatus*, explicitly connects to the search for truth.<sup>3</sup>

### A Perfect Method

The *Fama* presages the modern scientific method, criticizing scholars of Europe who, for mainly selfish interests, generally did not share their methods or results with other scholars. The Rosicrucian manifesto imagined a "perfect method of all arts" and speaks of a hypo-

thetical "Book of Nature" — a collection of all the world's knowledge — which could be possible if scholars cooperated and learned from each other. The *Fama*'s anonymous author boldly asserts that both Aristotle and Galen — whose ideas, still at that time, formed the core of Western thought — would correct themselves if they were alive at the time.

### The Philosophy Founded Upon the Kabbalah

In the closing passages of the *Fama*, the "Rosicrucian philosophy" is identified, indirectly but unmistakably. Described as having been received by Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and Solomon, these are clear allusions to several traditions belonging to the particular system known as Kabbalah.

When Christian Europeans discovered Kabbalah in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many believed it to be of fantastical antiquity. Modern scholarship and the discovery of countless manuscripts have given us a much clearer picture of Kabbalah's true origin in the Middle Ages. It's now up to us to live up to the Rosicrucian ideal to which we so boldly held Aristotle and Galen; to update our thinking in the face of new information.

### Wisdom, Art and Literature of the Ancient World

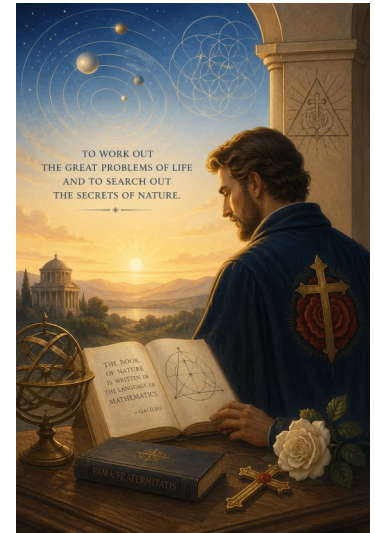
For centuries, the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle was among very few stable and consistent 'scientific' theories.<sup>4</sup> In the twelfth century milieu that produced Kabbalah, Greek thinking exerted a virtually inescapable influence on Western philoso-

phy. Jewish writers were no exception in this regard. Influenced by Greek rationalism, Maimonides, perhaps the best known Jewish philosopher of the Middle Ages, turns a critical eye on Jewish religious customs.

Compared to the sophisticated concepts of the Greeks, many Jewish customs seemed primitive to Maimonides. He charged that religious practice was too often awash in superstition and that anthropomorphic descriptions of God bordered on blasphemy. A handful of Rabbis, first in Provence and later in Spain and Israel, took it as their duty to defend tradition. They conceded no alteration to tradition. Instead their response took the form of symbolic interpretations, cloaked in contemporary language, finding vessels in their sacred texts for the prevailing ideas of the time.<sup>5</sup>

This is the beginning of what we know now as Kabbalah. This entirely unique foundation, with a focus on preserving instead of uprooting tradition, is the reason it remains a useful and popular system even today. Its nearly limitless capacity to recast traditional texts in the light of universal philosophy and spirituality, makes Kabbalah a useful companion to Freemasonry who took many symbols from the Bible with the promise that they should be meaningful to any follower of *that religion in which all Men agree*.

The second Rosicrucian manifesto, the *Confessio Fraternitatus*, states that every Brother of the Rosy Cross should learn the Bible, not just to quote it, but to explain it and apply it to "all



The Book of Nature: A Journey from Light to Understanding

"The aim of the Society is to afford mutual aid and encouragement in working out the great problems of Life, and in searching out the secrets of Nature..."

<sup>3</sup>Markham, *Markham's Brotherhood*.

<sup>4</sup>Shyfrin, *From Infinity to Man*



## The Rosicrucian Mission ... Continued from Page 21

## Chakras and Tree of Life ..Continued from Page 20

times and ages.<sup>6</sup> "Blessed is he that has it (holy scripture), more blessed is he who reads it diligently, but most blessed of all is he who truly understands it."

Rosicrucians are directed to follow this example found in Kabbalah. As the *Confessio* nears its conclusion, readers are instructed to "consider the imperfections in all arts (sciences) and things that don't make sense, and seek to amend them."

### In Conclusion

The Rosicrucian philosophy is founded on Kabbalah. Understanding the true genesis of Kabbalah puts us in a position to further our aim of working out the great problems of Life, which as was said, are the problems of explaining the mysteries of existence. Kabbalah is, in the end, a colorful, vivid, and wonderful explanation of existence.

Finally, let this be a call for us to perfect the method of our own art. The fates of Galileo and countless others at the hands of zealous religious authorities, centuries ago forced the search for truth to be conducted behind closed doors. There, the exploration of science and philosophy could avoid the overreach of religious authority. Today, we continue behind closed doors, only now it's done to avoid those who might come against our spiritual aims. However, at no point have the doors been meant to keep out science, in order to protect superstition, folly, or ignorance, but in all cases to do the opposite. ✚

Peter Cardilla, IV<sup>o</sup>

Ergas, Shomer Emunim.

Markham, Markham's Brotherhood.

of Tantrik Yoga,

which flourished from 600-1300 CE and is still alive today. In mature Tantrik Yoga (after the year 900 or so), every one of the many branches of the tradition articulated a different chakra system, and some branches articulated more than one. Five-chakra system, Six- chakra system, Seven, Nine, ten, twelve, twenty-one and more chakras are taught, depending on what text and what lineage you're looking at. The Seven (or, technically, 6+1) chakra system that Western yogis know about is just one of many, and it became dominant around the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

But which system is right? How many chakras are there really? And that brings us to our first major misunderstanding. The chakras aren't like organs in the physical body; they aren't fixed facts that we can study like doctors' study neural ganglia (with which the chakras were confused in the nineteenth century). The energy body (Sukshma-sharira) is an extraordinarily fluid reality, as we should expect of anything nonphysical and super sensuous. The energy body can present, experientially speaking, with any number of energy centers, depending on the person and the yogic practice they're performing.

Having said that, there are a few centers which are found in all systems; specifically, in the lower belly or sexual center, in the heart, and in or near the crown of the head, since these are the three places in the body where humans all over the world experience both emotional and spiritual phenomena. But apart from those three, there's a huge va-

riety in the chakra systems we find in the original literature. One is not more 'right' than another, except relative to a specific practice. For example, if you're doing a five-element practice, you use a five-chakra system. If you're internalizing the energy of six different deities, you use a six-chakra system. But this crucial bit of information has not yet reached Western yoga.

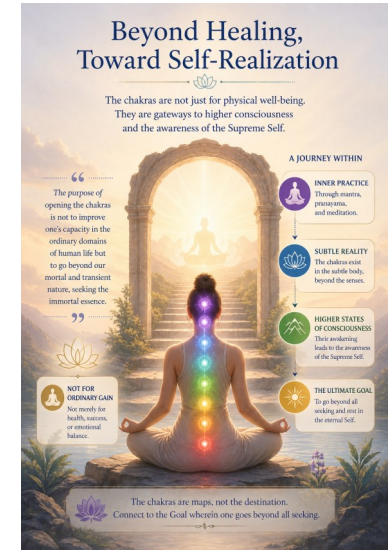
We've only just started down this rabbit hole.

The Chakra systems are prescriptive, not descriptive

This might be the most important point. English sources tend to present the chakra system as an existential fact, using descriptive language (like "the Mooladhara chakra is at the base of the spine and it is red" and so on). But in most of the original Sanskrit sources, we are not being taught about the way things are, we are given a specific yogic practice.

We are to visualize a subtle object made of colored light, shaped like a lotus or a spinning wheel, at a specific point in the body, and then activate mantric syllables in it, for a specific purpose. When you understand this, point # 1 above makes more sense. The texts are prescriptive – they tell what you ought to do to achieve a specific goal by mystical means. When the literal Sanskrit reads, in its elliptical fashion, "four-petaled red lotus at the base of the body" we are supposed to understand "The yogi ought to visualize a four-petaled lotus..."

The psychological states associated with the chak-



Gateway Beyond the Self

"Their opening allows for the unfolding of higher states of consciousness leading to the awareness of the Supreme Self."





## Chakras and Tree of Life ..Continued from Page 22

**ras are completely modern and western**

One countless website and in countless books, we read that the Mooladhara chakra is associated with survival safety, that Manipura chakra is associated with willpower self-esteem, and so on. The educated yogi should know that all associations of the Chakras with psychological states is a modern Western innovation that started with Carl Jung. Perhaps such associations represent experiential realities for some people (though usually not without priming), but we certainly don't find them in the Sanskrit sources.

Except one exception, and that is the 10-chakra system for yogi-musicians. In that thirteenth-century system, we do not find each chakra associated with a specific emotion or psychological state; rather, each petal of each lotus-chakra is associated with a distinct emotion or psychological state, and there seems to be no pattern by which we could create a label for the chakra as a whole.

But that's not all. Nearly all the many associations found in Anodea Judith's Wheels of

Life has no basis in the Indian sources. Each chakra, Judith tells us, is associated with a certain bodily gland, certainly bodily malfunctions, certain foods, a certain metal, a mineral, an herb, a planet, a path of yoga, a suit of the tarot, a sephira of Jewish mysticism, and an archangel of Christianity! None of these associations are found in the original sources. Judith or her teachers created them based on perceived similarities.

That goes also for the essential oils and crystals that other books and websites claim correspond to each chakra. (Note, that Judith does feature some information from an original Sanskrit source—that is, the Sat-chakra-Nirupana).

This is not to say that putting a certain kind of crystal on your belly when you're having self-esteem issues and imagining it purifying your Manipura chakra might not help you feel better. Maybe it will, depending on the person. While practice is certainly not traditional and has not been tested over generations (which is the whole point of traditional, really).

People should know when the pedigree of a practice is a few decades, not centuries. If practice has value, then you don't need to falsify its provenance.

**THE SEVEN-CHAKRA SYSTEM POPULAR TODAY DERIVES NOT FROM AN ANCIENT SCRIPTURE, BUT FROM A TREATISE WRITTEN IN 1577**

The chakra system Western yogis follow is that found in Sanskrit text written by a person named Purnananda Yati. He completed his text (the Sat-Chakra-Nirupana or 'Explanation of Six Chakras'), in the year 1577, and it was translated into English in 1918.

Earlier it was mentioned, this Seven-chakra system 'late and somewhat atypical'. But a simpler version of the same seven-chakra is found in a thirteenth-century postscriptural text called the Sarada-Tilaka, though that text does plainly acknowledge that there are multiple chakra systems (such as systems of 12 or 16 chakras). We also find a more elaborate version of the same system in the fourteenth-or-fifteenth-century Siva-Samhita. However, most yogis (both Indian and Western) know the Seven-chakra system through Purnananda's sixteenth-

century work, or rather, through the somewhat incoherent and confusing translation of it, done by John Woodroffe in 1918. Still, it's true enough to say that this seven-chakra system has been dominant for the last four or five centuries. But it's also true that the Westernized seven-chakra system we know is based on early-twentieth-century occultists' interpretation of a flawed translation of a non-scriptural source. This by no means invalidates it but rather serves to problematize its hegemony.

Note that Tantric Buddhism (e.g., of Tibet) often preserves older forms, and indeed the five-chakra system is dominant in that tradition (as well as the more fundamental three-Bindu (dot) system).

**The main purpose of a chakra system is to function as a template for Nyasa—Installation of mantras and deities**

As far as the original authors were concerned, the main purpose of any chakra system was to function as a template for Nyasa, which means the installation of mantras and deity-energies at specific points of the subtle body. So, though millions of people are fascinated with the chakras today, almost none of those people are using them for their intended purpose.

The most outstanding features of the chakra systems in the original sources are THREE:

That the mystical sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet are distributed across the 'petals' of all the chakras in the system,

That each chakra is associated with a specific Great Element (Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, and Space) and

That each chakra is associated with a specific Hindu deity or deities. This is because the chakra system is, as I mentioned, primarily a template for Nyasa. In Nyasa (lit., 'placing'), you visualize a specific



The Work Within

"Today, the chakras are used mainly for physical healing... This obscures their real purpose and function."



### Chakras and Tree of Life ..Continued from Page 23

mantric syllable in a specific location in a specific chakra in your energy body while silently intoning its sound.

Clearly, this practice is embedded in a culturally specific context in which the sounds of the Sanskrit language are seen as uniquely powerful vibrations that can form an effective part of mystical practice that brings about spiritual liberation or worldly benefits through magical means. Invoking the image and energy of a specific chakra is also cultural-specific, though if Western yogis come to understand what those deities stand for, the practice could potentially be meaningful for them as well, though probably never as meaningful as for someone who grew up with those deities as paradigmatic icons emblazoned on their subconscious minds. The so-called Cause-deities (Karana-Devatas) figure largely in every chakra system. These deities form a fixed sequence; from the lowest chakra to the highest, they are Ganesh, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Isvara, Sadasiva and Bhairava, with the first and last of these often not appearing, depending on the number of chakras. The last deity in the list of Cause-deities is never the ultimate deity of the given system, for that deity (whoever it is) is enthroned in the Ahasrara or thousand-petalled lotus on the crown of the head (which technically is not a chakra, since chakras by definition are pierced by Kundalini in her ascent or descent, whereas the Sahasrara is her final destination and home). Therefore, Bhairava (the most esoteric form of Shiva) is only included in the list of Cause-deities when he is transcended by the Goddess, the latter being the ultimate deity in many of these systems.

**The seed mantras that you think go with the chakras actually go with the elements that happen to be installed in those chakras.**

This is simpler than it sounds. You've been told that the seed-mantra of the Mooladhara chakra is LAM, it's not. Not in any Sanskrit source, not even in Purnananda's somewhat garbled syncretic account. And the mantra of Svadhisthana chakra is not VAM.

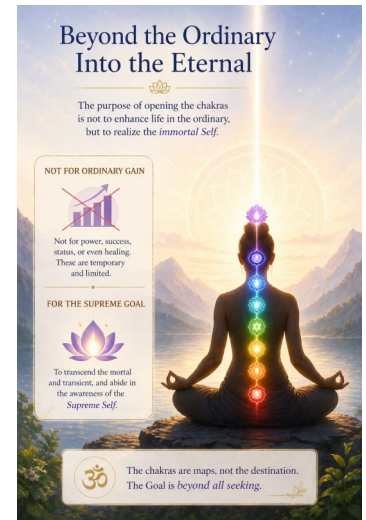
It's simple: LAM (rhymes with "thumb") is the seed-mantra of the Earth element, which in most chakra visualization practices is installed in the Mooladhara. VAM is the seed-mantra of the Water element, which is installed in Svadhisthana (at least, in the Seven-chakra system we know about). And so on: RAM is the syllable for Fire, YAM for Wind, and HAM for Space. (all these bijas (seed-mantra) rhyme with 'thumb'; though in esoteric Tantrik yoga, the elemental bijas actually have different vowel sounds which are thought to be much more powerful).

