



THE GREAT SYMBOL OF SOLOMON

The Double Triangle of Solomon, represented by the two Ancients of the Kabbalah; the Macroprosopus and the Microprosopus; the God of Light and the God of Reflections; of mercy and vengeance; the white Jehovah and the black Jehovah.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter from Transcendental Magic:

ITS DOCTRINE

Part I

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A Translation of
Dogme Et Rituel De La Haute Magie
By Arthur Edward Waite

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o. Introduction

BEHIND the veil of all the hieratic and mystical allegories of ancient doctrines, behind the shadows and the strange ordeals of all initiations, under the seal of all sacred writings, in the ruins of Nineveh or Thebes, on the crumbling stones of the old temples, and on the blackened visage of the Assyrian or Egyptian sphinx, in the monstrous or marvellous paintings which interpret to the faithful of India the inspired pages of the Vedas, in the strange emblems of our old books of alchemy, in the ceremonies at reception practised by all mysterious societies, traces are found of a doctrine which is everywhere the same, and everywhere carefully concealed. **Occult philosophy seems to have been the nurse or god-mother of all intellectual forces, the KEY of all divine obscurities**, and the absolute queen of society in those ages when it was reserved exclusively for the education of priests and of kings.

It reigned in Persia with the magi, who at length perished, as perish all masters of the world, because they abused their power; it endowed India with the most wonderful traditions, and with an incredible wealth of poesy, grace, and terror in its emblems; it civilised Greece to the music of the lyre of Orpheus; it concealed the principles of all the sciences and of all human intellectual progress in the bold calculations of

Nineveh: Ancient Assyrian city in Upper Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq)

Thebes: Ancient city in Upper Egypt, also known as Waset, along the Nile, circa 2000 BC

Vedas: Ancient religious texts in Vedic Sanskrit from the prehistoric Iron Age in India

Occult philosophy framed as the "Key of all divine obscurities" is the first reference to the Mystery of the Key.

What is the common bond across all the mystical allegories of ancient doctrines, of alchemy, Persian magic, the Vedas, Pythagorean calculations, the Orphic hymns, what is it that seals all sacred writings, that is at the root of all initiation, of

Pythagoras; fable abounded in its miracles, and history, attempting to appreciate this unknown power, became confused with fable; it shook or strengthened empires by its oracles, caused tyrants to tremble on their thrones, and governed all minds, either by curiosity or by fear.

For this science, said the crowd, there is nothing impossible; it commands the elements, knows the language of the stars, and directs the planetary courses; when it speaks, the moon falls blood-red from heaven; the dead rise in their graves and articulate ominous words as the night wind blows through their skulls. Mistress of love or of hate, the science can dispense paradise or hell at its pleasure to human hearts; it disposes of all forms, and distributes beauty or ugliness; with the rod of Circe it alternately changes men into brutes and animals into men; it even disposes of life or death, and can confer wealth on its adepts by the transmutation of metals and immortality by its quintessence or elixir compounded of gold and light.

Such was magic from Zoroaster to Manes, from Orpheus to Apollonius of Tyana, when positive Christianity, at length victorious over the brilliant dreams and titanic aspirations of the Alexandrian school, dared to launch its anathemas publicly against this philosophy, and thus forced it to become more occult and mysterious than ever.

Moreover, strange and alarming rumours began to circulate concerning initiates or adepts; these men were everywhere surrounded by an ominous influence; they killed or drove mad those who allowed themselves to be carried away by their honeyed eloquence or by the fame of their learning.

The women whom they loved became Stryges, their children vanished at their nocturnal meetings, and men whispered shudderingly and in secret of bloody orgies and abominable banquets.

Bones had been found in the crypts of ancient temples, shrieks had been heard in the night, harvests withered and herds sickened when the magician passed by. Diseases which defied medical skill at times appeared in the world, and always, it was said, beneath the envenomed glance of the adepts.

alchemy, and even of positive Christianity?

The answer: Occult philosophy and science.

Rod of Circe: One of the earliest Western references to a magical wand or staff. Per mythology, Circe, the goddess of magic, used her rod to channel magic, and used the rod to turn Odysseus's men into beasts.

Zoroaster, the prophet of Zoroastrianism, one of the oldest religions said to have influenced the Greeks, Judaism, Gnosticism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.

Manes is a reference to Mani, the prophet of Manichaeism. The cult of Mani or Manichaeism, centered around a prophet named Mani (216 AD - 274 AD), was a gnostic religion that sought to integrate the revelations of Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus to establish what he called the Religion of Light. At the core of Manichaeism was an acknowledgement that throughout human history, people everywhere have sought the same goal: transcendence toward the Light, and so Mani attempted to syncretize Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism into a cohesive doctrine. The Greek Magical Papyri was also an influential component to Manichaeism. Ritual magic and spell-crafting were part of the religion's core practice.

At length an universal cry of execration went up against magic, the mere name became a crime, and the common hatred was formulated in this sentence: "Magicians to the flames!" as it was shouted some centuries earlier: "o the lions with the Christians!"

Now the multitude never conspires except against real powers; it possesses not the knowledge of what is true, but it has the instinct of what is strong. It remained for the eighteenth century to deride both Christians and magic, while infatuated with the homilies of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the illusions of Count Alessandro di Cagliostro.

SCIENCE, NOTWITHSTANDING, IS AT THE BASIS OF MAGIC, as at the foundation of Christianity there is love, and in the Gospel symbols we see the Word Incarnate adored in his cradle by three magi, led thither by a star (the triad and the sign of the microcosm), and receiving their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, a second mysterious triplicity, under which emblem the highest secrets of the Kabbalah are allegorically contained.

Christianity owes, therefore, no hatred to magic, but human ignorance has ever stood in fear of the unknown. The science was driven into hiding to escape the impassioned assaults of a blind love; it clothed itself with new hieroglyphics, dissimulated [*disguised, concealed*] its labours, denied its hopes. Then it was that the jargon of alchemy was created, a permanent deception for the vulgar, a living language only for the true disciple of Hermes.

Extraordinary fact! Among the sacred books of the Christians there are two works which the infallible Church makes no claim to understand and has never attempted to explain; these are the prophecy of Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, two Kabbalistic Keys assuredly reserved in heaven for the commentaries of magician Kings, books sealed with seven seals for faithful believers, yet perfectly plain to an initiated infidel of the occult sciences.

There is also another book, but, although it is popular in a sense and may be found everywhere, this is of all most occult and unknown, because it has the key of all others; it is in public evidence without being known to the public; no

Stryges is a reference to the strix, a dark mythical owl-like creature that was also a metaphor for witches or connected to witchcraft.

