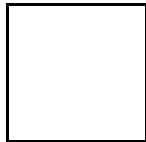


BIBLE ENLIGHTENED:
RELIGIONS AND YOGA

by
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FIRST VOLUME



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**This book is dedicated with the deepest respect
to SHRI NIRMALA SRIVASTAVA**

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“Who is wise, and he shall understand these things?
intelligent, and he shall know them?”

Hosea 14:9¹

¹ Most of the *Bible* quotations are given after *The Holy Bible*, translated from the original text and at the same time a collation of J.N. Darby’s German and French versions, Gute Botschaft Verlag (Good News Publ.), Dillenburg (Germany) 1889. *The New Testament*, new translation from a revised text of the Greek original, 2nd edition, G. Moorish, London 1871.

Unless otherwise indicated, all footnotes are by Dan Costian.

FOREWORD

“The Bible is the most read and, also, the least understood book”

Paradox of the *Bible*

*“Both read the Bible day and night
But thou readst black where I read white”*

William Blake [1]²

A careful reader will find it obvious that the biblical Scriptures contain quite a number of enigmatic aspects. They were and still are the purpose of some exciting research, the objectivity of which has often been doubted since they serve either theology or atheism. Very surprisingly, the greatest historian of religions, Mircea Eliade paid little attention to the study of the *Bible* [2]. By no means do we attempt at an approach of all these enigmas but only of those that could be explained through our knowledge about the Indian civilization, culture and philosophy as well as founded on geographical or historical data and, the last but not least on Yoga (meaning mostly Sahaja Yoga).

From the very beginning, it is to be pointed out that we have taken into account the possibility of some experts detaching themselves from certain hypotheses presented here, but we believe it would be our duty to inform the reader—as correctly and completely as possible—about the less orthodox³ views, and let him/her freely accept or reject them.

The learned scholars of the history of religions have noticed several undeniable similarities among some basic elements in the Scriptures. Thus, they have found a good opportunity to advocate the prominence of one religion over another, trying to invoke such facts as proofs for asserting that one religion could have been inspired by another. For example, most criticism brought up by the atheists against the *Bible* relies on the analogies existing between the latter and other previous sources, with the final aim of

² Except for the quotations in the *Bible* and the *Qur'an* given in the text, the other references will be provided at the end of each chapter as specified by the number between square brackets [...].

³ We have used the term *orthodox* to designate the right faith or doctrine (*orthodoxos*, from *orthos*, right, correct, and *dóxa*, opinion, belief, Gr.), and *Orthodox* for the Eastern Church that separated in 1054 from the Catholic (Western) Church.

discrediting the holiness of this Scripture. Some have thus maintained that the Old Testament was inspired from the traditions of the Mesopotamian peoples, while others—that the teachings of Christ might have had their origin in Buddhism or in the precepts of the Essenes sect (who left us the famous *Dead Sea Scrolls*). Similarly, others claimed that Buddhism has originated in Taoism and so forth.

We should confess to the reader that these ambitions seem meaningless to us and that we do not, in the least, intend to subscribe to any of the above ideas.

This book, through the hypotheses suggested above, does not attempt at minimizing the sacredness of the *Bible* but, on the contrary, at proving the existence of a unique source in the case of the Scriptures of all religions, namely the Word of a unique God no matter how we name Him, His Word revealed to the whole world through initiated persons.

The message that we should like to communicate to the reader does not concern the priority or the superiority of one or another religion, but that the progress of the human spirituality—originating in certain archetypes found at people from different geographical areas and historical periods—has a universal nature. Whenever we found it possible, we resorted to sources outside Indian history and geography to highlight this universal feature that is the core of man striving to come closer to God and Truth.

Titus Burckhardt affirmed: “<truth is one> and it is spiritually comforting to discover it hidden under the most diverse appearances. Obviously we are speaking here of spiritual and eternal truth and not of that wholly external truth which can be measured by science. We recognize eternal, universal truth because we find it in the very depths of our own being, in our heart” [3].

Heinrich Zimmer, the great indologist showed that, “during the Renaissance, there was even a moment (represented strikingly in the figure of Pico della Mirandola) when the last walls of orthodox exclusiveness seemed about to yield, and Ovid, Homer, the Kabbalah⁴, the *Qur'an*⁵ were being found to be in essential concord with the sacred pamphlets of the Christian movement. Behind the variety of symbols, a universally constant, vastly sophisticated tradition of human wisdom was joyfully recognized, and

⁴ *Qabalah*, received (Hebr.). For certain words, the English spelling requires the doubling of the consonant as compared to the written form in Hebrew or in other languages. The original spelling would be given in brackets.

⁵ *Al-Qur'an*, recitation (Arab.).

was on the point, even, of being officially conceded by the guardians of the «One True Faith» [4]. “*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*⁶ is an admittedly difficult Christian doctrine, not to be taken *au pied de la lettre*⁷. It must not be overlooked that «All that is true, by whomsoever it has been said, is from the Holy Spirit» [5]; accordingly, even St. Thomas could speak of the doctrines of the pagan philosophers as affording «extrinsic and probable proofs» of the truths of Christianity; and the same would apply to the teachings of Indian and Chinese metaphysicists of which there was no knowledge in those days. All fundamental theological propositions... are common to all orthodox traditions. «*All Scripture cries aloud for freedom from Self*». Religions (subject to the fallibility of human interpretation) necessarily differ in emphasis and modality, but the infallible truth of which all are expressions in one; and the same is coming when a *Summa of the Philosophia Perennis*⁸ (et Universalis) based on all orthodox sources whatever, not excluding those of «folklore» will have to be written”—said Ananda K. Coomaraswamy [7].

According to Zimmer: “The life strength of symbols and symbolic figures is inexhaustible, especially when carried forward by a highly conservative, traditional civilization, such as that of India. Our conventional histories of the development of mankind, the growth of human institutions, and the progress of religion, virtues and ideals, not infrequently misrepresent the situation totally, by describing as new departures the returns to power of archaic, archetypal forms” [8]. In his turn, the archaeologist and assyriologist Walter Andrae showed: “He who marvels that a formal symbol can remain alive not only for millenniums, but that it can spring to life again after an interruption of thousands of years, should remind himself that the power from the spiritual world, which forms one part of the symbol, is eternal... It is the spiritual power that knows and wills, and manifests itself when and where its due time comes” [9].

Let us try, despite our education and one-sided religious tradition, to objectively place us above any kind of partisan prejudgment and to start from the understanding that God is One, irrespective of His being called Yahweh, Allah or Shiva. Let us also admit that all the high personalities of the

⁶ “Outside the Church there is no salvation” (Lat.), a formula used first by Cyprian (c.210-258).

⁷ Word for word (Fr.), or *ad litteram* (Lat.).

⁸ The *philosophia perennis* is understood as the connecting link between the different religious concepts [6].

spiritual history of humankind—from the humble prophets to the founders of the great religions, whose statements lasted in time—were actually the word carriers of this unique God. In other terms, God Almighty chose the revelations as the means of communicating with people from different times and places and conveyed His message to a few chosen ones who, by employing their language, skill and effort to reach the understanding of masses, used parables and metaphors or even left out some parts of the divine message either because they could not read it themselves or because they realized that the people of that time was not ready for it. Thus, the *Aquarian Gospel* reads: “There are a multitude of things that this age cannot receive, because it cannot comprehend” [10]. Jesus warned: “I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now” (John 16:12). “And with many... parables⁹ he spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear, but without a parable spoke he not to them” (Mark 4:33). When the apostles asked Jesus Christ about the people who were listening to Him: “«Why speakest thou to them in parables?»... He answer[ing] said to them: «Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of the Heavens, but to them it is not given»” (Matthew 13:10-11; also ch. XI B and XXII E).

Here is what Augustine of Hippo stated: “What is now called the Christian religion existed even among the ancients and was not lacking from the beginning of the human race until «Christ came in the flesh». From that time, true religion, which already existed, began to be called Christian” [11]. Schuon shows: “This passage has been commented upon as follows by the Abbé P.-J. Jallabert in his book *Le Catholicisme avant Jésus-Christ*: «The Catholic religion is but a continuation of the primitive religion».” The abbot reached the conclusion: “This Divine Revelation... had nevertheless been preserved in its purity and perhaps in all its perfection in the mysteries of Eleusis, Lemnos, and Samothrace¹⁰” [13].

With a modern and enlarged outlook, Elaine Pagels wrote: “What we call Eastern and Western religions, and tend to regard as separate streams, were not clearly differentiated 2,000 years ago. Research... is only beginning: we

⁹ *Parabolé* (Gr.).

¹⁰ There were numerous places where the mysteries were celebrated. Mention should be made not only of the Greek mysteries but also of those in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Rome, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Thrace, Crete, Boeotia and Karia. They were devoted to the Cabiri, Corybantes, Titans, Graces, the Great Gods, as well as to Demeter, Athena, Aphrodite, Hera, Hecate, Dionysus, Cronus, Zeus, Antinous, Dioscuri etc. [12].

look forward to the works of scholars who can study these traditions comparatively to discover whether they can, in fact, be traced to Indian sources” [14].

“A little research soon shows that no faith is entirely new, that few dogmas are peculiar to any one religion, but all have a mixed ancestry. Just as in linguistics¹¹ the Sanskrit word *brather*, the Latin *frater*, the French *frère*, the German *bruder*, and the English *brother* indicate a common... stock, so does the similarity of several religious doctrines indicate the influence of older contacts. The recorded researches of comparative religion and the revelations of comparative mythology have already put a sorry face upon the narrow notion that any one creed contains the only revelation of whatever Gods there be” [15].

We can infer that the revelations made by the unique God through the mouth of His chosen ones are equal in value, irrespective of time and place, and that all the religions have a common essence, namely the divine message. Whatever sets them apart presently comes from man and not from God, it comes from ritualistic, interpretations, dogmas and from the institutions set up by the few ones to the loss of many.

Let us assume, for a moment, that only the *Bible* contains God’s Truth. This would imply that we, as Christians, are in a privileged position. However, that one person is a Hindu and another is a Muslim is just a pure chance: only chance has made any of them to be born in a certain geographical zone or family, to have a certain belief or a specific religious education gaining support from the local tradition. Of course, this would be a complete nonsense. The simple accident of being born and educated under specific conditions¹² cannot forbid access to God’s Truth. It would be not only absurd but also unjust from the part of the Creator who cherishes a tremendous love for *all* the human beings. We must admit that because of the “accident” of birth we have no merit in having embraced one belief over another.

“The broadening effect of mysticism upon man’s religious outlook is an incentive to tolerance and therefore a definite asset in this intolerant world. To take the *Bible*, for instance, as the sole authentic basis of religious truth, completely ignoring the possibility that other races, such as the Hindus or the Chinese, have produced scriptures which deserve at least an equal claim to

¹¹ Ch. I.

¹² We consider slightly probable that an Indian peasant should adopt Judaism or that an African tribe chief should become a worshipper of Shiva.

consideration, is a narrow view. This religious bigotry, which can see no other faith than its own, is out of place in our broader time, when the study of comparative religion can demonstrate amply the family ties between the world's faiths. Religious loftiness is not the exclusive possession of any single man, movement or race. The fully developed mystic understands that God's sun shines on all alike" [16].

Indeed, while entering the third millennium since the birth of Jesus we have witnessed, particularly over the last years, a radical change in the position of Christianity, which formerly manifested a strong intolerance towards the other religions. At present, the Church is forced to officially admit to the validity of other beliefs.

The Second Vatican Council held under Paul VI debated on November 21, 1964 the "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" and proclaimed *Lumen Gentium*, which reads: "those who have not yet received the Gospel are related to the People of God in various ways. There is, first, that people to which the covenants and promises were made, and from which Christ was born according to the flesh¹³... But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims¹⁴" [17].

The "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions" *Nostra Aetate* given by Paul VI on October 28, 1965 went even further, widening its acceptance for other non-Christian religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, for all "other religions found everywhere try to counter the restlessness of the human heart, each in its own manner, by proposing «ways», comprising teachings, rules of life, and sacred rites. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men" [18].

In the spirit of the above, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* published in 1994, stated: "The Catholic Church recognizes in other religions that search, among shadows and images, for the God who is unknown yet near since he gives life and breath and all things and wants all men to be saved. Thus, the Church considers all goodness and truth found in these religions as «a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men that

¹³ The Jews.

¹⁴ Adherent to the Islamic religion (Arab.). The plural form is *Muslimum*.

they may at length have life»” [19].

In his *Declaration* of 1998, the pope addressed the believers with the following words: “We request them to remember that the Church draws its sap from the roots of that good olive tree on which the pagan wild offshoots were engrafted” [20] (cf. Romans 11:17-24).

“Some clergy are making the provocative suggestion that Christians should abandon the idea of «one true faith» altogether. «We don’t have a monopoly on God’s truth», says Anglican Bishop Michael Ingham. «Jesus encountered people of other faiths respectfully». In his recently published book, *Mansions of the Spirit*, the Vancouver cleric calls for a new vision of a God who reveals Himself in all the great religions. Adds Ingham: «The task of Christianity today is to remove some of its inflated claims for itself»” [21].

The French priests gave up at converting Muslims since they admitted that salvation is also possible by following Muhammad. Moreover, the priests collect money to help Muslims build mosques in France. Churches have opened their gates to the “non-Christians” who put the statue of the Buddha in place of the crucifix. The Cathedral of Chartres is famous for preserving the veil in which Virgin Mary had given birth to Christ, a gift given by Charles the Bald [22]. That holy place was put at the disposal of the Druids to celebrate the Sun feast at the summer solstice. During the Gulf War, Monsignor Boffet, bishop of Montpellier, and the chiefs of all the religions in town signed a declaration against racialism: “We have to build up a mutual understanding in the reading of the sacred texts of the *Qur’an*, the *Bible*, the *Talmud*¹⁵ and in the respect for the French Constitution, beyond all differences” [23].

Despite the present Islamic fundamentalism, we should never forget that the *Qur’an*¹⁶ acknowledges the validity of Judaism and Christian religion: “Be Jews or Christians and you shall be guided... We believe in God, and in that which has been sent down on us and sent down to Abraham, Isma’il, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and the Prophets, of their Lord; we make no division between any of

¹⁵ “The Teaching” (from *lamud*, taught, Hebr.). It contains 63 books in 524 chapters.

¹⁶ Unless mentioned otherwise, all the *Qur’an* quotes are from *The Koran Interpreted* (transl. by Arthur J. Arberry), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1990, a work considered by the *New Encyclopaedia Britannica* as “generally recognized as the superior English translation.” “The most popular English translation by a non-Muslim is that of the Cambridge Arabist A.J. Arberry” [24].

them, and to Him we surrender” (2.129-130). “They that believe¹⁷ and those of Jewry, and the Christians, and those Sabaeans¹⁸, whoso believes in God and the Last Day, and works righteousness—their wage awaits them with their Lord, and no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow” (2.59). “Truly it¹⁹ is the revelation of the Lord of all Being, brought down by the Faithful Spirit upon thy heart, that you mayest be one of the warners, in a clear, Arabic tongue. Truly it²⁰ is in the Scriptures of the ancients” (26.192-196). “Yet before it²¹ was the Book of Moses for a model and a mercy; and this is a Book confirming, in Arabic tongue” (46.11).

Yaqub ibn Ishaq al-Kindi (d. c. 870) maintained: “We should not be ashamed to acknowledge truth and to assimilate it from whatever source it comes to us, even if it is brought to us by former generations and foreign peoples” [25]. The great Sufi teacher Ibn al-’Arabi declared in his turn: “My heart is open to every form: it is a pasture for gazelles, and a cloister for Christian monks, a temple for idols, the Ka’ba of the pilgrim, the tables of the *Torah*, and the book of the *Qur’an*. I practice the religion of Love; in whatsoever direction His caravans²² advance, the religion of Love shall be my religion and my faith” [26]. Another famous Sufi master al-Hallaj said: “I have meditated on the various religions, forcing myself to understand them, and I have found that they arise from a unique principle having numerous ramifications” [27].

While commenting the Qur’anic texts talking about the messengers sent before Muhammad (4.162; 13.38; 40.78; 57.26), the well-known exegete Abdullah Yusuf Ali wrote: “Allah sent Messengers of His Truth to every people. There are some whose names are known to us through the Holy *Qur’an*, but there are a large number whose names are not made known to us through that medium. We must recognize the Truth wherever we find it.” “Beginning with Adam, Islamic tradition asserts, God sends 124,000 prophets at various times and to every community... The *Qur’an* declares:

¹⁷ Muslims.

¹⁸ A Christian sect in Mesopotamia.

¹⁹ The *Qur’an*.

²⁰ The *Qur’an*.

²¹ The *Qur’an*.

²² Literally: “his camels,” signifying, like the “gazelles” above, the realities of the spirit.

«There is not a nation but a warner was sent to it» (26.207)” [28]. Karen Armstrong made additional remarks: “Today Muslims insist that if Muhammad had known about Hindus and Buddhists, he would have included their religious sages” [29].

Cardinal Lustiger declared: “The problem of the Islam is to find the way of rationality. The problem of the Christian world is to rediscover the path of spirituality” [30].

In his book devoted to the transcendent unity of the religions, F. Schuon observed: “one may ask why so much stupidity and bad faith are to be found in religious polemics... this is a sure sign that the majority of these polemics are tainted with the «sin against the Holy Ghost»²³... The person will be guilty of blasphemy since, by outraging the Divine Truth in an alien form, he is merely profiting by an opportunity to offend God without having to trouble his own conscience. This is the real explanation of the gross and impure zeal displayed by those who, in the name of their religious convictions, devote their lives to making sacred things appear odious, a task they can only accomplish by contemptible methods.” The author inferred: “If Christ had been the only manifestation of the Word, supposing such a uniqueness of manifestation to be possible, the effect of His birth would have been the instantaneous reduction of the universe to ashes” [31]. In order to stress out the deep consideration of Jesus Himself for other beliefs, Schuon quoted the Gospel (Matthew 8:10-12): “Verily I say unto you, not even in Israel have I found so great faith. But I say unto you, that many shall come from [the] rising and setting [sun], and shall lie down at table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens; but the sons of the kingdom²⁴ shall be cast out into the outer darkness” (cf. Luke 13:28-29).

The war of religions has made Cardinal Newman to exclaim: “O how we hate one another for the love of God!” [32].

Mircea Eliade, the great historian of religion, used to make the necessary distinction between the revealed truths and the religions built up around them, and daringly asserted: “I believe that certain primordial revelations can never disappear... What I am sure of is that any future forms of religious experience will be quite different from those we are familiar with in Christianity, Judaism, or Islam, all of which are fossilized, outmoded,

²³ In this respect, Jesus said: “Whosoever shall have spoken a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming [one]” (Matthew 12:32; cf. Mark 3:28-29; Luke 12:10).

²⁴ Israel, the Church (note belonging to F. Schuon).

drained of meaning. I am sure that new forms, new expressions will come” [33]. The Benedictine monk and mystic Bede Griffiths assumes that “The only way is to rediscover the perennial philosophy, the traditional wisdom, which is found in all ancient religions and especially in the great religions of the world. But those religions have in turn become fossilized and each has to be renewed... so that a cosmic, universal religion can emerge... This is the task for the coming centuries as the present world order emerges from the ashes of the old” [34]. That perfectly matched the forecast of Nostradamus about a new Messiah being one who will shake down the dogmas of fossilized religious thought [35] (ch. XIX D).

The comprehension of the divine message in its essence, the liberation of the archetypes from the artificial network created by man, could lead to a pure, universal religion (*Vishwa Nirmala Dharma*, in Sanskrit), thus fulfilling the contemporary (but not only) dream of many exponents of the great religions who, however, are hindered by the dogmatic conservatism of the intolerant, exclusive institutions driven by thirst for power and wealth that have nothing to do with the spirituality of which they are pretending to be the sole, authorized representatives. Schuon referred to the “natural mysticism” précising that here the term “mysticism” is “what relates to a supra-rational communication with Divinity.” In his view, that concept included the “spirituality not entering into the framework of a given religion, which is held to be the sole and supernatural religion.” He adds: “God intervenes directly only in the one supernatural religion that exists, and not outside it” [36].

NOTES

[1] William Blake, *The Everlasting Gospel*, [e], vv.13-14, in *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake*, (David V. Erdman, editor), Doubleday, 1988, p.524. [2] Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1993, p.168. [3] Titus Burckhardt, Preface to Ibn al-‘Arabi, *The Bezels of Wisdom* (transl. by R.W.J. Austin), Paulist Press, New York, Toronto 1980, p.XI. [4] Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 1990, pp.218-219. [5] Ambrose, *On 1 Corinthians 12:3*, endorsed by Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, 109.1 and 1; in Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* (transl. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province), Benzinger Bros. Ed., 1947. [6] Frithjof Schuon, *Gnosis* (translated by G.E.H. Palmer), John Murray, London 1959, p.27. [7] Zimmer, *Myths...*, note to p.219. [8] *Ibid.*, p.169. [9] Walter Andrae, *Die ionische Säule, Bauform oder Symbol?*, Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, Berlin 1933, Schlusswort (Conclusions); *apud* Zimmer, *Myths...*, note to p. 169. [10] Levi [H. Dowling], *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, 162.6, DeVorss & Co., Publishers, Marina del Rey, Calif. 1987, p.227. [11] Augustine, *Retractationes*, book I, 12.3; in Saint Augustine, *The Retractations* (transl. by Mary Inez Bogan), The Fathers of the Church, A New Translation, vol. 60, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C. 1968, p.52. [12] Victor Magnien, *Les Mystères d’Eleusis, leur origines, le rituel et leurs initiations*, Payot, Paris 1938, second edition, pp.9-16. [13] Frithjof Schuon, *The Transcendent Unity of Religions* (transl. by Peter Townsend), Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London 1975, note to pp.120-121. [14] Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, Vintage, Random House, New York 1989, p.XXI. [15] Paul Brunton, *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*, E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York 1966, p.64. [16] *Ibid.*, p.78. [17] *Lumen Gentium* ch. II, § 16; quoted also in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Unites States Catholic Conference, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994, §§ 839,841, pp.222,223. [18] *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate)* 2 § 2; cf. *Catechism...*, § 2104, p.510. [19] *Catechism...*, § 843, p.223; the final quotation is from *Lumen...*, ch. II, § 16. [20] *Apud Le Monde*, March 17, 1998, our translation (further designated by o.t.). [21] *Maclean’s*, December 15, 1997. [22] Ean C. M. Begg, *The Cult of the Black Virgin*, Arkana, London, Boston 1985, pp.54-55. [23] Marc Dem, *Le troisième secret de Fatima*, Éditions du Rocher, Paris 1994, pp.168-169, o.t. [24] John R. Hinnels, *A Handbook of Living Religions*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1991, p.124. [25] *Apud* R. Waltzer, *Islamic Philosophy*, quoted

by S.H. Nasr, *Theology, Philosophy and Spirituality*, in *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations*, London 1991, p.411. [26] Ibn al-'Arabi, *Tarjuman al-ashwaq*, quoted by Frithjof Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, World Wisdom Books, Bloomington, In., 1994, p.37 and notes 39,41. [27] Al-Hallaj, *Diwan*; quoted by *ibid.*, note 76 to p.173. [28] Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an*, Amana Corporation, Beltsville 1989, note 4454. [29] Karen Armstrong, *A History of God*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1993, p.152. [30] Jean-Pierre Soulier, *L'enigme du vivant*, Éditions Buchet/Chastel, Paris 1987, p.38, o.t. [31] Schuon, *The Transcendent...*, note to p.11, and p.20. [32] Quoted by Huston Smith in his *Introduction to the Revised Edition* of Schuon, *The Transcendent...*, p.XXII. [33] Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal...*, pp.116-117. [34] Bede Griffiths, *Christianity in the Light of the East*, The Hibbert Trust, London 1989; quoted in Paul Roland, *Revelations: Wisdom of the Ages*, Ulysses Press, Berkeley, Calif. 1995, p.157. [35] John Hogue, *Nostradamus: The New Revelations*, Element Books, Inc., Shaftesbury, Dorset; Rockport, Mass. 1994, p.242. [36] Schuon, *Gnosis*, p.35.

INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANCIENT INDIA

“India is, the cradle of human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend, and the great grand mother of tradition. Our most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only”

Mark Twain

“From times immemorial, the seekers of Truth have always known that India is a source of spiritual knowledge”

Dan Costian [1]

What is known today as India, used to formerly include a much wider geographical area that covered also Nepal, Tibet, Bangladesh and part of China and Mongolia on the east, and Pakistan, Afghanistan as well as the oriental part of Iran on the west. This area has, of course, changed down the centuries. Archaeologists have found the traces of a 50,000-year-old civilization in Kashmir, in the north, of what is today, India. The remnants, in the site at the Indus Valley, bear witness to a flourishing civilization dating back to the third millennium BC. The ruins of some formerly well-built cities were brought out to light in Harappa (in the Punjab, on the Ravi, the tributary of the Indus), in Mohenjo-Daro (Hill of the Dead; hill: *daro*, in India and Pakistan; *damb*, in the south of Afghanistan and in Baluchistan) in the southeast of Pakistan, in Lothal (the Indian state of Gujarat) and in many other places. Some historians consider that the founders of the Indian civilization might have been a population related to the aboriginal Dravidians in India (now only in the south of the peninsula) since some tribes from Baluchistan speak *Brahui* or *Kurdi*, related to the Dravidian languages *Tamil* and *Malayalam* [2].

Many ceramic seals were unearthed in the Indus Valley. They witness the ancient knowledge on Yoga: the seven subtle centers (ch. II) and their deities (ch. XIX C) were represented as seven dots or circles along with the sun and the moon (as the channels of energy). One of these seals found in Mohenjo-

Daro is called *the Seal of the Seven Sisters* (i.e. Shaktis; see below) and dates back from the 3rd millennium BC. On it one can see a man (supposed to be Shiva Pashupati, after Sir John Marshall) sitting cross-legged in the classic *lotus* position (*padmasana*, Sanskr.) of Yoga [3]. This is an attestation of the antiquity of the Yoga culture. Mircea Eliade, a famous personality in the field has “proved that far from being the patrimony of certain ascetic sects, Yoga is a category specific to the Indian spirit revealing an unbroken history from Chalcolithic till our days. No reform or Indian mystical sect could miss Yoga practice” [4]. A. Daniélou, in his turn stated: “The Yoga methods that enabled the development of the human latent powers... played an important role in elaborating all the forms of scientific, metaphysical or mystic knowledge” [5].

The etymology of the word Yoga derived from the Sanskrit *yuj* (*yoke*, to which it is etymologically related) meaning “to attach to the yoke”, “to unite” [6]. This must have been what Jesus had thinking about when He uttered the famous words: “Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me... and ye shall find rest to your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:29-30). Jesus must have had in view a later, *easier* form of Yoga, since the classical Yoga was based on asceticism (*tapasya*, Sanskr.), and penance (ch. XI C). In this respect, the easiest type of Yoga that eliminates asceticism is *Sahaja Yoga*, which is an ultimate discovery. Even the *Talmud* urges: “Take upon oneself the yoke of the kingdom” [7], thus revealing that the “yoke” (Yoga) is the way allowing people to enter the kingdom of God.

Yoga signifies the union of the individual consciousness—of the Self (*Atman*, Sanskr.) or the subjective manifestation of the Absolute—with the Supreme Consciousness, the Divine, *Brahman* or the objective Absolute, and this connection might be achieved only through enlightenment (Self Realization) obtained through the awakening of the subtle spiritual energy called the *Kundalini* lying dormant (latent) in the sacrum bone (Mooladhara sacrum)—see chapter II. This union with the Absolute, the Finite-Infinite synthesis is known in Christian religion as the *second birth* (John 3:3,5-8). That is the path to *Samadhi* (in Hinduism), *Nirvana* (in Buddhism), *Kevala* (in Jainism), *Satori* (in Zen), *Tao* (in Taoism), *al-Haqq* (in Islam), *Fana* (in Sufism), and to the “opening of the Dsam Duar” (in Sikhism). Patanjali’s classical treaty *Yoga Sutra* (2nd century BC, apart from the fourth part presumably from the 5th century AD) used the term of *Kaivalya* (literally: integration, Sanskr.) that gave the title of the fourth and last book (*The Kaivalya Pada*) and appeared in its conclusive verse [8]. The term is semantically related to *Walhalla* (*Walhöll*, hall of the chosen souls), or the

heavenly Palace of the supreme god of the ancient German and Scandinavian peoples. There was the place of the cosmic tree *Yggdrasil*. The Hindu equivalent was Vishnu's Paradise, *Vaikuntha* (Land of no hindrance, Sanskr.).

The *union* with God is the aim of any religion; the verb *religare* (Lat.) from which the latter derives²⁵ has exactly this meaning. However, in opposition to what we commonly understand through *religion*, Yoga relies not on the simple belief but on experiment²⁶, thus providing the concrete way towards achieving this union during one's lifetime and not any vague promises about after death. The genuine Christian saints reached during their lifetime the union with God in a state of ecstasy, of bliss (*ananda*, Sanskr.; ch. XIX C) through methods known by the Yogis—even if called differently—a subject to be further detailed in chapter XXV A. This proves the futility of the anti-Yoga campaigns initiated by ignorant or ill-intentioned fanatic priests advocating the false view that Yoga is a sect. The practitioners of homeopathy in the United States of the 1920s were also considered to be members of a religious sect [9].

The name of *India* actually comes from the *Indus* River that flows through the territory of the present-day Pakistan. In the old times, they called the Indus River *Sindh* that is also the name of a district in its valley existing in the southeast of Pakistan. There is also a river called *Sindh* in Kashmir.

Around the year 1500 BC peoples from the west first penetrated into the Punjab and occupied the Indus region (1200-900 BC). Then, the Aryan²⁷ invasion headed to Kosala at the feet of the Himalayas (900-600 BC) after crossing the Ganges; another branch descended along the Indus to the southwest, reaching Dravidia and conquered the Dravidians or drove them away to the top of the peninsula. Casal forwards the view (also supported by Sir Mortimer Wheeler) that the Aryans destroyed the city of Harappa, because the *Vedas* mentioned the *Hariyapiya* battle. In this case, the Punjab invasion occurred around the year 2000 BC [10].

The *Aryan Invasion Theory* was not unanimously accepted, since it denied the indigenous origin and ancient sources of the Vedic culture and heritage,

²⁵ In Christian faith, this explanation first appeared with Augustine of Hippo.

²⁶ James, the brother of Jesus used to say: "What [is] the profit, my brethren, if any one say he have faith, but have not works?" (2:14). "So also faith, if it have not works, is dead by itself" (2:17; cf. 2:18,20,22,24-26).

²⁷ *Arian* is the eastern side of the Iran plateau.

claiming that the warrior nomadic foreign tribes, which have destroyed both the developed culture of the Indus Valley and that of the ancient Dravidian inhabitants of the huge Indian peninsula, have conceived these sacred texts. Actually, in the Indian traditions and literature there was absolutely no record of the Aryan invasion, until the British true invaders imposed this theory [11].

According to the partisans of the *Aryan Invasion Theory*, the penetration of these tribes had a tremendous cultural and spiritual significance since the *Vedas*²⁸ were composed from this period on. A. Daniélou writes the followings on the impact of this historical event on other cultures, philosophies and religions: “The great religion of the Indus civilization [had] its Sumerian, Cretan, Egyptian, Greek and Roman offshoots... namely the Vedic religion whose gods, symbols and rites are similar to those in Greece, pre-Roman Italy and the Avesta Iran... Athens, Alexandria, Syria, Palestine were meeting places for many Hindus. Aristoxenus, quoted by Eusebius, referred to the dialogues between Socrates and an Indian philosopher. The School of Skeptics was founded after Jain²⁹ principles. According to Schröder (*Pythagoras und die Indier*), almost all the philosophical or mathematical doctrines attributed to Pythagoras were derived from *Sankhya* and were in current use in India of those times. The fundamental *Sankhya* concepts were, otherwise, found with Anaximander, Heraclitus, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus and Epicurus... Revelation is an adaptation of the *Bhavishya Purana*. Hindu colonies existed as far as the upper Euphrates long before the Christian era and it was only in AD 304 when Gregory destroyed temples and smashed down theirs [cultural] images” [12].

According to the *Aryan Invasion Theory*, the *Vedas* were composed between 1500 and 1000 BC. However, it seems that part of the *Rig-Veda* (the earliest of the four *Vedas*) was created before the coming of the Aryans. Jacobi established the beginning of the Vedic era in the first half of the 5th millennium, founded on the astronomic calculation of the position of several “lunar constellations” (*nakshatra*³⁰, Sanskr.) mentioned in the *Rig-Veda* [13]. Glasenapp situated this era in the 4th or 3rd millennium BC, and Oldenberg

²⁸ *Veda* means *divine knowledge*, from the Sanskrit root *vid*—to know.

²⁹ Conqueror (*jina, jaina*, Sanskr.). The founder of that doctrine was *Mahavira* (Great Hero, Sanskr.).

³⁰ The Indian zodiac is divided into 27 such parts. In western astrology they are called *asterisms*.

around 2000 BC. In Dr. Haug's views, the Vedic period extended between 2000 and 1200 BC although he held that the most ancient hymns could have been created around 2400 BC³¹. Bal Gangadhar Tilak placed them around 4000 BC, while Surendranath Dasgupta supposed that the *Vedas* had been orally transmitted from an unknown antique period.

The corpus of the old Indian Scriptures consists of *shruti* ("heard" or true, real revelations, Sanskr.; it has an absolute authority) and *smriti* ("remembered", tradition, Sanskr.; it has a recognized authority only to the extent it is not denied by the *shruti*). While *shruti*, revealed by God to the ancient *rishis* (seers, Sanskr.), is eternal and universal, *smriti* derived from human insight.

Vashuda Narayanan explains: "All schools of medieval thought agreed that the *Vedas* have a transcendent aspect and an authoritative nature... The Vedic seers (*rishis*) «see» the mantras and transmit them; they do not invent or compose them... Not being composed by human beings, the *Vedas* are considered faultless, the perfect and supreme source of knowledge... Though of human authorship, the material called *smriti* was nonetheless considered inspired. And while this literature has been theoretically of lesser authority than the *Vedas*, it has played a far more important role in the lives of the Hindus for the last 2,500 years" [14].

Shruti, first, comprise the four *Vedas*³², collections (*samhita*, Sanskr.) of hymns to be addressed to the deities during the worship ceremonies. They were composed in the following order: *Rig-Veda* (*Veda of stanzas* or the Holy Hymns) including 1028 hymns to the deities; *Yajur-Veda* (*Veda of the formulas* or the Book of the sacrificing priest) including the ritualistic formulas divided into two different texts: *Vajasaneyi* (the "white" one) and *Taittiriya* (the "black" one); *Sama-Veda* (*Veda of tunes* or the Book of chants) comprising the hymns that are chanted; *Atharva-Veda* (*Veda of the sage Atharvan* or the Book of charms) made up of texts used for exorcising the evil. The initial list of the *Vedas* (*trayi*, Sanskr.) seems to have included only the first three. Each *Veda* has four sections: hymns, rites, interpretation, and philosophical instruction. The earliest and core portions of the *Vedas* are the four *Samhitas*, the hymn collections, composed in metrical verses, usually of three or four lines. Besides the *Samhitas*, each *Veda* includes one or two

³¹ Dating the old Indian Scriptures is rather difficult since historians held different views.

³² There were defined as the *Knowledge of Meters* (*The Rig-Veda*), the *Knowledge of Contents* (*The Yajur-Veda*), the *Knowledge of Extension* (*The Sama-Veda*), the *Knowledge of Subtle Correspondences or Magic Lore* (*The Atharva-Veda*).

Brahmanas, many *Upanishads* [15], *Aranyakas*, ritual interpretations, ceremonials, and metaphysical dialogues. The *Vedas* remain the authoritative doctrine, guiding followers in their ways of worship (*upasana*, Sanskr.), duty (*dharma*, Sanskr.), and enlightenment (*jnana*, Sanskr.).

The *Brahmanas*, written in prose between 800 and 600 BC, include liturgical and ritualistic glosses, explanations and applications of the hymns, illustrated by numerous legends.

The *Upanishads* (to sit by the Master, Sanskr.) are 108 (a holy number; the same is the number of chapters in the Buddhist Scripture *Kanjur*) esoteric philosophical treatises (*rajaguhya*, *guhayatama*, Sanskr.), according to the list provided by the *Muktika Upanishad*. Jean Herbert showed that 225 are known but only 14 are taken to be *shruti*. They play a tremendous role in the spiritual life of Hindus, being looked on as the quintessence of the *Vedas* wisdom, a belief also shared by Schopenhauer who used to say: “*Sie is der Trost meines Leben gewesen und wird der meines Sterben sein*” (They have been the consolation of my life and will be of my death, Germ.) [16].

The same category of revealed teachings included the *Aranyakas* (*Teachings learned in the forest* or The Book of the Forest) and the *Sutras* (thread, Sanskr.) connected to the *Vedas*, for example the *Kalpa Sutras* referring to the ritual and called *Srauta*. The *Grihya Sutras* on domestic rituals and the *Samayacharika Sutras* on the conventional uses, derived from *smriti*, are called *Smarta*. They should be distinguished from the *Sutras* that are collections of aphorisms used within the six philosophical schools (*darshana*, point of view, Sanskr.) such as Patanjali’s famous *Yoga Sutra*.

After Max-Müller, the collection called *Mantra* (instrument conveying the thought, Sanskr.) was composed between 1200 and 800 BC and included sacred formulas, prayers and praises in the form of metrical hymns.

Smriti first includes the *Laws of Manu* (*Manava Dharma Shastra*)—a corpus of moral, social etc. rules and norms. Included herein are also the *Puranas* (old, Sanskr.) or ancient stories about deities. According to tradition, the present *Puranas* are what the sage Vyasa had preserved out of a unique, original *Purana*. They consist in legends, mythological stories, moral and spiritual precepts written as a versified discussion between the exponent and the disciple, interspersed with dialogues and remarks of the others. They constituted real encyclopedias, being destined to those to whom the access to the *Vedas* was prohibited. There are 18 main *Puranas* (6 devoted to Shiva, 6 to Vishnu, and 6 to Brahma), many other secondary ones (*upa-purana*, Sanskr.), and a large number of other of local interest (*sthana-purana*, Sanskr.). After W.J. Wilkins, they could be posterior to the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. The *smriti*, open to the non-Brahmins, also

comprises the *Tantras* (rule, ritual, technique; etymologically: loom, Sanskr.) amongst which five of them (*Panchatantra*, from *pancha*, five, Sanskr.) rank foremost. They were posterior to the *Puranas*, having as a main feature the importance attributed to the feminine power (*shakti*, Sanskr.), and particularly to the Great Primordial Goddess (*Adi Shakti*; *adi*, primordial; obviously connected to the Vedic *Aditi*, Mother of the Gods, *Deva-matri*, Sanskr.). The *smriti* corpus included the great epics (*Itihasa*, Sanskr.) of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*.

The most ancient Sanskrit epic poem was the *Ramayana* (the Deeds of Rama, Sanskr.), attributed to Valmiki. It is supposed to have been composed in the 5th century BC but only evolved to its present form one or two centuries later (Dowson). Wilkins showed that, according to some authors, it would date as early as 500 BC, but after others, it could go back to 200 or 100 BC. According to tradition, Rama lived about 8000 years ago. The poem includes about 43,000 couplets of 16-syllable lines.

The *Mahabharata* (the Great Song) or The Great (War of) Bharatas (Sansk.) would have been composed, according to Wilkins, one century after the *Ramayana*. Weber believed the epic to have been known to Dio Chrysostom in the second half of the first century AD, while Megasthenes who had been in India in about 315 BC did not mention it at all, a fact which determined the former to place the epic between these two dates; Professor Williams, on the other hand, considered the earliest pre-Brahmin compositions of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* not to be later than the 5th century BC. The events described would have occurred, in some opinions [17] in the 16th or the 15th century BC, while the Hindu tradition placed them around 6000 years ago when Krishna lived, and the author is supposed to have been the Sage Vyasa (the Arranger, Sanskr.) who was a divine incarnation and who dictated the epic—long before the actual events to take place—to Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed child who broke one of his tusks to write the epic with. “You, Ganapati³³, are the writer of this” [18]. The epic has 110,000 couplets of 16-syllable lines, grouped into 18 *Parvas* (books, Sanskr.) and it is probably the longest in the world. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is included in the 6th book *Bhishmaparvan* (ch. 25-42). Its full title is *Srimad Bhagavad Gita Upanishadah* (Teachings Given by the Song of the Blessed Master, Sanskr.).

In the 6th century BC, there were 16 large states in the north of India (Magadha, Kosala, Anga, Avanti, Vatsa etc.), the first two were fighting each other for supremacy which was finally won by the kingdom of Magadha (544-324 BC) with the main town of Pataliputra (Patna of today). Magadha

³³ Master (*pati*, Sanskr.) of the Ganas is another name given to Ganesha.

occupied the basins of the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers (part of the present-day Bangladesh) and extended towards Central India (364-324 BC).

Alexander the Great's campaign in the Punjab (327-323 BC) brought about the temporary Macedonian domination in the two satrapies established in northwest, and thus enabled the penetration of the Hellenistic culture.

The Maurya dynasty (324-184 BC) founded by Chandragupta (324-300 BC) led to the creation of the most powerful state in the history of ancient India that unified the entire northern part and extended southwards (300-273 BC).

The climax of the Maurya empire, however, was reached in the time of Asoka, the founder's nephew, whose reign covered, according to various sources, the following periods: 292-232 [19], 273-232 [20], 264-227 [21], 255-237 [22], 234-198 [23], while Jeannine Auboyer showed that he seized power in 264 and has been crowned in 260 BC [24]. We have listed all these diversities of periods during which the most famous emperor in the history of India was supposed to have ruled, with the only aim to show, if still necessary, how contradictory the information, on ancient times, actually is.

The Asoka's empire included the whole Indian peninsula except its southern part beyond river Narmada, comprised Kashmir and Punjab on the north, went along the Himalayan abutments on the east and involved Afghanistan on the west (one of his inscriptions was found in Kandahar) [25].

We should mention, however, that Asoka was not only a great conqueror but also the most outstanding political, moral and intellectual Indian personality of ancient times. In his youth, he witnessed the horrors of the wars against the neighbor kingdom of Kalinga. That is why he later came to condemn any conflict and entirely dedicated himself to the pacifist teachings of Buddhism to which he adhered in 257 BC. During his reign, over 84,000 Buddhist sanctuaries were founded in his huge empire. Moreover, he fulfilled also the task of spreading this religion by sending missionaries not only throughout India and Ceylon, Nepal, Tibet, Bactria, Mongolia, China, but furthermore to Syria, Egypt and Greece along the ancient traditional commercial road that came from the Ganges Delta, went upstream, continued through Taxila (north of Pakistan), Bactria, Parthia, crossed Tigris and Euphrates and finally reached Antioch and Tyre. A notable fact is that Asoka's edicts were in the *Brahmi* writing derived from the Aramaic alphabet (ch. XIV).

Under the rule of the Asoka's descendants, history witnessed the disintegration of this great empire (between the 2nd century BC and the 3rd century AD) and also the flourishing of the kingdom of Andhara, which

conquered the kingdom of Magadha that has been declining between the years 75 and 30 BC.

Andhara reached its climax under the dynasty of King Shalivahan³⁴, famous over the present-day Maharashtra state where he established its capital (Pratishthan) on the banks of Godavari River. Used even today, the Shalivahan calendar has its origin with AD 78 (ch. XXIII B).

At around the year 150 BC, people coming from Central Asia invaded the Hindustan peninsula: the Indo-Scythians (*Shaka*), the Parthians (*Pahlava*) and the Kushans (*Tokharians*; *Yüeh-chih*³⁵, or *Yue-che*) who would conquer Afghanistan, Baluchistan, the lower Indus and Punjab. Thus, after two centuries, the Kushan³⁶ Empire (with its core in Central Asia) extended its power over northern India as under Kanishka (AD 78-101), the dominion comprised Afghanistan, Punjab, Rajputan and the upper valleys of Yamuna and Ganges. At the end of the rule, Kanishka witnessed his tribes being assimilated by the Indians when the disintegration of the state started. The Kushans, dethroned in 236, were still present in Gandhara until the 4th century AD.

Between AD 330 and 496, the Gupta state greatly flourished (under the dynasty with the same name) with its capital in Pataliputra and, during its heyday, it embraced parts of northern Bengali up to Kathiawar and from the Himalayas to Narmada. It was in those times that the poet and dramatist Kalidasa, the author of *Sakuntala* lived. The 6th century AD marked the beginning of the White Huns' attacks (which started in fact in 480, but became important after 530), the decline of the Gupta Empire and the end of the ancient period in the history of India.

Although this is the most relevant period of our topic, we cannot disregard a much later period that greatly affected the history of the Indian subcontinent. That comprises the Muslim invasion that started in the 11th century under Mahmud of Ghazna (modern Ghazni in Afghanistan), followed by the first invasion of the Mongols in 1221 and other subsequent intrusions and, finally, by the establishing of the reign of the Great Moguls (1526-1827). For his great tolerance, we shall mention here the third emperor, Akbar who reigned from 1560 to 1605. Taking example from the Hindus, he

³⁴ Shri Nirmala Salve Srivastava, an outstanding personality of the contemporary spirituality is to be numbered among the descendants of the Shalivahan dynasty.

³⁵ Singnifying "meat-eaters" (Chin.).

³⁶ Established by the most important of the five Yueh-chi tribes coming from the South of the Aral Sea.

became a vegetarian, gave up hunting, and forbade the ritual sacrifice of animals. He went as far as founding a house of worship where scholars of all creeds could gather and talk about God. There, the Christian missionaries distinguished through their aggressiveness. Unfortunately, other Moguls did not share his tolerant spirit such as Emperor Aurangzeb (1618-1707) who caused heavy prejudices to the Hindus.

The long presence of the Muslim conquerors have not only left its mark on an important part of the population being converted to Islam, and generated tensions between Muslim and Hindus that persist even presently, but also influenced the culture of the Indian subcontinent, and this feature was maintained unaltered up to today.

NOTES

[1] Dan Costian, *Adevărul despre Yoga (Truth About Yoga)*, Ed. Valmi, București 1993, p.5, o.t. [2] Jean-Marie Casal, *La Civilisation de l'Indus et ses énigmes*, Librairie Arthème Fayard, Paris 1969, p.211. [3] Fida Hassnain, Dahan Levi, *The Fifth Gospel*, Dastgir Publ., Srinagar 1988, p.6; Zimmer, *Myths...*, fig.42; Casal, p.208, and illustr. to p.141. [4] Mircea Eliade, *Essai sur les origines de la mystique indienne*, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris, Fundația pentru literatură și artă "Regele Carol II," București 1936, p.VII, o.t. [5] Alain Daniélou, *Le polythéisme hindou*, Éd. Buchet/Chastel, Paris 1975, p.10, o.t. [6] Zimmer, *Myths...*, p.39. [7] *Apud* Dmitri Merejkowski, *Jesus Manifest* (transl. by Edward Gellibrand), Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1936, p.82. [8] Patanjali, *Yoga Sutra IV (The Kaivalya Pada)*, 34 (transl. by Sanderson Beck), Yoga Anand Ashram, 1998. [9] Teodor Caba, Marius Caba, *Homeosiniatria*, Ed. Litera, București 1983, p.85. [10] Casal, pp.205-206. [11] Dr. Dinesh Agrawal, *Hinduism Today*, 18 (7), July 1996. [12] Daniélou, *Le polythéisme...*, pp.7-9, o.t. [13] Jacobi, *Über das Alter des Rig-Veda*, in *Festgruss an Roth*, 1893, p.6; *apud* Jean Hebert, *Spiritualité hindoue*, Albin Michel, Paris 1972, note 3 to p.36. [14] Vashuda Narayanan, *The Hindu Tradition in World Religions*, Oxford University Press, Toronto, New York 1996, pp.23-35. [15] Except for the minor *Upanishads*, the quotations come out of *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (transl. by Robert Ernest Hume), Oxford University Press, New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras 1995. [16] S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1939, p.248; Cf. Herbert, p.367. [17] *Petit Larousse*, 1967, p.1515. [18] *The Mahabharata* 1.1.77. [19] *Atlas istoric (Historical Atlas)*, Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, București 1971, pl.9a. [20] *Istoria lumii în date (World History in Data)*, Ed. Enciclopedică Română, București 1963, p.20. [21] *Petit Larousse*, 1967, p.1123. [22] *The Columbia-Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, Dell, New York 1964, p.1131. [23] John Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion*, Heritage Publ., Delhi 1992, p.26. [24] Jeanine Auboyer, *Daily Life in Ancient India* (transl. by Simon Watson Taylor), Macmillan, New York 1965, p.10. [25] *Ibid.*, p.12.

I. “IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD”

“I am the Alfa and the Omega, saith [the] Lord God”

Revelation³⁷ 1:8; cf. 21:6; 22:13

“In the beginning was the Word³⁸, and the Word was with God³⁹, and the Word was God.” Thus starts the Gospel⁴⁰ according to John (1:1) which is so much distinct from the other three gospels and which is so rich in its substance. In the Hindu culture also the Creator is the original Verb (*Shabda-Brahma*; *shabda*, sound, Sanskr.; *shabad*⁴¹, Gurmukhi). From the two evangelists who had been ranked amongst the apostles, Matthew and John, only the latter was “the disciple whom Jesus loved... who also leaned at supper on his breast” (21:20) and was the one to whom the Savior revealed more than to the others. We have all the reasons to state that he was a genuine initiate (ch. XX C4). Indeed, it was he who presented not mostly the facts as in the other three gospels but foremost the teaching of Jesus. Hence, it is highly surprising that the Gospel according to John aroused the opposition of some prominent representatives of the early Christianity such as Papias⁴², Basilides, Hermas and Justin Martyr (all within the first half of the 2nd century) who did not accepted this gospel as authoritative Scripture. It was only at the end of the 4th century that this text was reluctantly admitted into the Canon⁴³ [1] (*kanón*, straight line, Gr.; *qaneh*—reed,

³⁷ *Apokálypsis* (revelation, discovery, Gr.).

³⁸ *En arché en ho Lógos* (Gr.).

³⁹ *Ho Lógos en pròs tòn Theón* (Gr.).

⁴⁰ The Gospel (good spell; good news: *euaggélion*, Gr.; *gg* pronounced: *ng*) comprises both “the announcement” i.e. “the preaching” (*kérygma*, Gr.) of the good news and “the message” within it (“The kingdom of God is near”—Luke 21:31; cf. 10:9,11; Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7), as well as “the book” which is containing it. Jesus used to say: “I must announce the glad tidings of the kingdom of God” (Luke 4:43).

⁴¹ According to Gurbani, the expressions such as *Shabad*, *Naam*, *Bani*, *Hukam*, *Divine Word*, *God*, are virtually synonymous.

⁴² Bishop of Hierapolis (Phrygia).

⁴³ Literally: *guideline*.

measure, rule, norm, Hebr.) by the Ecumenical Church.

Actually, the Gospels according to Mark, Matthew and Luke, called synoptic (*synopsis*, simultaneous view, Gr.) have a lot in common pertaining to the general schedule as well as to the details, even if the accents are not identical and there are inversions in the chronology, additions or omissions (sometimes important) concerning one another.

The Gospel according to John is the only one that even from the foreword identified Jesus with God's Verb and with Christ. *Verb* (word, Lat.) is the translation of the Greek *Lógos* (rational word, divine reason) and of the Aramaic *Memra* (the creative Word of God). The Verb of the Christian Trinitarian monotheism (Triune God) denotes the second member of the Trinity: the Son. John, then, continued about the Word: "He was in the beginning with God" (1:2). Hereafter he disclosed the identity between *Lógos* (Verb) and Jesus: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. And we have contemplated his glory, a glory as of an only begotten with a Father" (1:14). The foreword of his Gospel was actually dedicated to the embodiment of the Word.

In the *Qur'an* God's messenger (Gabriel) said to the Virgin: "Mary, God gives thee good tidings of a Word from Him whose name is Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary" (3.40). "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word⁴⁴ that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit⁴⁵ from Him" (4.169; cf. 2.254; 5.109). The Islamic⁴⁶ tradition written down in the *ahadith* from *Sahih Al-Bukhari*⁴⁷ also called Jesus "Allah's Word":

⁴⁴ *Kalimetohu* (*Kalimat-ul-Lah*, Word of God, Arab.).

⁴⁵ *Ruh* (*Ruh-ul-Lah*, Spirit of God, Arab.).

⁴⁶ *Al-Islam*, abandonment, surrender; from *aslama* (to surrender, Arab.; to the divine will).

⁴⁷ *Hadith* (tradition, word; plural: *ahadith*, Arab.). This is of two kinds: *hadith qudsi* (sacred word)—direct revelation, in which God Himself talks through the Prophet, and *hadith nabawwi*—word of the Prophet, in which this one talks in his own name. The most famous collection of *ahadith* was compiled by al-Bukhari (Muhammad bin Isma'il Abu 'Abdallah al-Dju'fi) born in Bukhara in 810. The collection, known under the name of *Sahih Al-Bukhari* (its full name is *al-Djami 'as-Sahih*; *sahih*, authentic, Arab.) is a gathering of sayings of the Prophet, and constitutes the *Sunna* (tradition, Arab.). The Shi'ites have their own collections of sayings attributed to the Prophet and the Imams. The most known compilations besides that of al-Bukhari (194-256 A.H.) belong to his disciple Muslim (204-261 A.H.), Abu Daud (203-275 A.H.), Ibn Mahaj (209-275 A.H.), Tirmizi (209-279 A.H.), and al-Nisai (214-303

“Narrated Anas: The Prophet said: «... Go to Jesus... Allah’s Word»” [3].

As we can see from the onset of Genesis (1:3), God manifested Himself through the Word: “And God said: «Let there be light»” (*Vayomer Elohim: «yehi aor»*, Hebr.).

According to the Hindu concept from the *Puranas* period, in the beginning God was Undifferentiated (*Nirguna*, beyond the *gunas*—tendencies, Sanskr.), hence Unmanifested⁴⁸, and called *Parabrahman* (*Parama*⁴⁹-*Brahman*, Sanskr.) that is Supreme *Brahman*⁵⁰. This is an apophatic (*apophatikós*, Gr.) approach since it implies negation. In Hinduism, Brahman cannot be referred to by any other word except: *Neti, neti* (*Not, not*, Sanskr., that is *neither this, nor this*), since it cannot be defined unless through negation, meaning that it is nothing of what humans can conceive or know. We could call it: non-dual⁵¹, unknowledgeable, informal, unchanging, unlimited. It is neither being nor unbeing; neither god nor man; neither positive nor negative; neither man nor woman; hence it is taken to be neutral. In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, this *deus otiosus* defines Himself as the steady nondoer: “The fourfold order was created by Me... Though I am its creator, know Me to be incapable of action or change” [5]. In Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung* [6] (*Ragnarök* in Norse mythology; The Doom

A.H.). The *Sahih* of al-Bukhari gradually became a holy book, only a little lower than the *Qur’an* [2]. All the *ahadith* were quoted after *The Noble Qur’an*, Hilal Publ. House, Istanbul 1994, if not specified otherwise.

⁴⁸ *Deus otiosus* (non-active God, Lat.). This epithet is also attributed to God who, having created the world, loses interest in the fate of His creation and withdraws in the heaven, abandoning its fulfillment which was left into the hands of a supernatural Being, a *Demiurge* (Creator, Lat. or *Demiourgós*, Gr.). Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite mentioned the state where God remains in an absolute repose, without manifesting Himself in any way [4].

⁴⁹ *Parama* also indicates the transcendence.

⁵⁰ There are two forms of the Sanskrit proper noun:

— *Bráhma*n (neuter)—Unmanifested (*Nirguna*), Transcendent God; The Absolute; the Supreme Self (*Paramatman*);
— *Bráhma* (masculine)—Manifested God (*Brahma Saguna*); Active God (*Karya-Brahma*); The Creator.

The masculine common noun *Brahmán* (*Brahmin*) denotes a member of the clergy: the Brahmin caste.

⁵¹ More exactly: neither one nor many.

of the Gods) of his tetralogy *The Ring of the Nibelung*, Brunhild said to the Supreme God when the ring was returned to the primordial waters (signifying the end of a cycle): “Rest, rest thee, God!” (*Ruhe, ruhe, du Gott!*, Germ.). The unmanifestation defining the state prior to the creation, and the one after the world dissolution, is described by: “I [am] the first, and I [am] the last, and beside me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6; cf. 43:10; 45:5,6; 48:12). Meister Eckhart distinguished between *Gottheit*, (Divinity, Germ.), the divine nothingness defined through the total absence of distinctions and manifestation tendencies, hence characterized by non-action on the one hand, and *Urgrund* (First Cause, Germ.) to whom it corresponded the action, on the other.

The moment of Creation occurred when Parabrahman had the *desire* to manifest itself, hence divided itself into *Sada-Shiva*, the Father⁵², the Almighty, the Witness (*Sakshin*, Sanskr.; the *Qur’an* 5.117 also calls Allah: “the Witness⁵³ to all things”) or the Spectator, and His *desire*, which is a form of *energy* or *power*. Therefore appeared the Primordial Power (*Adi Shakti*⁵⁴, Sanskr.), the Feminine Principle, the Divine Mother or the Actress. The desire is the manifestation of Maha-Kali ruling over Ida nadi. “In the beginning this world was Atman... He was, indeed, as large as a woman and a man closely embraced. He caused that Self to fall (*pat*, Sanskr.) into two pieces. Therefore arose a husband (*pati*, Sanskr.) and a wife (*patni*, Sanskr.)” [7]. “Dividing His own body, the Lord became half male and half female” [8]. The eternal couple Shiva-Shakti originated in the earliest Shaivite tradition dating back in prehistoric times and it remained in the center of the contemporary Hinduism. This polarization (*vritti*, Sanskr.) of the underlayer is the manifestation of *Maya* (appearance, illusion, Sanskr.). “She is the power of the Self; she it is who creates appearances” [9]. Energy is the source of everything, the origin of the phenomenal world but also of the conscious plan of its creation [10]. “My greatness expands beyond the sky and the earth” [11]. When manifested in macrocosm, it is *Prakriti* (Nature, Sanskr.), while in the microcosm it is achieved as the supreme aim of Yoga:

⁵² The Supreme Sovereign (*Maheshwara*, Sanskr.).

⁵³ *Ash-Shahid* (Arab.).

⁵⁴ The word *shakti* appeared in the *Vedas*, where its synonym *sachi* stands for the power personified by Indra’s female companion. The notion of *Shakti* as the Supreme Power seems to appear fully in the main Shaivite *Upanishad*, the *Svetasvatara*.

“In the principal aperture (*Brahmarandhra*⁵⁵, Sanskr.) each man finds Me, the Lady-of-the-spheres (*Bhuvaneshvari*, Sanskr.), who am the shape of the Principle, beyond the fourth stage⁵⁶” [12]. “This primordial goddess is known as «the Coiled» *Kundalini*... She envelops Shiva with her three and a half veil⁵⁷” [13]. By moving away from Sada-Shiva, the Adi Shakti started a cosmic dance (considered to be the aimless action of a play: *leela*, Sanskr.) describing an ellipsis, and this was actually the genesis of the universe. As a matter of fact, “the majority of modern physicists have moved to the view that the whole of the material universe is a cosmic dance of energy” [14]. The story went on telling that the powder that fell from the Great Goddess (*Maha Devi*, Sanskr.) aggregated into the Primordial Atom (*bindu*, Sanskr.) which represents the Son as well as the origin of the Space-Time from which the universe took birth through *expansion* (*Big Bang* cosmogony). The latter stands for that half of the ellipsis where the Adi Shakti moves farther from Sada-Shiva. The other half represents the *contraction* of the universe where the Feminine Principle moves closer to God the Father again ending in the *Big Crunch* that completes the Big Cycle. Thus, when the cosmic *pralaya* (dissolution, Sanskr.) occurs, the creation is indrawn into the bosom of Parabrahman. This manifestation could be called *universal breathing*, the expansion standing for *inhalation*, whereas the contraction representing the *exhalation*. “When a thing has spread to its limit it has to contract again” [15]. Sufism developed the theory consistent with Hindu cyclic model implying the “renewing of creation at each breath” (*tajdid al-khalq bil-anfax*, Arab.) [16]. Mention should be made of Ibn al-‘Arabi who was familiar with the concepts above when he wrote: “The origin is the movement of the Cosmos⁵⁸ out of its state of non-existence in which it was until its existence” [17].