So, the main point is that the fundamental mantras associated with the first five chakras on every website you can google, actually do not belong to those chakras per se, but rather to the five Elements installed in them. This is important to know if you ever want to install one of those elements in a different place. In fact, in different Tantrik lineages, we find the Elements installed in very different places. For example, the Saiddhantika lineage installed Earth in the heart chakra. What do you think might be the effect on your relationships of always installing the Wind element in the heart center? (Remember, YAM is the mantra of Air/Wind, not of the Anahata chakra, whose intrinsic mantra is actually OM). Do you ever notice that modern Western yogis have really unstable relationships? Could that possibly be connected to repeatedly invoking Wind on the level of the heart? So maybe you want to install some Earth in the heart sometime, because grounding is good for your heart. In that case, it's kind of handy to

know that LAM is the Earth element mantra, not the Mooladhara-chakra mantra.

Furthermore, most of the geometric figures associated with the chakras today also properly belong to the Elements. Earth is traditionally represented by a (Yellow) square, Water by a (Silvery) crescent moon, Fire by a downward-pointed (Red) triangle, Wind by a hexagram or Six-pointed star, and Space by a circle. So, when you see those figures inscribed in illustrations of the chakras, you now know that they actually are representations of those respective Elements, not of a geometry inherent in the chakra itself.

This brings us to the last point: even a Sanskrit source can be confusing. For example, in Purnananda's 16<sup>th</sup>-century text that is the basis of the popular modern chakra-system, the five Elements are installed in the first five chakras of a Seven-chakra system. But this doesn't really work, because in all the classical systems, Space element is installed at the crown of the head, since that is where the yogi experiences an expansive opening into infinite spaciousness. Space is the element that merges into the infinite, so it has to be at or near the crown. We can speculate that Purnananda placed Space at the throat chakra because he lived at a time of increasing dogmatic adherence to the received tradition without critical reflection (a trend which sadly has continued), and the tradition he received was a Kaula one in which the classical Cause-deities got shoved down to make room for later, higher deities (specifically Bhairava and the Goddess), and the elements were uncritically kept fused to the deities and chakra with which they were previously associated. The fact that Purnananda was drawing on Kaula sources is not obvious, because instead of enthroning the Goddess at the Sahasrara as we would expect in a Kaula seven-chakra system, we



Beyond the Veil of the Self

**"Opening the chakras requires a radical change in consciousness, which usually occurs only after years of meditation."**





## Chakras and Tree of Life ..Continued from Page 24

find there Paramasiva, possibly due to the influence of Vedanta.

In much New Age thinking, imbalances or blockages of the chakras are regarded as the root of disease, which is then treated by correcting the function of the affected chakra.

This misconception has spawned a whole group of practitioners who claim to heal our chakras for us. Others claim to be able to energize our chakras and thereby not only cure what ails us but also give us inner knowledge and experience. Some of these procedures can be very expensive and many are highly speculative.

Most chakra healing today emphasizes external measures such as gems, herbs, bodywork, sound or color therapy, and vibrational healing; often various machines are used to treat the chakras. In addition, psychic healers claim to work on the chakras directly through their mental or occult powers. Working on the chakras with such methods is supposed to open or awaken them, or to induce higher states of consciousness in the person being treated.

The yogic approach is aimed at opening the chakras, not for healing purposes or to gain occult powers, but as a part of the process of Self-knowledge. For this yoga employs internal practices of mantra, pranayama, and meditation, which we must do for ourselves; external means, such as diet or herbs, are only secondary aids.

According to the yoga system, in the ordinary human

state, which is rarely transcended except by sustained spiritual practice, the chakras are closed; that is, they do not truly function. The result of this is not disease, but ignorance. This ignorance consists of regarding the external world as the true reality and living without awareness of one's true Self, which is neither body nor mind but thought-free awareness. One's chakras can be closed and yet one can be healthy, emotionally balanced, mentally creative, and successful in many areas of life. The purpose of opening the chakras is not to improve one's capacity in the ordinary domains of human life but to go beyond our mortal and transient seeking the immortal essence.

Traditional yoga views the chakras as influencing physical functions only in a secondary way.

Today, the chakras are generally described as force centers within the physical body, with the Sushumna Nadi or central channel being identified with the spine. The chakras are

related to various spinal centers and the physiological processes they govern, such as digestion, respiration, or reproduction. However, traditional yoga views the chakras as influencing physical functions only in a secondary way.

The current tendency to confuse the chakras with their corresponding functions in the physical body is based on a lack of understanding of the nature and function of the subtle body.

The subtle body is the subtle counterpart of the physical body, and has a similar form. Yet it is composed of a finer matter than space in the physical world and cannot be perceived by the physical senses. It belongs to another plane of existence, which we normally access only in dream states or after death. The subtle body allows the life force to enter into the physical body; without it the body could not even move. The subtle body is always active within the physical body, as the source of its vitality, though its activity is obscured by the veil of physical conditions.

The chakras are not part of the ordinary functioning of the subtle body. They take on a significant role only in states of heightened awareness or spiritual awakening. They represent the opening up or the mergence of the subtle body with the consciousness beyond it. While we can correlate physical and subtle body components and functions.

We should realize that the two are not the same, and the spiritually opened astral or subtle body is something else entirely.

### Kundalini

If the chakras are to come into function, they need another, much higher source of energy than what the physical body can provide. This is the role of the kundalini or serpent power, which lies dormant in the subtle body. Kundalini is not a physical force, nor is it an energy that one can manipulate with personal power. Kundalini is the concentrated energy of awareness or attention. It is not an energy apart



The Way Beyond the Waypoints

“For this yoga employs internal practices of mantra, pranayama, and meditation, which we must do for ourselves; external means... are only secondary aids.”

## Chakras and Tree of Life ..Continued from Page 25

from consciousness, but rather the energy that manifests with consciousness when it becomes free from thought. Only if a person has one-pointedness of mind can kundalini truly come into action, because only then does one have the possibility of moving beyond thought.

The awakening of kundalini requires that prana or life force enter into the Sushumna or central channel. This occurs when the prana is withdrawn from its fixation through the thought process on the external world. As long as our life energy is identified with the physical body and its functions, it cannot be withdrawn into the central channel. For this reason, arousing kundalini and opening the chakras involves a state of samadhi in which we leave ordinary consciousness. In the beginning this usually involves a state of trance wherein we become unconscious of the physical body. Later it can be done in the waking state, without any impairment of physical action, but at that stage, the physical body is no longer experienced as one's true identity.

A more accurate yet simple way to name the chakras is after the elements they rule.

### The Chakras and the Physical Organs

Because the Sanskrit terms for the chakras are cumbersome, there has been a tendency to name them after their corresponding physical location: crown chakra, brow chakra, throat chakra, heart chakra, navel chakra, sex chakra, and root chakra. While this is convenient, it also heightens the tendency to confuse the chakras with

the physical body. A more accurate yet simple way to name the chakras is after the elements they rule: earth for the base of the spine, water for the urino-genital region, fire for the navel, air for the heart, ether for the throat, mind for the third eye, and consciousness for the crown chakra.

However, it is the cosmic functions of these elements that the opened chakras give access to, not their ordinary roles as components of our personal existence. The opened chakras provide knowledge of the unity of the objective constituents of the universe (elements), along with the instruments of cognition (sense organs) and the instruments of action (organs of action), which are the subjective constituents of the universe. When the chakras are opened, we experience the cosmic nature of these elements within our own deeper awareness.

To bring the subtle centers into function, the gross or physical centers must be put in a state of rest or equilibrium. That is why the practices of yoga develop stillness of body, breath, senses, and mind (asana, pranayama, pratyahara, and dharana). To properly open the water chakra, for example, is different than having a heightened sexual drive. On the contrary, it requires that the physical sexual organ go into a state of latency and that the sexual drive be sublimated.

Similarly, to open the air chakra is quite different than to being in a heightened, vulnerable, or overly emotional state. To awaken this fourth chakra we must go beyond mere personal emotions and

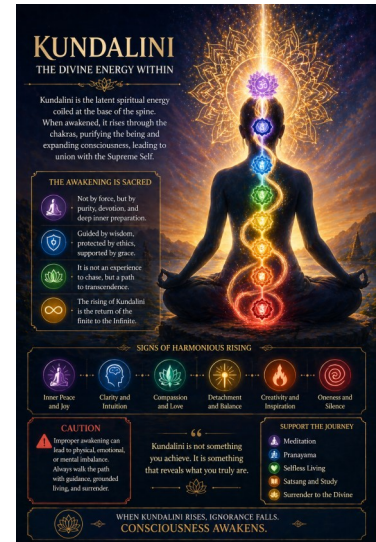
understand the cosmic energy behind all emotional fluctuations. This requires an opening to the universal feelings of compassion and devotion and contact with the universal life force.

Strictly speaking, therefore, there is no such chakra as the sex center, or heart center, or any other chakra as a mere physical function. There is a chakra located in the subtle body in an area that corresponds to the region of the sex organs in the physical body and which is its subtle counterpart. However, the properly opened chakra is not concerned with the functions of the physical sexual organs but with the cosmic element of water and its corresponding activities. To call it a sex center invites misinterpretation.

The signs of opened chakras include a corresponding control over and detachment from the physical elements and organs. As long as one is attached to the physical organs and their functions, the subtle organs cannot come into play. The awakening of the consciousness behind the subtle body involves being able to take off the gross body and its functions like a heavy overcoat which is no longer necessary on a warm summer day.

### Signs of Chakra Opening

To give a sense of what occurs when the chakras are opened, let us examine the signs of opening, chakra by chakra. Note that these signs are general. Experience is variable, particularly as to phenomena or powers. The main experience is a deepening sense of the unity of the universe with one's own Self-



The Serpent of Awakening

"Kundalini is the concentrated energy of awareness or attention... the energy that manifests when consciousness becomes free from thought."





### Chakras and Tree of Life ... Continued from Page 26

nature.

Let us examine the signs of opening, chakra by chakra.

#### **Mooladhara / Earth (Base) Chakra; YESOD**

The Sanskrit word Moola/Mula means 'root or foundation' and that is precisely what this chakra is. The 'root center' represents our body, the physical base of our personality and embodied existence.

Mooladhara is at the root of the chakra system, and its influence is at the root of our whole existence. In tantra, Mooladhara is the seat of Kundalini, the basis from which the possibility of higher realization arises.

The ordinary ego-mind of YESOD works and runs our lives more or less automatically. It is not until one takes steps towards spiritual development that this chakra awakens and its function become conscious, which can be a painful experience.

All the passions are stored in Mooladhara: all the guilt, every complex, and every agony have its root in Mooladhara chakra. It is so important for everybody to awaken this chakra and get out of it. Our lower karmas are embedded there as, in lower incarnations, one's whole being is founded on the sexual personality.

The awakening of any chakra is rarely a sudden event. It may take several years or lifetimes. In order to move on from Mooladhara, one has to clear the barrier of ignorance, egocentricity, attachment to physical pleasures and material objects.

When this first chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of the cosmic earth element and aware of the underlying unity of all solid states of matter as a crystallization of the energy of consciousness. One comes to experience the qualities of the cosmic earth element—like hardness, roughness, density, and texture—as various vibratory conditions of one's own consciousness. One may perceive various subtle or celestial fragrances. Similarly, one understands all formative acts in the universe as different workings of the cosmic earth energy in its capacity to produce and sustain form.

#### **Swadhisthana / Water (Sacral) Chakra; HOD-NEZAH**

'One's own abode' (Swa – one's own; adhisthana – abode) represents the instinctive, subconscious realms, which are the basis of our personality. Reaching Swadhisthana means that one is starting to penetrate the HOD-NEZAH threshold of the unconscious. Usually, one has to face the lowest manifestations first; there may be excessive fear (HOD) or sexual fantasies (NEZAH).

This stage of evolution is known as Purgatory, and if you read the lives of many of the great saints, you will find that most of them encountered great turmoil and temptations when they were passing through this stage.

It is interesting to note, that in traditional symbolism the animal related to Swadhisthana is a crocodile. It is here that we encounter the dragon as described in the mythology and fairy-stories,

in other words, the unconscious aspects of our psyche that are preventing us from evolving.

The way forward is keeping the path of Honesty. "One must have detachment, which is the outcome of a thorough analysis of the situations of life. To get beyond Swadhisthana you must improve the general background of your psycho-emotional life".

When the water chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of the cosmic water element and aware of the underlying unity of all liquid states of matter as a crystallization of the energy of consciousness. One comes to experience the qualities of the water element—like softness, wetness, coolness, and flowing nature—as various vibratory conditions of one's own consciousness. One may perceive various subtle or celestial tastes as an essence (rasa) that emanates from all experiences. Similarly, one understands all purificatory acts in the universe as different workings of the cosmic water energy in its purificatory role.

#### **Manipura / Fire (Navel or Solar Plexus) Chakra; TIFERET**

The 'city of jewels' (mani – jewel; Pura – city), is so called because each one of us can be compared to a city with multifarious activities simultaneously taking place. This is particularly true of the Manipura, or Solar plexus, which is our powerhouse. It is the center of vitality and generates energy that animates every action and thought. It gives us the energy and aspiration to express



From Seeking to Being

"No external person, machine, or object can open your chakras for you on their yogic level of functioning."



ourselves in the world and our capacity to fulfil our ambitions. In the same way that the sun continually radiates energy to the planets, Manipura chakra radiates and distributes pranic energy throughout the entire human framework, regulating and energizing the activity of the various organs, systems and processes of life. Poorly functioning Manipura means lack of vitality, depression and ill health.

If this is true regarding the physical body, the more important it's psychologically. Manipura or TIFERET is the Self, the midpoint of the psyche. "It is the centre of dynamism, energy, will and achievement and is often compared to the dazzling heat and power of the sun." The solar plexus is widely called 'the abdominal brain'; through it, we can 'feel' situations. We often have a 'gut feeling' or a 'twinge' in the abdomen which tells us that something is not quite right. We can 'sense' situations directly through the Manipura without being censored by the intellect. The Manipura is sensitive to emotions and is also the depository of suppressed emotions.