Rousseau (1712 - 1778): influential political philosopher during the Enlightenment

Cagliostro (1743 - 1795): Occultist, psychic healer, Freemason, though also accused of being a charlatan

Perhaps in the same way the profane and disbelievers have forgotten that the foundation of Christianity is Love, the profane and disbelievers can't see the science in magic.

Here, Levi is equating Divinity in Mankind (the mythos of Christ) as the Word Incarnate (logos), the three magi representing the trinity that must always subsist at the root of all magical workings, and the star, also called the Sign of the Microcosm, which he will revisit in Chapter V: The Pentagram.

The disguised "new hieroglyphics" driven into hiding is alluding to the tarot.

According to Levi, there are three sacred books:

- (1) The Book of Ezekiel from the Old Testament,
- (2) The Book of Revelation (or The Apocalypse), the final book of the New Testament, and
- (3) a third, which he does not yet reveal in the Introduction.

one dreams of seeking it where it actually is, and elsewhere it is lost labour to look for it. This book, possibly anterior to that of Enoch, has never been translated, but is still preserved unmutated in primeval characters, on detached leaves, like the tablets of the ancients.

A distinguished scholar has revealed, though no one has observed it, not indeed its secret, but its antiquity and singular preservation; another scholar, but of a mind more fantastic than judicious, passed thirty years in the study of this book, and has merely suspected its whole importance. It is, in fact, a monumental and extraordinary work, strong and simple as the architecture of the pyramids, and consequently enduring like those a book which is the sum of all the sciences, which can resolve all problems by its infinite combinations, which speaks by evoking thought, is the inspirer and regulator of all possible conceptions, the masterpiece perhaps of the human mind, assuredly one of the finest things bequeathed to us by antiquity, an universal key, the name of which has been explained and comprehended only by the learned William Postel, an unique text, whereof the initial characters alone exalted the devout spirit of Saint Martin into ecstasy, and might have restored reason to the sublime and unfortunate Swedenborg.

We shall speak of this book later on, and its mathematical and precise explanation will be the complement and crown of our conscientious undertaking. The original alliance of Christianity and the science of the magi, once it is thoroughly demonstrated, will be a discovery of no second-rate importance, and we question not that the serious study of magic and the Kabbalah will lead earnest minds to the reconciliation of science and dogma, of reason and faith, heretofore regarded as impossible.

We have said that the Church, whose special office is the custody of the Keys, does not pretend to possess those of the Apocalypse or of Ezekiel. In the opinion of Christians the scientific and magical clavicles of Solomon are lost; yet, at the same time, it is certain that, in the domain of intelligence ruled by the Word, nothing which has been written can perish things which men cease to understand simply cease to exist for them, at least in the order of the Word, and they enter then into the domain of enigma and mystery.

Levi proposes the speculation that this other book “most occult and unknown” pre-dates the Book of Enoch (300-200 BC).

William Postel (1510 – 1581): Also known as Guillaume Postel. A Cabbalist, astronomer, philosopher, and professor of mathematics. Advocated for a universalist world religion. Also believed in soul dualism (binary of intellect and emotion). Was declared insane by the Venetian Inquisition and imprisoned for heresy, spending the last two decades of his life under house arrest in Paris.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688 – 1772): Christian mystic, theologian, philosopher, and scientist; author of *Heaven and Hell (De Caelo et Eius Mirabilibus et de inferno, ex Auditibus et Visis, 1758)*

In *The Key to the Mysteries* (English trans. by Aleister Crowley), Levi writes: “This monument is the Tarot of the Bohemians . . . is composed of twenty-two allegorical letters [*Major Arcana*], and of four series of ten hieroglyphs each, referring to the four letters of the name of Jehovah [*Minor Arcana*]. The diverse combinations of those signs, and the numbers which correspond to them, form so many Kabbalistic oracles, that the whole science is contained in this mysterious book. “

Furthermore, the antipathy, and even open war, of the official church against all that belongs to the realm of magic, which is a kind of personal and emancipated priesthood, is allied with necessary and even with inherent causes in the social and hierarchic constitution of Christian sacerdotalism

The Church ignores magic for she must either ignore it or perish, as we shall prove later on; yet she does not the less recognise that her mysterious founder was saluted in his cradle by the three magi that is to say, by the hieratic ambassadors of the three parts of the known world and the three analogical worlds of occult philosophy. In the school of Alexandria, magic and Christianity almost joined hands under the auspices of Ammonius Saccas and of Plato; the Doctrine of Hermes is found almost in its entirety in the writings attributed to Denis the Areopagite; and Synesius sketched the plan of a treatise on dreams, which was later on to be annotated by Cardan, and composed hymns which might have served for the liturgy of the Church of Swedenborg, could a church of the illuminated possess a liturgy. With this period of fiery abstractions and impassioned warfare of words there must also be connected the philosophic reign of Julian, called the Apostate because in his youth he made an unwilling profession of Christianity.

Everyone is aware that Julian was sufficiently wrongheaded to be an unseasonable hero of Plutarch, and was, if one may say so, the Don Quixote of Roman Chivalry; but what most people do not know is that Julian was one of the illuminated and an initiate of the first order; that he believed in the unity of God and in the universal doctrine of the Trinity; that, in a word, he regretted nothing of the old world but its magnificent symbols and its exceedingly gracious images. Julian was not a pagan; he was a Gnostic allured by the allegories of Greek polytheism, who had the misfortune to find the name of Jesus Christ less sonorous than that of Orpheus. The Emperor personally paid for the academical tastes of the philosopher and rhetorician, and after affording himself the spectacle and satisfaction of expiring like Epaminondas with the periods of Cato, he had in public opinion, already thoroughly Christianised, anathemas for his funeral oration and a scornful epithet for his ultimate celebrity. Let us skip the little men and small matters of the

To be a magus is itself a priesthood, though one that is “personal and emancipated.”

Sacerdotalism: System, spirit, or methods of priesthood.

Ammonius Saccas (175-242 AD): A Greek philosopher credited with developing Neoplatonism; works were heavily influenced by Plato

“Doctrine of Hermes” is a reference to Hermeticism and the writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus

“Denis the Areopagite” is a reference to Dionysius the Areopagite. Apocryphal texts on Christian mysticism and Neoplatonism were credited to him.

Synesius (373-414 AD) was a Greek bishop, Neoplatonist, and disciple of Hypatia

“Cardan” is a reference to Gerolamo Cardano (1501 – 1576), a polymath from the Italian Renaissance

Julian the Emperor (331 – 363 AD) was the last pagan ruler of the Roman Empire (though here, Levi refers to Julian as a Gnostic); historians believe Julian was heavily influenced by Plutarch (46 – 120 AD). Both supported Platonist and Neo-Platonist philosophies. Plutarch believed that different civilizations used different names to identify the same gods.

