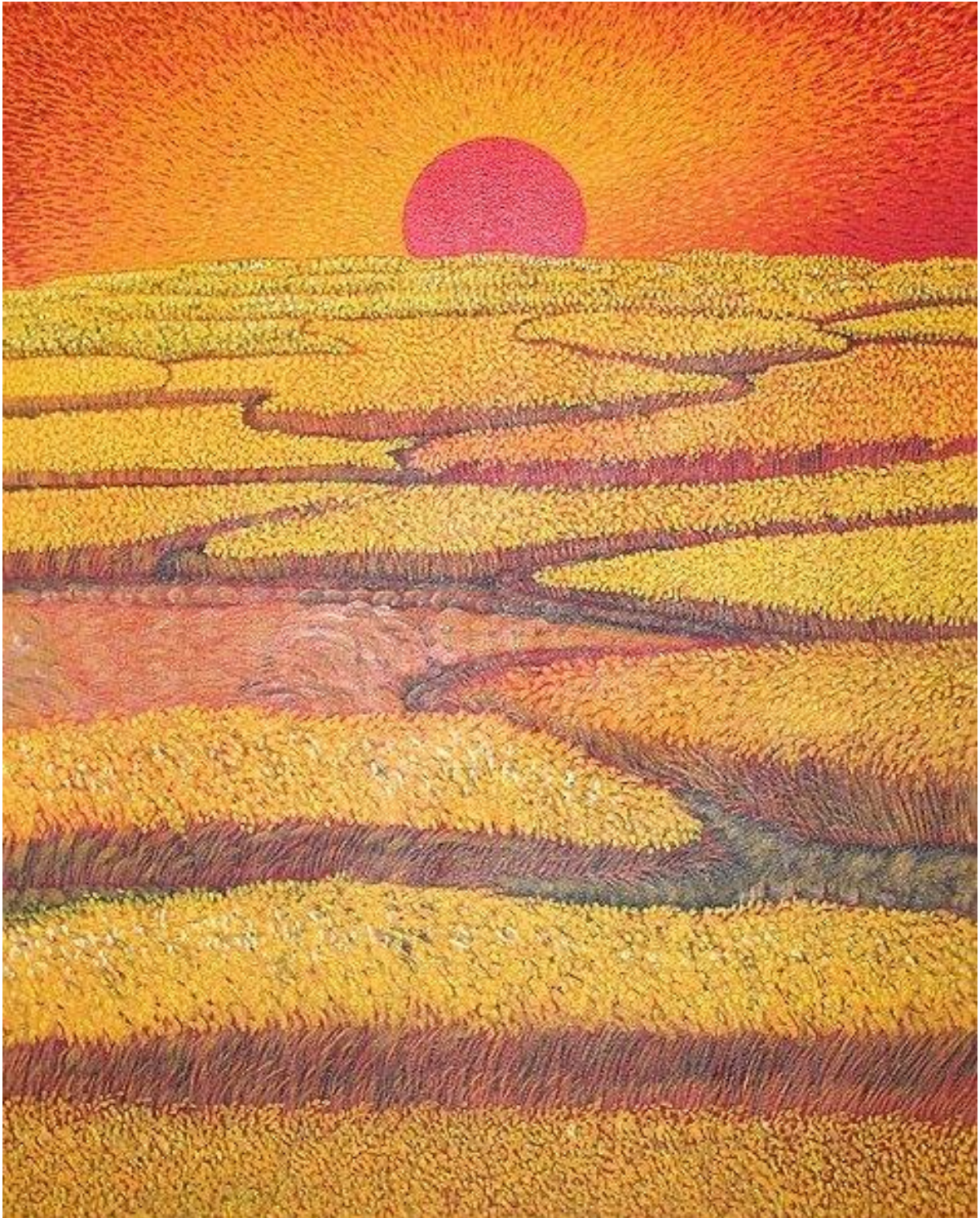


# *Helena Blavatsky on Apollonius of Tyana*



## *Train of thoughts*

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## Apollonius' travels allegorically described after the Zodiacal signs

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, XIV pp. 127-36. With appended selections from Philostratus' *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. Translated by F.C. Conybeare. First published in 1912 in two volumes as part of the Loeb Classical Library Series.