The diaphragm is the dividing line between the lower instinctual and the higher intellectual and intuitive levels of man. In one Amerindian tradition, the diaphragm is compared to the surface of the earth: below lies the instinctive, animal aspects of human nature; above are the higher aspects. This analogy exactly applies to the Manipura

chakra.

"When the consciousness evolves to Manipura, one acquires a spiritual perspective." This refers to the position of TIFERET as the Kingdom of Heaven. In Mooladhara and Swadhisthana the consciousness is still preoccupied with personal matters and resolving old karmas, but in Manipura one starts to realize the possibilities in becoming truly human.

However, at this level one may fall for money, sex and power instead of striving for truth, goodness and beauty. The temptations are becoming more subtle as one starts developing Siddhis or psychic powers. Attachment to these powers often makes one believe one has "arrived", thus blocking further development.

When the third chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of the cosmic fire element and aware of the underlying unity of all radiant states of matter as a crystallization of the energy of consciousness. One experiences the qualities of the fire element—like light, color, heat, and illuminations as various vibratory conditions of one's own consciousness. One may also experience subtle sights and visions and perceive the radiance or aura behind things. Similarly, one understands behind all appearances in the universe the workings of the cosmic fire energy in its power of illumination.

**Anahata / Air (Heart) Chakra; GEVURAH-HESED**

The 'center of non-vibrational sound' is the

heart chakra through which we begin to connect with a wider sphere of existence and are enabled to feel and express love and compassion. Anahata operates at the level of the soul and symbolically relates to the awakening of the heart. It is important to remember that warning about the barrier: "The second psychic knot is located at this heart center. It represents the bondage of emotional attachment, the tendency to live one's life making decisions on the strength of the emotions rather than in the light of the spiritual quest."

In some traditions, such as Sufism and Bhakti yoga, the Anahata is considered to be the center of each human being since it integrates the qualities of the "lower" chakras with those of the "higher" chakras.

Everything in the universe is based on vibrational energy. The root of the Anahata is said to be in God, or Consciousness – so subtle that it has no vibration. In yoga, it is symbolized by a flame which represents the eternal spark of life and immortal Awareness in each of us.

Awakening this chakra is the key to fate and free will. "Anahata chakra is almost completely beyond empirical dimensions. One depends solely upon the power of one's own consciousness rather than on anything that is external or concerning faith. In Anahata chakra, the freedom to escape from a preordained fate and to determine one's own destiny becomes reality." As such, it is said that there is a wish-fulfilling tree in the chakra.



Harmony of the Subtle Self

"The subtle body... is composed of a finer matter... and cannot be perceived by the physical senses."





## Chakras and Tree of Life ... Continued from Page 28

It seems that awakening of a chakra follows the pattern of the Lightning Flash on the Tree. In Anahata, the negative tendencies of GEVURAH usually surface first, like fear and pessimistic attitudes towards life. One has to remember the power of wish-fulfilling at this level in order not to manifest negative wishes. "It is important to have a firm and alert control over the mental tendencies and fantasies of the mind."

In order to move on, one needs to cultivate the qualities of HESED. A positive way of thinking is vital. Also enjoying the arts at their best can be helpful. "Anahata chakra awakens refined emotion in the brain, and its awakening is characterized by a feeling of universal, unlimited love for all beings."

When the fourth chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of the cosmic air element and aware of the underlying unity of all gaseous states of matter as a crystallization of the energy of consciousness. One experiences the qualities of the air element—like motion, changeability, subtlety, and penetration—as various vibratory conditions of one's own consciousness. One may also perceive subtle energy contacts and feel the underlying vibratory energies of the cosmic life-force. Similarly, one understands behind all contacts in the universe the workings of the cosmic air energy in its energizing role.

**Vishuddhi/Ether (Throat) Chakra; DA'AT**

The 'purification chakra' symbolizes the level of understanding at which we start to realize the importance of purification on all levels. Be-

sides Vishuddhi being described as the void in the tantra, there is also the knowledge aspect as in Kabbalah. "The more abstract aspect of Vishuddhi is the faculty of higher discrimination. Hence any communication received telepathically can be tested here for its correctness and accuracy. Similarly, Vishuddhi allows us to differentiate between realization coming into our consciousness from the higher level of knowledge, and the mere babblings of our unconscious mind and wishful thinking."

Vishuddhi is also known as the 'nectar and poison center'. This would mean 'death and transformation' in more familiar terms. The nectar is transcendental fluid, 'the Dew of Heaven'. "As long as Vishuddhi chakra remain inactive, this fluid runs downward unimpeded, to be consumed in the fire of Manipura, resulting in the processes of decay, degeneration and finally death in the body's tissues. When Vishuddhi is awakened the divine fluid is retained and utilized, becoming the nectar of immortality. The secret of youth and regeneration of the body lies in the awakening of Vishuddhi chakra."

Vishuddhi is also the key to psychological regeneration. "At the level of Vishuddhi and above, even the poisonous and negative aspects of existence become integrated powerless as concepts of good and bad fall away. At this stage of awareness, the poisonous aspects and experiences of life are absorbed and transformed into a state of bliss."

This chakra is also known as the 'communication chakra'. As our contact with the Vishuddhi deepens, we

**"One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth"<sup>1</sup>: The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ... Continued from Page 13**

ances are intrinsically linked because the latter proceeds from the former.

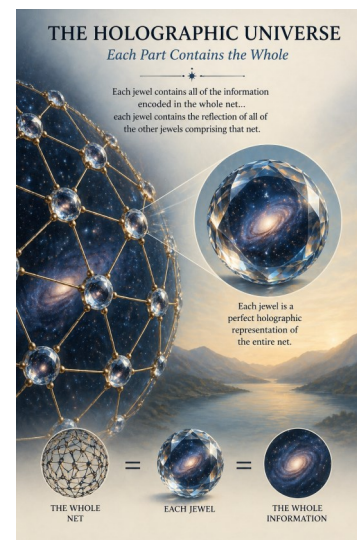
Thus, the Idea underlying every natural manifestation must find its source in the Good, which Plato identifies as a major attribute of God. For Plato, the Good alone is real and permanent. Evil, conversely, constitutes the absence of Good. Thus, evil is unreal and transitory because it does not exist independently of the Good, but rather serves as its shadow. In that way, Divinity unfolds all of Creation constructively.

Accordingly, Plato concludes that, "being", that is, God, is fundamentally benevolent.<sup>3</sup>

That conclusion also drives Plato's conception of the ideal nation-state described in his *Republic*.

**Plato's Allegory of the Cave**

Another concept from Plato that contributes to an understanding of our reality's true nature is his Allegory of the Cave, which is found in Book VII of his *Republic*. In Plato's allegory, the cave symbolizes the human condition. Some prisoners have been chained there since infancy so they know nothing of the outside world. Outside the prison, a fire burns above the cave. Between the fire and the prisoners is a small wall containing a path on which representations of people, plants, animals, and objects seem to travel. All of those objects exist above the wall behind the prisoners. Those objects are then projected by the fire light onto the cave wall in front of the prisoners, who are unable to turn around due to their chains. To the prison-



Indra's Net: The Universe Reflected in Every Part

"Thus, the tangible reality of our everyday lives is really a sort of illusion... Bohm termed the primary level of reality the 'Implicate Order', and our perceived reality the 'Explicate Order.'"



**“One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth”<sup>1</sup>:  
The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ... Continued**  
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ers, the shadows projected on the cave wall appear to constitute the objective reality of the external world.

However, the shadows are really only the reflections of imitation humans, animals, plants, and objects. The prisoners also attribute voices to the puppets, not knowing that the voices are really those of the puppeteers. Eventually, one of the prisoners is freed, and sees the world as it truly is for the first time. Gradually, the freed prisoner understands the simulated “reality” of the cave was not reality at all. Rather, it was an illusory experience that had no real existence despite the fact that it seemed real to the prisoner for most of his life. The prisoner then returns to the prison to tell his companions of the “True Reality” that exists outside of the cave. Thus, the allegory illustrates Plato’s idea that our phenomenal world is but a mere shadow of the World of Forms, or noumenal world.

Therefore, Plato’s Allegory of the Cave illustrates the relationship between the World of Ideas and the World of Appearances. The latter is symbolized by the cave, and the former is symbolized by the “True Reality” experienced by those who escape the cave.

Plato’s conception of the Primordial Idea is also similar to the “Primordial Tradition” or “Sophia Perennis” (i.e. “Perennial Wisdom”) described by subsequent philosophers, including René Guénon and the Traditionalist School of philosophy and metaphysics. For both Plato and Guénon, the highest principle is Unity, which manifests on the physical plane as multiplicity.

#### Guénon & Traditionalism

Traditionalists posit that time is cyclical rather than linear, and that all major world religions are founded upon universal and primordial truths. Traditionalism espouses a Perennial Philosophy (philosophia perennis) described as “both absolute Truth and infinite Presence.”<sup>4</sup>

Absolute Truth is “the perennial wisdom (Sophia perennis) that stands as the transcendent source of all the intrinsically orthodox religions of humankind.”<sup>5</sup> Infinite Presence is “the perennial religion (religio perennis) that lives within the heart of all intrinsically orthodox religions.”<sup>6</sup>

However, the Tradition itself is not a formal or specific religion. Rather, the Tradition “resides as an immanent and underlying presence within the religions...”, and serves as a “vivifying presence” in those religions.<sup>7</sup> Traditionalism embraces the shared values at the heart of the world’s great religions, rather than focusing on their doctrinal differences. Thus, the tenets of Traditionalism seem similar to the “Religion of the Heart” described by Goethe in *Faust*.

Traditionalism can, therefore, be seen as a positive, unifying philosophy.

French mystic and Freemason René Guénon is generally considered the founder of the Traditionalist School. Guénon held that no esoteric path is possible without affiliation with one of the world’s great religions.<sup>8</sup> For Guénon, that path was illuminated by the light of Sufism, an esoteric branch of Islam, to which he converted. Guénon also invoked the Hindu doctrine of Manvantara to explain humanity’s gradual, cyclical drift away from primordial spirituality.

Manvantara is divided into four stages, or “world ages”, a concept similar to the Ancient Greek division of time into a grand cycle consisting of Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron Ages.<sup>9</sup> As the cycle progresses, humanity becomes more distant and alienated from the unity that is the source of spiritual inspiration and true intelligence, traits which characterize the Golden Age.

According to Guénon, we are currently living in the Kali Yuga, or “Iron Age”, which began over six thousand years ago. During this time, spiritual knowledge “becomes enveloped in more and more impenetrable veils, which hide it from men’s sight and make it extremely difficult to discover.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, “the truths which were formerly within reach of all have become more and more hidden and inaccessible; those who possess them grow fewer and fewer...”<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, “we find everywhere, under various symbols, the theme of something that has been lost – at least to all appearances and as far as the outer world is concerned – and those who aspire to true knowledge must rediscover...”<sup>12</sup> This idea may sound familiar to a Masonic audience because it echoes one of Freemasonry’s fundamental concepts: the quest to rediscover the Lost Word.

However, “it is said that what is thus hidden will become visible again at the end of the cycle, which because of the continuity binding all things together, will coincide with the beginning of a new cycle.”<sup>13</sup> According to Guénon, cyclical development must proceed downward from higher to low-



From the Unseen to the Seen: The Unfolding of Reality

“Thus, the tangible reality of our everyday lives is really a sort of illusion... Bohm termed the primary level of reality the ‘Implicate Order’, and our perceived reality the ‘Explicate Order.’”



**“One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth”<sup>1</sup>: The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ...**  
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er because “the development of any manifestation necessarily implies a gradually increasing distance from the principle from which it proceeds”<sup>14</sup>. Thus, “[s]tarting from the highest point, it tends necessarily downward” and “the speed of its motion increases continually until it finally reaches a point at which it is stopped.”<sup>15</sup>

According to Guénon, “[t]his fall could be described as a progressive materialization” from a principle of pure spirituality to a manifestation of gross materialism.<sup>16</sup> At that point, the next cycle begins anew. Guénon’s description of humanity’s “fall” into matter also seems similar to humanity’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden as described by Milton in his *Paradise Lost*, or by Dante in his *Divine Comedy*. The “Golden Age”, or period of pure spirituality Guénon described, also seems similar to the Egyptian Zep Tepi or “First Time”, when the Egyptian people coexisted with their “gods” on Earth. Plato’s story of Atlantis, related in the *Timaeus* and *Critias*, also seems to serve as an allegory for the turning of this cosmic wheel, as does the Ancient Greek “Age of Heroes”, which bridged the gap between the Bronze and Iron Ages.

Thus, the cyclical process Guénon described recalls the idea of humanity’s gradual involution into matter, and our gradual evolution back towards the highest spiritual principle.

Therefore, one may observe the influence of Plato’s cosmogony on Guénon and his Traditionalist School. Both seem to agree that the highest spiritual principle is Unity, which proceeds to a material manifestation of multiplicity. Or, as David Bowie once

Qabalistically phrased it, “[h]ere are we, one magical movement from Kether to Malkuth.”<sup>17</sup>

**The Holographic Universe**

American Physicist David Bohm is widely considered to be the father of the holographic universe theory. Bohm was educated at the University of California at Berkeley where he studied under J. Robert Oppenheimer, the head of the American atomic bomb project. During his early career, Bohm earned a reputation as one of the world’s most respected quantum physicists.<sup>18</sup>

However, Bohm’s radical political beliefs derailed that career, and led him into self-imposed exile in London, U.K., and then Brazil. Bohm was also a long-time friend and collaborator with the Indian mystic, writer, and philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti, and the two friends influenced one another’s work. Additionally, Albert Einstein once referred to Bohm as his “spiritual son”, and the Dalai Lama called Bohm his “science guru”.<sup>19</sup> Bohm’s life was the subject of the documentary film, *Infinite Potential*, which was released in 2020.

Before considering the holographic universe theory, it is useful to explain what a hologram actually is, and how it is created. A hologram is produced when a single laser light is split into two separate beams. The first beam is bounced off of the object to be photographed.

The second beam is allowed to collide with the reflected light of the first beam. The collision of those two beams creates an interference pattern. That interference pattern is then recorded onto a piece of holographic film. The interference pattern created by

**Chakras and Tree of Life ... Continued from Page 29**

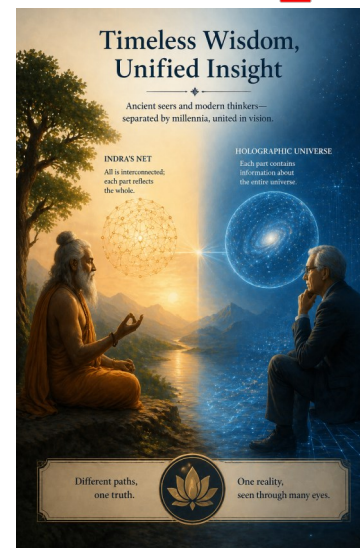
develop the capacity to communicate more powerfully on all levels: verbally, intellectually, aesthetically and physically.