Bas Empire, and pass on to the Middle Ages. . . .

Stay, take this book! Glance at the seventh page, then seat yourself on the mantle I am spreading, and let each of us cover our eyes with one of its corners. . . . Your head swims, does it not, and the earth seems to fly beneath your feet ? Hold tightly, and do not look around. . . . The vertigo ceases; we are here. Stand up and open your eyes, but take care before all things to make no Christian sign and to pronounce no Christian words.

We are in a landscape of Salvator Rosa, a troubled wilderness which seems resting after a storm; there is no moon in the sky, but you can distinguish little stars gleaming in the brushwood, and you can hear about you the slow flight of great birds, who seem to whisper strange oracles as they pass. Let us approach silently that cross-road among the rocks. A harsh, funereal trumpet winds suddenly, and black torches flare up on every side. A tumultuous throng is surging round a vacant throne; all look and wait. Suddenly they cast themselves on the ground. A goat-headed prince bounds forward among them; he ascends the throne, turns, and by assuming a stooping posture, presents to the assembly a human face, which, carrying black torches, everyone comes forward to salute and to kiss. With a hoarse laugh he recovers an upright position, and then distributes gold, secret instructions, occult medicines, and poisons to his faithful bondsmen. Meanwhile, fires are lighted of fern and alder, piled over with human bones and the fat of executed criminals. Druidesses crowned with wild parsley and vervain immolate unbaptised children with golden knives and prepare horrible love-feasts. Tables are spread, masked men seat themselves by half-nude females, and a Bacchanalian orgie begins; there is nothing missing but salt, the symbol of wisdom and immortality. Wine flows in streams, leaving stains like blood; obscene talk and fond caresses begin, and presently the whole assembly is drunk with wine, with pleasure, with crime, and singing. They rise, a disordered throng, and hasten to form infernal dances. . . .

Then come all legendary monsters, all phantoms of nightmare; enormous toads play inverted flutes and blow with their paws on their flanks; limping scarabaei mingle in the dance; crabs play the castanets; crocodiles beat time on

Epaminondas (d. 362 BC): Cicero considered him the “first man of Greece.” Defeated the Spartans and liberated Thebes.

Salvator Rosa (1615-1673): Italian Baroque painter

Here, Levi is guiding you through an astral vision:

You’re in the wilderness after a storm. The sky is black, with no moon, though filled with stars. You can hear all around you the wings of birds flapping. Amidst the sound of the wings, you can hear an oracle whisper. Make your way toward a crossroads formed from rocks. You hear a trumpet and suddenly the scene changes: black fires surround you. You see an empty throne in front of you. You go on bended knee and before you a goat-headed prince emerges and ascends to the throne. You amble forward, salute and kiss the prince, and he distributes to you gold, secret instructions, occult medicines, and poisons. Then the scene of a Bacchanalian orgy unfolds...

...the astral vision continues with a parade of mythical beasts, and then Levi narrates you back home, into your own

their scales; elephants and mammoths appear habited like Cupids and foot it in the ring; finally, the giddy circles break up and scatter on all sides. . . . Every yelling dancer drags away a dishevelled female. . . . Lamps and candles formed of human fat go out smoking in the darkness. . . . Cries are heard here and there, mingled with peals of laughter, blasphemies, and rattlings of the throat. Come, rouse yourself, do not make the sign of the cross! See, I have brought you home; you are in your own bed, somewhat worn-out, possibly a trifle shattered, by your night's journey and dissipation; but you have witnessed something of which everyone talks without knowledge; you have been initiated into secrets no less terrible than the grotto of Triphonius; you have been present at the Sabbath. It remains for you now to preserve your reason, to have a wholesome dread of the law, and to keep at a respectful distance from the Church and her faggots.

Would you care, as a change, to behold something less fantastic, more real, and also more truly terrible? You shall assist at the execution of Jacques de Molay and his accomplices or his brethren in martyrdom. . . . Do not, however, be misled, confuse not the guilty and the innocent! Did the Templars really adore Baphomet?

Did they offer a shameful salutation to the buttocks of the Goat of Mendes? What was actually this secret and potent association which imperilled Church and State, and was thus destroyed unheard?

Judge nothing lightly; they are guilty of a great crime; they have allowed the sanctuary of antique initiation to be entered by the profane. By them for a second time have the fruits of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil been gathered and shared, so that they might become the masters of the world. The sentence which condemns them has a higher and earlier origin than the tribunal of pope or king: "On the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," said God Himself, as we see in the book of Genesis.

What is taking place in the world, and why do priests and potentates tremble? What secret power threatens tiaras and crowns? A few madmen are roaming from land to land, concealing, as they say, the philosophical stone under their

bed. The journey ends.

The original French for Waite's English translation, "...and to keep at a respectful distance from the Church and her faggots" was as follows:

"...et à une distance respectueuse de l'Église et de ses bûchers."

Bûchers can be translated to pyre or bonfire, making reference to being burned at the stake.

Jacques de Molay: Last Grand Master of the Knights Templar. Executed by King Philip IV. Was burned at the stake and according to legend, cursed the King and his heirs.

"The Goat of Mendes" is a reference to Baphomet, which the Templars were accused of worshipping.

"God can only be defined by faith; science can neither deny nor affirm that He exists."

From *La Clef Des Grands Mysteres*, or *The Key to the Great Mysteries* (1861)
by Eliphas Levi
Trans. by Aleister Crowley

ragged vesture. They can change earth into gold, and they are without food or lodging! Their brows are encircled by an aureole of glory and by a shadow of ignominy! One has discovered the universal science and goes vainly seeking death to escape the agonies of his triumph he is the Majorcan Raymond Lully. Another heals imaginary diseases by fantastic remedies, giving a formal denial in advance to the proverb which enforces the futility of a cautery on a wooden leg he is the marvellous Paracelsus, always drunk and always lucid, like the heroes of Rabelais.

Here is William Postel writing naively to the fathers of the Council of Trent, informing them that he has discovered the absolute doctrine, hidden from the foundation of the world, and is longing to share it with them.

The council does not concern itself with the maniac, does not condescend to condemn him, and proceeds to examine the weighty questions of efficacious grace and sufficing grace.

He whom we see perishing poor and abandoned is Cornelius Agrippa, less of a magician than any, though the vulgar persist in regarding him as a more potent sorcerer than all because he was sometimes a cynic and mystifier.