**I**T IS SAID IN *ISIS UNVEILED* that the greatest teachers of divinity agree that nearly all ancient books were written symbolically and in a language intelligible only to the Initiated. The biographical sketch of Apollonius of Tyana affords an example. As every Kabbalist knows, it embraces the whole of the Hermetic Philosophy, being a counterpart in many respects of the traditions left us of King Solomon. It reads like a fairy story, but, as in the case of the latter, sometimes facts and historical events are presented to the world under the colours of fiction. The journey to India represents in its every stage, though of course allegorically, the trials of a Neophyte, giving at the same time a geographical and topographical idea of a certain country as it is even now, if one knows where to look for it. The long discourses of Apollonius with the Brāhmans, their sage advice, and the dialogues with the Corinthian Menippus would, if interpreted, give the Esoteric Catechism. His visit to the empire of the wise men, his interview with their King Iarchas, the Oracle of Amphiaraus, explain symbolically many of the secret dogmas of Hermes — in the generic sense of the name — and of Occultism. Wonderful is this to relate, and were not the statement supported by numerous calculations already made, and the secret already half-revealed, the writer would never have dared to say it. The travels of the great Magus are correctly, though allegorically described — that is to say, all that is related by Damis had actually taken place — but the narrative is based upon the Zodiacal signs. As *transliterated* by Damis under the guidance of Apollonius and *translated* by Philostratus, it is a marvel indeed. At the conclusion of what may now be related of the wonderful Adept of Tyana our meaning will become clearer. Suffice it to say for the present that the dialogues spoken of would disclose, if correctly understood, some of the most important secrets of Nature. Éliphas Lévi points out the great resemblance which exists between King Iarchas and the fabulous Hiram, from whom Solomon procured the cedars of Lebanon and the gold of Ophir. But he keeps silent as to another resemblance of which, as a learned Kabbalist, he could not be ignorant. Moreover, according to his invariable custom, he mystifies the reader more than he teaches him, divulging nothing and leading him off the right track.

Like most of the historical heroes of hoary antiquity, whose lives and works strongly differ from those of commonplace humanity, Apollonius is to this day a riddle, which has, so far, found no Oedipus. His existence is surrounded with such a veil of mystery that he is often mistaken for a myth. But according to every law of logic and reason, it is quite clear that Apollonius should never be regarded in such a light. If the Tyanean Theurgist may be put down as a fabulous character, then history has no

right to her Caesars and Alexanders. It is quite true that this Sage, who stands unrivalled in his thaumaturgical powers to this day — on evidence historically attested — came into the arena of public life no one seems to know whence, and disappeared from it, no one seems to know whither. But the reasons for this are evident. Every means was used — especially during the fourth and fifth centuries of our era — to sweep from people's minds the remembrance of this great and holy man. The circulation of his biographies, which were many and enthusiastic, was prevented by the Christians, and for a very good reason, as we shall see. The diary of Damis survived most miraculously, and remained alone to tell the tale. But it must not be forgotten that Justin Martyr often speaks of Apollonius, and the character and truthfulness of this good man are unimpeachable, the more in that he had good reasons to feel bewildered. Nor can it be denied that there is hardly a Church Father of the first six centuries that left Apollonius unnoticed. Only, according to invariable Christian customs of charity, their pens were dipped as usual in the blackest ink of *odium theologicum*, intolerance and one-sidedness. St. Jerome (Hieronymus) gives at length the story of St. John's alleged contest with the Sage of Tyana — a competition of "miracles" — in which, of course, the truthful saint<sup>1</sup> describes in glowing colours the defeat of Apollonius, and seeks corroboration in St. John's *Apocrypha* proclaimed doubtful *even* by the Church.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore it is that nobody can say where or when Apollonius was born, and everyone is equally ignorant of the date at which, and of the place where he died. Some think he was eighty or ninety years old at the time of his death, others that he was one hundred or even one hundred and seventeen. But, whether he ended his days at Ephesus in the year 96 A.D., as some say, or whether the event took place at Lindus in the temple of Pallas-Athene, or whether again he disappeared from the temple of Dictynna, or whether, as others maintain, he did not die at all, but when a hundred years old renewed his life by Magic, and went on working for the benefit of humanity, no one can tell. The Secret Records alone have noted his birth and subsequent career. But then — "Who hath believed in *that* report?"