Revelation (6:14) described the final contraction, where the universe equated *the heaven*: “And the heaven was removed as a book rolled up” (*kai ho ouranòs apechoristhe os biblion eilissómenon*, Gr.; *et coelum recessit sicut liber involutus*, Lat.). The *Qur'an* also mentions first that Heaven (Male Principle) and Earth (Female Principle) were originally one piece that was ripen apart: “the heavens and the earth were a mass all sewn up, and then We

⁵⁵ See ch. II.

⁵⁶ *Chaturtha* or *Turiya* (Sansk.)—ch. XIX C.

⁵⁷ Ch. IX.

⁵⁸ *Al-alam* (Arab.).

unstitched them” (21.31), then called to come together: “Then He lifted Himself to heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: «Come willingly, or unwillingly?» They said: «We come willingly»” (41.10). The Jewish marriage ritual where the woman must walk round the man constitutes a reminiscence of the Feminine Principle dancing around the Masculine Principle. In the Welsh rite, the marriage formula was: “You, distinguish in order to unite” [18].

Many sacred texts converge in their meaning towards the same idea above. Even from the first chapter of Genesis, we find the cosmogony concept of the expansion of the universe: “God said: «Let there be an expanse in the midst of waters»” (1:6). “And God called the expanse Heavens” (1:8). The word used in the original language for the *heavens* was *rakiah*⁵⁹ that also meant *expansion* and had the same root with the verb *to spread, to dilate*. Within the first verses of Genesis we met the order (*táxis*, Gr.) of the divine manifestation: the Father (Sada-Shiva) is mentioned first (1:1), then the uncreated energy of His Spirit (Adi Shakti; ch. XXI) (1:2), and in the end, the Word, that is the Son: “God said: «Let there be light»” (1:3). The Word has here a double specification: on the one hand, through “said”, and on the other, through Jesus (the Word) who defined Himself as Light: “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5; cf. 1:4; 3:19; 12:35,36,46). The splitting of Parabrahman could be found in the word *badal* (to separate, Hebr.), pertaining to the division of the masculine (Sada-Shiva) and feminine (Adi Shakti) antinomies: light and darkness (Genesis 1:4), day and night (1:5), morning and evening (1:5), dry [land] and waters (1:9).

About 1900, a Chinese priest broke a sealed (since c. AD 1000) room carved into a mountain close to Dunhuang (or Tun-Huang, once an important town on the Silk Road; now in Gansu Province, West China) and discovered a pile of ancient manuscripts. Similar documents were found in several tombs in the oasis of Turfan (Turpan, Tulufan, Tulupan) in Eastern (Chinese) Turkestan. All of them were written on parchment and paper, from the 5th to 11th centuries, in Chinese, Uighur, Turk, Sogdian, Parthian, Pahlavi, and even in New Persian. Out of this wealth of Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian documents, a few were Christian writings, dating back to mid-7th and 8th centuries. They include Chinese translations of Christian texts coming from books (of which no other traces were left, except for fragments) written in Syriac (the international language used by the Church of the East), Greek or other languages, such as the *Teachings of the Apostles* written or compiled by Tatian (c. 110-180). A Christian mission sent from the mighty Church of the East (in the Sassanian Empire) brought the documents to China in 635.

⁵⁹ Final *h* in Hebrew is mute; the same in Arabic.

Between 1902 and 1914, scientists of the Anthropology Museum of Berlin dug up numerous manuscripts, kept now in Germany. In 1908 some scrolls were taken to Paris. Many westerners bought similar documents by bundles from Chinese antiquity robbers and dealers. As a result, these writings are now scattered between Japan and France. Few of the manuscripts were properly handled, preserved, recorded and one cannot be sure of their source, although they are supposed to come from the Dunhuang-Turfan area. In what follows, we would label them as “ancient Chinese Christian” writings. We know exactly when two of them were written: one in 641 and other in 720.

One of these documents mentioned the splitting of Parabrahman into the two Principles: “The whole universe is of the two kinds. Even God separates Himself so as to make of the two kinds, placing One in each” [19]. Lao-tse⁶⁰ described the ellipsis of the Adi Shakti who paralleled the *Tao*: “Returning is the motion of the Tao.” “Going far means returning” [20], thus defining both parts of the ellipsis. The Gospel sounds alike: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). Another ancient Chinese Christian manuscript mentioned the creative Power (Adi Shakti): “The Creation was due to no other than the mysterious and wonderful Power of the one God” [21]. According to Christian and Muslim theology, since God is The Almighty (Sada-Shiva) He will manifest His Power (Adi Shakti) and thus the World was created [22]. Last but not least, we should mention that Theodore bar Konai attributes to the Mother of the Living the role of the World Creator [23], while a Gnostic text has shown that the Father emanated (*proballein*) the Mother of the Living (*emma de hayye*) [24] who in turn calls into being the First Man (*nasha qadmaya*) [25]. A similar concept reveals the calling into being of the *Third Messenger* (*Tertius Legatus*, Lat. [26]) described either as Androgyne [27], Malefemale (*Masculofemina*, Lat. [28]), or Virgin of Light (*Parthénos tou photós*, Gr., as in the Abjuration Formula), obviously when it was regarded as the third member of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost.

The Adi Shakti moving away from Sada-Shiva also echoed in the Safed Kabbalah⁶¹ tradition (Isaac Luria, 16th century). Scholem talked about “the exile⁶² of the Shekhinah or in other words, the separation of the masculine and feminine principles in God.” *Ha-Shekhinah* (Hebr.) (ch. XX B) is the equivalent of the primordial *Shakti* (Sansk.), where both have a common

⁶⁰ Also spelled according to various transcriptions from Chinese: Lao-tseu, Lao-tzu (Wade-Giles), Lao-zi (Pinyin).

⁶¹ See ch. II for details on the Kabbalah.

⁶² *Galut* (Hebr.).

root. In the Kabbalah, however, “a part of God himself is exiled from God.” Scholem showed that “this exile is sometimes represented as the banishment of the queen... by her husband” [29]. We would like to draw the reader’s attention on the accurate correspondence found in the *Ramayana* where King Rama exiled his Queen Sita. Likewise, exiled and lost, Sophia of the Gnostics had wandered through the cosmos, yearning to return to her divine Source [30]. Other similar instances are found with the disappearance of the *Dharma*, *Maat*, *Astraea* or *Diké* (Justice), Enoch’s *Wisdom* (ch. XIX A), Kóre’s (Persephone’s) descent into the realm of Hades (also an exile), as well as with Inanna who describes herself as: “I, the woman who circles the land—tell me where is my house, tell me where is the city in which I may live... The bird has its nesting place, but I—my young are dispersed. The fish lies in calm waters, but I—my resting place exists not. The dog kneels at the threshold, but I—I have no threshold” [31]. All these “exiles” symbolized, in fact, the eternal quest for Truth and restoration of the original union (Yoga).

“The reunion of God and his Shekhinah constitutes the meaning of redemption” (Self Realization). “In this state, again seen in purely mythical terms, the masculine and feminine are carried back to their original unity.” The Kabbalists held that the formula: this is done “for the sake of the reunion of God and his Shekhinah” should accompany every act. The contraction of God’s essence, His withdrawal into Himself is *tzimtzum* (Hebr.). Then begins the *shevirah* (breaking of the vessels, Hebr.), which Luria identified with the “dying of the primordial kings” from chapter 36 of Genesis. This is the end of the cycle, the closing of the ellipsis. *Tikkun* (*tikun*, restoration, emendation, accomplishment, Hebr.) represented the harmony being re-established within a new cycle and uses the specific Law of the respective cycle for its instrument. The Kabbalists assert that *tikkun* represents the *unification of the upper and the lower worlds* that can occur only after you have all three of the “pillars”⁶³ back in place. The two opposite points of the ellipsis could define, with the Kabbalah, the two positions of the Feminine Principle concerning her Master: *the exiled (remote) state* (Rachel), and *the merged state* (Leah) [29].

Not only the sacred or esoteric texts but also the authors of the literary works allude to the One splitting into two Principles. We shall give two examples. The first is Quintus Valerius Soranus (praised by Crassus as the most learned of all), who wrote that the Supreme One generated Gods and Goddesses who are one and the same: “*Jupiter Omnipotens.../ Progenitor genetrix-que Deum, Deus unus et idem*” (From Jove the Almighty... /Came

⁶³ Ch. II and IV.

both dam and sire/ Yet God the sole and same, Lat.). The second is Shakespeare in his *Henry VI*: “No more can I be severed from your side,/ Than can yourself in twain divide” [32].

The Original Atom was the holy Sanskrit Primordial Syllable *AUM* (pronounced OM; more details are given in ch. XV D), the Word in the *Bible*, that represents the Divine Son Principle as *Ganesha* (Sansk.) under his not incarnated form, created earlier than the universes (*Bhuwanas*, Sanskr.). “I bow to the abode of all science, the Great Lord, Maheshwara. From his breath⁶⁴ sprang the eternal Word and from the Word the universe” [33]. “The beloved of Shiva, his divine Energy, is the support of all the words” [34]. *Ganesha* as “the Lord of Beginning he is invoked at the beginning of every ceremony and before any new undertaking, especially before a journey or a new project” [35].

The idea of the creative Word also appeared in the *Zend Avesta*, the holy book of the ancient Iranians that mentioned the words “*Asa para asmen*” to have existed before the heavens, water and earth [36]. Here, we could notice the triple analogy *AUM—asmen—amin* (Hebr.) or *amen* (Lat.). Revelation called Jesus “The Amen” (3:14), thus disclosing the identity Jesus-Ganesha (*AUM*)—see ch. XIX B and C.

Therefore, the Word (*Vak*, Sanskr.) created the universe by the effect of vibrations (ch. II) of the primordial sound. That is why the genuinely initiated could master even the natural elements by the uttering of sacred words. It is well known the example of the prophet Elijah who, by prayers, caused drought for three and a half years, and then rain again (1 Kings 17:1; 18:42-45; cf. Luke 4:25; James 5:17-18; similarly in Revelation 11:6). The Psalms (65:7; 89:9; 93:4; 107:29) predicted Jesus commanding the wind and the waves to calm down (Matthew 8:26; Mark 4:39; Luke 8:24).

In the beginning there was Brahma, and He was *Vak*, this was what the Vedic texts told us. Islam called the Verb: *Kalimat* (the Word of God or the Word that sets up). In the four consonants of *Kalimat* (*KLMT*) Abu Ya'qub Sejestani saw the quaternary manifestation of the Primordial Unity. The word *Allah* also consists of four letters, similar to the Hebrew *Tetragrammaton* (four letters, Gr.) *YHWH* (*Yahweh*). To these one can add the four rivers of Paradise, four Archangels, four words in the *Bismillah*, four sides of the I - 8 Ka'ba, four “rightly guided” caliphs (*ar-rashidun khalifah*, Arab.), and four founders of ritual schools (*madhab*, Arab.). We should not forget that for the Islamic scholars, the Primordial Matter (*al-jawhar al-hayalani*, Arab.; *materia prima*, Lat.; *Hyle*, Gr.; name encountered with Homer and Aristotle) was endowed with four attributes: heat, dryness, cold, and humidity. The

⁶⁴ The Holy Spirit (Adi Shakti)—ch. XI C.

holiness of number four was also familiar in Hinduism: Brahma, the Creator I - 1 has four faces (*chatur-mukha*, Sanskr. [37]), four heads (*chatur-anana*, Sanskr.) and four arms (*chatur-bhuja*, Sanskr.) that represented sovereignty, in symbolic language. In the same way, the Self has four parts (*Vaisvanara*, *Taijasa*, *Prajna*, *Atman*, Sanskr.), to which there are corresponding four states of consciousness (ch. XIX C). The Hindu sages held it as a basic truth that every perfect thing has four legs or stands on four feet (*chatur-pada*, Sanskr.), or has four aspects (*chatur-vyuha*, Sanskr.). Also the *Bible* wrote about divine beings with four faces and four hands. Thus, Ezekiel reads: "I saw visions of God" (1:1)... "And every one had four faces" (1:6). "And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings" (1:8). In the *Book of Enoch*⁶⁵ we read "on the four wings likewise of the Lord of spirits, on the four sides" or just about "the four sides" [39]. Sometimes, in Christianity as well as in Islam the artists render even the angels with four wings. Also, some Gnostic writings I - 4 mention the Father as being Four-faced (*tetraprosopos*, Gr.) or having four attributes [40]. As far as the Gnostics are concerned, Jung mentions the example of the Barbelites for whom Autogenes, the self-born or uncreated is surrounded by four lights [41]. This strange figure could correspond also to Monogenes of the Coptic⁶⁶ Gnosis in the *Codex*⁶⁷ *Brucianus* [42]. There, Monogenes is featured through the symbol of quaternity. Jung further refers to the assignment "of the mystical speculation about the four roots (the *rhizomata* of Empedocles [43]), i.e., the four elements or qualities (wet, dry, warm, cold), peculiar to Hermetic or alchemical philosophy" [44]. According I - 6 to Macrobius, the transcendent god Iao had a fourfold nature. His Orphic equivalent, Phanes, the first-born of the gods, was described as having wings and the heads of a ram, bull, snake and lion.

The *Veda* has four parts exactly as the New Testament includes four gospels. The quaternary manifestation of the Primordial Unity was Ganesha I - 2

⁶⁵ Despite the fact that it is considered to be an apocryphal writing, the *Book of Enoch* (*Sepher Hanokh*, Hebr.) is also mentioned in the *Bible* (Jude 14-15) and in the *Zohar* [38]. Some historians dated Enoch's book back to about 100 BC.

⁶⁶ *Copt* (Egyptian, *Qubti*, Arab.; *Aigýptios*, Gr.).

⁶⁷ The *codex* (plural: *codices*, Lat.) consisted in rectangular leaves bound together in a book. It originates from the wax tablets utilized by the Latin scribes. Martial put the word to use for the first time around AD 85. In a catacomb, St. Petronilla (martyred in AD 98) is depicted next both to a scroll and a codex.

(having four arms and four major qualities belonging to the child: purity, innocence, wisdom and everlasting joy; ch. XIX C). Ganesha is the Divine Son as well as the sacred syllable AUM (OM) and He rules the Mooladhara I - 3 chakra symbolically depicted as a four-petal flower and has a well-established anatomic correspondence (ch. II), but its significance exceeds Hinduism, as shown below. The supreme symbol of Islam, the *Ka'ba* (cube, Arab.), is built in a square block (*Beit ul'lah*, House of God, Arab.) expressing number four, that is stability.

Number four governs our terrestrial world: four cardinal points, four seasons, four moon quarters connected to the lunar calendar. The four-dimensional space (continuum) in the relativist theory has four perfectly tantamount space-time co-ordinates⁶⁸. “The «point of view of cosmology» (*Sankhya*), takes time to be a corollary of space” [45]. Within the atomic microcosm, only four quantum numbers are necessary and sufficient to characterize any out of the over one hundred chemical elements and, by extension, the infinite possible combinations of these elements. Four kinds of the physical field—each containing a specific non-dimensional constant—can fully describe the macrocosm.

The “quaternion” model also existed in the schemata of the great psychologist Carl Gustav Jung. Jung recognized the emblem of the major Archetype in the Buddhist mandala [46]. However, the mandala for *puer aeternus*, which emerges from Jung’s analysis, is nothing else than the quaternary geometrical symbol of the Mooladhara chakra in Hinduism. The I - 9 Buddhist *Mandala* that reflected the universe is a circle inside a square, I - 10 whereas the graphical sign of *Shri Chakra* (*Yantra*, Sanskr.) is similarly depicted and has four gates [47]. In Hebrew, “the gate“ is *daleth*, which also denotes number four. The mandala symbol is astonishingly widespread from the Nazca Indians of Peru and the Pueblo of the southwest (who arrange stones and carve ditches to mark mandala patterns on the earth, some of them thousands of years old) until the Dogons of Africa or the Chinese or Japanese Imperial Cities. We should not forget the ancient examples of *Roma quadrata* (square Rome, Lat.) or the square of the ideal, celestial Jerusalem in Revelation.

About Jung, Kerényi said: “To his mind it seems «that there is normally a clear insistence on *four*, or as if there were a greater statistical probability on four».” Kerényi showed further: “As Jung emphasizes, since the phenomenon of fourfoldness is not just an invention of the conscious mind but «a spontaneous product of the objective psyche», a fundamental theme

⁶⁸ Energy and Matter merge into a unity just like Space and Time fuse together.

of mythology” [48]. “C.G. Jung has found the number four to be representative of the goal of wholeness with the soul and discovered that four stages are found in all significant process of psychological development in all psychotherapeutic process that involve a deep integration of the unconsciousness” [49]. In his analyses [50], Jung goes even further, revealing new facets of the topic: “the number four plays an important role... always alluding to an idea akin to the Pythagorean tetraktys.” The ancient Greeks considered that “four is the source and the root on the eternal nature” [51]. After Plato, the body has its origin in number four. Even Pythagoras represented the soul through a square [52]. Jung [53] added: “*quaternarium* or quaternity has a long history. It appears not only in Christian iconology and mystical speculation but plays perhaps a still greater role in Gnostic philosophy⁶⁹ and from then on down through the Middle Ages until well into the eighteenth century.” “The «four» in Christian iconology appears chiefly in the form of the four evangelists and their symbols arranged in a rose, circle or melothesia, or as a tetramorph, as for instance in the *Hortus deliciarum* by Herrad of Landsberg and in works of mystical speculation [54]. The four-petal flower appears connected with the Holy Trinity inscribed in a four-petal flower in a French manuscript of the 14th century [55]. A wooden *manbar* within the crypt of Telsafarri Estifanos (Ethiopia) shows the crucified Jesus in the center of another four-petal flower [56]. Also, the Great Dragon I - 5 (Kundalini, ch. IX) was included into a four-petal flower in a bas-relief on I - 7 the north tomb (Beiling) of Qing Taizong dynasty founder (1627-1693) in Shenyang [57]. Khunrath [58] says that the “*Monas catholica*” arises from the rotation of the “*Quaternarium*” and interprets it as an image and allegory of Christ. For the quaternity see also Dunbar [59].

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi revealed that AUM, related to the swastika, alpha and omega, materialized all in the tetravalent atom of carbon (which stands at the basis of life, of organic chemistry), exactly as the *Mooladhara* (with four petals) stands for the support of the root (*adhara*, support; *moola*, root, Sanskr.). One can imagine how daring these assertions could be if we read Kerényi’s words about Jung who “*permits himself* a suggestion as to quite another kind of cosmic origin: it is, he says, a strange *lusus naturae*⁷⁰ that the main chemical constituent of the physical organism should be carbon, which is characterized by four valences” (emphasis added) [48]. Modern science came up with an extraordinary confirmation of the facts revealed by Shri Mataji. The pattern of the three-dimensional distribution of

⁶⁹ As it was shown above.

⁷⁰ Game of nature (Lat.).

I - 11 the carbon's four drop-shaped clouds of valence electrons, when seen from
 I - 12 four distinct angles looked exactly like the Sanskrit sign for AUM, the
 . . . 15 swastika, and the Greek letters *á*lpha (α) and *omé*ga (actually both the lower
 case ω , and the upper case Ω [60].

The word *swastika* derives from *swastikah* (being fortunate; from *sw*,
 I - 23 good, and *asti*, is, *astikah*, being, Sanskr.), and is associated with
 auspiciousness. The most ancient swastika appeared on a Paleolithic cave at
 least 10,000 years ago. A swastika was found on a fragment of a
 I - 16 Mesopotamian ceramics from the 5th millennium discovered at Samarra [61]
 and reappears in other civilizations [62], for example in ancient Greece, as
 I - 18 on the artifacts (especially spindles) unearthed in Troy, dating back to the
 beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, then in Boeotia (8th century BC). It
 was spread over the Bronze Age Europe, from the Arctic to the
 I - 17 Mediterranean, and in the Iron Age to the Etruscan, Mycenaean, Thracian
 19, 20 and Hittite civilizations. In the East, besides the Hindus that symbol was used
 by the Jains and Buddhists, brought in China from India by the latter where
 it was found painted on a silk about 2300 years ago. That silk was discovered
 in the 1970s in the Han Dynasty Tomb 3 at Mawangdui, near Changsa. On
 the silk there were sketched 29 comets, and the last one depicted as a
 I - 21 swastika was called *Di-Xing* (long-tailed pheasant star, Chin.). That symbol
 I - 22 appears also with the Japanese (on their coffins), pre-Columbian pottery, the
 artifacts of Native Americans in North, Central and South America [63]. The
 swastika was found also in the Kurgan graves on the steppes of Russia and
 in the Indo-Aryan graves in Xinjiang, China. That symbol is considered a
 Chinese character with the reading *wan* (in Mandarin) and it is tantamount
 to another Chinese pictogram with the same pronunciation, which means: ten
 thousand, a large number, all. The Germanic tribes called the swastika: “the
 Cross of Thor,” which was brought as such to England by the Scandinavian
 settlers in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. That sign can be found on Jewish
 temples from 2000 years ago.

Christians used the swastika ever since the 3rd century. The equivalent of
 the Divine Son Ganesha was Jesus, corresponding on the one side to the
 cross (similar to the swastika—*crux gammata* (Lat.), with the arms in the
 shape of the four *gamma* letters (Γ), the Greek initial letter of the name
 Ganesha; also *GAM* is the most secret name intended only to the initiates by
 the *Ganesha Atharva Sheersha*), and on the other side to the Greek letters
*á*lpha and *omé*ga: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith [the] Lord God”
 (Revelation 1:8; and 21:6; 22:13). We would remark the analogy of *á*lpha
 (Gr.) and *aleph* (Hebr.; *alif*, Arab.), where the latter is not only the first letter
 of the Hebrew alphabet but also the one in the beginning of the Decalogue,

whose first word of the first commandment is *Anokhi* (I am, Hebr.). In Hebrew, aleph represents only the position of the larynx whenever the word starts with a vowel (*spiritus lenis*⁷¹); hence aleph could stand for the source of all the articulated words. That is the reason for the Kabbalists, to consider aleph as the spiritual root of all the letters. Aleph-Alpha is identical to AUM.

For Islam as well as for Judaism, *handwriting* and *calligraphy* are *sacred arts*. To the latter, we would anticipate here the special significance attributed to the first alphabet letters *aleph* and *bath*, and peculiarly to the tiny letter *yod* (symbol of divinity; ch. IV, V, VIII, XV D); an analogous situation might be encountered in Islam. Here it is an example: The first surah (*al-Fatihah*, That which opens, Arab.) is said to basically contain the entire *Qur'an*, and the formula *Bismillah* (ch. XV D) to contain the entire *al-Fatihah*. *Bismillah* is contained within the letter *ba* and the latter in its diacritical dot. *Ba* is the second letter from the Arabic alphabet, *alif* being the first. Letter *ba* consists of a horizontal line with the end curved upwards and placed above a dot. The group contains the elements of the *crescent and star*, the classical emblem of Islam (☉) on the flag of many Muslim countries (Libya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Pakistan, Tunisia, Turkey). The same group appears in the graphic representation of the Sanskrit AUM (ॐ). The diacritical dot corresponded to the *divine drop*, it is the divine germ, the prototype of the world. We have shown this to be *bindu* (drop, star, Sanskr.; ch. XV C). The Hebrew *yod* is also a dot. The Kabbalistic book *Sepher Yetzirah* wrote: "Light springs out from the ethereal mystery. The hidden dot was thus manifested" [64]. In Hebrew, the *light* (*aor*; ch. IV) comes from *ether* (*avir*) by deleting the dot (*yod*), i.e. the symbol of the manifested Principle.

Back to the Logos, the Hindu wisdom distinguishes among four manifestation forms of the Word. First it was necessary the existence of the undifferentiated underlayer of the consciousness, the transcendent Verb, the *Voice beyond* (*Para-vak*, Sanskr.). Then it was defined the intention, the first impulse, the *Voice that sees* (*Pashyanti*, literally: seeing, Sanskr.), thus visualizes the idea. Next it comes the finding of the word (yet silent) which can serve as vehicle of the thought, e.g. the potential sound, the *intermediary Voice* (*Madhyama*, Sanskr.). Eventually, the sound is exteriorized (articulated) as the *Voice manifest* (*Vaikhari*, Sanskr.). The connection with Ganesha's four attributes is obvious. Likewise, there is a clear relation with the tetrahedron (triangular on a flat plane) symmetry of carbon, since the three lower stages of manifestation of the Word correspond to the three sides of a triangle, which represents the power of will (*ichchha-shakti*, Sanskr.),

⁷¹ Ch. XV D.

the power of knowledge (*gyana-shakti*, Sanskr.), and the power of action (*kriya-shakti*, Sanskr.), also called Intention, Formulation, and Expression—i.e. the three divine aspects personified as the *Trimurti* (ch. II), or the three manifestations of the *Adi Shakti*: *Maha-Kali*, *Maha-Lakshmi*, *Maha-Saraswati*, expressed through the three sounds constituting the Primordial Syllable AUM (ch. XIX C) or the three tendencies (*guna*, Sanskr.), which represent the desire (*tamo*; left channel), knowledge (*sattwa*, central channel) and action (*rajo*, right channel). The center of the triangle (or the center of the tetrahedron in three dimensions) is *Para-vak*, God, envisioned as *Shabda-Brahma*, or *Vak-tattwa* (Word Principle, Sanskr.). The *Veda* is the revealed Verb.

Nada (Sansk.) is the manifestation of the sonorous quality of the sound (*shabda*, Sanskr.), which corresponds to the element of Ether (*Akasha*, Sanskr.), while according to the Gnostics (but not only to them), the Divine Son Jesus was endowed with an ethereal body of pure vibration (ch. XXIII B). However, the Son Ganesha-Jesus was born out of the Feminine Divine Principle *Adi Shakti* (Divine Primordial Power, Sanskr.) being everything perceived as a sound according to the Hindu sacred texts. “From Energy sprang forth the principal vibration, the point-limit from which the manifest world begins” [65]. On the other hand, the point-limit, the germ of the manifestation (*bindu*, Sanskr.; corresponding to *yod* and the diacritical dot) was Ganesha or OM.

* * *

The scientific study of languages reveals a history of mankind that precedes the earliest written documents: by comparing the related languages, linguists search for the first ancestors of these languages, hoping to find the most distant common ancestor; this proto-language reveals the territory and the way of life of the people who used it.

The process of linguistic reconstruction is related to the methods of molecular biology: the linguist looks for the grammatical, syntactic, lexical and phonetic correlations amongst the known language in order to define their ancestors in a similar way to the biochemist who identifies molecules with similar functions amongst different species in order to characterize their common forbear. Phonology is primordial here: the phonetic components are more perennial than their lexical meanings.

Linguists have made remarkable progress by studying the superfamily of Indo-European languages, that is, by far the most important family regarding the number of languages and inhabitants, representing the native languages

spoken by over a half of the world population.

For two centuries the linguists have been retrieving the Proto-Indo-European vernacular and syntax with an increasing accuracy.

According to Gamkrelidze and Ivanov, this would have been spoken in the south of Caucasus over 6000 years ago [66]. There are hypotheses placing it in other geographical areas, for instance India. It is becoming more certain, however, that it stemmed from this part of Asia and, there were by no means, the Aryans who might have spread the Indo-Iranian languages from Europe to India, but there were rather the Indo-Iranians who, coming from Asia Minor, would have invaded India after having crossed Afghanistan. After this hypothesis, Europe was the destination and not the origin of Indo-European migrations.

A large number of words of the Indo-European languages were borrowed from the languages spoken in eastern Anatolia: Semitic, Sumerian, Kartvelian and even from Egyptian. The Indo-European proto-language, in its turn, enriched each language.

To give only one example, both the Semitic and the Indo-European languages assimilated *earth* and *man* to each other. *Adam* (man) and *adamah* (earth) in Hebrew derive from the same root in the Semitic proto-language. Genesis reads: “And Yahweh Elohim formed man, dust of the ground” (2:7).

Homo and *humus*, in Latin originate from the same Indo-European proto-language word *d^heg^hom⁷² meaning *earth* and *man* (etymologically: *earthen creature*). Through an even deeper analysis, the following words derived from a proto-language word; thus, the words for *earth* are *tekan* (Hittite), *ksam* (Sanskrit), *chthon* (Greek), *humus* (Latin), while the words for *man* are: *saumo* (Tokharian), *homo* (Latin) and, in Germanic languages: *guma* (Gothic), *guma* (Old English), *gomo* (Upper German).

Whereas the speakers of the Anatolian languages (Hittite, Luvian etc.) migrated only to a little extent and their languages died away with their extinction, the speakers of the Greek-Armenian-Indo-Iranian dialects migrated far from the Indo-European cradle after the flourishing of the Indo-European proto-civilization. The speakers of the Indo-Iranian languages divided into two groups following different routes eastwards. The descendants of the former, who spoke the Kafiri languages, still live in Nuristan on the southern slope of the Hindu-Kush Mountains, in the northeast of Afghanistan. The latter group started southwards, following the Indus Valley and brought with them the languages from which the Indian ones were to be born. The *Rig-Veda* hymns written in old Sanskrit were the earliest literary works of the speakers belonging to this group. After the first

⁷² The asterisk stays for the words in the proto-language.

period when one witnessed a spreading (eastwards going around the Caspian Sea along its southern shore) of three branches to Turkestan, to the north of Pakistan (Punjab) and Kashmir, and to Iran and the Persian Gulf respectively, another branch extended this time going westwards around the northern part of the Caspian Sea. The other three branches went on westwards coming from Asia Minor through the Doric zone.

Gamkrelidze and Ivanov showed Sanskrit to have preserved its original phonology. Hindus considered it a holy language (*sans*, sacred; *krita*, deed), a real *Deva-vani* (language of the *Devas*, gods, Sanskr.). According to Schuon: “The modern languages... are unsuited for sacred use by reason of their too analytical character... ; sacred use requires a language of a more synthetic and impersonal character... that character of simplicity and sobriety which is proper to all non-modern languages.” He advocates us to be “alive to spiritual undertones and to the mystical vibrations” [67].

The *Encyclopedia Americana* states: “since the revival of classical learning, there has been no other event in the history of culture as important as the discovery of Sanskrit (by Western scholars) in the latter part of the eighteen century. Linguistic science, comparative grammar, comparative mythology, the science of religion... either owe their very existence to the discovery of Sanskrit or were profoundly influenced by its study.” “The Sanskrit language,” said Sir William Jones, founder of the Asiatic Society, “whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either” [68]. Indeed, it is a peerless language in its vastness, versatility and power of expression. To give just a few samples, it contains 24 words to describe rainfall, 65 for earth and 67 for water.

The Sanskrit vowel sounds are corresponding to the “petals” of the Vishuddhi chakra placed in the lower part of the neck, and controlling—according to Sahaja Yoga—the interhuman communication (gestures, mimics, eye movements, hearing and, of course, also the speech). The cervical plexus related to the Vishuddhi has 16 branches (eight on the left side and eight on the right). The Sanskrit letters correspond to the “petals” of the symbolic chakra lotuses (4—Mooladhara, 6—Swadhithana, 10—Nabhi, 12—Anahatha, 16—Vishuddhi, 2—Agya, 1—Sahasrara⁷³), that anatomically represent the number of subplexuses that parallel the chakras. A certain analogy with the number of vertebrae in the respective region is also worth noticing: Mooladhara and Swadhithana (totaling 10 sacral and lumbar vertebrae), Anahatha (12 thoracic vertebrae) and Vishuddhi (8 cervical vertebrae from where the cervical plexus branches are coming out:

⁷³ 1 or 1000 (ch. II).

8 on the right and 8 on the left, that is 16). We have left aside the Nabhi chakra, because this center is located in the discontinuity of the Void (ch. II).

According to some historians and linguists, the migration would have occurred eastwards, having its origin in the geographical zone of Old Europe, which also included Romania.

Approximately eighth millenniums ago, the Pontic-Carpatho-Danubian population turned to the vast, organized and systematic breeding of animals (sheep particularly), without adopting a nomadic life, which constituted a unique case. Circumstances allowed for this cradle of civilization to appear before those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. It was due to this fact and to the extremely favorable conditions offered by the geographical position (climate, geographical relief, the Danubian basin—the largest European river) that a rich abundance of products (milk, wool, besides meat) was obtained. That was to generate a demographic explosion resulting in the expansion of the population surplus that carried away the features of this civilization and still maintained its connections with those left behind in the Danubian basin. Various researchers advocated this hypothesis. “This... center generated vast movements of the population surplus, a phenomenon specific to the Holocene⁷⁴, whereas the stable settlements were manifesting an attractive welfare. The proto-native place of the early Indo-Europeans was in the Carpathian Mountains” [69]. It was from there that the Luvians, the Pelasgians, the proto-Greeks, the proto-Hittites, the Balkhs, the Indo-Aryans, the Iconians emigrated and their descendants happened to come back at their places of origin, at least accidentally, as invading tribes [70] (see below). Berinde and Lugojan stressed it out that, although the development spread out in all directions, an important branch went southwards, crossed the Bosphorus, the Anatolian plateau and reached Iran and then the northwestern India during the 2nd millennium BC. That entire route has shepherd populations scattered along and speaking Indo-European languages; some of them go a long way back into the history (the Hittites) while others (such as the Curds, the Armenians, the Iranians, the Indes) still exist in our times. Among the supporting proofs one could mention, first, “the Assyro-Babylonian sources giving information on the new peoples having appeared at the western and northern Mesopotamian borders during the third millennium BC... when the Luvians, a European population coming from the Haemus⁷⁵ Peninsula crossed over to Asia Minor followed by the Hittites after

⁷⁴ The last epoch of the Quaternary.

⁷⁵ Balkan Peninsula; *Haemus* was the old name of the Balkan Mountains.

some time” [71]. Another proof is that *Way of the Gods* described by the *Kaushitaki Upanishad*, further described by Herodotus, mentioned by Pindar in his *Isthmi*, by Ovid and Hasdeu, marked on the old military maps of the Russian armies, also revealed by N. Densușianu in his *Prehistoric Dacia* [72]. This *Way of the Gods* could be geographically situated in the Gorges of the Bâc, from where the row of guiding stones goes on until the Azov Sea. The text of the mentioned *Upanishad* referring to *Devayana* (Leading to the gods, Sanskr.) path⁷⁶, revealed that it “comes to the Lake Ara” [73], showing that the way run on from the Azov Sea to the Aral lake.

The American archaeologist William Schiller thinks that the civilization was born where the Romanian people live today spreading both eastward and westward. About what time? 13-15 thousand years ago [74].

The world renowned archaeologist and historian Dr. Marija Gimbutas, Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles was mentioned whenever Mircea Eliade dealt with the spiritual edifice of the Neolithic [75]. In order to characterize the climax of the ancient civilization that once flourished in the east-central Europe, she referred in many of her works to “the peoples who inhabited Europe from the 7th to the 3rd millennia BC, which I termed Old Europe, referring to Neolithic Europe before the Indo-Europeans. During this period, our ancestors... developed a rich and sophisticated artistic expression and a complex symbolic system formulated around the worship of the Goddess in her various aspects. Substantial evidence for a rapidly growing Neolithic culture that began in the middle of the 7th millennium BC exists in the Aegean area, the Balkans, and in east-central Europe... It has also become evident that this extremely old European civilization precedes the Sumerian one by a couple of millennia... It was a period of real harmony, in full agreement with the creative energies of nature... The civilization that flourished in Old Europe between 6500 and 3500 BC and in Crete until 1450 BC enjoyed a long period of uninterrupted peaceful living, which produced artistic expressions of graceful beauty and refinement, demonstrating a higher quality of life than many androcratic, classed societies... It was... a true civilization in the best meaning of the word. In the 5th and early 4th millennia BC... Old Europeans had towns with a considerable concentration of population, temples several stories high, a sacred script, spacious houses of four or five rooms... The Late Cucuteni culture, c. 4000-3500 BC, reached an urban stage with towns of up to 10,000 inhabitants at the center of a district surrounded by medium and smaller size villages... Although the Sumerians are generally thought to be the inventors

⁷⁶ *Pathya* (Sanskrit.)

of written language, a script in east-central Europe⁷⁷ appeared some two thousand years earlier than any other that has been yet found. Unlike Sumerian script, the writing of the Old Europeans was not devised for economic, legal or administrative purposes. It was developed, instead, . . . only within the context of an increasingly sophisticated worship of the Goddess. Inscriptions appear on religious items only, indicating that these signs were intended to be read as sacred hieroglyphs” [77].

In their turn, Anne Baring and Jules Cashford [78] wrote: “Now it seems that isolated centers of Neolithic culture existed as early as 7000 BC in places as far as eastern Europe, southern Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. The picture that is emerging is of a single cultural matrix that underlies and relates all these different areas to each other. Almost identical figurines and sculptures of the goddess have been found in eastern Europe and to the Indus Valley (in a place called Mehrgarh) . . . The implications of uncovering these highly developed Neolithic cultures have not yet informed the general understanding of our time, which continues to believe that the «cradle» of civilization was Bronze Age Sumer and Egypt.” The authors wrote with reference to the works of Marija Gimbutas on Old Europe: “These fascinating books reveal the cultural matrix that underlies European, Near Eastern and Mediterranean civilizations. What she has discovered and interpreted parallels the discoveries of other Neolithic cultures, such as Çatal Hüyük⁷⁸ in Anatolia and the communities in the Indus Valley. Before radiocarbon dating (discovered in 1952) and tree-ring dating (dendrochronology) had been synchronized (an achievement that revolutionized the chronology of prehistoric material), the cultural momentum was believed to have spread westwards from the Near East, in particular from Egypt and Sumer, during the fourth and third millenniums BC. However, the study of Old Europe shows that this was an autonomous culture, that developed parallel with other cultures in the Near East and Anatolia from the seventh to the fourth millennium BC. Moreover, the astonishing variety, richness and sheer volume of material gathered from Old Europe far surpass anything found so far in other Neolithic cultures. In the civilization of Old Europe settlements

⁷⁷ The *Tărtăria Tablets*, discovered in 1961—The Transylvania History Museum, Cluj-Napoca—belong to the Turdaş (Vinča) civilization, and were “produced two thousand years earlier than the development of Sumerian civilization and about three thousand years before the appearance of Minoan Palace culture . . . The Old European writing was associated with religious functions” [76].

⁷⁸ Hill (Turk.).

grew into villages and villages into small towns housing several thousand people. This happened many thousands of years before anything like it occurred in western and northern Europe—undoubtedly because of the increasing mastery of agriculture—and reached the peak in the fifth millennium BC. All kind of skills, such as pottery and stone- and copper-working techniques—even the formulation of a rudimentary linear script in the sixth millennium BC—attained a remarkable level of achievement long before the rise of Bronze Age Sumer. One in every hundred figurines in Old Europe carried the incisions of this script... There is another, possibly related, feature of this civilization. The deities of these people, as Eisler has noted, carry no spears, swords or thunderbolts... There is no picture that celebrates or even depicts war. Rather, the myriad images from nature attest to their feeling for the beauty and sanctity of life. The primary purpose of life was evidently not to conquer, pillage and loot, nor was the relation with the divine one of fear and obedience. As to the relations between women and men in Old Europe, the archaeological evidence suggests that there was no apparent social superiority of males over females... Gimbutas observes that this was a matrilineal society in which descent and inheritance passed through the mother and where women played essential roles in religious rituals. From the fourth millennium BC onwards, Indo-European tribes, in ever-increasing numbers, force their way into Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and lands stretching eastwards to the Indus Valley. We can trace their path of conquest as they appear as Hittites in Anatolia and Syria; Mitanni, Hurrians and Kassites in Mesopotamia; Achaeans and then Dorians in Greece; and Aryans in the Indus Valley [79]... The echo of the mythology of war which resounds in the *Mahabharata* as it does in the *Iliad* and the Old Testament, descends from these Bronze Age migrations.”

At the same time with the first penetrations of the population of the Kurgan (barrow)⁷⁹ culture that arrived in three waves from the Russian steppe between 4300 and 2800 BC, the flourishing Carpathian civilization started to decline and fell into obscurity. The vestiges of Old Europe were preserved only in the tip of the Balkan Peninsula and in the south of Italy, which further facilitated the Greco-Roman civilization.

Mircea Eliade showed: “In all of Europe, but especially in the southeast, different ethnic groups, religions, and cultures encountered, challenged, and mutually influenced one another, at least three millennia before the era of great invasions. Dacia was pre-eminently the country of such encounters.

⁷⁹ *Kurgan*, stone or earthen circular tumulus covering the mortuary chamber and surrounded by a *cromlech* made up of walls, stone rings or wooden pillars.

From prehistory down to the dawn of modern times, eastern and Aegean influences never ceased... Other cultural elements common to all the Balkan peoples seem still more ancient than the Geto-Thracian heritage, presenting a pre-Indo-European⁸⁰ aspect... We must bear in mind that the Thracians and the Cimmerians shared a protohistorical culture whose successive irradiations crossed Central Asia and instigated the appearance of new cultural aspects on the shores of the China Sea... Certain eminently conservative parts of Europe (among which Romania and the Balkans must always be reckoned) reveal strata of culture more archaic than the one resented, for example, by the «classic» Greek and Roman mythologies... A certain number of pre-Indo-European cultural elements have been better preserved there than anywhere in Europe (perhaps with the exception of Ireland and the Pyrenees)” [80]. The great historian of religions inferred: “The exegesis of the Romanian and southeastern European materials facilitates the research of the folk religious traditions in India, Middle Asia, Far East and Middle America and, in its turn, is validated by the results obtained in these exotic cultural areas” [81].

Irrespective, however, of the direction of peoples' migration, or of the development of the Indo-European languages, the formerly-mentioned provide evidence about the cultural and spiritual interferences amongst the European and the far Indian populations.

⁸⁰ “This is especially true of religious symbolism, dances and musical instruments” (Eliade’s note).

NOTES

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⁸¹ Further it will be designated by the initial letters JNCBRAS.

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II. “GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS IMAGE”

“Will ever the day arrive when man will discover through scientific knowledge and experience and earthly manifestation that which the spirits have always known through God, and which our hearts have known through longing?”

Khalil Gibran [1]

“Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind”

Albert Einstein [2]

“For religion God is at the beginning of thought, for science He is reached at the end”

Max Planck [3]

How should we understand the statement in Genesis (1:26): “Let us make man in our image (*tzelem*, Hebr.), after our likeness (*demut*, Hebr.)” (*kat’ eikóna emon, kaph homoiósin emon*, Gr., in the Septuagint)? Is it in the naive way in which we see God painted in icons or other works of art? Should we see Him as an old man, adorned with a white beard, clad in rich attire, sitting on a golden throne? Neither the Muslims nor the Jews conceive God having a face. Yahweh usually manifests as fire or light (ch. XI E): Exodus (*Shemoth*, Hebr.) 3:2; 19:18; Deuteronomy (Second Law; *Debarim*, Words, Hebr.) 4:11-12; 5:4-5,22-24; Ezekiel 1:27-28 etc. As for Hindus, they consider Brahman to be beyond knowledge, hence beyond representation.

The well-known theologian of the Eastern Christianity, Vladimir Lossky acknowledged: “We are here confronted with a philosophical anthropomorphism having nothing in common with Biblical anthropomorphism” [4], hence, when talking about God, any scriptural anthropomorphism should be abandoned.

When referring to “creation in God’s image,” E. Lehmann hinted at “the complete silence of the rest of the Old Testament on this subject, which, if it had been a prevalent idea, might have been expected to be very frequently used, and used to the full, in the constantly recurring treatment of the relation between God and men. But no Prophet, not Job, not even the humane Deuteronomy, has any suggestion of such a likeness of nature between God and man” [5]. It is a mystery, which we shall try to break in.

Greg Turek realized that as far as the end of the second millennium approached, more and more scientists became aware of a spiritual reality beyond the physical one. The Hindu tradition called this spiritual realm the *Virata* (The Glorious One, Sanskr.). Many mythologies regarded the Virata as the Cosmic Being whose apparent manifestation was the universe, as it was shown in the *Bhagavad-Gita* by Krishna who incarnated the Virata (see *infra*). Mankind is envisaged to be the conscious interface between the physical and spiritual. This reality becomes manifest as an all-pervading power, which exists throughout the universe and could offer a solution to the unifying theory searched in vain by all the physicists since Einstein. The ancient Scriptures called it *Paramchaitanya* (Sansk.) or *Brahmachaitanya* (divine vibrations, Sanskr.). In a simplistic term (because the scientific language was not able to offer a proper word for it), it could be called *vibrations* (*chaitanya*, Sanskr.). It encompasses both the physical cosmos and the spiritual realm, reason for what the sages designated it as Universal or Supreme (*Parama*, Sanskr.). *Paramchaitanya* represented a *life force* while everything in the cosmos seems to be made up of and permeated and joined together by these “vibrations” [6]. The Supreme Being cannot prevent Himself from radiating, therefore from manifesting Himself (or from creating), because He cannot prevent Himself from being infinite. Radiation of the Divinity is related to His Infinitude. This all-pervading energy appeared in the first moment of Creation. We find it in the ancient Chinese Christian manuscripts mentioned above: “All things in this universe share the Divine Power of God in common” [7], i.e. the *Adi Shakti* (Primordial Power, Sanskr.). It is what Dumitru Constantin-Dulcan defines as “the intelligence of matter,” present within the atom as well as within the entire universe [8]. The *Paramchaitanya* might be supposed to be the so-called *residual cosmic radiation*, a reminiscence of the primordial radiation, which appeared in the moment of the explosion (Big Bang) that gave birth to the universe. In the spring of 1964, the American physicists Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, detected a significant signal with a wavelength of 7.35 cm (range of microwaves) by means of an antenna of the Bell Telephone Laboratories in Holmdel, New Jersey. The intensity and the measured spectrum pattern enabled it to be assimilated to the radiation of a black body with a temperature of 2.7 K. The more accurate measurements made with the satellite COBE (Cosmic Background Explorer), launched by NASA in November 1989 confirmed the black body characteristics of this feeble microwaves radiation at a temperature of $2.735 \pm 0,06$ K. The radiation is practically constant in any direction (the variation with the direction does not exceed 30 millionth of degree). If we admit that this radiation has a

cosmological characteristic (i.e. it bathes the entire universe), this would be a clear evidence for an extremely isotropic universe [9].

The Cosmic Being does not include only the physical universe but the entire universe with its Mind, which precedes its existence, its guiding energies, and the laws that rule its development. The Hindu sages think that man is the *fragmentary universe* (*vyashti*, Sanskr.) or microcosm (*kshudra-brahmanda*, the small egg of Brahma, Sanskr.), while the Cosmic Being is the *universe-totality* (*samashti*, Sanskr.) or macrocosm (*Brahmanda*, the Egg of Brahma, Sanskr.). The *Rig-Veda* showed that originally there was the Primordial Egg⁸² (*Hiranyagarbha*, Sanskr.). And the *Upanishad* wrote: “In the beginning this world was merely non-being. It was existent. It developed. It turned into an egg. It lay for a period of a year. It was split asunder. One of the two eggshell-parts became silver, one gold. That which was of silver is this earth. That which was of gold is the sky” [10]. This actually corresponds to the Masculine and Feminine principles (Sada-Shiva and Adi Shakti; ch. I) and, as shown in the followings, to the side channels (solar—gold and lunar—silver). The lower-case omega (ω) is believed to represent the Primordial Egg split in halves. Among the masterpieces of Constantin Brâncuși, the father of modern sculpture, the *Egg* seems to be a plastic representation of Genesis vision in the *Rig-Veda*, connected to various versions of the *Magic Bird* (*Maiastira*) carved by the famous artist as an aspiration towards spiritual elevation.

The Pelasgian creation myth begins with Eurymene, the Goddess of All Things. From the wind (ch. XI C) she made the great serpent (ch. IX) Ophion, then, taking the form of a dove (ch. XXI) she laid the Universal Egg on the Primordial Waters. Ophion coiled (as *uroboros*; ch. IV) seven times round the egg until it was split into two. Then she created the seven planetary powers (aeons; ch. XIX C) putting a male and a female over each of them (Masculine Principles and their Shaktis). The first man was called *Pelasgós*, the ancestor of the Pelasgians (aboriginal non-Greek people of northern Greece) [11].

The *physical body* of the Cosmic Being—totality of all physical bodies—is the *Virata*, governed by Brahma; the *subtle body* is *Hiranyagarbha* under Vishnu’s control; the *causal body* is *Sarvajna* (All-knower, Sanskr.) ruled by Shiva. The Cosmic Person is *Purusha*. According to Jain view and Sankhya philosophy, *purusha* is the living monad (*jiva*) distinct from non-living matter (*prakriti*; *ajiva*, Sanskr.), and from *karma* (ch. XXIV) respectively.

⁸² This belonged to the mythology of the Bird Goddess (ch. XXI) and its memory is maintained in the custom of Easter eggs.

The analogy between the Creator and the man could be explained through the relation existing between the Virata and the human being, on the level of the subtle body (*sukshma sharira*; in opposition with the physical body—*sthula sharira*, Sanskr.). The Virata is made up of primordial centers and channels (*Adi Chakras*⁸³ and *Adi Nadis* respectively) just as the human I I - 5 subtle body has a structure of energy plexuses or centers (*chakra*, Sanskr.) I I - 9 and channels (*nadi*, river, Sanskr.) made active by the *Kundalini* energy (which is a reflection in man of Virata's primordial cosmic energy).

In the human subtle body there is a network of energy channels, some of them being used in the Far Eastern traditional medicine (acupuncture, pressopuncture etc.) under the name of meridians. The vital energy sustaining even the cosmos is known as *ch'i* (Chin.) or *k'i* (Japan.)⁸⁴, and the meridians—the *pathways of ch'i (jing ch'i)*. Acupuncture refers to an “«ancestral energy» at the origin of all the energies of the body” and uses the term “curious meridians” to denote the paths of this subtle energy that are not connected to a viscera-organ system but to the nervous system (brain and backbone marrow). These peculiar meridians are also called extraordinary (or marvelous) vessels (e.g. the *chang mo* meridian). “The circulation of the ancestral energy controls the entire energy of the organism. It is always bipolar and controls the positive and negative potential... The Chinese medical science also mentions the «immaterial» aspect of the vegetative energy represented by the psychic energy” [12].

For making things simply and clear, we shall consider the three main channels.

The **central** channel (*Sushumna nadi*, Sanskr.) corresponds to the parasympathetic nervous system, to the marrow inside the backbone and it I I - 7 is not accessible to acupuncture, pressopuncture or Hatha Yoga practitioners, who exclusively work on the side channels (*ha*, sun, and *tha*, moon, Sanskr.). The Sushumna is the channel of balance (*Sattwa guna*, Sanskr.). In acupuncture this is believed to correspond to the main channels (because they control or are linked to the other meridians) represented by the paths starting from the coccyx bone (from a point situated between the genitals and the anus) and ascending along the backbone up to the skull [13].

The **left** channel (*Ida nadi*, Sanskr.), alongside the left sympathetic ganglion chain is the channel of the feminine (*Yin*, Chin.), lunar, cold, lethargic tendency (*Tamo guna*, Sanskr.).

⁸³ Or *pitha* (seat; of divinity, Sanskr.).

⁸⁴ Whereas the Sufis call it *barakah* (Arab.), and the Kabbalists—*yesod* (Hebr.).

The **right** channel (*Pingala nadi*, Sanskr.), along the right sympathetic ganglion chain stands for the masculine (*Yang*, Chin.), solar, warm, dynamic tendency (*Rajo guna*, Sanskr.).

It cannot pass without mention the analogy between the terms Yang-Yin and the Indian masculine (*Linga*) and feminine (*Yoni*) symbols. Originally, *Yang* designated the blazing of the sun, and *Yin*—the obscurity. These two tendencies are held together in balance by the subtle energy *ch'i* that corresponds to the central channel.

The side channels can be also characterized through other antithetical dyads (in the *Ida/Pingala* consecution): minus/plus, passive/active, reception/emission, desire/action, humid/dry, darkness/light, night/day, past/future, solve/coagula (alchemical terms, ch. IV; corresponding to the centrifugal force, *utkranti*, and the centripetal attraction, *adana*, respectively—in Sanskrit) etc. (see also ch. I), whereas the central channel corresponded to a neutral position, of balance (*pratishtha*, Sanskr.), to mathematical zero, or to the present. This characterization might be compared to the electrical charge of the elementary particles: electron (negative), proton (positive) and neutron (neutral).

The *three tendencies* (*gunas*, Sanskr.), of which the universe is wove, are nothing but the reflection of the aspects of the *Adi Shakti*: *Maha-Lakshmi* creates *Sattwa guna*, *Maha-Saraswati*—*Rajo guna* and *Maha-Kali*—*Tamo guna*. They correspond to the Eleusinian triad of goddesses *Demeter*, *Kóre* and *Hecate*, or the Arcadian trinity in *Lykosura* consisting of *Demeter*, *Despoina* and *Artemis Hegemone*, respectively. Hesiod, the poet of *Theogony* acclaims *Hecate* who was worshipped in the ancient world as the goddess with a *triple body* who held a *triple power* (*Shakti*, Sanskr.) on the *three realms* as early as the time of the *Titans*, i.e. long before *Zeus* has established a new order. *Hekateia* were set up at the crossing of *three roads*⁸⁵ [14]. The Greek mythology also refers to the *three Graces* (*Gratae*, Lat.; *Charites*, Gr.; it is worth noticing that the *Adi Shakti* who lies at their source is also the goddess who bestows the *grace*, or *Self Realization*): *Charis*, *Mia* and *Pasithea* (Lat.) or *Euphrosine* (Joyous), *Thalia* (Flowering) and *Aglae* (Brilliance, Gr.). At the same time, there are the *three Parcae* (Lat.): *Nona*, *Decuma* and *Morta* who have as their Greek parallels the *three Moerae* or *Moirai* which have control over man's destiny: *Klotho* (controls his birth, i.e. the creation, similar to *Brahma*), *Lahesis* (controls his flow of the existence, similar to *Vishnu*) and *Atropos* (controls his death, similar to *Shiva*). They correspond to the *three Norns* in Scandinavian mythology, and to the *Triple Goddess of Ireland*, *Eire*, *Fodhla* and *Banbha*. In the Romanian folklore their

⁸⁵ Three channels (this crossing occurs at the level of the *Agya chakra*).

equivalents are the *three* Fatal Sisters, or even the fairies *Savatina*, *Rujalina* and *Margalina* (see the similitude to the Sanskrit names). It is to be shown here that, according to the most ancient tradition [15], the number of *Muses* in Helikon was also *three*: *Melete* (exercise, training, study—pointing to the right channel, of physical and mental activity), *Mneme* or *Mnemosyne* (memory—a feature of the left channel pertaining to the past) and *Aoede* (song, i.e. vibrations—specific for the central channel). The role of the *Muses* was to purify (*kátharsis*, Gr.). In King Arthur’s legends, the Magic Island sheltered *three* ladies who are the manifestations of the Mother Goddess, that is the three *gunas*. *Faust* read: “The goddesses rule in solitude,/... We speak about them in awe./ They are the *Mothers!*” (*Göttinnen thronen hehr in Einsamkeit,/... Von ihnen sprechen ist Verlegenheit./ Die Mütter sind es!*”, Germ.) [16].

The multisided artist and philosopher William Blake, presently considered a great initiate, wrote about the “Three-fold Wonder: feminine: most beautiful: Three-fold/ Each within other” [17].

In the Hindu mythology, the three female entities are the *Shaktis* of the masculine deities making up the *Trimurti* (*murti*, aspect, Sanskr.), or the Hindu triad: *Brahma* (creator), *Vishnu* (support of creation and evolution), and *Shiva* (destroyer of creation at the end of the great cycle—ch. XIX A). Both sacred numbers of three and seven, which characterise the subtle body, appear jointly as early as the *Rig-Veda*: “I laud the seven-rayed, the triple-headed *Agni* all perfect” [18].

The triad corresponded to the stages of every evolutionary process: *birth*, then *existence*, *living* (*keeping*, *maintaining* or *lasting* of life) and *death*. The three manifestations are aspects of the Unique Principle (*Brahman*), described in the *Bhagavad-Gita* “as supporting creatures, destroying them and creating them afresh” [19]. Chapter XIX C discloses the relation between the three parts of the sacred syllable *AUM*, the three tendencies (*gunas*), the powers (*shaktis*) and the three members of the *Trimurti*. By chance or not, the letters composing *GOD* are the initial letters for *Generator* (*Brahma*), *Organizer* (*Vishnu*) and *Destroyer* (*Shiva*). Mention should be made of another way of expressing the Divine principle consisting in attributing him *three* qualities (ch. XIX C): *Sat* (Existence), *Chit* (Consciousness), *Ananda* (Bliss).

Similar to the reflection of the *Virata* within the human being, the *Trimurti* is manifested within the blood triad: the red cells *create* the premises of life since oxygenate the body, the white cells (leukocytes) ensure the *sustenance* in fighting the pathogenic agents, and the trombocytes bring about *destruction* by producing clotting. The physics has demonstrated on the

atomic level, that the quantum field *generates* an infinite variety of forms, *sustains* them, and eventually *reabsorbs* them. Thus, the science confirms the conclusions that the sages of the East had reached intuitively. “Tranquil, let one worship It as that from which He came forth⁸⁶, as that into which He will be dissolved⁸⁷, as that in which He breathes⁸⁸” [20]. The *Zohar* also describes *three* guiding principles corresponding to the three channels: “Rabbi Yehudah said: «man is lead by three guided: reason, passion and the instinct of self-preservation». Rab Dime called the latter as «the background of existence»” [21]. Indeed, Pingala is the channel of reason, Ida is the channel of passion, and Sushumna is the channel of sustenance. The triple divine hypostasis is found in the incarnations. As examples, we could mention: the Old Testament—Yahweh (*singular*) appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre⁸⁹ (Genesis 18:1) where the prophet saw *three* men (18:2); the New Testament—the *three* Magi from the East (Matthew 2:1); and the Indian X - 2 Scriptures—Dattatreya, the incarnation of the *Trimurti* as the principle of the Primordial Guru (ch. X and XIX C).

The vegetative nervous system and, implicitly, the subtle channels operate on the nervous plexuses: the parasympathetic nervous system relaxes the plexuses, thus supplying energy, whereas the sympathetic nervous system contracts them, so releasing energy. The side channels cross themselves on II - 11 the forehead level—where the chiasma optialis (crossing of the optical - a nerves) is located—and end up on the opposite part in two “balloons” corresponding to the cerebral hemispheres. Although the western medicine does not distinguish between the functions of the two chains of the sympathetic nervous system—whereas Sahaja Yoga attributes them specific functions—the cerebral hemispheres each specialize in *different functions*: the left dedicating itself to logical and analytical thinking; the right to intuition and synthesis [22]. The subtle parts corresponding to the hemispheres are called *ego* (ending of the right channel on the left side of the head) and *superego* (ending of the left channel on the right side of the head). II - 11 The well-known image of the *Yin-Yang* symbol of Taoism (☯) depicts well - b the position of those subtle elements.

The main seven chakras are aligned—on the level of nervous plexuses

⁸⁶ Brahma.

⁸⁷ Shiva.

⁸⁸ Vishnu.

⁸⁹ Symbolises the Tree of Life, the subtle body.

and endocrine glands—along the central channel and have projections on the I I - 8 side channels. The raising sequence of the chakras is as follows: *Mooladhara* (sacral plexus; sex glands), *Swadhisthana* (aortic plexus; adrenal glands), *Manipura*⁹⁰ or *Nabhi*⁹¹ (celiac plexus; pancreas), *Riddhaya* or *Anahatha* (cardiac plexus; thymus), *Vishuddhi*⁹² (cervical plexus; thyroid), *Agnya* spelled also *Agnya*, *Ajna* (chiasma opticalis; pituitary and pineal glands), *Sahasrara* (limbic zone of the brain; thalamus—*thálamós*, inner chamber, Gr.). Professor Umesh C. Rai showed that the limbic system could operate as a mediator between the conscious thinking and the involuntary activities of the autonomous nervous system [23]. By measuring of certain physical parameters, the researchers reached the conclusions confirming the existence of the chakras: Thus, in the United States, a professional physicist who was a scientific adviser to the U.S. Army's Advanced Material Concepts Agency, Dr. Zabo V. Harvalik claimed that “these measurements suggests that dowsing sensors must be located in the region of the solar plexus and that perhaps there are additional sensors in the head or brain” [24].