Interconnected with Vishuddhi chakra is Bindu Visarga. Very little is known and written about it as it is beyond the realm of all conventional experience. On Jacob’s Ladder it would relate to the YESOD of Beriah, which underlines the DAAT of Yezirah. “Bindu is a trap-door opening in both directions.” It is said to be the origin of manifest individuality. “From this point or seed an object, an animal, a human being or whatever, can arise and manifest. Each and every object has a Bindu as its base. That which was previously formless assumes shape through the Bindu, and its nature is fixed by the Bindu as well.”

When the fifth chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of the cosmic ether element and aware of the underlying unity of all space in the universe as a crystallization of the energy of consciousness. One experiences the qualities of space—like lightness, subtlety, pervasiveness, and clarity—as various vibratory conditions of one’s own consciousness.

One may also perceive subtle sounds and recognize the underlying spatial structure of the universe. Similarly, one understands behind all vibrations in the universe the working of the cosmic ether element as their matrix.

**Ajna/Mind (The Third**



**One Light, Many Paths:**  
The Convergence of Wisdom and Science

“Therefore, the Supreme Principle of Creation depends on One Idea and One Reality, which manifests on the earth plane in multiplicity.”

**Eye) Chakra; BINAH-HOKHMAH**

The 'control center', it gives us the capacity to 'see' innerly and to access intuitive understanding that pertains not only to our daily life but also into more subtle phenomena normally not visible to our two fleshy eyes. Ajna is the chakra of higher intellect. "Ajna is the witnessing center where one becomes the detached observer of all events, including those within the body and mind. Here the level of awareness is developed whereby one begins to 'see' the hidden essence underlying all visible appearances. When Ajna is awakened, the meaning and significance of symbols flashes into one's conscious perception and intuitive knowledge arise effortlessly."

"Up until Ajna chakra awakens, we are under delusions. It is only after the awakening of Ajna chakra that the laws of cause and effect can be known. Thereafter your whole philosophical attitude and approach to life change." As said, it is very important to develop the qualities of one's spiritual journey. "Only those who have reason and understanding are able to cope." As Ajna awakens, we are able to integrate previously hidden potentialities into our 'concept' of self.

It would seem that the awakening of the Ajna chakra follows the sequence of the Lightning Flash, activating first the BINAH and then the HOKHMAH aspect of this level. It is said that from Ajna there is only a short way to Sahasrara or enlightenment; from HOKHMAH we would see how to get there.

When the sixth chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of cosmic mind and aware of the underlying unity of all minds in the uni-

verse as a crystallization of the energy of consciousness. One experiences the qualities of mind—like perceptiveness, creativity, discrimination, and detachment—as various vibratory conditions of one's own consciousness. One gains the ability to integrate all the cosmic elements and their respective organs and functions through the activity of the awakened mind. One gains mastery over the mind and comes to have a continual stream of divine perceptions. One realizes that all we think is a manifestation of the cosmic principle of mind.

**Sahasrara / Consciousness (Crown) Chakra; KETER**

Sahasrara is actually not considered to be a chakra; it is the source of the chakra. "It is the crown of expended awareness. The power of the chakras does not reside in the chakras themselves, but in Sahasrara. The chakras are only switches. All the potential lies in Sahasrara."

Patanjali classifies samadhi or enlightenment in three different stages. This would correspond to the position of the KETER of Yezirah on Jacob's Ladder overlapping the TIFERET of Beriah and the MALKHUT of Atzilut. "Sahasrara is both formless and with form, yet it is also beyond, and therefore untouched by form."

There are many descriptions about enlightenment, but ultimately it is not possible to define such an experience. "Super-mental awareness is not a point; it is a process, a range of experience. Just as the term 'childhood' refers to a wide

span of time, in the same way, samadhi is not a particular point of experience but a sequence of experiences which graduate from one stage to another."

When the seventh chakra is opened, one becomes cognizant of the Self or pure consciousness as the sole reality and underlying substance of the universe. One experiences the qualities of consciousness—like infinity, immortality, peace, and bliss—as one's own nature and the underlying nature of the universe. One gains mastery over consciousness and comes to abide in a state of Self-realization, seeing oneself in all beings and all beings in oneself. One realizes that all things are manifestations of the Supreme Self, which is the sole reality.

Though the word Sahasrara literally means 'a thousand', it really implies 'the infinite', the Fountainhead, Reality, the Absolute, or Consciousness. Mystically, the Sahasrara is beyond time, space and all objects, and yet it is the source of them. Consciousness is the Reality that existed before the creation came forth, or in scientific terms, that which existed before the creation came forth, or in scientific terms, that which existed before the big bang; it is that which exists at the heart of everything Now; and it is that which will exist eternally beyond endless time in the future. It is the ever-present stage on which the drama of time plays out. This Reality is summed up in the following statement by the Chinese mystic Chao-Chou: "Even before the world was, Reality is."



**The Return to the Eternal Self**

"The chakras are maps... What is important is to connect to that Goal wherein one goes beyond all seeking."





## ✠ Evagrius Ponticus and the Desert Fathers . By Worthy Gregory Peters, V<sup>o</sup>et Philologus Zelator

### Introduction

**I**n the desolate expanses of Egypt's deserts and the intellectual crucible of late antiquity, Evagrius Ponticus (c. 345–399) emerged as a Christian mystic whose theology of spiritual ascent fused the ascetic rigor of the Desert Fathers with a philosophical lineage rooted in Plato and early Christian thinkers like Philo, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and the Cappadocian Fathers. This synthesis shaped both Eastern and Western Christian traditions, drawing heavily on Platonic ideals of the soul's liberation and ascent to eternal truth. The Desert Fathers, his predecessors and direct mentors, embodied this quest through their radical withdrawal from a newly Christianized Roman Empire after the Edict of Milan (313 CE), seeking transformation in solitude. Their lives, chronicled in Palladius' *Historia Lausiaca* and John Cassian's *Conferences*, and their sayings, preserved in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* and *Philokalia*, provided Evagrius with a living tradition that he systematized into a profound mystical framework. At its core lies a radical, luminous awareness, echoing Plato's Forms, revealing a universal human capacity to touch the infinite, forged by the interplay of philosophy and monastic discipline.

### 1: Historical Context

The late antique world, spanning the 3rd to 4th centuries, was marked by shifts that set the stage for Evagrius and the Desert Fathers. The Edict of Milan in 313 CE, issued by Constantine and Licinius, legalized Christianity, ending persecution

## Chakras and Tree of Life ...

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In the western mystical traditions, the Sahasrara is called the 'crown' since it is symbolically located at the crown of the head and because it is the culmination and consummation of our evolutionary journey. We realize what we have always been as Consciousness and that our 'trip' to planet Earth was a grand illusory drama, sometimes pleasant, sometimes painful. All our problems and anxieties were, and are, just bubbles in Eternity. We realized that there was not, is not and never will be a path to realize Consciousness. We are ever Consciousness. Ultimately, there is no need to realize anything: I Am and everything IS. However, from the perspective of our life and our identification with our individual self, we aspire to realize what we already are. So, we practice yoga and try to awaken the chakras.

There are also general signs of the awakening of subtle energies and faculties, like the experiencing of subtle sounds, lights, visions of deities, and so on, generally in the region of the third eye. But such experiences may come long before any particular chakra is opened.

### Psychic Experiences and Powers

Each chakra can give an awareness of corresponding levels of the universe or different worlds beyond the physical. The corresponding sub-planes of the astral universe, which are quite marvelous beyond anything in the physical world, may become available to our experience. We may similarly gain insights into the subtle work-

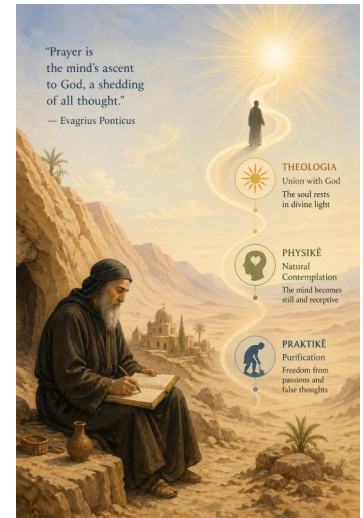
ings of nature, the senses, the life force, and the process of cosmic creation and powers over them.

Each chakra can give an awareness of corresponding levels of the universe or different worlds beyond the physical.

Yet not all yogis choose to explore the worlds or the faculties that relate to the chakras. Many great *jnanis*, or yogis of the path of knowledge, strive to merge directly into pure unity or the Absolute. In their awakening they may hardly note the distinctions of the chakras and their functions. Ramana Maharshi typifies this view. For him there was only one chakra or center, the Self, from which all the phenomena of the gross and subtle worlds and bodies appeared like the images seen in a mirror or bubbles on the waves of the sea.

### Premature Chakra Opening

Opening the chakras requires purity of body, heart, and mind. It cannot be done willfully or forcefully, nor can it be done in a state of emotional disturbance. Attempts to awaken kundalini without having first purified the body and mind often lead to side effects in which the mind or the pranic force becomes disturbed, which results in various illusory experiences. For this reason, traditional yogic literature has always stressed right living (like a vegetarian diet and control of sexual energy), and right attitude (such as non-violence, non-possessiveness, and the other observances and restraints embodied in the Yamas and Niyamas).



The Ascent of the Luminous Soul

"At its core lies a radical, luminous awareness, echoing Plato's Forms, revealing a universal human capacity to touch the infinite, forged by the interplay of philosophy and monastic discipline."



## Chakras and Tree of Life ... Continued from Page 33

It is possible to have aberrant kundalini or chakra experiences, although most of the experiences labeled as premature kundalini awakening are actually nervous or mental disturbances of a more ordinary nature. If the mind is not purified, there still can be a heightened activity of the lower chakras, which is accompanied by an increase in corresponding physical urges. That is why yoga texts state that beings of asuric or highly egotistical natures can open the chakras up to the navel, but their experiences will be tainted, and the functioning of the chakras will be deranged.

**The Limits of Healers**

Certain healers may be able to affect the physical counterparts of the chakras with external aids or with psychic energies—which may be helpful for treating various physical or emotional imbalances—but the true awakening of the chakras cannot be accomplished for us by an external person. No external person, machine, or object can open your chakras for you on their yogic level of functioning. The use of certain diets, herbs, or gems can be helpful in preparing the way for the opening of the chakras, but these are only external supports. They can no longer open the chakras than can asanas of themselves produce meditation. A guru, or one in whom the inner consciousness is awakened, can provide guidance or initiatory experience but cannot do the work for us. The real opening of the chakras requires the adept practice of yoga, which may take years, sometimes lifetimes, to accomplish and which stems from deeper yogic practices of Pranayama, mantra, and meditation

along with a disciplined lifestyle.

Above all we should understand that opening the chakras is not an end in itself, but part of the process of Self-realization, which occurs primarily either through surrender to the Divine (bhakti or devotion) or inquiry into one's true nature (jnana or knowledge). The current tendency to focus on the technicalities of the chakras rather than developing devotion or wisdom shows that we have not understood what spiritual practice is really about. It is analogous to being more concerned with the physiology of the stomach than with the quality of the food that we eat. The chakras are maps. They show the road and indicate the side paths where one can go astray. What is important is to connect to that Goal wherein one goes beyond all seeking.

**Siddhis**

Yogic literature speaks of various siddhis, or yogic powers, like the power to levitate, or the power to become as large or small as one likes. As the chakras open, these corresponding powers in the subtle body may be experienced. These siddhis relate primarily to the subtle body, which as subtle matter is totally malleable. It is almost impossible to translate these siddhis into the physical body, gross and dense as it is, and in any case, this is not the aim of yogic practices.

In addition, there are many subtle energies that exist between ordinary physical consciousness and the true awakening of the kundalini and the chakras. We should

not regard any extraordinary experience as an enlightenment or a kundalini experience.

Visions, out of the body experiences, trances, channeling, mystical dreams, genius, inspiration of various sorts and other such states often originate in other parts of the mind and are not necessarily spiritual experiences. Even when they are legitimate, such spiritual experiences may still fall short of the real awakening of kundalini, and certainly should not be confused with Self-realization, which requires the full development of our awareness, not giving ourselves over to some entity or experience outside ourselves.

We've barely scratched the surface of this subject. It's really complex, as you can gather by taking a look at the scholarly literature, like Dory Heilijgers-Seelen's work or Gudrun Buhnemann's. It takes uncommon patience and focusses to even read such work, let alone produce it. So, here's what I hope will be the result of this: some humility. A few less claims to authority when it comes to really esoteric subjects. Maybe a few less yoga teachers are trying to tell their students what the chakras are all about.

This is still mostly uncharted territory. So, when it comes to the chakras, don't claim you know. Let everyone around you know that every book on the chakras presents only one possible model. Virtually nothing written in English is really authoritative for practitioners of yoga. So why not hold more gently the beliefs you've acquired about yoga, even while you keep



"The chakras are not part of the ordinary functioning of the subtle body. They take on a significant role only in states of heightened awareness or spiritual awakening."



**Chakras and Tree of Life..**Continued from  
Page 34

learning? Let's admit we don't fully understand these ancient yoga practices yet; and instead of seeking to be an authority on some oversimplified version of them, you can invite yourself and people around you to look more clearly, more honestly, more carefully, and more non-judgmentally at their own inner experience.

In introducing the Bindu and the Sahasrara, we have flown into the mystical realms, beyond thought and concept. But the chakras are dynamic aspects of our embodied personality which relate to our everyday life. By exploring them, we start to discover previously hidden and unsuspected potential in ourselves. They reveal joy, meaning and wisdom which allow us to live in heaven, but on planet Earth. Exploring the chakras can be invaluable on our life's path to awakening.

In the course of one's development, the chakras may be only partially or temporarily awakened. They do not necessarily follow the traditional sequence. In Kabbalah, an individual whose all chakras have fully and permanently awakened would be called the Messiah.

After all, everything that every yoga master ever experiences is in you, too.

Denish Chhabra, IV<sup>o</sup>***"One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth"<sup>1</sup>: The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ...***

Continued from Page 31

this process appears similar to the concentric rings of ripples formed when throwing a handful of pebbles into a pond. When another laser beam is shined through the film, a three-dimensional image of the original object appears.