All that history knows is that Apollonius was the enthusiastic founder of a new school of contemplation. Perhaps less metaphorical and more practical than Jesus, he nevertheless inculcated the same quintessence of spirituality, the same high moral truths. He is accused of having confined them to the higher classes of society in-

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<sup>1</sup> See *Preface to St. Matthew's Gospel*, Baronius, Vol. I, p. 752, quoted in de Mirville's *Des Esprits*, Vol. VI, p. 63. Jerome is the Father who having found the authentic and original *Evangel* (the Hebrew text) by Matthew, the Apostle-publican, in the library of Caesarea, "*written by the hand of Matthew*" (Jerome, *De Viris illustr.* cap. iii) — as he himself admits — set it down as heretical, and substituted for it his own Greek text. [See *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. IV, pp. 238-42] And it is also he who perverted the text in the *Book of Job* to enforce belief in the resurrection in flesh (see *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 181 *et seq.*), quoting in support the most learned authorities.

<sup>2</sup> De Mirville gives the following thrilling account of the "contest."

John, pressed, as St. Jerome tells us, by all the churches of Asia to proclaim more solemnly [in the face of the miracles of Apollonius] the divinity of Jesus Christ, after a long prayer with his disciples on the Mount of Patmos and being in ecstasy by the divine Spirit, made heard amid thunder and lightning his famous *In Principio erat Verbum*. When that sublime ecstasis, that caused him to be named the 'Son of Thunder,' had passed, Apollonius was compelled to retire and to disappear. Such was his defeat, less bloody but as hard as that of Simon, the Magician. (*Des Esprits*, Vol. VI, p. 63)

For our part we have never heard of ecstasis producing thunder and lightning and we are at a loss to understand the meaning.

stead of doing what Buddha and Jesus did, instead of preaching them to the poor and the afflicted. Of his reasons for acting in such an exclusive way it is impossible to judge at so late a date. But Karmic law seems to be mixed up with it. Born, as we are told, among the aristocracy, it is very likely that he desired to finish the work undone in this particular direction by his predecessor, and sought to offer “peace on earth and good will” to *all* men, and not alone to the outcast and the criminal. Therefore he associated with the kings and mighty ones of the age. Nevertheless, the three “miracle-workers” exhibited striking similarity of purpose. Like Jesus and like Buddha, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies, bigotry and hypocrisy. That his “miracles” were more wonderful, more varied, and far better attested in History than any others, is also true. Materialism denies, but evidence, and the affirmations of even the Church herself, however much he is branded by her, show this to be the fact.<sup>1</sup>

The calumnies set afloat against Apollonius were as numerous as they were false. So late as eighteen centuries after his death he was defamed by Bishop Douglas in his work against miracles. In this the Right Reverend bishop crushed himself against historical facts. [For it is not in the *miracles*, but in the identity of ideas and doctrines preached that we have to look for a similarity between Buddha, Jesus and Apollonius.] If we study the question with a dispassionate mind, we will soon perceive that the ethics of Gautama Buddha, Plato, Apollonius, Jesus, Ammonius Saccas, and his disciples, were all based on the same mystic philosophy. That all worshipped one [divine Ideal], whether they considered [it] as the “Father” of humanity, who lives in man as man lives in Him, or as the Incomprehensible Creative Principle; all led God-like lives. Ammonius, speaking of his philosophy, taught that their school dated from the days of Hermes, who brought his wisdom from India. It was the same mystical contemplation throughout, as that of the Yogīn: the communion of the Brahman with his own luminous Self — the “Ātman.”<sup>2</sup>

The groundwork of the Eclectic School [of Ammonius Saccas] is thus shown to be identical with the doctrines of the Yogis — the Hindu Mystics; it is proved that it had a common origin, from the same source as the earlier Buddhism of Gautama and of his Arhats.

The *Ineffable Name* in the search for which so many Kabbalists — unacquainted with any Oriental or even European Adept — vainly consume their knowledge and lives, dwells latent in the heart of every man. This mirific name which, according to the most ancient oracles, “rushes into the infinite worlds, *ακοιμήτω στροφάλιγγι*” [in sleepless whirling],<sup>3</sup> can be obtained in a two-fold way: by regular initiation, and through the “small voice” which Elijah heard in

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<sup>1</sup> This is the old, old story. Who of us, Theosophists, but knows by bitter personal experience what clerical hatred, malice and persecution can do in this direction; to what an extent of falsehood, calumny and cruelty these feelings can go, even in our modern day, and what exemplars of *Christ-like* charity His alleged and self-constituted servants have shown themselves to be!