Sahasrara literally means “the lotus with one thousand petals” (Sansk.). I I - 10 The longitudinal cross-section of the human brain discloses a system of fibers called *corona radiata*, the inner capsule suggesting a structure with I I - 12 one thousand petals. The horizontal cross-section reveals a similar pattern: *radiatio corporis callosi*.

The Nabhi chakra has a circular zone around it, called the *Void* or *Bhava* I I - 5 *Sagara* (Ocean of Illusions; literally: *bhava*, worldly life, Sanskr.). This corresponds to *Hara* (Japan.), and the Taoists called it the *Ocean of Energy*. Here, the parasympathetic nervous system is interrupted between the vagus nerve and the sacral plexus. The Void is located on the level of the diaphragm separating the *abdominal breathing* from the *pulmonary breathing*. The birth trauma implies the rush of air into the lungs and the separation from the maternal womb by cutting the navel chord. On a subtle level, the Sushumna channel is interrupted and the Void is created. In order that the Kundalini energy might cross the Void (*vacuus*, Lat.; close phonetically to *vagus*), and continue its ascent during the process of Self Realization, it is necessary for the Void to be filled with divine vibrations (*Paramchaitanya*, Sanskr.), so that the Kundalini energy could continue her rising up to the Sahasrara. Otherwise God is absent: *vacare Deo* (*vacare*, to

⁹⁰ *Mani* (jewel, Sanskr.), *pura* (city, Sanskr.).

⁹¹ *Nabhisthana*.

⁹² *Vishuddha*.

be absent, Lat.). However, *vacare Deo* designates the “void for God.” This seems to be the reason for the practitioners of the Hesychasm (ch. XXV A) as well as for the Sikhs to concentrate their attention during meditation on the navel.

The structure of the Virata manifests itself not only in the subtle body but also in the innermost structure of the cell. Dr. Ram Mishra, a university professor from Canada, discovered that “the receptors protein⁹³ is folded in such a way that it forms seven loops. Each of the spanning loops has a specific function... The alteration or distortion of one of the seven loops could be responsible for the altered/abnormal function of the cell which results into the development of mental, neurological or psychosomatic.” For example, the blockage of the heart chakra (Anahatha) produces certain heart diseases, high blood pressure and even the seven loops of the adrenergic receptor become altered. Dr. Mishra reached the conclusion that by using the Sahaja Yoga method, not only the basic chakras but also the micro-chakras existing at the cell basis can be “cleansed” [25].

* * *

In the Old Testament, God defined Himself as a Being: “I am that I am” (Exodus 3:14), and the image of the divine body itself was revealed to Moses: “The form of Yahweh doth he beholds” (Numbers⁹⁴ 12:8). He could not have seen the divine *face* for this is not represented in the Judaism. According to tradition, it was the Shekhinah that was revealed to Moses as the interpretation of the *Face of God*⁹⁵. We assume that Moses was rather shown the structure of the subtle body, a projection of the Divine Being on the human level. Moreover, the one who might have seen the Face of God was doomed to death: God spoke to Moses: “Thou canst not see my face, for man shall not see me, and live” (Exodus 33:20; cf. 33:23). For a similar reason, Elijah⁹⁶ “wrapped his face in his mantle” (1 Kings 19:13) when God

⁹³ The membrane receptors supply information on the environment thus performing—in the most primitive monocellular beings—the role of the nervous system specialised in collecting peripheral data.

⁹⁴ *Bemidbar* (Hebr.).

⁹⁵ *Peni-El*, or *Peni-El*, Hebr. (Genesis 32:30); *prósopon* (Gr.)—literally denotes the “Face of God (*El*)”, but it is generally used to denote the “person.” It is also the name of an Israelite city built by King Jeroboam.

⁹⁶ In the New Testament, his name is written *Elias*.

made His appearance.

Jesus said about His Father: “Not that any one has seen the Father” (John 6:46; cf. 5:37), which was also stressed on by the gospel writer: “No one has seen God at any time” (1:18). John Chrysostom (*chrysóstomos*, golden mouth, Gr.; c.350-407) repeated it that: “No man hath seen God at any time” [26]. All the prophets (*Jacob* in Genesis 32:30; *Isaiah* 6:1; *Micah* in 1 Kings 22:19; *Daniel* 7:9; etc.) who claimed that they had seen God, actually behold either divine manifestations (theophanies, ch. XI E), or divine incarnations (*Avatara*, Sanskr.; ch. XIX B) taking their descents (*sygkatábasis*, Gr.) as the Angel of God (Genesis 16:7; 19:1; Judges 6:22; 13:3; etc.). These correspond, according to Chrysostom, to the revealed actions or energies that descend on us [27], and were mentioned also by the three great Cappadocian Fathers⁹⁷. “It is in His energies that God manifests Himself to His creatures, as Saint Basil says, «they descend even to ourselves»” [28]. “The «distinctions» (*diakríseis*, Gr.)... are the processions (*próodoi*, Gr.) beyond Himself, His manifestations (*ekphánseis*, plural; *ékphansis*, singular, Gr.), which Dionysius also calls virtues or forces (*dynámeis*, Gr.), in which everything that exists partakes, thus making God known in His creatures” [29]. God reveals Himself in all beings through His energies. He multiplies Himself without abandoning His unity, and the beings ascend to godliness by transcending God’s manifestations in His creation. The topic will be further dealt with in chapter XXV A.

The relationship man-Divinity (Virata) appears in the words of Jesus: “Abide in me and I in you” (John 15:4; cf. 15:5,7). “I in them and thou in me” (17:23). The Savior referred to the centers (*abodes*) in the Virata—called “my Father’s house”—disclosing that Himself governs one of them (ch. XIX C): “In my Father’s house there are many abodes... I go to prepare you a place” (John 14:2).

Isaiah (45:3) mentioned the treasures which could not be seen (*of darkness*) being inside, and placed in the chakras (*secret places*), as a richness granted by the Divine: “I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places; that thou mayest know that I, Yahweh, who calls thee by name [am] the God of Israel” (*Yisra’el*, Hebr.). The first mention of the name *Israel* appeared on the victory stele of Pharaoh Merneptah (1235-1223 BC). The Old Testament oftentimes referred to the

⁹⁷ Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, and Gregory of Nyssa.

primordial chakras called heavens (*shamaim*, Hebr.; *shemaya*, Aram.⁹⁸) having the same initial (letter *shin*, tooth, Hebr., trident-shaped, suggesting the three channels) as the divine name (*Ha-Shem*, Hebr.; it replaces YHWH). They were created in the Virata from the very beginning: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). For other references about the heavens see Genesis 2:4,5; Psalms 8:3; 33:6; 89:11; 102:25; 136:5; 146:6; Isaiah 44:24; Jeremiah 10:12; 51:15 etc.

The opening of the heavens (Ezekiel 1:1; Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:21; Acts 7:56; 10:11; Revelation 4:1; 15:5; 19:11) which was witnessed by the prophets and the Avatars (ch. XIX C and D), corresponds to the opening of the chakras leading to the Enlightenment (Self Realization, attainment of the Yoga state, union with the Absolute).

The *Proverbs of Solomon* (*Mishlei Shlomoh*, Hebr.) also wrote about the seven chakras called there the “pillars of the house” (i.e. of the subtle body), the latter being a masterpiece of Wisdom or *Sophia* (Gr.), a name given by the Gnostics to the Divine Mother (see ch. XX C4) hence the Adi Shakti whose projection, the Kundalini energy, enlightens the seven chakras. Here is the text: “Wisdom hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars” (9:1). A Hindu sacred text read: “The Lord of Progeny... brought forth from himself, as his first creation, Holy Power, that is, the «threefold wisdom»” [30], namely Maha-Lakshmi, Maha-Saraswati, and Maha-Kali, or the *A*, *U*, and *M* respectively (ch. I), and where the *Holy Power* is the Adi Shakti. To Sophia, the mystical number seven is essential. While descending to the Great Below, she unveiled herself through seven levels, which are the seven planetary planes of experience (ch. XIX C), and left one by one the seven *mes* (pronounce *mays*), which are the divine rules symbolized by her regalia. Hence, Sophia’s temple of seven pillars can be regarded as the wedding chamber where it takes place the mystical union (Self Realization). Aristobulus of Paneas regarded “the Pre-existent Wisdom... to be symbolized by seven” [31].

The similarity between man and the Cosmic Being was familiar to the early Christian writers. Thus, Origen wrote: “as our one body is provided with many members, and is held together by one soul, so I am of opinion that the whole world also ought to be regarded as some huge and immense animal, which is kept together by the power and reason of God as by one soul” [32]. He also added: “Understand that thou art a second little world and that the sun and the moon are within thee, and also the stars” (*Intellige te*

⁹⁸ *Aramaic*, an ancient Semitic language currently spoken by the people during the Old Testament period as well as in the time of Jesus, while the Hebrew was used for cultural purposes.

alium mundum esse in parvo et esse intra te Solem, esse Lunam, esse etiam stellas, Lat.)⁹⁹ [33]. “All things exist in each other and all things mutually support each other, for there is a kind of transmuting power,” said Gregory of Nyssa. Actually, this power that he was referring to is what the Hindus call *the Adi Shakti*. Other similar patristic views are mentioned in Vladimir Lossky’s excellent book devoted to the mystical theology of the Eastern Church. “His glory is manifested in the celestial powers, is reflected in man”, “in the body, by reuniting the heavens and the earth, the totality of the sensible universe” [34]. “A person cannot be a part of a whole, since it contains the whole within itself... For all things have been created by God, in their diverse natures, are brought together in man as in a melting-pot, and form in him one unique perfectness—a harmony composed of many different notes” in the words of Maximus the Confessor [35]. According to him, the archetypal man unites in himself the whole of created being and bears paradise within himself [36].

In the 12th century, Abbesses Hildegard of Bingen, a genuine saint woman, declared: “Now God has built the human form into the world structure, indeed even into the cosmos” [37]. St. Francis of Assisi (1182? - 1226) made a cosmic analogy when calling the following which he regarded as intimately “his own”: “brother Sun, sister Moon and the Stars, brother Wind, brother Fire and our sister, Mother Earth.” We find here the so-called Vedic Triad: *Surya* (Sun)—*Vayu* (Wind)—*Agni* (Fire), together with other Hindu deities: *Chandra* (Moon), *Bhoomi Devi* (Goddess Earth). In his turn, St. John of the Cross (Juan de la Cruz of Spain, 1542-1591) has exclaimed: “Mine is the sun, mine is the moon, mine are the stars, mine is the Mother of God... What else do you want and long for, my soul? All is yours and for yourself” [38].

A Christian concept on the cosmic being was met also with Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) who, in his visions, perceived anthropomorphically the entire cosmos [39]. He even mentioned the *heart-system* as well as the *lung-system* of heaven etc. [40], coming to the conclusion that human organism reflects the multiple heavens and their respective divine manifestations: “Since God is a Person, the entire angelic heaven, taken in a single grasp, resolves into one person. This entity is divided into realms and sections that follow the members, organs, and viscera of a human being... Angels even know what section of the person they are in. The whole heaven is in this model because God is a Person. And God is Heaven... We have explained in *Arcana Coelestia* at the ends of several chapters, that heavens is in the form of everything human” [41].

⁹⁹ See ch. XIX C.

II - 18 In the poetic vision of William Blake (1757-1827), “man formerly embraced in his strong limbs all the things of heaven and earth” [42], thus acknowledging that once the Kundalini energy was active in all the human beings. We would like to refer also to a beautiful lithograph of Blake depicting the sun on the right leg (Pingala, the solar channel) and the moon on the left leg (Ida, the lunar channel) [43]. The ancient Chinese Christian manuscripts provided a similar description: “There has been, indeed, two manifestations (of the One Godhead). For instance, these may be likened to one’s right and left hands or legs” [44].

In the twentieth century, Bishop Jean Kovalevsky considered Adam to be a Pan-anthrōpos, macroanthrōpos, compared to the microanthrōpos represented by the entire universe [45].

Carl Sagan believed that we begin to understand the Cosmos contained within ourselves just as if we are contained within it.

Lossky explained that man “must overcome spatial conditions not only in his spirit but also in the body, by reuniting the heavens and the earth, the totality of the sensible universe.” He also observed: “the universe is in fact a single body”; “man is not a being isolated from the rest of creation; by his very nature he is bond up with the whole of the universe” [46].

The Dead Sea scrolls unveil the existence of a secret knowledge (*gnosis*, Gr.; ch. XX C4) when talking about “the Secret of the Pillars” [47].

The Gnostic cosmology mentioned the structure of the human subtle system: “with chamber piled upon chamber, and assigned to each god by just as many staircases as there were heresies,” said Tertullian, the fierce opponent of the Gnosticism [48]. In Talmudic and Kabbalistic writings, Eden is depicted with seven gates, as well as in some apocryphal¹⁰⁰ texts, for instance the *Testament of Levi* [49]. How beautiful it is depicted by the Gnostic *Acts of Thomas* the Kundalini as “Spirit of the holiness, Mother of the Seven Houses”! [50]. The Bogomiles also agree on the existence of seven heavens, which might be reached after crossing the gates of elements (water, air etc.) controlled by the angels who oversee them [51].

Scholem shows that the Jewish Gnostics knew, to the exasperation of the Middle Ages philosophers, about a body of the Divinity (*Shi'ur Qomah*, literally: measure of the body , i.e. the body of God, Hebr.) [52]. Actually, as early as a *Midrash* from the second or the third century, described Adam as having a cosmic size and strength [53]. The *Talmud* stated: “All that the Holy One created in the World he created in man” [54].

¹⁰⁰ From *apókryphos* (secret, hidden, Gr.). Under the influence of the Church that aimed at discrediting these writings, the word acquired the wrong meaning of “non-authentic.”

The esoteric doctrine of the Kabbalah (*qabalah*, from *qabel*—to receive, to contain, Hebr.), considered to be a received revelation, appeared on the stage of the Hebrew history in Languedoc towards the end of the 12th century. It is based on two books: the *Zohar*¹⁰¹ (full name: *Sepher*¹⁰² *ha-Zohar*, the Book of Splendor/Radiance, Hebr.) whose main part (written between 1280 and 1286) is attributed to Moses ben Shemtov of Leon¹⁰³ (c.1250-1305) and the *Sepher Yetzirah* (Book of Creation, Hebr.)—attributed to Abraham, according to tradition—where the sephirothic tree was described for the first time (ch. IV). We should add the brief and obscure text called the *Books of the Hekhaloth* (heavenly palaces, Hebr.) which describe the rooms and the palace which the seeker have to cross before arriving at the seventh and last one where the Throne of God is placed. More details on the apparition, development, essence and connections of the Kabbalah with Yoga are given in chapter XXV C.

The *Zohar* depicted the structure of the Cosmic Being reflected on the human level, showing: “The Holy One, blessed be He, created man printing onto him the image of the sacred kingdom that is the image of All¹⁰⁴” [56]. “Just as in the firmament, which covers the whole universe, we behold different shapes formed by the conjunction of stars and planets to make us aware of hidden things and deep mysteries¹⁰⁵; so upon the skin which covers our body and which is, as it were, the body’s firmament, covering all, there are shapes and designs—the stars and planets of the body’s firmament, the skin through which the wise of heart may behold the hidden things and the deep mysteries indicated by these shapes and expressed in the human form” [57].

The *Zohar* wrote: “For as man’s body consists of members and parts of varying rank, all acting and reacting upon one another so as to form an organism, so does the world at large consist of a hierarchy of created things, which when they properly act and react upon each other together form

¹⁰¹ *Zohar* means literally “radiance.”

¹⁰² *Sifra* (Arab.), where the *cipher* came from.

¹⁰³ According to others, the author of the *Zohar* would have been even its hero, Rabbi Simeon (Shimon) ben Yohai (2nd century BC) succeeded by his son Rabbi Eleazar, or even Meister (Magister) Eckhart [55].

¹⁰⁴ *Kol* (Hebr.).

¹⁰⁵ *Razin* (Hebr.).

literally one organic body” [58]. A booklet of 30-40 pages, the *Sepher ha-Bahir* (Book of Brightness, Hebr.) was one of the earliest Kabbalistic writings, and appeared in the south of France towards 1180. This writing had spoken of the “seven holy forms of God,” each corresponding to a part of the human body [59]. The *Bahir* was compiled after ancient texts, one of them being the important esoteric writing of the *Raza Rabba* (Great Mystery, Hebr.). Last but not least, in the Kabbalistic language, *Merkabah* (the divine throne chariot, Hebr.) represented the archetype, the ideal primordial model after which all things were created.

In the Talmudic view, the *Shekhinah* (manifestation of God, ch. XX B) rises up to the *seven heavens*. According to Philo, number *seven* is that of “full perfection” [60]. Consistent with the tradition, the founder of figure seven was Seth, whose son Enosh was the seventh human being (the previous ones being Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Enoch, Seth). It is since then that “people began to call on the name of Yahweh” (Genesis 4:26), i.e. uttering of mantras (ch. XV D). The Kabbalists took this to mean that the Hebrew six-corner star had the sacred name (the Tetragram) inscribed in the middle, so that the star starts shining with its seven rays [61]. The sum of 6 corners and 4 letters of the Tetragram equals 10 which is the *pléroma* (wholeness, Gr.), IV-17 where ten represents the number of sephiroth (ch. IV) constituting the Tree of Life as well as of God’s Commandments (*Decalogue*) and also the sum of the 3 channels and 7 chakras. It is to be noticed that the name of Seth itself is related to figure seven: *sept* (Fr.), *sette* (Ital.). However, number seven (*sheva*, Hebr.) brings us to *Shiva* and, implicitly, to the structure of the Virata.

The columns of Solomon’s temple¹⁰⁶ correspond to the side channels: the one on the right (*yaminah*, Hebr.) is called *Yakhin*, and the one on the left (*smolah*, Hebr.)—*Boaz*. In the *Zohar*, “said R.¹⁰⁷ Judah, «It is not a dictum of the Rabbis that the world rests on seven supports, as it is written, *Wisdom hath hewn out her seven pillars*¹⁰⁸»? R. Jose replied: «That is so... »” [62]. Moreover: “It is from this palace that the Pillar in the middle makes all the spirits ascend to the seventh palace, which is the Mystery of mysteries and where all the ladders arrive, since they are united there to form only one. The Scripture refers precisely to that perfect and ultimate union: «Yahweh is

¹⁰⁶ The New Testament metaphorically denotes the human body as a temple: “He spoke of the temple of his body” (John 2:21).

¹⁰⁷ Rabbi.

¹⁰⁸ Proverbs 11:1.

Elohim, Yahweh is Elohim»” [63]. Indeed, it is a wonderful depiction of the ascent by the central channel (*the Pillar in the middle*, Sushumna) of all the entities (*spirits* or *Elohim*, the gods) ruling over the subtle body, thus passing through the point (Agya) where all the channels (*ladders*; ch. IV) unite, and arriving at the seventh chakra (Sahasrara), the *Mystery of mysteries*.

The *Qur'an* also reads about man who is similar to the Supreme Being, hence to perfection: “We indeed created Man in the fairest stature” (95.4). In addition, Ibn al-‘Arabi refers to “the Cosmos, called in terminology of the Folk, the Great Man” [64] (*al-Insam al-Kabir*, Arab.). A Sufy saying read: “Man is a small cosmos, and the cosmos is like a great man” [65].

It is not by chance that the opening surah of the *Qur'an* (*al-Fatihah*) has precisely *seven* verses. Likewise, the holiest monument, the mosque al-Haram in Mecca where the Ka’ba is placed has seven minarets (there is no I I - 3 other equaling this number; next comes the famous Sultan Ahmet’s Blue Mosque in Istanbul as the only one having six minarets). The Islamic Scripture is calling the Virata “the Lord of the seven heavens” (23.88). Here, the *seven heavens* denote the seven primordial chakras, too. “He lifted I I - 2 Himself to heaven and leveled them seven” (2.27). “He determined them as seven heavens” (41.11). “We have built above you seven strong ones” (78.12). “Have you not regarded how God created seven heavens one upon another, and set the moon therein for a light and the sun for a lamp?” (71.14-15; cf. 17.46; 25.75; 50.37). “God is He who raised up the heavens... He subjected the sun and the moon, each one running to after a term stated... Haply you will have faith in the encounter with your Lord” (13.2). The encounter is the Union (Yoga), the Self Realisation, and the mentioning of the sun and the moon reminds of the side channels as it was shown before. Furthermore, the heavens are structured similar to the earthly world: “It is God who created seven heavens, and of earth their like” (65.12). The highest point is the Sahasrara called the Kingdom of heaven(s) or of God (in Christian religion), Paradise Garden (in Judaism and Islam), Imperishable Home (in the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, the Sikh Scripture written in Gurmukhi¹⁰⁹ language), and designated as God’s Throne (al-‘Arsh, Arab.) in the *Qur'an*: “The Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the mighty Throne” (23.88). “It is He that created the heavens and the earth in six days then seated Himself upon the Throne” (57.4; cf. 7.52; 10.3; 11.9; 13.2; 32.3) or even Regions or Horizons within themselves (their Souls; 41.53).

The holy book of Islam offers a wonderful description of the moment when the Prophet received his Self Realization, compared to the Ascent (*Mi'raj*, Arab.; ch. IV) of Muhammad (actually of his Kundalini) who

¹⁰⁹ *Gurmukh* has the significance of “Self-Realized.”

crossed the seven heavens (chakras) up to the lotus of the Sahasrara: “He stood poised, being on the higher horizon... he saw him another time by the Lote-Tree of the Boundary¹¹⁰ nigh which is the Garden of the Refuge¹¹¹” (53.7, 13-15). Though ineffable, this mystic experience of ecstasy is qualified by the Christian terminology as *going up into the heaven* (Elijah; 2 Kings 2:11), or *catching up to the heaven* (2 Corinthians 12:2) which fully agrees with the Islamic view. To receive the Self Realization, the subtle body of Muhammad was first purified (ch. XV C). The angels Gabriel and Michael (the masters of the side channels) washed away from the body of the Prophet all doubt, idolatry, paganism and error (which are the cause of catches or blockages of the chakras) by using the water from the Zamzam well (the *living water* of the Kundalini, ch. XI D), and filled his body with wisdom and belief (divine qualities¹¹² of the chakras). The vehicle of the ascent (Self Realization) was a female beast (a winged mare) called al-Buraq, which is depicted as having a woman’s head [66]. It seems very plausible that this was the maternal Kundalini. In each and every heaven (Adi Chakra) the Prophet came across a messenger of God (Avatar; ch. XIX B) starting with Adam (symbol of the first chakra, the Mooladhara) and ending with Jesus (master of the Agya chakra that precedes the Paradise of the Sahasrara) [67].

The pillar-chakra metaphor is also found in the *Qur’an*: “God is He who raised up the heavens without pillars you can see” (13.2; cf. 31.9). The pillars are not visible (since are parts of the subtle body) but they still exist, for otherwise the specification would have been pointless. The subtle body is called “the city” or “the land” (90.1-2), or more accurately it is depicted as the citadel “Iram, of the pillars, the like of which was never created in the land” (89.6-7).

As we have pointed out previously, the above concepts preceded those existing with the three monotheistic religions originating within the Semitic area. Their most ancient and complete expression was found in India.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* testified to the analogy between man and the Supreme Being: “Those who worship Me with devotion they are in Me and I also in them” [68] or, in other translation: “I am what he is. He is what I am” [69]; and the *Upanishads* read: “Whatever is here, that is there. What

¹¹⁰ *Sidrat-ul Muntaha* (*sidr*, the lotus-tree or the *nabk* tree, Arab.), the lotus of the utmost boundary (the seventh heaven) beyond which nobody can pass [66].

¹¹¹ The Garden of Eden, the dwelling of God.

¹¹² *Sifat-ullah* (Arab.).

is there, that again is here. He obtains death after death, who seems to see a difference here” [70]. Moreover, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Arjuna could contemplate Vishnu as Cosmic Being (*Vishwarupa darshana*; *Vishwarupa*, Universal Form; *darshana*, contemplation, Sanskr.), i.e. the Virata: “In Thy body, O God, I see all the gods and the varied hosts of beings as well, Brahma, the lord seated on the lotus throne and all the sages and heavenly nagas... I behold Thee as one without beginning, middle or end, of infinite power, of numberless arms, with the moon and the sun as Thine eyes... This space between heaven and earth is pervaded by Thee alone, also all the quarters, O Exalted One, when this wondrous, terrible form of Thine is seen, the three worlds tremble” [71].

The *Avatamsaka* School (in India) of *Mahayana* (Great Vehicle; *maha*, great, *yana*, vehicle, boat, floating bridge, Sanskr.) Buddhism expressed the concept of the part-whole identity [72], and the same did its correspondent *Hua-yen* School (in China), and *Kegon* School (in Japan).

The universe was regarded as a living organism (which will never die) in the Jain cosmology too [73].

In ancient Iran, every single person in the mundane world (*getik*) was held to have a counterpart in the archetypal world of sacred reality (*menok*) [74].

Even before Socrates, there were philosophers such as Thales of Miletus, Pythagoras and others who extolled the cosmic harmony. The ancients believed that *seven* is a *number pleasant to gods*, which revealed knowledge of the seven subtle centers. Pythagoras thought that it was a *climacteric number* (*climax* in philosophy is associated to climbing a ladder—see *supra* and ch. IV). Plato gave the following description of the Universal Being: “The world came into being—a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God” [75]. “In our opinion, expressed within a veracious discourse, the world is, as a whole, a single deity” [76].

According to Lawrence: “To the Etruscan all was alive; the whole universe lived; and the business of man was himself to live amid it all. He had to draw life into himself, out of the wandering huge vitalities of the world. The cosmos was alive, like a vast creature... The whole was alive, and has a great soul” [77].

The *Smaragdine (Emerald) Table* begins by stating: “that which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above” [78]. According to an Arabic version of the *Table*, the initial idea comes back to the end: “The structure of the microcosm is in accordance with the structure of the macrocosm” [79].

* * *

The reflection of the structure of the macrocosm in the individual human microcosm is a holistic (*hólos*, whole, Gr.; note the similar root) representation founded on the principle *pars per toto* (the part stands for the whole, Lat.). Although the term was widely adopted by the scientists in the second half of the twentieth century, the holistic concept might be found with the ancient wisdom.

Professor Julia Ching explains: “The universe is viewed as a hierarchically organized mechanism in which every part reproduces the whole. Man is a microcosm corresponding rigorously to this macrocosm; his body reproduces the plan of the universe. Between man and universe, there exists a system that the ritualists, philosophers, alchemists, and physicians have described, but certainly not invented” [80].

Tompkins and Bird considered in their turn that “the ancient wisdom... throws quite another light on the energy of the bodies, both of humans and of plants, as well as the relation between of individual cells to the entire cosmos” [81].

For thousands of years, the Indian sages have adopted a holistic view of the universe, whose unifying principle is Brahman: “He on whom the sky, the earth, and the atmosphere are woven, and the wind, together with all life-breaths, Him alone know as the one Soul” [82]. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* brings forward the metaphor of Indra’s network (*Indrajalam*, Sanskr.), retold by Sir Charles Eliot: “In the heaven of Indra, there is said to be a network of pearls¹¹³, so arranged that if you look at one you see all the others reflected in it. In the same way each object in the world is not merely itself but involves every other object and in fact *is* everything else” [83]. This was precisely what we call today a *hologram*.

Anagarika Govinda showed that “to the enlightened man... whose consciousness embraces the universe, to him the universe becomes his «body», while his physical body becomes a manifestation of the Universal Mind, his inner vision an expression of the highest reality, and his speech an expression of eternal truth and *mantric power*” [84] (emphasis added; ch. XV D). In his turn, Ashvaghosha mentioned: “Entering into the *samadhi*¹¹⁴ of purity, (one obtains) all-penetrating insight that enables one to become conscious of the absolute oneness of the universe” [85].

Joseph Campbell asserted: “A vast concept took form of the universe as a living being in the likeness of a great mother, within whose womb all the worlds, both of life and death, had their existence. And the human body is in

¹¹³ A symbol of the Sahasrara (ch. XV A).

¹¹⁴ See our Introduction.

miniature as a duplicate of that macrocosmic form. So that throughout the whole an occult harmony prevails, which it is the function of a mythology and relevant rites to make known. The Chinese idea of Tao is a development out of this macro-microcosmic insight” [86]. In his turn, Joseph Needham wrote: “the Chinese physical Universe in ancient and medieval times was a perfectly continuous whole... Individual objects acted and reacted with all other objects in the world... in a wave-like or vibratory¹¹⁵ manner dependent, in the last resort, on the rhythmic alternation at all levels... Individual objects thus had their intrinsic rhythms. And these were integrated... into the general pattern of the harmony of the world” [87]. Giuseppe Tucci in his classic work *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, inferred: “the whole drama of the universe is repeated in ourselves” [88].

The holistic interpretation is also mirrored in the integral eastern medical science, opposed to the western “atomized” (i.e. fragmentary), diffuse view of man that started to gain ground at the end of the 19th century (the bacteriomorphic concept) at the same time with the *impressionist style* in painting which might be related to.

Islamic esoteric trend was also familiar with the holistic view, the all-pervading Oneness of Being (*wahdat al-wujud*, Arab.) since Ibn al-‘Arabi wrote: “every part of the Cosmos is the totality of the Cosmos in that it is receptive to the realities of the disparate aspects of the Cosmos” [89].

The Kabbalists stressed on the interrelated links and layers of the existing worlds, the intertwining of all that exists and is ruled by exact but unfathomable laws. The late exponents of the movement (for example Moses Cordovero, d. 1570) were indebted to the holistic view when they said: “where you stand, there stand all the worlds” [90].

Here again, we shall quote William Blake, the great enlightened soul who expressed the holistic idea in verses of an exquisite beauty: “To see a World in a Grain of Sand/ And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,/ Hold infinity in the palm¹¹⁶ of your hand,/ And Eternity in an hour” [91].

* * *

The principle of holography was discovered in 1947, but it needed the laser to appear in order to become a reality (1965). Every part of a hologram contains within itself the image of the whole. We perceive the information given by bi-dimensional photography through the light intensity variations

¹¹⁵ That is the Paramchaitanya.

¹¹⁶ For the meaning of the palms see ch. X and XI C.

(amplitude variations of the electromagnetic waves). In a holographic approach, the perception is three-dimensional due to the additional information provided by the wave trains and phase variations. As compared with a photographic image, the hologram appears to be a transcendent reality.

The holistic concept was embraced by a whole group of scientists belonging to the most various vocations: the physicists David Bohm and Geoffrey Chew, the neurosurgeon and psychiatrist Karl H. Pribram, Ilya Prigogin, a Nobel Prize laureate (1977), the psychologist Abraham Maslow, the psychiatrist Stanislaw Grof, the biochemist Rupert Sheldrake, the microbiologist Lynn Margulis, the biochemist James Lovelock, the psychologist and naturalist Peter Russell, to quote only a few of them.

The great physicist Erwin Schrödinger declared: “The multiplicity is only apparent. This is the doctrine of the *Upanishads*. And not of the *Upanishads* only. The mystical experience of the union with God regularly leads to this view” [92].

According to the vibratory paradigm¹¹⁷ elaborated on the latest discoveries in physics (the *superstring theory*), the universe is holistically conceived as being made up of vibrations. The situation is well described by Solomon Marcus [93]: “We may represent the cosmic substance as a universal and undetermined substratum revealing the entire diversity of what we call electrons, photons and other similar entities. The vacuum is non-existent in such a vision, since it is replaced by a substratum of waves or particles in a virtually unperceived state that may become actualized under the effect of an energy quantum... The superstring theory is able to explain the entire diversity of the particles and substances in the universe. The higher excitations of the «vibratory string» determine various forms of matter... The «music» generated by these strings is none other than matter itself. The long quest for unifying force apprehended by physicists seems to have been found at last” [94].

Actually, things are far from being so simple. In fact, the atoms are nothing than patterns of probability waves, while the quantum numbers reflect the vibration patterns of the electronic waves in their atomic orbits. Fritjof Capra, the famous author of *The Tao of Physics*, where he sets up a relationship between modern physics and eastern philosophy, shows that on the subatomic level “these particles are not made of any material stuff... [they] are dynamic patterns continually changing into one another—a

¹¹⁷ *Parádeigma* (model, Gr.). Thomas Kuhn used this term to define the concept about the world expounded by a community of scientists in a determined historical period.

continuous dance of energy” [95]. According to the Tibetan Buddhist monks, “all things... are aggregations of atoms that dance and by their movements produce sounds” [96]. Out of this rhythmic “dance,” our senses pick up only certain vibration ranges, certain frequency bands, converting them into vibratory structures to be taken up by the brain (Pribram’s theory below). To the above examples of holistic concepts, we should add the theory of modern physics about the fifth dimension of the space, smaller than the atomic nucleus but recipient of the entire universe. The Kabbalistic *Sepher Yetzirah*, on the other hand, showed that our world has five dimensions: three spatial, one temporal and one spiritual.

Towards the end of the 1960s, Geoffrey F. Chew launched the *bootstrap* (link, connection) hypothesis after which the universe is seen as a dynamic web of interrelated events. The scientist states: “Carried to its logical extreme, the bootstrap conjecture implies that the existence of consciousness, along with all other aspects of nature, is necessary for self-consistency of the whole” [97]. Consciousness and matter are, hence, nothing else than the congruous aspects of the same *ontos*¹¹⁸ of the dynamic wholeness; thus, consciousness is taken as an essential part of universe. This is a consequence of the laws of quantum theory, which could not be formulated in a fully consistent way without reference to consciousness. Modern physics described the universe as a dynamic whole that cannot be separated from the observer. The similitude to the concept of the eastern mystics becomes obvious with respect to the quantum theory, the relativistic theory and, particularly, the quantum-relativistic models.

The British physicist David Bohm—who used to be one of Einstein’s students, and who was one of the main opponents of the *Copenhagen School* directed by Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg—created the homonymic theory and the holographic model (holomovement) that greatly influenced Fritjof Capra.

In Bohm’s view, the holomovement is a dynamic phenomenon out of which all the forms of the universe flow: matter, space and time as well as consciousness [98]. The universe structures are subject to the self-organization dynamics, that is the cosmic Spirit. He sees mind and matter as being interdependent and correlated, mutually enfolding projections of a higher reality which is neither matter nor consciousness. In his opinion, as well as in Chew’s bootstrap hypothesis, consciousness is an essential aspect of the universe that will have to be taken into consideration by a future theory of physical phenomena. The universe structures are subject to the self-organization dynamics, that is the Cosmic Spirit. Man had at his disposal a

¹¹⁸ Being (Gr.).

homonymic system that at some point he forgot how to use. This system could perceive the transcendent access, the “direct” knowledge by holographic decoding. Thus, a direct communication may be possible between the persons endowed with “intertuned” holograms. It should be stressed out that this fact expounded by David Bohm—to be found in persons in the Yoga state, through their connection to the collective consciousness (see below and ch. X)—has absolutely nothing in common with the telepathy phenomena that are determined by certain negative entities (cases of possession—ch. XXII D). If Chew used to consider that each and every infra-atomic particle included all other particles, none of them being “more fundamental” than the rest, then, in Bohm’s view, the whole reality is “wound up” in every particle of reality [99].

The neurosurgeon and psychologist Karl Pribram took Bohm’s ideas even further and elaborated the homonymic theory of the brain structures. Pribram stressed on the decisive role of the sensory perception of vibrations and of the organization of the vibration field as holograms on the brain level. The sight memory of the whole was experimentally demonstrated to be codified in each part of the cerebral substance just as the hologram is found in each one of its fragments [98]. Under these conditions, the world may be considered as a projection from the outside acquiring the dimensions of space and time but being as imperfect in its relation to the inner reality as the photography to its corresponding hologram. Pribram showed that, without a brain operating in a homonymic way, we should perceive the world as vibrations only, all being devoid of shapes, sounds, colors, space and time. As a way of illustration, sight is nothing but the change of the light waves into rhythmical pulsations of the brain neurons and a similar situation may be met with the acoustic waves. Even smell seems to be connected to certain olfactory-cosmological frequencies [100]. All these would result from the interpretation performed by the brain to the frequencies transmitted as nervous impulses by the sense organs. This world of illusion is nothing else than the *Maya* (illusion, Sanskr.) of Hinduism. The Buddha used to say: “The past, the future, physical space,... and individuals are nothing but names, forms of thought, words of common usage, merely superficial realities” [101].

By taking Pribram’s idea even further we might say that each brain is part of the Great Hologram and, under certain condition, it may have access to the information stored in the Universal Computer System.

The conclusions reached by Bohm and Pribram are confirmed by the experimental proofs of the connection to the collective and universal consciousness obtained through the practice of Sahaja Yoga (ch. X) founded

by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi who showed that after the Kundalini awakening “the human microcosmic computer is connected to the cosmic program and the information start circulating as vibrations in our nervous system. The temperament, health, character structure and even destiny of every human being actually depends on the type of relation between its spiritual instrument and the cosmic archetype” [102].

The Canadian physicist Richard Maurice Bucke, Walt Whitman’s friend, experienced in 1872 such an overpowered mystical illumination that he talked about a Cosmic Consciousness and selected this as a title for his book in which he recorded and analysed this experience [103].

Dr. Dumitru Constantin-Dulcan, the author of the book *The Intelligence of Matter*, defined a “cosmic informational model” and an “individual energy model,” where we recognize the Virata, and the human subtle body, respectively. The “basic energy model” which characterizes the entire living world [104] would thus correspond to the Kundalini energy. The author asked himself: “Is it so difficult for us to understand what it was already known thousands of years ago?” [105]. He defined a *universal information field* that could be “assimilated to an «invisible brain» of cosmic size.” “The connection of the entire living world to the information and force of action of this information field might provide a further explanation to the coherent operation of the whole universe, to the harmony, the resonance and the interdependence of all systems.” The author, thus, admits the possibility of the living creatures being connected to the universal field of information [106]. Examples of such connections, recognized by science, are the biorhythms, the influence of the lunar cycles on physiology, the effect of the solar activity peaks on morbidity or the meteorological sensitiveness of the organisms.

However, unrecognized by science and rejected by religion (ch. XV C) astrology enjoys popularity amongst the inhabitants of our planet. After Bjørnstad and Johnson, there would be 70 million people in U.S.A. and 40 million people in West Germany, highly interested in astrology [107]. In our opinion, the *message of astrology* should be interpreted as the *necessity of integrating man in the great universal harmony*. Tompkins and Bird showed that many scientists “view man as an enmeshed, integral part of life on earth and in the universe. They maintain he is linked to the cosmos via his bioplasmatic body... If there is a change in the universe and environment... a resonance is produced in the vital energy of the human body which in turn affects the physical body” [108].

As early as the first half of the twentieth century, and in spite of his colleagues scorning at his concept of regarding the psyche as a sort of “subtle

body,” the great psychologist Carl Gustav Jung followed the example of the alchemists and philosophers when declaring: “I always advise my patients to take such obvious but invincible nonsense as the manifestation of a power and a meaning they have not yet understood” [109]. He wrote: “We are obliged to assume the existence of a collective psychic substratum. I have called this the *collective unconscious*” [110]. Starting from Jung and Pauli’s theory of synchronicity after which *Unus Mundus* is conceived as a nontemporal and noncausal world containing the engrams of the archetypes reflected into the collective unconscious, Dumitru Constantin-Dulcan believed that the psyche would operate a translocation of the energy—originating in the archetypal world—into time-space frequencies that could be perceived [111] (see below). Jung goes on: “The deeper «layers» of the psyche lose their individual uniqueness as they retreat farther and farther... «Lower down», that is to say as they approach the autonomous functional systems, they become increasingly collective until they are universalized” [112]. What amazing description of the subtle energy that penetrates “lower down” into the autonomous (parasympathetic) nervous system! This topic will be developed further on, with regard to the embryo life. How beautifully does the great psychologist formulate the connection to the collective consciousness of the person in the state of Yoga, by using the potentialities of the autonomous nervous system—otherwise inaccessible—through the Kundalini awakening! Goethe thought that this connection represented the “supreme existence” aimed at by Faust who wanted to enlarge his ego-ness up to the mankind ego-ness, or more exactly, to the Self [113].

Solomon Marcus [114] brought further evidence to support the above: “J.C. Eccles considered that beyond the brain it is exerted a real human intelligence by controlling and using the critical neural activities (and also the drastic transitions in the activity of the neuron groups)” [115]. The analysis of the recent concepts of the quantum mechanics led to the conclusion that “the localized reduction implies an associated reduction of the wave-packets of all the particles that the brain particles have ever interacted with. In other words there may be a development from a localized reduction to reductions that pertain to remote universe zones. Thus, we come to J.S. Bell’s theorem” [116] which claims that distant entities in the universe can apparently act as parts of a greater whole [117]. “The reduction process introduces, therefore, a not localized or cosmic element in the human decision. Man is no longer a passive observer but an active participant... a combination (that is mathematically specified) of personal and cosmic elements” [114].

Lakhovsky showed that “«every living thing emits radiations» upholding that disease is a matter of disequilibrium in cellular oscillations, that the fight between healthy cells and pathogens, such as bacteria or viruses is a «war of radiations»... In order that a diseased cell [would] be restored to health, Lakhovsky felt it should be treated by means of a radiation of appropriate frequency... He therefore came to the conclusion that the energy is externally derived from cosmic radiation... To Lakhovsky the ether¹¹⁹ was not the negation of all matter but a synthesis of radiation forces, the universal plexus of all cosmic rays. It was a ubiquitous and all-pervading medium... In March of 1927 Lakhovsky wrote a communication, *Influence of Astral Waves on Oscillations of Living Cells*, that was presented to the French Academy” [118]. “In line with Bovis and Lakhovsky, Simoneton reasoned that if human nerve cells can receive wavelengths they must also be transmitters: senders and receivers must be able to enter into resonant vibration with each other in order to pick up a transmission. Lakhovsky likened the system to two well-tuned pianos: when a note is struck on one it will cause the same note to vibrate on the other” [119]. William A. Tiller, chairman of the Department of Material Science at Stanford University, also found that “living things, like humans, emit a very complex wave spectrum of which parts are associated with various organs and systems of the body.” He referred to the chakras when he wrote: “These seven endocrine centers have been called our sacred centers and through them we radiate transmitting information of a quality (frequency) associated with that center” [120]. Professor Harold Saxton Burr from the Toronto University admitted to the existence of an “energy matrix” of the biological structures [121]. Annick de Souzenelle explained: “Reality operates within an infinite range of wave lengths; only a small part of them acts immediately upon our senses; but the senses of Man «ascending along his Tree»¹²⁰ are opened to ever wider fields of Reality” [122]. In chapter XI E we shall broadly explain the significance of the above.

These daring concepts of modern science seem to answer the invitation made by the brilliant Serbian-born American inventor and genius, Nikola Tesla (d. 1943) before his death: “The day science begins to study non-physical phenomena, it will make more progress in one decade than in all the previous centuries of its existence” [123].

While referring to the religions, philosophies and sciences outside India, A. Daniélou wrote: “I was deeply amazed by the unbelievable ignorance of

¹¹⁹ After some authors, the medieval concept of the cosmic ether would correspond to the multidimensional hyperspace.

¹²⁰ This refers to the sephirotic tree (ch. IV).

the Christian world (not to mention the Islam world) about the origin and significance of the myths and rituals and also by the primitive, almost childish character of the theological and philosophical concepts. It was only in the field of the most advanced sciences like mathematics, cybernetics, biology, atomic physics that I came across notions very close to the Indian science. In this world that boasts about having invented everything, I have not seen anything original but only ill-interpreted bits of an older knowledge and I was shocked by the crazy use, forbidden by all traditional societies, of certain life styles and intellectual and moral tyranny that could only lead to human destruction” [124].

In his turn, Mircea Eliade declared: “It is a striking thing to find the greatest mathematicians and astronomers of our day, men who have grown up in a wholly desacralized society, reaching scientific, even philosophic, conclusions very close to certain religious philosophies. It is striking to see physicists, and specialists in theoretical physics, reconstructing a universe in which God has his place” [125]. This is exactly what Capra noticed: “Modern physics leads us to a view of the world which is very similar to the views held by mystics of all ages and traditions... The parallels to modern physics appear not only in the *Vedas* of Hinduism, in the *I Ching* or in the Buddhist *sutras*, but also in the fragments of Heraclitus, in the Sufism of Ibn al-’Arabi” [126].

Actually, science recognizes God’s existence. First we would mention Isaac Newton who wrote in his *Optics*: “Does it not appear from Phaenomena that there is a Being incorporeal, living, intelligent, omnipresent, who in infinite Space, as it were in his Sensory, sees the things themselves intimately, and thoroughly perceives them, and comprehends them wholly?” [127]. In a letter to his friend Richard Bentley, dean of St. Paul’s, Sir Isaac added: “I am compelled to ascribe ye frame of this System to an intelligent Agent” [128]. In his *Philosophiae Naturalia Principia Mathematica*, Newton declared: “The most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being... He is eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient; that is, his duration reaches from eternity to eternity; his prescience from infinity to infinity; he governs all things, and knows all things that are or can be done” [129]. Paracelsus¹²¹ affirmed: “Between heaven and earth, there is a unity reflected, on the one hand in the real or supposed influence of the sun, stars and planets on the life of plants, animals and men and on the medicines derived from them, and, on the other hand, in the repetition of the structures

¹²¹ A nickname given to Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541), a noteworthy Swiss physician and alchemist.

from which sprang the notions of macrocosm and microcosm.” The English physicist and astronomer Sir James Jeans (1877-1946) once stated: “The universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine” [130]. A similar position had Einstein: “Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a Spirit is manifest in the Laws of the Universe—a Spirit vastly superior to that of man, and one in the face of which we, with our modest powers, must feel humble” [131]. Tompkins and Bird came to an analogous conclusion: “some overall force exists in the universe which is itself intelligent and provide answers.” They explain further on: “Daniels theorizes that this force operates through a whole spectrum of frequencies not necessarily linked to the electromagnetic spectrum and that human beings can mentally interact with it” [132]. Many scientists embraced that concept supposing that a relationship must exist between the chakras and the frequency that is specific to each of them, as it will be shown below (ch. XI E).

Based on the holistic approach, Fritjof Capra made the following reasoning about human beings: “Their intelligence, therefore, implies that the whole, too, is intelligent. Human beings are seen as the living proof of cosmic intelligence; in us, the universe repeats over and over again its ability to produce forms through which it becomes consciously aware of itself” [133]. The same direction was adopted by works postulating the *anthropic principle* (ch. XIX B), according to which the physical properties of universe are exactly those necessary for the appearance of man, wherefrom the existence of a *final purpose* [134]. On this topic, Shri Mataji stated: “The mere existence of this Mother Earth makes the whole Cosmos to exist and have a meaning” [135]. Albert Einstein used to say: “God does not play dice with the world“ [136]. It is interesting to notice that the anthropic principle has been stipulated ever since the *Bible*, first in Genesis where, the two sentences although opposite are complementary to each other: man was created for this world (1:26), and the world was created for man (2:5). Then, the idea of the final purpose appeared again in the prophetic books: “For thus saith Yahweh, who created the heavens, God himself who founded the earth and made it, he who established it,—not as waste did he create it: he formed it to be inhabited” (Isaiah 45:18). Also, in the *Qur’an*, God said: “We have not created the heavens and earth, and what between them is, for vanity; such is the thought of the unbelievers” (38.26).

In their turn, the followers of the modern scientific movement known as the *Princeton Gnosis* (1969) declared: “The world is created by the Spirit which is the Cosmic Consciousness encompassing the world information, the matrix of all things” [137].

In his volume devoted to the eastern mysticism and science, Amaury de Riencourt made a thorough analysis of the religion-science relationship. “The existence, throughout a shrinking world, of a great number of many different religions, often contradicting one another, had added its contribution to the confusion and decline of spiritual belief. The great advantage of science is that it is *one*. It speaks the same language all over the world... This is not the case with institutionalized religions: each of them has its own symbolism and metaphorical language, often exceedingly obscure to the non-initiate. Therefore, the problem is to attempt to penetrate to the hard core of *all* religions, discover whether they contain a kernel of truth which they all hold in common—which could then be called the religious view of the world—and which could, under no circumstances, collide with the scientific picture of the Universe. A great number of many creeds and Churches scattered throughout the world claim a near-monopoly of spiritual truth with a remarkable lack of the metaphysical humility that characterizes contemporary physics. It has obviously become difficult for any thoughtful person to subscribe to any such claims, whatever they may be... A spiritual way—this is the one thing all religion have in common, a way of life... A Christian is not only one who believes in the divinity of Christ; it is one who lives, as best he can, the total life of a Christian. Mere intellectual commitment to a theological doctrine is not enough... Spearheading the way of the great saints and mystics who often appear to lead superhuman or transhuman lives and who seem to know the «way» because they have traveled it and reached some sacred destination—be it Christian who heeds Jesus admonition according to St. John’s Gospel: «I am the way... », or the Buddhist who follows the «Noble Eightfold Path¹²²», or the Taoist and Confucianist who see (in different ways) in the Tao the path that every Chinese must follow in life, or even the Hindu who reads in the epic *Mahabharata*: «Hard is the great path (*mahapantha*) and few are they who travel it to the end» [138]. This «way» is the way of the mystic, and its destination is mysterious, ineffable, that is literally beyond verbal description, inexpressible in any language, although it can be hinted at in... metaphors... This is the hard core of *all* religions because, fundamentally, there is only one way and one ultimate destination, only one fundamental experience, however differently conceived and expressed in various

¹²² Including: correct *opinion*, correct *aspiration*, correct *speech*, correct *behaviour*, correct *existence means*, correct *effort*, correct *attention* and correct *contemplation*.

religions¹²³. Gifted mystics attempt to describe this experience for the benefit of the less endowed laymen who try to follow them on the sacred path. Basically, the mystical experience is one and often breaks through the thin cultural coating which traditions and education have bestowed on the mystic... Few prominent physicists are mystically inclined, but many are concerned about the religious problem as a whole and they would probably concur with Einstein when he stated the following: «The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness [136]” [139].

Last but not least: when asked by John Freeman in the famous *Face to Face* interview (broadcasted by BBC in 1959) if he believed in God, Jung answered: “I do not have to believe. I *know!*” [140].

* * *

On an individual level, the all-pervading vibrations manifest as the maternal energy known as the Kundalini, which is present in any living being and operates in an intelligent way.

Starting from the early Indian knowledge [141], Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi further explained [142] that when the human embryo is two to three months old a pencil of vibratory energy (Paramchaitanya) passes through the fontanel bone area (*talū*, Sanskr.). Then the brain behavior evokes that of a prism, which operates on a light beam splitting it into four rays. One of them penetrates the parasympathetic nervous system and is placed as residual energy (the Kundalini) in the sacrum bone close to the end of the spine, while the others are directed towards the left sympathetic nervous system, the right sympathetic nervous system and the central nervous system. The beam penetrating into the central channel leaves behind an extremely delicate line¹²⁴ dug within the backbone marrow (the *cut channel* mentioned by Plato; see below).

”The true light was that which, coming into the world, lightens every

¹²³ See ch. XXV.

¹²⁴ Possible corresponding to Reissner’s pencil, or to the ependimus channel [143].

man” (John 1:9). Now we could understand that this light was no other than the pencil of vibratory energy, as it was explained by Shri Mataji. “He shall be filled with [the] Holy Ghost even from his mother’s womb” (Luke 1:15). Actually, the path of the Kundalini is nothing else that the biblical *Way of Holiness*: “a highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass through it, but it shall be for thee. Those that go [this] way... shall not err... The redeemed shall walk [there]” (Isaiah 35:8-9).

Genesis reads that “a river went out of Eden, to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four main streams” (2:10). We have seen that the Sahasrara is symbolically called the Kingdom of heavens or Paradise. According to the Islamic tradition, Muhammad have said: “I was shown *Sidrat-ul Muntaha*¹²⁵... Four rivers originated at its root, two of them were apparent and two were hidden. I asked Gabriel about those rivers and he said: «The two hidden rivers are in Paradise and the apparent ones are the Nile and the Euphrates»” [67]. The hidden rivers (*nadi*, Sanskr.) designate the side channels, and the mention to Gabriel strengthens this hypothesis because it is he who controls one of these nadis. In the human body, two of the four rays go to *visible* locations: the head and the spinal cord (both of them as parts of Paradise, i.e. the brain with the marrow as its continuation¹²⁶), and two go to the *hidden* locations of the right and left sympathetic nervous systems. The rivers Nile and Euphrates encompass Jerusalem from where Muhammad ascended to heavens. The mystic ascent transformed it into the heavenly Jerusalem. The four rivers of the Paradise gush forth from the Throne of Allah (see above) placed above al-Firdaus, the central and the highest part of the Paradise. The Sahasrara is also a summit, being placed on top of the head. Jean Delumeau draws the conclusion that the traditions placing Paradise on an intangible mountain peak, the highest in the world, or beyond an ocean that cannot be crossed over, evoke the non-apparent origin of the great rivers [144]. It is not a mere coincidence that the Sahasrara is related to the Himalayas that, in the sacred geography were the terrestrial lodge of this subtle center (ch. IV). As for the *ocean that cannot be crossed over*, this obviously must be the *Void* (ch. II, V). The difficulty of tackling them both is fully stressed. The *non-apparent* origin of the *great rivers*, reveals the *subtle* nature of the energy channels.

“The mountain of Yahweh’s house shall be established on the top of the

¹²⁵ The lotus of the utmost boundary, i.e. the Sahasrara—see above.

¹²⁶ The serpent of the Gnostics was the brain prolonged by the spinal cord.

mountains... Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob; and we will walk in his paths¹²⁷” (Isaiah 2:2,3). “Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful¹²⁸ in my house” (56:7; cf. 65:25). “Yahweh, who shall sojourn in thy tent? Who shall dwell in the hill of thy holiness?” (Psalms 15:1). “The city of our God, in the hill of his holiness” (48:1). “A city situated on the top of a mountain cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14). “He carried me away in [the] Spirit, [and set me] on a great and high mountain” (Revelation 21:10). Christ also referred to the Sahasrara when He said: “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor shall they say: Lo here, or, Lo there; for behold, the kingdom of God is in the middle of you” (Luke 17:20-21). “And the king[dom of God] is within you... [Whoever] knows [himself], will fin[d] it [and when you] know yourselves, [you will realize that] you are the [sons] of the li[ving] Father. [But if you will not] know yourselves, [you are] in [poverty] and you are pov[erty]” or, as in another variant that adds: “.”. ye shall know yourselves to be in [the kingdom of heaven]. And ye are the city (of God)” [145]. Jesus asked people to look for the Kingdom neither in the sky nor in the sea. “Rather, the Kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living Father” [146].

The precious metals and stones near the rivers of Eden (Genesis 2:11, 12) symbolize the qualities of the chakras, which are associated to certain gems (ch. XV A) according to Indian tradition.

The ancient Chinese wisdom synthetically depicts the penetration of the Kundalini (equated with the *Tao*) into the head of the embryo: “This being is born out of the head. This is the Tao” [147]. It is far from mere chance that the Chinese alchemy¹²⁹ frequently refers to the embryo with the words: *gestation, embryo breathing (t'ai si, Chin.)*, the last being recommended for reaching the primordial (embryo) state, i.e. getting the second birth, the Self Realization (see ch. XXV). Actually, as Professor Julia Ching has showed, “the techniques of «inner» alchemy are the methods associated with Taoist yoga and meditation, which were developed during Tang and Sung times” [148]. The acupuncture takes it for granted that one part of the psychic

¹²⁷ The subtle channels.

¹²⁸ The bliss (*ananda*, Sanskr.) experienced during the state of Yoga (ch. IV).

¹²⁹ See also ch. IV.

energy is “inborn (received by the fetus during conception)”, and that the *ancestral energy* (see *supra*) “is received during birth and represents the hereditary energy potential specific to each separate species and individuals” [149].

The Gnostics (ch. XX C4) were also knowledgeable of the Kundalini energy. Hippolytus wrote: “According to Simon (Magus), therefore, there exists that which is blessed and incorruptible in a latent condition in every one—(that is,) potentially, not actually... This, he says, is one power¹³⁰, divided above¹³¹ (and) below¹³², generating itself, making itself grow, seeking itself, finding itself, being mother of itself, father of itself,... a unit, being a root of the entire circle of existence” [150]. Further on, Simon acknowledged that in every person “resides an indefinite power, which he affirms to be the root of the universe” [151]. The descend of the Kundalini into the fetus is referred to in a Gnostic writing as the spirit penetrating into the womb and being distributed by the ministers of the Archons after forty and thirty days (i.e. ten weeks or about two and a half months) when it is closed in the new body marked with their seals [152].

The *Zohar* reads about “that fourfold beam issues from Eden, at the Lower Point¹³³ that shines opposite the Celestial Point. That point is illumined, and is itself transmuted into Eden, the fount of light” [153]. Rabbi Simeon referred in the same book to “the Law issued from the mystic Head of the King” [154]. Another Kabbalistic book gives an explicit text describing how the spirit of God descended into matter [155].

Plato wrote: “Now after the superior powers¹³⁴ had created all these natures... they cut various channels through the body as through a garden, that it might be watered as from a running stream¹³⁵. In the first place, they cut two hidden channels or veins down to the back where the skin and the flesh join, which answered severally to the right and left side of the body. These they let down along the backbone, so as to have the marrow of

¹³⁰ The *Adi Shakti* (Primordial Power of God Almighty).

¹³¹ *Paramchaitanya* (the macrocosmic level)

¹³² The Kundalini (the microcosmic level) previously referred to in her latent state.

¹³³ The sacrum bone where the Kundalini is coiled around itself.

¹³⁴ I.e. the gods.

¹³⁵ In the *Bible*, the Kundalini is called “the living water” (ch. XI D).

generation between them, where it was most likely to flourish, and in order that the stream coming down from above might flow freely to the other parts, and equalize the irrigation. In the next place, they divided the veins about the head, and interlacing them, they sent them in opposite directions; those coming from the right side they sent to the left of the body, and those from the left they diverted towards the right” [156]. As we can see, Genesis (2:10) and especially Plato’s given quotation described the above with a striking precision (italics were used to highlight the similitudes). The Sanskrit word for the *hidden* (hence subtle) *channel* is *nadi*, meaning *running stream* (*river*). The text goes on reading about *two veins down to the back... to the right and left side of the body... along the backbone (the two side channels, right and left, as branches of the sympathetic nervous system)* so as to have between them the *marrow* (the parasympathetic nervous system, i.e. the central channel, the *Sushumna*); about the *stream coming down from above (the flowing down of the Kundalini energy when the fetus has been created by the superior powers that have been doing all this work; about its flowing to the other parts of the body (the chakras); and about their interlacing... in opposite directions* (exactly as happened within the *chiasma opticalis*—see above). Plato went on: “For the bonds of life which unite the soul with the body are made fast there, and they are the root and foundation of the human race... he... gave to the marrow as many and various forms as the different kinds of souls were hereafter to receive... That which, like a field, was to receive the divine seed, he made round every way, and called this portion of the marrow brain” [157]. The meaning is easy to understand: the *root* is the *Mooladhara* (see above); *fast* designates the *power*, i.e. the *Adi Shakti*; the giving to the marrow (i.e. to the nervous substance) *as many and various forms, as the different kinds of souls* indicates the *nervous plexuses* (chakras), while the *souls* depict here the entities ruling over the chakras. The *divine seed to be received* is the *Kundalini* that first penetrates into the brain where there is the Sahasrara, usually compared to a *field* (ch. IX).

The descent—during which the Kundalini becomes passive, latent, residual and confined into the sacrum bone—will turn during the Self Realization into an ascending flow going through all the chakras up to the Sahasrara, opening it and further transcending it, gushing forth out of the *fontanel bone* like a spring of living water (ch. XI D). It thus becomes the vehicle of union (Yoga) between Atman and Brahman. This is actually the explanation of the anatomical denomination of *fontanel* meaning “small fountain” (Ital.), a name that would otherwise be completely devoid of foundation, medically speaking, because nothing visible flows out of the fontanel.

Ancient texts of Yoga described the Self Realization like this: “When the Kundalini is sleeping it will be aroused by the grace of the Guru¹³⁶. Then all the chakras and knots are pierced and prana flows through the royal road of Sushumna. The mind is released from its work and the Yogi conquers death” [158].