Moreover, if a segment of holographic film is cut into pieces, and each of those pieces is illuminated by a laser, each individual scrap of the film will still contain the entire image. That is because every small fragment of holographic film contains all the information recorded in the whole, similar to how each jewel at each vertex of Indra's Net reflects all of the other jewels in that net.

According to Bohm, a vast and more primary level of reality exists that generates all of the objects and appearances of our physical world in much the same way that a piece of holographic film generates a hologram.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the tangible reality of our everyday lives is really a sort of illusion, a conception that seems similar to Plato's "Allegory of the Cave". Bohm termed the primary level of reality the "Implicate Order", and our perceived reality the "Explicate Order".<sup>21</sup>

Bohm defined the Implicate Order as the deeper level of reality that underlies our everyday reality, while the Explicate Order constitutes the level of perceived reality we experience. Thus, the Implicate Order seems similar to Plato's "World of Ideas", while the Explicate Order corresponds to Plato's "World of Appearances". Bohm used the term "implicate" to mean "enfolded" and explicate to mean "unfolded".<sup>22</sup> Bohm used those terms because he

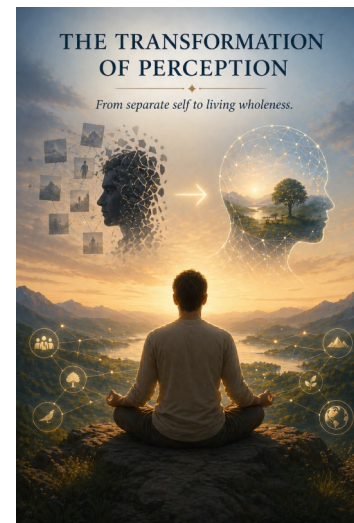
saw the manifestation of all forms of the universe as a result of countless enfoldings and unfoldings between the implicate and explicate orders.<sup>23</sup> In that sense, Bohm's holographic model seems similar to how the Spacing Guild's Navigators "fold" space to facilitate interstellar travel in Frank Herbert's seminal science fiction novel *Dune*.

For example, a piece of holographic film and the three-dimensional holographic image it generates can be used to demonstrate this concept. The film corresponds to the implicate order because the image encoded in its interference pattern is a hidden totality enfolded throughout the whole. The hologram projected from the film corresponds to the explicate order because it represents the unfolded and perceptible version of the implicate interference pattern.

Additionally, Bohm's holographic model provides a scientific framework that explains any number of spiritual phenomena such as Human Energy Fields (i.e. "Auras"), Bodily Energy Centers (i.e. "Chakras"), Near Death Experiences, astral projection, and remote viewing.

**U.S. Army Intelligence's Gateway Process**

On June 9, 1983, Lieutenant Commander Wayne M. McDonnell submitted his assessment of the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command's "Gateway Process" to the Commander of the U.S. Army Operational Group in Fort Meade, Maryland.<sup>24</sup> The Gateway Process is a method of expanding human consciousness to transcend our space-time dimension.



Awakening to Unity: The Transformation of Perception

"Energy creates, stores and retrieves meaning in the universe by projecting or expanding at certain frequencies in a three-dimensional mode that creates a living pattern called a hologram."

**"One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth"<sup>1</sup>: The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ... Continued from Page 35**

According to McDonnell, "[s]olid matter...simply does not exist. Rather atomic structure is composed of oscillating energy grids surrounded by other oscillating energy grids which orbit at extraordinarily high speeds."<sup>25</sup> As McDonnell explains, "the entire human being, brain, consciousness and all is, like the universe which surrounds him, nothing more or less than an extraordinarily complex system of energy fields."<sup>26</sup> In other words, our universe is a vibratory ocean permeated by consciousness.

Moreover, this understanding extends to the "so called states of matter", which "are actually variances in the state of energy, and human consciousness is a function of the interaction of energy in two opposite states (motion vs rest)...".<sup>27</sup> In other words, McDonnell's conception seems similar to Bohm's description of the implicate order, as well as Plato's conception of the World of Forms. The similarities to Bohm's theory do not end there, as McDonnell observes that, "[e]nergy creates, stores and retrieves meaning in the universe by projecting or expanding at certain frequencies in a three-dimensional mode that creates a living pattern called a **hologram**."<sup>28</sup> (emphasis added).

While the connection to Bohm's holographic model is implicit, McDonnell cites Israeli-

American scientist and mystic Itzhak Bentov to support his argument. Similar to Bohm, Bentov posited that "[t]he universe is a hologram or interference pattern in which all parts are interconnected, containing information about each other and thus about the entire universe."<sup>29</sup>

Thus, Bohm was not alone in his conception of the Universe as holographic in nature nor in his fusion of scientific and spiritual principles.

However, our perceived reality contains only limited aspects of the "universal hologram which can be accessed in the dimension of space time as we know it."<sup>30</sup> To understand how this process works, McDonnell argues, we must understand the nature of energy and its relationship to consciousness. Unconfined energy constitutes "force without limit, without dimension, without the limits of form".<sup>31</sup> Thus, "[e]nergy in infinity means energy uniformly extended without limit."<sup>32</sup> In other words, energy in its infinite state has neither beginning, nor end, nor location. Rather, it is "a conscious force, the fundamental, primal power of existence without form, a state of infinite being."<sup>33</sup> Therefore, energy in infinity is completely at rest, and, as such, is incapable of generating holograms.

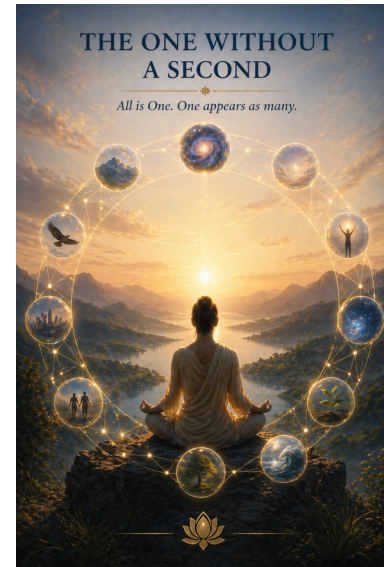
Accordingly, energy in infinity "is termed by physicists as energy in its absolute state, or simply, **'the Absolute'**."<sup>34</sup> (emphasis added). Between this "Absolute" and our "material" universe, are "various intervening dimensions to which human consciousness in altered states of being may gain access."<sup>35</sup> This insight echoes the Qabalistic concept of our Universe as proceeding from Kether (i.e. "The Crown"), the highest principle of Unity, to Malkuth (i.e. "The Kingdom"), our perceived, material reality, through the other eight intervening Sephiroth (i.e. "Spheres"). The idea of the "Absolute" as energy in its infinite state of being also

seems similar to the Qabalah's "Ain Soph" (i.e. "The Infinite"), which is defined as God prior to any selfmanifestation.<sup>36</sup>

Additionally, McDonnell's thesis validates Guénon's theory regarding the universe unfolding from the highest point of Unity to the lowest point of multiplicity and materialism. In theory, McDonnell contends, "human consciousness may continue to expand on the horizons of its perceptual capability until it reaches the dimension of the Absolute at which point perception stops because the Absolute generates no holograms of or about itself."<sup>37</sup> Similarly, one cannot perceive the Ain Soph.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, McDonnell posits that the Absolute exists as "conscious energy in infinity", and is, therefore, without any boundaries.<sup>39</sup> Thus, the Absolute "occupies every dimension to include the time-space dimension in which we have our physical existence but we cannot perceive it."<sup>40</sup> As such, the Absolute "overlays" not only our space-time dimension, but also "many of the intervening gradients or dimensions through which the energies of the universe pass on their way to and from their home in the state of infinity (the Absolute)."<sup>41</sup>

Once again, McDonnell's description of the "intervening gradients or dimensions" seems strikingly similar to the eight Sephiroth mediating between Kether's source of Unity, and Malkuth's material manifestation of multiplicity on the Qabalistic Tree of Life. McDonnell thus determines that humans can project their consciousness into those intervening dimensions by focusing "with such intense coherence that the frequency of the energy pattern which comprises that consciousness (i.e. the



The One Becoming Many:  
The Circle of Manifestation

"Thus, the universe is a hologram or interference pattern in which all parts are interconnected, containing information about each other and thus about the entire universe."



**"One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth"<sup>1</sup>: The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ... Continued from Page 36**

brainwave output) can accelerate to the point where the resulting frequency pattern... would look virtually like a solid line" on an oscilloscope.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, McDonnell provides a scientific basis for the phenomena of astral projection.

Furthermore, McDonnell invokes the analogy of Indra's Net to illustrate his holographic thesis, calling it the "classic description of the universal hologram".<sup>43</sup> For McDonnell, the Hindu sutra "shows that the concept of the universe which at least some physicists are now coming to accept is identical in its essential aspects with the one known to the learned elite in selected civilizations and cultures of high attainment in the ancient world."<sup>44</sup> McDonnell's assessment seems consistent with Guénon's viewpoint, and with the perspective of the Traditionalist School Guénon founded. McDonnell's reference to learned elite of the ancient world also brings to mind Plato, and his Allegory of the Cave.

However, McDonnell also contends that the holographic model is consistent with "the essential tenets of the Judeo-Christian stream of thought."<sup>45</sup> For McDonnell, both perspectives view our perceived reality as the "emanation of an omnipotent and omniscient divinity who is completely unknowable in his primary state of being."<sup>46</sup> McDonnell also validates the connection between the holographic model and the Qabalah, stating, "[t]he Absolute at rest in infinity is a concept straight out of Hebrew mystical philosophy."<sup>47</sup> Again, McDonnell's description of the Absolute seems similar to the Qabalistic concept of the Ain Soph.

Specifically, "the Christian concept of the Trinity shines through" in McDonnell's conception of the Absolute. McDonnell's "description of energy totally at rest, in infinity fits the Christian metaphysical concept of the Father while the infinite self-conscious resident in that energy providing the motive force of will to bring a portion of that energy into motion to create reality corresponds with the Son."<sup>48</sup> According to McDonnell, "[t]his is so because in order to attain self-consciousness, the consciousness of the Absolute must project a hologram of itself and then perceive it."<sup>49</sup> That projected hologram, McDonnell contends, "is a mirror image of the Absolute in infinity, still exists outside time and space, but is one step removed from the Absolute and is the actual agent of all creation (all reality)."<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, McDonnell determined that the "eternal thought or concept of self which results from this self-consciousness serves the Absolute as the model around which the evolution of time-space revolves to ultimately attain a reflection of and union with Him."<sup>51</sup> For McDonnell, that "thought model, which perfectly reflects the essence or 'spirit' of the Absolute fits the Christian metaphysical description of the Holy Spirit."<sup>52</sup> Thus, one may observe the reflection of the Holy Trinity in the holographic model. Therefore, Bohm's holographic model is not only consistent with Christian theology, but actually bolsters trinitarian doctrine from a scientific standpoint.

Finally, McDonnell likens the holographic conception of the universe to the "stylized laby-

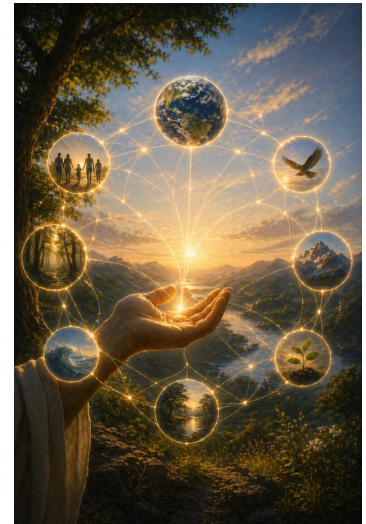
rinth once popular in the Hellenic [sic] world, the spiralized version of the Hebrew Tree of Life or its Hindu counterpart, or the Chinese Spiral Through The Fourfold Powers..." before concluding that the "ultimate meaning" of those symbols "is the same".<sup>53</sup> Thus, McDonnell determines that "[m]ystics the world over, it seems, have perceived the universal hologram in the same spiral form and have incorporated that **intuitive knowledge** in their religious writings from antiquity to the present."<sup>54</sup> (emphasis added). Thus, McDonnell's work seems to substantially validate the ideas put forth by Plato, Guénon and Bohm in describing the nature of the universe and of our reality.

### Conclusions

Physicist David Bohm's Holographic Universe model provides a scientific framework for many of Plato's concepts. For instance, Bohm's theory that our reality unfolds from the Implicate Order to the Explicate Order echoes Plato's theory regarding the World of Forms and the World of Appearances. Both Bohm and Plato also recognize the illusory nature of our reality, Plato through his Allegory of the Cave, and Bohm through his Holographic Universe model.

Thus, one can observe the similarities in thought between two eminent theorists whose conceptions of our world were separated by millennia.

Additionally, Plato's "Primordial Idea" is reminiscent of the "Primordial Tradition" described by René Guénon and his Traditionalist School of spiritual philosophy. Likewise, Bohm's Holographic



The Living Web: All Things Interconnected

"Thus, one may observe the similarities in thought between two eminent theorists whose conceptions of our world were separated by millennia."

**"One Magical Movement From Kether To Malkuth"<sup>1</sup>: The Holographic Nature of Our Reality ... Continued from Page 37**

Universe model supports Guénon's conception of the universe as proceeding from the highest principle of unity to the lowest principle of multiplicity. Guénon's description of that cyclical process also recalls the idea of humanity's involution into matter, and our evolution back towards the highest spiritual principle; a concept that is reflected in the Hindu sutras, Ancient Egyptian religion, Greek mythology, and Plato's story of Atlantis, as well as Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Or, in a qabalistic context, our reality proceeds in "one magical movement" from the absolute unity of Kether, to the manifested multiplicity of Malkuth, as David Bowie observed in *Station to Station*.

Most surprisingly, perhaps, no less an institution than the United States military has endorsed Bohm's Holographic Universe model through its "Gateway Process", a method of expanding human consciousness to transcend our space-time dimension. Lieutenant Commander Wayne McDonnell's analysis of that process describes our universe as a veritable vibratory ocean permeated by consciousness. McDonnell's conclusion that humans are capable of projecting their consciousness into higher dimensions also provides a scientific framework for explaining various "supernatural" phenomena such as astral projection while remaining consistent with the essential tenets of Judeo-Christian theology. Significantly, McDonnell uses the analogy of Indra's Net to illustrate our reality's holographic nature, even identifying it as the "classic description of the uni-

versal hologram"<sup>55</sup>.