- What secret do these men bear with them to their tomb?
- Why are they wondered at without being understood?
- Why are they condemned unheard?
- Why are they initiates of those terrific secret sciences of which the Church and society are afraid?
- Why are they acquainted with things of which others know nothing?
- Why do they conceal what all men burn to know?
- Why are they invested with a dread and unknown power?

The occult sciences! Magic!

These words will reveal all and give food for further thought!
De omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis.

Ramon Llull or Raymond Lully (1232 – 1315): writer, polymath, philosopher, mathematician who wrote on the topics of theology, esotericism, astrology, and logic.

François Rabelais (1494 – 1533): French physician, humanist, monk, and writer, known for his satirical novels (hence Levi's phrasing, "drunk and always lucid").

In 1551, the Council of Trent condemned Postel's writings as heretical and he was imprisoned in Rome. By 1563, Postel had been moved to the Monastery of St. Martin des Champs in Paris and kept under house arrest until his death in 1581.

De omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis: "Of all things that can be known and even certain other things," a quote attributed to the Renaissance philosopher Giovanni Pico della Mirandola

But what, as a fact, was this magic?

What was the power of these men who were at once so proud and so persecuted?

If they were really strong, why did they not overcome their enemies ? But if they were weak and foolish, why did people honour them by fearing them ? Does magic exist ? Is there an occult knowledge which is truly a power, which works wonders fit to be compared with the miracles of authorised religions?

To these two palmary questions we make answer by an affirmation and a book. The book shall justify the affirmation, and the affirmation is this. Yes, there existed in the past, and there exists in the present, a potent and real magic; yes, all that legends have said of it is true, but, in contrariety to what commonly happens, popular exaggerations are, in this case, not only beside but below the truth.

There is indeed a formidable secret, the revelation of which has once already transformed the world, as testified in Egyptian religious tradition, symbolically summarised by Moses at the beginning of Genesis.

This secret constitutes the fatal science of good and evil, and the consequence of its revelation is death. Moses depicts it under the figure of a tree which is in the centre of the Terrestrial Paradise, is in proximity to the tree of life and has a radical connection therewith; at the foot of this tree is the source of the four mysterious rivers; it is guarded by the sword of fire and by the four figures of the Biblical sphinx, the Cherubim of Ezekiel. . . .

Here I must pause, and I fear already that I have said too much. Yes, there is one sole, universal, and imperishable dogma, strong as the supreme reason; simple, like all that is great; intelligible, like all that is universally and absolutely true; and this dogma has been the parent of all others.

Yes, there is a science which confers on man powers apparently superhuman; I find them enumerated as follows in a Hebrew manuscript of the sixteenth century :

Two Questions to Ask Yourself:

What exactly is magical power and occult knowledge?

Is there a Sacred Mystery that you can learn, which will empower you to perform miracles?

Answer to the first question is yes, and the answer to the second question is yes, and it can be found in a certain book...

Hints so far as to the "formidable secret":

- Known to the Egyptian magi
- Symbolically summarized by the narrative of the Biblical burning bush scene

Four Rivers of Eden: Pishon, Gihon, Tigris (Chidekel), and Euphrates (Phirat), per Genesis 2:10-14

Sword of Fire or Flaming Sword: Placed at the Gates of Paradise by God, wielded by a cherubim, to guard the Tree of Life; flaming sword as spirit and word of God

The Clavicles of Solomon, *Clavicula Salomonis*, also known as the Key of Solomon, is a grimoire of Renaissance magic dated to the 14th-15th centuries.

"These are the powers and privileges of the man who holds in his right hand the Clavicles of Solomon, and in his left the branch of the blossoming almond:

Aside: Almond flowers blossom in February - March, around the spring equinox.

Hebrew Letter	Phoenician Alphabet	Powers and Privileges of the Solomonic Magus	
א	Aleph	Ⲁ	He beholds God face to face, without dying, and converses familiarly with the seven genii who command the entire celestial army,
ב	Beth	Ⲃ	He is above all afflictions and all fears.
ג	Gimmel	Ⲅ	He reigns with all heaven and is served by all hell.
ד	Daleth	Ⲇ	He disposes of his own health and life and can equally influence that of others,
ה	H h	Ⲉ	He can neither be surprised by misfortune, nor overwhelmed by disasters, nor conquered by his enemies.
ו	Va	Ⲑ	He knows the reason of the past, present, and future.
ז	Zain	Ⲓ	He possesses the secret of the resurrection of the dead and the key of immortality.

"Such are the seven chief privileges, and those which rank next are as follows:

H brew Letter	Phoenic an Alphabet	Powers and P ivileges of the Solomonic Magus	
ח	Cheth	Ⲅ	To find the philosoph cal stone.
ט	Teth	Ⲇ	To enjoy the universal medicine.
י	Yod	Ⲉ	To be acquainted with the laws of perpetual motion and in a position to demonstrate the quadrature of the circle.
כ	Kaph	Ⲑ	To change into gold not only all metals, but also the earth itself, and even the refuse of the earth.
ל	Lame	Ⲓ	To subdue the most ferocious animals and be able to pronounce the words which paralyse and charm serpents.
מ	Mem	Ⲕ	To possess the Ars Notoria which gives the universal science.
נ	Nun	Ⲗ	To speak learnedly on all subjects, without preparation and without study.

"These, finally, are the seven last powers of the magus:

Hebrew Letter	Phoenician Alphabet	Powe s and Privileges of the Solomon ic Magus
ס Samekh	𐤎	To know at first sight the deep things of the souls of men and the mysteries of the hearts of women.
ע Ayin	𐤊	To force nature to make him free at his pleasure,
פ Peh	𐤑	To foresee all future events which do not depend on a superior free will, or on an undiscernible cause.
צ Tzaddi	𐤚	To give at once and to all the most efficacious consolations and the most wholesome counsels.
ק Q ph	𐤒	To triumph over adversities.
ר Resh	𐤓	To conquer love and hate.
ש Shin	𐤔	To have the secret of wealth, to be always its master and never its slave. To know how to enjoy even poverty and never become abject or miserable,
ת Tav	𐤕	Let us add to these three septenaries that the wise man rules the elements, stills tempests, cures the diseased by his touch, and raises the dead!

"At the same time, there are certain things which have been sealed by Solomon with his triple seal. It is enough that the initiates know, and as for others, whether they deride, doubt, or believe, whether they threaten or fear, what matters it to science or to us? "

Such are actually the issues of occult philosophy, and we are in a position to withstand an accusation of insanity or a suspicion of imposture when we affirm that all these privileges are real.

To demonstrate this is the sole end of our work on occult philosophy. The philosophical stone, the universal medicine, the transmutation of metals, the quadrature of the circle, and the secret of perpetual motion, are thus neither mystifications of science nor dreams of madness.