<sup>2</sup> *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 342

<sup>3</sup> [Quoting Proclus, *On the Cratylus of Plato*, from the “Chaldaean Oracles of Zoroaster.” Full text in I.P. Cory’s *Ancient Fragments*, etc., 1828, pp. 104-15, Theosophy and Theosophists Series. Cf. *αοκνος στροφαλιγγι*, in Damascius’ *de Principiis*, 148]

the cave of Horeb, the mount of God. And “when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his *face in his mantle* and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

When Apollonius of Tyana desired to hear the “small voice,” he used to wrap himself up entirely in a mantle of fine wool, on which he placed both his feet, after having performed certain magnetic passes, and pronounced not the “name” but an invocation well known to every adept. Then he drew the mantle over his head and face, and his translucid or astral spirit was free. On ordinary occasions he wore wool no more than the priests of the temples. The possession of the secret combination of the “name”<sup>2</sup> gave the Hierophant supreme power over every being, human or otherwise, inferior to himself in soul-strength.<sup>3</sup>

To whatever school he belonged, this fact is certain, that Apollonius of Tyana left an imperishable name behind him. Hundreds of works were written upon this wonderful man; historians have seriously discussed him; pretentious fools, unable to come to any conclusion about the Sage, have tried to deny his very existence. As to the Church, although she execrates his memory, she has ever tried to present him in the light of a historical character. Her policy now seems to be to direct the impression left by him into another channel — a well-known and a very old stratagem. The Jesuits, for instance, while admitting his “miracles,” have set going a double current of thought, and they have succeeded, as they succeed in all they undertake. Apollonius is represented by one party as an obedient “medium of Satan,” surrounding his theurgical powers by a most wonderful and dazzling light; while the other party professes to regard the whole matter as a clever romance, written with a predetermined object in view.

In his voluminous *Memoirs of Satan*, the Marquis de Mirville, in the course of his pleading for the recognition of the enemy of God as the producer of spiritual phenomena, devotes a whole chapter to this great Adept. The following translation of passages in his book unveils the whole plot. The reader is asked to bear in mind that the Marquis wrote every one of his works under the auspices and authorisation of the Holy See of Rome.

It would be to leave the first century incomplete and to offer an insult to the memory of St. John, to pass over in silence the name of one who had the honour of being his special antagonist, as Simon was that of St. Peter, Elymas that of Paul, etc. In the first years of the Christian era, . . . there appeared at Tyana in Cappadocia one of those extraordinary men of whom the Pythagorean School was so very lavish. As great a traveller as was his master, initiated in all the secret doctrines of India, Egypt and Chaldaea, endowed, therefore, with all the theurgic powers of the ancient Magi, he bewildered, each in its turn, all the countries which he visited and which all — we are obliged to admit — seem to have blessed his memory. We could not doubt this fact without repudiating real historical records. The details of his life are transmitted to us by a historian of

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<sup>1</sup> [1 Kings xix, 13]

<sup>2</sup> [See “The Ineffable Name” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series.]

<sup>3</sup> *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 343-44

the fourth century [Philostratus], himself the translator of a diary that recorded day by day the life of the philosopher, written by Damis, his disciple and intimate friend.<sup>1</sup>

De Mirville admits the possibility of some exaggerations in both recorder and translator; but he “does not believe they hold a very wide space in the narrative.” Therefore, he regrets to find the Abbé Freppel “in his eloquent Essays,<sup>2</sup> calling the diary of Damis a *romance*.” Why?

[Because] the orator bases his opinion on the perfect similitude, *calculated* as he imagines, of that legend with the life of the Saviour. But in studying the subject more profoundly, he [Abbé Freppel] can convince himself that neither Apollonius, nor Damis, nor again Philostratus ever claimed a greater honour than a likeness to St. John. This programme was in itself sufficiently fascinating, and the travesty as sufficiently scandalous; for owing to magic arts Apollonius had succeeded in counterbalancing, *in appearance*, several of the miracles at Ephesus [produced by St. John], etc.<sup>3</sup>