The *Zohar* describes the awakening of the Kundalini as follows: “here «the tent door» is the door of righteousness, referred to in the words, *Open to me the gates of righteousness*¹³⁷, and this is the first entrance door: through this door a view is opened to all the other supernal doors. He who succeeds in entering this door is privileged to know both it and all the other doors, since they all repose on this one... when Israel return from exile, all the supernal grades are destined to rest harmoniously upon this one, Then men will obtain a knowledge of the precious supernal wisdom of which hitherto they wist not... All these are destined to rest on this lower door which is the «tent door»” [159]. Obviously, the *tent door* is the Mooladhara sacrum, the dwelling of the Shekhinah (Kundalini). *Shekhinah* comes from *shakhan* (to reside, to dwell, Hebr.). The other doors are the chakras and indeed they repose on the Mooladhara (support of the root, Sanskr.; ch. I).

Dante, who was a great realized soul, also metaphorically described the Self Realization, when he passed on from the “earthly Paradise” into the “heavenly Paradise” with the help of Beatrice, the symbol of the female guide (the Kundalini) taking man towards the heavenly Paradise (the Sahasrara).

The thunderbolt¹³⁸—as well as the lightning as its luminous manifestation, but also the thunder as its sonorous effect (of vibratory kind, as the light)—is the Great Dragon, which unites Heaven and Earth. This metaphor equates the vibratory energy of the lightning (therefore, here being considered under its electromagnetic form) with the Great Dragon, a symbol of the Kundalini (ch. IX) that crosses the central channel and unites Heaven (the Sahasrara) and Earth (the Mooladhara). The identity is confirmed in the title of the Gnostic work *The Thunder, Perfect Mind* (that is *Sophia*, the Gnostic name of the Divine Mother, therefore the Kundalini; ch. XX C4) beginning with the words: “I was sent forth from [the] power¹³⁹, and I have come to those who

¹³⁶ Ch. XXIV.

¹³⁷ Psalms 118:19.

¹³⁸ For instance that of Zeus, the master of thunder (*Tonans*, Lat.).

¹³⁹ *Adi Shakti* (Sanskrit.), the source of the Kundalini energy.

reflect upon me, and I have been found among those who seek after me” [160]. Actually, the thunderbolt depicts enlightenment.

The topic reminds the legend of St. George riding a fiery horse, whose I I - 19 spear is piercing the Dragon to the ground, thus releasing the Virgin who symbolizes the feminine Kundalini. The *horse* (ch. XIX B) is the metaphor of the Savior and of salvation (liberation, *moksha*, Sanskr.), while the *fire* or the *lightning* (ch. XI E) are the symbols of the Kundalini. Also here, the *spear* darts like the sacred energy or like a sword in the sheath of the backbone, to stab the Kundalini into the Mooladhara sacrum (the Earth). In fact, the fire spear of the god Agni represents the *Shakti* manifested as the Kundalini. The spear of Achilles used by Ulysses to heal the king of Mysia (Asia Minor) reveals the curing effect of the Kundalini energy (ch. XXII C).

The medical science has fully corroborated Shri Mataji’s assertions about the Kundalini energy penetrating the nervous system when the latter has reached a certain stage of evolution. Thus, embryology has established that over the interval of the first 2-3 months, a radical change arises in the formation of the human embryo brain. Over the second month, there are already structures (like the hypothalamus) that are capable of separating the pencil of the Kundalini energy. The evolution of the fetal brain takes place between the 8th and the 12th week of pregnancy by an increase of the number of nervous cells. The genetic program controls the 14 billions of these cells (the number is supposed to be much higher after others) resulting in the creation of the brain as an organ. The quantitative generating process is suddenly interrupted during the 12th week when the cells start making an increasing number of connections. At the moment of birth each and every cerebral neuron is connected to other cells through approximately one thousand intracellular connections, to be later increased to about one quarter of a million connections with other cells in the period of maturity. During the eighth week, the root of the sacral nerve becomes noticeable, and during the thirteenth week the backbone marrow has got its final shape [143]. W.I. Thompson wrote: “Neurophysiologists have discovered that the electrical pathways of nerves appear to develop *before* the growth of the nervous tissue itself; the implication being that they would constitute formative fields pre-existing the nervous matter and guiding its development” [161]. The *nervous pathways prior to the nervous tissue itself*—it seems to be an absurd idea. We infer that the sentence refers to the subtle channels that appear so early inside the fetus. The *formative fields pre-existing the nervous matter and guiding its development* can be no other than those created by the Kundalini energy.

The convergence of the ancient Indian concepts, of the conclusions of

modern embryology, and of the religious ethics consenting the abortion before the fetus has reached three months is indeed remarkable.

A *hadith* narrated by 'Abdullah read: "Allah's Messenger, the true and truly inspired said: «(as regards our creation), every one of you is collected in the womb of his mother for the first forty days, and then he becomes a clot for another forty days, and then a piece of flesh for other forty days¹⁴⁰. Then Allah sends an angel to write four words... Then the soul is breathed into his body»" [162]. The angel sent is the piercing pencil of vibratory energy, the four written words are the four rays, and the breath is the manifestation specific to the Kundalini that is felt above the fontanel like a cool breeze (see ch. XI C). In the words of the Toledan physician Judah Halevi (1085-1141) who was a disciple of al-Ghazali, the entering of the Kundalini is described as follows: "It is just as the soul which waits for its entry into the fetus until the latter's vital powers are sufficiently completed to enable it to receive this higher state of things" [163]. The *Ishraqi* movement founded by the prominent Sufi as-Suhrawardi believed that the Holy Spirit bestowed the light (or soul) on the embryo [164].

The problem of the sacrum bone is worth, here, a short analysis. The anatomical name coming from *hierón ostoun* or *ostéon* (holy bone, Gr.) was used in the time of Hippocrates (about 400 BC) and was translated by the Romans through *sacrum* (sacred, Lat.). *Hulyah* (vertebra, Hebr.) has the name of God *Yah* (short form of *Yahweh*) as its root. Why this bone had been called a "holy bone" had been a mystery for centuries. Some thought that the bone was used in the sacrificial rituals, others, that it played a role in the protection of the genitals (considered to be sacred in themselves), or that the Last Judgment would require this bone to be intact as a receptacle of resurrection. The ancient world assumed that the sacrum was the last bone subject to decay after death (conviction found in a Jewish folk story) [165]. This idea is also found with the Muslims, being mentioned in a *hadith*: "Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said: «... Everything of a human body will waste away, perish or decay except the last coccyx bone¹⁴¹ and from that bone Allah will reconstruct the whole body" [166]. Thus, no one should be surprised at the Yogis considering the Kundalini awakening as tantamount of resurrection.

Etzem (bone, essence, Hebr.; *tz*, vertebra, Egypt.) has *etz* (tree, Hebr.) for its root, a reason for which Annick de Souzenelle asserted that the sacrum

¹⁴⁰ The three stages described are called *nutfali*, *'alaqa* and *mudgha* (Arab.).

¹⁴¹ *Ajbal-dhanab* (Arab.).

(*atz*, Hebr.) is the tree (of life, we should add: *etz hayyim*, Hebr.; ch. IV) in its seed form [167]. The double significance of the word *etzem*, in our opinion, makes it possible the correct interpretation of Adam's sentence about the Feminine Principle (Eve): "This time it is bone of my bones...; this shall be called Woman" (Genesis 2:23), a sentence that becomes: "she who is essence of my bones" (the feminine energy Kundalini being the *sacred* essence of the respective bone).

In chapter I, the Mooladhara was shown to be controlled by Ganesha, the Divine Son depicted with an elephant head by the Hindu iconography. Indeed, any anatomy book provides the image of an elephant head for the II - 21 group made up of the sacrum bone (elephant's triangular face) having on . . . 26 both sides the iliac bones (as its ears) and the coccyx (as its curved trunk) at the bottom. Likewise, the graphic sign of the holy syllable AUM (ॐ) depicts the elephant head seen from above: the ears on the left and the trunk on the right.

NOTES

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III. WHERE WAS THE GARDEN OF EDEN?

*“If there is a heaven on earth,
It is this, and it’s this, and it’s this”*

(Agar Firdaus bar ru-i-zamin ast,
Hamin asto, hamin asto, hamin ast)

Persian verses on Kashmir [1]

The real meaning of the heavenly Kingdom was shown (ch. II) to be the subtle place (Sahasrara) enabling man to unite with Divinity. However, people have never ceased seeking for the location of an earthly Paradise. This place was thought to be hinted at in Song of Songs that mentioned “a garden enclosed...; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed” (4:12), “a fountain in the gardens, a well of living waters” (4:15). One can easily identify here the spring of the Kundalini living water confined in the sacrum bone and eager to gush forth from the fountain (fontanel) of the Sahasrara that stays sealed until the Self Realization.

Genesis says: “Yahweh Elohim planted a garden in Eden¹⁴² eastward¹⁴³” (2:8). Gregory of Nyssa used this reference to explain that when praying “we face the East because our first homeland, the place of Paradise from where we have fallen, was eastward” [2]. “And a river went out of Eden, to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four main streams¹⁴⁴” (2:10). The Garden of Eden (*’Adn*, Arab.) is also mentioned in the *Qur’an* (9.73; 13.23 etc.).

One of the mentioned rivers was the Euphrates (2:14) which made people suppose Eden to be in Mesopotamia, but the latter, as its name shows (*mésos*, middle, *potamós*, river, Gr.), had only two rivers: *Tigris* (*Hidekel*, Hebr.) and *Euphrates* (*Perat*, Hebr.). The *Bible* called the two other rivers *Gihon* and *Pishon*¹⁴⁵ (2:11,13). Any attempt to locate them also in Mesopotamia, failed.

In his book *The Bible Came From Arabia*, Professor Kamal Salibi (of the American University of Beirut) reached the following conclusion: “For more than a century traces of the Hebrews have been searched for in Mesopotamia

¹⁴² Delight; here: place of delight (Hebr.). *Paradise* is a posterior word of Persian origin.

¹⁴³ *Plantavit Deus hortum ab Oriente* (Lat.).

¹⁴⁴ Literally: heads.

¹⁴⁵ Also spelled *Pison* (e.g. with Darby, Josephus etc.).

and also those traces showing the path of their assumed migration from there via northern Syria to Palestine, but (these) never have been really discovered” [3].

There are, however, sufficient reasons to assert that Eden should be located further eastwards.

Chapter 44 of Ezekiel’s book starts as follows: “And he brought me back toward the outer gate of the sanctuary which looked toward the East; and it was shut. And Yahweh said unto me: «This gate shall be shut; it shall not to be opened, and no one shall enter in by it; for Yahweh, the god of Israel, hath entered in by it; and it shall be shot»” (44:1-2). The description clearly indicates the dwelling of God (Eden), whose access was guarded by “the Cherubim, and the flame of the flashing sword, toward the East” (Genesis 3:24).

The *Book of Enoch*¹⁴⁶ described the earthly Paradise as being populated by exotic large beasts and birds [4]. “To the East of these beasts I perceived the extremities of the earth, where heaven ceased. The gates of heaven stood open” [5], wherefrom it can be inferred that Eden was placed further eastwards. Both in the writings of Isidore, bishop of Seville, in the 7th century and in the *Mappa Mundi* from a codex by the same author preserved in the Vatican Library, the earthly Paradise was placed in Asia, surrounded by fiery walls and guarded by angels [6]. Unfortunately, the extremely approximate geography of the map does not allow this Eden to be more exactly localized [7].

III - 1

Josephus Flavius referred to “Pison, which denotes a multitude, running into India, makes its exit into the sea, and is by the Greeks called Ganges... and Geon¹⁴⁷... denotes what arises from the east” [8].

Hippolytus (c.160-235) wrote that “some choose to maintain that paradise is in heaven, and forms no part of the system of creation. But since we see with our eyes the rivers that go forth from it which are open, indeed, even in our day, to the inspection of any who choose, let every one conclude from this that it did not belong to heaven, but was in reality planted in the created system. And, in truth, it is a locality in the east, and a place select” [9].

Philostorgius of Cappadocia (d. c.425) identified Pishon to Hyphasis (Beas) confused with the Indus or Ganges [10]. As a matter of fact, the Indus has a tributary called Pishin.

In his *Topographia Christiana* (Christian Topography) composed between 535-548 in Sinai, Cosmas Indicopleustes of Alexandria wrote: “Of

¹⁴⁶ No doubt, Enoch was a great initiate, like Eliyah and John (ch. I).

¹⁴⁷ Gihon.

these, the *Pheisôn* [Pison] is the river of India, which some call the Indus or Ganges. It flows down from regions in the interior, and falls by many mouths into the Indian Sea,” then identified “the *Geôn*” (Gihon) with the Nile [11]. Actually, the longest river (250 km) in the Indian state of Kerala is called *Nila* (known also as Bharatapuzha, Ponnani-puzha or Perar). According to tradition, the Ganges was divided by Shiva in seven main streams, one of them being the *Sindh* (Indus) flowing towards west, other known as *Nalini* flowing towards east. The *Nilamata Purana* quoted by J.G. Frazer (ch. V) recorded *Nala*, the lord of the Kashmirian Nagas.

The mysterious name of Hydekyl (mentioned in Genesis 2:14), supposed to be the Tigris, evokes Hidakal in the Indian state Karnataka.

The accounts of Alexander’s conquests in northwestern India mentioned the following names of rivers: *Hydaspes*, *Hyphasis*, *Hydraotes* and *Acesines*. The Sanskrit equivalents of these Greek names are, respectively: *Vitasta* (Jhelum), *Vipasa* (Beas), *Airavati* (Ravi), and *Asikni* (Chenab). On the *World Map* [12] drawn in 1100 by Henry of Mainz (Mayence), *Hydaspes*, *Acesines* and *Hypanis* (*sic!*) are represented independently of the Indus, while the Ganges, appears on the other side of Paradise towards the north, flowing due east.

In the 12th century, Honorius of Autun equated Pishon to the Ganges [13].

In his *Atlas*, the Venetian Martino Sanudo (14th century) called “Gyon” the river that became Indus later on [14].

In the 15th century, Inveges wrote in his *Sacred History of the Terrestrial Paradise*: “As said with good reason by Augustine and Moses Bar Chefa out of it (the Garden of Eden) went... the Ganges... and Indus...” [15].

David Baron reports that “Abraham Farisol¹⁴⁸... identifies the River Ganges with the River Gozan” (Gihon) [16].

Genesis brings additional details about Pishon: “that is it which surrounds the whole land Havilah, where the gold is. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and the onyx stone are there” (2:11-12). Another land, proverbial for its gold of exceptional quality is Ophir (Job 28:15,16; Isaiah 13:12; cf. 1 Kings 9:28, 10:11; 1 Chronicles 8:18, 9:10, 29:4; Psalms 45:9). At the same time, Havilah and Ophir are the names of two of Joktan’s sons (Genesis 10:29). However, Joktan and his sons “dwelled at Masha, as one goes to Sephar” pointing at the Afghanistan border and the Indian Ocean, as shown in chapter VI.

¹⁴⁸ Rabbi Abraham Farisol, the author of *Iggereth Orechoth Olam*, lived in the early 16th century.

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* mentioned: “The most ancient tradition, going back to Josephus and followed by most of the Church Fathers, makes Havilah equivalent to India, and the Pison one of its rivers,” and “the *Targum Yerushalmi* translates «Havilah» by «Hindiki» (Hindustan, or India)” [17]. According to Josephus (referring to 1 Kings 9:28): “Solomon gave this command: That they should go along with his own stewards to the land that was of old called Ophir, but now the Aurea Chersonesus, which belongs to India, to fetch him gold” [18]. There are historical records that King Solomon had traded with the Indian state of Kerala [19].

Based on Josephus and the *Targum Yonathan*, other authors identified Havilah with India, too. In support of this assumption, there is a city called *Havelian* on the Upper Indus, 100 km north of Islamabad, not far from Murree and Kashmir. In Rajahstan, *haveli* denotes opulence, signifying *palace* or *mansion*. The district of *Haveli Nagar* is located north of Bombay and Thane, at the southern limit of the Gujarat State.

Bdellium is probably a resin, or even amber which is a fossilized resin. The word *Havilah* means “sandy.” In the text of Genesis 2:11, Pishon is the Indus River, fitting all of the description of the Pison and Havilah. It encompasses northern Pakistan and India, and surrounds 60% of the Kashmir and Jammu provinces where there is high quality gold and resin represents a major export. Besides gold deposits, India and Pakistan possess onyx. A good segment of the Indus Valley is sandy.

Smith’s Bible Dictionary holds similar views: “The India of the book of Esther is not the peninsula of Hindostan¹⁴⁹, but the country surrounding the Indus, the Punjab and perhaps *Scinde*. The people and productions of that country must have been tolerably well known to the Jews. An active trade was carried on between India and western Asia. The trade opened by Solomon with Ophir through the Red Sea consisted chiefly of Indian articles” [20].

According to the writings of John Damascene (John of Damascus, c.675-749) on the Paradise: “Its site is higher in the East than all the Earth” [21], which points at the Himalayan region.

The bishop of Bethraman (near Baghdad), Moses Bar Chefa (*floruit* c.900) in his commentary *On Paradise* supposed that the Paradise was eastward, beyond the ocean and on a peak higher than any place on the planet [22], supporting Damascene’s views.

In a text from the *Account of Elysaeus* (12th century) based on a letter attributed to the legendary Priest John, the terrestrial Paradise was placed on the top of four Indian mountains [23].

¹⁴⁹ *Sic!*

An old master of Dante, Brunetto Latini wrote in 1265, in the “langue d’oc,” *Li Livres dou Tresor* (The Books of Treasure) where he assumed that “the earthly Paradise is in India” [24]. Dante himself made a distinction between the “earthly Paradise” and the “heavenly Paradise.”

Born around 1300, Jehan de Mandeville was the author of the *Travels*. Of this famous book, which was included among Christopher Columbus books besides Marco Polo’s, one knows 250 manuscripts and 180 printed editions in ten languages. There the author assumed that the garden of Paradise is the highest land in the world and it is in the East [25]. Columbus himself considered the Ganges one of the four rivers in the terrestrial Paradise [26].

It was as late as the Enlightenment, when the *Encyclopedia* accepted that the Paradise was in Asia.

The Iranians had a legend saying that the ancestors of the Mazdeans had come from an Edenic country called *Airayanam vaejah* (*Eran vež*, Pahlavi), an idealization of Chorasmia [27]—in the east of Iran.

The geographic name of *Punjab* means “five rivers” (Persian; *Panchanada*, Sanskr.). This fact can be related to the biblical text when noticing that “the river with four main streams” totals up *five rivers*. They are the tributaries of the Indus (from north to south): *Jhelum* (of about 800 km in length, crossing Kashmir and eastern Pakistan), *Chenab*, *Ravi*, *Beas*, and *Satlej* of 1440 km in length flowing from the holy lake Manasarowar (Lake of the Mind) near the Mountain Kailash in Tibet (known there as Langchhankhabab River) and crossing northern India and Pakistan down to Indus. The latter two tributaries merge into *Saraswati*¹⁵⁰ River (hence, probably, only four rivers mentioned in Genesis) called “Paradise River” [28].

The legendary mountain *Meru* mentioned in the *Mahabharata*, and the mythical height of the Buddhism, *Shambala*—each of them correlated with Paradise and presumed to serve as summits for initiations¹⁵¹—both lay in the north of India. On the other hand, it is precisely at the northern extremity of the Indian subcontinent where it is situated Kashmir, which means “Paradise on Earth” in the native language. As we shall see further the word’s etymology, however, may also have other explanations.

The paradise-like landscape of Kashmir truly justifies its fame of the III-3 “Switzerland of India”, due to its fertile valleys, its silvery lakes and crystal- . . . 6

¹⁵⁰ *Saraswati* is the Flow of Knowledge (*saras*, flow, Sanskr.) that could be connected to the correspondent tree of Paradise.

¹⁵¹ For this reason, great saints and prophets have always visited Kashmir (see below).

clear rivers bordered by wood-covered mountains at the lap of the Himalayas.

Genesis read about the rivers watering the Eden: “The name of the second river is Gihon: that is it which surrounds the whole land of Cush” (2:13). Although by the biblical “Cush” scholars understand “Ethiopia,” we shall bear in mind that the ancient world designated the Hindus as “Eastern Ethiopians” (more details in chapter VI). The fact that in the *Septuagint*, with no reason *Aithiopia* sometimes replaced the Hebrew *kwš*, further encouraged posterity to equate Cush to Ethiopia, in disagreement with other exegetes, like Professor Salibi [29].

It is a known fact that many names in the *Bible* underwent some alterations due to the linguistic interrelations so that we cannot exclude the hypothesis of Gihon having become, in the course of time, Jhelum, the river that actually surrounds Kashmir. As for the person called Cush, he was the son of Ham (10:6) and Noah’s grandson (5:32; 6:10; 9:18; 10:1). In this III-7 respect it is full of significance that the Kashmiri boatmen, *Hanjis*¹⁵² or *Manjis*, claim that they are the descendants of Noah [30].

To support the above hypothesis, Khwaja Nazir Ahmad (who called that blessed land by its other traditional surname of “Heaven on Earth”) quotes no less than twenty-five geographical names having the root *Kush* or *Kash*. Thus, another name of Kashmiri is *Kash-ir*, while the Tibetans called it *Kash-i-jheel*, and the Baltics, *Kash-i-yul*. *Kush* is the name of the country on both sides of Pir Punjal range in Kashmir. There are many mountains not far from each other: *Kash-rim*, *Kash-ban*, *Kash-farid*, *Kash-ba* and, of course, the well-known *Hindu-Kush*, west of Kashmir [31].

Many kings were named after the name of their common ancestor *Kush*. First we shall mention the *Kushan* dynasty in Kashmir met in the *Rajatarangini*¹⁵³ or the *Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir* [32], then a *Kushan* king in Mesopotamia mentioned in the *Bible* (Judges 3:8,10). Kashmiri kings were named *Ralu-Kush*, *Utpala-Kush*, *Hiranya-Kush* and his father *Kanaka-Kush* [33]. The Mogul Emperor Babar pointed out that the name was derived from the hill-tribe *Kash* or *Kush* living in the neighborhood of Kashmir [34]. This tribe settled down in the zone that presently is called *Kash-tawar*, in the Doda district from Kashmir. According to Erskine’s interpretation, the etymology of Babar was extended to *Kashgar* (*Kashi* of today), the *Casiareggio* and *Casu* Mountains of Ptolemy [35]. Actually, a Persian manuscript of the quoted text adds that *mir* means

¹⁵² Here we assume that originally the name came from Ham: *Ham-ji*, *ji* being the suffix of reverence.

¹⁵³ Literally: Stream of Kings.

mountain. [36]. The explanation of Babar appeared still more prominently in *A'in-i-Akbari* [37] and found favor with Count Tieffenthaler and was also supported by the historian of Kashmir Haider Malak Chadauara [38] as well as by G.T. Vigne [39]. Among the Gujars of Kashmir there are two tribes named *Kashan* and *Kashana*. Even the Kashmiri Era is called *Kashan* Era. *Kashu* or *Cushu* is a sub-caste (*got*) of Kashmiri Pandits. In Ghar-ghost there is a *Kashi* tribe, and a *Kashan* tribe among the Afghans [40].

Other etymological hypotheses take into account the Jewish origin of the Kashmir population (see ch. VI and XIV). One can easily notice the analogy of *Kashmir* and *kosher* (*kashir* or *kasher*, Hebr.) meaning *flawless* (Leviticus¹⁵⁴ 22:20), above all when it concerns food. The Old Testament obliged people to consume just some animals that have been slaughtered according to the prescribed ritual (Genesis 9:4; cf. Leviticus 17:10-12,14; Deuteronomy 12:23). After this hypothesis, the inhabitants and then their land would have adopted the similar name.

The first known Kashmiri historian, the Pandit Kalhana thought that the name of the country came from *Kashyapa-mir* (country of Kashyapa, Sanskr.) [41]. "All creatures are descendants of Kashyapa", since this was the grandfather of Manu, the father of mankind [42]. From this one can deduce that Kashyapa was the equivalent of Adam in the *Bible*, but Sir William Jones [43], W. Wakefield [44] and Sir Aurel Stein [44] criticized this theory.

Others made a connection between *Kashmir* and *Kashaf*, the attendant of King Solomon during his visit in Kashmir (ch. XIII).

Since early times, the Kashmiri historians call this blessed land *Bagh-i-Jannat* (*Bagh-i-Jannah*, Garden of Paradise, Arab.) or *Jannat-ud-Dunya* (*Dunya men Jannah*, Paradise in this World, Arab.).

As we shall see later (ch. VI, XII, XIII and XIV) there are many other reasons to see Kashmir as a holy land, seeing that numberless prophets and saints coming from everywhere visited it [46]. This paradise has been enticing people from remote places even from the ancient times. Kashmir is considered the center of *Mahayana* Buddhism and has been receiving pilgrims from all over the world, coming here to study the teachings of the sage Gautama.

According to the *Rajatarangini* chronicle, the first inhabitants of Kashmir were the divine serpents (*nagas*) [47], which denoted the presence of great sages familiar with the esoteric symbolism of the Kundalini ever since the ancient times.

There are reasons to thought about Kashmir as the *Promised Land*

¹⁵⁴ *Vayiqra* (Hebr.).

pledged by God to the Jews (ch. XII). This blessed land was to be a “heaven on the earth” (Deuteronomy 11:21), thus depicting the Paradise, “towards the sun-rising” (4:41), and was to be “a land of mountains and valleys, which drinketh water of the rain of heavens” (11:11). Further God says: “I will give rain to your land in its season” (11:14) stating that this place, eastward of Jordan is “as far as the sea of the plain, under the slopes of Pisgah” (4:49). It is sure that Palestine cannot answer at all these descriptions.

The only country east of Jordan (or of the Euphrates) that is famous for its springs and rivers, its fruitful valleys and meadows, is Kashmir. The “sea of plain” is no other than the huge Lake Wular (the largest fresh water lake in India), situated north of Srinagar, not far from the cliffs of Pisgah. Likewise, we shall find other toponyms of the Old Testament fitting well with the geographical names we could find in Kashmir even today (ch. XII and XIV).

The children of Ham also were to go to a place where they “found fat and good pasture, and a land widely extended and quiet and fertile” (1 Chronicles 4:40). Isaiah described the Land of Promise as being “a place of rivers of broad streams: no galley with oars shall go there, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby” (33:21). Neither of these descriptions is applicable to Palestine but they do fit Kashmir, where as soon as the rivers leave the valley, they transform into rapids completely inappropriate for navigation. A puzzling sentence appearing in the Song of Deborah and Barak (Judges 5:17) presented the tribe of Dan (squeezed north of Israel, in a narrow strip between mountains) in relation to its ships: “And Dan, why did he remain in ships?” (variant: “Dan abode in ships”). Dan was one of the “lost tribes of Israel” supposed to reach Kashmir (ch. XIV).

We shall conclude this chapter by showing that in Islam there are many traditions claiming that Adam made his descent on earth in India (after al-Hassan), even that he descended in India with the Black Stone (after Assady), and also it is said that Adam had come from India to go on a pilgrimage for forty times up to the Ka'ba, placed in Mecca by angels two thousand years earlier [48]. Moreover, a note of Henry Yule to his translation of Marco Polo's travels shows: “One of the most interesting papers on the subject is in the *Chinese Repository*, vol. XX. It gives the translation of a Chinese Jewish inscription... Here is a passage: «With respect to the Israelitish religion, we find that its first ancestor, Adam, came originally from India»” [49]. We should signal also the existence in southern Sri Lanka of Adam's Peak, where Muslims thought that Adam left his footprint when landed there after being expelled from Paradise. Hindus called that place *Shri Pada* (Holy Footprint) or *Shivan Adi Padam*, believing that the world-creative dance of

Shiva left that giant footprint (1.67 by 0.75 meters), while Christians attributed the footprint to Thomas.

NOTES

[1] Verses inscribed by Shahjahan's minister Saadullah on the walls of Diwan-i-Khas, Lahore; quoted by Mohammad Yasin, *Rauzabal and Other Mysteries of Kashmir*, Kesar Publisher, Srinagar 1972, p.22. [2] Gregory of Nyssa, *De Oratione Dominica*, V, in Migne, *P.G.*, vol. 44, col.1184. [3] Kamal Salibi, *The Bible Came From Arabia*, Jonathan Cape, London 1985, p.24. [4] *The Book of Enoch* 31.5, 32.1. [5] *Ibid.*, 32.2. [6] Isidor of Sevilla, *Etymologiae*, XIV, III, 2-4; XIV, VI, 3-10. [7] Alexandru Busuioceanu, *Zalmoxis*, Ed. Meridiane, București 1985, p.109 and note II 90, o.t. [8] Josephus Flavius, *The Antiquities of the Jews* I.1.3 in *The Works of Flavius Josephus* (transl. by William Whiston), Milner and Co., London, p.25. [9] Origen, *Fragmenta on Hexameron* (transl. by S.D.F. Salmond). [10] Philostorgios, *Historiae ecclesiasticae*, in Migne, *P.G.*, vol. 65, col.491-495. [11] McCrindle, J.W., *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian monk*, Hakluyt Society, Series I, vol. 98, 1897. [12] *World Map of Henry of Mainz*, Corpus Christi College, MS. 66, p. 2, Cambridge, England. [13] Honorius d'Autun, *De Imagine mundi*, in P.J. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* (further it will be designated by the initial letters *P.L.*), Paris, 1841-1855, vol. 172, col.123. [14] A.E. Nordensjöld, *Facsimile Atlas to the Early History of Cartography*, Dover, New York 1973, p.51. [15] Agostino Inveges, *Historia sacra paradisi terrestris et sanctissimi innocentiae status*, Palermo 1469, pp.16-17, o.t. [16] David Baron, *The History of the Ten "Lost" Tribes*, in <http://www.wcg.org>. [17] [JewishEncyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com). [18] Josephus, *The Antiquities...* VIII.6.4. [19] Dr. John Mathew Thekkel, *A Brief History of India*, www.thekkel.com. [20] William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (revised and edited by F.N. and M.A. Peloubet), computer file, electronic edition, Logos Library System, Thomas Nelson, Nashville 1997. [21] John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith (De Fide Orthodoxa)*, II.9; cf. *La Foi orthodoxe*, in *Cahiers Saint Irénée*, Institut Français de Théologie du Paris, 1966, ch. XI, p.65. [22] Moses Bar Chefa, *De Paradiso*, in Migne, *P.G.*, vol. 3, col.583-602. [23] Ed.-F. Zarncke, *Der Priester Johannes*, in *Abhandlungen der...kön.-sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, Phil.-Hist., Leipzig 1883, no.8, p.123. [24] Br. Lattini, *Li Livres dou Tresor*, Coll. des inédits de l'histoire de France, Paris 1863, p.161. [25] *Mandeville's Travels* (transl. by Malcom Letts), London 1953, vol. II, pp.405-406. [26] C. Colomb, *Oeuvres* (transl. by A. Ciorănescu), Gallimard, Paris 1961, pp.233-235. [27] *Videvdat* 1.3; Émile Benvenuto, *L' Eran vež et l'origine légendaire des Iraniens*, in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, vol. 7, pp.265-274 (1937). [28] *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, Paris 1968, vol. 16, p.1031. [29] Salibi, pp.52-54,56. [30] *Imperial Gazetteer of*

India, section *Kashmir and Jammu*, 1960. [31] Al-Haj Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, *Jesus in Heaven on Earth*, The Woking Muslim Mission & Literary Trust, The Mosque, Woking and Azeez Manzil, Lahore 1952. [32] Pandit Kalhana, *Rajatarangini, a Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir* (transl. by Sir Mark Aurel Stein), Archibald Constable, London 1900, I, 76. This important historical work was even translated in Japanese by Dr. Tokan Sumi. [33] *Ibid.*, I, 286-287. [34] *Tauzak-i-Babari (Memoirs of Babar)*, transl. by Leyden and Erskine, p.313. [35] *Ibid.*, Introduction, p.XXVII. [36] Nazir Ahmad, p.335. [37] *A'in-i-Akbari*, vol. II, p.381. [38] Haider Malak Chadauara, *Waqiat-i-Kashmir*, Muhammadi Press, Lahore 1617, p.35. [39] G.T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh and Iskardu*, Henry Colburn, London 1842, vol. II, p.44. [40] H.W. Bellow, *An Enquire into the Ethnograph of Afghanistan*, The Oriental Institute, Woking 1891, p.98. [41] Kalhana, *quoted work*. [42] Dowson, p.153. [43] Sir William Jones, *Kashmir, Indian Researches*, vol. I, p.268. [44] W. Wakefield, *The Happy Valley*, Sampson, Low, Mareton, Searle, Ravington, London 1879, p.6. [45] Sir Aurel Stein, *Ancient Geography of Kashmir*, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta 1899, p.13. [46] Pandit Hargopal Khasta Kaul, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir*, Farsi Arya Press, Lahore 1883, p.19. [47] *Apud Daniélou, The Myths...*, p.309; Jean Filliozat, *Classical India*, vol. 2: *Political History of India from the Earliest Times to the 7th century A.D.* (transl. by Philip Spratt), Susil Gupta (India) Limited, Calcutta 1957, § 21, p.12. [48] Schuon, *Să înțelegem...*, Glossary. [49] Henry Yule's note 3 to chapter V of *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Dover Publications, Inc., New York 1993, vol. I, p.346.

IV. THE TREE OF LIFE AND OF KNOWLEDGE

“There is a strange tree, which stands without roots and bears fruits without blossoming; it has no branches and no leaves, it is lotus all over”

Kabir [1]

Genesis says that in the Garden of Eden (2:8) “out of the ground Yahweh Elohim made every tree grow... and the tree of life, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (2:9). It might seem that there are two different trees (3:22). There are, however, exegeses supporting the idea of one and the same tree. Thus, in their analyze Baring and Cashford came to the conclusion that in the Garden of Eden “the one tree has become two... In the earlier mythologies the one tree offered both «knowledge» and «life», or «wisdom» and «immortality»” [2]. In his turn, Campbell said: “The principle of mythic dissociation... in the *Bible* is expressed in a dissociation of the Tree of Knowledge from the Tree of Immortal Life” [3].

However, we believe that to the above we might add other reasons, too.

First of all, we should notice that Genesis wrote of “the tree of life *in the midst of the garden*, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (2:9), wherefrom we might infer that the latter was *not in the midst of the garden*, being different from the former one. However, the text shows later on that “of the fruit of the tree that is *in the midst of the garden*, God has said: «Ye shall not eat of it, and ye shall not touch it, lest ye die” (3:3), this prohibition exclusively referring to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:17). Herefrom it results the identity of the “two” trees. The gospel explains that “this is the eternal life, that they should know thee, the only true God” (John 17:3), which again identifies *eternal life to knowledge*. The *Proverbs of Solomon* make no distinction between wisdom, understanding (knowledge), and the tree of life: “Blessed is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding... She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her” (3:13,18). “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and the wise winneth souls” (11:30).

Genesis also says that “Yahweh Elohim commanded Man, saying: «Of every tree of the garden thou shalt freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it” (2:16-17). When Eve told that to the serpent, the latter replied: “God knows that in the day ye eat of it, your eyes

will be opened, and ye will be as God¹⁵⁵, knowing good and evil” (3:5). Eve is eager to obtain this knowledge: “And the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a pleasure for the eyes, and the tree was to be desired to give intelligence” (3:6). In the original text, *nehemod* (pleasant-graceful, Hebr.) etymologically means *heat-energy-desire*, which indicates the qualities of the three channels: heat (Pingala, the solar channel), energy (Kundalini, within the Sushumna), desire (quality defining the Ida nadi). According to the serpent, the fruit of the tree of knowledge brings immortality: “Ye will not certainly die” (3:4); “ye will be as God” (3:5) who is immortal. Here, again, knowledge parallels eternal life, which further confirms that that the two trees are actually one. In total disagreement with the pretended “original sin” (ch. IX), Theophilus of Antioch wrote in his epistle to Autolycus: “The tree of knowledge itself was good, and its fruit was good. For it was not the tree, as some think... which had death in it. For there was nothing else in the fruit than only knowledge; but knowledge is good when one uses it discreetly.” [4]. Irenaeus of Lyons had adopted an analogous position.

Students of the *Bible* consider it that initially, the tree of Eden was not an apple but a fig tree, since the man and the woman “sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Genesis 3:7) to cover their nudity, thus expressing their chastity (ch. XIX C). The small apple leaves could have been improper. A possible explanation for mentioning the apple tree could be related to the Latin texts of the *Bible* that were available in the Middle Ages where *malus* (apple, Lat.) was associated to *malum* (evil, Lat.).

The story of the sacred Golden Apple Tree of the Hesperides (c.700-500 BC) placed it under the protection of the great serpent Ladon [5]. The Hesperides watered the tree with the Water of Life. In Mediterranean (and Celtic) traditions the apple symbolizes immortality through love of the Great Goddess [6]. We can easily understand that Eve stands for the Divine Mother who bestows on people enlightenment and divine knowledge (*vidya*, Sanskr.), opposed to ignorance (*avidya*, Sanskr.).

The myth of the Tree of Life is equated to the one about the plant that grants immortality, often met with in legends, folk fairy tales, heroic epics (like Gilgamesh; ch. VI), or literary creations. The Taoists were also prompt in taking over the protohistorical tradition of the immortality herb (*chih* or *chü-sheng*, Chin.).

Since earlier times, the Indians considered ignorance to be *the greatest sin*

¹⁵⁵ Or “as gods”: *Eritis sicut dii* (Lat.). Becoming like God can be obtained through the Self Realization, after which the human subtle body (Tree of Life) becomes similar to the Virata (ch. II).

(see, for example, the answer given by Yudhishtira to the spirit of the lake, in the *Mahabharata*). The second of the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* discloses that the cause of sufferings lies in ignorant desire (*trishna*, Sanskr.). Plato, in his turn, said: “I call on him to grant us that surest and best of medicines, knowledge” [7] and declared “there was nothing more powerful than knowledge” and associated “a wrong action” to “ignorance” [8]. One of the manifestations of the Great Goddess in the phenomenal world is the motherlike energy of the Kundalini, i.e. the legendary serpent (ch. IX). As we have seen, the fact of being attracted towards knowledge originates in the *desire*, a feature of the Ida, the feminine channel.

Ignorance was condemned by Jesus: “Man, if indeed thou knowest what thou doest, thou art blessed; but if thou knowest not, thou art cursed, and a transgressor of the law¹⁵⁶.” This passage in the gospel was written off the authorized Scripture, but it still exists in earlier manuscripts as Théodore de Bèze’s in the Cambridge University Library (*Codex Bezae* or *Cantabrigiensis D*) [9]. This makes it easy to understand why Jesus often rebuked His disciples for the ignorance that they repeatedly manifested. For example, Jesus replied to one of Peter’s questions (Matthew 15:16; cf. 16:9; Mark 7:18 etc.): “Are ye also still without intelligence?” God was pitiless to those ignoring the subtle essence of the two side channels: “And I, should not I have pity on... persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand” (Jonah 4:11). In chapter II western medicine was shown to make no distinction between the specific features of the right and left sympathetic nervous systems. The *Proverbs of Solomon* stressed it out that ignorance forbade any access to immortality: “Forsake follies¹⁵⁷ and live, and go to the way of intelligence” (9:6).

According to Clement of Alexandria: “The darkness is ignorance, through which we fall into sins... Knowledge¹⁵⁸, then, is the illumination we receive, which makes ignorance disappear, and endows us with clear vision” [10].

Lossky too dealt with the problem of ignorance (*áгноia*, Gr.). By interpreting the *gnósis* to be the “knowledge of grace” within ourselves (i.e. of the Kundalini), the author wrote that “this *gnosis* dispels all limitations of consciousness; banishes that *áгноia* which has the twilight of hell at its farthest margin.” He considered “the absence of this quality is a mark of sin, the «sleep of the soul»“ [11]... “(*áгноia*), pushed to its furthest limits, would

¹⁵⁶ Dharma (ch. VII).

¹⁵⁷ Strictly: simplicities.

¹⁵⁸ *Gnósis* (Gr.); see ch. XX C4.

be nothing other than hell, the final destruction of the person” [12].

Plato wrote: “He who has been earnest in the love of knowledge and of true wisdom, and has exercised his intellect more than any other part of him, must have thoughts immortal and divine, if he attains truth, and insofar as human nature is capable of sharing in immortality, he must altogether be immortal; and since he is ever cherishing the divine power, and has the divinity with him in perfect order, he will be perfectly happy” [13].

Ibn al-'Arabi realized that “soul's life is spared from the death of ignorance by learning, as He says «he who is dead» from ignorance, «We gave him life» by learning, «and appointed for him a light to walk by among the people», which is the guidance (The *Qur'an* 6.122)” [14].

Number four, standing for perfection (ch. I), is further found in many concepts about the four levels of knowledge.

The Jewish philosophers admit two levels of semantic structures of the *Torah* (*Thorah*, Hebr.): *hitzon* (outward, exoteric, Hebr.) and *penimi* (inward, esoteric, Hebr.), which are literal translations of the corresponding Arabic terms. Therefore, the *Torah* is at once exoteric and esoteric: '*oraita sethim ve-galya* (Hebr.) [15]; *he'elem v'gilui* (concealment and disclosure, Hebr.). Also Revelation acknowledged the coexistence of the exoteric and esoteric meanings of the *Bible* (Revelation 5:1-2): “I saw on the right hand of him that sat upon the throne a book, written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals... Who [is] worthy to open the book, and to break its seals?” The mentioning of the seven seals to be broken was a clear indication to the key able to unveil the secret: the knowledge about the seven chakras, i.e. the awakening of the Kundalini within the subtle body. Other details on the topic would be given in chapter XI B.

Scholem reminded of the “fourfold meaning of Scriptures that had been developed by the Christian authors of the early Middle Ages” [16]. The Rabbinical tradition attributed at least 37 meanings to each and every word [17]. At the end of the 13th century, the *Tikkune ha-Zohar* (emendations to the *Zohar*, Hebr.) appeared, comprising 70 interpretations of the first line in the *Torah*.

Joseph ibn Aqnin (12th century) speaks, throughout his commentary on Song of Songs, of three levels of interpretation: *literal*, *haggadic* and *philosophical-allegorical*, to which the Kabbalists added a fourth, that of the *theosophical mystery*, which was termed in the *Zohar* as *raza de mehemanutha*, i.e. understanding of the Scripture according to the “mystery of faith.” According to one of the earliest Kabbalistic writings of Moses of Leon (end of the 13th century) *Midrash ha-Neelam* (recondite exposition, Hebr.) to the Book of Ruth, each word of the Scripture (*Torah*) implies four

distinct kinds of understanding: the outward fact (*ma'aseh*), the meaning got through the hermeneutic method used by the Kabbalists or by the legalists of the *Talmud* (*Midrash: Torah* commentary), the allegorical or tropic form of interpretation (*haggadah*) and the mystery (*sod*) [18].

In the *Zohar*, the four levels (the meanings ascribed by Joseph Gikatila at the end of the 13th century) become: (a) the literal or simple meaning, *peshat* (the strict grammatical meaning, *perush*); (b) the allegory, the homiletical meaning *remez* (the interpretation: a deeper penetration into the literal sense, *peshet*, translation); (c) the sense which embraces both the Talmudic and haggadic interpretation, *derashah* (*derash*); and (d) the mystical meaning, *sod* (*beur*¹⁵⁹), to which there is added a fifth term, *gematria*—the interpretation through the numerical value of the Hebrew letters [18].

Clement of Alexandria acknowledged, too, that “the sense of the Law [i.e. the Scripture] is to be taken in three ways” [19], leaving aside the *literal* sense [20].

In Dante’s gnoseology, the text can and should be mainly explained after four meanings: “*si possono intendere e di onsi esponere massimamente per quattro sensi*” (these four different meanings cannot mutually destroy or oppose to each other, Ital.). The first one is the *literal* meaning; the second one is the *allegorical* meaning: “*una veritate ascosa sotto bella mensogna*” (a truth hidden under a beautiful lie, Ital.); the third one—the *moral* meaning; the last one which is the innermost, is the *anagogic*¹⁶⁰ meaning, representing a metaphysical hypersense (*sovrasenso*, Ital.) i.e. transcending the senses [21], which is perceived only by the initiate. In his *Inferno*, Dante wrote: “*Mirate la dottrina che s’asconde/ Sotto il velamo degli versi strani*” (Admire the doctrine hidden/ Under the veil of strange verses, Ital.) [22]. The author also referred to these interpretations in a letter addressed to the lord of Verone, Can Francesco (or Can Grande) della Scala.

For other Christian authors of the late Middle Ages, the fourfold sense became: *history*, *allegory*, *tropology* (moral homiletics) and *anagogy* (eschatological interpretation¹⁶¹). In his *Apology* (1487), Pico della Mirandola acknowledges the similitude with the Jewish tradition in the

¹⁵⁹ Connected to *be'er* (fountain, Hebr.), since the *Torah* is like a fountain full of water (ch. XI D) constantly sending out new showers of its hidden meaning.

¹⁶⁰ *Anagogic* comes from *anagogé* (elevation, Gr.; of the soul, for instance).

¹⁶¹ Referring to the end of the world (*éschaton*, final; *lógos*, word, speech, Gr.).

fourfold explanation of the *Bible*: the literal meaning (*peshat*), the allegorical or mystical (*midrash*), the tropic (*sekhel*) and the anagogic (the most sublime and divine of all, the *Kabbalah*) [23].

According to the interpretation of the *Midrash ha-Neelam*, when God said: “Let there be light” (*yehi aor*, Hebr.) (Genesis 1:3), He referred to obtaining knowledge, which also is coming out of the *Torah* [24]. This would be the origin of the word *Zohar* (light, radiance, splendor, Hebr.). Therefore, the *Zohar* says about the *Torah*: “every word of it radiates light in many directions” [25].

After the tradition, 'Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, have said: “there is no Qur'anic verse¹⁶² which does not have four senses: the exoteric¹⁶³; the esoteric¹⁶⁴; the limit¹⁶⁵; and the divine project¹⁶⁶” [26]. A *hadith nabawwi* (saying of the Prophet himself) shows that the *Qur'an* verses contain an exoteric, and an esoteric meaning including a multitude of other meanings—seven at least (ch. XXV B) and seventy at most; their profusion was compared to “the waves of the sea” [27]. There is a distinction between the “external science” (*al-'ilm az-zahir*) and the “internal science” (*al-'ilm al-batin*). However, the *Qur'an* is presented as: “the Book, wherein are verses clear that are the Essence of the Book, and others ambiguous... and none know its interpretation, save only God” (3.5).

It is said that the *Bhagavad-Gita* could also be read according to seven different threads of meaning [28].

After the fall into the earthen condition, the gate of Eden was guarded by cherubs (energies of the side channels controlled by Archangels Michael and Gabriel—Bhairava and Hanumana in Hinduism) bearing “the flashing sword” (the Kundalini, as fire, ch. II, XI E), “to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3:24), since the teachings about the Kundalini had always been kept secret (ch. XI B, XX C4 and XXII E). The two archangels are described in the following words: “there stood... two, the one on this side, on the bank of the river, and the other on that side, on the bank of the river” (Daniel 12:5), the river being the Sushumna. Enoch also mentioned the side

¹⁶² *Aya* (singular), *ayat* (plural), Arab.

¹⁶³ *Az-zahir* (external, apparent, Arab.).

¹⁶⁴ *Al-batin* (internal, hidden, Arab.).

¹⁶⁵ *Hadd* (the limit, Arab.; setting what is allowed or not).

¹⁶⁶ *Mottala'* or *matla'* (Arab.); indicating what God means to achieve in man through each verse.

channels governed by Michael and Gabriel: “I saw the path of the angels”, saying on his guide Michael: “he shewed me all the hidden things of the extremities of heaven, all the receptacles of the stars¹⁶⁷” [29]. He called the archangels after the qualities attributed by Sahaja Yoga to the two channels: “the merciful, the patient, the holy Michael” (left channel) and that “who presides over all that is powerful, is Gabriel” (like Hanumana behaved towards Rama, pointing to the right channel) [30]. When deeply confused, James and John, the sons of Zebedee asked Jesus: “«Give to us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory»... Jesus said to them: «... To sit on my right hand or on my left is not mine to give, but for those whom it is prepared»” (Mark 10:35-40; in Matthew 20:20-23, the request was made by the mother of the two apostles). Isaiah referred to the left and right channel when quoting God: “My [left] hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spread abroad the heavens” (48:13), the earth being of feminine and the heaven of masculine gender (ch. XX A). The *Zohar* said that in every body there is a right and a left aspect (principle) [31], and then showed: “Observe that the function of the priests and Levites is to unite the Left with the Right. Said Rabbi Hizikiyah: «That is so, but I have been told that one rouses the Left and the other the Right, because the union of male and female is only brought about by Left and Right»” [32]. It is very plausible that Hizikiyah referred to those individuals authorized to arise (awaken the energy of) the channels Ida and Pingala, in order to achieve the union (*Yoga*, Sanskr.) between the masculine (Atman) and the feminine (Kundalini) principle.

The *Qur'an* described the moment “when the two angels meet together, sitting one on the right, and one on the left” (50.16), on “the Day of Resurrection” (75.6), while “the sun and moon are brought together” (75.9). It is the moment of transcending the solar and the lunar channels, the day of Resurrection (*Qiyamah*, Arab.), of Self Realization (ch. XIX C). The side channels correspond to the names *Nadirah* (shining, radiant, Arab.) and *Basirah* (dark, gloomy, sad, Arab.) [33]. The former is the solar channel having exactly this tendency (*Rajo guna*, Sanskr.), while the latter is the lunar channel with the different tendency (*Tamo guna*, Sanskr.) (ch. II). The contrasting feature of the two side channels also corresponds to the east—west opposition. “To God belong the East and the West; He guides whomsoever He will to a straight path” (2.136; cf. 2.109), where the straight path is the central channel. The fact that the meaning implies besides the geographic east and west another “East” and another “West,” is revealed by the periphrases “Lord of the Two Easts, Lord of the Two Wests” (55.16-17).

¹⁶⁷ I.e. of the chakras (see the symbolism below).

Also the *Bible* says: “That day living waters¹⁶⁸ shall go out from Jerusalem¹⁶⁹; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the hinder¹⁷⁰ sea” (Zechariah 14:8). Enoch wrote, too, about the Lord of spirits: “He seated me between two spirits, between the north and the west” [34], the spirits being Michael and Gabriel who control the side channels. According to the tradition, Gabriel has one wing of light, and one wing of darkness [35], symbolizing the right and the left channels, respectively.

According to Paul Humbert and Mircea Eliade, the tree of life would have been concealed, hence inaccessible, and discovered by Adam only when he had tasted from the wisdom of the tree of knowledge [36]. However, this becomes possible only through Enlightenment (Self Realization, attainment of the Yoga state).

Two questions arise from the passages above: What does the tree of life and (that) of knowledge represent? What does the serpent symbolize? Finding an answer to the former question will be a topic considered within this chapter. As for the latter one the matter will be dealt with in chapter IX.

The serpent’s explanation was the first to retain our attention: the access to the fruits of the tree of life would allow the archetypal humans to be like God. Chapter II has shown that this analogy refers to the structure of the subtle body whose manifestation in human beings becomes complete only when the Kundalini energy is awakened. The second consequence is the achievement of immortality (liberation from the chain of reincarnations). As a symbol of everlasting life, the evergreen tree was once honored as the Tree of Life or the World Tree. It is worth retaining the promise in the *Zohar* (valid, maybe, for our time; ch. XIX D): “In days to come *the days of my people shall be as the days of the tree*¹⁷¹ like that tree of which we know. Of that time it is written, *He hath swallowed up death for ever*¹⁷²” [37]. “The ones who unites with the Tree of Life and becomes connected to its branches, will eat its fruit. All blessings and sacraments emanate from him; he acquires life for his soul and healing for his limbs” [38] (see below, and ch. XXII C, for the last consequence).

¹⁶⁸ Name given to the Kundalini (ch. XI D).

¹⁶⁹ Jerusalem (New Jerusalem, more exactly; Revelation 3:12; 21:2,10) is the symbol of the Sahasrara.

¹⁷⁰ Or western.

¹⁷¹ Isaiah 65:22.

¹⁷² Isaiah 25:8.

The Spirit says in Revelation: “To him that overcomes, I will give to him to eat of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God” (2:7). The Paradise is the Sahasrara. We understand from the previous paragraphs that this is a matter of inner conquest, of Self Realization. It is a work implying man’s direct action, the fight against his own shortcomings. As we shall see (ch. XI E), the disciples of Christ witnessed such an event on the Pentecost day. The *Zohar* associated the Pentecost with the fruit of the tree and further explaining it with the words: “Rabbi Judah said: «We learn in the Mishnah that judgment is pronounced on word at four seasons:... On Pentecost judgment is passed in respect of the fruit of the tree: this is the great and mighty tree which rears itself aloft»” [39]. It is not written “the fruit of the trees” but of the Tree, because this is the *great and mighty Tree* in heaven. The words of tradition allude to this Tree on which the Scripture says: “I am like a green fir-tree. From me is thy fruit found” (Hosea 14:8).

The state of union with the Absolute is the triumph inside metaphorically described by the legendary conquests (the Grail [40], the Golden Fleece etc.), liberation from the Egyptian bondage (bondage of the vile actions causing the blockage of energy circuits), crossing of the Red Sea (signifying the Void or Ocean of Illusions, where the fetus is immersed in the red amniotic¹⁷³ liquid) or of the desert (notice the close meanings: *void* and *desert*)—which is another sea but made from sand (formerly the bottom of a sea). This *second birth* (as the Self Realization is called; see *infra*) was prophesied to be repeated on the Day of Resurrection (union with the Divine, Yoga): “And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people... ; like it was to Israel in the day when he went up out of the land of Egypt” (Isaiah 12:16; cf. 51:10; 63:12-13). The road was obviously meant for the chosen ones (*His people*), few in number (*the remnant*). For example, all through the time of Rama, a *single man*, Nachiketas, had got¹⁷⁴ the Self Realization, according to the *Taittiriya Brahmana* and the *Katha Upanishad*. The situation was not different two thousand years later, through the times of Krishna who showed: “Among thousands of men scarcely one strives for perfection and of those who strive and succeed, scarcely one knows Me in truth” [41], that points out one single Self Realization in several millions of people. That scarcity was acknowledged also in the Gnostic *Gospel of Thomas* where Jesus said: “I shall choose you, one out of a thousand, and two

¹⁷³ Notice the relation between the original syllable *AUM-amen* (Hebr.; written *amn*) and *ámnios* (the membrane wrapping the mammal fetus until birth time, Gr.).

¹⁷⁴ From King Janaka.

out of ten thousand” [42]. Desert is also an Ocean of Illusions for those deluded by the *fata morgana*. The novels on King Arthur wrote about *Morgan le Fay*, Arthur’s sister and the mistress of the enchanted isle Avalon.

It is beyond questioning that the above-mentioned chapter in Revelation refers to the subtle body since, from the beginning (2:1) it reads about the seven chakras of the Supreme Being: “He that holds seven stars in his right I I - 1 hand¹⁷⁵, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lamps” (cf. 1:12,13,16,20). The chakras of the subtle body were represented in the Indian iconography as stars or lotuses whose number of rays or petals, respectively, coincides with the number of branches of the corresponding nervous plexuses (ch. II). Jung had otherwise noticed: “Plant symbols are generally flowers (lotus and rose). These lead on to geometrical figures like IV - 2 6 the circle, the sphere, the square, the quaternity” [43]. In India, the lotus on which Brahma the Creator was seated came out from Vishnu’s navel. In the IV - 2 ancient Egypt the lotus was considered as the original cosmic flower [44]; it I I - 1 7 is frequently rendered in funeral chambers being associated to the rebirth and IV - 1 sometimes it adorns the head. It seems likely that not by coincidence (see: Hesychasm; ch. XXV A) the saints in the monastery frescoes in the northern IV - 3 Romania (for instance Voronets and Moldovitsa [45]) are seated on lotuses, thus reminding the most classical Hindu or Buddhist tradition. The rose metaphor could also be met in Dante’s description of the Empiraeus in the Paradise: “so large a light within itself, what then the amplitude of the rose’s utmost petals... in form, then, of a white rose displayed itself to me that sacred soldiery” [46]. This rose is, of course, the Sahasrara, indicated by the *Empiraeus*, the *sacred soldiery*, the *white* color (ch. XV E), the *large light* (ch. XI E), the *utmost petals* (apex of the body as well as of evolution).

Revelation says later: “In the midst of its¹⁷⁶ street, and of the river, on this side and on that side, [the] tree of life, producing twelve fruits, in each month yielding its fruits; and the leaves of the tree for healing of the nations” (22:2). The first part of the statement is geometrically impossible since a single tree cannot find itself both in the middle and on both sides at the same time. We have to understand this as a metaphor. It actually refers to the three channels comprised within the Tree of Life: Sushumna (*in the midst*) and the *side* channels (Ida and Pingala) through which the Kundalini flows like a *river*.

¹⁷⁵ According to Sahaja Yoga, this is the hand of action.

¹⁷⁶ It refers to the city. In chapter II it was pointed out that in the Scriptures, the human body is metaphorically denoted in terms of construction like the temple of Solomon (John 2:21), the citadel of Iram (The *Qur’an* 89.6) or just “the city” (90.1-2), “the city of nine gates” (The *Bhagavad-Gita* 5.13) etc.

However, the Kundalini was worshipped as *water of life* by the Templars and the Gnostics (see ch. XI D, XX C4). As we are told at the end, the tree of life also serves to cure the nations. Yogis agree that by using the Kundalini energy which is activating the whole system symbolized by the tree of life, one could bring about both the physical healing (ch. XXII C) and the spiritual one (supreme liberation, *moksha*, Sanskr.).

People at home with the science of numbers admit of the numbers 7 and 12 expressing the same reality, since both are made up of 3 and 4 ($7=3+4$; $12=3\times 4$). Three is feminine while four is masculine, suggesting the masculine and feminine side channels, and their combination symbolizes *unio mystica* (Yoga). Through the transformation of 12 into 7, we can infer that the fruits of the tree represent the chakras. The mystic implications of number four were largely dealt with in chapter I. Number three is also a holy number: the Christian Trinity represented in different ways (three magi, three angels I I - 4 etc.), the Qur'anic Trinity (ch. XX D), the Hindu Trinity (*Trimurti*, Sanskr.), the Buddhist Trinity (*Triratna*, Sanskr.), three worlds (celestial, earthly, subterranean), three *gunas* (tendencies, Sanskr.), the trigram of *I Ching* (Chin.) etc. In the Kabbalah, the Holy Trinity is abbreviated as *Abracadabra*, from *Ab(ba)*, the Father, *Ben*, the Son and *Ruah ha-Qadesh*, the Holy Spirit (Hebr.). In the ancient traditions, number three appeared in the layout of cities in Etruria and even in Rome: three gates, three streets, three districts, three temples or temples divided into three. Other instances were given in chapter II. This number everywhere reflects the existence of the three energy channels. Number twelve has a similarly large extent since it characterizes the mass of the carbon atom (element of life), the signs of the zodiac, the sky mansions, the months of the year, the labors of Hercules, the companions of Odysseus, the shepherds of Romulus, the tribes of Israel, the disciples of Jesus, the gates of Heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 21:12), the Imams of the Twelver Shi'ites (ch. XIX C), the Danish Berserks of Hrolf, the Knights of King Arthur, the judges of Balder, Roland's Peers of France etc. Not only 12 but also 21 as its reverse is also a sacred number, since in Hinduism it stands for the aspects of the 7 chakras projected on the 3 channels ($7\times 3=21$).