They are terms which must be understood in their veritable sense; they are expressions of the different applications of one same secret, the several characteristics of one same

The Five Achievements of Your Great Work:

1. The philosophical stone
2. The universal medicine
3. Transmutation of metals
4. Quadrature of the circle
5. Secret of perpetual motion

Know that all five achievements or these five expressions of your Great Work share the same common denominator, the same Secret:

operation, which is defined in a more comprehensive manner under the name of the great work.

Furthermore, there exists in nature a force which is immeasurably more powerful than steam, and by means of which a single man, who knows how to adapt and direct it, might upset and alter the face of the world.

This force was known to the ancients; it consists in an universal agent having equilibrium for its supreme law, while its direction is concerned immediately with the great arcanum of transcendent magic.

By the direction of this agent it is possible to change the very order of the seasons; to produce at night the phenomena of day; to correspond instantaneously between one extremity of the earth and the other; to see, like Apollonius, what is taking place on the other side of the world; to heal or injure at a distance; to give speech an universal success and reverberation.

This agent, which barely manifests under the uncertain methods of Mesmer's followers, is precisely that which the adepts of the middle ages denominated the first matter of the great work. The Gnostics represented it as the fiery body of the Holy Spirit; it was the object of adoration in the secret rites of the Sabbath and the Temple, under the hieroglyphic figure of Baphomet or the Androgyne of Mendes. All this will be proved.

Such are the secrets of occult philosophy, such is magic in history; let us now glance at it as it appears in its books and its achievements, in its initiations and its rites. The key of all magical allegories is found in the tablets we have already mentioned, and these tablets we regard as the work of Hermes.

About this book, which may be called the keystone of the whole edifice of occult science, are grouped innumerable legends which are either its partial translation or its commentary renewed endlessly under a thousand different forms.

Sometimes these ingenious fables combine harmoniously

YHVH
ASOT
THOT
TARO

The great arcanum of transcendent magic, which this text is about, is premised on mastery and control over the Universal Agent.

Initially these claims seem to be wild and preposterous, but noting Levi's earlier assertions about science and magic as incorporated, read this same passage again, interpreted as scientific innovation and technology.

Franz Mesmer (1732 – 1815) was a German physician, astronomer, and proponent of a concept he called animal magnetism, or mesmerism, where an invisible force (*lebensmagnetismus*) possesses all living beings.

Levi notes in Chapter I, "Preparations" of Part II, *Ritual*:

"Hereunto therefore we have made it plain, as we believe, that our Magic is opposed to the Goetic and necromantic kinds."

Goetic magic here is in reference to the specific practice of using principles from the *Key of Solomon* and related works to conjure demons.

into a great epic which characterises an epoch, though how or why is not clear to the uninitiated. Thus, the fabulous history of the Golden Fleece both resumes and veils the Hermetic and magical doctrines of Orpheus, and if we recur only to the mysterious poetry of Greece, it is because the sanctuaries of Egypt and India to some extent dismay us by their resources, and leave our choice embarrassed in the midst of such abundant wealth. We are eager, moreover, to reach the Thebaid at once, that dread synthesis of all doctrine, past, present, and future, that, so to speak, infinite fable, which comprehends, like the Deity of Orpheus, the two extremities of the cycle of human life.

Extraordinary fact! The seven gates of Thebes, attacked and defended by seven chiefs who have sworn upon the blood of victims, possess the same significance as the seven seals of the sacred book interpreted by seven genii, and assailed by a monster with seven heads, after being opened by a living yet immolated lamb, in the allegorical work of St. John. The mysterious origin of Oedipus, found suspended from the tree of Cytheron like a bleeding fruit, recalls the symbols of Moses and the narratives of Genesis. He makes war upon his father, whom he slays without knowing alarming prophecy of the blind emancipation of reason without science; he then meets with the sphinx the sphinx, that symbol of symbols, the eternal enigma of the vulgar, the granite pedestal of the science of the sages, the voracious and silent monster whose invariable form expresses the one dogma of the great universal mystery. How is the tetrad changed into the duad and explained by the triad?

In more common but more emblematic terms, what is that animal which in the morning has four feet, two at noon, and three in the evening? Philosophically speaking, how does the doctrine of elementary forces produce the dualism of Zoroaster, while it is summed by the triad of Pythagoras and Plato? What is the ultimate reason of allegories and numbers, the final message of all symbolisms? Oedipus replies with a simple and terrible word which destroys the sphinx and makes the diviner King of Thebes; the answer to the enigma is Man! . . . Unfortunate! He has seen too much, and yet with insufficient clearness; he must presently expiate his calamitous and imperfect clairvoyance by a voluntary blindness, and then vanish in the midst of a storm, like all

Golden Fleece: Fleece of a golden-haired winged ram from Greek mythos; symbolizes authority and divine right of sovereignty

Orphic Mysteries: A Hellenistic mystery cult and set of esoteric rites associated with Orpheus and the Orphic Hymns

Thebaid: Latin epic poem by Publius Papinius Statius (45-96 AD), subdivided into 12 books, about the Seven Against Thebes, or seven champions

Riddle of the Sphinx (from *Oedipus the King*, by Sophocles): “What is that which has one voice and yet becomes four-footed, and two-footed, and three-footed?”

Oedipus answers: “Man—who crawls on all fours as a baby, then walks on two feet as an adult, and then uses a walking stick in old age.”

Alternate version of the Riddle: “There are two sisters: one gives birth to the other and she, in turn, gives birth to the first. Who are the two sisters?”

The answer: “Day (ἡμέρα) and Night (νύξ).”

civilisations which may at any time divine the answer to the riddle of the sphinx without grasping its whole import and mystery.

Everything is symbolical and transcendental in this titanic epic of human destinies. The two hostile brethren express the second part of the grand mystery divinely completed by the sacrifice of Antigone; then comes the last war; the brethren slay one another, Capaneus is destroyed by the lightning which he defies, Amphiaraus is swallowed by the earth, and all these are so many allegories which, by their truth and their grandeur, astonish those who can penetrate their triple hieratic sense. Aeschylus, annotated by Ballanche, gives only a weak notion concerning them, whatever the primeval sublimities of the Greek poet or the beauty of the French critic.