The *anguis in herba*<sup>4</sup> has shown its head. It is the perfect, the wonderful similitude of the life of Apollonius with that of the Saviour that places the Church between Scylla and Charybdis. To deny the life and the “miracles” of the former, would amount to denying the trustworthiness of the same Apostles and patristic writers on whose evidence is built the life of Jesus himself. To father the Adept’s beneficent deeds, his raisings of the dead, acts of charity, healing powers, etc., on the “old enemy” would be rather dangerous at this time. Hence the stratagem to confuse the ideas of those who rely upon authorities and criticisms. The Church is far more clear-sighted than any of our great historians. The Church *knows* that to deny the existence of that Adept would lead her to denying the Emperor Vespasian and *his* Historians, the Emperors Alexander Severus and Aurelianus and *their* Historians, and finally to deny Jesus and every evidence about Him, thus preparing the way to her flock for finally denying *herself*. It becomes interesting to learn what she says in this emergency, through her chosen speaker, de Mirville. It is as follows — he asks:

*What is there so new and so impossible in the narrative of Damis concerning their voyages to the countries of the Chaldees and the Gymnosophists?*

Try to recall, before denying, what were in those days those countries of marvels *par excellence*, as also the testimony of such men as Pythagoras, Empedocles and Democritus, who ought to be allowed to have known what they were writing about.

*With what have we finally to reproach Apollonius? Is it for having made, as the Oracles did, a series of prophecies and predictions wonderfully verified?*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Des Esprits*, etc., Vol. VI, p. 62. [Full title of Vol. VI: *Des Esprits: De L'Esprit-Saint et du Miracle dans les Six Premiers et les Six Derniers Siècles de Notre Ère, Spécialement des Resurrections de Morts, des Exorcismes, Apparitions, Transports*, etc.]

<sup>2</sup> *Les Apologistes Chrétiens au Deuxième Siècle: Cours d'Éloquence Sacrée* [Sacred Rhetoric] *Fait à la Sorbonne Pendant l'Année 1859-1860*, p. 106 [Paris, A. Bray, 1860]

<sup>3</sup> *Des Esprits*, Vol. VI, p. 62

<sup>4</sup> [A snake in the grass, *i.e.*, a false friend.]

<sup>5</sup> [See Appendix A.]



No; because, better studied now, we *know* what they are.<sup>1</sup> The Oracles have now become to us, what they were to everyone during the past century, from Van Dale to Fontenelle.

*Is it for having been endowed with second sight, and having had visions at a distance?*<sup>2</sup>

No; for such phenomena are at the present day endemical in half Europe.

*Is it for having boasted of his knowledge of every existing language under the sun, without having ever learned one of them?*

But who can be ignorant of the fact that this is the best criterion<sup>3</sup> of the presence and assistance of a spirit of whatever nature it may be?

*Or is it for having believed in transmigration (reincarnation)?*

It is still believed in (by millions) in our day. No one has any idea of the number of the men of Science who long for the re-establishment of the Druidical Religion and of the Mysteries of Pythagoras.

*Or is it for having exorcised the demons and the plague?*

The Egyptians, the Etruscans and all the Roman Pontiffs had done so long before.<sup>4</sup>

*For having conversed with the dead?*

We do the same today, or believe we do so — which is all the same.

*For having believed in the Empuses?*

Where is the Demonologist that does not know that the Empuse is the “south demon” referred to in David’s *Psalms*, and dreaded then as it is feared even now in all Northern Europe?<sup>5</sup>

*For having made himself invisible at will?*

It is one of the achievements of mesmerism.

*For having appeared after his (supposed) death to the Emperor Aurelian above the city walls of Tyana, and for having compelled him thereby to raise the siege of that town?*

Such was the mission of every hero beyond the tomb, and the reason of the worship vowed to the Manes.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Many are they who *do not know*; hence, they do not believe in them.

<sup>2</sup> Just so. Apollonius, during a lecture he was delivering at Ephesus before an audience of many thousands, perceived the murder of the Emperor Domitian in Rome and notified it at the very moment it was taking place, to the whole town; and Swedenborg, in the same manner, saw from Gothenburg the great fire at Stockholm and told it to his friends, no telegraph being in use in those days.

<sup>3</sup> No criterion at all. The Hindu Sādhus and Adepts acquire the gift by the holiness of their lives. The Yogā-Vidya teaches it, and no “spirits” are required.

<sup>4</sup> As to the Pontiffs, the matter is rather doubtful.