Similarly to Sanskrit where the letters are associated to the chakra petals (subplexuses on the anatomic level; ch. I), the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet are associated to the chakra qualities. "The Book *Yetzirah* describes in broad outlines, but with certain astronomic-astrological and anatomical¹⁷⁷ details, how the cosmos was built—chiefly from twenty-two letters... Man

¹⁷⁷ The connections between chakras, internal organs, celestial bodies and deities, envisaged by Yoga (see below).

is a microcosm attuned to the great world¹⁷⁸. Each letter «governs» a part of man or a realm of the great world.” “Every letter represents a concentration of divine energy¹⁷⁹.” The 22 letters¹⁸⁰ of the Hebrew alphabet used for writing the *Torah*¹⁸¹ are “different configurations of the divine power” [47], which is perfectly true: there is one symbol of the Divine and 21 energy aspects (configurations) of the subtle body (ch. II). We would remark that 22 divided by 7 is a good estimate for number π (3.14) regarded as sacred by the ancient Greeks. When talking about the sect of Therapeutae from Egypt, Philo showed that the entire *Torah* (*nomothesia*, legislation; from *nómos*, law, Gr.; e.g. with Aristeas) appeared to them as a living being [48], a concept also familiar with the great Jewish philosopher. The *Zohar* relates the 22 letters and the 10 sephiroth: “These twenty-two letters which are inscribed in the *Torah* are illustrated in the Ten Creative Utterances¹⁸². Each of those ten, which are the crowns of the King, is traced in certain letters... Blessed are the righteous in this world and next, because God desires to honor them and reveals to them profound secrets of the Holy Name which He does not reveal to the celestial holy ones“ [49]. The *Zohar* also refers to “the righteous which have studied the thirty-two «paths of Wisdom», i.e. the thirty-two hermeneutic rules... This number of thirty-two also corresponds to the twenty-two letters of the alphabet and to the ten Sephiroth [50]. Likewise, “all these letters are enclosed in that spirit, and for a time the design of those letters enter into the face; and as they enter, the face appears with the design of these letters upon it... when the spirits and the souls emerge therefrom they are all stamped with the imprint of those letters; that which, when the spirit of a man be thus stamped by it, makes also a certain impression on the face” [51], which explains the preservation of individuality during the transmigration of the soul (ch. XXIV).

According to the *Zohar*, “the Sword of the Saint, blessed be him, is made up of the Tetragram; *Yod* is the handle, *Vau*—the blade, the two *He* are the two edges” [52]. In his spiritual elevation (Self Realization) the prophet Elijah ascended on Mount *Horeb* (1 Kings 19:8), which is spelled like *herev*,

¹⁷⁸ See ch. II.

¹⁷⁹ Yogis attribute one deity to each aspect of a chakra.

¹⁸⁰ It is not by chance that Revelation has 22 chapters.

¹⁸¹ The graphic signs for vowels were lacking in the original text (ch. XX B).

¹⁸² I.e. the ten sephiroth.

sword (Hebr.). Revelation described the One “like [the] Son of man” (1:13): “out of his mouth a sharp two-edged sword going forth” (1:16; cf. 2:12,16; 19:15,21; Isaiah 49:2). Annick de Souzenelle proposed the transformation of the Tetragram by moving above the letter yod, the symbol of God’s transcendence (notice the analogy *yod—God—Gott*, Germ.). There results a symmetrical triangle (like the subtle body) where the blade (Sushumna) is bordered by the two edges (Ida and Pingala). This transformation of the masculine 4 into the feminine 3 points at the side channels that are more accessible in the esoteric practice than the central channel. The Kabbalistic symbolism is here analogous to that of St. George (ch. II) or of the Grail [40].

Under the hypothesis of a single tree, the previous quotation from Revelation (2:7) showed an inconsistency with the one in Genesis where God warned the primordial people not to eat the fruits of this tree because otherwise they would die (2:17), which was later rejected by the serpent: “And the serpent said to the woman: «Ye will not certainly die»” (3:4). In this fact we could discern the concern of concealing the secret of the Kundalini, a topic to be more extensively resumed in chapters XI B, XX C4 and XXII E.

We could find in the *Qur’an*, a text like the one in Revelation (2:22) talking about “a Blessed Tree, an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West” (24.35).

“The kingdom of the heavens is like a grain of mustard [seed] which a man took and sowed in his field, which is less indeed than all seeds, but when it is grown... becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and roost in its branches” (Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19). The *grain* is the Kundalini within the sacred bone, the *land* is the Mooladhara sacrum (element Earth, *Mother Earth*), the *tree* is the subtle body, the *roosts* are the chakras, the *branches* are the channels, the *birds of heaven* are the divine aspects abiding (and ruling over) the chakras. Tradition unanimously considered birds as spiritual entities (ch. XXI), here roosting in the branches, at the higher spheres of existence, where our material world is taken as a reference level. The *Zohar* provides the example of the “sacred and exalted abodes where the celestial birds build their nests” [53]. Jesus “spoke another parable to them: «The kingdom of the heavens is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until it had been all leavened»” (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20). The *Woman* is the Adi Shakti, the Divine Mother, the *meal* is the Kundalini, the *three measures*—the three channels, and the *leavening* is the rising of the Kundalini. In our opinion, Philo of Alexandria had also in mind the channels of subtle energy when

writing about “three measures¹⁸³ to be kneaded and blended in the soul... When the soul becomes an initiate of the rites of the perfect, she will undertake to divulge the mysteries to no one. But she will store them and keep them secret in silence” [54]. It is worthy noticing the feminine gender used by Philo, which suggests the Kundalini. Symeon the New Theologian seemed to synthesize the above in his text: “The Holy Spirit becomes... the pearl, the grain of mustard seed, the leaven, the water, the fire, the bread, the life-giving draught... the marriage chamber...” [55]. As for the *pearl*, it is known to be the symbol of the Sahasrara [56] (also ch. XV A), the latter being also the *marriage* (bridal) *chamber* (ch. II, IV, XX C and D). Other sections explain the metaphors of life-giving breeze (ch. XI C), water (ch. XI D) and fire (ch. XI E).

The Essenes were familiar with the Kundalini and the subtle body as the holy plant, which they exalted in their hymns: “Thou wilt bring Thy glorious [salvation] to all the men of Thy Council... They shall send out a bud [for ever] like a flower [of the fields], and shall cause a shoot to grow into the boughs of an everlasting Plant. It shall cover the whole [earth]¹⁸⁴ with its shadow [and its crown] (shall reach) to the [clouds]; its roots (shall go down) to the Abyss [and all the rivers of Eden shall water its branches]... A source of light shall become an eternal ever-flowing fountain” [57]. “The fruitful Plant [by the] everlasting [spring shall be] an Eden of glory [bearing] fruits [of life]” [58].

In their *Dictionary of Symbols* Chevalier and Gheerbrant [59] show: “Merely the bibliography of trees, one of the richest and most widespread symbolic motifs, would of itself fill a volume.” Mircea Eliade identified seven main interpretations [60] and considered them not to be exhaustive but articulated around the central idea of a perpetually regenerating living Cosmos.

The tree brings together all the elements: the Water flowing with the sap, the Earth being integrated into its body through the roots, the Air nourishing its leaves, the Fire lit as a result of its friction. The sap symbolizes the Kundalini energy rising from chakra to chakra (ch. II), its upward circulation contradicting the universal gravitation principle (like fire, another symbol of the Kundalini, ch. XI E).

Since its roots go deep into the ground and its branches rise up into the air, the tree is the symbol of the relationship between the Earth and the Heaven; the tree became, therefore, a central element (Genesis 2:9; cf.

¹⁸³ Cf. Abraham’s words in Genesis 18:6.

¹⁸⁴ Ch. XIX D.

Revelation 22:2) so that the *tree of the world* became a symbol of the *world axis* (*axis mundi*, Lat.). Jung referred to the “relation to the cult of the Great Mother and her symbol, the tree” [61].

The tree goes upwards, like *The Middle Path* (*Tchong-Tao*, Chin.) or the *Royal Path* (*Wang-Tao*, Chin.). Only the one that has reached the center—thus becoming enlightened, which is the primordial or Edenic state (W. Blake’s commentary, ch. II)—can ascend the axis. Lao-tse was supposed to be at its root. The world axis was symbolized not only by the tree but also by the mountain, the rock (*swayambhu*, *Beith-el* with the Greek equivalent *baetylos*¹⁸⁵ etc.; ch. XV A) or the pillar; it was also the staff (see *infra*; also ch. IX), the shaft, the axle (considered in a vertical position, where the two wheels stand for the Heaven and the Earth). The *Vedas* mention the Tree of Life (*Kalpaka*, *Kalpataru*, Sanskr.), the Cosmic Pillar (*Skambha*, Sanskr.), IV-5 the mast rising upwards to the sky, the divine effigies of Shiva: the *Linga* IV-4 (literal: emblem, Sanskr. [62]; ch. I) and the *Trishula* (trident, Sanskr.). The Mysteries of Osiris in Abydos (and of Attis in Rome) culminated with the IV-5 rising of the obelisk, the *Djed* (stable, durable, Egypt.) pillar or column signifying the ascension, the enlightenment and the resurrection. People cried: “Osiris is raised.” What other symbol could more beautifully depict the IV-5 World Axis than the one created by Constantin Brâncuși: the *Infinite Column* in Târgu-Jiu, Romania? Its shape suggests the overlapping of chakras as well as the elevation towards the Divine. Here, the infinite concerned not only the space but also the time since the column is made up of elements having sandglass shape in an endless succession. Marija Gimbutas wrote the followings: “The presence of these columns is of particular interest, since they must have symbolized trees of life. A life column can be a plant, a tree, or a tree turned into a column... Spirals, crescents, horns, hooks, and axes accompany symbols of the source of life as stimulators of life energy. All are «symbols of becoming».” Trees of life or life-columns, zigzags and wavy lines, spirals, horns, axes, serpents accompany also the Neolithic representations of the Goddess [63] (ch. VIII, IX, XX A).

The tree nourished by the earth and the water and rising up to the seventh heaven (Sahasrara) is a symbol used by the Isma’ilites to denote *haqiqat* (bliss, Arab.; *ananda*, Sanskr.) when the mystic is beyond the duality of illusion (*maya*, Sanskr.) and attains the Supreme Reality, the Original Unity where the being is one with God. The *Qur’an* wrote: “God... has procured

¹⁸⁵ A cone-shaped pillar, anointed with oil or blood, in which the divinity was supposed to dwell.

them radiance¹⁸⁶ and gladness¹⁸⁷, and recompensed them... with a Garden... when thou seest them thou seest bliss” (76.11-12,20). As for the righteous people, “those shall be recompensed with the highest heaven, for that they endured patiently, and they shall receive therein a greeting and peace. Therein they shall dwell forever” (25.75-76).

One of the Angkor inscriptions reads that the roots of the Tree of the World represent Brahma, its trunk—Shiva, and its branches—Vishnu. The *Kalika Purana* reads that Shiva was below, Vishnu in the middle and Brahma above. Another text shows: “I bow to the sacred fig tree, to Brahma in the root, to Vishnu in the trunk, and to Shiva in the foliage” [64]. Tantrism advocates that Vishnu was the root, Shiva—the trunk, and Brahma the crown of the tree [65]. Other metaphor considered that Shiva is the trunk in the center and Brahma and Vishnu its side branches, but this interpretation recorded by Chevalier and Gheerbrant [66], however, is in opposition with the Yoga concepts according to which the central channel of the spiritual evolution corresponds to Maha-Lakshmi (Vishnu’s power), the left channel—to Maha-Kali (Shiva’s power) and the right channel—to Maha-Saraswati (Brahma’s power).

Jesus proclaimed the Divine presence within the core (chakras and channels) of the Tree of Life: “Split a piece of wood, and I am there” [67]. The godly son Dumuzi who was worshipped in Mesopotamia was called “Lord of the Tree of Life.” There was also a Tree for Queen Maya to lean against as she gave birth to the Buddha and it was beneath the *pipal* or *bo* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) in Bodh-Gaya—considered a Tree of the World and a Tree of Life—that Gautama got his enlightenment (*bodha*, Sanskr.).

A Tree of Life is also the Japanese Himorogi brought to the central Land, while in the Iranian shadow drama this corresponds to the central mountain.

The Tree of Life is often represented upside down both in the West and in the East.

The Yogi’s subtle body is depicted as a tree having its leaves at the IV-16 bottom and its roots coming out from the head [68]. According to the *Vedas*, this inversion would originate in the idea that life comes from heaven and tries to reach the earth (penetration of the vital energy into the fetus, ch. II). Dante described it as an inverted tree [69]. The Hindu symbol of the inverted tree was met in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: “They speak of the imperishable ashvattham (pipal tree) as having its root above and branches below. Its leaves are the *Vedas* and he who knows this is the knower of the *Vedas*” [70].

¹⁸⁶ *Nadratan* (light of beauty, Arab.).

¹⁸⁷ Bliss.

IV-14 Also the *Upanishads* describe the inverted tree: “Its root is above, its branches below—this eternal fig-tree! That indeed is the Pure. That is Brahman” [71]. The *Rig-Veda*, on the other hand, reads: “Its branches go downward, its roots are upwards, let its rays descend upon us” [72].

Plato wrote: “We should consider that God gave the sovereign part of the human soul to be the divinity of each one, being that part which, as we say, dwells at the top of the body, and inasmuch as we are a plant not of an earthly but of a heavenly growth, raises us from earth to our kindred who are in heaven¹⁸⁸. And in this way we say truly, for the divine power suspended the head and root¹⁸⁹ of us from that place when the generation of the soul first began, and thus made the whole body upright¹⁹⁰” [73].

In Islam, the roots of the Tree of Happiness are supposed to penetrate into the highest heaven and its branches spread all over and under the earth.

The sephirotic tree of the Hebrew esoterica appeared—in a primitive form—even in the *Sepher Yetzirah*, of the early Kabbalah. It is structured similarly to the subtle body in Yoga. *Sephirah* (numeration; Hebr., singular) signifies the *divine attribute* and is the recipient; *Sepher* is the book enclosing the Tradition. The *sephiroth* (plural form) or the creative energies of God were revealed to Adam in the shape of the Tree of Life and of Knowledge [74]. The first sephirah is *Ruah Elohim Hayyim* (Breath of the Living Gods, Hebr.; ch. XI C).

The three channels are called “pillars.” The image depicting the tree offers a front view, i.e. the elements perceived on the left are actually on the right side of the object whereas those seen on the right are on the left side of the object. The central pillar (of the balance; the Sushumna nadi) has on its both sides the masculine pillar, *Abba* (Father, Hebr.), “God’s right arm” (Pingala nadi) and the feminine pillar, *Ima* (Mother, Hebr.), “God’s left arm” (Ida nadi) [75]. The two side pillars are representing the rigor (masculine) and the compassion (feminine), respectively.

IV-17 The classical model of the tree comprises ten sephiroth, which represent the sum of the seven chakras and three channels, and is perhaps connected to the Ten Commandments (*Decalogue*), which are also *emanations* of God, or to the Pythagorean *tetraktys*. Moreover, the ten sephiroth are placed along

¹⁸⁸ The reflection of the Universal Being structure within the human subtle body (ch. II).

¹⁸⁹ The extremities of the subtle body: the head (Sahasrara) and the root (Mooladhara).

¹⁹⁰ The spinal cord, the Sushumna, unifying the extreme chakras.

three verticals and constitute seven horizontal planes.

The Transcendent One is placed at the summit (like in the ladder in Jacob's dream, Genesis 28:13), above the subtle body. *En* is interpreted as Nothingness or Chaos¹⁹¹ by the Kabbalists but it should rather be considered as the state of unmanifestation. *En* is actually the Negation and it is, in our opinion, more correctly to be understood as an *apophasis*, similar to the Hindu interpretation of Brahman: *Neti, neti* (ch. I) which is, however, beyond definition. *En-Soph* (Endless; *soph*, end, Hebr.) and then *En-Soph Aor* (Endless Light; *aor*, light, Hebr.) are located immediately below. In this manner the stages are described in the first three verses of Genesis: the Unmanifestation preceding the creation, the Infinite Manifestation (1:1-2), and the Light (1:3). Since it is an inverted tree, it grown downward from IV-15 Kether to Malkuth, having En-Soph Aor for its source.

Similarly to the subtle body, each sephirah has divine attributes and is correlated to various elements and planets. Plato said that Fire, Air, Water and Earth are not substances but qualities [76].

The Book of Job (38:39-39:27) mentioned *ten* energies, which are manifested as *animals of holiness*. Ever since ancient times, sacred animals accompanied the divine Avatars, meaning that in those times man was closer to nature and in a better harmony with the entire creation than in the following periods. According to Hindu representation, the entities controlling the chakras have animals for their vehicle (*vahana*, Sanskr.). The wild beasts tamed by the song of Orpheus followed him. The Greek mythology named IV-12 them "cows of the Sun." The animals accompanying Jesus were also vehicles of divine entities (angels). In the wilderness, Jesus "was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered with him" (Mark 1:13). The same should be said about the animals in the stable where He was born (Luke 2:7,12,16). Sacred animals also appear nearby Jesus in His hypostasis of the Good Shepherd as IV-13 little child (Isaiah 11:6). We also mention the three animals specific to the authors of the Gospels that are not different from the vehicles of the main IV-8 Hindu deities: Luke's *bull* (*vrishabha*, Sanskr.) that parallels Nandi (Joyful, IV-9 Sanskr.)—Shiva's vehicle, John's *eagle* which corresponded to . . . 11 Garuda—Krishna's vehicle, and Mark's *lion*, the same as the Great Goddess Durga's vehicle, where all these deities are tantamount to the Christian Trinity: the Father (Shiva; ch. I), the Son (Krishna; ch. XIX B), and the Holy Spirit (Great Goddess; ch. XXI). The ox, the eagle, and the lion were also recorded in the vision of Ezekiel (1:10). In the fairytale realm, miraculous animals assist the hero in fulfilling his quest (see below).

As a representation of the subtle body, the Tree is multiplied in the

¹⁹¹ *Tohu wa-bohu* (Hebr.).

Enchanted Forest where the *Beauty* will be awakened (an example is Snow-White; see below)—thus evoking the awakening of the feminine Kundalini.

We can detect many correspondences between the sephiroth of the Kabbalistic tree and the chakras of the subtle body in Yoga (the correspondent in Yoga is given in brackets).

*Kether*¹⁹² (Sahasrara) is the “Crown” and the Divine Self (since it is here that the connection with Brahman is achieved, the Sahasrara having the opening of Brahman, the *Brahmarandhra* in its middle—ch. II).

Going down we find *Binah* and *Hokhmah* (Agya). When one reaches *Hokhmah* (Wisdom, Hebr.) one starts to create an ego (Hokhmah that represents the Agya is located on the left side of the head where there is the ego of the subtle body) [77]. That confirms what we have already shown, namely that the Agya is connected to the aspects implied in mental activities: *Hokhmah*-Wisdom and *Binah*-Intelligence.

*Geburah*¹⁹³ and *Hesed* correspond to the Ether (like the Vishuddhi).

Located on the central axis, *Tiphereth*¹⁹⁴ has Air for its element (like the Anahatha) and represents the centered Self, the silent Witness. The individual Self, Atman is the reflection of the Witness Sada-Shiva in man, located on the left side (ch. XIX C), hence the definition of Tiphereth as the centered Witness.

Hod and *Netzah* (Nabhi) correspond to the Fire, and *Yesod* (the Swadhisthana) to the Water (for this two chakras, the elements are placed in a reverse order in the subtle body, a confusion which could be explained by these chakras rotating one around the other). *Hod* (Majesty, Glory, Splendor, Hebr.) has the same quality as the right Nabhi, which is manifesting the worshipped Guru of the disciple.

Malkuth has the Earth for its basic element (like the Mooladhara), and was identified by the *Zohar* with the Shekhinah (Wisdom, Sophia), the female aspect of Divinity. Also, this last sephirah was called *Negevah de Zeir* (Zeir’s Woman, Hebr.), the Great Recipient, the Lower Mother (Mother Earth, therefore), or the Maid of Israel [77]. Or, according to the Hindu mythology, the virgin Gauri rules the Mooladhara sacrum. Etymologically speaking, *Bath* (Daughter/Maid of Israel, Hebr.) symbolizes all the created energies, since it embraces between the first (*beth*) and the last (*tav*) letter, all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet except *aleph* that designates God the

¹⁹² Or *Kether Elyon* (Supreme Crown, Hebr.).

¹⁹³ Or *Din* (Power, Hebr.).

¹⁹⁴ Or *Rahamim* (Compassion, Hebr.).

Father (*El, Elohim*) being the initial letter of the respective word (see above, the number 21/22). The tenth sephirah, however, represents “the feminine, seen at once as mother, as wife, and as daughter” [78]. Malkuth is also the Queen who ascends to join the King at a higher level: “The human soul is the result of the union between the King and the Queen, and thanks to one of her most remarkable attributes, the Queen can ascend to the level of the King” [79]. The Queen is the Kundalini, and the King is Atman. About the “Soul of the souls,” that is the *Adi Shakti*, the *Zohar* [80] says: “You are one, without a second. Be it be pleased to you to unite the Shekhinah with the Holy One, blessed be him, upon all levels of the world of emanation¹⁹⁵” (i.e. of the sephirothic tree). The Shekhinah was called “the Pearl”, thus indicating her final destination: the *Sahasrara*, whose symbol was the pearl (ch. XV A).

The Feminine Principle (called also: “Power,” i.e. *Shakti*; *Shekhinah*; *Hokhmah*, i.e. *Wisdom*; “God’s womb”; “God’s water”) intervenes in the arrangement of the sephiroth. As it was shown in the Kabbalistic book *Bahir*, God said: “It is I who have planted this «tree», that all the world may delight in it, and with it I have spanned the All and called it «All»; for on it depends the All, and from it emanates the All, all things need it, and look upon it, and yearn for it, and from it all go forth... And what is [that] «tree», of which you have spoken? He said to him: All powers of God are [disposed] in layers¹⁹⁶ and they are like a tree: just as the tree produces its fruits through water¹⁹⁷, so God through water increases the powers of the «tree». And what is God’s water? It is *Hokhmah* and that is the soul of the righteous, which flow from the wellspring to the great channel¹⁹⁸, and it rises up and hangs on the tree... If they are good and righteous, then the *Shekhinah* dwells among them, and through their works they abide in God’s womb” [81].

There are also variants of the tree with 11 sephiroth [82]. The introduction (by the *Habad School* founded by *Schneur Salman* of the *Hasidim* trend; ch. XXV C) of a new sephirah, *Da’ath*, between the *Geburah*—*Hesed* line and the *Binah*—*Hokhmah* line, implies the following changes above the *Nabhi chakra*. *Tiphereth*, which is in connection with the *Sun*, becomes the *Void* having the *Nabhi chakra* in its center, on the anatomic level of the *solar plexus*. *Geburah* is the right *Anahatha* and has the same

¹⁹⁵ *Atziluth* (Hebr.).

¹⁹⁶ Overlapping of chakras.

¹⁹⁷ Ch. XI D.

¹⁹⁸ The *Sushumna*.

qualities of righteousness (justness), justice (judgment), rigor (severity), whereas Hesed is the left Anahatha being similarly characterized by compassion (mercy), love. Da'ath appears above it, with its attribute of knowledge also provided by the Vishuddhi chakra that co-ordinates the individual's external communication and is located at the root of the neck (ch. I). It is well known that God, angry with the Jews who worshipped the Golden Calf (Exodus 32:4-8), stopped communicating His grace towards them who suddenly became "stiff-necked people" (32:9; 33:3), the result of a caught Vishuddhi. "Thy neck is an iron sinew... so I have long ago declared [them] to thee" (Isaiah 48:4-5), thus alluding to the two verses in Exodus.

Scholem wrote about the Tree of Life, *Etz Hayyim* (Hebr.): "It is by the way of this tree that God's energies flow into the process of Creation" [83]. The same author revealed a holistic concept (ch. II): "To the Kabbalist the unity of God is manifested from the first as a living, dynamic unity, rich in content. What to the Jewish theologians were mere attributes of God are to the Kabbalist potencies, hypostases, and stages in an intradivine life-process, and it is not for nothing that the images with which he describes God are first and foremost images pertaining to the organism. The tree that was originally planted by God becomes an image of God" [83].

The Hebrew candlestick is the equivalent of the Babylonian Tree of Light. IV-23 The *Bible* refers to the golden candlestick with seven arms (*menorah*, Hebr.) (Exodus 25:31,32; 37:17, 18) having on each branch "three cups shaped like almonds" (25:33; 37:19) "and in the lamp-stand were four cups shaped like almonds" (25:34; 37:20). It is amazing how truthfully is rendered the structure of the subtle body with its seven chakras, each having three aspects (left, center, right) and the first chakra Mooladhara, as a four-petal flower (ch. I) at the root of the whole system. The seven kindled lamps (25:37; 37:23) show that all the chakras are enlightened. The precise directives given for manufacturing it: "see that those make [them] according to their pattern, which hath been shown to thee in the mountain" (25:40) ascertains our hypothesis that it was there where Moses received the revelation of the divine subtle body structure analogous to the human one (ch. II).

The candlestick with seven arms in Zerubbabel's temple is described by Zechariah, and it is depicting the subtle body. "A lamp-stand, all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and the seven lamps thereon, seven [lamps] and seven pipes to the lamps, which are upon the top thereof; and two olive-trees beside it, one of the right of the bowl, and the other on the left of it" (4:2-3). The lamps are the chakras, the bowl on the top is the Sahasrara, and the olive-trees—the side channels. To Zechariah there were given the

following explanations: “«Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit», saith Yahweh of hosts” (4:6). “These seven... these are the eyes of Yahweh, which run to and fro in the whole earth” (4:10; cf. 3:9). Hindus call the Agya chakra “the third eye of Shiva.” When asking what the two olive-trees on the right and to the left side of the bowl are (4:3) Zechariah was given this reply: “These are the two sons of oil that stand before the Lord of the whole earth” (4:14). We see here the reference to the Kundalini (the *Spirit* of God) and to Michael and Gabriel (the *two sons of oil*, i.e. the anointed) who are controlling the side channels (the *olive-trees*).

Cardinal Jean Daniélou otherwise made a connection between *menorah* and the seven higher archangels [84] but they stand for the entities controlling the chakras (ch. XIX B). Number seven correlated with the golden candlestick also appears in Revelation (1:20), where it is said to stand for the seven assemblies, each being located topographically and represented by seven corresponding angels. The assemblies are the dwellings of the divine Spirit (Kundalini) that means the chakras, while the angels are the Christian correspondents of the Hindu deities (sometimes couples of the masculine principle and his feminine power, the *Shakti*) that govern the respective chakras. On the central channel, from the bottom to the top these are: Ganesha, Brahmadeva—*Saraswati*, Vishnu—*Lakshmi*, *Durga* (or *Jagadamba*), Krishna—*Radha*, Maha-Vishnu¹⁹⁹—*Maha-Lakshmi*²⁰⁰, Kalki—*Adi Shakti* (for details see ch. XIX B and XX A).

It is a remarkable fact that not only the tree is a assembly of all the chakras but also the Earth out of which it comes out, which supports and nourishes it with its vital substances.

According to tradition, in the same way as the chakras are topographically placed in the human body they have their correspondences also on planetary scale. To give a few examples: the Mooladhara corresponds to Australia, the Swadhithana belongs to Africa, and the Vishuddhi is reflected in the Americas, while the Sahasrara is located in Tibet (the Himalayas) [85]. In this context, the divine urge: *subdue the earth* (Genesis 1:28) may signify the inside conquest of the human chakras which parallel the ones of the sacred geography.

Among the ancient people, the Hindus venerated the *sthana devata* (deities of the place, Sanskr.). They still do this currently.

Plato who considered the Earth a living being (*zōon*, Gr.) beautifully describes the concept of the sacred geography. “In the days of old, the gods

¹⁹⁹ Corresponding to Jesus in Christian religion (ch. XIX B).

²⁰⁰ Corresponding to Virgin Mary in Christian religion (ch. XX C1).

had the whole earth distributed among them by allotment. There was no quarrelling; for you cannot rightly suppose that the gods did not know what was proper for each of them to have” [86], “I have before remarked in speaking of the allotments of the gods, that they distributed the whole earth into portions differing in extent, and made for themselves temples and instituted sacrifices” [87].

Like the Hindus, the Romans used to worship the *genius loci* (local spirits, Lat.), and Plutarch upholds that they have learned from the Etruscans the *mysterium* of choosing the most auspicious place for a city. We advocate the view that Rome, the Eternal City standing for *imago mundi* in the eyes of those who inhabited the widest empire of antiquity, synthetically suggested—through its *seven hills*—the geographical correspondence with the *seven chakras* of the planet. A similar meaning could have the location of the *seven assemblies* in Asia (Revelation 1:4,11).

The Gospel of Thomas referred to the sacred geography: “The kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it” [88].

The *Zohar* shows that just as the seven heavens placed one above the other, there are also seven earths. The highest earth is called *Thebel* [89], as it stands written “It is he that will judge the world (Thebel) with righteousness²⁰¹.” It is really bewildering! Here it stays written with a perfect accuracy the location of the Sahasrara in Tibet, the place of the Last Judgment, that is of Resurrection. The other names also have their correspondences: *Adamah* indicates the color red (*adom*, Hebr.) as well as IV-7 Adam as the symbol of the Mooladhara (red mountain Uluru in Australia; ch. XV A); *Arqa* (ark, the ship suggesting the Void; ch. VI); *Eretz* (country of Israel, the location of the Agya chakra); *Neshiah* (oblivion, Hebr.) sending to the place where Ulysses became amnesiac: the country of the lotus-eaters IV-6 in Africa (the Swadhithana); *Ghe* or *Ge*, *Geia*, *Gaia*, personifying the Earth with the Greeks where the Nabhi is found. The *Zohar* further explains: “What is the «heritage of the Lord²⁰²»? It is the land of living” [90].

The well-known contemporary German ethnographer Leo Frobenius wrote *Paideuma*, which in his vision becomes “the local soul”, the spiritual essence of the geographical space (*Raumseele*, Germ.).

Gaia, the Greek goddess of the Earth, personalized our planet, which appeared as a being that is alive and on whom all other life depends. James Lovelock in his *Gaia* [91] considered the planet Earth as a self-regulating system where there is a “Gaia Consciousness” which urges that the Earth and

²⁰¹ Psalms 9:8.

²⁰² 1 Samuel 26:19; 2 Samuel 14:16; 20:19.

her creatures should be regarded as one whole [92]. On the same topic, Bede Griffiths wrote: “Today we are beginning to discover that the earth is a living being, a Mother who nourishes us and of whose body we are members” [93].

The cross, as a derivative of the tree, also symbolizes the subtle body. The cross which was an instrument of death becomes a symbol of eternal life through the supreme sacrifice consented to by the Son of God—“No one takes it (the life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again” (John 10:18), i.e. to rise from the dead. A Gnostic text said that when Jesus was “nailed to a tree he became a fruit of the knowledge²⁰³ of the Father” [94]. Mary, the New Eve, standing near the cross of Calvary, the Tree of Life whose fruit is the eternal life, IV-18 accompanies Jesus, the New Adam. The *Evesham Psalter* (c.1250) shows a-d Christ hanging on a cross that is depicted as a tree with branches, that means the ever-living Tree of Life. *Christ on the Tree of Life* could be seen in the mosaic apse of the church San Clemente in Rome (c.1100) too [95]. The arms are the side channels and the Crucified One is on the central channel of salvation, of liberation (*moksha*, Sanskr.). Sometimes, the lateral branches of the cross are marked by the Sun (at the right side) and the Moon (at the left side) justifying their significance of side channels of the subtle body [96]. The One on the cross is “no male and (no) female” (Galatians 3:28) since being on the central path.

When extended into the three-dimensional space by crossing the three perpendicular axes defining this space, the cross includes seven elements similar to the subtle body: six arms and the center at their intersection. The center is, naturally, the heart and, in fact, the heart chakra (the Anahata where there is the dwelling of Atman—the Self, a projection of God the Father—Sada-Shiva on human level) has both above and below it an equal number of chakras, three on each side, the same number as the channels.

The Kabbalists sometimes present the Tetragram in the shape of a cross: the vertical being the *Yod-Vau* axis and the horizontal—the two *He* [97], which is fairly similar to the sword-like configuration described above. The shape of the *Christian sword* with its transverse hilt is also a *cross*. As a IV-19 symbol of the subtle body, record can be made here of the famous sword *Excalibur* belonging to King Arthur’s knights, whose blade (Sushumna nadi) radiated light (ch. XI E).

The sacrifice on the cross was interpreted as a mystic union: “Christ, a new bridegroom... comes in the bridal bed of the cross ascending to it, thus fulfilling the wedding” (the full text is: *Christus quasi sponsus de thalamo suo, praesagio nuptiarum exiit at campum saeculi, cucurrit sicut gigas*

²⁰³ *Gnósis* (Gr.).

exultando per viam usque venit ad crucis torum et ibi ascendendo coniugium, Lat.) [98]. The Gnostics gave the significance of Self Realization to the mystic wedding (ch. XX C4). The bridal-chamber (*thálamos*, Gr.) is the Sahasrara that is really placed on the level of a thalamic structure (ch. II). The *Qur'an* also depicts the Sahasrara (Kingdom of heavens) as the bridal-chamber where "bridal couches" are provided for the righteous in Paradise (76.13) [99].

IV-21 A tree is also a ladder: they both enable for the ascent. As a symbol of the subtle body, a ladder appeared in the *Bible* where Jacob "dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to the heavens. And behold, angels of God ascended and descended upon it. And behold, Yahweh stood above it" (Genesis 28:12-13). A clear symbol of the Tree is the *Klimax Heptapulos*, the seven-fold ladder that underlies the Mysteries of Mithra and was referred to by the Gnostics and alchemists, related to the seven planets. This is also the ascent of the Kundalini, called the Shekhinah in the *Zohar*: "All the angels opened their wings to receive the Shekhinah" [100]. The earth is the symbol of the Mooladhara translated by the "support of the root." The angels, as previously shown, are the entities controlling the parts of the subtle body (ladder). The image of the ladder appears also in connection with Sophia (Divine Mother whose manifestation

IV-28 is the Kundalini; ch. XX C4) of the Gnostics as well as with Alchemy [101].

IX-13 In the vision of the great artist William Blake, Jacob's ascent implies a spiral staircase reminding of the Kundalini (ch. IX) [102]. Shri Mataji compares the subtle channels to three ladders: the side ones stand on the ground (that is they are accessible through Hatha Yoga, acupuncture etc.) but never getting to heaven, whereas only the middle one is reaching heaven (the Sahasrara, enabling the union with the Divine) but it has no contact with the ground (meaning that it is inaccessible to the unauthorized persons).

Lossky shows that the "cataphatic" or affirmative theology is "a ladder of «theophanies»²⁰⁴ or manifestations of God in creation", and stressed it out that it is "one and the same way which can be followed in two different directions: God condescends towards us in the «energies»²⁰⁵ in which He is manifested; we mount towards Him in the «unions»²⁰⁶," [103].

The Prophet's ascent to heavens [104] is called *Mi'raj* (ladder, Arab.) in Islam, whereas Allah is also called in the *Qur'an* "God, the Lord of the

²⁰⁴ Ch. XV A.

²⁰⁵ Ch. II.

²⁰⁶ Yoga, Self Realization.

Stairways (or: Lord of the Ways of Ascent). To Him the angels and the Spirit mount up” (70.3-4). Actually, the entire surah 70 is called *Al-Ma’arij* (stairways; ways of ascent, Arab.). The angels are Michael and Gabriel (2.92) using the side channels, while the way of ascent of the Spirit (the Kundalini) is the central channel. The three channels of the subtle body are beautifully described through rhetorical questions: “You (all) will be in three kinds. So those on the Right Hand—Who will be those on the Right Hand? And those on the Left Hand—Who will be those on the Left Hand? And those foremost will be foremost. These will be those nearest to Allah in the Gardens of delight” [105]. In other words, only those who follow the central way of the Sushumna (those who have access to the Kundalini) will reach the Kingdom of heavens (the Sahasrara) and God.

In Mithraism there was a symbolic ladder whose steps were made of the seven planetary metals [106], in the same way in which there is a planet I I - 6 corresponding to each and every chakra: Mars (Mooladhara), Mercury (Swadhisthana), Jupiter (Nabhi), Venus (Anahatha), Saturn (Vishuddhi), Sun (Agya) and Moon (Sahasrara). The planets are thought to be Vishnu’s manifestations. The Iranian mythology also hinted at a tree with seven branches made of various metals [107]. According to the Gnostic concepts, the seven planets are also related to seven musical notes, the seven vowels of the Greek language (see also ch. XXII D) [108]. Moreover, the chakras are associated to the seven colors of the spectrum (ch. XV E.).

According to the talmudic tradition, “the Shekhinah comes to the good and true... giving them the opportunity to go straight up the center of the heavenly ladder in a moment of pure consciousness, into the merger with the Divine... The rabbis say: «When man and wife are worthy, the Shekhinah abides in their midst»” [109]. The text reveals the symbolism of the Shekhinah (Kundalini as the vehicle of Self Realization), as well as of the Sushumna channel in the center (way of ascent to the union with the Divine), having the masculine and feminine channels on each side.

The staff of the Hindu pilgrim (*brahma-danda*; *danda*, stick, staff, IV - 20 Sanskr.) has seven knots, which represent the chakras, and it is mentioned in a connection with Vamana (an incarnation of Vishnu; ch. XIX B). Likewise is regarded the Taoist staff of bamboo with seven knots which represent the number of heavens or the degrees of initiation. The pilgrim staff as a true symbol of the Tree of Life is also considered to be *axis mundi*. The staff—tree relationship is illustrated in the *Electra* where Agamemnon appeared in Clytemnestra’s dream, took hold of the scepter stolen by his killer, Aegisthus, and stuck it into the ground. In that moment, Clytemnestra IV - 20 saw a blossomed tree rising up from the scepter and shading with its b

luxuriant foliage the entire country of Mycenae [110]. The *Bible* should also be remembered here for a similar story: “the staff of Aaron... had budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and ripened almonds” (Numbers 17:8).

The vegetal theme of the subtle body has been expressed in the sacred and the secular literature as well as in the arts in a variety of ways, some of which will be examined below.

The *Upanishads* depicted the building up of the energy body and the Self Realization in poetic, but accurate words. “Here is the inner experience: Sushumna, the artery of Brahman²⁰⁷ is there in the midst of the subtle body. By her brightness, it looks like the Sun and the Full Moon. She wells up from the center of the base²⁰⁸ and rises straight up to the opening of Brahman²⁰⁹. In her lies energy like a serpent coiled upon itself²¹⁰, gleaming like a thousand lightning flashes²¹¹, delicate as a lotus stem²¹². When the disciple saw her even in spirit he was liberated from his ties, from the ties of the bodily existence. Due to the purification let this vision be working in his being!” [111]. “The divine power Kundalini shines like a stem of a young lotus at the base of the body” [112]. The awakening and ascent of the Kundalini, symbolized by fire (ch. XI E) is described in the following terms: “The disciple leads the prana²¹³ until the Mooladhara. The air thus inspired awakens the lower Fire²¹⁴ that was asleep. Meditating on Pranava that is nothing else than Brahman and concentrating his thought, he rises the breath united to the lower Fire until the navel and beyond, within the subtle body. On the top of the body, over the head there is the lotus with thousand

²⁰⁷ Called also *Brahma nadi* (Sanskrit.).

²⁰⁸ The Mooladhara.

²⁰⁹ The Brahmarandhra (ch. II).

²¹⁰ The Kundalini (ch. IX).

²¹¹ Upon announcement of Resurrection (Self Realization), the messenger is described like: “his look was as lightning” (Matthew 28:3). Other details will be given in chapter XI E.

²¹² The Sushumna is the stem of the Sahasrara lotus.

²¹³ The vital breath (Sanskrit.).

²¹⁴ The Kundalini.

petals²¹⁵, shining like the heavenly light: it's that which gives the liberation²¹⁶. Its secret name is Kailash, the mountain where Shiva abides²¹⁷. The one who knows this secret place is delivered from samsara²¹⁸" [113]. "The prana leaves the nadis [Ida and Pingala] and goes through the Sushumna. Thus is effected the union of Ida, Pingala and Sushumna [Moon, Sun and Fire] which leads to immortality" [114].

The great saint Adi Shankaracharya (c. AD 800) wrote in his *Saundarya-Lahari*: "Having filled in the pathway of the Nadis with the streaming shower of nectar flowing from Thy Lotus feet²¹⁹, having resumed Thine own position from out of the resplendent lunar regions, and Thyself assuming the form of a serpent of three and a half coils, sleepest Thou in the hollow of Kula Kunda²²⁰" [115]. "Thou art diverting Thyself, in secrecy with Thy Lord²²¹, in the thousand-petalled lotus, having pierced through the Earth situated in the Mooladhara, the Water in the Manipura, the Fire abiding in the Swadhisthana, the Air in the Heart (Anahatha), the Ether above (Vishuddhi), and Manas between the eyebrows (Agya) and thus broken through the entire Kula path" [116].

Now let us quote from a wonderful poem on *Guharini*, the veiled and yet dynamic Shiva-Shakti: "Oh Guharini! Magnetic power so peerless! Thou who art hidden in the cave of my heart unknown, Universal Energy lying coiled and dormant within. Arise! Release thy cosmic power in me and in all moving objects, by the act of Grace, divine ambrosial sweetness. Thou! Oh vital Energy so feminine! Generating Beauty of Grace! Reveal thy liberating power so that the veiled polarity inherent in manifestation is removed with thy ascent, and I experience the perpetual bliss in mystic Oneness. Awake, arise, oh Mother, from thy slumber! Bestir from thy resting place of the Mooladhara center; Move majestically to unite with the supreme Being in the

²¹⁵ The Sahasrara.

²¹⁶ Moksha.

²¹⁷ Together with Parvati (Adi Shakti), it is making up the supreme divine couple, a symbol of the union (Yoga) between the Kundalini and Atman.

²¹⁸ Endless movement (Sanskrit), which is the cycle of reincarnations.

²¹⁹ On the Guru.

²²⁰ The sacrum bone.

²²¹ The Self (Atman).

lotus of the crown, the seat of light effulgent. Is there anything rare, anything separate from me? Therefore with the nectar of thy Grace arise and come; reveal the grandeur of thy increscent incandescence, as thou mingle in ineffable bliss with the Sun of Shiva. Deign thy Grace to crown me with such consummation” [117].

IV-26 The great poet and mystic Kabir (c. 1440-1518) advised the reader like this: “Do not go to the garden of flowers!/ O Friend! go not there;/ In your body is the garden of flowers²²²./ Take your seat on the thousand petals of the lotus²²³, and there gaze on the Infinite Beauty” [118].

IV-25 A very suggestive representation of the subtle body as a plant appears in a book dedicated to the power and secret of ancient healers, where the subtle body is symbolically drawn like a plant with its flowers arranged on seven levels on the left and right of the central stem, having the four-petal Mooladhara at the bottom [119].

In the Balkan Peninsula, the New Year is traditionally welcomed using the *sorcova* when children hit the backbone of the grownups with a “tree” consisting of a central stick bearing flowers on both sides. This custom recalls the Zen practice of hitting the spine in order to awaken the Kundalini (ch. XXV).

IV-30 An apocalyptic scene in a Mosarabic manuscript represents the Virgin riding a horse next to the Tree of Life bearing a serpent on the trunk and the Sahasrara crowning the top of it [120].

IV-24 Another representation of the subtle body is the tree of Jesse that may be seen on a stained-glass window in the Notre-Dame cathedral of Chartres. One can easily notice the arrangement of the saints (entities governing the subtle system) on seven levels along three vertical lines [121].

IV-22 The artists who were realized souls usually depicted the primordial couple with Adam on the right and Eve on the left of the Tree, in full agreement with the position of the side channels in the body. From amongst the numerous works of art on this subject, we quote, for instance, the *Original Sin* by Titian in Prado Museum, *Adam and Eve* by Lucas Cranach (1526) or the same subject from the Gent altarpiece *The Mystic Lamb* by Hubert and Jan van Eyck [122]. The graphic representations from the 16th, 17th and even 18th century richly illustrate this concept, many of which having alchemical themes, where the Moon (channel of the feminine energy) is placed on the left while the Sun (channel of the masculine energy) is on the

²²² *The flowers* are the chakras (ch. I) while *the garden of flowers* is the subtle body.

²²³ The Sahasrara chakra.

right with respect to the central character [123]. Another graphical work (17th century) has the Lunar Tree (*Arbor Luna*) on the left and the Solar Tree (*Arbor Solis*) on the right [124].

Amongst the drawings depicting alchemical processes, there is also the image (end of 16th century) of three branches springing out from a common IV - 2 9 root having the serpent Uroboros coiled around itself as a circle indicating IX - 5 4 the Kundalini lying in the sacrum bone or symbolizing the Primordial Waters that encircled the Earth in ancient times. This is precisely the portrayal given in the Indian sacred texts: “The shakti called Kundalini in the form of a serpent, beautiful, fine as lotus, resides in the Mooladhara... with its tail in its mouth” [125]. The Moon is under the left branch and the Sun under the IV - 3 3 right branch [126]. Along the same line of subjects, there is a woodcut (of the same period) showing a hermaphrodite²²⁴ having three serpents under its feet and being placed next to a plant structured on three vertical lines and bearing IV - 2 5 star-shaped suggesting faces (deities?) arranged on seven horizontal levels a [127].

We shall refer here also to *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*, a work probably inspired from the Renaissance text ascribed to the Dominican monk Francesco Colonna (1433-1527) *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (*The Dream of Polyphilus*), deeply esoteric and allegorical. The text IV - 3 4 describes the unveiling of the Goddess sleeping in the depths of a castle. Under the guidance of Virgin Alchymia, the hero performs in the span of seven days the Great Work. It is a perfect interpretation of the awakening of the Kundalini in the depths of the sacrum bone and the consecutive crossing of the seven levels (chakras). In his commentaries to the *Aurora Consurgens*—a weird mixture of theology, sapiential references and alchemical lore attributed to Thomas Aquinas—, Marie-Louise von Franz arrived at the conclusion that “Alchemy... lays upon man the task... of rescuing the hidden feminine aspect of God from imprisonment in matter by his opus, and of reuniting her with the manifest, masculine deity” [128]. *Aurora* narrates about seven women imprisoned together who desire one husband and expect seven gifts from the Holy Spirit. The Goddess declares: “I am the mediatrix of the elements, making one to agree with another... I am the whole work and all science is hidden in me” [129]. Another alchemical work explains that man should discover a divine mirror: “by uniting himself with the Holy Spirit becomes a perfect man. He sees God within himself... This mirror is set up beyond seven doors... which correspond to the seven heavens, beyond the sensual world, beyond the twelve mansions” [130]. Here

²²⁴ In the realm of spiritual union (*unio mystica*) of the masculine-feminine antinomic tendencies.

the mirror points at the reflection of the divine qualities in man, God within himself is Atman, and the twelve mansions are connected to the zodiacal signs (ch. XIX C). The theme of seven doors is recurrent with the anonymous *Book of Thirty Chapters* [131]. These are conventionally called: calcination, sublimation, solution, putrefaction, distillation, coagulation, and tincture.

For long time *alchemy* has been considered to be at the origin of *chemistry* that had been a direct result of the former. Like Mircea Eliade, we have to admit that there is no continuity between alchemy and chemistry. However, the historian of religions regarded alchemy just as “the last stage in the work that began with metallurgy. The «founder» transforms mineral into metal, and the alchemist takes over the work of nature and time in order to acquire the philosopher’s stone and gold—the equivalent of immortality.” Further on, Eliade defines the frontier between him and Jung, declaring: “Our paths ran parallel. For Jung, alchemy is an image, or a model, for his «individuation». For me, it is what I explained just now” [132]. Actually, *alchemy was but one instrument used to dissimulate a secret knowledge* that was in no way different from the one that could be found in the metaphorical texts of the Gnostics, of the Kabbalists, of the Renaissance period or of the Christian chivalrous *quest* (*quête*, Fr.; from *quaesitus*, search, Lat.) as for the Grail etc. (see *supra* and ch. X), all of them referring to the Self Realization (Yoga). The approach from such a perspective would result in a large synthesis to include Yoga, science and religion, alchemy and Gnosticism, Symbolism in literature and arts, mysticism and esoteric doctrines (Hesychasm, Sufism, Kabbalah, Hasidism etc.).

The highest esteem granted to this kind of spiritual quest was expressed in a letter written by Rhazes, an Islamic physician and alchemist of the 10th century, quoted by Petrus Bonus of Ferrara: “God himself has entrusted this magistry to his philosophers and prophets, for whose souls he has prepared a dwelling place in his paradise” [133]. We should not forget in contrast to the Western attitude, that within Islam science is regarded in the light of the divine, and it is considered a holy art.

Alchemy apparently aimed at the transmutation of the common metals into gold but *gold* was the Vedic symbol of *immortality* acquired through liberation (*moksha*). “Gold means immortality”—repeated the Indian texts [134]. However, the true purpose of alchemy is to restore the primal and holy state (*prima materia*) through a spiritual process leading to the mystical union with the divine. Caitlín Matthews wrote: “Alchemy... teaches us to relate the infinite to the mundane, to find the presence of the divine in the daily circle is being. The process is a spiritual code used... by those who seek the Stone” [135]. The *Philosopher’s stone* (*lapis philosophorum*, Lat.),

uselessly and tenaciously searched for by the ignorant is inside oneself, being nothing else than the Kundalini energy, the grace of the Holy Spirit (Adi Shakti). Basil Valentinus explains the acrostic for the mysterious alchemical *Vitriol* as: *Visita interiora terra; rectificando invenies occultum lapidem* (Visit the inner earth; through purification you shall find the hidden stone, Lat.). Relevant analogies could be found between *coagula* and *solva*, the *kalpa* and *pralaya* stages of the cosmic cycle respectively; between the opening of the crucible (*athanor*) where the transmutation takes place and the *Brahmarandhra*, the opening of the fontanel (ch. II); between the purification of the substances and of the chakras referred to as: the seven metals, the seven planets, and even the Seven Dwarfs (*gnomes*, from *gnósis*, knowledge, Gr.) in the Snow White tale [136]. Because of the restricted room, we cannot afford going deeper into the subject but only send the reader to our previous essays on the esoteric knowledge of the Getes-Dacians and its survival in the present Romanian folklore [137].

Aniela Jaffe noticed: “The most serious alchemists realized that the purpose of their work was not the transmutation of base metals into gold, but... the spiritual values and the problem of psychic transformation” [138]. The Chinese distinguished between the internal (*neldan*, Chin.) and the external (*waldan*, Chin.) alchemy. Angelus Silesius (his real name was Johann Scheffler) had revealed the esoteric meaning of transmutation: “Lead is changed into gold... ; I am changed into God by God himself,” which corresponds to the union of Atman and Brahman achieved through Yoga. The *union* of the antagonistic chemical elements is tantamount to the union of the feminine and masculine principles in *Yoga*. The Great Work²²⁵ means the reunion of the masculine element, sulfur, with the feminine element, mercury. Within the hermetic philosophy which dominated the Middle Ages this was considered to be *coniugium solis et lunae* (Lat.), the alchemical *hierós gámos* (sacred marriage, Gr.—the supreme moment of the Mysteries of pre-Christian cultures) between Sun and Moon, King and Queen, Spirit and Soul (Atman and the Kundalini, as a matter of fact). The Great Work had a multiple healing effect: insight cleansing of the soul of the fear, anger, hatred and envy that were the root of all the negative projections [139]. Jung appreciated Goethe’s *Faust* as “the last and greatest work of Alchemy”: “Goethe is really describing the experience of the alchemist who... after the peregrinations of a long life full of confusion and error, becomes the *filiius regius*, son of the supreme mother” [140]. As far as the subject matter of this chapter is concerned, we should add that the genius of Weimar had imagined an *Urpflanze*, that is an archetypal plant, which could be interpreted as the

²²⁵ *Opera Magna* (Lat.); also called *Hermetic Art*.

symbol of the subtle body [141].

IV-35 The architecture has transformed the Tree of Life into the pyramid, . . . 40 ziggurat, tower, stupa or pagoda. The bulbs (*bolbós*, onion, Gr.) of the IV-41 Islamic mosques—as well as the similar domes erected at the top of most of the Eastern Christian churches, and especially those created by the Russian architects—represent the culmination (lotus of the Sahasrara; ch. II) not only of the buildings but also of the subtle body symbolized by them.

The overlapping of the seven chakras has found its expression in the seven stories of the Heavenly Column, the seven notches of the Tree of Life, the seven floors of the Cosmic Temple etc.

The Babel tower was often represented with seven levels as for instance in the reconstruction of the Khorsabad ziggurat [142]. *Babel* means “the gate of God” in Akkadian. People erected the Babel tower in their desire to reach the heavenly kingdom (Genesis 11:4). The episode metaphorically described the unauthorized attempt²²⁶ at reaching the Yoga state (union with the Divine), since the tower stands for the overlapping of the chakras whereas the ascent stands for the awakening and rise of the Kundalini up to the Sahasrara kingdom. Being unauthorized, it was sanctioned by God who transformed the unique (11:1,6)—and sacred—language into a multitude (11:7), which produced confusion (*babel*, Hebr.), that is the loss of true knowledge. Similarly, “the estranging from Tao²²⁷ gave birth to diversified language, hence, to languages. This diversification produced the confusion referred to in *Tao-Te-King*” [143]. The Indian tradition reads of an analogous story in which the unauthorized persons were sanctioned. The enemies of gods started erecting a Fire altar shaped as a pyramid on which they planned to climb up to the heaven and take over dominion on the universe. Disguised under the innocent appearance of a Brahmin, god Indra went close to the pyramid and pulled out some foundation bricks, which produced the rapid collapse of the demons back to Earth [144].

The stage pyramid in Sakkarah, the earliest stone monument in Egypt (and in the whole world) was built by Imhotep, a great initiate, architect and adviser of the pharaoh Zoser from the third dynasty (2778-2723 BC). It originally had seven steps [145]. There are also seven stages in the helical ziggurat minaret of the Samarra mosque in Iraq [146].

Victor Kernbach wrote: “Prof. S. Stecchini, having studied the Sumerian mathematical texts, succeeded in establishing the sizes of the ziggurat

²²⁶ See also the case of Prometheus (ch. XI C and XI E).

²²⁷ Which means the abandoning of the divine law of the Dharma (ch. XIX A).

pyramid (with seven interconnected steps) that was actually the archaic pyramid type both in Mesopotamia and Egypt, as well as in pre-Columbian America and the Canary archipelago. The same was valid for the great Khufu (Cheops) pyramid on the parallel 30⁰” [147].

Another example of ranging the seven chakras is the Gopuram tower of the Tiruvannamalai temple in Madura [148].

De Kalbermatten considered that also “the form of the Buddhist stupa is interestingly described as representing the superimposition of the chakras” [149]. One can give the following examples of such seven-storied buildings: the miniature stupa in the Taxila Museum [150], the pagoda of the fresco in the Qianfodang cave [151], the Tang Dynasty pagoda of the Da Qin monastery erected in 781, and the famous “Pagoda of the Seven Bliss” now in Hang-tse, dating back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) [152]. The Bharhut stupa (2nd century BC) shows the chakras as disks (*chakra*, disk, Sanskr.) placed on the central and the side channels, one of these disks having the face of its deity in the middle [153].

Last but not least, on the island of Kauai the Hawaiians constructed seven temples (representing the seven chakras) along a trail called *Ku-a-moo* (spine of the dragon, i.e. the Sushumna) connecting the ocean and a central volcanic peak (suggesting the Sahasrara out of which the Kundalini erupts).

NOTES

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V. THE FLOOD

“You remember a single deluge only, but there were many”

Plato, *Timaeus* [1]

During the excavations made in the summer of 1929 around Ur, in Mesopotamia, Sir Charles Leonard Woolley found a layer of alluvial clay having a thickness up to 30 feet! The stratum was clean, free of shards and debris, which were found, however, both above and below it. The layer extended northwest of the Persian Gulf, stretching over a distance of 630 kilometers covering 100,000 square kilometers! This clay deposit was looked on as a proof of the flood described in the *Bible*. However, archaeologists agreed to date it back to around 4000 (3200 after others) BC, and by that time the Hebrew people had not yet reached Mesopotamia.

Although the *story* of the biblical flood is supposed to be borrowed from Mesopotamia, in our opinion the *genuine catastrophe* that struck Abraham’s forerunners—compelling them to leave the paradisaical land where they previously lived—happened, in fact, in the Upper Indus area neighboring Kashmir. We also suppose that the flood story conveys an initiatory message.

About 1900 BC, a devastating flood accompanied by tectonic plate shift changed the course of the Indus (Sindh), dried up Saraswati, which lost its tributary Satlej. The catastrophe is confirmed by Indo-French LANDSAT satellite mappings (on a 1:1 000 000 scale) of the shifting courses of the Saraswati River. The satellite photographs taken in 1972 were thoroughly analyzed in 1979 by Bimal Ghose et al. Further researches were performed by Yash Pal et al (1980), Bakliwal et al (1983 and 1988), and reviewed in 1991 by S.M. Ramasamy, P.C. Bakliwal and R.P. Verma. The results clearly proved a very large flood area of the Indus (up to a maximum width of 100-120 km in the east and southeast) and dramatic shifts of the Saraswati and Satlej courses [2].

According to Dr. Subhash Kak, “The drying up of Saraswati around 1900 BCE, which led to a major relocation of the population centered around in the Sindhu and the Saraswati valleys, could have been the event that caused a migration westward from India. It is soon after this time that the Indic element begins to appear all over West Asia, Egypt, and Greece” [3]. This view is shared by S. R. Rao: “The great flood of 1900 BC at the end of Phase IV²²⁸ was so devastating that all the public and private buildings were razed

²²⁸ Of the Indus-Saraswati Civilization.

to the ground and the basin of the dock was completely sealed by debris and silt. The entire population fled to safer regions” [4].

J.G. Frazer refers to a Kashmiri tradition, recorded by the early native chroniclers, relating that a great lake once occupied the whole of the valley. Such was the case of one of the oldest annals, the *Nilamata Purana*, which may date from the 6th or 7th century of our era. The chronicle said that at the beginning of the present Kalpa, the valley was filled by a lake called Satisaras (Lake of Sati) and reminded an episode in the period of the seventh Manu. Mention is made also of the *Naubandhana* (Biding of the Ship, Sanskr.) peak overlooking the lake, i.e. the very same mountain on which, according to the *Mahabharata*, Manu anchored his ship after the great flood. After the gods drained the water at the request of Kashyapa, the actual Kashmir Valley came into existence [5]. This explains why the land is called “the country of Kashyapa” (*Kashyapa-mir*; ch. III). The *Nilamata Purana* identifies that peak with *Naubandha Shankara*, that is *Naubandhashikara* on the Pir Punjal Range, one of the high mountains (4700 meters) of the Brahma Sakal.

Kersten made the connection between the word *Sintflut* (flood, Germ.) and the *Sindh* River in Kashmir, thus backing the hypothesis that the flood took place in that part of India [6].

The tradition of the flood is frequently mentioned in different mythologies. The American historian and missionary Dr. Aaron Smith of Greenborough wrote a complete history of the flood literature. On this theme, there are about 80,000 works in 72 languages [7].

Plato’s words quoted in the beginning of this chapter support the hypothesis of a repeated catastrophe that probably occurred locally in many parts of our planet. That ancient idea is defended not only by reputed authors like Frazer [5] but by the recent studies as well, such those based on the LANDSAT satellite photographs (see *supra*) and those started in 1997 by William Ryan, Walter Pitman and colleagues about the flood that generated the Black Sea. The latter theory was confirmed by the team of archaeologists lead by Robert D. Ballard who discovered on September 11, 2000, 20 km east of the Turkish city-port of Sinope, a submersed made-man structure at a depth of 300 ft. providing dramatic evidence of a flood 7,500 years ago [8].

In the Sumerian²²⁹ story of the deluge, god Enki warned the hero

²²⁹ The Sumerian and Hittite prototypes date probably from the second millennium BC; as an Akkadian epic (7th century BC), it was found in Ashurbanipal’s library.

Ziudsuddu²³⁰. According to the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh²³¹, the hero Utnapishtim was counseled by the god Ea to build up a ship in order to survive the flood. The Hindu flood legend—having as a hero Vaivaswata, the seventh Manu to whom *Manu smriti* is attributed—can be found in the *Satapatha Brahmana* and the various *Puranas* [9] as well as in the *Mahabharata* [10]. The Sanskrit texts present concordances to Noah's story, too. God Vishnu who was incarnated as the fish Matsya (in the *Mahabharata* and *Matsya Purana* variants the guidance was given by Brahma), advised Vaivaswata (Satyavrata, in the *Bhagavata Purana*) to build a ship for saving all the living creatures (ch. XIX B), plants included. The rain lasted seven days²³² (the *Bhagavata Purana*), and the waters were high for several years (the *Mahabharata*).