Therefore, the Sages of the Ancient World, such as Plato and his Hindu counterparts, shared virtually the same conception of our reality as some contemporary physicists like David Bohm and Itzhak Bentov. Those similarities also underscore the validity of intuitive knowledge, even if it has fallen out of favor in this increasingly technocratic and materialistic post-modern era. By cultivating intuitive knowledge through techniques employed by the ancient sages, as well as by the U.S. Military's Gateway process, we may be able to discover more about our reality by looking deeply within ourselves than we can by blindly following computer generated models, or from algorithms formulated by artificial intelligence. Thus, the jewels in Indra's Net still shine brightly, lighting our way through the Kali Yuga. ✚

**Casey Lowe, IV<sup>o</sup>**

1 Bowie, David. "Station to Station." *Station to Station*. Track One (1), 4:12-4:22. RCA, 1976.

2 Plato. *Phaedrus* (249b). Translated by R. Hackforth. Edited by E. Hamilton and H. Cairns. Princeton University Press, 1961, p. 496.

3 *Ibid.*, *Republic* (7.518c), pp. 750-751.

4 Lings, Martin and Minnaar, Clinton. *The Underlying Religion: An Introduction to the Perennial Philosophy*. World Wisdom, 2007, p. xii.

5-6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*, xii-xiii.

8 Guénon, René. *Perspectives on Initiation*. Sophia Perennis, 2001, p. 48.

9 Guénon, René. *Traditional Forms & Cosmic Cycles*. Sophia Perennis, 2004, p. 5.

10 Guénon, René. *The Crisis of the Modern World*. Sophia Perennis, 2004, p. 7.

11—14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*, 7-8.

16 *Ibid.*, 8.

17 Bowie, David. "Station to Station." *Station to Station*. Track One (1), 4:12-4:22. RCA, 1976.

18 *Infinite Potential*. Howard, Paul. Counter-Point Films, 2020.

19 *Ibid.*

20 Talbot, Michael. *The Holographic Universe*. HarperCollins, 1991, pp. 46-47.

21-23 *Ibid.*

24 McDonnell, Wayne M. "Analysis and Assessment of Gateway Process". U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, 1983, p.1. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP96-00788R001700210016-5.pdf> and from [https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/2060119\\_5/6-full-report.pdf](https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/2060119_5/6-full-report.pdf).

25 *Ibid.*, 7.

26-28 *Ibid.*

29 Bentov, Itzhak. *A Brief Tour of Higher Consciousness: A Cosmic Book on the Mechanics of Creation*. Destiny Books, 2000, p. 15.

30 McDonnell, *supra*, "Analysis and Assessment of Gateway Process", p. 11.

31-35 *Ibid.*

36 Myer, Isaac. *Qabbalah: The Philosophical Writings of Solomon ben Yehuda Ibn Gebriel or Avicebron, and their Connection with the Hebrew Qabbalah and Sepher Zohar*. Ktav Publishing House, 1970, pp. 253-255.

37 McDonnell, *supra*, "Analysis and Assessment of Gateway Process", p. 11.

38 Encausse, Gerard ("Papus"). *The Qabbalah*. Thorsons Publishers Limited, 1977, p. 233.

39 McDonnell, *supra*, "Analysis and Assessment of Gateway Process", p. 11.

40-43 *Ibid.*

43 *Ibid.*, 24.

44—50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*, 24-25.

52 *Ibid.*, 25.

53—54 *Ibid.*

55 *Ibid.*, 24.



**From Illusion to Illumination: The Passage to True Reality**

"According to Bohm, a vast and more primary level of reality exists that generates all of the objects and appearances of our physical world in much the same way that a piece of holographic film generates a hologram."



## Evagrius Ponticus and the Desert Fathers ...

Continued from Page 33

but ushering in a paradox: as the faith gained imperial favor, its radical edge dulled. The church's new alliance with Rome, cemented by the Council of Nicaea (325 CE), birthed a tension that drove ascetics like Anthony the Great (c. 251–356) to the desert. Athanasius' *Life of Anthony* details how Anthony, hearing Matthew 19:21 ("sell all you have"), sold his estate circa 270 CE, retreating first to a tomb near his village, then to a fortress by the Red Sea. Palladius notes, "His face bore a radiance as if the desert itself had sanctified him" (*Historia Lausiaca*). Earlier, Paul of Thebes (c. 227–341) fled persecution to a cave, surviving on dates and spring water, while Hilarion (c. 291–371) spread this ethos to Palestine, building a cell near Gaza.

Evagrius Ponticus entered this world shaped by such figures. Born in Pontus around 345, he was educated under Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, key Cappadocian Fathers who bridged Nicene theology with Hellenistic thought. Basil extolled monastic withdrawal, while Gregory praised intellectual rigor, both strongly influencing Evagrius' early career as a deacon in Constantinople. Pausing briefly in Jerusalem in 382, he went to Nitria in Egypt by 383. There, under Macarius of Egypt, a disciple of Anthony, he joined a thriving monastic network. Nitria housed thousands, while Kellia and Scetis offered solitude. Evagrius settled in Scetis by 385, living in a cell for 14 years.

## 2: Philosophical Foundations—Plato's Legacy in Early Christianity and Evagrius

Evagrius' theology rests on Plato's philosophical edifice,

filtered through early Christian thinkers into a Christianized mysticism. Plato's *Republic* presents the cave allegory: the soul ascends from sensory illusion to the Form of the Good, a blueprint for Evagrius' *Kephalaia Gnostika*, where the soul, fallen from unity with God, climbs back through purification. The *Phaedo* frames the body as a prison, liberation achieved by philosophy. Evagrius echoes this in the *Praktikos*, where asceticism frees the *nous* for divine contemplation. The *Symposium* traces love's ascent to the Beautiful, paralleling Evagrius' triadic path: *praktikē* (purification), *physikē* (natural contemplation), and *theologia* (union with God). The *Phaedrus* depicts the soul as a charioteer mastering two horses—reason over passion—a model for Evagrius' *logismoi*. The *Timaeus* posits a demiurge ordering chaos, the soul mirroring cosmic harmony, reflected in Evagrius' *physikē*. The *Meno* ties knowledge to recollection of eternal truths, a concept Evagrius applies to *gnosis*. The *Philebus* contrasts bodily pleasure with wisdom's purity, reinforcing his ascetic ethos.

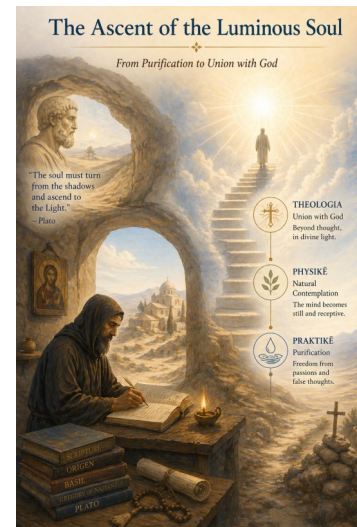
Early Christian thinkers mediated this legacy. Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 BCE–50 CE), a Hellenistic Jew, blended Plato with Scripture: in *De Opificio Mundi*, he aligns the *Timaeus*'s cosmos with Genesis, a precursor to Evagrius' creation theology. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215) saw Plato as a divine pedagogue. In *Stromata*, he cites the *Phaedo* to argue philosophy purifies the soul for faith, while in *Protrepticus* he links the *Republic*'s Good to Christ, a foundation for Evagrius' *nous*. Origen (c. 184–253), Evagrius' chief influence, systematized this. In *De Principiis*, he posits

pre-existent souls falling from God, ascending through purification, a concept straight from the *Phaedo*. His *Commentary on John* interprets Scripture as a Platonic ascent from literal to spiritual, mirrored in Evagrius' *Gnostikos*. Origen's apophaticism—God beyond grasp—echoes the *Republic*'s Good, shaping *On Prayer*: "Prayer is the mind's ascent to God, a shedding of all thought".

The Cappadocians refined this further. Basil's *Hexaemeron* ties the *Timaeus* to creation, while Gregory of Nazianzus' *Oration 27* praises contemplation over sensory distraction. Both of these concept feed into Evagrius' *physikē* and *theologia*. Neoplatonism, via Plotinus' *Enneads*—the soul's return to the One—amplified this. The Desert Fathers embodied it: *hesychia* mirrors the *Republic*'s harmony (*Apophthegmata*); Anthony's demons recall the *Phaedrus* (*Life of Anthony*); Moses' self-knowledge (*Apophthegmata*) mirrors the *Meno*. Their rejection of the material, honed by Macarius, cemented Plato's influence on Evagrius.

## 3: Mystical Theology

Evagrius' mystical theology is a sophisticated tapestry, weaving Plato's philosophical legacy with the practical asceticism of the Desert Fathers into a distinctly Christian framework of spiritual ascent. At its core lies *apatheia*, a state of dispassion that Evagrius deems essential for *gnosis* (spiritual knowledge), drawing from Stoic equanimity but profoundly rooted in Plato's *Phaedo*, where the soul's purity is achieved by detachment from bodily desires. In his *Praktikos*, he writes, "*Apatheia* is the health of the soul," a concept echoing



From Shadow to Light: The Ladder of Divine Ascent

"Their legacy—bridging Plato's eternal quest to the modern soul—invites us to peel back the layers of illusion, to stand before the infinite with a mind made radiant by discipline and grace."



## Evagrius Ponticus and the Desert Fathers ...

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Clement's *Stromata*, where dispassion prepares the mind for divine illumination. This state is not mere apathy but a dynamic stillness, enabling the *nous*, the rational faculty Plato elevates in the *Republic*, to transcend the material and engage the divine.

Evagrius structures this ascent in a triadic progression, detailed across his works, which mirrors Plato's *Symposium* and Origen's stages of purification (*De Principiis*). *Praktikē*, the first stage, involves combating the passions through ascetic discipline—fasting, vigils, and manual labor—reflecting the *Phaedrus*'s chariot-reiner in unruly horses (*Praktikos*). *Physikē*, the second, entails contemplation of God's presence in creation, akin to the *Timaeus*'s vision of cosmic order, where the soul discerns divine logos in nature (*Gnostikos*). *Theologia*, the pinnacle, achieves unmediated union with God, an apophatic state Evagrius describes as “the knowledge of the Holy Trinity” (*Kephalaia Gnostika*), resonating with Plotinus' return to the One (*Enneads*) but grounded in Cappadocian Trinitarianism (*Basil, On the Holy Spirit*).

Prayer is the soul's lifeline in this ascent, evolving from vocal supplications to *proseuchē akataplēktos*, a pure, imageless communion where the *nous* beholds God directly (*On Prayer*).

Evagrius writes, “If you pray truly, you will find peace”, urging *nepsis* (watchfulness) to guard against distractions, a practice he learned from

Macarius' silent vigils (*Homilies*) and Anthony's radiant solitude (*Life of Anthony*). This apophatic approach, denying all concepts to grasp God's essence, aligns with Plato's ineffable Good (*Republic*), Origen's unknowable God (*Contra Celsum*), and Clement's call to “strip the mind” (*Stromata*). Evagrius' *Chapters on Prayer* warn against “imaginings,” reflecting the *Phaedo*'s rejection of sensory illusion, enriched by desert experience.

Central to his theology is the doctrine of *logismoi*, the eight intrusive thoughts: gluttony, lust, avarice, sadness, anger, acedia, vainglory, and pride (*Praktikos*). This psychological map, later distilled into the Seven Deadly Sins by Cassian (*Institutes*), draws from Plato's *Phaedrus*, where passion's horses disrupt reason, and the *Republic*'s tripartite soul of appetite, spirit, and intellect, analyzed with Origen's depth (*Commentary on Matthew*). Evagrius saw these as demonic assaults, a desert insight from Anthony's battles (*Life of Anthony*). Acedia, the “noonday demon,” is particularly vivid: “It makes the sun seem slow, the day endless” (*Praktikos*), a lethargy echoing the *Phaedo*'s bodily drag. He prescribes prayer, psalmody, and perseverance, all methods honed by the Fathers' resilience (*Apophthegmata*). This framework blends Platonic order with Christian combat, a testament to Evagrius' synthesis.

### 4: The Desert Fathers as Mentors

The Desert Fathers were not mere contemporaries but Evagrius' spiritual crucible, their raw, unadorned mysticism shaping his theoretical edifice. Their creed centered on *hesychia*, a stillness transcending

silence, which Abba Isaac described to Cassian: “We pray truly when we forget we pray” (*Conferences*). This surrender finds a mirror in the harmony from Plato's *Republic*, which Evagrius reframed as *theologia*. Humility and detachment were their armor: Pambo lived on bread and water, weaving baskets in prayer (*Historia Lausiaca*, embodying the *Philebus*'s rejection of pleasure. Syncletica of Alexandria taught, “Hunger binds the body's chains” (*Vita Syncleticae*), her fasts a mirror to the *Phaedo*'s discipline. Macarius of Egypt, Evagrius' mentor, ate once weekly (*Homilies*), his vigils piercing the night, all practices Evagrius adopted in Scetis (*Praktikos*).

The asceticism of the Desert Fathers was truly rigorous. Fasting stretched days. Arsenius subsisted on minimal bread, while sleep was curtailed by all-night vigils, as Abba Agathon attested: “I keep watch to guard my soul” (*Apophthegmata*). The Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me”, was utilized as a mantra refined in the *Philokalia*: “Let Jesus' name ride your breath, and peace descends” (*Theoliptos*). Paired with Psalm 70:1—“Make haste, O God, to deliver me”—as Cassian records (*Conferences*), it built a ladder to *hesychia*, echoing the *Phaedrus*'s disciplined ascent. Evagrius internalized this, noting in *On Prayer*, “Short, frequent prayer keeps the mind alert.”

Spiritual combat defined their lives, directly feeding Evagrius' *logismoi*. Anthony laughed at demons masquerading as beasts (*Life of Anthony*), recounting, “I saw them as weak, for Christ is my strength”. Macarius envisioned the heart as “a



The Pilgrim's Ascent: From Discipline to Divine Light

“Evagrius' mystical theology is a sophisticated tapestry, weaving Plato's philosophical legacy with the practical asceticism of the Desert Fathers into a distinctly Christian framework of spiritual ascent.”





## Evagrius Ponticus and the Desert Fathers ...

Continued from Page 40

tomb of lurking spir-its” (*Homilies*), urging vigilance. Evagrius systematized this in *Praktikos*. Abba Moses faced bandits yet disarmed them with kindness (*Apophthegmata*), a triumph over anger that Evagrius cataloged. Their encounters, often mythic projections of inner turmoil, align with Plato’s dualism, with spirit wrestling matter (*Phaedo*), yet always grounded in Christian redemption. Guidance from abbas was terse but profound: Poemen advised, “Cling to the good, not your measure” (*Apophthegmata*), while Sisoës wept over sin, saying, “I fall daily” (*Apophthegmata*). These shards of wisdom, rooted in desert experience, anchored Evagrius’ Platonic ideals in praxis, shaping his *nepsis* and contemplative focus.