<sup>5</sup> But this alone is no reason why people should believe in this class of spirits. There are better authorities for such belief.

<sup>6</sup> De Mirville’s aim is to show that all such apparitions of the Manes or disembodied Spirits are the work of the Devil, “Satan’s simulacra.”



*For having descended into the famous den of Trophonius, and taken from it an old book preserved for years after by the Emperor Adrian in his Antium library?*

The trustworthy and sober Pausanias had descended into the same den before Apollonius, and came back no less a believer.

*For having disappeared at his death?*

Yes, like Romulus, like Votan, like Lycurgus, like Pythagoras,<sup>1</sup> always under the most mysterious circumstances, ever attended by apparitions, revelations, etc. Let us stop here and repeat once more: had the life of Apollonius been simple *romance*, he would never have attained such a celebrity during his lifetime or created such a numerous sect, one so enthusiastic after his death.

And, to add to this, had all this been a romance, never would a Caracalla have raised a herōon<sup>2</sup> to his memory<sup>3</sup> or Alexander Severus have placed his bust between those of two Demi-Gods and of the true God,<sup>4</sup> (or an Empress have corresponded with him). Hardly rested from the hardships of the siege at Jerusalem, Titus would not have hastened to write to Apollonius a letter, asking to meet him at Argos and adding that his father and himself (Titus) owed all to him, the great Apollonius, and that, therefore, his first thought was for their benefactor. Nor would the Emperor Aurelian have built a temple and a shrine to that great Sage, to thank him for his apparition and communication at Tyana. That *posthumous* conversation, as all knew, saved the city, inasmuch as Aurelian had in consequence raised the siege. Furthermore, had it been a romance, History would not have had Vopiscus,<sup>5</sup> one of the most trustworthy Pagan Historians, to certify to it. Finally, Apollonius would not have been the object of the admiration of such a noble character as Epictetus, and even of several of the Fathers of the Church; Jerome for instance, in his better moments, writing thus of Apollonius:

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<sup>1</sup> He might have added: like the great Śamkarāchārya, Tsong-Kha-Pa, and so many other real Adepts — even his own Master, Jesus; for this is indeed a criterion of true Adeptship, though “to disappear” one need not fly up in the clouds.

<sup>2</sup> [Shrine of heroes.]

<sup>3</sup> See *Dion Cassius, Roman History*, LXXVIII, xviii, 2

<sup>4</sup> Lampridius, *Alexander Severus*, XXIX

<sup>5</sup> The passage runs as follows:

Aurelian had determined to destroy Tyana, and the town owed its salvation only to a miracle of Apollonius; this man so famous and so wise, this great friend of the Gods, long dead since, appeared suddenly before the Emperor, as he was returning to his tent, in his own figure and form, and said to him in the Pannonian language:

Aurelian, if thou wouldst conquer, abandon these evil designs against my fellow-citizens; if thou wouldst command, abstain from shedding innocent blood; and if thou wouldst live, abstain from injustice.

Aurelian, familiar with the face of Apollonius, whose portraits he had seen in many temples, struck with wonder, immediately vowed to him [Apollonius] statue, portrait and temple, and returned completely to ideas of mercy.

And then Vopiscus adds:

If I have believed more and more in the virtues of the *majestic* Apollonius, it is because, after gathering my information from the most serious men, I have found all these facts corroborated in the Books of the Ulpiian Library. (See Flavius Vopiscus, *Divas Aurelianus* xxiv, in *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*.)

Vopiscus wrote in 250 and consequently preceded Philostratus by a century. [Cf. de Mirville, *Des Esprits*, etc., Vol. VI, p. 68 *fn.*]

This travelling philosopher found something to learn wherever he went; and profiting everywhere thus improved with every day.<sup>1</sup>

As to his prodigies, without wishing to fathom them, Jerome most undeniably admits them as such; which he would assuredly never have done, had he not been compelled to do so by facts. To end the subject, had Apollonius been a simple hero of a romance, dramatized in the fourth century, the Ephesians would not, in their enthusiastic gratitude, have raised to him a golden statue for all the benefits he had conferred upon them.<sup>2, 3</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> *Ep. ad Paulinam*

<sup>2</sup> The above is mostly summarized from de Mirville, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-69.