The secret book of antique initiation was not unknown to Homer, who outlines its plan and chief figures on the shield of Achilles, with minute precision. But the gracious fictions of Homer replaced speedily in the popular memory the simple and abstract truths of primeval revelation. Humanity clung to the form and allowed the idea to be forgotten; signs lost power in their multiplication; magic also at this period became corrupted, and degenerated with the sorcerers of Thessaly into the most profane enchantments. Thejcrime of Oedipus brought forth its deadly fruits, and the science of good and evil erected evil into a sacrilegious divinity. Men, weary of the light, took refuge in the shadow of bodily substance; the dream of the void, which is filled by God, soon appeared to be greater than God himself in their eyes, and thus hell was created.

When, in the course of this work, we make use of the consecrated terms God, Heaven, and Hell, let it be thoroughly understood, once for all, that our meaning is as far removed from that which the profane attach to them as initiation is distant from vulgar thought. God, for us, is the AZOT of the sages, the efficient and final principle of the Great Work.

Returning to the fable of Oedipus, the crime of the King of Thebes was that he failed to understand the sphinx, that he destroyed the scourge of Thebes without being pure enough to complete the expiation in the name of his people. The

Sacrifice of Antigone:
Choosing to live (and die) by
Divine Law over Human Law

Capaneus: Formidable warrior
of Greek mythos who defies
Zeus and demonstrates
arrogance against the gods

Amphiaraus: Meaning “twice
Aries-like”; a Seer and favorite
of both Zeus and Apollo

Shield of Achilles, as
described by Homer, features:
the earth, sun, moon, and
constellations, sea and sky,
two beautiful cities full of
people, depicting a wedding
in one and a court trial in the
other, etc.

Here, Levi emphasizes that
references to God are in no
way attached to the profane
aspects of religion, but rather,
is referring to a monistic
panentheism (an all-in-God
concept to the Universe).

Oedipus: Tragic hero of Greek
mythos who was prophesied to
kill his father the king of Thebes
and marry his mother, so the

plague, in consequence, avenged speedily the death of the monster, and the King of Thebes, forced to abdicate, sacrificed himself to the terrible manes of the sphinx, more alive and voracious than ever when it had passed from the domain of form into that of idea. Oedipus divined what was man and he put out his own eyes because he did not see what was God. He divulged half of the great arcanum, and, to save his people, it was necessary for him to bear the remaining half of the terrible secret into exile and the tomb. After the colossal fable of Oedipus we find the gracious poem of Psyche, which was certainly not invented by Apuleius.

The great magical arcanum reappears here under the figure of a mysterious union between a god and a weak mortal abandoned alone and naked on a rock. Psyche must remain in ignorance of the secret of her ideal royalty, and if she behold her husband she must lose him. Here Apuleius commentates and interprets Moses, but did not the Elohim of Israel and the gods of Apuleius both issue from the sanctuaries of Memphis and Thebes?

Psyche is the sister of Eve, or, rather, is Eve spiritualised.

Both desire to know and lose innocence for the honour of the ordeal. Both deserve to go down into hell, one to bring back the antique box of Pandora, the other to find and to crush the head of the old serpent, who is the symbol of time and of evil. Both are guilty of the crime which must be expiated by the Prometheus of ancient days and the Lucifer of the Christian legend, the one delivered, the other overcome, by Hercules and by the Saviour.

The great magical secret is, therefore, the lamp and dagger of Psyche, the apple of Eve, the sacred fire of Prometheus, the burning sceptre of Lucifer, but it is also the holy cross of the Redeemer. To be acquainted with it sufficiently to abuse or divulge it is to deserve all sufferings; to know it as one should know it, namely, to make use of and conceal it, is to be master of the absolute.

Everything is contained in a single word, which consists of four letters; it is the Tetragram of the Hebrews, the AzoT of the alchemists, the Thot of the Bohemians, or the Taro of the

king sent the boy away to be killed. However, Oedipus was not killed, grew up, and after solving the riddle of the Sphinx, was responsible for his father, the king's death, and married his mother. After realizing what he had done, Oedipus takes two pins from his mother (and wife's) dress and blinds himself.

Apuleius (124 – 170 AD): Platonist philosopher and writer. Was accused of using sorcery to win the affections of a wealthy widow. Author of *The Golden Ass*, a novel about a protagonist Lucius's obsession with magic and spell-crafting, who is later saved by the goddess Isis.

Psyche (namesake "Breath of Life" or "Soul") was married to Cupid. Gnostics saw her as analogous to Adam, and story an allegory to the fall of the human soul. When Psyche lost her virginity to Cupid, her blood created the first rose.

Knowledge is the great magical secret. The lamp symbolizes illumination to see what is truly there in the dark. Psyche's dagger represents power, but in the way Psyche inadvertently wounded herself, the occultist runs a grave risk of inadvertently causing self-inflicted harm through the acquiring of occult power.

Kabbalists.

This word, expressed after so many manners, means God for the profane, man for the philosophers, and imparts to the adepts the final word of human sciences and the key of divine power; but he only can use it who understands the necessity of never revealing it. Had Oedipus, instead of killing the sphinx, overcome it, harnessed it to his chariot, and thus entered Thebes, he would have been king without incest, without misfortunes, and without exile. Had Psyche, by meekness and affection, persuaded Love to reveal himself, she would never have lost Love. Now, Love is one of the mythological images of the great secret and the great agent, because it at once expresses an action and a passion, a void and a plenitude, a shaft and a wound. The initiates will understand me, and, on account of the profane, I must not speak more clearly.

After the marvellous Golden Ass of Apuleius, we find no more magical epics. Science, conquered in Alexandria by the fanaticism of the murderers of Hypatia, became Christian, or, rather, concealed itself under Christian veils with Ammonius, Synesius, and the pseudonymous author of the books of Dionysius the Areopagite. In such times it was needful to excuse miracles by the garb of superstition and science by an unintelligible language. Hieroglyphic writing was revived; pantacles and characters were invented to summarise an entire doctrine by a sign, a whole sequence of tendencies and revelations in a word.

What was the end of the aspirants to knowledge?

They sought the secret of the great work, or the philosophical stone, or the perpetual motion, or the quadrature of the circle, or the universal medicine formulas which often saved them from persecution and hatred by causing them to be taxed with madness, and all signifying one of the phases of the great magical secret, as we shall shew later on. This absence of epics continues till our Romance of the Rose; but the rose-symbol, which expresses also the mysterious and magical sense of Dante's poem, is borrowed from the transcendent Kabbalah, and it is time that we should have recourse to this immense and concealed source of universal philosophy.

YHVH
ASOT
THOT
TARO

What do the foregoing actually mean? To the profane, it means God. To the philosophers, it means human intelligence. But to the occultist, it holds the key to transcendence and mastery of transcendental magic.