### 5: Legacy and Influence

Evagrius’ legacy, though marred by his posthumous condemnation for Origenism at the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553 CE), endures as a cornerstone of Christian mysticism, profoundly influenced by the Desert Fathers’ practices and Plato’s philosophy. His works faced scrutiny, for example his *Kephalaia Gnostika* was deemed heretical for its Origenist cosmology (*Canon 1*, Council of Constantinople II). Nonetheless his practical writings survived, influencing key figures. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580–662) refined Evagrius’ triadic ascent in *Chapters on Love*, tempering Origenist speculation with orthodoxy: “Love unites the soul to

God,” a nod to *theologia*. John Climacus’ *Ladder of Divine Ascent* (Step 27) owes its structure to Evagrius’ stages, emphasizing *hesychia*: “Stillness is the beginning of purification”. Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), in the hesychast tradition, echoed Evagrius’ prayer in *Triads*, rooted in the Fathers’ Jesus Prayer.

The Desert Fathers’ influence radiated through Evagrius’ mediation. Their sayings, compiled in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, became the spiritual bedrock of the *Philokalia* (compiled 1782), a treasury of Eastern Orthodox contemplation. Abba Poemen’s aphorisms guided monks like

Evagrius, while Anthony’s radiance inspired countless hermits (*Philokalia*, Nicephorus, *On Watchfulness*). Palladius notes Scetis’ vibrancy (*Historia Lausiaca*), a legacy preserved in these texts. Westward, John Cassian adapted their wisdom in *Institutes* and *Conferences*, introducing *logismoi* as “evil thoughts” to Gaul’s monasteries, shaping Benedictine spirituality (*Rule of St. Benedict*).

Their Platonic influences—soul over body (*Phaedo*), ascent to eternity (*Symposium*)—persist across centuries. Evagrius’ *apatheia* influenced medieval mystics like Pseudo-Dionysius (*Mystical Theology*), whose apophaticism traces to Plato via Origen. The Fathers’ *hesychia* resurfaced in 14th-century Mount Athos, where hesychasts like Gregory Palamas linked it to the uncreated light of Tabor, a vision Evagrius foresaw in *theologia*.

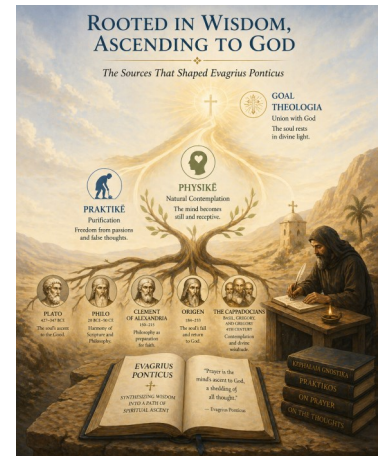
### 6: Consciousness as the Root of All

Evagrius’ synthesis of Platonic philosophy, early Christian

theology, and the Desert Fathers’ asceticism does not stand in isolation; it reverberates across diverse traditions, suggesting a shared human capacity for a radical, radiant awareness that transcends cultural boundaries. This convergence—rooted in the stripping away of illusion to reveal a luminous, unconditioned consciousness—echoes Evagrius’ *theologia* and the Fathers’ *hesychia*, reflecting a universal impulse glimpsed in Stoicism, Vedanta, Sufism, and Zen Buddhism.

In Stoicism, this awareness manifests as *apatheia*, a state of inner tranquility akin to Evagrius’ dispassion. Epictetus (c. 50–135 CE), in his *Enchiridion*, writes, “Demand not that events happen as you wish, but wish them to happen as they do, and you will be at peace”—a call to master passions that parallels the *Praktikos*. Seneca’s *Letters to Lucilius* extols the wise man’s detachment, “free from the perturbations of the mind,” mirroring Plato’s *Phaedo* and the Fathers’ rejection of worldly ties (*Apophthegmata*). Marcus Aurelius’ *Meditationes* urges focus on the “ruling faculty,” akin to Evagrius’ *nous*, aligning with the *Republic*’s reason. While Stoicism lacks the desert’s theistic union, its disciplined stillness prefigures Evagrius’ path.

Vedanta, the philosophical core of Hinduism, offers a parallel in *jnana yoga*, the path of knowledge that strips away ego to reveal the unity of *atman* (self) and *brahman* (ultimate reality). The *Mundaka Upanishad* declares, “By the higher knowledge, the wise realize the imperishable,” a process akin to *physikē* and *theologia* (*Gnostikos*). Shankaracharya’s (c. 788–820 CE) *Vivekachudamani* teaches, “Detach from the unreal, and the real shines



Roots of Wisdom, Path of Ascent

“Prayer is the mind’s ascent to God, a shedding of all thought.”

### Evagrius Ponticus and the Desert Fathers ...

Continued from Page 41

forth,” echoing Plato’s cave and Origen’s ascent (*De Principiis*). The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* likens this to “a man awakening from a dream,” paralleling Evagrius’ *nepsis* and Anthony’s clarity. Unlike *theosis*, Vedanta’s non-theistic oneness underscores a cultural inflection of the same radical awareness.

Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, mirrors this in *fana*, the annihilation of self in God.

Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273), in his *Masnavi*, writes, “Die before you die, and find the Beloved,” a dissolution akin to Plotinus’ One and Evagrius’ imageless prayer. Ibn Arabi (1165–1240) resonated this with *wahdat al-wujud* (the unity of existence), in *Fusus al-Hikam*, asserting “He who knows himself knows his Lord,” echoing the *Meno*’s self-knowledge. Sufi practices like *dhikr*—repetitive remembrance of God—resemble the Jesus Prayer, cultivating a stillness akin to *hesychia*. The ecstatic union of *fana*, though theistic like *theosis*, shares the desert’s radiant solitude.

Zen Buddhism provides a striking example, rooted in Bodhidharma’s arrival in China (5th century) and refined by Dōgen (1200–1253). *Zazen* is the practice of silent sitting, which cultivates a naturally arising awareness, as Dōgen’s *Fukanzazengi* instructs: “Drop off body and mind,” paralleling *apatheia* (*Praktikos*) and Syncretica’s detachment (*Vita Syncreticae*). The *Lankavatara Sutra* describes “a turning-about in the deepest seat of consciousness,” akin to the *nous* beholding truth (*On Prayer*). Zen’s *śūnyatā* (emptiness)—form and void interpenetrating—resonates

with Plato’s Good and Plotinus’ unity. The practice of contemplation with a koan, such as “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” (*Gateless Gate*, Case 1), shocks the mind beyond concepts, akin to Plato’s dialectical leap. The Jesus Prayer’s breath has resonance in *zazen*’s basic practice of observing the breath, both peeling delusion to reveal what shines.

This convergence—from Scetis’ cells to Kyoto’s zendos—underscores a timeless truth: beneath layers of conditioning lies a consciousness, radiant and unadorned, accessed through discipline and surrender. Evagrius’ *logismoi* and Buddhist *kleshas* (defilements) map out obstacles such as passion and ignorance, while *nepsis* and mindfulness restore clarity, a shared archetype rooted in Plato’s eternal quest.

#### Conclusion

Evagrius Ponticus stands as a pivotal figure in the tapestry of human spiritual endeavor, his theology a luminous thread that binds the philosophical richness of Plato, the transformative silence of the Desert Fathers, and the enduring echoes of a universal quest for the infinite.

Rooted in Plato’s vision—where the soul ascends from the cave’s shadows to the Form of the Good, Evagrius crafted a triadic path that wove the *Phaedo*’s liberation and the *Symposium*’s ascent into a Christian mysticism, mediated by Origen’s apophatic depth and Clement’s preparatory wisdom. The Desert Fathers, his living mentors, forged this in the crucible of Nitria and Scetis, their *hesychia*—captured in Isaac’s “forgetting prayer” and relentless combat with *logismoi* grounding his system in the stark reality of sand

and solitude. From Anthony’s radiant visage to Macarius’ vigilant heart, they offered Evagrius not just inspiration but a praxis that transformed Platonic ideals into a lived theology.

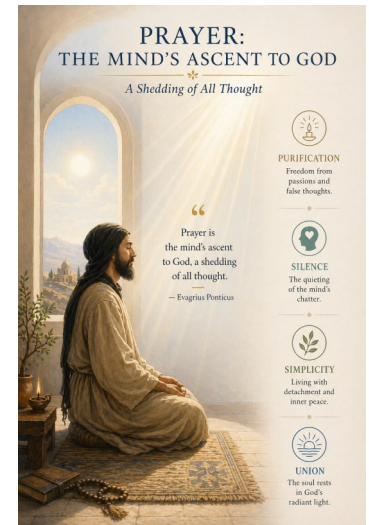
This synthesis, far from a historical relic, ripples outward, resonating in Maximus’ love (*Chapters on Love*, III.56), Climacus’ ladder (*Ladder*, Step 27), and Palamas’ light (*Triads*, III.1.22), while the Fathers’ sayings endure in the *Philokalia*’s timeless counsel. Yet its reach extends further, touching Stoicism’s calm (*Enchiridion*, Ch. 2), Vedanta’s unity (*Mundaka*

*Upanishad*, I.2.7), Sufism’s dissolution (*Masnavi*, I.3050), and Zen’s awakening (*Fukanzazengi*).

Each tradition, in its own tongue, speaks to a shared archetype—a consciousness that shines when unadorned, as Evagrius glimpsed in *proseuchē akataplēktos* (*On Prayer*, Ch. 70) and the Fathers intuited in their desert stillness. This is no mere convergence of ideas but a testament to the human spirit’s persistent longing, kindled in the dark—whether by Egypt’s sun-scorched sands, a Stoic’s disciplined mind, a Sufi’s ecstatic chant, or a zendo’s quiet breath.

Evagrius and the Desert Fathers, then, offer more than a chapter in Christian history; they illuminate a perennial truth. Their legacy-bridging Plato’s eternal quest to the modern soul—invites us to peel back the layers of illusion, to stand before the infinite with a mind made radiant by discipline and grace. In their fusion of thought and practice, we find not an end, but a beginning: a call to ascend. ✠

Gregory Peters, V<sup>o</sup>



Sacred Stillness: The Prayer of the Silent Mind

“Beneath layers of conditioning lies a consciousness, radiant and unadorned, accessed through discipline and surrender.”

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**The Golden Light of Brotherhood: 25 Years of Rosicrucian Illumination** By R.W. Ed Fentum, IX<sup>o</sup>**Fratres,**

My introduction to Rosicrucianism began as a charter member of California College on April 10th 1994 and was privileged to serve as Exponent in 2000. It was therefore a particular honour, at the invitation of R. W. Bruce Pruitt, to serve as the Charter Exponent of Golden State College in 2001. In 2026, we will celebrate 25 years. Golden State College is one of the high-

ly respected Masonic organizations of which it is my privilege to be a member.

The name "Golden State College" I chose with care and conviction—not only as a tribute to California, but for its alchemical and spiritual resonance. Within esoteric, alchemical, and spiritual traditions, gold is revered as the highest metal, symbolizing divine consciousness, perfection, immortality, and the radiant energy of the sun. It signifies the perfected soul—incorruptible, pure, and enlightened—refined through spiritual transmutation. Gold embodies the "riches of Spirit" (divine wisdom), amplifies subtle energies, and stands as a powerful emblem of eternal, steadfast love. Attributes found in Rosicrucianism.

Over the years, the opportunity to meet, study with, and learn from scholarly Rosicrucian Fraters has been profoundly enriching and has exerted a lasting influence on my life. In this context, it is only fitting to offer heartfelt and unreserved congratulations to our Secretary, R. W. Joseph Dongo who has consistently demonstrated exemplary dedication and efficiency, and who, in my view, has been the finest Secretary we have had in these 25 years.

Thank you all for your continued commitment and for the light you bring to our shared work. ✚

Ed Fentum, IX<sup>o</sup>**The Customs of the Hermetic Order: Their Significance and Application for Personal Growth**  
By Worthy Luis Montero, IV<sup>o</sup> et Philologus Philosophus

This paper explores the ancient customs of the Hermetic Order and their relevance in the modern world, particularly as tools for personal growth and spiritual development. Rooted in the teachings of Hermes Trismegistus, Hermeticism is a philosophical and mystical system that emphasizes universal laws governing both material and spiritual realms. By examining the seven Hermetic Principles and the ritual customs practiced by initiates of the Order, we reveal how these ancient wisdom traditions can be integrated into contemporary daily life for transformation, mindfulness, and inner harmony.

**Introduction**

The Hermetic Order refers to various esoteric schools and secret societies, including the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which uphold the spiritual philosophy known as Hermeticism. Based on teachings attributed to the mythic figure Hermes Trismegistus—a fusion of the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth—this body of work comprises texts such as the Corpus Hermeticum, Asclepius, and The Kybalion. These writings emphasize the interconnectedness of all things, the divine nature of the human soul, and the possibility of spiritual ascent through knowledge and inner transformation.

Hermetic customs are not relics of an outdated mysticism; rather, they are potent practices that—when applied correctly—offer practical guidance for living a life aligned with cosmic law. This paper focuses on the core principles of Hermeticism, the ritual customs associated with the Hermetic Order, and how these



As Within, So Without:  
The Path of Inner Alignment

*"The customs of the Hermetic Order are more than ancient rituals—they are gateways to self-awareness, transformation, and alignment with universal truths. Through the disciplined application of its principles, one can develop emotional resilience, mental clarity, and spiritual insight."*



## The Customs of the Hermetic Order: Their Significance and Application for Personal Growth ...

Continued from Page 43

ancient practices can be consciously applied to modern life for personal development and enlightenment.

### The Seven Hermetic Principles

| The Seven Hermetic Principles                     |                           |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                                   | <b>Mentalism</b>          |
| All is Mind; the Universe is Mental.              |                           |
|                                                   | <b>Correspondence</b>     |
| As above, so below; patterns repeat.              |                           |
|                                                   | <b>Vibration</b>          |
| Everything vibrates and moves.                    |                           |
|                                                   | <b>Polarity</b>           |
| Opposites are the same in different degrees.      |                           |
|                                                   | <b>Rhythm</b>             |
| Everything flows in and out.                      |                           |
|                                                   | <b>Cause &amp; Effect</b> |
| Every cause has its effect.                       |                           |
|                                                   | <b>Gender</b>             |
| Gender exists in everything; balance of energies. |                           |

The Kybalion, a foundational Hermetic text published in 1908 by three anonymous initiates, outlines seven universal principles that form the core of Hermetic philosophy. These are not simply metaphysical curiosities; they are laws that govern both inner and outer experience.