<sup>3</sup> *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, XIV pp. 127-36. [Also cf., “Apollonius comforts a bereaved father” in our Constitution of Man Series, and “Apollonius of Tyana on Sacrifice” in our Mystic Verse and Insights.]

## Appendix A.

### **Apollonius foresaw Nero's attempt to open the isthmus at Corinth and his subsequent retreat from Greece.**

And he also visited all the Greek shrines, namely that of Dodona, and the Pythian temple, and the one at Abae, and he betook himself to those of Amphiaraus and of Trophonius, and he went up to the shrine of the Muses on Mount Helicon. And when he visited these temples and corrected the rites, the priests went in his company, and the votaries followed in his steps, and goblets were set up flowing with rational discourse and the thirsty quaffed their wine.

And as the Olympic Games were coming on, and the people of Elis invited him to take part in the contest, he answered:

“You seem to me to tarnish the glory of the Olympic Games, if you need to send special invitations to those who intend to visit you at their own promptings.”

And as he was at the Isthmus, when the sea was roaring around Lechaeum and hearing it, he said:

“This neck of land shall be cut through, or rather it shall not be cut.”

And herein he uttered a prediction of the cutting of the Isthmus which was attempted soon afterwards, when Nero after seven years projected it.<sup>1</sup> For the latter left his imperial palace and came to Hellas, with the intention of submitting himself to the heralds' commands, in the Olympic and Pythian festivals; and he also won the prize at the Isthmus, his victories being won in the contest of singing to the harp and in that of the heralds. And he also won the prize for the tragedians at Olympia. It is said that he then formed the novel project of cutting through the Isthmus, in order to make a canal of it for ships to sail through and not right round, uniting the Aegean with the Adriatic Sea. So instead of every ship having to round Cape Malea, most by passing through the canal so cut could abridge an otherwise circuitous voyage.

But mark the upshot of the oracle of Apollonius. They began to dig the canal at Lechaeum, but they had not advanced more than about four stadia of continuous excavation, when Nero stopped the work of cutting it. Some say because Egyptian men of science explained him the nature of the seas, and declared that the sea above Lechaeum [in the west] would flood and obliterate the island of Aegina [in the east], and others because he apprehended a revolution in the empire. Such then was the meaning of Apollonius' prediction that the Isthmus would be cut through and would not be cut through.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This remark enables us to date Apollonius' visit to Corinth to the year 61. Nero ordered the cutting of the canal in 67.

<sup>2</sup> Philostratus, *Apollonius of Tyana*, Vol. I, Bk. IV, § 24, pp. 399-401; tr. Conybeare.



[Continues Apollonius]

“You can imagine that the Greeks will endure whole Iliads of woe<sup>1</sup> at these spectacles. For I have long ago learned by the revelation of heaven that the Isthmus will be cut through and will not be cut through, and just now, they say, it is being cut.”

Here Damis took him up and said:

“As for myself, O Apollonius, I think this scheme of cutting through the Isthmus excels all other undertakings of Nero, for you yourself see how magnificent a project it is.”

“I admit that it is, O Damis; but it will go against him that he never could complete it, that just as he never finished his songs, so he never finished his digging. When I review the career of Xerxes, I am disposed to praise him not because he bridged the Hellespont, but because he got across it; but as for Nero, I perceive that he will neither sail his ships through the Isthmus, nor ever come to an end of his digging; and I believe, unless truth has wholly departed from among men, that he has retired from Hellas in a fit of panic.”<sup>2, 3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> [From Demosthenes' *On the false embassy*, 19, 148: “they were superior in cavalry, and so an Iliad of woes encompassed the Thebans”; tr. Vince & Vince.]

<sup>2</sup> Early in 68, Nero was forced to return to Italy.

<sup>3</sup> Philostratus, *Apollonius of Tyana*, Vol. I, Bk. V, § 7, p. 481; tr. Conybeare.



## Appendix B.

### **The Cappadocian Adept, more Pythagorean and Pythagoras himself, defends his life-style to a Stoic philosopher.**

Perhaps then you would like to draw up a little indictment of me?

I only wish you had the pluck to do so. And you would be able to repeat these hackneyed and obvious accusations:

“Apollonius utterly declines to take a bath.”<sup>1</sup>

Yes, and what’s more, he never quits his house and takes care never to soil his feet.

“You never see him moving any part of his person.”

Yes, for he never moves anything except his soul.

“He wears his hair long on his head.”