Portrait of Hypatia (1908)
By Jules Maurice Gaspard



The Bible, with all its allegories, gives expression to the religious knowledge of the Hebrews in only an incomplete and veiled manner. The book which we have mentioned, the hieratic characters of which we shall explain subsequently, that book which William Postel names the Genesis of Enoch, certainly existed before Moses and the prophets, whose doctrine, fundamentally identical with that of the ancient Egyptians, had also its exotericism and its veils. When Moses spoke to the people, says the sacred book allegorically, he placed a veil over his face, and he removed it when addressing God; this accounts for the alleged Biblical absurdities which so exercised the satirical powers of Voltaire. The books were only written as memorials of tradition, and in symbols that were unintelligible for the profane. The Pentateuch and the poems of the prophets were, moreover, elementary works, alike in doctrine, ethics, and liturgy; the true secret and traditional philosophy was not committed to writing until a later period, and under veils even less transparent.



Thus arose a second and unknown Bible, or rather one which was not comprehended by Christians, a storehouse, so they say, of monstrous absurdities, for, in this case, believers, confounded in the same ignorance, speak the language of sceptics; a monument, as we affirm, which comprises all that philosophical genius and religious genius have ever accomplished or imagined in the order of the sublime; a treasure encompassed by thorns; a diamond concealed in a rude and opaque stone: our readers will have already guessed that we refer to the Talmud.

Reference to the Book of Raziel, etched onto the facets of a sapphire stone.

Talmud: Body of Jewish civil and ceremonial or rabbinic law, dated to around 200 AD

How strange is the destiny of the Jews, those scapegoats, martyrs, and saviours of the world, a people full of vitality, a bold and hardy race, which persecutions have always preserved intact, because it has not yet accomplished its mission!

Do not our apostolical traditions declare that, after the decline of faith among the Gentiles, salvation shall again come forth out of the house of Jacob, and that then the crucified Jew who is adored by the Christians will give the empire of the world into the hands of God his Father ?

On penetrating into the sanctuary of the Kabbalah one is seized with admiration at the sight of a doctrine so logical, so simple, and, at the same time, so absolute.

The essential union of ideas and signs--

...the consecration of the most fundamental realities by primitive characters--

... the trinity of words, letters, and numbers--

... a philosophy simple as the alphabet, profound and infinite as the Word--

...theorems more complete and luminous than those of Pythagoras--

... a theology which may be summed up on the fingers--

...an infinite which can be held in the hollow of an infant's hand--

...ten figures and twenty-two letters, a triangle, a square, and a circle--

These are the entire elements of the Kabbalah.

These are the component principles of the written Word, reflection of that spoken Word which created the world!

All truly dogmatic religions have issued from the Kabbalah and return therein; whatsoever is grand or scientific in the religious dreams of all the illuminated, Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, Saint Martin, etc., is borrowed from the Kabbalah; all masonic associations owe to it their secrets and their symbols.

The Kabbalah alone consecrates the alliance of universal reason and the divine Word; it establishes, by the counterpoise of two forces apparently opposed, the eternal balance of being; it only reconciles reason with faith, power with liberty, science with mystery; it has the keys of the present, past, and future!

To become initiated into the Kabbalah, it is insufficient to read and to meditate upon the writings of Reuchlin, Galatinus, Kircher, or Picus de Mirandola; it is necessary to

Here, Levi sets up his view that studying the Kabbalah is imperative to understanding the concepts he'll be covering in *Transcendental*, that Kabbalistic principles are revealing of the *prisca theologia* (an ancient theology that is also the basis of a universal religion), and how he believes that the synchronicities between the Kabbalah and the tarot demonstrates that the two share the same divine origin.

Arcana Cælestia (The Mysteries of Heaven), a multi-volume text written in the 18th century by theologian, mystic, and philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg, espoused the theological doctrine of correspondence, which essentially was to say that there is a correlation between the spirit and the body, intention and action, and God the Creator and the World Created. He gives the example of light—light illuminates what the physical eyes can see, and so light corresponds with wisdom, because wisdom illuminates what the mind can perceive.

A. E. Waite includes a footnote here dismissing Levi's understanding of the Kabbalah and writes, "No account of Kabbalism could be more

study and to understand the Hebrew writers in the collection of Pistorius, the *Sepher Yetzirah* above all; it is necessary also to master the great book Zohar, read attentively in the collection of 1684, entitled *Kallala Denudata*, the treatise of Kabbalistic Pneumatics, and that of the Revolution of Souls; and afterwards to enter boldly into the luminous darkness of the whole dogmatic and allegorical body of the Talmud. Then we shall be in a position to understand William Postel, and can admit secretly that apart from his very premature and over-generous dreams about the emancipation of women, this celebrated, learned, illuminated man could not have been so mad as is pretended by those who have not read him.

We have sketched rapidly the history of occult philosophy; we have indicated its sources and analysed in a few words its principal books.

This work refers only to the science, but magic, or, rather, magical power, is composed of two things:

- (1) a science and
- (2) a force;

without the force the science is nothing, or, rather, it is a danger.

To give knowledge to power alone, such is the supreme law of initiations. Hence did the Great Revealer say: "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent only shall carry it away."

The door of truth is closed like the sanctuary of a virgin; he must be a man who would enter. **All miracles are promised to faith, and what is faith except the audacity of a will which does not hesitate in the darkness, but advances towards the light in spite of all ordeals, and surmounting all obstacles?**

It is unnecessary to repeat here the history of ancient initiations; the more dangerous and terrible they were, the greater was their efficacy. Hence, in those days, the world had men to govern and instruct it. The sacerdotal art and the royal art consisted above all in ordeals of courage, discretion, and will. It was a novitiate similar to that of those priests

egregiously irrelevant."

Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522):
German humanist; scholar of Greek and Hebrew works

Petrus Galatinus (1460–1540):
Italian theologian and Orientalist

Athanasius Kircher (1602–1680):
Jesuit scholar and polymath with an interest in Egyptology and Sinology

Picus de Mirandola (1463–1494):
Renaissance philosopher;
credited as the founder of Christian Kabbalah

Magic consists of two components:

- (1) a Science, and**
- (2) a Force.**

Faith is the audacity to exert your will and confront the darkness, to brave through every obstacle until you find the Light.

who, under the name of Jesuits, are so unpopular at the present day, but would govern the world, notwithstanding, had they a truly wise and intelligent chief.

After passing our life in the search after the absolute in religion, science, and justice; after turning in the circle of Faust, we have reached the primal doctrine and the first book of humanity. There we pause, there we have discovered the secret of human omnipotence and indefinite progress, the key of all symbolisms, the first and final doctrine, and we have come to understand what was meant by that expression so often made use of in the Gospel the Kingdom of God.