The Greek hero of the flood was the son of Prometheus, Deukalion, King of Phthia. Frazer recoded that the Samothracians believed that the cause of the catastrophe was connected to the Black Sea [5]—an amazing intuition of a fact confirmed only nowadays (see *supra*). Alexander von Humboldt wrote that a similar myth existed in Peru. Surprisingly enough, the hero of the Polynesian flood bore the name of Noa. *Noah* (Hebr.) means *repose*, but could also have the meaning of *consolation* (Genesis 5:29).

In the *Bible*, the term *tebah* (ark, Hebr.) joins the letters *beth* and *tav* like in the word *Bath* (Daughter/Maid of Israel, Hebr.) where the two letters were shown (ch. IV) to enclose all the alphabet letters (apart from *aleph* representing God the Father) and hence, symbolically include all the energies [11]. The *ark* is thus the Primordial divine Power (*Adi Shakti*, Sanskr.; *Shekhinah*, Hebr.), since *arché* (Gr.) means the *beginning*. Manifested as the Kundalini, this Power allows the Self Realization. All the Divine Mothers were connected to the Primordial Waters, some of them being born out of the ocean (the most common instance is that of Aphrodite). Like them, Mary (Maria, whose name comes from *mare*, sea, Lat.) is the patron of ships and sailors, and was given the name of *Stella Maris* (Star of the Sea, Lat.). The stone boat of Isis (which was a universal symbol of the Goddess) once carried over the processions in antique Rome, could be seen presently near the church of Santa Maria della Navicella (St. Mary of the Boat, Ital.) [12]. The ship *Argo* took Jason and his companions (*basileios*, i.e. *great* initiates

²³⁰ Ziusudra (Xisuthros, in the *Babylonian History* of Berossus).

²³¹ Atrakhasis.

²³² The same as in the legend of Ziudsuddu/Xiusudra (six days in the story of Gilgamesh).

who were in number of 51 that corresponded to the total number of “petals” in the chakras; ch. I) on their initiatory voyage in the quest of the Golden Fleece. We remember that Jesus has said: “Except any one be born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5), thus connecting water and Spirit, i.e. the Divine Mother (ch. XXI) on the one side, and, on the other side pointing out that the lively (*spirited, animated*) beings originated in the Primordial Waters (ch. IX). The female Spirit (*Ruah*, Hebr.) was associated to the water since the inception, as the opening of Genesis wrote: “the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (1:2).

The lotus, symbol of the chakras, floats on the waters like an enchanted island. Such a transcendent island is *Shweta-dwipa* (White Island, Sanskr.; *Leuké*, Gr., a name also given to the Island of Serpents in the Black Sea), the goal coveted by Yogis and Arhants (ch. IX). The transcendent island in the ocean of transitory forms (of Illusions, *Maya*), is a symbol of absolute, immutable, heavenly Reality. Nirvana in *Sutta Nipatta* was likened to an island.

In King Arthur’s legends, the mysterious Castle of Miracles (*Le Château Merveil* in the Grail’s myth), a place of initiation, was located on Avalon (a white island too), “the island of women”, thus suggesting the sacrum bone as the dwelling of the feminine Kundalini. The access was possible only by boat and the crossing itself was extremely difficult since the castle could be reached only with a divine help. The hero conquered the Excalibur sword, a symbol of the Sushumna channel (ch. IV), hence achieving the Self Realization. According to the legend, Joseph of Arimathaea went to that place to translate the book about the Holy Grail. The Chinese tradition mentioned the eight Immortals who went all the way to a supernatural island on a boat carried on the wings of a crane, also a symbol of immortality. Similarly, the island of Euthanasius was not accessible, excepting those who had attained the heavenly, Adamic state.

The Grail myth was preceded by a mysterious medieval text called *L’Élucidation*, dealing with seven Damsels of the Wells (allusion to the seven chakras and the female Kundalini hidden deep in the well of the Sushumna). They emerged out of the wells and offered to travelers a drink from their golden cups. The great mystic of the 12th century, Hildegard of Bingen referred in her *Scivias* to a chalice destined to collect Christ’s blood at the crucifixion [13].

As we know, the Void or the Ocean of Illusions (*Bhava Sagara*, Sanskr.) round the Nabhi chakra placed on the level of the navel constitutes an obstacle in the ascent of the Kundalini along the Sushumna channel. The Gnostic Valentine (Valentinus) wrote: “Error became fortified. It elaborated

its own matter in the Void” [14]. It is worth noticing the relation *Nabhi—navel—navis* (ship, Lat.) where *b* and *v* are interchangeable being tantamount to each other. The symbol of duration (sustenance) of spiritual evolution, Vishnu, is placed on the serpent Ananta-Shesha floating as a ship V-1 (ark) on the Primordial Ocean²³³. The discus (or wheel) of Vishnu is called *Sudarshana* (Beauteous-Sight, Sanskr.) [15]. The circle around the wheel is *Maya* (Ocean of Illusions, Void). This figure is a plastic representation of the navel. The circular space of the Void is symbolized by the *Round Table* of King Arthur’s knights. The Round Table²³⁴, however, was created by Merlin (*Merddin*, Welsh), personifying the Guru Principle [16] who guided King Arthur along his ascent from early childhood (the Mooladhara) up to supreme royalty (the Sahasrara). Merlin’s castle was erected in the middle of the green forest of Brocélinde²³⁵, a vegetal sea having the same color as the ocean, the Void and the Nabhi chakra. In the Scandinavian epic, the correspondent of Merlin was Mimir, Odhinn’s master of wisdom. Likewise, the Void is controlled by the Principle of the Primordial Prophet or Master (*Guru*, granting the Divine Light or Knowledge that removes the darkness of spiritual ignorance; from *gu* meaning “darkness,” and *ru* meaning “knowledge” or “light,” Sanskr.) manifested as ten incarnations (ch. X). However, *prophet* in Hebrew and in Arabic is *nabi* or *navi*, having the same etymology as *Nabhi* (Sansk.; ch. VII, X). The Greeks regarded the renowned sanctuary of the prophetess Pythia in Delphi as the *Navel of the Earth* (the name derived from *delphys*, womb, Gr.).

The ark allowed for the sacred tradition (Ark of the Covenant) to be preserved, thus ensuring the survival (sustenance) of creation. Noah or his equivalents from other myths have taken on the ship everything necessary for the perpetuation of each and every being. The symbolical crossing of the Red Sea, of the desert etc. as the Ocean of Illusions was dealt with in chapter IV. The following quotation on Jesus may possibly be a metaphor for the Self Realization, too: “Going on board the ship he passed over and came to his own city” (Matthew 9:1). Indeed, in order to reach the *city of Jesus* (Agya chakra, ch. XIX C) it is first necessary to cross the Void using the ship of the

²³³ In other variants, the Golden Egg of the cosmogony (*Hiranyagarbha*, Sanskr.) floats on the Primordial Ocean. The Primordial Waters are called *Ap* (Sansk.; *Apsu*, Babylon.) where the Romanian word *apa* comes from.

²³⁴ Its copy may be seen in Winchester.

²³⁵ An ancient sacred place of the Celts, in the vicinity of Ploërmel, in the Valley of Fairies.

Kundalini energy. The Self Realization can be attained in Buddhism by means of the boat (*yana*, Sanskr.) of learning (*Mahayana* or *Hinayana*). One of its major treaties is *Prajna-paramita Sutra*²³⁶ meaning “the wisdom (*prajna*) that has reached the other border²³⁷ (*param-ita*).” However, the Kundalini is nothing else than the reflection of the Adi Shakti, the Great Goddess who is *Maha Maya* (Great Illusion, Sanskr.) on a human level. Hence, the name of *Ocean of Illusions* that has to be crossed. The Kabbalists are also bewildering through the accuracy of information since they refer to the “«Valley of Visions», that is the Shekhinah” [17] i.e. the Great Goddess. It is not without significance that the name of “Valley of Visions” suggestive of Maya, appears in the Book of Isaiah (22:1) connected to the (spiritual) ascent at its maximum height: ”The burden of the valley of vision: «What aileth thee now, that them art wholly gone up to the house-tops?»” The difficulty of crossing the Red Sea can only be compared to the one of finding the right husband or wife, as the Divine decides for the marriage of humans; this is an ancient belief still existent in India of today. Thus, talking about the “heavy task of cleaving of the Red Sea” performed by God, the *Zohar* says: “similarly, the arranging of marriages is a heavy task to him” [18].

The animals taken on the ark are nothing else than the vehicles of deities (ch. IV) governing the subtle body and existing and assisting in getting the Self Realization.

When the rain had stopped, Utnapishtim sent a dove²³⁸, then a swallow and both birds came back but the raven sent afterwards did not return. The salvation from the flood represents the *second birth* (see our Introduction) and is tantamount to the baptized being taken out of water (ch. XXII B) i.e. the Self Realization. The god’s words bear out the truth of the above: “Until now Utnapishtim was but a man, but from now on Utnapishtim and his wife become gods like Us” [19] (ch. IV). This reminds us God’s words concerning the Primordial couple: “man is become as one of us” (Genesis 3:22; cf. 3:5). The journey of the first birds (especially that of the dove—metaphor of the Holy Spirit, ch. XXI) symbolizes release from captivity (inside the boat, or the *karma*; ch. XXIV), therefore the Kundalini awakening and her transcendence beyond the physical body, whereas the raven (whose black color suggests evil; here—the cause of chakra catches) leaving for good

²³⁶ *Ashta-Sahasrika-Prajna-Paramita* (*ashta-sahasrika*, eight thousand, Sanskr.; the number of its verses).

²³⁷ The state of Nirvana.

²³⁸ Deukalion sent a dove also.

signifies the purification (elimination of catches) that finally results in the full manifestation of the subtle energy. The episode in the *Bible* is similar to the one above: “He sent out the raven, which went forth going to and fro²³⁹, until the waters were dried from the earth” (Genesis 8:7); it is understood that at last it did not return. After repeated attempts (of the Kundalini awakening), “the dove came to him at eventide; and behold, in her beak was an olive-leaf” (8:11) an auspicious token of the Self Realization being fulfilled as a divine work, a symbol of the *inner peace* (quality of the Nabhi chakra). The Tree of Life is often identified to an olive-tree not only in the *Bible* but in the *Qur’an* as well (ch. IV, XV C).

“The pour of rain was on earth forty days and forty nights²⁴⁰” (7:12; cf. 7:4, 17). The duration is significant for achieving the purification occurred through the Kundalini awakening. After baptism, Jesus went into the wilderness for forty days (Matthew 4:2; Luke 4:1-2), and only afterwards He started performing miracles. Likewise, the Buddha isolated himself from the world for forty days, and then received his enlightenment. Moses fasted for forty days too (Exodus 24:18; 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9, 18). Prophet Elijah also fasted on his way to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8). In like manner, Muhammad fasted and established the general rule of fasting (*siyam*, *sawm*, Arab.) one full month (*Ramadan*, Arab.; literally: the *most warm* month).

When the flood had stopped, “God made a wind to pass over the earth” (Genesis 8:1). Here the wind is the manifestation of the Kundalini immediately after the Self Realization (ch. XI C).

In the end, “the ark rested... on the Mountains of Ararat” (Genesis 8:4)—on a peak of Himavat (the Himalayas) in the *Mahabharata* [10]; on the mountains of Armenia in the story of Ziudsuddu, or on the peak Nisir (supposed by some to be in Kurdistan) in the epic of Gilgamesh. Annick de Souzenelle correctly interpreted the event of the ship landing at the completion of a cycle, which put an end to the curse materialized in the destroying through the flood of the decayed creation [19]. The beginning of the new cycle is marked by the conclusion of a new covenant with God, which is the rainbow (Genesis 9:11-13; see ch. XV E). The new covenant shows that each period has its own law (*Dharma*, Sanskr.; ch. VII and XIX A). Only those who have obtained their Self Realization will be saved (redeemed). It is significant here the fact that—according to the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata Purana* [9], [10]—those taken by Manu on

²³⁹ Which indicates the persistence of the initial catches.

²⁴⁰ After the author of the “*J*” text. The “*P*” (Priestly) text mentions a year (ch. VII).

his ship were the *seven Rishis* (holy sages; seers, Sanskr.) symbolizing the seven chakras. In the Greek legend, Zeus saves only the pure couple of Deukalion and Pyrrha on a ship built in order to repopulate the earth (start of a new cycle).

Noah had three sons called *Shem* (name, Hebr.), *Ham* (warm, hot, Hebr.), and *Japheth* (Genesis 9:18). Annick de Souzenelle discussed about the significance of these names: Shem is bound to *pleasure*, Ham to *heat* and Japheth evokes the *opening* (9:27) [20]. Thus, the three channels are indicated here: Ida—the channel of desire (*pleasure*), Pingala—the solar channel (*heat*) and Sushumna—the channel of evolution (*opening* to the spiritual realm).

NOTES

[1] Plato, *Timaeus*, 23b, in *The Collected...*, p.1158. [2] Dr. S. Kalyanaraman, 1995, in www.geocities.com/ravi_sans/indus_sarasvati.htm; also Georg Feuerstein, Subhash Kak, David Frawley, *In Search of the Cradle of Civilization*, Quest Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 1995; Natwar Jha, *Vedic Glossary on Indus Seals*, Ganga-Kaveri Publishing, Varanasi 1996; Interview with Dr. Subhash Kak, in *Bhartiya Pragna*, February 2002. [3] Subhash Kak, *Indic Ideas in the Graeco-Roman World*, in *IndiaStar Review of Books*, January 2003, www.indiastar.com. [4] S. R. Rao, *Lothal*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi. [5] Sir James George Frazer, *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament: Studies in Comparative Religion*, c.1918; cf. Ved Kumari, *The Nilamata Purana*, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Srinagar, 1994; also www.koausa.org/Purana. The same legend is told in a briefer form by Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini*, as well as by the Muslim authors Beddia and Dien; it is also alluded to, in a Buddhist setting, by the famous Chinese pilgrim of the sixth century, Hiuen Tsiang. [6] Holger Kersten, *Jesus lived in India*, Element Books, Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset 1986, p.61. [7] Werner Keller, *The Bible as History*, (transl. by William Neil), Bantam Books, New York, London, Sydney, Auckland 1988, 2nd revised edition, p.38. [8] William B.F. Ryan et al., *An Abrupt Drowning of the Black Sea Shelf*, in *Marine Geology* 138, pp.119-126 (1997); William Ryan, Walter Pitman, *Noah's Flood*, Simon and Schuster, New York 1998; *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2000. [9] *The Satapatha Brahmana* 1.8.6; *The Bhagavata Purana* 8.24.7-61; *The Agni Purana* ch. 2; *The Matsya Purana* ch. 1 and 2. [10] *The Mahabharata* book 3 (Vana Parva), ch. 187; cf. Dowson, pp.199-201; there is also an allusion in *The Bhagavad-Gita* 10.6. [11] De Souza, p.150, o.t. [12] Baring, Cashford, pp.557-558. [13] Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias* II.6. [14] Valentine, *Evangelium Veritatis* 17.15-16, Rascher, Zürich 1956. [15] *The Nrisimha-purva-tapini Upanishad* 5; *apud* Daniélou, *The Myths...*, p.155. [16] Heinrich Zimmer, *The King and the Corpse*, (Joseph Campbell ed.), Bollingen Series XI, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1970, 3rd printing, note to p.134, and p.182. [17] *Pardes*, Gate VIII.32. [18] *The Zohar* I, 207b, vol. II, pp.286. [19] De Souza, p.156, o.t. [20] *Ibid.*, p.153, o.t.

VI. WHERE DID ABRAHAM COME FROM?

“A pious Brahmin named Terah lived in Ur”

Levi Dowling, *The Aquarian Gospel* [1]

Abraham is one of the most prominent figures in the Old Testament. The Jews and the Arabs are in fact both children of Abraham through Isaac and Ishmael, respectively. Abraham is considered the founder of the Judaism, the first monotheistic religion, and is highly esteemed by the Muslims. In the followings we will try to elucidate some significant aspects regarding this biblical character.

Scholars do not agree upon the time when he lived, and the estimates range from 2100 to 1500 BC. Noel Freedman even placed Abraham in the Early Bronze Age (3000-2000 BC) [2]. We shall see below that a reasonable period must be situated not earlier than 1900 (when he and/or his relatives left the country where they lived) and not later than 1800 BC (when the settlement of Haran was completely abandoned, remaining unoccupied until the seventh century BC, as proved by the archaeological excavations at that site).

Now we would try to find out more about Abraham and his ancestors.

With good reason, Graves and Patai wrote: “The Patriarchs’ names have been identified with those of places or ethnic groups from historical documents, which makes it plausible that they are the mythical residue of ancient tradition about ancestral wanderings.” Indeed, in various periods and parts of the world, nostalgic immigrants have given towns and regions, mountains and rivers familiar names of their original country (ch. XII, XIII and XIV). The two authors related the names of the entire lineage from Shem to Abraham with places in Mesopotamia [3]. Such sites are situated mostly in the Padan-Aram area, in the plain of Aram, having in its centre the city of Haran [4]. Even the name of Haran coincides with the name of a brother of Abraham (Genesis 11:26).

We can assume the reason lies in the fact that the story was written during the Babylonian exile as many scholars believe. “Genesis... was thereafter edited and re-edited from perhaps the sixth century BC onwards” [5].

The opposite would be highly unlikely (i.e. the places were given their names after the Patriarchs), since the former are located in Mesopotamia, not in Palestine.

It should be noticed that there are no places in Mesopotamia bearing the names Abram, Abrahm or Abraham, and we are well inclined to believe that none of them was a personal name but denoted a trait of a group, possibly

applied to many individuals, even though—by using it for a biblical hero—it became later on a personal name. We have examples of multiple persons with the same name. In spite of his celebrity, the name of Abram, Terah's son, was not unique: before him lived another Abram who was the father of Edna and a kinsman of Terah [6]. It is not sure that Abram was the first-born son (Genesis 11:26.), or the youngest son of Terah [7]. Confuse genealogies appear frequently in Abram's family: Sarai was presented either as daughter of Haran [8] or daughter of Terah [9] but not of Abram's mother (Genesis 20:12.), i.e. Edna. Indeed, this explains why Abram repeatedly presented Sarai as his sister and wife (12:12-20; 20:2 sq). However, according to the *Babli Talmud*, Abram's mother was not Edna but Amitlai (Amatelai), the daughter of Barnabo [10].

The topic of this chapter is to establish the place of origin for Abraham and his family.

The lineage of Shem's descendants was Arphaxad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, and Terah (Genesis 11:10-26); all took birth after the Flood (10:1), yet Shem and the other sons of Noah were born before the catastrophe (9:18; cf. 6:10,18). After the Deluge, the ark landed on Mount Ararat (8:4). However, the highest mountains are the Himalayas (where the ark landed according to the *Mahabharata*; ch. V), and consequently, we cannot overlook the idea of this area as the starting point in the future developments of the story about Noah, Shem and their progeny. And that, the more so as the story of Noah in Genesis is close to the Hindu tradition as shown in chapter V.

About Peleg (whose name means "division") Genesis wrote: "in his days was the earth divided" (10:25). Where went Peleg? The text shows about Joktan (Peleg's brother) and his sons: "And their dwelling was from Mesha, as one goes to Sephar, the eastern mountain. These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations" (10:30-31). The succession of the sentences induces the thinking that before the "division" (Joktan was born before Peleg) *all* the sons of Shem dwelled at Masha, as one goes to Sephar, the eastern mountain and, perhaps after that, the earth was shared between their relatives contemporary to Peleg. Where are located Mesha and the eastern Mount Sephar? This is the only reference in the *Bible*, on the place called Mesha (while there are three persons bearing this name: a Moabite king, a son of Caleb, and a Benjamite). A possible explanation is that Mesha was far away of Palestine, as well as of Mesopotamia that provided many toponyms for the story of Abraham.

In supporting the above hypothesis, we cite Muhammad Raza who located the tomb of Shem in the land of Mashaq [11]. Mashaq or Mesha could be

identified as the town of Mashhad (Meshed) in Iran, next to Afghanistan border.

On the *World Map* of Henry of Mainz, already mentioned in chapter III, *Mount Sephar* is figured on the Indian Ocean.

To summarize, we may conclude: The ark landed on the Himalayas (or Ararat), from where Shem arrived, lived, and was buried at Meshed, northeast of Iran, close to Afghanistan. It is not impossible that his successors settled in the neighboring zones, since we do not know exactly what Muhammad Raza understood by “the land of Mashaq.” Possibly towards the East, even beyond Afghanistan, as we shall see.

In his address to the Jews, Joshua (24:2-3) said: “Thus saith Yahweh the God of Israel: «Your fathers dwelt of old on the other side of the river, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the river, and led him throughout the land of Canaan.” God went on: “And now, fear Yahweh and serve him in perfectness and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river... ; and serve Yahweh. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Yahweh, choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods whom your fathers that were on the other side of the river served, or the gods of the Amorites²⁴¹, in whose land ye dwell” (24:14-15). The King James Version read: “the other side of the flood” instead of “the other side of the river” as in Darby, the Revised Standard Version and Revised Version (British and American).

It is quite sure that the predecessors of Abraham had reached Mesopotamia, *coming from the East*: “As they journeyed from the East, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there” (Genesis 11:2). Shinar is the name of a part or of the entire Babylonia, frequently used in the *Bible* and indicating Sumeria. However, in India there is a town called Sinnar, about 30 kilometers south of Nasik.

It is worth noticing the repeated reference to the *East*, even in the episode describing the patriarch’s attitude towards the son born by a woman other than Sarah, to whom Abraham “went them away from Isaac his son, eastward to the east country” (25:6). As we shall see below, the East meant India. It was there (and also in Egypt located, however, on the west of Palestine) that the sages were so famous that they were taken as reference: “Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt” (1 Kings 4:30). Bishop Jean Kovalevsky considered the East to be “the aurora of the light of knowledge” [12].

Professor Salibi’s book previously mentioned (ch. III) rigorously proves

²⁴¹ They arrived in Palestine about 2300 BC.

that Palestine was not at all the country where the biblical history originated. After analyzing biblical toponyms through linguistic researches (see also ch. XIV), the scientist concluded: “of the thousands of place-names mentioned in the Hebrew *Bible*, only a handful have been linguistically identified with place-names in Palestine.” As for “the canonical texts of the Hebrew *Bible*... the reconstruction of the early Jewish history in Palestine is not possible from these texts, nor indeed from any other records so far available” [13].

Constantin Daniel, an expert in the history and civilization of ancient peoples in the Near East concluded his analysis of the origin of the Jews as follows: “it means that they might have come from the Indus Valley because on the East there were only the Iranian desert and beyond it the Indus Valley with its flourishing civilization” [14].

The opinion about a westward migration that started in the valley of the river whose name was taken to keynote India, can also be found in Sir Arthur Keith’s writing [15], stating firstly that about “the southern Mesopotamians at the beginning of the fourth millennium BC... we may regard southwestern Asia as their cradleland until evidence leading to a different conclusion comes to light.” Subsequently, “after extensive research, Sir Arthur Keith concluded that: «One can still trace the ancient Sumerians eastwards among the inhabitants of Afghanistan and Baluchistan, until the Valley of the Indus, some 1500 miles distant from Mesopotamia” [16]. There are similitudes in the civilizations of the Indus and Euphrates valleys, such as the ceramic seals VI - 1 having *identical* shapes, themes, writing and engraving style [14]. Oertwig observed “the great similarity between the ancient Sumerian and Hindustan writings... Some scientists go as far as supposing... that the Sumerians would have lived on the Indus Valley some time ago, later emigrating to Mesopotamia” [17]. In his turn, while referring to “recently [discovered] in the districts of Karachi and Lahore ruins of ancient cities five thousand to six thousand years old, showing the advanced culture of ancient India,” the archaeologist Nicholas Roerich adds: “This culture reminds one of the culture of the Sumerians and Elams. Many cylinders like those of Babylon were found in these ruins” [18].

Dumézil also admitted of the “migration witnessed by the presence of the Indians on the Euphrates and even closer to the Mediterranean Sea by the beginning of the 14th century BC” [19]. Eliade wrote about the “protohistorical and historical links of India and the country of the two rivers“ that is Mesopotamia [20].

Therefore, “the river” mentioned by Joshua (24:2-3, 14-15) was supposed to be the great river Indus or Sindh—constituting a true natural border of the former India—which the traveller entering Mesopotamia from the East had

to cross, since between these two extreme limits there was only the Iranian desert and beyond it the Indus Valley. However, as it was shown in chapter I, the name of Sindh also belongs to a river in Kashmir. We shall see below that also “the flood” variant of Joshua (in King James Version) concerned the Indus.

We would mention now some of many existing sources pointing a finger at Indus, India and Kashmir (see also ch. III).

The philosopher Clearchus of Soli (d. 401 BC; a pupil of Aristotle) wrote: “The Jews descend from the philosophers of India. The philosophers are called in India *Calanians*.” The idea reappears after four centuries, with the Jew historian Josephus Flavius [21]: “these Jews are derived from the Indian philosophers; they are named by the Indians *Calami*” (*sic!*)

The same Josephus mentioned: “Now Joctan, one of the sons of Heber, had these sons, Elmodad, Saleph, Asermoth, Jera, Adoram, Aizel, Decla, Ebal, Abimael, Sabeus, Ophir, Euilat, and Jobab. These inhabited from Cophen, an Indian river, and in part of Asia adjoining to it” [22]. Cophen is a tributary of the Indus in the Gandhara region. Abraham’s ancestor Eber is supposed to be at the origin of the name “Hebrew,” coming from *crossing* a river (Genesis 32:23): *eber* (*eber hannahar*, beyond the river, Hebr.; Joshua 24:14; 1 Kings 14:15; Isaiah 7:20), thus designating “the people of crossing.” Therefore, that “crossing” refers to the Indus River and not to Jordan, as it was mistakenly believed. It is also likely that the descendants of Ophir, the grandson of Eber, populated Ophir, believed by Josephus to be located in India, too (ch. III). We recall also that Abram’s father’s name, Nahor, has the same orthography as “river” (*nhr*, i.e. *nahar*, Hebr.), which may be related to his crossing of that important river.

Ancient sources show that not only the Hebrews but also their neighbors, the Phoenicians came from India. The Father of History, Herodotus wrote at the very beginning of his first book about the Phoenicians: “This people, who had formerly dwelt on the shores of the Erythraean Sea, having migrated to the Mediterranean and settled in the parts which they now inhabit” [23]. “This nation, according to their own account, dwelt anciently upon the Erythraean Sea, but crossing thence, fixed themselves on the seacoast of Syria, where they still inhabit. This part of Syria, and all the region extending from hence to Egypt, is known by the name of Palestine” [24]. Scholars believe that Herodotus’ Erythraean Sea is our Indian Ocean, as it appears on ancient maps [25].

The name of Abram, later changed into Abraham (Genesis 17:5) or Abrahm, obviously comes from *abrahman*, that is *non-Brahman* in the Sanskrit language spoken beyond Sindh. If Terah and his people “served

other gods” (see above) in the beginning, they later abandoned that belief and became non-Brahmins.

Graves and Patai disclosed that Abram and Abraham are both variants of the same royal title *Abamrama* or *Abiramu* occurring in cuneiform tablets from the 19th and 17th centuries BC that means “The God Ram is [My] Father” as well as the fact that “the divine name *Ram* occurs also in Adoniram, Jehoram, Malchi-ram; and its plural... is used to describe heavenly beings. A king of Edom in Sennacherib’s day was called Malik-ramu—«Ram is King»” [26]. Thus, the name of Rama establishes another connection to India.

Another interesting biblical reference is related to Moses. According to Numbers “he had taken a Cushite as wife” (12:1). By Cush, scholars understand Ethiopia (ch. III), and perhaps Moses’ wife had a black skin. However, the ancient world considered the Ethiopians as well as the southern Hindus (Dravidians) to belong to the same stock.

Herodotus referred to the black Africans as “Western Ethiopians” and to the Indians as “Eastern Ethiopians”: “The eastern Ethiopians—for two nations of this name served in the army—were marshaled with the Indians. They differed in nothing from the other Ethiopians, save in their language, and the character of their hair. For the eastern Ethiopians have straight hair, while they of Libya are more woolly-haired than any other people in the world.” The Indians “have also all the same tint of skin, which approaches that of the Ethiopians... Their country is a long way from Persia towards the south” [27].

Also Arrian (who is regarded as a definitive source for information on Alexander the Great) wrote in his *Indica*: “the southern Indians resemble the Ethiopians a good deal, and, are black of countenance, and their hair black also, only they are not as snub-nosed or so woolly-haired as the Ethiopians” [28].

It is hard to believe that Moses—who is regarded as the most rigorous and prominent spiritual character in the New Testament: God entrusted him His Law—would have taken a wife belonging to an alien race as the Ethiopians, unless it would have been, in reality, a Hindu as Abraham’s ancestors.

The *Qur’an* tells significant things, the first one being that the attitude of Terah, Abraham’s father, was reproachful: “Abraham²⁴² asked not pardon for his father... ; and when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he declared himself quit of him” (9.115). It is known, however, that the Brahmins, like other priests too, had reached a point where they no longer observed the essence of the divine laws. The Brahmins ended in formally

²⁴² *Ibrahim* (Arab.)

servicing certain symbolist statues instead of the Divine. That is why “he²⁴³ said to his father: «Father, why worshippesst thou that neither hears nor sees, nor avails thee anything»” (19.43). That made the son of Brahmin Terah to become a non-Brahmin who denied his father with the words: “Father, there has come to me knowledge such as came not to thee; so follow me, and I will guide thee on a level path” (19.44), that is on the path of Self Realization. The holy book of Islam says: “Abraham in truth was not a Jew, neither a Christian; but he was a Hanif” (3.60; cf. 2.129; 3.89; 4.124; 6.161; 16.121). According to the tradition, “Zayd enquired: «What is Hanif»? He said: «Hanif is the religion of (Prophet) Abraham, he was neither a Jew not a Christian»” [29]. The term of *Hanif* was extended to the Arabs who during the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic era) rejected the idolatry in their society.

The volume of Papus dedicated to the Kabbalah contains a point of view that fully supports our theory and that also places this esoteric trend in a completely new light. “The myth of *Abraham*, as Saint-Yves d’Alveydra has shown, marks the passage of the Hindu or oriental tradition to the Occident; and since the Kabbalah which we today possess is nothing more than this tradition adapted to the western mind, one can understand why the oldest known Kabbalistic book, the *Sepher Yetzirah* bears as a heading the following notice: *The Kabbalistic Book of Creation, in Hebrew, Sepher Yetzirah, by Abraham*” [30].

Talmudic commentaries maintain that the inhabitants of Paradise stand on their heads, and recount that Rebekah saw Isaac (on his way back from a stay in Paradise) in a similar position [31]. One can easily recognize here the upside-down posture known in Yoga as *Shirshasana*.

The quotation from the *Aquarian Gospel* [1] in the beginning of the chapter confirms our hypothesis. In his turn, the eminent Russian scientist Nicholas Roerich said: “We are reminded of the tale of old Avramy²⁴⁴, who was a shepherd beyond the Urals” [32].

Kersten confirmed that before the coming of the Jews in Palestine, the non-Brahmans or a-Brahmans used to live in the Sindh, in Aria (Iran) and in Chaldea [33].

Most significant is the fact that *Abhram* was a name given in the *Veda* to the ancient god of Heaven (Dyaus), with the significance of “dwelling of the clouds.”

Another question to be answered: If Abram was not a Hebrew but a Hindu, how would it be possible to him to be regarded as the father of the

²⁴³ Abraham

²⁴⁴ *Sic!*

Hebrews? The *Bible* even calls him “Abram the Hebrew” (Genesis 14:13).

The name of *Hebrew* has an uncertain etymology. We have seen above the hypothesis about *eber*. The *Septuagint* uses the Greek word *perates* from *peraió*, to cross, to pass, to exceed a limit (*péras*). According to others, *Hebrew* would come from *Habiru* an old Semitic tribe related to *‘ibri* from *br*, to cross over a boundary.

The clay tablets known as the Amarna Letters (since discovered in the archives of Akhenaten at Tell el-Amarna, the capital of that Pharaoh) mention *Hapiru* as lawless groups of rebels, bandits, and criminals. However, Ugaritic, Babylonian and Hittite sources refer also at *Hapiru*, which points at a larger ethnic sphere than just Canaanite people (for instance, including among others the “Sea People”—a term introduced by Gaston Maspero—who were the founders of the Philistine and Phoenician civilizations) that might have become the outcasts, destitute, vagrant groups described in the Amarna Letters.

If Abram’s ancestors were Hindus, that does not exclude their taking of wives among Semitic populations they encountered during their long journey. This probably happened before the conversion to monotheism and before they turned very strict about not taking foreign spouses. In Hebrew tradition, even in our days, the Hebrew is the one who has a Hebrew mother, regardless of the paternal nationality.

We have mentioned above the opinion of scholars considering the story about Abraham and his relatives, as no more than a recollection of ancient wanderings of the people who, after centuries, ultimately arrived in Canaan.

Martin Haug (late Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative philosophy at the University of Munich) provided us with a proof: “The Magi are said to have called their religion Kesh-î-Ibrahim. They traced their religious books to Abraham, who was believed to have brought them from heaven” [34].

It is most likely that the migration, at an excruciating slow pace, lasted many years, maybe decades. One cannot refrain thinking of the story of Moses and his people’s stay in wilderness for forty years, since the account presents so many flaws that it is difficult to be related to Moses and his time. Indeed, as Sheler points out, “while archaeologists... look for traces of a forty-year nomadic sojourn in the Sinai desert... [these] so far have not been found” [35]. Moreover, although Exodus records “about six hundred thousand on foot [that were] men, besides children” (12:37), Friedman shows that “investigators doing research on early Israelite history have concluded that, historically, only a small portion of the ancient Israelites were actually slaves in Egypt.” He signals only three Egyptian names (met only among the Levites): Moses, Hophni, and Pinehas [36]. On the other side, the period is

too lasting for that wilderness as compared to the vast unwelcoming areas Abraham and his people had to cross during their long way from the fertile land of origin to Palestine. We can only suppose that Exodus' story of roaming across the desert was just a recollection about the nomadic wandering of Abraham and/or his forefathers after leaving India and before reaching the Promised Land.

A last question arises. The original land where Abraham and/or his ancestors lived (either India or, apparently, Kashmir) was and is still regarded as "the Paradise on earth" (ch. III). How strong would have been the reason to abandon such a favorable land?

We are very inclined to find the answer in the terrible cataclysm occurred around 1900 BC, analyzed in chapter V. Such catastrophes explain the sudden disappearance of the flourishing civilization in the Indus Valley developed at Harappa and Mohenjo-Dao as well as Lothan. Similar events happened many times. Strabo recorded the situation in that area, reported by Aristobulus who "says that when he was sent upon a certain mission²⁴⁵ he saw a country of more than a thousand cities, together with villages, that had been deserted because the Indus had abandoned its proper bed, and had turned aside into the other bed on the left that was much deeper, and flowed with precipitous descent like a cataract, so that the Indus no longer watered by its overflows the abandoned country on the right, since that country was now above the level, not only of the new stream, but also of its overflows" [37].

²⁴⁵ In India, more precisely in Taxila and Hydaspes/Jhelum area.

NOTES

[1] Levi [Dowling], *The Aquarian...*, 10.6, p.25. [2] Jim A. Cornwell, *The Alpha and the Omega*, 1995, ch. IV; for the the latest dating: Graves, Patai, p.162. [3] Graves, Patai, pp.132-133. [4] Keller, p.53. [5] Graves, Patai, p.14; cf. Jeffery A. Sheler, *Is the Bible True?*, HarperSanFrancisco/Zondervan, 2000, p.26. [6] *The Book of Jubilees* XI.14. [7] *Sepher Hayashar*, Lazarus Goldschmidt ed., Berlin, 1923, p.27. [8] *The Book of Jaser* 16.23. [9] *The Book of Jubilees* XII.9-10. [10] *Babli Talmud, Baba Bathra* 91a. [11] Faqir Muhammad ben Qazi Muhammad Raza, *Jami-ut-Tawarikh*, 1838, vol. II, p.81. [12] Kovalevsky, p.144, o.t. [13] Salibi, pp.23,26; cf. p.108. [14] Constantin Daniel, *Civilizația sumeriană (Sumerian Civilization)*, Ed. Sport-Turism, București 1983, pp.14-15, o.t.; cf. Casal, pp.200-201. [15] Sir Arthur Keith, in *Al-'Ubaid*, pp.216,240, quoted by C. Leonard Woolley, *The Sumerians*, reprint of the 1929 edition by AMS Press, New York 1970, note 1 to pp.6-7. [16] *Apud* Ceram, p.314. [17] Siegfried Oertwig, *Gang durch versunkene Städte*, Prisma Verlag, 1968, ch. IV, o.t. [18] Nicholas Roerich, *Shambala*, in Nicholas Roerich, *Heart of Asia*, Inner Traditions International, Rochester, Vermont 1990, p.92. [19] Georges Dumézil, *Les dieux souverains des Indo-Européens*, Gallimard, Paris 1977, p.25, o.t. [20] Mircea Eliade, *Essai sur les origines...*, p.294; Mircea Eliade, *Meșterul Manole*, pp.256-257, o.t. [21] Josephus, *Against Apion* (transl. by William Whiston), Wesley Center for Applied Theology, I.22. [22] Josephus, *The Antiquities...* I.6.4. [23] *History of Herodotus* I.1 (transl. by George Rawlinson), John Murray, London 1875, 3rd ed. [24] *Ibid.* VII.89.2. [25] For instance, the map shown in <http://www.viewzone.com/abraham3.html>. [26] Graves, Patai, p.165. [27] *History of Herodotus*, VII.70; III.101. [28] Arrian, *Anabasis Alexandri* (transl. by Iliff Robson, 1933), book VIII (*Indica*), § 6. [29] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 5, *hadith* 169. [30] Pappus, *The Qabalah*, p.168. [31] Graves, Patai, pp.73,185. [32] Nicholas Roerich, *Altai-Himalaya*, Frederick A. Stokes Comp., New York 1929, p.37. [33] Kersten, p.43. [34] Martin Haug, *The Parsis: Essays on Their Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion*, (reprint after the 2nd edition by E.W. West, Trubner, London 1878), Cosmo, New Delhi 1978, p.16. [35] Sheler, p.67. [36] Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, Summit Books, New York, 1987, p. 82. [37] Strabo, *Geography*, XV.19.

VII. THE DECALOGUE OR THE LAW OF GOD

“I am Yahweh thy God... Thou shalt have no other gods before me”

Exodus 20:2-3

God revealed the Ten Commandments to His chosen one, Moses, on the Mount of Sinai (Exodus 20:2-17). There is a modified version in Deuteronomy 5:6-21. The Decalogue is also found in Leviticus (from Levi’s people of priests, *the Levites*) considered to be the Book of religious precepts (19:2-4, 11, 12, 16).

The second half of Decalogue (Exodus 20:13-17) included interdictions, whose imperative grammatical function (thou shalt not...) eliminated any trace of concession; they mainly referred to the social life. Among the first five—most of which refer to God and the right attitude towards Him—it was only the last commandment about the respect paid to the parents, that had an affirmative formulation.

It is worth noting that the order and sometimes even the content of the commandments were changed (one could say adapted) in the Catholic tradition. Thus, the interdiction for killing was the sixth in the Hebrew order and the fifth in the Catholic catechism [1].

When referring to the Old Testament, Mircea Eliade wrote about Yahweh: “His «justice» at once moral, cosmic and social constitutes the fundamental norm of the universe“ [2]. “«I will judge with equity», said God” (Psalms 75.2).

Jesus said in the New Testament that the Law and what the prophets have said had to be observed (Matthew 5:17-19; 7:12; Luke 11:28). Decalogue appeared, in this way, either implicitly or explicitly (for instance Matthew 5:21,27; 19:18-19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; 12:30; Luke 18:20 etc.).

However, the *Bible* was not the single Scripture containing a moral code. In other countries of the East, long before Moses, there used to exist well-established, respected, and ethical rules believed to come from the Divine. Such an instance was the famous Hammurabi’s code of laws also comprising Ten Commandments, which could find a parallel in the *Rig-Veda*. The Babylonian king received his code from Shamash having flames emerging from his shoulders [3], and that reminded the story of Moses. According to *Enuma elish*, the Babylonian epic of creation, Marduk took the *Tablets of the Destiny (of the Law)* from the goddess Tiamat [4] and that concluded the earlier phase of the Neolithic in which the religion of Mother Goddess prevailed (ch. XX A). This is “the earliest example of what might be called

priestly politics, whereby the mythology of an earlier age and culture is completely inverted, so that the divinities of the previous era are named demons and the divinities of the new order are exalted to a position of supremacy” [5]. The domination of the Father god became the paradigm of the Iron Age (ch. XIX A)—about 1250 BC in Levant (Palestine), which corresponded to the period of Moses—and determined “the polarization: the one divine and good, the other «fallen» and «evil»” [6] (on the pretended original sin, see ch. IX; also ch. XX B) which stood as a basis for Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christian religion and Islam and, furthermore, could explain the characteristic disregard of Mother Earth of the 20th century.

The entire group of moral and religious principles in the great spiritual movements of world is very well expressed by the word *Dharma* (Sanskrit; *Dhamma*, Pali²⁴⁶; *Lex aeterna*, Lat.; *al-Fitrah*, Arab.). The *Justice* of Yahweh is close to the Sumerian *Me*, the Babylonian *Masaru* and the Egyptian *Maat* (or *Mayet*) [2]. *Maat* was the universal law binding divine beings and human beings, for they all live “by *Maat*, in *Maat* and for *Maat*.” “She embodies truth, right order, lawfulness and justice. Both the pharaoh and the judges wore the emblem of *Maat*. In a hymn one says: «I am Thoth, my two hands united to carry *Maat*... *Maat* is in every place that is yours... I come to thee, I bring to thee *Maat*. Thou livest by her. Thou rejoyst in her, thou art perfect by her, thou unitest by her, thou givest by her, thou restest upon her... thou art powerful²⁴⁷ by her, thou art stable by her, thou art adorned with her, thou risest by her... the divine entities reward you with *Maat*, for they know her wisdom... Your right eye is *Maat*, your left eye is *Maat*... your flesh, your members are *Maat*... the breath of your nose is *Maat*... you exist because *Maat* exists, and she exists because you exist»” [7]. It is in the “hall of *Maat*” that the dead person’s soul is judged. If the dead one lived “with *Maat* in his heart” [8] then he would get eternal life. *Maat* was even personified as a goddess, which should not be in the least surprising, since *Dharma* was also personified as Yudhishtira’s father, as well as *Dharman* in one of the Vedic hymns [9].

Plato called the absolute, immanent and, hence, ideal righteousness (*dikaiosýne*, Gr.) and the same did Matthew (6:33): “Seek ye first... his righteousness” (*dikaiosýne*).

The birth and development of the great civilizations would have been

²⁴⁶ The language of earlier Buddhist canon, which was preserved in Sri Lanka.

²⁴⁷ See below also Tiamat, Inanna, Ishtar.

inconceivable in the absence of these principles. These *Laws*, as the *Bible* calls them, are perennial over centuries and millenniums and originate from a common, archetypal model of a divine nature, being conveyed down to people through some chosen ones considered to be great initiates or prophets. There are, naturally, certain differences (pertaining to surface details and not to the essence) among these rules, reflecting various historical, social, cultural, geographic, climatic peculiarities.

Dharma-Shastra was a code that contained the whole corpus of Hindu laws. It was *smriti* (see our Foreword). It is considered to have been elaborated by 18 lawgivers inspired by Divinity (but the names of forty-two old authorities are given), the first of whom were Manu and Yajnavalkya. Some deities as Vishnu, also appeared among them.

Manu was the name given in India to the fourteen Fathers of mankind (from the root *man*, to think, Sanskr.). They ruled over the era bearing their names (*Manuantara*). The first one was called Swayambhuva.

Manu-Samhita comprised the laws attributed to the first Manu and these were the first and chief of works classified as *smriti*. This law code was subsequent to the *Vedas*, but the deities belonged to the *Vedas*. It is supposed to have been composed in the 5th century BC but it contained, however, much earlier rules and traditions. It is said to have originally included 100,000 verses arranged into 24 chapters [10].

Dharma comes from the root *dhri*, meaning *to hold*. Dharma refers to the eternal nature, which constantly exists with a particular object. In other words, Dharma refers to that activity or natural law which cannot be changed. When mentioned in the Scriptures, Dharma is the eternal function of all beings in relationship with God or the Guru.

For example, heat is the natural (innate) Dharma of fire, liquidity indicates the Dharma of water, light is the Dharma of sun, to produce a plant is the Dharma of a seed etc. Dharma, therefore, is a comprehensive term that expresses the vital or true nature of men, animals, metals, and all other creatures. It refers to the immutable cosmic laws that pervades each and every particle of the cosmos, and runs the entire universe and all beings. As the Lord does not have beginning, middle or end, Dharma does not have any beginning or end, it is eternal.

Jean Herbert achieved in his *Spiritualité hindoue* a deep analysis of the extremely complex concept of Dharma [11] from which we provide the following synopsis.

In Hinduism the essential principle of life is to follow Dharma. It denotes whatever sustains and elevates, hence it is the basic principle of all the manifestations of life, and it is what we call Truth or God. Gandhi used to

say that it is more correct to say *Truth is God*, that *God is Truth* [12].

Bhagavan Das [13] explains: from a scientific point of view, Dharma is the *characteristic feature*; from a moral and legal point of view it is the *duty*; in psychological and spiritual terms it is the *religion*; generally speaking it is the *justice* and the *law*.

The Sanskrit text of the *Bhagavad-Gita* starts with the word *Dharma*. Dharma—i.e. duty, religion, justice and law—is the major focus of the *Mahabharata*. The most general significance of Dharma is shown here to be the cosmic order (*Sanatana Dharma*—eternal and universal Dharma). Thus, Krishna considers himself to be the son of Dharma, his name being Dharmaja [14]. Likewise, Nara (the prototype of man, of the individual soul) and Narayana which is Vishnu (the prototype of God, of the Cosmic Soul) are both considered the sons of Dharma [15]. The Supreme Person, Purushottama is born out of Dharma [16]. It was Brahma who has created Dharma as a superior force. Dharma is the sovereign of sovereignty: “there is nothing higher than Dharma” [17]. After the *Laws of Manu*, Dharma is our only friend following us even beyond death since all the rest decay with the body [11].

What the *Mahabharata* taught us was to gather the unique treasure: to make good acts, to be moderate and self-controlled, to gather that wealth which cannot be stolen by thieves, or taken by tyrants, which follows us after death, that never becomes scattered or worn out [18]. The Buddha also explains: “Righteousness is a safe treasure which no one can steal. It is a treasure which accompanies man even after death; it is a treasure which is the source of all knowledge and all perfection” [19]. Jesus gave the following advice: “Lay not for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust spoils, and where thieves dig through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust spoils, and where thieves do not dig through nor steal” (Matthew 2:19-20).

“Satisfaction, patience, self-control, non-stealing, purity, mastery over senses, knowledge of the *Shastra*²⁴⁸, knowledge of the Supreme, truthfulness, absence of anger, this is the tenfold Dharma”—says the *Law of Manu* [11]. Krishna specified: “non-violence (in thought, word and deed) truthfulness, abstention from taking what is not given, freedom from lust, anger and greed, desire to work for the happiness and welfare of all beings—these constitute the Dharma of all classes of society” [20]. Gandhi wrote: “Dharma means religion in the highest sense of the term; it encompasses Hinduism, Islam, Christianity etc., but is superior to them all” [21].

²⁴⁸ Rule, scripture (Sanskrit); by extension any book acknowledged for its divinity or authority.

*The Papyrus Prisse*²⁴⁹ (about eight centuries before Moses) wrote that God said of Himself: “I am the Hidden One, the Creator of Heaven and of all beings. I am the Great God created by himself and without equal. I am yesterday and I know tomorrow. I am the Law for every being and I am the essence.” The primary Egyptian god described himself as *Nuk pu Nuk* (I am who I am). Likewise with Exodus (3:14): “I am that I am” (or “whose name is «I am»”).

Buddhism also has ten commandments from which five were for every man: do not kill, do not steal, do not commit adultery, do not lie, do not drink intoxicating liquors [22]. The rest were meant for the ascetics aiming at Nirvana. There were also others, even stricter, for those who have given up this world. Likewise, Jain religion asks to observe a set of twelve rules described in *Tattvarthadhigama Sutra*.

Zoroaster (Zarathustra), after some historians might have lived between 660-583, according to others between c.570-c.500; there are opinions placing him in the 10th century (Mary Boyce; Dumézil doesn't reject any of the previous variants [23]) or even the 13th century BC. He proclaimed Ahura Mazda as the unique God in the sacred book *Zend Avesta* (Law, Persian) that foretold his reincarnation as the Savior Saoshyant (ch. XIX B).

More recently, the *Qur'an* contained a Dodecalogue (twelve commandments) in the surah²⁵⁰ 17 (23-29). In Islam there is a moral and social tradition (*sunna*, Arab.), similar to the development of the ethic customs imposed by the Old Testament, while the *Law* is called *shari'ah*. The *Qur'an* itself refers to the *Sunna of Allah*, meaning God's principles of action with regard to men [24]. The Islamic correspondent of Dharma is *al-birr* and *at-taqwa* (virtue, righteousness, piety, Arab.).

Edda, a collection of mythological traditions and heroic legends of the early Scandinavians (the first dated around 1220 and attributed to Snorri Sturluson, the second to Saemund) was also centered on the idea of a unique, invisible, all knowing God, Father of the universe, full of love, gentleness and compassion.

An ancient Chinese Christian manuscript entitled *Hsü-t'ing Mi-shi-so Ching* (Jesus Messiah Sutra, Chin.) also comprised a group of ethical and religious rules [25].

Coming back to the *Bible*, the Old Testament includes many other moral,

²⁴⁹ Acquired by Achille Prisse d'Avennes.

²⁵⁰ *Surah* (plural: *suwar*; chapter, Arab.), literally means “thread”, close from semantic and phonetic point of view to *sutra* (thread, Sanskr.), which suggests the relation text-texture.

judicial, ritualistic, cultural and hygienic rules. They were largely presented in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Torah (*Thorah*, Instruction, Law, Hebr.) is the term used by the Jews to denote the divine message that was received by Moses from God. *Torah* was the *written Law*, the book of the alliance or covenant between God and His (chosen) people. The Prophets and the Writings also belonged to the Scripture but did not have the same “importance.” The Old Testament was called *Tanakh* (Hebr.), from the initial letters of the component parts: *Thorah* (or *Pentateuch*—the Five Books), *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and *Kethuvim* (Writings or Hagiographa).

The *oral Law* consisted in the oral commentary that coexisted with the written text. Since it was of a divine origin and addressed to Moses, it was of a high authority because the written text could not be accurately understood in its absence. It included the *Midrash* (literally: investigation; usually: commentary, interpretation, Hebr.)—the exegetic²⁵¹ texts on the *Tanakh*, then the *Talmud* and the *Zohar* (esoteric and mystical commentary of *Torah*; ch. II, IV). The *Talmud* was made up of two parts: the *Mishnah* (literally: repetition, Hebr.) about seeds (agriculture...), festivals (Sabbath...), women (conjugal life...), damages (civil and criminal law), holy things (the Temple...), purifications (pure and impure), and *Gemara* including commentaries on some elements of *Mishnah*: legislative aspects (*halakhah*), as well as narrative, moral, customary and folklore ones (*haggadah*).

An analysis of the Old Testament [26] discloses its obvious lack of homogeneity: it was a collective work that had been composed in different times. The *Pentateuch* was the result of a long oral and written tradition extended over centuries. A diversity of authors has left traces easily discernable in the discrepancies of diction, abundant inconsistencies and recurrences, conflicting disparity in the doctrine. The scientists identified in the beginning of Genesis the existence of two separate sources. The first mythology (belonging to the “*P*” or Priestly source) appears in chapter 1 and 2:1-4, while the second source comes from the southern kingdom of Judah and was using the word *Yahweh* (the so-called “*J*” text) and appears in chapter 2 (apart from verses 1-4) and chapter 3. The Old Testament includes also parts originating in the northern kingdom of Israel using the word *Elohim* (the “*E*” texts) as well as “*D*” (Deuteronomist) texts.

Claus Westermann [27], showed that the earlier text would be the *Song of Miriam* (Exodus 15:21) from the 13th century BC, while the *Covenant Book* (Exodus 20:22-23:33) could be dated back to the 12th-11th century BC.

²⁵¹ *Exegesis* (explanation, interpretation, relating about, Gr.).

The first six books included *Pentateuch*, which was supplemented with the *Book of Joshua Navi* (*navi* or *nabi*, prophet, Hebr.). This *Hexateuch* would have been transcribed in two versions in the 10th-9th century BC which were compiled then into one later than 722 BC. The first enterprise to establish the canonical text²⁵² of the written Law (named “the Book of the Law”) should date back to 621 BC when King Josiah showed it to his people; it should be the contribution of the high priest Hilqiyah and the scribe Shaphan (2 Kings 22:8, 10; 23:3). Thus, *Deuteronomy* would have suffered certain additions in the 7th century, while *Judges*, *Samuel* and *Kings* would have been completed towards the year 600, and *Isaiah* would have been finished around the year 540 BC. The *Psalms* have started to be written by David (c. 1000 BC), while the *Proverbs of Solomon* based on a core belonging to their author have been finished in 322 BC. Other parts (e.g. *Ecclesiastes*²⁵³, *Song of Songs*, *Chronicles*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Tobbit*, *Judith*) date back to the 3rd century BC [27]. The second attempt to decide on the canonical version was assumed by Ezra in 444 BC (Nehemiah 8:1-8), but it was only in AD 90 when the Yavneh Council declared *Tanakh* a canon. Towards the end of the 9th century, the *Masorettes* (*msr*, transmission—of a tradition: *masorah*, Hebr.) decided on the final content of the Old Testament made up of 39 books. The standard text was *Diqduke ha-Teamin* established by Aaron ben Asher in AD 930.

The canonical text referred to a number of books (from the 11th-7th centuries BC) that, however mentioned in the *Bible*, did not reach our times: the *Book of the Covenant*²⁵⁴ (Exodus 24:7; cf. Hebrews 9:19), the *Book of the Wars of Yahweh* (Numbers 21:14) that presents the acts of Moses at the Red Sea and those of Aaron’s progeny, the *Book of Jasher* or “of the Upright” (Joshua 10:13), the *Acts of Solomon* as well as a series of chronicles of the kings of Judah and Israel mentioned in the First and Second Books of Kings.

The *Talmud* had two versions: one from Jerusalem composed between the 2nd and 4th century AD, and one from Babylon finished in the 5th century AD. However, the corporation of scribes (*sopherim*, Hebr.; of whom the title for a book of the *Talmud* comes from) had been set up in the 5th century BC during the captivity in Babylon.

²⁵² In the Hebrew text of the Book of Daniel (9:2) the *canon* was called *sepherim* (books; plural form of *sepher*, Hebr.; equivalent to *biblos*, Gr.).

²⁵³ *Qoheleth* (Hebr.).

²⁵⁴ However, this could refer to the *Torah* (see 2 Kings 23:2).

The writing of the *Midrash* took place between the 2nd and the 10th century, and the *Zohar*—in the 13th century AD as we have seen (ch. II, IV).

The *Septuagint* (translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek) was accomplished in Alexandria (Pharos Island) by seventy scholars (from which it comes the name of the translation) from Judea, answering the call of Emperor Ptolemy II Philadelphus (c.308-246 BC). A Greek incomplete manuscript of the *Septuagint* confirms the dating in the 3rd century BC. It contains 50 books. The 11 supplementary books of the *Septuagint* are not accepted as a canon by the Jewish theologians, although some of them are referred to in the *Talmud*, for instance: “In spite of our sages who have expelled *Ben-Sirah*²⁵⁵, we continue to preach the valuable precepts existing in this book” [28]. The respective quotations are present not only in the *Talmud* but also in the *Midrash*. From the supplementary books there are also: the *Wisdom of Solomon* (1st century BC), the *Books of Maccabees*, the last *Books of Ezra*, then *Tobbit*, *Baruch*, *Judith* etc. The *Septuagint* remained the basic Scripture for the Eastern (Orthodox) Church that, however, does not acknowledge the 11 aforementioned books.

Between 390 and 405 Jerome translated the Old Testament into Latin after an original Hebrew text at the order of Bishop Damasus of Rome (except for the non-canonical books taken over from the extant Latin translation). This edition was called the *Vulgate* (*Vulgata editio*, common edition, Lat.) and Clement VIII declared it the Authentic Version (*Versio Authentica*, Lat.) of the Western (Catholic) Church in 1546, during the Council of Trent.

The earliest and most complete texts of the *Septuagint* were the famous *Codex Vaticanus*²⁵⁶ 1209 (with some gaps in Genesis, 2 Kings and Psalms, and without the four Books of Maccabees) and *Codex Sinaiticus*²⁵⁷ (from which the Pentateuch misses almost completely), both dating from the 4th century AD, the latest being supplemented in 1931 by the *Chester Beatty*²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ *The Book of Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirah* (*Sepher ben-Sirah*, Hebr.), that is the son of Sirah. The book is dating back to the 2nd century BC.

²⁵⁶ Otherwise known as *Codex B*. It is kept at the Vatican Library.

²⁵⁷ Also called *Codex Aleph*; it was discovered by Konstantin von Tischendorf at St. Catherine Monastery on Mount Sinai in 1844. Most of it is now at the British Library, London, except for several leaves, which are at the University Library of Leipzig.

²⁵⁸ It is now at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, and, partly at the Austrian National Library, Vienna.

*Papyrus p*⁴⁵ from the 2nd century AD. Then followed *Codex Alexandrinus*²⁵⁹ (containing all the Books of Maccabees and with less gaps than the former two) dating from the beginning of the 5th century. However, the *Codex Petropolitanus*²⁶⁰ belonging to the 6th century, is the most complete manuscript written in Hebrew [29].

In the year 1947, a 23-ft. leather scroll was discovered in a cave of Wadi Qumran near the Dead Sea. This manuscript, called *IQIs^a* contains the complete text of the *Book of Isaiah* in Hebrew, and was dated back to about 100 BC by Professor W. F. Albright of John Hopkins University. In Greek language, the *Fuad 266* and *Rylands*²⁶¹ fragments of the Old Testament belonged to the 1st (possible 2nd) century BC.

²⁵⁹ Known also as *Codex A*; it was found in 1621 by Patriarch Cyril Luker of Constantinople.

²⁶⁰ Or *Codex H*; in the Imperial Library, St. Petersburg.

²⁶¹ In the John Rylands Library, Manchester.

NOTES

[1] *The Malines Catechism*, 1882; also *Catechism...*, pp.497,544. [2] Mircea Eliade, *A History...*, vol. 1, § 114, note 9 to p.337. [3] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to p.430. [4] *Enuma elish* 6.33. [5] Baring, Cashford, p.280. [6] *Ibid.*, p.282. [7] Lucie Lamy, *Egyptian Mysteries: New Light on Ancient Knowledge*, Thames and Hudson, London 1981, pp.17,51; also Helmer Ringgren, *World and Wisdom*, H. Ohlssons Boktryckeri, Lund 1947, p.48. [8] Eliade, *The Myth...*; *apud* Baring, Cashford, p.262. [9] *The Rig-Veda* 8.35.13. [10] Dowson, pp.89,189-202. [11] Herbert, pp.116-126. [12] Gandhi, *Lettres à l'ashram*, Albin Michel, Paris 1971, p.29, o.t. [13] Bhagavan Das, *The Science of Social Organization*, Theosophical Publishing House, Madras 1932, vol. I, p.50. [14] *The Mahabharata, Shanti Parvan* 13.265. [15] *The Bhagavata Purana* I.3.9. [16] *Ibid.*, VIII.1.25. [17] *The Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad* 1.4.14. [18] *The Mahabharata* XIII.12084. [19] Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *Buddhism in Its Connexion with Christianity*, John Murray, London 1890, p.51. [20] *Bhagavata Purana* XI.17.21. [21] Gandhi, p.129, o.t. [22] Monier-Williams, p.126. [23] Dumézil, p.209. [24] Schuon, *Understanding...*, p.95. [25] P.Y. Saeki, *The Hsü-t'ing Mi-shi-so Sutra or Jesus Mesiah Sutra*, in *JNCBRAS* vol. 63 (1932) §§ 90-92,105-111, pp.37-39. [26] Kernbach, *Dicționar...*, p.79. [27] Claus Westermann, *Handbook to the Old Testament* (transl. by Robert H. Boyd), Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 1876, p.XIV. [28] M.S. Belenki, *Despre mitologia și filozofia Bibliei (On the Mythology and the Philosophy of the Bible)*, Ed. Politică, București 1982, p.34, o.t. [29] Keller, p.425.