Well, and so does the Hellene, because he is a Hellene and not a barbarian.

“He wears linen raiment.”

Yes, for this purest garb is that of priests.

“He practises divination.”

Yes, for many are the things we know not, and there is no other way of foreseeing anything that is going to happen.

“But such practices are not consonant with philosophy.”

Nevertheless they befit the deity.

“And moreover he eases the flesh of its agonies and allays suffering.”

You might equally bring this charge against Asclepius.

“He eats alone.”

Yes, and the rest of the world feed.

“He uses few words and on few occasions.”

Yes, for he has a faculty of holding his tongue altogether.

“He abstains from all flesh and from eating any animal food.”

That is surely a proof of his humanity. If you tell me, Euphrates, that you have put these counts into your indictment, you will probably add the following as well:

“If there had been any going, he would have taken money as I have, and presents, and civil promotions.”

If there had been money going, he would not have taken it.

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<sup>1</sup> [i.e., a hot, public bath. Cf. “<A fourth handmaiden of Circe> carried water, and lighted a great fire under a large tripod; and the water was warmed. But when the water boiled in the shining brass, having put me in a bath, she washed me from the large tripod, pouring [water] pleasantly over my head and shoulders, until she took away from my limbs mind-destroying labour.” *Odyssey* x, 361-64; tr. Buckley. At the time Apollonius the cost of a public bath was about one diobol, containing 1.43 g of silver.]

“Nay, but he would have taken it for his country.”

Yes, but that is not one’s country which knows not what it hath.<sup>1</sup>

**Though he imparted untold riches to the world, he courted neither lucre nor laurel.**

If anyone offers money to Apollonius, and he considers the donor to be worthy, he will accept it, if he is in need; but for his philosophy he will take no reward, even though he be in want.<sup>2</sup>

**He was as strict with his disciples as he was with himself.**

If anyone professes to be my disciple, let his profession be that he remains within his house, that he abstains from all bathing, that he kills no living creature, nor eats flesh, that he is exempt from feelings of jealousy, of spite, of hatred, of slander, of enmity, in order to bear the name of a free man and belong to their class. For surely he must beware of carrying about a pretence of manners and character and of language which he merely feigns, in order to make others believe that he leads the life which he does not.

Farewell.<sup>3</sup>

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## Appendix C.

**Apollonius then run over some Pythagorean qualities to the same philosopher.**

If anyone converses with a Pythagorean, and asks what boons and how many he shall derive from him, I should myself answer as follows:

He will acquire

Legislative science,  
Geometry,  
Astronomy,  
Arithmetic,

Knowledge of

Harmony and of  
Music, and of  
The physician’s art,  
God-like divination in all its branches,

And the still better qualities of

Magnanimity,  
Greatness of soul,  
Magnificence,

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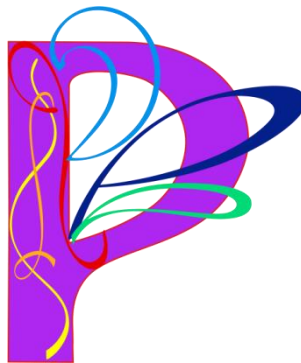
<sup>1</sup> Philostratus, *Apollonius of Tyana*, Vol. II, (Epistle 8 to Euphrates), pp. 413-15; tr. Conybeare.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, (Epistle 42 to the Platonic Thinkers), p. 437

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, (Epistle 43 to those who are puffed up with wisdom), p. 437

Constancy,  
Reverence,  
Knowledge and not mere opinion of the gods,  
Direct cognisance of demons and not mere faith,  
Friendship with both,  
Independence of spirit,  
Assiduity,  
Frugality,  
Limitation of his needs,  
Quickness of perception,  
Quickness of movement,  
Quickness in breathing,<sup>1</sup>  
Excellence of colour,<sup>2</sup>  
Health,  
Courage,  
Immortality.

And from you, Euphrates, what have your companions obtained that they can keep?  
Surely no more than the excellence which you possess yourself.<sup>3</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> [i.e., *εὐπνοία*, relaxed and rhythmical breathing.]

<sup>2</sup> [i.e., *εὐχροία*, fresh and healthy complexion.]

<sup>3</sup> Philostratus, *Apollonius of Tyana*, Vol. II, (Epistle 52 to Euphrates), pp. 447-49; tr. Conybeare.