To provide a fixed point as a fulcrum for human activity is to solve the problem of Archimedes by realising the application of his famous lever. This it is which was accomplished by the great initiators who have electrified the world, and they could not have done so except by means of the great and incommunicable secret.

However, **as a guarantee of its renewed youth, the symbolical phoenix never reappeared before the eyes of the world without having solemnly consumed the remains and evidences of his previous life.** It is thus that Moses caused all those to perish in the desert who could have known Egypt and her mysteries; thus, at Ephesus, St Paul burnt all books which treated of the occult sciences; thus, finally, the French Revolution, daughter of the great Johannite Orient and the ashes of the Templars, spoliated the churches and blasphemed the allegories of the divine cultus.

But all doctrines and all revivals proscribe magic, and condemn its mysteries to the flames and to oblivion. The reason is that each cultus or philosophy which comes into the world is a Benjamin of humanity which lives by the death of its mother; it is because the symbolical serpent seems ever devouring its own tail; it is because, as essential condition of existence, a void is necessary to every plenitude, space for every dimension, an affirmation for each negation; it is the eternal realisation of the phoenix allegory.

Levi alludes again to that same concealed doctrine, the occult science that he believes to be behind the allegories of ancient doctrines, positive Christianity, alchemy, the initiatory rites of mystery traditions, the Orphic Hymns, Persian magic, the Vedas, and that which we've inherited from Nineveh, Thebes, Assyria, and ancient Egypt.

St. Paul established the first Christian community in Ephesus, though in doing so, rid the city of magicians, soothsayers, and pagans.

Johannite Christians purportedly believed that Jesus was carried to Egypt as a child and initiated into the occult sciences there, by priests of Osiris, who treated Jesus as the incarnation of Horus.

Reference to Benjamin here is to the youngest child of Jacob, progenitor of the Tribe of Benjamin; mother Rachel died after giving birth to him. Tribe of Benjamin was known for its military prowess and being taught how to fight left-handed.

Two illustrious scholars have already preceded me along the path I am travelling, but they have, so to speak, spent the dark night therein. I refer to Volney and Dupuis, to Dupuis above all, whose immense erudition has produced only a negative work, for in the origin of all religions he has seen nothing but astronomy, taking thus the symbolic cycle for doctrine and the calendar for legend. He was deficient in one branch of knowledge, that of true magic, which comprises the secrets of the Kabbalah. Dupuis passed through the antique sanctuaries like the prophet Ezekiel over the plain strewn with bones, and only understood death, for want of that word which collects the virtue of the four winds, and can make a living people of all the vast ossuary, by crying to the ancient symbols:

"Arise! Take up a new form and walk!" Hence the hour has come when we must have the boldness to attempt what no one has dared to perform previously. Like Julian, we would rebuild the temple, and in so doing we do not believe that we shall be belying a wisdom that we adore, which also Julian would himself have been worthy to adore, had the rancorous and fanatical doctors of his period permitted him to understand it.

For us the temple has two pillars, on one of which Christianity has inscribed its name. We have, therefore, no wish to attack Christianity; far from it, we seek to explain and accomplish it. Intelligence and will have alternately exercised their power in the world; **religion and philosophy are still at war in our own days, but they must end by agreeing.**

The provisional object of Christianity was to establish, by obedience and faith, a supernatural or religious equality among men, and to immobilise intelligence by faith, so as to provide a fulcrum for virtue which came for the destruction of the aristocracy of science, or, rather, to replace that aristocracy already destroyed. Philosophy, on the contrary, has laboured to bring back men by liberty and reason to natural inequality, and to substitute astuteness for virtue by inaugurating the reign of industry. Neither of the two operations has proved complete and adequate, neither has brought men to perfection and felicity. What is now dreamed, almost without daring to hope for it, is an alliance between these two forces so long regarded as contrary, and

Constantin François de Chassebœuf, comte de Volney (1757-1820): French philosopher, abolitionist, and Orientalist; advocated the Christ myth theory

Charles-François Dupuis (1742-1809): Polymath and lawyer who also advocated the Christ myth theory



From *The Book of Dreams and Ghosts* (1897) by Andrew Lang

Faith and religion equalizes humanity, offering redemption and salvation to anyone through virtue, which anyone can practice.

On the other hand, says Levi, philosophy reveals the inequality of humanity, because each one's intelligence and ability to reason varies. He notes a natural inequality to our aptitudes.

How do we reconcile the two, to

there is good ground for desiring their union, for these two great powers of the human soul are no more opposed to one another than the sex of man is opposed to that of woman; undoubtedly they differ, but their apparently contrary dispositions come only from their aptitude to meet and unite.

"There is no less proposed, therefore, than an universal solution of all problems?"

No doubt, since we are concerned with explaining the philosophical stone, perpetual motion, the secret of the great work and of the universal medicine. We shall be accused of insanity, like the divine Paracelsus, or of charlatanism, like the great and unfortunate Agrippa. If the pyre of Urbain Grandier be extinguished, the sullen proscriptions of silence and of calumny remain. We do not brave but are resigned to them. We have not sought ourselves the publication of this book, and we believe that if the time be come to produce speech, it will be produced by us or by others. We shall therefore remain calm and wait.

Our work has two parts: in the one we establish the Kabbalistic and magical doctrine in its entirety; the other is consecrated to the cultus, that is, to ceremonial magic.

The one is that which the ancient sages termed the clavicle, the other that which rural people still call the grimoire. The numbers and subjects of the chapters, which correspond in both parts, are in no sense arbitrary, and are all indicated in the great universal key, of which we give for the first time a complete and adequate explanation. Let this work now go its way where it wills, and become what Providence determines; it is finished, and we believe it to be enduring, because it is strong, like all that is reasonable and conscientious.

ELIPHAS LEVI

harmonize religion and philosophy? After all, that must be your ultimate objective as the magus.

Urbain Grandier (1590 – 1634): French Catholic priest who was accused of practicing witchcraft and black magic, and subsequently burned at the stake. Levi brings up Grandier again in Chapter VIII, "Realization."

Transcendental Magic is divided into two parts:
Part I. Doctrine
Part II. Ritual

Chapters I through XII herein are from Part I. Doctrine only, on magical doctrine, with short excerpts from Part II. Ritual interspersed throughout. Part II. Ritual is based in large part on the *Key of Solomon*.

Finally, Levi reminds the reader that the chapter numbers for these books are not arbitrary, so pay attention.

VEL SANCTUM INVENIT, VEL SANCTUM FACIT

"High magic [transcendental magic] leads man back to the laws of the purest morality. Either he finds a thing holy or makes it holy."

(Key to the Great Mysteries, Eliphas Levi)