VIII. THE MIRACLES OF MOSES

“And Yahweh said to Moses: «See, I have made thee God to Pharaoh»”

Exodus 7:1

The Jews regarded Moses (*Moshe*, Hebr.) as the founder of their religion (hence the name of it: *Mosaic*), the liberator out from bondage in Egypt, the intercessor to Divinity; he was not only the prophet who received the entire revelation but also the prototype of the future Messiah.

The miracles performed by Moses and told about in the Old Testament are numerous. His name itself could indicate a miracle: he was saved from out of the waters (*mo*, water; *uses*, saved, Coptic) since, after Exodus, Moses had been born by a woman in Levi's house (2:1-2) who abandoned him in a basket of reeds laid in the river²⁶² (2:3) from where he was found by the Pharaoh's daughter (2:5-6) who adopted him and “called his name Moses²⁶³ and said: «Because I drew him out of the water»” (2:10). There are others who interpret his name to come from *mos* (meaning *child* or *born*), which is encountered with several names of Pharaohs such as *Kamose* followed by his brother *Ahmose*, four *Thut(h)mosis*, then a second *Ahmose*.

God Himself had announced to him some upcoming miracles, ever since their first encounter. They were intended to impress the Egyptians and force them to set free the Hebrews. Exodus then described the ten plagues that fell on the Egyptians until the Pharaoh consented to let the Hebrews go (ch. 7-12), the crossing of the Red Sea (ch. 14) and the miracles performed by Moses in the desert (ch. 15-17). They were all considered to be manifestations of the divine power (*Adi Shakti*, Sanskr.) and were meant to strengthen the belief in the true God and His word-carrier, Moses. “In the wilderness shall waters break out, and torrents in the desert. And the mirage shall become a pool... And a highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass through it, but it shall be for thee. Those that go [this] way... shall not err” (Isaiah 35:6-8). Moses is also mentioned as the one, “through the great and terrible XI - 3 wilderness, [a wilderness] of fiery serpents..., who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint” (Deuteronomy 8:15). They are symbols of the Kundalini: fiery serpents (ch. IX), and living water (ch. XI D), while the

²⁶² The same legend is told about Sargon I, King of Akkad, c. 2300 BC.

²⁶³ Meaning “drawn out.”

Holy Way (of Self Realization leading to union with God) is the Sushumna or Brahmanadi (channel of Brahman, Sanskr.). We have explained the significance of liberation from bondage and of crossing the Red Sea and the desert (ch. V).

For the *chosen people* of God, that crossing signified the transcending of human condition. Egypt became the symbol of uncleanness since, however initially it was the preserver of a valuable spiritual knowledge (ch. XIX B), afterwards it turned into decadence when it started exacerbating the cult of the dead, and that tradition degenerated into anti-divine, magical practices (ch. XV C). Being the holder of divine powers (as said by Exodus 7:1 in the beginning of the chapter) by achieving the Self Realization, Moses had the mission of a savior, liberator of man from the earth bondage (Exodus 6:6-8), thus redeeming both the divine chastisement (Genesis 3:17-19) and the death penalty (“for dust you art; and into dust shalt thou return”—3:19). The retrieval of the initial Adamic state through the Self Realization brings eternal life.

Kersten held that the miracles achieved by Moses were merely manifestations of the magic that was widespread both in Israel and India (and also, we could say, in Mesopotamia that cradled it, as well as in Egypt, since the local magicians had been successful in imitating some of the performances of Moses before the Pharaoh). The German author also noticed some analogies between Moses and other eastern lawgivers with the same initial: *Manu* (India), *Menes* (first Pharaoh of Egypt), *Minos* (Cretan king who had been to Egypt to study the laws that he intended to institute in his own country), and similarities with the spiritual leaders of other peoples: Rama and Zoroaster [1].

The hero of *the Ramayana* was the ideal prototype as a ruler, son, brother, husband and father. He also enacted laws, made water come out in the desert, fed his people on some kind of manna [2], and stifled an epidemic with *soma*, largely mentioned and even deified in the *Rig-Veda* where *soma* is sometimes identified for the Supreme Being. Rama conquered the fertile territories (in India and Ceylon). He was described as having had light beams protruding like horns of his head. Other details would be given in chapter XIX B.

The horn was the symbol of power.

“The gods in Mesopotamia were always shown with a horned tiara on their heads”—said Deshayes [3]. The goddess of Laussel, on a stone bas-relief from Dordogne (c. 22,000-18,000 BC) holds a cow horn in her hand [4]. Consecration horns were found in Çatal Hüyük (7th millennium), Vinča (5th millennium), and Knossos (2nd millennium BC). [5]. Sumerian

VIII
-1, 7

VIII
-2

VIII goddesses oftentimes are portrayed with horns on ceramic seals (c. 2300-3, 4 2000) or in a bas-relief from Ur (c. 1800 BC) [6]. Isis wears the solar disk VIII between her two horns (ch. XX A). Baring and Cashford told us: “In Crete - 5 the horned altar is far more ancient than Minoan civilization” [7]. The bovine horns were the emblem of the divine Magna Mater. The divine power is, however, the Adi Shakti that is the Primordial Mother (ch. XX A, XXI). VIII Pallas Athena initially was the goddess Aurora born as flames bursting out - 8 of the head of Zeus. *Zeus Pater* (*Jupiter*, Lat.) is the homonym of *Dyaus Pitar* (Sansk.) that means Heavenly Father. The symbolism of fire, flames and light will be commented on in chapter XI E.

The Hindu god of fire, Agni, had horns, which were sharpened by Brahma himself. The *Mahabharata* told about Shiva’s horn: he wore the moon crescent on his head, held a horn in his hand and he rode on the bull Nandi. The Egyptian Ammon was called “The Lord with two horns.” In the archaic brain there is, however, a hypocamp formation called the *horn of Ammon*²⁶⁴ by the anatomists. The Egyptian allies known as the Sherden ethnic group represented on the walls of Ramesses III’s mortuary chamber at Medinet VIII Habu wore horned helmets like the Vikings where the horns symbolized the - 11 power. The mythical Tch’e in China also had horns. Alexander the Great was - 10 represented as having horns. The Celtic god Cernunnos is depicted on a VIII cauldron found in 1891 at Gundestrup (Denmark). He was sitting cross- - 9a legged (in the classical Yoga position of the lotus: *padmasana*, Sanskr.), having two horns and holding a snake in his left hand. The god was represented surrounded by animals, near a goddess [8]. This milieu reminds VIII Shiva Pashupati²⁶⁵ (Shepherd²⁶⁶, Sanskr.) carved on an ancient ceramic seal - 9b in the same posture of a Yogi (see our Introduction). The snake held in Cernunnos’ left hand (connected to the feminine channel) stands for the feminine Kundalini.

²⁶⁴ Another possibility, except for its association to the horns of the Egyptian god, would be for the name of this formation to come from Ammon, the son of Lot, conceived after the latter had got drunk with wine (Genesis 19:32-38). However initially mentioned as *Ben-Ammi* (19:38)—meaning “the Son of My people” (Hebr.)—this son of Lot reappeared in Deuteronomy (2:19) as *Ammon*. The horn of Ammon is one of the brain regions especially affected in chronic alcoholics, which might explain the relation above.

²⁶⁵ Literally: Lord of animals.

²⁶⁶ One can notice, on the one hand, the resemblance between *pashu* (cattle, Sanskr.) and *pasture* and, on the other hand, the analogy to the *Good Shepherd*, Jesus (John 10:11; cf. Isaiah 11:6).

Kerényi referred to “a Christian apologist [9] who has preserved an Orphic tradition according to which the child of Zeus and Rhea-Demeter, the Kóre or Persephone... had horns” [10]. “Zagreus, son of Zeus and Demeter, was a «horned child»” [11]. Many artistic works show us Bacchus having horns, like his companions, the Satyrs.

The horn in the Judeo-Christian tradition also symbolized power. The Semitic *El* (God) was called “the Bull El” (ch. XIX C). The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *aleph* (bull, Hebr.; *alif*, Arab. has the same meaning), representing God was originally the ideogram of the *horned head*. The sacred altar in the Tent of Meeting is provided with horns (Exodus 37:25; cf. Revelation 9:13). Deuteronomy (33:18) mentioned the horns of Joseph. Psalms talk about the horn as the power of God who protects the people invoking Him: “My God, my rock, in whom I will trust, my shield, and the horn of my salvation” (18:2). “There will I cause the horn of David to bud forth” (132:17). The horn, however, was also the power of the arrogant who were lowered down by God: “I said... to the wicked: «Lift not up the horns: Lift not up your horn on high; speak not arrogantly with a [stiff] neck»” (75:4-5). In the *Book of Enoch* the horns are associated to the Lamb of God: “I saw also, that horns grew upon those lambs... I saw, too, that a large horn sprouted out on one among the sheep” [12]. “The first, who was in the midst of them, became a Word, and that Word became a large beast, upon the head of which were great and black horns” [13]. As a symbol of Power, the horns are also attributed to Jesus in glory. The Christ in the basilica of Vaison-la-VIII Romaine is only one example [14]. That symbol could be met in the New - 12 Testament too: “And raised up a horn of deliverance for us in the house of David his servant” (Luke 1:69), since the lineage of Jesus from the house of David was a fact of general acceptance (Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38). Revelation (5:6) read about “a Lamb standing, as slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God.” Most frequently, however, the horns are changed into a wreath (for instance the wreath of laurels adorning the forehead of heroes) or into a crown.

“When Moses came down from the Mount of Sinai... the skin of his face shone” (Exodus 34:29; cf. 34:35), that means it was radiating rays. The word “rays” was literally translated by “horns” in the *Vulgate* (in Hebrew language, *keren* has the double meaning of *horn* and *ray*): “*cumque descenderet Moses de monte Sinai... qui videbant faciem egredientis Mosis esse cornutam*” (Lat.). This fact explains the image attributed to Moses in the art of the Middle Ages. We would remind, for instance, the famous statue of Moses carved in marble by Michelangelo: his head is adorned with two VIII protuberances (like two short, thick horns), which may also be considered to - 6

be light beams [15]. There is a similar sculpture of Moses by Claus Sluter [16].

The Book of Habakkuk (3:4) described God in the following way: “And [his] brightness was as the light: rays²⁶⁷ [came forth] from his hand and there was the hiding of his power.” This is in full agreement with the facts mentioned above. The topic of the divine energy emanating from the hands is fully developed in chapter XI C and E.

Zoroaster, like Moses and Rama, could command fire, was of royal descent, and proclaimed a new faith. When he was eighteen years old, God announced him His Law on al-Bordj (meaning “the Mountain,” Persian), where He was announced by thunders, then made His appearance wrapped in a luminous cloud and surrounded by flames (ch. XI E). Zoroaster also went for a search of a fertile land in the company of his adepts and divided the waters to let his followers pass with dry feet. Other details are given in chapter X.

VIII On coins, Alexander the Great is depicted with horns. Many scholars - 10 believe that the prophecy of Daniel (chapter 8) refers to him. In the *Qur'an*, Alexander (*al-Sikandar*, Arab.) is regarded as *Dhul* (or *Zul*) *Qarnain* (two-horned, Arab.), the companion of al-Khidr.

Kersten started from the opinion of Jens Juergens [17]—claiming that the Egyptian priests knew the secret of gunpowder and its use in fireworks as early as six thousand years ago—in order to advocate the idea that Moses might have found it from the secret Scriptures of the priests, and used it for some miracles in the Old Testament. Moreover, Kersten believed that Moses even bandaged his severely burnt face after a supposed explosion, bringing the story in the Exodus as a supporting evidence in this respect [18].

Let us examine the text about Moses more closely: “when he came down from the mountain—that Moses knew not that the skin of his face shown through his talking to him” (Exodus 34:29; cf. 34:35). Having addressed himself to the people, he used to “put on his face a veil; and when Moses went in before Yahweh to speak with him, he took the veil off” (34:33,35). Therefore, it was a *brightness*, an emanation of light (ch. XI E) coming from the face of Moses and not a burning. Moreover, once in front of God, Moses *took the veil off* (34:34).

To find less hazardous explanations, in the followings we shall again resort to the Yoga culture from times immemorial.

²⁶⁷ Literally: *horns*.

NOTES

[1] Kersten, pp.46-50. [2] Édouard Schuré, *The Great Initiates* (transl. by Gloria Rasberry), St. George Books, West Nyack, N. Y. 1961, pp.51-53. [3] Deshayes, p.293, and fig.89,91,94,97,98 with the adjacent commentaries to pp.252-254, o.t. [4] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to pp.2,44. [5] *Ibid.*, illustr. to p.110. [6] *Ibid.*, illustr. to pp.177,182,188,191,201,203,208,212,219,223. [7] *Ibid.*, p.129. [8] Christiane Eluère, *The Celts—Conquerors of Ancient Europe*, Discoveries, H.N. Abrams, New York 1993, illustr.116; Kernbach, *Dicționar...*p.113. [9] Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians (Legatio pro Christianis)*, XX, (transl. by B. P. Pratten); cf. *Orphic Hymns* XXIX, 11. [10] Jung, Kerényi, pp.147. [11] Nonnus Dion, *Dionysiaca*, VI, 264, *apud* Jung, Kerényi, p.148. [12] *The Book of Enoch* 89.12-13. [13] *Ibid.*, 89.47. [14] De Souzenelle, pp.10,56, and illustr. to p.404. [15] E.g. in A. Parronchi, *Michelangelo*, Sadea Editore, Firenze, fig.52,53. [16] Élie Faure, *Histoire de l'Art. L'Art renaissant*, Livre de Poche, Paris 1965, fig.106. [17] Jens Juergens, *Der biblische Moses als Pulver- und Dynamitfabrikant*, München 1928. [18] Kersten, pp.48-49.

IX. THE SERPENT-STAFF AND THE BRASS FIERY SERPENT

“Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it into a pole”

Numbers 21:9

In Exodus, Aaron (in presence of Moses) performed the first miracle in front of the Pharaoh, on God’s command: “Take thy staff and cast [it] before Pharaoh— it will become a serpent” (7:9). And this actually happened. The Egyptian sorcerers did the same but Aaron’s serpent swallowed the others. It was one of many instances of punishment of the unauthorized manipulations.

Kersten regarded this no more than “a popular trick in the repertoire of Indian fakirs” where, for instance, a snake could be put into a catatonic state so that it looks like a staff [1].

We think that the above facts require a more careful examination.

From the very beginning, it will be stressed out that the serpent (“magic” for the uninitiated)—into which the staff was changed—was the metaphor for the *Kundalini* energy, whose name signifies the Coiled-up (Sanskrit). A classical treatise of Yoga describes her as follows: “The great Goddess [Kundalini] sleeps, closing with her mouth the opening through which one can ascend to the Brahmaraṇḍhara, to that place where there is neither pain nor suffering. The Kundalini sleeps above the Kanda²⁶⁸. She gives liberation to the Yogi. He who knows Kundalini knows Yoga. The Kundalini, it is said, is coiled like a serpent. He who can induce her to move is liberated. There is no doubt” [2]. The subtle energy is there portrayed as “the great Goddess, Kundalini, who in her sleep closes the mouth of the Sushumna” [3]. *Shiva Samhita* depicts her as follows: “In the pericarp of the (Mool)adhara lotus there is a triangular beautiful yoni, hidden and kept secret. It is the supreme goddess Kundalini, ... in a coil. It has three and a half coils and is in the mouth of the Sushumna. It represents the creative force of the world, and is always engaged in creation” [4]. Another text read: “Over it shines the sleeping Kundalini fine as the fiber of the lotus stalk. She is the world-bewilderer²⁶⁹ gently covering the mouth of Brahmadvāra by her own (mouth). Like the spiral of a conch shell Her shining snake like form goes three and

²⁶⁸ The Mooladhara chakra.

²⁶⁹ See ch. II.

a half times around Shiva, and Her luster is that of a strong flash of young strong lightening. . . . It is She who maintains all beings of the world by means of inspiration and expiration, and shines in the cavity of the root (Moola) lotus like a chain of brilliant lights” [5]. Gyaneshwara²⁷⁰ (b.1275) wrote: “So lies Kundalini, very small and coiled three and a half times, like a female serpent with her head turned downwards. She is like a ring of lightening, folds of flaming fire, or a bar of pure gold” [6].

Jung had a full knowledge about the Kundalini and has experienced the Self Realization, the state of Yoga²⁷¹. He declared that in his “line of research important parallels with yoga has come to light, especially with *kundalini yoga*” among other forms. “These forms of yoga with their rich symbolism afford me invaluable comparative material for interpreting the collective unconscious. . . . I. . . regard this spiritual achievement of the East as one of the greatest things the human mind has ever created.” He also estimated that in the course of the human development, a specific form of Yoga would appear in the West, having a common base with the essence of Christ’s teaching [7]. In his lectures given on the *Psychology of Kundalini Yoga* he explained: “You see, the Kundalini in psychological terms is that which makes you go on the greatest adventures. . . . It is the quest that makes life livable, and this is Kundalini; this is the divine urge” [8]. “Shakti-Kundalini or Devi-Kundalini is a goddess. She is the female principle, the self manifesting power which surrounds the gem at the center, the gold seed, the jewel, the pearl, the egg. The Kundalini serpent is, however, also Devi-Kundalini, a chain of glittering lights, the «world bewilderer»“ [9]. Jung asserts that the awakening comes about only “by the grace of heaven, which is the Kundalini. Something in you, an urge in you, must lead you to it” [10]. “To activate the unconscious means to awaken the divine, the *Devi*, Kundalini—to begin the development of the suprapersonal within the individual in order to kindle the light of gods²⁷². Kundalini, which is to be awakened in the sleeping *Mooladhara* world, is the suprapersonal, the non-ego. . . . For this reason Kundalini is the same principle as the *Soter*, the Savior Serpent of the Gnostics²⁷³” [11] called the Perates [12], while for the Sethians both the Demiurge and Logos are serpentlike [13]. Other times, the Gnostics

²⁷⁰ Also spelled Jnaneshwara; called sometimes Gyanadeva (Jnanadeva).

²⁷¹ Other details would be given in ch. XIX C.

²⁷² Ch. XI E.

²⁷³ Ch. IX and XX C4.

identified the Serpent with Sophia herself [14]. Epiphanius, the bishop of Salamis (or of Constantia, in Cyprus) showed in his *Panarion* (Medicine Chest, Gr.; also known as *Adversus Haereses*) that in the *Gospel of Eve* the Snake imparted knowledge to the Primordial Woman [15], while Gnostic texts claim that “the female principle came [in] the snake, the instructor” [16], and replaced Sophia through Moluchtas, the serpent-like Wind [17]. Others identified the snake with Eve of Light, a double of Sophia.

IX-1 This energy is stored within the sacrum bone as a serpent wounded in
 IX-2 three and a half coils or loops (*kundal*, Sanskr.). The *Spiral of life* of the
 deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) has a helical shape. The alpha helix is a
 widespread type of the polypeptidic chain structure standing for the building
 up of the proteins. There are even known all-alpha proteins (having an almost
 100% alpha helix structure) such as myoglobin, myohemecitrin etc. In the
 case of α -keratin, myocin, tropomyocin, fibrinogen there are three and a half
 IX-3 amino acid remains per 360° turn. If one examines the image of a leptotene
 (spiral chromosome that appears during the spermatogenesis, within the
 meiosis) it will be noticed that it includes three and a half S-shaped loops in
 its structure [18].

This number, heavy with significance, is also found in the Bible on four occurrences. The first time it appears in the case of Elijah who stopped the rain for exactly three and a half years (Luke 4:25; James 5:17). For a second time it appears in a context that could remind the elements of the subtle body: the main channel (Sushumna, likened to a river, *nadi*, Sanskr.) and the lateral ones, right and left: “I heard the man... who was above the waters of the river; and he held up his right hand and his left hand unto the heavens, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it is for a time, times, and a half” (Daniel 12:7), i.e. one plus two plus a half is three and a half. It is then written that the words will remain a secret (ch. XI B) for the unauthorized (“the wicked”) until the Resurrection Day, i.e. the moment of Self Realization: “Go thy way, Daniel; for these words are closed and sealed till the time of the end... and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand” (12:9-10). The mentioning of “three and a half” appears twice in Revelation (11:9,11) too. Also the public life of Jesus lasted three and a half years (ch. XXI B; cf. XVII).

Jung showed that “the lower vertebrae²⁷⁴ have from the earliest times been favorite symbols of the collective psychic substratum, which is localized anatomically in the subcortical centers, the cerebellum and the spinal cord. These organs constitute the snake” [19]. That was acknowledged as early as

II-20

²⁷⁴ The five joint vertebrae that make up the sacrum bone (our comment).

Hippolytus [20] who wrote: “the form, however, of the brain is like the head of a serpent... proceeds from the cerebellum to the lower parts of the rest.” Other interesting anatomic peculiarity can be noticed in the heart (considered IX - 4 to be the dwelling of Atman, ch. IV, XIX C) whose muscle contains spiral-shaped fibers.

Those who mastered the subtle energy could use it to perform certain achievements that looked miraculous in the eyes of the others, such as the annihilation of the real snakes. In this context, there are well known the cases of saints living in woods without the beasts ever attacking them. In this respect, the Bible read: “Of the beasts of the earth thou shalt not be afraid... and the beasts of the field shalt be at peace with thou” (Job 5:22-23; cf. Isaiah 11:6,8; 35:9).

“Then Yahweh sent fiery serpent among the people, which bit the people: and much people of Israel died... And Yahweh said to Moses: «Make thee a fiery [serpent], and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every XI - 37 one that is bitten, and looketh upon it, shall live». And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, if a serpent had bitten any man, and he beheld the serpent of brass he lived” (Numbers 21:6,8-9). In chapter VIII we reminded the fiery serpents which were also mentioned in Deuteronomy 8:15.

“The Minoan snake goddess... held the snakes of life and death in both IX - 27 her hands” [21]. It is obvious that the last was the common, poisonous snake, while the first one was the secret snake known only by the initiates as Moses.

A few remarks are necessary here. For one thing, the fiery serpent is a XI - 38 more complex symbol since it expresses the light manifestation of this energy (ch. XI E) and indicates its active state (by being *fiery*). The *staff* and the *pole* are nothing but metaphors for the spinal cord containing the residual energy. Moses had put (awakened) the fiery serpent “*upon*” that pole. The attempt of an unauthorized person to manipulate the Kundalini is not free from dangers, a thing that is warned against in *every* trustworthy book on Yoga: the fiery serpents made certain people die. In exchange, the initiate (every one that looketh upon it) came to acquire eternal life through the Self Realization, which is the *second birth*, while the idea of regeneration is connected to the sloughing of snakes. The transformation of the brass serpent concept into a material idol after the death of Moses was the result of an unauthorized manipulation, and after six centuries that idol drove Hezekiah into a wrath: “he... broke in pieces the serpent of brass that Moses had made” (2 Kings 18:4). Hezekiah terms the brazen serpent: *Nehushtan*, and in Numbers 21:9 it is called *Seraph*, while Isaiah (6:2) gives the name of *Seraphim* (plural form) to the winged beings that appeared in his vision.

Moses' brass serpent was taken as a model for other similar effigies, since archaeologists unearthed in Midian a small bronze snake.

We also have to think about the special relevance of the apparently surprising analogy between Jesus and the brass serpent: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, thus must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14). This topic appeared again in the Middle Ages when a 12th or 13th century mystical poem, translated by Rémy de Gourmont [22] described IX-6 Jesus, the regenerator of people's spirituality, to be the crucified brass Serpent.

Before surveying the serpentine representations of the Kundalini—that are extremely varied—it is useful and necessary to clear up the problem of the so-called *original sin* which is mentioned in the *Bible*. Baring and Cashford specified its Semitic origins: "The Semitic view of life... brought to the literature of the Bronze Age... a fundamental conviction of human guilt" [23]. We should mention that the concept of guiltiness plays no part in native spirituality, as an instance within North America where the missionaries tried to introduce it to tribal societies [24].

A first observation is that Adam and Eve are divine prototypes of the humans that appeared on our planet (ch. XIX C) since they dwelled the very Kingdom of God and thus, were immortal. The metaphorical exile from the Paradise should be understood as a transfer (limited in nature, hence a fall from the divine condition)—of some of their inherent qualities—towards the earthly human beings who missed other divine attributes, for instance the knowledge of Truth (i.e. of God). Another interpretation takes it as a metaphor of the decay of human race from the perfect state of the golden age (total respect of Dharma) down to the imperfection of the following epochs due to the disregard of the divine laws (ch. XIX A). If we are to talk about sin, then, ignorance is actually the greatest one possible (ch. IV).

Attributing a "sin" to Eve constituted an attempt to demythologize the Goddess—worshipped in the previous cultures—into a human woman, a rejection of the Feminine as a sacred Principle.

The *Bible* itself proves the "original sin" being a false problem because, otherwise, how could we explain the obvious contradiction between two texts of Genesis? To start with, the *first commandment* given by God to humans was: "God *blessed* them; and God said to them: «Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it»" (Genesis 1:28; emphasis added; cf. 35:11 etc.). That was addressed to the couple, *before* eating of the famous apple (actually, a symbol of immortality—ch. IV), that was interpreted as the performance of the sexual act. This distortion came from the sentence: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked"

(3:7), where to the verb “to know” (*yada*, Hebr.) the Jews sometimes attributed a sexual connotation. After woman was created, it was no other than God who proclaimed: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” (2:24). Another text (3:16-19) that *followed* the former two would imply their *damnation* and punishment for performing the respective act. Is it a *blessing* or a *curse*? Genesis also mentions the *sons of God* (hence divine incarnations) who took themselves wives of the daughters of men who had borne children to them (6:2,4). Therefore, is it a question of sin, after all?

Supposing—contrary to all reasons, as we have shown—the existence of an “original sin,” according to the New Testament the sacrifice of Jesus absolved humankind from that guilt. With the Church insisting on this pretended transgression means that the significance attributed to the death of Jesus is actually rejected. How many times more should Jesus die so that priests might renounce frightening people with an imaginary guilt? “It is essential to remember that the myth²⁷⁵ and its implications, together with the patriarchal customs regarding women, were *not* endorsed by Jesus—quite the contrary—but they were transmitted from the Old to the New Testament through the writings of Paul and so they entered formal Christian doctrine” [25]. *Never* in the gospels Jesus refers to “original sin” nor equates sexuality with sinfulness. He only refers to negative, individual actions, “offences of the world”: “Woe to the world because of the offences” (Matthew 18:7). Mary Magdalene was identified improperly (ch. XX C4) to the sinful woman whose “original sin” was redeemed (Luke 7:48; cf. 7:47). However, this became one of the foundation stones of Christian theology.

The idea of transgression (sin) is deeply planted in man’s consciousness. This invention is cultivated since the early childhood by the parents and family, then by the educators in schools, and last but not least by the Church. It is, in fact, a form of enslavement, of dominating human personality. In the *Bible*, Jesus never referred to the “original sin”; He never claimed that He had come to atone the sin of humans, as revealed by the biblical scholar Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768). As a matter of fact, it was only Paul, the theorist who came into view after Christ resurrection and first brought in this idea (ch. XX C2), followed by some Christian Fathers. Paul’s work is abundant in texts having sin as the main topic, such as entire chapters (1, 5, 6 and 7) within the Epistle to the Romans. Actually, in that epistle the word “sin” appears 45 times (out of 72 in all Paul’s epistles). Moreover, the Pauline Church resorted to false interpretations, out of which we shall mention here only two instances. The Greek word *hamartía* in the New

²⁷⁵ This refers to the “original sin.”

Testament text was translated by *sin* while its actual meaning is *missing the mark*, completely devoid of guilt or shame. In the same way, *metánoia* (change of mind, Gr.; meaning spiritual transformation) was wrongly translated as *repentance* (e.g. Matthew 3:8,11) [26]. Paul insinuated also the idea that the redemption Jesus granted to the “fallen” world was an illusion. Then came Augustine of Hippo who was the main responsible in developing the doctrine of “original sin.” As a consequence, “There had been an emphasis on guilt and sin, struggle and strain in the religion of God in the West since Augustine, which was alien, for example, to Greek Orthodoxy theology” [27]. Augustine made no exception for one’s own mother or wife: “What is the difference whether it is in a wife or a mother, it is still Eve the temptress that we must beware of in any woman” [28]. Elaine Pagels arrives at the following conclusion: “Instead of the freedom of the will and humanity’s original royal dignity, Augustine emphasized humanity’s enslavement to sin” [29]. He regarded humankind as wicked and perverse lacking innate goodness, and entered in conflict with the ideas of the patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom who argued that we should not be blamed for Adam’s sin. The followers of Clement of Alexandria rejected the theory of the Fall as derogatory to the dignity of Adam and Eve. Another opponent of Augustine was the British theologian Pelagius (c.354-418) who thought that the original sin was absurd, since the human nature was basically good but had been corrupted by human weakness. The idea that we all have sinned in Adam (Romans 5:12; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:22) nourished the Christian consciousness with the culpability for a non-existent sin. Actually, Augustine followed an author relying only on a Latin version and mistook the text in Romans 5:12 as “death passed upon all men because of Adam [in whom] all sinned,” instead of Paul’s Greek text: “death passed upon all men because [in that] all sinned” [30]. Due to Augustine’s reflections, the theologians believed that the curse of the life on earth passed from Adam through “heredity” to all future generations. “The doctrine of original sin deprived humanity of any innate divinity, and instead named woman and man as innately corrupt and condemned to sin eternally. There was no intrinsic good in the natural world and in human nature” [31]. For more details on Augustine’s contribution to that topic we send to other sources too [32].

Freud’s devastating work did nothing else than deepen the feeling of guiltiness. It is no secret, today, that Freud’s theory is exclusively derived from a gross deception, as numerous researchers have recently demonstrated [33].

Sahaja Yoga has experimentally proved that this *sin* conditioning results

in nothing else than a severe catch of the Vishuddhi chakra that can develop in the physical body diseases such as spondylitis, angina or even larynx cancer. The only way to get rid of that catch is to realize the identity with our Self (ch. XIX C), and consequently becoming aware that “I am not guilty at all” (a very powerful mantra for cleansing the Vishuddhi chakra). Bishop Kovalevsky admitted: “shame... can stop the evolution” [34]. He obviously referred to the guilt associated to shame.

To come back to the main theme of this chapter, we shall quote Marija Gimbutas who has shown that “the snake and its abstracted derivative, the spiral, are dominant motifs of the art of Old Europe²⁷⁶, and their imaginative use in spiraliform design throughout the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods remained unsurpassed by any subsequent decorative style until the Minoan civilization, the sole inheritor of Old European lavishness... This art reached its peak of unified symbolic and aesthetic expression c. 5000 BC... The mysterious dynamism of the snake, its extraordinary vitality and periodic rejuvenation, must have provoked a powerful emotional response in the Neolithic agriculturists, and the snake was consequently mythologized, attributed with a power that can move the entire cosmos... The snake was the symbol of immortality... The snake was stimulator and guardian of the spontaneous life energy” [35]. The author further explains that the serpent in Old European beliefs was actually a messenger of good and not of evil as in the system of Judeo-Christian symbols: “Influenced by Christian, Semitic, and Indo-European religions, we are accustomed to think of the snake as an incarnation of evil. The snake of Old Europe, however, represents the antithesis of Christian, Semitic, and Indo-European religions. She assures the well-being and continuity of life through intimate identification and harmony with the cycles of nature” [36].

Ever since Abraham times the Jews represented Yahweh as a serpent [37]. Later, through the *Bible* the snake was changed into a symbol of evil. However, Yahweh was represented having serpent-shaped feet on an amulet IX - 5 from the second or first century BC [38]. Likewise, another major deity, Zeus Meilichios, was pictured as a wound serpent on a votive tablet in Piraeus (4th IX - 3 7 century BC) [39]. Along the line of vehicles of the gods (already mentioned in ch. IV), the serpent (Kundalini) can be considered on the human scale as the *vehicle* of this Masculine Principle (Atman) thus involved in an ascending movement towards the supreme goal—*unio mystica* in the Sahasrara. After Aelian, in the days of King Herod, a huge serpent visited a Jewish maiden [40], and according to Frazer there is every reason to assume

²⁷⁶ The civilization of «Old Europe» includes the period 6500-3500 BC (ch. I).

that this is a reference to Our Lady [41]. Jung had drawn a similarity between anima and Virgin Mary (ch. XIX C), while anima had the ribbon that is the serpent, for its symbol. The great psychologist considered the biblical tale responsible for the idea that “the snake was «the most spiritual animal» (*tò pneumatikótaton zoon*, Gr.; an idea that could be found also with Philo of Alexandria) and the favorite symbol for *nous* (spirit, Gr.)” [42].

IX-22 A seal of Akkadian²⁷⁷ origin was brought to light by archaeologists in the ruins of a Mesopotamian city. On it there were engraved a serpent on a tree in the center, with a woman and a horned man on its sides. The image was rather faded away and hardly visible [43]. Some interpreted this as an artistic representation of the scene with the three well-known characters: Adam, Eve, and the serpent. The man could also be supposed to embody Satan who tempted Eve through the serpent. It is obvious, however, that two previously mentioned elements could be found here: the so-called horns (energy beams, ch. VIII) and the serpent climbed on the tree (which substituted here the staff or the pole, both of them representing symbols of the subtle body or, at least of the central channel, the Sushumna; ch. IV). It is worth mentioning that Cybele had by her side an obelisk entwined by a serpent, like the Tree of Life [44].

It is remarkable that from the outset Genesis had a special place reserved for this creature: “The serpent was more crafty than any animal of the field which Yahweh Elohim had made” (3:1). How wonderfully said, since the *field* or the *pasture* represents the symbol of the Sahasrara or the Kingdom of heavens, and the Kundalini serpent is the vehicle of salvation that leads the Spirit (Atman) to that divine location after crossing the gate governed by Jesus, namely the Agya chakra (ch. XIX C): “I am the door; if any one enter in by me, he shall be saved, and shall go out and shall find pasture” (John 10:9). The serpent craftiness is rather indicating the ability of the Kundalini to get rid of the persons unauthorized by the Divine. Jesus revealed that the snake is the symbol of wisdom: “Be ye therefore wise²⁷⁸ as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Matthew 10:16; *King James Version*²⁷⁹; cf. *The Gospel of Thomas* [45]). The serpent-dove parallel could seem strange but they are

²⁷⁷ Belonging to a Semitic civilization that started to flourish in the 4th millennium BC and became a great empire under Sargon (c. 2800 BC).

²⁷⁸ “Prudent” in Darby version.

²⁷⁹ The *King James Authorized Version* is based upon the Greek *Textus Receptus* and was published in 1611. A *Revised Version* of it was published in 1881 (for the New Testament) and 1885 (for the whole *Bible*).

actually metaphors of one and the same archetype, the Holy Spirit (ch. XXI). The symbols of goddess Astarte were also the snakes and doves. The *Proverbs of Solomon* mentioned among the “exceeding wise” [people] another reptile: “the lizard... yet in king’s palaces” (30:24,28), that is in the Sahasrara (Kingdom). In *The Forge and the Crucible* Eliade wrote about the tradition of serpents endowed with the gift of prophecy and wisdom.

The serpent was the one who told Eve that on the day when you would eat “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Genesis 2:17) “your eyes will be opened, and ye will be as God²⁸⁰, knowing good and evil” (3:5). It was since then that the serpent drew the divine curse on itself (3:14). Then, God said to Eve and the serpent: “she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt crush her heel” (3:15). There are variants where this sentence was intended to the seed of them. The heel often gets involved in myths as that of Achilles or Esau (25:26). The name of Jacob (*Yaaqov*, Hebr.) who caught Esau by the heel comes from *aqev* (heel, Hebr.), close to *aqar* (root, Hebr.): “Jacob shall take root” (Isaiah 27:6). However, the root is the Mooladhara chakra having the heel as its correspondent and indeed, during the Self Realization the Kundalini serpent will crush the prison of the Mooladhara sacrum. This anathema thrown on the serpent contradicts the mentioned quotations in the Gospels of Matthew and Thomas, which gives ground for considering it either just an interpolation²⁸¹ meant to forbid the access to Truth or a coded message destined to the initiated people.

In Genesis, the serpent appears as the instructor of Eve. Due to the characteristic of the ancient Semitic languages (Aramaic, Hebraic, Arabic) to omit vowels (ch. XX B), some commentators [46] equate the *serpent* (*hewya*, Hebr.) with the *instructor* (*hawah*, to instruct, Hebr.) and *Eve* (*Hawah*, Hebr.). Therefore, Eve will be the one to instruct Adam in the secret art of emancipating the serpent of eternal life, the Kundalini. As a matter of fact, *Eve* is translated by *life*, hence “Man called his wife’s name Eve; because she is the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20). A Gnostic text shows that: “After the day of rest Sophia²⁸² sent her daughter Zoé²⁸³, being called Eve, as an instructor in order that she might make Adam, who had no soul, arise so that those whom he should engender might become containers

²⁸⁰ Ch. II.

²⁸¹ Interpolation: changing the text by inserting a new material not belonging to the original.

²⁸² Wisdom.

²⁸³ Life (Gr.).

of light... Eve... said: «Adam! Become alive! Arise upon the earth!» Immediately her word became accomplished fact. For Adam, having arisen, suddenly opened his eyes. When he saw her he said: «You shall be called Mother of the Living. For it is you who have given me life» [47]. Another Gnostic manuscript says that: “Then the Female Spiritual Principle came [in] the Snake, the Instructor, and it taught [them], saying «... you shall not die...»” [48]. There is also an Islamic legend crediting Eve with being fashioned from the feet of the serpent [49].

Schuon referred to “the tempter serpent, which is the cosmic genius” [50].

Nicholas Roerich “reminds one of the most ancient cult of Asia—the wife and the serpent. The snakelike capitals of the pillars of Asia and of the Mayans speak of the same cult of the wise wife. The old plaque found in Kashmir tells the same tale: In the middle sits the king of serpents with the magic flower²⁸⁴ in his hand... Before the king is a woman with a veiled head, and to her the king entrusts wisdom... So is preserved the ancient symbol of wisdom” [51].

Gaston Bachelard regarded the serpent as “one of the most important archetypes of the human soul” [52].

IX-8 A widespread serpentine item is the spiral, the holy symbol of the . . . 15 Kundalini spiritual energy. We should notice the relationship between the Greek *spyre*, *spyres* and the Latin *spiro* meaning “to breathe,” thus linking the Kundalini spiral to her manifestation as light wind (breeze) as shown in chapter XI C.

IX-18 The spiral is the form of existence not only for the living matter (see above) but also of the cosmic matter, since galaxies are spiral in shape.

In the opinion of the well-known historian Jean Deshayes (author of an important work about the civilizations of the Ancient East) the spiral is an “ornament originating presumably in the Danubian part of Europe where it appeared in the ceramic decorations by the beginning of the Neolithic” [53].

Baring and Cashford showed: “The spiral and meander symbolize the sacred way to approach to a dimension invisible to human senses. They are found incised on the goddess figurines... a whole language of signs and symbols emerges—spirals, chevrons, zigzags, meanders... —embodying aspects of the goddess’s powers. Altogether they compose, as Marija Gimbutas suggests, «an alphabet of the metaphysical... by which an entire constellation of meanings is transmitted»” [54]. So close was the association of goddess and serpent in ancient Egypt, that one of the hieroglyphs for goddess was the serpent (the other hieroglyph was the egg).

The serpent appeared in the shape of a centered coiled spiral (like a snail)

²⁸⁴ Symbol of the chakra.

or as an open spiral: cord, winding or zigzag²⁸⁵, column of rhombuses etc. A plate from Mal'ta in Siberia (16,000-13,000 BC) has three serpents (two of which have three and a half coils) on its obverse and a seven-coil spiral on its reverse. "The seven-fold spiral design appears highly deliberate, and the number seven recalling the seven strata notched round the head of the Goddess of Willendorf, gains in possible significance" [55]. Indeed, though finding its artistic expression at various sites and times, the heads of divinities were often decorated with small spirals. Thus, "Venus"²⁸⁶ of Willendorf (20,000-18,000 BC) has her head covered with this figure arranged in seven circles with their center in the Sahasrara [56]. Other examples are Athena of Acropolis (c.520 BC), the Celtic Mother Goddess (2nd century AD) now in the Salzburg museum [57] and numerous Buddha heads from India, Java, Cambodia, Thailand etc. [58]. Seen from above, these heads look like lotuses with numberless petals (the Sahasrara). Moreover, they end up with a protuberance marking the climax of the subtle system, which can also be noticed in other divine representation, mostly goddesses: Isis; Minoan goddesses (c.1500 BC); Mother Goddess (Boeotia, c.700 BC); Athena of Aegina (c.480 BC); Diana of Ephesus (2nd century, Rome); Cybele; Mithra; numerous representations of Virgin Mary [59]. The cone often covering the heads of deities [60] is usually interpreted as a mountain peak, which symbolizes the Sahasrara, according to our opinion (ch. II).

The spiral reached its glory in the cultures of Vădastra (about 5250 BC), then proto-Cucuteni, Cucuteni, Gumelnița and Petrești, but the Cucutenian spiral reached its apogee around 4400 BC [61]. In the words of Marija Gimbutas: "Cucuteni is one of the best explored and richest cultures of Old Europe, a true civilization in the best meaning of the world" [62]. That culture spread out as far as in western Ukraine until Kiev where it is known under the name of Tripolye. The Cucutenian spiral being often associated to a circle bearing inside three dots [63]—a mark indicating the three subtle channels—is a clear proof of its relation to the Kundalini energy. As Gimbutas have stated, "the number three, it would seem was not accidental and was indeed connected with the mythical number of three which in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic era is evidenced by the continuous recurrence of

²⁸⁵ Like a river flowing in meanders, the serpent embodies the living water springing out from Mother earth, the Primordial Mother (ch. XI D).

²⁸⁶ Known under this name, the statuettes of the Great Goddess from Paleolithic have nothing in common with the Greek goddess.

three... holes on the mouth and neck of the goddess, or three parallel lines or three chevrons” [64]. A serpentine spiral was incised on the belly of the Lady of Pazardzik (Bulgaria) as well as of two statues of Sitagroi (Macedonia), all the three dating back to c.4500 BC [65]. Also we mention

IX-59 a pre-Columbian anthropomorphic statue that has a three and a half coiled serpent incised on the lower part of its abdomen [66].

Older (end of the 3rd millennium BC), larger, and grander than the ones XV-5 of Stonehenge, the megaliths of Avebury (Wiltshire), covering an entire hill, had previously been arranged in the shape of a gigantic serpent [67], but Christians, starting with the Middle Ages disfigured the group. One of the

IX-21 Irish megaliths of New Grange (c.3200 BC) was completely carved with spirals [67].

IX-8 Another significant example: the Great Crucified One on the dome of San . . . 12 Clemente Church in Rome is fully surrounded by spirals making up the Tree of Life [69].

The serpent was shown to be the symbol of eternal life. Thus, in the epic of Gilgamesh the snake stole the grass of immortality, a present from the gods. The many-headed serpent mentioned in Ugaritic mythology appears on a Sumerian mace-head, on a Mesopotamian seal from the 3rd millennium and on a Hittite seal [69].

IX-23 The serpent *Uraeus* crowning the pharaohs is the symbol of Power (*Shakti*, Sanskr.). It rises from the Agya chakra (center of forehead) and transcends the Sahasrara beyond the top of the head. Likewise, the serpent

IX-42 of Aesculapius (Lat.; Asklepios, Gr.) was the symbol of science rising above the cup of the Sahasrara. It is not by chance that this god of medicine was considered the son of Koronis (crown of the head). The emblem wonderfully

IX-43 reunites the *chalice* and the *serpent*—both designating the Great Goddess (ch. XV A). The Egyptian goddess Maat was identified to Uraeus and the goddesses included in the ogdoad²⁸⁷ were serpents [70]. As a way of

IX-24 example, Isis was the goddess of the Primordial Water serpents. Another serpent goddess was Nephtys. A funeral monument from the times of

IX-25 Ramesses II “represented three goddesses: Anat, Astarte, Qadesh (Pure, Holy) amongst the most important deities, reunited in one single divinity endowed with Egyptian attributes; that unique divinity is represented standing on a lion²⁸⁸, holding two serpents in its left hand and a bunch of flowers in its right hand while wearing on her head the Hathor specific sign” [71]—the horns.

²⁸⁷ See ch. XIX C.

²⁸⁸ Ch. XX A.

Initially, the Aditiya gods were serpents. Among the Vedic deities, Aditi was identified to the Earth or even to the universe and it was highly probable the Great Mother Goddess. The serpents then became *Devas*²⁸⁹ (Gods, Sanskr.). The *Satapatha Brahmana* declared that the knowledge of the Serpents (*sarpa-vidya*, Sanskr.) is the *Veda* [72]. The serpent becomes the symbol of enlightenment. The Buddha is seated on Muchilinda serpent with IX-33 three and a half coils, extending its seven head hood above him [73]. The author of the first Yoga treatise, Patanjali was represented with his head IX-35 covered by a tiara and having the hood of a seven-headed cobra above, and Patanjali's body ended in a three and a half coiled serpent [74]. The respective hood is visible in many representations of the divine incarnations or of the saints [75]. The Babylonian god Ea was shown as a serpent or riding a serpent. King Erechtheus (Erichthonios) of Athens to whom it was dedicated the famous Erechtheion on the Acropolis was half serpent similarly IX-35 to his relative Kekrops. On the renowned Chest of Cypselus, Boreas was rendered as half man, half serpent. Athena whose connection with the IX-38 serpents is a well-established fact adopted him, although he was the son of 39 Gaia and Hephaistos. An ancient ancestor of Kekrops and Erechtheus, "the anthropomorphic Neolithic Snake Goddess has been found in a yogic pose, IX-20 usually with snakelike hands and feet" and a crowned human head [76]. "From the Early Neolithic, the Snake Goddess wears a crown, a symbol of her omnipotence and omniscience which exists in 20th century folklore" [77].

In the universe of creation, the Kundalini has the correspondent of serpent *Ananta* (Endless; from *anta* end, and *an*—negation, Sanskr.) that is another V-1 name of *Shesha* (Remainder, Residue, Sanskr.), the king of the serpent race IX-30 (*nagas*, Sanskr.; *nahas*, Hebr. is surprisingly similar; another Sanskrit name 31 given to them is *sarpa*, from where it comes *serpent*), having seven heads (number of chakras) [78]. It is he that supports Vishnu on the Primordial Waters. Vishnu was the element of balance (central channel), the sustainer of Creation and the moderator of the antagonistic energies of the left (Shiva) and right (Brahma) channels in the subtle body of the Cosmic Being, the Virata. Talboys Wheeler believes that the aboriginal inhabitants of India (before the Aryan invasion) were called *Nagas*. The Dravidians in the south approached with reverent awe the serpent as the propitious deity of the tree, IX-32 and guardian of secret treasure [79].

Chapter II included the story of the Pelasgian myth on creation where the uroboros serpent (see also ch. IV) *Ophion* appears as the creation of the

²⁸⁹ Notice the related etymology: devotee, devotion, from the same Sanskrit root.

IX-53 Goddess. *Midgardorm* (*Midhgardhsormr*) was the Germanic uroboric serpent 54 of the Ocean that enclosed the Earth. Gimbutas noticed that the myth originated in the Neolithic-Chalcolithic era, as proved by the universal snake being portrayed winding around the cosmic egg as a continuous flow of water, since the serpent, water bird, and water are closely interrelated in myth and cult. Some 5000 years before Athenagoras (who, in the second century AD, recorded the same story) the myth could have gone like this: First, all was water. From the water emerged a cosmic snake with a horned head. Then the egg split in two [80]. The myth is reminded in a Gnostic text referring to the Great Dragon (*drákon*, Gr.), which bites its tail and surrounds the universe [81].

It is not by chance that Vishnu, the god sustaining the evolution of beings (ch. XIX B) is so much attached to the water element. The first living forms appeared in the Primordial Ocean and from there they evolved and expanded over the entire planet (Genesis 1:20-22,28; also ch. XIX C). The *Vedas* wrote: “In the beginning, everything was like a sea” [82]. The Babylonian epics on Creation, *Enuma elish* wrote that in the beginning, the gods emerging by pairs male and female from a formless, watery waste of the primordial times, *Apsu*, where all the forms were molten. The *Qur’an* maintains: “God has created every beast of water” (24.44). Not only the present-day sea creatures but also the amphibians grow their eggs into water and a large number of insects came out of water grubs. The mammal embryos (human included) bathe in the amniotic liquid, thus individually living again the historic emergence from water about 350 millions of years ago²⁹⁰. In his analysis, Kerényi shows that “the primal water conceived as the womb, the breast of the mother, and the cradle is a genuinely mythological image... Thales, the earliest Greek philosopher, asserted that everything came of water²⁹¹. In this he was only saying what Homer did, who speaks of Oceanus now as the «source of the gods²⁹²», now as the «source of all things». The same doctrine was held by Anaximander, the second Greek philosopher, but he applied it to living creatures and, according to a quotation from Censorinus, to mankind too” [85]. Thus, “Anaximander says that the first animals were born in the moisture” [86].

Extending this to the universal scale, the Earthly Ocean was the cradle of

²⁹⁰ This is the age of the most ancient amphibian fossil, discovered in bituminous shale in Scotland, not far from Edinburgh.

²⁹¹ The material principle of everything is water [83].

²⁹² “Oceanus, from whom all we gods proceed” [84].

the biological evolution, in the same way that the Cosmic Ocean sheltered the evolution of all the cosmic bodies (see the parallel between the two kinds of evolution in ch. XIX B).

The Mesopotamian mythology mentioned the Primeval Serpent as *Lothan* (i.e. *Leviathan*, Hebr. [87]), the Close-coiling One of Seven Heads [88] IX-64 which was slaughtered by Baal. The *Book of Apophis* described the fight between Ra and the huge serpent Apophis. The Hittite god Teshub defied the IX-66 serpent Illuyankas. Zeus faced the dragon Typhon with a hundred serpent's IX-67 heads. The mythical Iranian hero Thraetaona defeated a three-headed monster that, like Cerberus, symbolized the three channels.

In the *Bible*, the Spirit of God (manifested as the serpent Kundalini) was associated with the Primordial Waters and appeared in the first moment of Creation: "The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). The Qur'an read, too, of the aquatic support of the Creator: "It is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and His Throne was upon the waters" (11.9). Also, the Old Testament recalled "Leviathan the fleeing serpent"²⁹³, and Leviathan the crooked serpent²⁹⁴ ... the monster that is in the water" (Isaiah 27:1). "Thou... pierced the monster" (51:9). This IX-70 monster was a huge reptile (the Jerusalem Bible named it "the dragon") called Tanin, the creation of which is found in Genesis 1:21: "God created the great sea monsters." "Thou dost rule the raging of Tehom"²⁹⁵ (Psalms 89:9). Besides Tanin and Tehom, the *Bible* refers also to Rahab, the Dragon (Isaiah 51:9) therefore three serpents (three channels). The great IX-65 mythological serpents from the Middle East have the initial letter T in common: Tiamat, Tanin, Tehom. All of them are connected to the notion of "depth," which reminded the female "depth" in the Tao-Te-King. Actually, in some passages, the "depth" (*thmt*, Tehom; e.g. in Exodus 15:5) has a feminine gender disclosed by the suffix. The pagan kings were also assimilated to serpents/dragons, for instance Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 51:34), Pompey in the apocryphal Psalms of Solomon (9.29).

Incarnated as Krishna, Vishnu fought against the huge serpent Kaliya in IX-69 the Yamuna River. There was no opposition between these elements since Vishnu—whose divine substance embodied the three aspects:

²⁹³ *Nahash bariah* (Hebr.).

²⁹⁴ *Nahash aqalaton* (Hebr.).

²⁹⁵ The quotation comes from Baring and Cashford [89] (Darby's translation: "the pride of the sea"). In fact, *Tehom* (deep, Hebr.) is the name given to the huge serpent *Tiamat*.

anthropomorphic (god), serpentine (Ananta-Shesha) and aquatic (Primordial Ocean)—could not be opposed to the ophidian principle. He had fought before, incarnated as the boar Varaha, against the marine monster that had IX-69 stolen the Earth (ch. XIX B). However, neither the sea monster, nor Kaliya were killed; moreover, Krishna assured the latter that he would be spared forever by the eagle Garuda (god's vehicle) [90].

IX-64 The defeat of the serpent—here, as in the legend of St. George fighting 70 the dragon (ch. II)—symbolized the Self Realization, the defeat stood for deciphering the secret of the serpent Kundalini. Merlin, the embodiment of the Primordial Master (Guru) (ch. V), knew the secret of the depths (of the sacrum bone) from where the hidden dragon (the Kundalini) was shaking the foundation of the tower (subtle body, the Sushumna channel) in its attempt to get liberation (Self Realization). Other variants read of the combat of *two* differently colored dragons symbolizing transcendence of the side channels. Baring and Cashford held that the fight against the mythical serpent symbolizes “an inner quest for illumination” [89]. Jung wrote: “Only one who has risked the fight with the dragon and is not overcome by it wins the IX-65 hoard, the «treasure hard to attain»... He... attained what the alchemists called the *unio mentalis*” [91]. The examples are numerous. “Thou didst break the heads of the monsters on the waters; thou didst break in pieces the heads of Leviathan” (Psalms 74:13-14; cf. *The Testament of Asher* 7.3 [92]). In Colchis, Jason overcame a dragon that was asleep, coiled around the tree with the Golden Fleece, an evident allusion to the Kundalini and the subtle body. In the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf* the hero killed the dragon of the IX-68 depths. Not only Indra, Perseus, Hercules, Cadmus, Siegfried, Tristan, and Sir Owen but also fairy tale heroes defeated dragons. The serpent lore of Scotland parallels the dragon lore of China and the serpent lore of India [93]. The third Great Master of the Knights of St. John of Rhodes (between 1346 and 1353), Dieudonné de Gozon, has to his credit the killing of the dragon of Malpasso, the same island being the source of another similar legend about an unknown hero, starting with the year 1420.

The eagle and the serpent do not oppose to each other. In the Neolithic, the vulture was the goddess of the Upper Waters (*Nekhbet* of the Upper Egypt), while the Lower Waters (*Wedjat* of the Delta and Lower Egypt) had the serpent as a goddess. The same Egyptian goddess could be seen pictured sometimes as a vulture and other times as a serpent. Also, the serpent and the vulture formed the entrance to the temples, one on either side [94].

Another fight took place when the earthly serpent of Delphi, a python (wherefrom the name of the Pythia priestess to whom the python conveyed the revelations) was killed by Apollo. This was, however, not destruction but

a substitution with Apollo, the god of the solar power, enlightenment, wisdom and moderation. The god of Fire, *Agni* (*Ignis*, Lat.), *the lotus born*, was Apollo's equivalent in Hinduism [95]. The Vedic poems called Agni "the brilliant guardian of Truth who shines in his own dwell." The Swadhisthana chakra has the Fire as a corresponding element, while the Pure Knowledge of the Divine Truth (*Nirmala Vidya*, Sanskr.) is its specific manifestation (on the left channel). The Swadhisthana rotates around the IX - 52 Nabhi chakra, whose element is Water, like Shesha coiling in the Primordial Ocean. Agni is also called the "furious serpent", the latter being a virtual manifestation of Fire [96] (ch. XI E).

The serpent votive theme continues to exist in the Indian traditions right up our days. Ancient stone plates (*nagakal*, Sanskr.) bearing the serpent motif, devoted to the ophidian spirits may be seen in the temple yards²⁹⁶, by the ponds or under the holy trees. After carving, the votive plate was kept immersed into the pond for six months to absorb the vital power of the aquatic element, since the ponds were considered to be the dwelling of the serpent-gods, the nagas [90]. Eliade referred to the "stone of serpents," too.

In the epic *Enuma elish*, the Babylonian goddess Tiamat was the great serpent-dragon. In China the Great Dragon united Heaven and Earth [97] as IX - 58 the Kundalini does for the extreme chakras (ch. IV). The dragon, a huge, winged mythological serpent [98] is a reminiscence of the gigantic reptiles once inhabiting our planet. Actually, the dragon was also mentioned in the *Bible*, as "the fleeing (flying) serpent" (Isaiah 27:1; 30:6; Job 26:13). The dragon flight is the ascent of the Kundalini up to the seventh heaven (chakra) of the Sahasrara. In Taoism, the primordial goddess *Nü Wa* (*Nü Hua*, *Nü XX - 33 Gua*) had a woman's head and a serpent's body, like her husband *Fu Xi*. Their bodies were wound in a spiral (like a caduceus; see below): *Fu Xi* held the Sun and *Nü Wa* the Moon, a child being placed in-between. Here we find the side solar and lunar channels whereas the child, the Principle of evolution (*Vishnu*), corresponded to the central channel. *Shai Hai Jing* characterized the goddess as "Nü Wa, magic virgin and goddess of ancient times, with a human face and serpent body." *Huainan Zi* reads: "A white dragon²⁹⁷ flies ahead and a serpent follows. This is how she carries herself up in the heights, amongst demons and spirits, rising up to the ninth²⁹⁸ heaven where she meets

²⁹⁶ E.g. the temples of Nandi and Dodda Ganapati in Bangalore.

²⁹⁷ The white light accompanying the Kundalini-Nü Wa.

²⁹⁸ Sometimes, two more chakras are considered, besides the common seven ones.

the Great God²⁹⁹ at Linmen gate³⁰⁰, and then sinks into peace and rest³⁰¹ at the feet of her great ancestor. Never does she disclose her merits, never does she raise her voice, but keeps inside the way of the perfect ones and obeys the natural laws of Heaven and Earth” [99]. The legend says that Huang Ti (considered one of the founders of religious Taoism) returned to heavens seated in a “heavenly pearl” pulled by a dragon, where the pearl is the correspondent of the Sahasrara (ch. XV A). What a beautiful description of the Self Realization! Its equivalent in the Romanian folk tales is the dragon with seven (like Shesha; some other times twelve) heads spitting out fire (ch. XI E). Professor Ivan Eliseev, PhD, noticed: “in the Romanian folklore, the rainbow is the heavenly dragon drinking water out of ponds, wells, rivers and seas and being able to change things in the universe” [100]. The serpent embodies the heavenly light: both the moving (lightning; ch. II) and the static one (rainbow; ch. XV E) thus serving as vehicle of the union between earth and heaven. The Rainbow-Serpent painted on sheets of bark is very common in the Arnhem region of northern Australia. The aboriginal people suppose that the snakes live in the sacred well Mirsimina under the name of Yulungurr [101]. Karlsfried Graf von Dürckheim quoted the words of a truly enlightened hermit (Father Grégoire): “If man encounters his Self... if he stands facing the Dragon dwelling inside himself and is able to embrace this Dragon, unite with him, then he will be shown the Divine and Resurrection will take place” [102].

Chou Chi-Ch'ang made a painting in the times of the Sung dynasty (920-1279) representing the transfiguration of an *arhat* (enlightened, released during his lifetime, in the Hinayana Buddhism; from *arh*³⁰², to be capable, qualified, Pali; *arhant*, Sanskr.; *lohan*, Chin.; *rakan*, Japan.), whose match in Hinduism (Yoga) is *jivanmukta* (Sansk.). *Arhana* was the premise to immortality in the *Rig-Veda* and the *Brahmanas*. However, transfiguration (for instance, in Christian religion) signifies Enlightenment (Self Realization). On the painting previously mentioned, one can see the IX-34 uncoiling of the Kundalini's spiral rising up to the sky above the arhant's Sahasrara [103].

We shall quote Mircea Eliade for an analysis of this holy symbol along

²⁹⁹ The Masculine Principle.

³⁰⁰ The Sahasrara.

³⁰¹ The state of union (Yoga), the merging of the Primordial Principles (ch. I).