#### 1. The Principle of Mentalism

“The All is Mind; the Universe is Mental.”

Reality begins in thought. According to this principle, the universe itself is a mental creation of the All—an infinite, unknowable source. We co-create our lives through conscious and unconscious thought patterns.

#### 2. The Principle of Correspondence

“As above, so below; as within, so without.”

This law highlights the mirrored relationship between different planes of existence: spiritual, mental, and physical. By mastering the internal world, we influence the external.

#### 3. The Principle of Vibration

“Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates.”

Every being and object exists at a frequency. Emotions,

sponsibility for our actions, thoughts, and the experiences they generate.

#### 7. The Principle of Gender

“Gender is in everything; everything has its masculine and feminine principles.”

This principle refers not just to biological sex, but to the masculine (active) and feminine (receptive) energies within all beings. True mastery comes from balancing these forces.

### Hermetic Customs and Ritual Practice

Hermetic initiates used structured rituals to internalize the above principles and advance spiritually. Common customs within Hermetic Orders include:

- **Theurgy:** Sacred ceremonial practices intended to invoke divine energies or archetypes for transformation. These rituals often incorporate symbols, sacred geometry, and guided meditations aligned with planetary forces.

- **Meditative Visualization:** Practitioners visualize symbols like the Caduceus or the Rose Cross, aligning internal energies with cosmic patterns.

- **Purification Practices:** Observing dietary discipline (often vegetarian), abstaining from toxic substances, and practicing mental purity are emphasized. These customs are tied to the ancient Egyptian priesthood, which influenced Hermetic tradition through ascetic purity.

- **Daily Alignment:** Many Hermetic practitioners organize their daily lives around planetary hours, astrological transits, or seasonal equinoxes and solstices. This harmonizes personal action with cosmic timing.

- **Initiatory Progression:** Similar to Freemasonry, Hermetic Orders guide initiates through degrees or grades of understanding. Each degree corresponds to deeper internal transformation, symbolized by alchemical elements or sephiroth on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

Applying Hermetic Principles



The Seven Principles: A Blueprint for Inner Mastery

“Hermetic customs are not relics of an outdated mysticism; rather, they are potent practices that—when applied correctly—offer practical guidance for living a life aligned with cosmic law.”





## The Customs of the Hermetic Order: Their Significance and Application for Personal Growth ... Continued from Page 44

for Personal Good

The customs and teachings of the Hermetic Order are not reserved solely for initiates of esoteric societies. Anyone can apply them to improve their life and well-being.

- **Mental Transmutation (Mentalism):** By changing your thoughts, you change your reality. Practicing daily affirmations, journaling, or mindfulness helps reprogram subconscious patterns.

- **Balance of Emotion (Polarity):** Understanding that every emotional state has an opposite helps us “swing the pendulum” toward higher emotional frequencies. This can aid in managing depression, anger, or fear.

- **Ritualized Living (Rhythm and Correspondence):** Following lunar cycles, performing morning meditations at sunrise, or setting intentions during equinoxes help you live in sync with natural laws.

- **Intentional Diet and Fasting:** Many Hermetic practitioners follow plant-based diets and engage in ritual fasting as a method to cleanse the body and elevate consciousness. These practices are useful for physical health and mental clarity.

- **Creative Balance (Gender):** Engaging both analytical and creative tasks (such as balancing logic and intuition, or discipline and spontaneity) fosters harmony and productivity.

- **Accountability and Responsibility (Cause and Effect):** Hermeticism teaches that we are never victims of circumstance but creators of our reality. Practicing accountability shifts us from blame to empowerment.

### Conclusion

The customs of the Hermetic Order are more than ancient rituals—they are gateways to self-awareness, transformation, and alignment with universal truths. Through the disciplined application of its principles, one can develop emotional re-

silience, mental clarity, and spiritual insight. Whether through sacred rituals or quiet contemplation, Hermetic customs guide us toward becoming co-creators with the cosmos. In a world often consumed by distraction and materialism, these practices invite us to return to the center of our being—to the mind, the spirit, and the truth hidden in plain sight. ✚

**Luis Montero, IV<sup>o</sup>**

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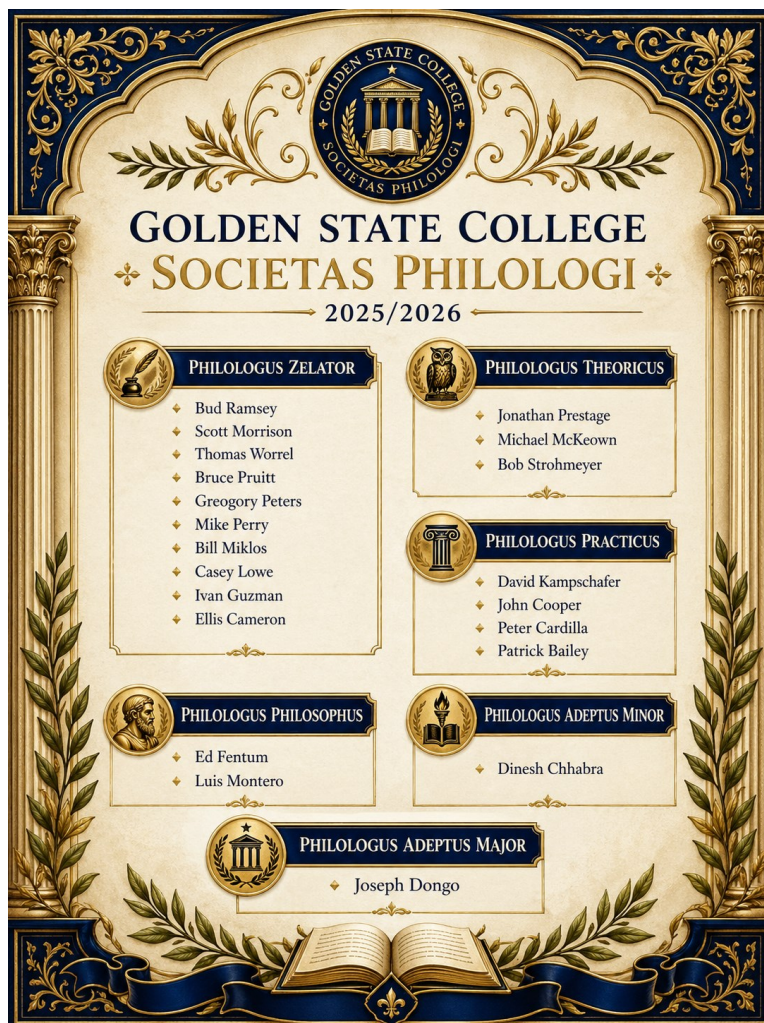
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Golden State College – Societas Philologi

2025-2026



We are on the Web!

<https://sricf.org/golden-state/>

**Golden State College**  
Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis  
The Northern California College of SRICF

**Golden State College—SRICF**  
1123 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: 916-776-6440  
Email: Joe@JosephDongo.com



**Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis** — Encyclopedic Entry  
By RW Frater David Lindez IX°, KGC  
Grand Archivist, SRICF High Council

The Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis is a Rosicrucian Society based in the United States of America extending from its formation of a Grand High Council on April 21st, 1880 and its official consecration on September 21, 1880, by three Colleges chartered by the Societas Rosicruciana in Scotia.[1] High Grade Christian Freemasons in the United States in search of the Classical Rosicrucian Society for Masons in the United Kingdom became interested in organizing a

similar body in the United States and did so under Scotland's authority (Societas Rosicruciana in Scotia) with the help of Most Worthy Charles Matier of the SRIS, as early as 1873[2]. This effort died out two years later under the care of R.W. Frater George S. Blackie VIII and was then re-chartered by the SRIS later again in 1878. Dr. Jonathon J. French[3] was a IX grade head of the Rosicrucian Society of the United States & opened the Matier Royal Provincial College with a charter from Lord Inverurie, Earl of Kincore and Supreme Magus of the

## Philologi Societas

Philologi Societas (Society of Scholars or Learned Men)

### Qualifications:

- Write an original research paper
- Write a philosophical essay or meditation
- Read a book on an esoteric subject and write and present a report and/or critique
- Arrange for a guest speaker (not a Frater of our College) to speak on a esoteric subject
- Create a work of art around an esoteric theme, present and discuss
- Create a PowerPoint presentation around an esoteric theme, and use it to present an overview
- Lead a practical demonstration such as creating a natal chart, various forms of Tarot divination, meditation exercises and the like. Can be participative or demonstrative
- Undertake a project for the college such as the construction of furnishings
- Etc...

## Secretary's Corner



orthy Fratres,

The Golden State College year ends June 30<sup>th</sup>, and a new year begins July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Your dues can be paid online at <https://gscsricf.org/pay-dues.html> or by check at the mailing address across.



Joseph Dongo, IX°  
Secretary



## ITEMS for SALE - UPDATED November 18, 2025

|                                                            |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| First & Second Order Jewel - Grades I thru IV (Green)      | \$20.00 ea  |
| Second Order Jewel - Grade V Thru VII (Gold)               | \$20.00 ea  |
| Third Order Jewel - Grade IX (Red w/miter)                 | \$20.00 ea  |
| Lapel Pins                                                 | \$ 5.00 ea  |
| First Order (grades 1-4) Rituals                           | \$ 10.00 ea |
| Second Order (grades 5-7) Rituals                          | \$ 10.00 ea |
| Guide to the Ceremonial, Version 3                         | \$10.00 ea  |
| Rosicrucian Neck Ties                                      | \$30.00 ea  |
| Manual of Supplemental Rituals                             | \$ 5.00 ea  |
| The Rose Petal (The 1883 Meyer rituals for the S.R.I.C.F.) | \$5.00 ea   |
| SRIS Study Course Part I (March 2015)                      | \$20.00 ea  |
| SRIS Study Course Part II (March 2017)                     | \$5.00 ea   |
| SRIS Grade Notes for Grades 1 through 7                    | \$5.00 ea   |
| The Art and Science of Alchemy & Lecture Guide             | \$40.00 ea  |
| Package of Grade notes for all 7 Grades                    | \$25.00 ea  |

SRIS. The college was named after Charles Fitzgerald Matier, the first Supreme Magus of SRIS who served in 1876. Harold Van Buren Voorhis insists that the Illinois College under Dr. French was never truly active, and it certainly was short-lived as Dr. French died an untimely death in 1879. Harold Voorhis also insisted that Frater Stodart Blackie's early charter in New York had been nothing more than an unsubstantiated rumor. It has since been established as historical fact.

In 1878 a group of senior U.S. Masons (Daniel Sutter, and Charles W. Parker) led by Charles E. Meyer (1839-1908) of Pennsylvania traveled to England and on July 25th, 1878 were initiated into the grade of Zelator at Yorkshire College at Sheffield[4]. They applied for a charter, but getting no response, turned to Scotland and received a charter from the college in Edinburgh in 1879. Scotland's Society is actually the oldest as Walter Spencer is recorded as having been initiated into the SRIS by

| Presentation # | Title                       | Tassel Color                |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1              | Philologus Zelator          | Plain Tam (black) no tassel |
| 2              | Philologus Theoricus        | Black                       |
| 3              | Philologus Practicus        | Yellow                      |
| 4              | Philologus Philosophus      | Blue                        |
| 5              | Philologus Adeptus Minor    | Red                         |
| 6              | Philologus Adeptus Major    | Purple                      |
| 7              | Philologus Adeptus Exemptus | White                       |

Worthy Frater John Smith, V° et Philologus Zelator  
V(ery)W(orthy) Frater John Smith, VII° et Philologus Zelator  
R(ight)W(orthy) Frater John Smith, VIII° et Philologus Zelator

Anthony Oneil Haye in 1857, and there are documents in the SRIS archives that show that both Robert Wentworth Little and William J. Hughan were initiated in 1866 & 1867 by Anthony O'Neal Haye, Magus Max, Ros. Soc. Scot. With H.H.M. Bainfathur signing as Secretary. The Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia[5] was formed in England in 1866 by Robert Wentworth Little. The SRIS later felt the need to charter the current SRIS on October 24, 1873.[6]

A second charter was granted by the SRIS for a college in New York, and Fratres from Philadelphia and New York met in Philadelphia on April 21, 1880 and formed a High Council, then known as the SRRCA or the Societas Rosicruciana Reipublica Confoedera America, was later changed to the Society of Rosicrucians in the USA by Most Worthy Frater Shryock in his capacity as Supreme Magus and then properly Latinized in 1934 by & at the suggestion of Dr. William Moseley Brown under the regime of Most Worthy Frater Hamilton. Brown composed the name (Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Foederatis) himself and submitted it on January 17th, 1934. The SRICF has operated continuously since its formation in the 19th Century, and is thriving today with an upsurge of young Masons being invited into its ranks with great enthusiasm and demonstrated scholarship.

Membership is by invitation only & predicated on regular mainstream Masonic affiliation as well as a profession of Christian faith. Membership was initially restricted to 36 members per College, but this was changed in 1908 by MW Thomas Shryock to 72 members per college. The See of the High Council is in Washington, D.C. The SRICF is in amity with the SRIS (Scotia) and the SRIA (Anglia) as well as the SRIC (Canada) and has helped the cause of Rosicruciana by empowering High Councils in their own sovereignty around the World. They are: the SRIL in Lusitania (Portugal), SRIG in Gallia (France) & the SRIR (Romania).

The society issues an annual journal known as Ad Lucem composed of academic articles on things related to Rosicrucianism & esoteric streams of Christian Mysteries. There is also an annual report, The Rosicrucian Fama. Many of the Colleges have their own individual organs[7] which are produced quarterly as well as annually. The governing body of the Society is known since 1911 (having dropped 'Grand' from its title) as The High Council which is composed of Fratres of the Third Order (IX and VIII), plus any College Celebrant not a member of the Third Order. The head of the Society is titled The Supreme Magus who was elected ad vitam up until circa 1991 when the constitution of the Society was changed to reflect that Supreme Magi are elected each triennium. Unlike the SRIA in England, a Chief Adept in the SRICF does not have regional powers, but rather is in charge of an individual College. Typically there is but one College per state, exceptions having been made for both New York and California due to their size and population.



Tam and Tassel of Philologi Societas