³⁰² *Arha*, deserving.

different co-ordinates: “A mural painting found in Turkestan represents a standard in the shape of a wolf or wolf-headed dragon” [104]. “During the Parthian period the elite army corps in northwestern Iran and Armenia... were called «dragons» and had dragon standards” [105]. “Now we know that the Dacia standard represented a wolf with the body of a dragon” [106]. “The spread of the standard bearing a *draco* into the Roman armies of the Late IX - 50 Empire was in all probability due to a Parthian or Dacian influence. We IX - 74 should remember that the dragon also appeared on the standards of the Germans” [107]. “Odinn-Wotan himself was represented as an eagle, a dragon, or a sea monster” [108]. Last but not least the god *Sabazius* (*Sebadius*, Lat.) of the Thracians had the serpent as a symbol.

The study of the pre-Columbian civilization has revealed number of IX - 61 interesting elements for the present research. Serge Gruzinski mentions, 62 “according to the tradition, the seven tribes who occupied central Mexico had a common origin. They were said to have come... from Chicomóztoc, the «place of seven caves»” [109]. The coiled serpent of the Tenayuca pyramid was the Aztec symbol for the heavenly fire [110]. An Aztec serpent of stone IX - 60 having three and a half coils may be seen in the art collection Dumbarton Oaks [111]. It is also possible that *Quetzalcoatl* or *Nahuatl*, the “feathered serpent” in the Meso-American culture before the conquest, would have been a dragon like the Kundalini, since feathers suggest flying. The *Popol-Vuh* (The *Book of the Community*) was the great Maya chronicle and was regarded as the sacred book of the Quiché Indians. The anthropogonic description in that book used the symbolic expression *Pizom-Gagal* that can be translated through “wounded force” or “wounded grandeur.” Having accomplished his mission on this earth, the hero Balam-Quitze handed out the *Pizom-Gagal* symbol to his sons on the behalf of the four primordial men³⁰³. The divine origin is indicated by the *Popol-Vuh* syntagma denoting the god of tempest, *Huracan*³⁰⁴ [112]. The same holy text represented the soul, of a divine origin, through a ribbon or a cord, a serpentine symbol, whereas the aboriginal Naskapis in Canada conceived it as a flame (ch. XI E).

Quetzalcoatl is the *god of the East* and of the morning star, the divinity of resurrection [113]. He was worshipped at Tula from the ancient time [114]. The eagle and the snake, specific to Krishna’s legend, are inseparably connected to the emblem of the founding of Tenochtitlän not far from

³⁰³ We find again the relation between the Primordial Being and number four (ch. I).

³⁰⁴ Wherefrom the name of *hurricane*.

Mexico City [115]. In his *Secrets of Mayan Science/Religion*, Hunbatz Men wrote: “To be Quetzalcoatl or Kukulkan³⁰⁵ is to know the seven forces that govern our body—not only know them but also use them and understand their intimate relationship with natural and cosmic laws” [116].

IX-48 Another masterpiece of ancient art was the Glykon serpent [117] in the Museum of Archaeology in Constanța—Romania. This strange serpent—which was coiled around itself *three and a half times exactly* and was adorned with a long feminine hair which indicates the feminine Kundalini—was brought to light in the former Greek colony of Tomis and is estimated to date back to the second century AD. Its horse-head is the symbol of salvation (ch. XIX B). This is not at all accidental, which is proved by the image of a serpent with exactly three and a half coils next to God and Goddess on a Sumerian seal (c.2500 BC) [118], or by the two pre-Columbian serpents mentioned in the foregoing. On the Sistine Chapel ceiling, IX-63 Michelangelo also painted the serpent with a womanly head offering Eve the apple of knowledge and eternal life.

IX-56 The Greek mythology has *Agathodaimon*, the benevolent and protecting god, sometimes represented as a serpent. Dionysus (Bacchus), the god of Thracian origin who was considered a great initiate (ch. VIII) was called “the twice born³⁰⁶.” He was born from the union of Persephone with Zeus, where the latter changed himself into a serpent—a symbol of the union between spirit and Divinity, between Earth and Heaven. His emblem, also specific to the satyrs accompanying him, was the thyrsus (*thyrsos*, singular form, Gr.), a staff adorned with vine shoots wound around it and having a pinecone on its top. The *Bacchantes* of Euripides (410 BC) read about a Maenad who “took her thyrsus and struck it into the earth, and forth there gushed a limpid spring” [119], thus reminding the deed of Moses (Exodus 17:5-6; cf. 7:20; Numbers 20:8; Deuteronomy 8:15; see *supra*).

The most complex symbolism of the serpent, having the shape of a IX-72 caduceus (similar to the thyrsus) was intentionally left at the end of this . . . 76 chapter. At first, the golden rod was in the shape of a twig with three leaves, after which the two lateral leaves turned into two serpents, according to the legend of Hermes separating two fighting snakes³⁰⁷ with his rod. Pliny said, otherwise, that the caduceus was a symbol of reconciliation and peace.

³⁰⁵ The Mayan variant of the Aztec *Quetzalcoatl* and Quiché *Nacxit*.

³⁰⁶ We have explained that the “second birth” is the name given to Self Realization (our Introduction).

³⁰⁷ Indicating the antinomic qualities of the side channels (ch. II).

Obviously, this is the inner peace granted by the Self Realization. The legend says that Hermes (Mercury) received the caduceus as a present from Apollo IX - 73 in exchange for the lyre³⁰⁸ with three (or seven) strings standing for the subtle body. “Oh, friend! This body is His lyre;/ He tightens its strings, and draws from it the melody of Brahma” [120]. “The sovergin Lord’s lyre plays unstruck,” said Kabir [121], while a Zen *koan* urged: ”Play your stringless lute” [122]. It is interesting that some Dacian coins display a caduceus and a horse having above its head an arc of seven stars and below the archaic lyre with three strings [123].

The caduceus’ origin is actually very ancient. It could be seen on a sacrificial goblet from Sumer that belonged to Gudea of Lagash, dating back IX - 71 to the third millennium BC [124]. There are two serpents wound around a central vertical axis, like the three channels crossing in seven points (chakras) with the heads of the two serpents forming the *ego* and *superego* “balloons.” The goblet bears the mention: “Lord of the Tree of Truth” [125], thus indicating that in Mesopotamia the central rod of the caduceus was a reminiscence of the tree—as well as in the case of the symbols of Hermes or Asclepius. In Sumer, also the goddess Inanna had the caduceus as magisterial symbol, while Nammu (Ninmah), the Primordial Mother Goddess, was both the sea and “the great serpent goddess” [126] (see above: Ananta-Shesha). The Babylonians represented Mother Goddess of Earth by a serpent wound around a staff.

Chevalier and Gheerbrant noticed the same symbolism of the serpents coiled on the Brahmin staff (ch. IV) corresponding to the two side nadis bended around the Sushumna, as well as in the circumambulation (ch. XV F) performed around the cosmic pillar by Izanaghi and Izanami (ch. XX A) before their marriage. For Court de Gébelin quoting Athenagoras and Macrobius, the two serpents, male and female, symbolize the Sun and the Moon [127], hence the side channels.

The serpents framed the ancient gods so frequently that it becomes a significant phenomenon to be exemplified by the followings: a god and a goddess having the seven-branch Tree of Life in-between (Sumerian seal, IX - 22 c.3500 BC); a goddess on a steatite vessel (Iraq, c.2700-2500 BC); an ivory image of the goddess (Ugarit, 1800-1700 BC); Astarte with serpents and lotuses (Ugarit, Ras Shamra); Demeter (Ceres)—Hellenistic terracotta; IX - 40 Demeter (Eleusis, 5th century BC); Hecate (engraved gem, Rome); Cybele IX - 41 and Demeter; Isis (coin, 1st century BC); a Gallo-Roman goddess (Oô, IX - 24 Luchon) etc. etc. Serpents are also the attributes of Athena who wears them IX - 38 on her head, keeps them in her hands, has them as decorations on her shield 39

³⁰⁸ The archaic lyre.

or even as the very stuff of her clothes [128]. We should remark that this miraculous shield (*aegeis*, Gr.) forged by Hephaistos for Zeus who offered it to Athena, had the snake on its inner part, therefore hidden from the unauthorized persons. Likewise, the pre-Columbian goddess Coatlicue wore a skirt made of woven serpents [129]. A Greek ceramic (6th century BC) and IX-29 a Roman bronze statue of Atargatis (Dea Syria) show goddesses accompanied by ascending serpents [130]. It cannot pass this long list IX-44 without mentioning Medusa having her hair of snakes and wearing two entwined snakes (a caduceus) on her belly [131]. Athena inherited Medusa's IX-38 head (cut off by Perseus), which was put by the goddess on her shield. We also mention a Babylonian relic made of a semiprecious stone having engraved in its center a two-headed androgynous person (symbolizing the masculine and feminine channels) and three stars above the head (indicating the three channels) and two serpents on each side adorned with the Moon (for the left serpent) and the Sun (for the right one), respectively [132]. A Syrian seal from the 15th century BC shows two serpents on each side of a crowned person [133]. A Persian miniature from the beginning of the 16th century AD represented two serpents framing a man wearing a tiara with a pointed end (the Sahasrara) [134].

Chevalier and Gheerbrant made a synthesis of this extremely complex manifestation: "All the great goddesses of nature, these Mother goddesses which Christianity refashioned as Mary, Mother of God... had serpents as attributes... First in this line was Isis³⁰⁹, wearing the royal cobra on her forehead, the pure gold Uraeus, the symbol of divine sovereignty, life and IX-47 youth. She was followed by Cybele and Demeter and that Cretan serpent IX-27 goddess who was chthonian as well... However celestial her origins, Athena herself had a serpent as one of her attributes³¹⁰, and what plainer symbol of IX-45 marriage of reason with the powers of Nature than the myth of Laocoön, in which the serpents which emerged from the sea to punish the priest guilty of sacrilege should subsequently coil round the feet of Athena's statue?" [135].

In Israel, the priests were waving *lulab* (Hebr.) i.e. thyrsus (Gr.) during the feast of the Booths (Tabernacles). The *lulab* was held in the right hand during their procession (ch. XV F) around the altar of burning offering [136]. The Book of Judith also refers to thyrsi as "branches," this time waved by women: "all the women of Israel ran together to see her, and blessed her, and made a dance among them for her—and she took branches in her hand, and

³⁰⁹ Isis used to carry, at other times, a basket with a sleeping serpent inside.

³¹⁰ In her hand, or on her chest.

gave also to the women that were with her” (15:12).

The *Bible* mentions *three different serpents* designating the three channels (Isaiah 27:1). Three serpents wound up around one another, make up the Delphi column (erected in the memory of the Plataea victory) that can be IX-46 seen today near the Saint Sophia church (now, a mosque) in Istanbul [137]. The serpents that came out of the sea to devour Laocoön and his two sons IX-45 were also three in number. An alchemical engraving at the end of the 16th century represented three snakes at the feet of a hermaphrodite next to a plant with flowers arranged on three verticals and seven superposed levels that obviously symbolized the subtle body [138].

A Gnostic amulet represents the serpent Chnoumis (Agathodaimón) IX-56 having womanly hair (like serpent Glykon) and twelve rays on its head IX-48 [139].

The seal of St. Servatius preserved in the Maastricht cathedral displays IX-55 a goddess in the shape of a seven-headed serpent [140].

The sea or earth mollusk (snail) (ch. XV F) is similar to the serpent in that IX-16 it is coiled inside its shell marked outside by a spiral that is extremely suggestive for the position of the Kundalini in the sacrum bone. Such an example is the snail suggesting the winding of heavens (Revelation 6:14; ch. I)—at the same time a symbol of the cosmic spiral (galaxy; see above) as it appears represented in the Byzantine church Chora (now, Kariye mosque in IX-17 Istanbul) [141] where the three subtle channels are symbolically reunited: the unfolded snail of the Kundalini with its shell (sacrum) at the basis of the Sushumna, then on its both sides the Moon (Ida channel) on the left, and the Sun (Pingala nadi) on the right.

To end the chapter, we have chosen the beautiful verses of William Wordsworth (1770-1850) who was also an enlightened soul: “Why sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,/ Coil within coil, at noon-tide? For the Word/ Yields, if with unpretentious faith explored,/ Power at whose touch the sluggard unfold.” These words, full with significance, belong to a poem having the best possible title: *Conclusions* [142].

NOTES

[1] Kersten, p.47. [2] *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* III.10 (106-108). [3] *Ibid.* III.7 (5). [4] *The Shiva Samhita* 2.22-24. [5] Purananda Swamin, *Shat Chakra Nirupana* 10-11, in *Sri Tattwa-chintamani*, ch. 6. [6] Swami Kripananda, *Jnaneshwar's Gita: A Rendering Of The 'Jnaneshwari'*, Sunny Press, New York 1989, p.75. [7] C.G. Jung, *Yoga and the West*, in *The Collected Works*, vol. 11: *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, § 875, p.537. [8] C.G. Jung, *The Psychology of Kundalini Yoga*, Notes of the Seminar Given in 1932 by C.G. Jung (Sonu Shamdasani editor), Bollingen Series XCIX, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1996, Lecture 1, 12 October 1932, p.21. [9] *Ibid.*, Indian Parallels, 11 October 1930, p.74. [10] *Ibid.*, Lecture 1, 12 October 1932, p.20. [11] *Ibid.*, Lecture 4, 2 November 1932, pp.68-69. [12] Hippolytus, *Ref.* V.17.2-8. [13] *Ibid.*, V.19.18-20. [14] Irenaeus, *A.H.* I.30.15. [15] Epiphanius, *Panarion* (or *Adversus Haereses*) 26. 2.6, in *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis* (transl. by Frank Williams), E.J. Brill, Leiden, New York, København, Köln 1987, vol. I, p.84. [16] *NHL, The Hypostasis of the Archons* 89.31-32. [17] *NHL, The Paraphrase of Shem* 34.9-11. [18] Andronescu, p.16, fig. 2-3 C. [19] Jung, Kerényi, p.85. [20] Hippolytus, *Ref.* IV.51. [21] Baring, Cashford, p.334. [22] Rémy de Gourmont, *Le latin mystique*, Paris 1913, p.130. [23] Baring, Cashford, p.157; cf. Deshayes, p.261. [24] Matthews, p.224. [25] Baring, Cashford, p.513. [26] Lossky, p.204. [27] Armstrong, *A History...*, p. 354. [28] Augustine, *Letter 243*, 10; *apud* Armstrong, *A History...*, p.124. [29] Pagels, *Adam...*, p.99. [30] Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1975, p.299. [31] Baring, Cashford, pp.534-535. [32] Phillip David, *Diatribes against St. Augustine's Theory of Original Sin*, in *Slate Magazine, The Fray*, June 1997. [33] E. Fuller Torrey, *Freudian Fraud*, Harper, New York 1993; Hans Eysenck, *Decline and Fall of the Freudian Empire*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1991. [34] Kovalevsky, p.186, o.t. [35] Gimbutas, *The Goddesses...*, pp.93-95. [36] Gimbutas, *The Civilization...*, p.236. [37] Zenon Kosidowski, *Povestiri biblice (Stories of the Bible)*, Ed. Științifică, București 1970, p.37. [38] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to p.501. [39] *Ibid.*, illustr. to p.317. [40] Aelian, *On the Characteristics of Animals (De natura animalium)* VI.17 (transl. by A.F. Schofield), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., William Heinemann, Ltd. London, 1959, vol. II, pp.31-32; a similar occurrence appears in *ibid.* XII.39, vol. III, p.61. [41] J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough. A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd edition, London 1911-1915, vol. V, p.81; *apud* Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, p.854. [42] Jung, *Answer to Job*, in *The Collected Works*, vol.

11: *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, § 619, p.393. [43] Kosidowski, p.38. [44] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to p.404. [45] NHL, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 40.11 (L.39). [46] Bridge A. Pearson, *Jewish Haggadic Traditions in the Testimony of Truth from Nag Hammadi*, CG IX, 3, in *Ex Orbe Religionum: Studia Geo Widengren oblata*, Leiden 1972, pp.458-470. [47] NHL, *On the Origin of the World* 115.30-116.8. [48] NHL, *Hypostasis of the Archons* 89.31-33, 90.7. [49] Matthews, p.223. [50] Schuon, *Understanding...*, p.186. [51] Roerich, *Altai-Himalaya*, pp.73-74. [52] Gaston Bachelard, *La terre et les rêveries du repos*, reprint, J. Corti, Paris 1965, p.212, o.t. [53] Deshayes, pp.612-613, o.t. [54] Baring, Cashford, pp.24,52-53; Gimbutas, *The Language of the Goddess*, Harper & Row, San Francisco 1989, preface, pp. XV and 1; cf. *The Civilization...*, p.297. [55] Baring, Cashford, p.24, illustr. to pp.10,23. [56] *Ibid.*, illustr. to p.10. [57] *Ibid.*, illustr. to p.333; Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, Bollingen Series XLVII, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1974, pl.45. [58] For instance in Elie Faure, *L'esprit des formes*, Éd. J.-J. Pauvert, Paris 1964, vol. 2, fig.164; Zimmer, *Philosophies...*, illustr. IV, VII, X. [59] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to pp. 236,243,246,250,262;399; 300;336;328;392,393,404;409;583. [60] *Ibid.*, illustr. to pp.175,188,191,192,203,207,409,430,445,454. [61] *Dicționar de istorie veche a României (Dictionary of Ancient History of Romania)*, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, București 1975; Vasilescu, p.19, fig.1. [62] Gimbutas, *The Civilization...*, p.101. [63] Vladimir Dumitrescu, *Arta culturii cucuteniene (Art of the Cucutenian Culture)*, Ed. Meridiane 1979. [64] Gimbutas, *The Goddesses...*, p.147. [65] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to pp.48,66. [66] *Nirmalitas* (Columbia), no.1, cover I (1997). [67] Baring, Cashford, pp.93-94,98,99. [68] *Ibid.*, p.599. [69] Graves, Patai, p.52. [70] Constantin Daniel, *Cultura spirituală a Egiptului antic (Spiritual Culture of Ancient Egypt)*, Ed. Cartea Românească, București 1985, pp.244-246. [71] Claire Lalouette, *L'empire des Ramses*, Librairie Arthème Fayard, Paris 1985, p.329, o.t. [72] *The Satapatha Brahmana* 13.4.3.9; 13.4.3.4; also Eliade, *A History...*, vol. 1, § 67, p.204. [73] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to p.186. [74] Rai, illustr. opposite to pp.8/9. [75] Zimmer, *Philosophies...*, illustr. III-VIa; Baring, Cashford, illustr. to pp.109,149,501. [76] Gimbutas, *The Civilization...*, p.236, and fig.7-23 to p.237—the Snake Goddess of the Neolithic, Kato Ierapetra (Crete, around 6000 BC); also *The Goddesses...*, p.101, and fig.65 to p.99. [77] Gimbutas, *The Civilization...*, p.343. [78] Zimmer, *Myths...*, fig.3-6. [79] J. Talboys Wheeler, *India from the Earliest Ages*, Cosmo Publications, Delhi 1973, p.58. [80] Gimbutas, *The Goddesses...*, pp.94,95,102. [81] *Pistis Sophia*, ch. 126, p.268. [82] *The Rig-Veda* 10.129.3; cf. 1b.10.121.8; *The Satapatha Brahmana* 11.1.6.1 etc. [83]

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X. THE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER

“God is unique. You call Him by different names. Ram³¹¹ and Rahim³¹² are but one³¹³. Do not fight. Love one another. Follow your unique religion and search for the Truth”

Sai Nath of Shirdi [1]

In the following we shall attempt at disclosing the defining element presented by a series of prominent figures that have marked out the history of human spirituality.

As we have seen, some students of the prophetic phenomenon have looked for similitudes among its exponents that mainly pertain to the facts of their biographies told about in the Scriptures (ch. VIII).

We find the Yoga viewpoint more plausible, since, in contrast with those searching after formal, superficial analogies, it perceived here the manifestation of the divine will or, more exactly, the reflection of the Universal Guru (*Jagad-guru*, Sanskr.) principle. *Guru* (Sansk.) means *teacher*—the term used by the apostles when addressing Jesus (*rabboni*, Hebr.—for instance in John 20:19; *rabbaniyum*, Arab. [2]). The English term has a wider significance: *master*, that is *spiritual master* or even *lord*, since in classical Yoga the disciple used to unconditionally be subject to the Guru who showed him the way of the spiritual ascent (ch. XXIV). The obedience was not imposed but rooted in mutual affection between master and disciple. G. Scholem wrote: “A guru... prevents the student who sets out to explore the world of mysticism from staying off into dangerous situations. For... the path of the mystic is beset by perils... The Yogis, the Sufis³¹⁴, and the Kabbalists,... stress the need for such a spiritual guide” [3].

Related to this classical concept, *Sahaja Yoga* has set up a principle according to which this external relation becomes an internal one and this fact can be synthetically expressed by the sentence: “I am my own Guru.” In

³¹¹ Rama (here, he is designating the Hinduism).

³¹² One of Allah’s names—ch. XV D (here, it is designating the Islam).

³¹³ *Ram Rahim Thumi Ho*.

³¹⁴ See ch. XXIV B.

the *Qur'an* we come across a similar urge addressed to “any human being to whom Allah has given the Book³¹⁵ and Wisdom³¹⁶ and Prophethood... (he would say): «Be you teacher³¹⁷»” [2]. The Christian Gnostic (ch. XX C4) became “a disciple of his mind” [4] and his own mind became “the father of the truth” [5]. Anyone who achieves gnosis “is no longer a Christian but a Christ” [6]. “You saw the Spirit, you become Spirit. You saw Christ, you become Christ” [7].

Those who are at home with the notions of traditional Yoga can find this fact surprising, but in Sahaja Yoga there is no external guru, the evolution being controlled by the own Self (Atman) that is guided by the Kundalini which sends out signals warning the practitioner on the catches in his subtle system. They are perceived as heat or paresthesia (stings, itches, numbness or throbbings) on the fingers—that are directly connected to the X-1 chakras—constituting the ends of the subtle paths. The fingertips, called *Ting* points, are, otherwise, successfully used in acupuncture. Once the catches are detected they can be removed by specific techniques. To give a single example, we shall refer to the heart chakra (Anahatha) corresponding to the little finger, and this connection is well known by the medical science. Thus, during the acute myocardial infarction the pain goes alongside the left shoulder, descending on the cubital side of the forearm down to the left little finger. This is a case of pain projection caused by the lesion of an internal organ that can be explained by the two types of pain sensitivity associated to the anatomical areas (cutaneous and visceral) having a common transmission path. This occurrence also enables a Sahaja Yogi to detect the catches of another person and, therefore, could illustrate the connection to the collective consciousness (ch. II).

Scientists have confirmed this kind of paresthesias signaled by Sahaja Yoga. Marcel Vogel, for instance, “felt a slight cooling³¹⁸ sensation followed by what he describes as a series of electrical pulses, indicating a powerful field” [8]. Tompkins and Bird showed that “many of the children instantantly described a rippling or tingling sensation” [9]. Actually, it has been found that through the method of Sahaja Yoga children acquire the Self Realization much faster than adults do. One reason is that the Mooladhara (support)

³¹⁵ The Scripture; here the *Qur'an* and, by extension, the *Bible* or any sacred essential text (ch. XIX C).

³¹⁶ *Al-Hikmah* (Arab.).

³¹⁷ *Rabbaniyyum*.

³¹⁸ Ch. XI C.

chakra is in a better state in children who possess highly developed qualities of this chakra (innocence and purity; ch. XIX C) in contrast to adults. Another reason could be that their subtle body is less affected by catches. Hence, the words of Jesus: “Unless ye... become as little children, ye will not at all enter into the kingdom of the heavens” (Matthew 18:3) as well as the sentence: “Suffer little children, and do not hinder them from coming to me; for the kingdom of the heavens is of such” (Matthew 19:14; cf. Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16).

Considering the above, Sahaja Yoga rejects the presence of the false “gurus”—unfortunately so numerous in the other forms of Yoga—persons who have no scruples in snatching material advantages from the naive clients attending their “lessons.”

The revelations become possible through the connection to the *cosmic consciousnesses* or whatever its name might be (ch. II) and they appear not only in mysticism but also in science. Sudden inspirations led to results of a remarkable scientific value that could not have been arrived at by inductive reasoning. Such revelations have disclosed to Mendeleev the arrangement of the chemical elements in the famous periodic system, to Niels Bohr—the structure of atom, to Kékulé—the cyclic pattern of the atoms forming the benzene ring. Similar cases were reported by Sir William Rowan Hamilton (the famous mathematician, author of the linear operators on quaternions), and by another renowned mathematician, James Clerk Maxwell (known for his revolutionary work in electromagnetism) who gave away his unscientific methods of thought: he could arrive at the correct formula but expected his colleagues to justify the results. Another example is Ramanujan Srinivasa (1887-1920) who is regarded as the most creative mathematical theorist of modern times. Despite a relatively little formal education, he was able to produce a series of ingenious mathematical theorems, and declared that goddess Saraswati (Divine Creativity; having the Muses as her equivalent in Greek mythology) tutored him, and granted him this breakthrough. About Srinivasa’s discoveries, Geoffrey Hardy of Cambridge University declared: “Nobody could have the imagination to invent them” [10]. Statistical studies have proved that the practice of Sahaja Yoga induces new creative ability (literary, artistic, scientific) or stimulates the pre-existent creative skills [11].

In the light of the Yoga, the great prophets of mankind were incarnations of the Primordial Guru (*Adi Guru*, Sanskr.), a Principle symbolized by X-2 *Dattatreya*, who was considered the manifestation of the trinity Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in the shape of a great saint and sage. There is a *hadith* claiming that the principle of Primordial Prophet existed prior even to Adam: “*Fa-kana nabiyān wa-‘Adamu bayna ‘l-ma‘i wa‘-t-tin*” (He [Muhammad]

was Prophet, when Adam was still between water and mud, Arab.). “I have been charged to fulfill my mission since the best of the ages of Adam, from age to age down to the age in which I now am” [12], thus acknowledging the various incarnation of the Universal Principle of Spiritual Master. Even Muhammad declared in the *Qur’an*: “I abode among you a lifetime before it—will you not understand?” (10.17). In the New Testament, this corresponds to the words of Christ: “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58).

Sahaja Yoga considers a number of ten great Incarnations (*Avatara*, X-2 Sanskr.) of the Primordial Guru, corresponding to the petals/subplexuses of the Nabhi chakra governed by this divine Principle. The *Kalika Purana* wrote that the mind of the Creator Brahma gave birth to ten manifestations considered the ancestors of the Brahmins. The *Zohar* says that there are “«ten potentates» [who] then take of the blessings above [in the heaven], and pour them down upon him who is below” [13]. It is to be remembered here that ten stands for the number of emanations (sephiroth) defining the Tree of Life (ch. IV), just like the ten fingers of both palms (or feet) reflect the assembly of all the chakra connections (see above). Moreover, there are ten petals (subplexuses) of the Nabhi chakra³¹⁹ of Prophethood (ch. V and *infra*).

The number associated to the prophets is often *seventy*, the product of two sacred numbers symbolizing the same reality (*seven* chakras and *ten* sephiroth), hence a strengthening (raising to a *power*). Seventy were the prophets sent by God during Moses time (Numbers 11:25), and seventy were those sent by Jesus (Luke 10:1 *King James Version*; seventy-two in other versions), seventy in number were also the scholars in charge with the translation for the *Septuagint* (ch. VII) and seventy was the number of openings (doors and windows) of Merlin’s house [14].

Abram was the first great prophet recorded by the *Bible*. In spite of a X-3 wide divergence of views among scholars [15], we place the odyssey of Abra(ha)m between 1900 and 1800 BC (ch. VI).

The name of *Abram* (high or exalted father, Hebr.) will be changed, at God suggestion, to *Abrahm* or *Abraham* (father of a multitude, Hebr.) (Genesis 17:5). He was considered the founder of the Judaism.

God has spoken to Adam and Eve (1:28 etc.), to Cain (4:6), and then to Noah (6:13). However, Abraham was the first who had a real dialogue with Yahweh (15:1 sq.).

In the beginning, God advised him to go to another country (12:1) and promised him all the blessings and the proliferation of his seed (12:2-3).

³¹⁹ Ch. I.

Then a covenant³²⁰ was concluded (17:7). When Abraham was ninety-nine (17:1) he had to acknowledge the unique God and, in return, he received for an everlasting possession *the Promised Land* (17:8). This agreement was sealed by the promise that he would have a son from Sarai (now called Sarah) though she was ninety and barren (17:15-21). All men had to be circumcised as a sign of the above covenant (17:10-14). To prove his faithfulness, Abraham was ready to sacrifice his only son Isaac on God's request (ch. 22). He was stopped in the last moment and instead a ram was accepted as an offering (22:1-13). This is still the custom in practice for the Easter lamb, and its correspondent is the sacrifice of a ram during the Muslim Ramadan.

X-4 **Moses** was the second great prophet of the Hebrews. God appeared to him as a burning bush (ch. XI E) on the Mount Horeb (Exodus 3:1-10) and helped him liberate his people out of the bondage in Egypt. The exodus is supposed to have taken place towards the middle of the 13th century BC, during the rule of Ramesses II (1304-1237 BC).

It was on Mount Sinai that God renewed His agreement with *His (chosen) people*³²¹ (19:5) by giving Moses the ten commandments (20:1-17), then other laws and rules presented in the last four books of the *Pentateuch*. The Hebrews would not observe the agreement and hence, were punished by being sent to wander through the wilderness. No one from their generation was to enter *the Promised Land*, but only their offspring.

Raja³²² Janaka, Guru Nanak and Sai Nath of Shirdi were chronologically considered in the Indian tradition to be among the great spiritual masters, as the incarnations of Adi Guru.

X-5 **Raja Janaka**, the king of Videha, lived eight thousand years ago. His daughter, the future wife of Rama was given to him by *Bhoomi-Devi*, the Mother Earth. The former sprang from a furrow when he was ploughing the ground, hence the name of *Sira-dhvajah* (he of the plough banner, Sanskr.).

By refusing to submit to the Brahmin hierarchy, he established his right to perform sacrifices without the intervention of the priests. Through his pure

³²⁰ This was the meaning of the word *testament*, which designated the two parts of the *Bible*.

³²¹ However, the Old Testament does not reject the universalism (Psalms 22:27; 47:7-9).

³²² King (Sanskrit).

and righteous way of life, he was believed to be a Brahmin and a Rajarishi³²³. Together with his priest and adviser Yajnavalkya, both were considered to have prepared the way for the Buddha [16]. Their philosophical and religious teachings were presented in the *Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad*.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was born in the Punjab where people had no X - 6 respect either for God, or for the traditional idols, but only for money and power. He married in 1485, had two children and became a merchant for twelve years. After receiving his enlightenment he gave up his trade and started wandering through villages, preaching his faith. He even reached Mecca in one of his travels. He was neither a Hindu, nor a Muslim, but only “a man of God” as he called himself.

When he died, his Hindu and Muslim disciples started a quarrel: the former wanted to cremate him while the latter group wanted to bury him. It was then that his last miracle was performed, when his body was changed into an exquisite bunch of a thousand flowers.

His teachings were collected into the *Adi Granth* (First Book, Sanskr.), the sacred book of the *Sindh* (disciple), *Singh* (lion) or *Sikh* movement. The *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* gathers a larger doctrine collection of many teachers, for instance those of Guru Nanak or of Kabir, “the devotee of the Invisible One,”—this being Allah or Rama or having any other name. Other Gurus were Ramdas (the fourth after Nanak), Charpat, Gorakh, Loharipa etc.

Sai Nath³²⁴ first appeared in 1870 in the Shirdi forest in the Indian state X - 7 of Maharashtra although nobody knew where he was born. All those who met him spontaneously admitted that he was not an everyday type of person. He lived alone and begged for his food and oil for his lamp.

One knows him only through his teachings, deeds and miracles. He also tried to reconcile Hindus and Muslims, as it is proved by his words quoted in the beginning of this chapter.

Zoroaster (Zarathustra, Gr.) was the founder of what later changed into X - 8 *Parsi* religion (*Mazdaism* or *Zoroastrianism*). His birth in a royal Persian family was foretold in a dream where he appeared to his mother as a blessing for mankind and especially for those who followed the divine laws. In his childhood he performed many miracles, which aroused the envy of the magicians who made several attempts on his life, but all these were unsuccessful since the boy seemed to be protected by a divine force. At an early age he dedicated himself to a contemplative life and received the

³²³ *Rishi* (holy sage, Sanskr.); *rajarishi* (holy sage of royal lineage, Sanskr.).

³²⁴ *Sai* (holy, Persian), *Nath* (Lord, Sanskr.).

X - 9 revelation of Ahura Mazda, whose prophet he became. He rejected the other deities and forbade the bloody sacrifices (hecatombs of animals). The merciless opposition of the priests created great difficulties for him but finally, under King Vishtapa's protection, he was permitted to present and spread his doctrine.

The Mazdaism had previously been a polytheistic, Arian religion related to the *Vedas*, and worshipped the gods under the form of natural elements: ocean, wind, fire. Zoroaster preached the monotheism whose only god was *Ahura Mazda* (*Ohrmuzd*, *Ohrmazd*—the Wise Lord or the Lord of Wisdom, Persian), the god of Light. The prophet's original concept was expressed in the *Gatha*³²⁵ texts of *Avesta*, while many deities from the *Vedas* (some of them demons) appear in the after-Gathic writings. The Vedic equivalent of Ahura was Varuna. Ahura Mazda was set in opposition to Angra Mainyu (Ahriman), the Evil principle. Like other incarnations, Zoroaster was tempted by Angra Mainyu to abandon the law of Ahura Mazda.

Zoroastrianism became the mainstream religion of the Achaemenid Empire and flourished under the succeeding Parthian and Sassanian Empires, influencing the development of Greek, Jewish, Christian and Muslim thought. The Parsis of Mumbai (Bombay) are their modern descendants.

Lao-tse and his contemporary Confucius lived at a time when China was going down politically and morally: the central power was disintegrating; the vassals were becoming more powerful than the sovereign and were taking religious liberties.

X - 10 **Lao-tse** (604-531; after others he was born in 571 BC) could be translated as "the old one," where *tse*³²⁶ was a suffix of respect denoting "the master." He was known under the names of Lao-tan and Li Erh and he was given the posthumous name of Tan (long ears, Chin., signifying longevity and wisdom). He was born in the village Huhsien (Huxian) in the kingdom of Ku or Ch'u (East of Luyi district in the Henan province of today). He worked as an archivist at the royal court of King Chou (Zhou), which he left after some time. Before disappearing without a trace, he made a halt in the house of the watchman Yin Hsi of the Hangu pass, on the north of the town of Linbao, in the province Henan. On the request of the houselord he wrote (or dictated) *Tao-Te-King* or *Dao-De-Jing* (the Book of the Path and Virtue, Chin.) including 5000 ideograms (words) in 81 chapters.

Tao means the Mid Path, but the meaning is extremely complex. It is the

³²⁵ Hymns; addressed to the divinity in Zoroastrianism.

³²⁶ *Tse* was translated also as "child"; the "old child" signified "enlightenment" (the second birth).

origin of all things and creatures in the universe, the cosmic principle underlying every human existence and natural activity. Tao was presented as the undifferentiated unity where all the contrasts and differences between human experience and thinking were solved. The paradox was that it acted without acting, it did not do anything but everything was being done by it.

Confucius was the Latinized name given by the Europeans to *Kong Fu-zi* X - 11 (Pinyin), *K'ung-tzu* or *K'ung-fu-tzu* (Wade-Giles), *K'ong-fou-seu* (École Française d'Extrême Orient), *Kung-tse*, *Kong Qiu*, *Zhong Ni*, signifying “venerable master Kong.” He lived between 551 and 479 BC, was of royal blood but was poor. He was born in the feudal state Lu and spent most of his life teaching others. He took an active part in Chinese life, urging a concrete system of moral, social and especially political correctness in the midst of warfare, corruption and tyranny. His doctrine was so successful that it became the state official doctrine. Even the appointment of the functionaries came to be made according to the knowledge of his precepts.

The doctrine of Confucius was humanistic and social in its essence while that of Lao-tse was mainly of cosmic and mystic order. The *Lunyu* (*yu*, sayings, Chin.) was the principal collection of the *Analects* (dialogues, Lat.) written by Confucius. The Invariable Middle was the foundation of Confucius' morals. The rule on becoming a righteous man consisted of loyalty, equity and right behavior. He also wrote the commentaries on *Yi King*³²⁷ (*I-Ching*, Wade-Giles; *Yi Jing*, Pinyin), the earliest book of Chinese wisdom.

The three great contemporaries: Lao-tse, Confucius and the Buddha (ch. XIX B) never intended to create religions and this was a fact that needs a special mention. They were all deified after their deaths, against their will and together with their doctrines became the subject of worship for the followers who created their cults. This was also the reason the Chinese tradition has always made a distinction between the Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist philosophical schools (*jia*, Chin.) and the religions (*jiao*, Chin.) of the same name.

It should be noticed “the *Sanatana Dharma* known today as Hinduism is the only living religion that does not look to a founder for its source of inspiration, scripture or historical beginning. It is timeless and ageless. *Sanatana Dharma* is the root religion of humankind, looks inward for its origins, into the subtle, superconscious realms within the microcosm, which it calls the *Karanaloka*, *Shivaloka* or *Third World*” [17].

Socrates (c. 468-399 BC) was born in Alopece (Attica). He was married X - 12 and had three children. He was temperate in eating, resisting bad weather and

³²⁷ Literally: the Book of Mutations (Chin.).

diseases (he escaped untouched whenever pest broke out in Athens) and simply in clothing; Aristophanes [18] noticed that Socrates walked barefoot (ch. XV C). He never demanded money for his teachings (cf. XX C2c). He did not write anything and is known to the posterity through the works of his disciples Xenophon, and especially Plato, but unfortunately the latter did not always truly reflect the reasoning of Socrates. *Amicus Plato sed magis amica veritas* (Plato is a friend to me but Truth is still my closer friend, Lat.).

Socrates did not have regular lectures but was present wherever people gathered at public ceremonies, gymnasiums, stadia etc. His influence became manifest among the aristocratic, young people. He refused to express faith in the tutelary deities of Athens, that were the object of a deformed mythology (ch. XIX B). He did not look on himself as a wise man (*sophós*, Gr.; *rishi*, Sanskr.; *cheng*, Chin.). However, he was one of the wisest men of all times (a fact acknowledged not only by his contemporaries Plato, Xenophon etc. as well as all the posterior philosophers but even by his opponents as Protagoras). During the opening of discussions (called *eironeía*, the action of asking, Gr.) he used to determine his partner, through questioning, to make his position clear, usually trapping him within the contradictions of his own statements, and even pretending to be ignorant (an attitude which might correspond with the term *ironical* as it is used currently). During the second part of the Socratic method (*maieutiké*, the art of enabling truth to get born, Gr.; from *maia*, midwife, mother, Gr.; *Maya*, Sanskr. was one of the Great Mother's names) he determined his partner to logically draw the right conclusions about the reality of Beauty, Good, Truth, and Justice. The human soul was shown by him to be in search of noble, beautiful things, of aesthetics, virtue and absolute love. "I spend all my time going about trying to persuade you, young and old, to make your first and chief concern not for your bodies nor for your possessions, but for the highest welfare of your souls" [19]. Like his Chinese predecessors above, he was a great philosopher who had witnessed a period of decay. His philosophy was centered round *man*, the meaning of his life, his deep desires and his fight against skepticism. He has chosen as his device the inscription "*Know thyself*" (ch. XIX C) on the fronton of the temple in Delphi.

Socrates had undergone a striking mystical experience at Potidae, which changed completely the course of his life. *Socrates' Defense* disclosed that something divine (*daimónion*, Gr.) was talking to Socrates [20]. The *daimónion* talked, warned, announced him prophetically, and Socrates admitted to it even during his trial. He called this "the divine sign" (*to tou theou semeion*, the sign of God, Gr.) [21]. According to Zeller, the voice of the *daimónion* was considered by Socrates to be "an inner oracle which he

had been gifted,” a “prophetic warning” [22]. “The knowledge of the Self” was not an abstract speculation for the great philosopher but a *state*, as texts revealed. Socrates said: “the philosopher frees his soul from association with the body, so far as is possible” [23]. The same dialogue specifies that this “liberation” was seen as a “purification” (*kátharsis*, Gr.): this “purification... consists in separating the soul as much as possible from the body, and accustoming it to withdraw from all contact with the body and concentrate itself, and to have its dwelling, so far as it can, both now and in the future, alone by itself, freed from the shackles of the body” [24]. Various authors have shown that Socrates was sometimes in a supernatural state of consciousness: Plato in his dialogues, Xenophon in his hints, but especially Diogenes Laertius: “at Potidaea... he is said to have remained a whole night without changing his position” [25]. Aulus Gellius pointed out that these exercises were voluntary (*inter labores voluntarios et exercitia corporis*, Lat.): “he used to incessantly stand motionless for a whole day and night, from dawn to dawn, without closing an eye, without a single move, in the same place, his face and eyes towards the same direction, in a meditative mood as if the soul had separated from his body” [26]. During his trial, Socrates showed that he was doing differently from the many [27]. The witnesses said that truly strange things happened to him, which were given various interpretations [28]. Plato wrote about how Socrates went under a porch and refused all the invitations to supper. Then Agathon said to the others: “You’d much better leave him to himself. It’s quite a habit of his, you know; off he goes and there he stands, no matter where it is... I really don’t think you’d better worry him.” Later on, Agathon told him: “Here you are, Socrates, come and sit next to me; I want to share this great thought that’s just struck you in the porch next door. I’m sure you have mastered it, or you’d still be standing there” [29]. The witnesses noticed: “Socrates fell into a fit of abstraction” [30]. Falling back on the interpretation given by L. Gernet and J.P. Vernant regarding the word *prapides* (diaphragm, Gr.) used in connection to the breathing, Henri Joly and others thought that Socrates used a Yoga respiratory technique [31]. To conclude, we shall point it out that *eudaimonia* (from *eudaímon*, Gr.—the one who was endowed with *daimónion*) literally means *beatitude* (a term later introduced by the Latins), bliss [32] or *ananda* (Sansk.; ch. XIX C).

At the age of seventy, he was condemned to death on the false charge that he did not respect the gods and he corrupted the youth. The real reason was his opposition to the dictatorship in Athens. Having refused the advice of his friends to go into exile, he chose to obey the law and to die by drinking hemlock poison—one of the legal “favors” left to the convicts.

The great master of human spirituality made a famous prophecy a short time before his death: “The Divinity will come in person to visit us,” by which he foretold the coming of Jesus. Therefore, Socrates was supposed to be one of Christ’s forerunners and frequently was included in the Savior’s genealogy. Thus, the fresco in the refectory of the monastery of Bachkovo, Bulgaria (1643) has them depicted next to each other.

By proposing a metaphysical concept of Creation, Socrates had paved the way for the Christian doctrine of love and sacrifice in the Roman world a few centuries later. Actually, he was a founder of the love for wisdom (*philosophía*, Gr.).

X-13 **Muhammad** (Glorified, Arab.) or, more exactly, Muhammad ibn Abdallah—a member of the Hashim clan belonging to the tribe Quraysh—was born in Mecca around 570. The little orphan was brought up first by his grandfather, then by his uncle and soon came to lead the caravans of the wealthy widow Khadija whom he married. His sons died young while his daughter Fatima married ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet’s cousin.

In 612 he started to receive the divine revelations—first conveyed orally and later recorded in writing by his disciples—to build up later on the *Qur’an*, the Holy Book of Islam, also called *At-Tanzil* (Descent, Arab.). Muhammad did not claim to have done anything else, other than to restore the revelation made by God to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, thus acknowledging the unity in essence of the three prophetic and messianic religions that appeared in the Semitic area of Middle East: Judaism, Christian religion and Islam.

The new religion of *Islam* (submission, to God, Arab.) disturbed the social order founded on polytheism, which was supported by the mercantile oligarchy. The Hegira (*Hijrah*, flight, Arab.) to Yathrib (called afterwards Medina, an abbreviation from *Medinat an-Nabi*, Prophet’s city, Arab.) to run away from the hostilities, occurred in 622 and since then the Muslim calendar counts its dates. After eight years the Prophet returned to his native town in real triumph. He destroyed the old idols and proclaimed the new religion that practically spread throughout the whole of Arabia in one year. Schuon rightfully showed it that: “Islam was born in an atmosphere of conflict and the soul in search of God must fight” [33]. On his return to Medina, from victorious battles in Mecca and Hunayn, the Prophet said: “We return from the lesser holy war³²⁸ to wage the greater holy war³²⁹,” which he

³²⁸ *Al-jihad al-ashgar* (Arab.) has the meaning: “the exterior war (struggle).”

³²⁹ *Al-jihad al-akbar* (Arab.) has the meaning “the inner war (struggle).”

explained as “the war against the soul,” actually against the limited ego [34]. The holy war (*jihad*, whose meaning is “struggle”—in the way of God³³⁰) started by the Prophet due to the aggression encountered against him, beyond the external significance of the historical moment, has the meaning of the inner struggle against the evil in us.

Muhammad died in 632.

They say about Muhammad that he could neither read nor write, being thus called *an-Nabi al-ummi* (the illiterate Prophet, Arab.): “Follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write” [35]. As a matter of fact, when the first revelation was conveyed to him by God’s messenger on Mount Hira in 610, the archangel Gabriel repeatedly and uselessly commanded him: “Read!” [36].

The coming of this incarnation of the prophetic principle was foretold in the *Bible*. In the *Qur’an* we read about “the revelation of the Lord of all being” (26.192)... “in the Scriptures of the ancient” (26.196). Moreover, there is a mention about “the Messenger, the Prophet... whom they find written down with them in the *Torah* and the Gospel” (7.157). “Narrated ‘Ata bin Yasar: I met ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bin Al’Aas and asked him: «Tell me about the description of Allah’s Messenger which is mentioned in the *Torah*». He replied: «Yes. By Allah, he is described in the *Torah* with some of the qualities attributed to him in the *Qur’an*».” “Narrated ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bin Al’Aas: This verse: «Verily We have sent you (O, Muhammad, may Allah’s peace be upon you) as a witness, as a hearer of glad tidings and as a warner». This is in the *Qur’an*, and it appears in the *Torah* as follows: «Verily We have sent you (O, Muhammad, may Allah’s peace be upon you) as a witness, as a bringer of glad tidings and as a warner, and as a protector for the illiterates. You are My slave and My Messenger; and I have named you al-Mutawakkil” (one who depends on Allah) [37]. We read in the Book of Isaiah (29:12): “They give the book to him that cannot read, saying: «Read this, I pray thee»; and he saith: «I cannot read».” Most references to Muhammad are found, however, in Deuteronomy. “Yahweh thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me” (18:15). “A prophet will I raise up unto them from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (18:18). This cannot be an Israelite because of the term *brethren* and not *seed*. The ancestor of the Arab peoples is considered Abraham’s other son Isma’il (*Ishma’el*, God hears, Hebr.), *the brother* of Isaac (Genesis 21:13,18; 25:12 etc.). Isma’il first lived in the wilderness of Paran (21:21), after the name of the mount in Arabia: “Yahweh

³³⁰ I.e. the Sushumna, the way of Self Realization.

came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shone forth from Mount Paran, and he came from the myriads of the sanctuary” (Deuteronomy 33:2). God announced Isaiah (42:1-12) about the sending of His Chosen One, where some assumed that He meant Jesus. The Chosen One would be received with joy: “Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up [their voice], the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains” (42:11). However, Kedar is the name of Isma’il’s second son (Genesis 25:13), which would support the hypothesis of the above prophecy referring to Muhammad. Later, we find the following text in Habakkuk (3:3) sending again to Paran: “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran.” After the word Paran, the text indicates: *selah* (stop, Hebr.; besides Habakkuk, it appears only in the Psalms) after which it resumed with the words: “His glory covereth the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.” We can believe that in the place of the *stop* there might have existed a fragment (see ch. XI E) that had to be ignored (from easily understood reasons, if it had Muhammad as its object).

Another source (of much questionable authenticity) is the *Gospel of Barnabas* that read: “Then Jesus said: «So secret is predestination, O brethren, that I say to you, truly, only to one man shall it be clearly known. He it is whom the nations look for, to whom the secrets of God are so clear that, when he comes into the world, blessed shall they be that shall listen to his words, because God shall overshadow them with his mercy even as this palm-tree overshadows us». The disciples answered, «O Master, who shall that man be of whom you speak, who shall come into the world?» Jesus answered with joy of heart: «He is Muhammad, Messenger of God»” [38].

In the New Testament, John (1:20-21) “acknowledged: «I am not the Christ». And they asked him: «What then? Art thou Elijah? And he says: «I am not». «Art thou the prophet³³¹?» And he answered: «No»,” because the Jews awaited three persons: Elijah, Messiah and the prophet similar to Moses. The *Qur’an* reads: “We gave Moses the Book, and after him sent succeeding Messengers” (2.81). “Jesus says to them: «Have ye never read in the scriptures ‘The stone which they that builded rejected, this has become the corner-stone; this is of [the] Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes?’»” (Matthew 21:42; Jesus was referring to the prophecy in the Psalms 118:22-23). “Therefore I say to you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation producing the fruits of it. And he that falls on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder” (Matthew 21:43). The commentators see here the following

³³¹ The exegesis sends to the prophet who is like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15,18)—see above.

possible variants: (a) Isma'il³³² (rejected stone, as he had been exiled into the wilderness with his mother Hagar—Genesis 21:10, 14; then saved by God 21:17-20 who developed a people out of him; (b) the Arab people; (c) Muhammad and the spreading by force of Islam.

After the death of Muhammad, Abu Bakr, the successor (*khalifah*, Arab.) who became in charge of the religion, ordered the collection of all the *Qur'an* fragments written on palm leaves, camel shoulder blades, pottery pieces etc. The Islamic Scripture was written only under the third caliph 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (644-656), after the notes of Zayd ibn Thabit. But because of 'Uthman's discontent on Zayd's work, the text was amended by Sa'id ibn al-As and two others [39]. According to some scholars, the text we have today incorporates also changes by al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf at-Thakafi (660-714) regarding 10.22; 26.116,167; 47.15; 57.7. The official version having been established, all the other variants were burned in the year 25 after Hegira (A.H., *Anno Hegirae*, Lat.). However, there is a version of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (who succeeded to keep his variant that does not include suwar³³³ 1, 113, and 114) to which the inhabitants of the city of Kufa remained faithful, and a *corpus* of Hazrat 'Ali ibn Abi Talib [40] that presents a different order of the suwar and includes more chapters "under the title of *The Revelation of God for the Explanation of the Intended (purpose)*" [41]. Other variants belong to Ibn Abbas, Abi Musa al-Ashari, al-Maqdad ibn al-Aswad, Saalim (the client of Abi Huthayfa), Ubayy ibn Ka'b (with two more suwar: *Al-hafd* and *Al-Khal'*, and joining surah 104 with 105, and surah 93 with 94) [42]. The latter variant was widespread in Syria, and other texts differing from that of 'Uthman were commonly used until 322 A.H. (when they were officially banned in Baghdad), over the period called *ikhthiyar* (free choice, Arab.).

Muhammad himself recommended some variants. Thus, according to as-Suyuti, on the strength of Jaabir, the Prophet said: "Receive the *Qur'an* from four: Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Mu'aaz ibn Jabal, Saalim, and Ka'b." There are many omitted letters, words or even complete phrases [43].

To this it has to be added that the *Qur'an* was written in the Kufi script without vowels (the consonantal form characterized the ancient Semitic writing, as was also the case of the Old Testament text; ch. XX B) and without diacritical marks, and thus the same symbol could have been read as *b*, *n*, *t*, *th* or *y* [44]. The diacritical points and vocalization were added later on by Abu al-Aswad ad-Duali, Nasr ibn Asim, and al-Khalil ibn Ahmad.

³³² *Ishmael* (Arab.).

³³³ *Suwar* is the plural form of *surah*.

Therefore, the final text suffered—alongside the single text of the *Qur'an* consonantal form that was standardized by 'Uthman—the removal of a vast number of passages that are said to have been lost, a host variant readings of specific texts, together with finer distinctions in the vowelling of the text.

The changes operated in the *Qur'an*, are evidenced by the sentences in the Islamic Scripture: “For whatever verse we abrogate or cast into oblivion, we bring a better or the like of it” (2.100). “And when we exchange a verse in the place of another verse—and God knows very well what He is sending down—they say: «Thou art a mere forger!» Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge” (16.103).

The subtle zone that hosts the Principle of spiritual Master (Guru) is called Void and surrounds the Nabhi chakra. Muhammad is considered *Rasûl*³³⁴ (messenger, Arab.) and *Nabi* (prophet, Arab. and Hebr.), at the same time. The relationship Nabhi—nabi—*navis* (ship, Lat.)—navel was explained in chapter V. Green is the color of Nabhi chakra and the Void, as well as of Water expanses, which is the element of the former too. Green was adopted by the *sharifs* in the 13th century, as the color of the Prophet. X-16 Khidr³³⁵ [45] or Khadir, “the one to live until the Dooms Day” (supposed by some people to be the Hidden Imam; ch. XIX C) is called “the Verdant One” [46]. He might have appeared in that color to the famous Sufi Ibn al-'Arabi during a vision [47]. The *Ishraqi* Iranian tradition talks about the Grail (ch. V), as the *Green Citadel* or the *Emerald Citadel* [48], due to the precious X-14 stone the Holy Chalice was made of. Actually, the hero of the Grail myth Parsifal or Percival(e) (Parzival, Germ.; Perceval, Fr.) was called “the Green One.” Green is the color of *hope* for immortality, of *life* (eternal) symbolized by the fir tree, the *evergreen* tree (ch. IV). It is the color of the talisman that X-15 saved Sir Gawain from death and that was later adopted by all King Arthur's knights.

In Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, the Grail is equated to the *lapis exilis* (small, or paltry stone, Lat.): “*Und dieser Stein ist Gral genannt*” (And this stone is named the Grail, Germ.). King Solomon and Emperor Akbar are said to have possessed this stone, and it is supposed to appear before the Great Advent ending the present Kali Yuga (ch. XIX D). Roerich tells that Buddhists have a similar tradition about the *Chalice of the Buddha* that after the death of the Teacher was brought to Peshawar where it still existed about 400 BC as reported by the Chinese traveler Fa-hsien, but where it was no

³³⁴ *Muhammadun rasûlu'llah* (Muhammad is the messenger of God, Arab.).

³³⁵ See ch. XII.

longer about AD 630 during the time of another Chinese traveler, Hsuan-tsang, being supposedly in Persia or in Karashahr from where it has disappeared. The Chalice of the Buddha was miraculous and inexhaustible, a true Chalice of Life. Bodhisattvas are holding the chalice blossoming with tongues of flames. It reminded the Chalice of Amrita and the struggle for its possession related in the *Mahabharata*, the Chalice of the king of the Nagas taken by Indra to heaven, mentioned as filled with *soma* in a *Hymn to Indra* in the *Rig-Veda* [49]. In the Persian tradition we have the chalice Jami-Jemshid, discovered during the excavations for the city of Istaker; it was made of turquoise (the same green color as the Grail) and was filled with the Nectar of Life (the same as *amrita*, Sanskr.). One may also remember the Druid Chalice of Life. The same powerful stylized image might be noticed in the Hindu vestiges dating back to the period of Chandragupta Maurya. There exists also a similar object belonging to King Solomon that appears on the silver shekels contemporary to the latter [50], and which gave birth to a myth: "Great is the Chalice of Solomon, fashioned from precious stone. On the Chalice are inscribed three verses in Sumerian characters and no one can explain them." The Muslims in Kandahar have their own sacred chalice, and in Kharra there is also a sacred chalice, Faa-Faga. The Chalice of Life appears in the Mazdean tradition too [51] (see also ch. XI E).

It is not devoid of interest to quote here the beautiful description of the corresponding subtle center made by Plato. "That part of the soul which desires meats and drinks³³⁶ and the other things of which it has need by reason of the bodily nature, they placed between the midriff and the boundary of the navel, contriving in all this region a sort of manger for the food... The authors of our being... placed in the liver the seat of divination... No man, when in his wits, attains prophetic truth and inspiration; but when he receives the inspired word, his intelligence is enthralled in sleep, or he is demented by some distemper or possession. And he would understand what he remembers to have been said, whether in a dream or when he was awake, by the prophetic and inspired nature, or would determine by reason the meaning of the apparitions which he has seen, and what indications they afford to this man or that, of past, present or future good and evil, must first recover his wits" [52]. The fact is thus accredited that the gift of prophecy pertains to the Nabhi chakra (at the navel and liver level) that is controlled by divinities (*the authors of our being*), by the principle of the Primordial Prophet to be more specific.

The following chapter will bring further information on the gift of prophecy and other powers granted by the Spirit of God.

³³⁶ The Nabhi chakra controls the digestion.

NOTES

[1] Sai Nath of Shirdi, *Kirantan 6: Bhai Re Behad Ke Banjarey...* (Look at the drama of the mind...). [2] *NQ* 3.79. [3] Scholem, *On The Kabbalah...*, p.18. [4] *NHL, The Testimony of Truth* 44.2. [5] *Ibid.*, 43.26. [6] *NHL, The Gospel of Philip* 67.26-27. [7] *Ibid.*, 61.29-31. [8] Tompkins, Bird, p.22. [9] *Ibid.*, p.27. [10] Leonard George, *Alternative Realities*, Facts on File Inc., New York 1995, p.241. [11] Ileana Rabega, *Statistic Appraisal of the Changes Occured in People Practising Sahaja Yoga*, Research Institute for Computer Science, Bucharest, Romania. [12] *Apud* Schuon, *The Transcendent...*, p.117; *Understanding...*, p.107. [13] *The Zohar* II, 67a, vol. III, p.209. [14] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Vita Merlini*, John Jay Parry, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, vol. X, no.3, August 1925, line 555 sq. [15] Jim A. Cornwell, *The Alpha and the Omega*, 1995, ch. IV; for the the latest dating: Graves, Patai, p.162. [16] Dowson, pp.132-133,253. [17] *Hindu Deity of Dharma*, in *Hinduism Today*, September 1995. [18] Aristophanes, *The Clouds*, v.363. [19] Plato, *Socrates' Defense (Apology)* 30a-b (transl. by Hugh Tredennick), in *The Collected...*, p.16. [20] *Ibid.*, 31d, p.17. [21] *Ibid.*, *Phaedrus*, 242b-c (transl. by R. Hackforth), p.489; *Euthydemus*, 272e (transl. by W.D.H. Rouse), p.387; *Socrates' Defense*, 31d, 40a, 41d etc., pp.17,24,25-26; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* I, 4, 15. [22] Eduard Zeller, *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy* (transl. by Dr. Wilhelm Nestle), Dover, New York 1980, § 25, pp.98-99. [23] Plato, *Phaedo*, 65a (transl. by Hugh Tredennick), in *The Collected...*, p.47. [24] *Ibid.*, 67c, p.50. [25] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers, Socrates* II. 23, (transl. by R.D. Hicks), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., London 1995, vol. I, p.153. [26] Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, II, 1. [27] Plato, *Socrates' Defense*, 20c, in *The Collected...*, p.6. [28] Henri Joly, *Le Renversement platonicien*, J. Vrin, Paris 1974. [29] Plato, *Symposium*, 175b,c (transl. by Michael Joyce), in *The Collected...*, pp.529-530. [30] *Ibid.*, 174d. [31] Joly, p.69 sq.; Roger Godel, *Socrate et le sage indien*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1953. [32] A.J. Festugière, *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon*, J. Vrin, Paris 1975, 4th printing, pp.269,275. [33] Schuon, *Understanding...*, p.52; cf. Titus Burckhardt, *Introduction aux doctrines ésotériques de l'Islam*, Messerschmitt, Alger, P. Derain, Lyon 1955. [34] Peter Occhiogrosso, *The Joy of Sects*, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., New York 1996, p.416. [35] *NQ* 7.157. [36] *Ibid.* 96.1,3. [37] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 3, *ahadith* 335 and 362. [38] *The Gospel of Barnabas*, 163.2-3 (transl. by L. Ragg), Copyright R. Blackhirst, 1999. [39] Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan fii Ulum al-Qur'an (Adjusted Qur'anic Science)*, p.140; *apud* Jam' Al-

Qur'an, ch. 5, § 1. [40] Ibrahim al-Abyari, *The History of the Qur'an*, third print, 1982, pp.107,109. [41] Imam Khui, *Al-Bayan*, p.222. [42] *Behind the Veil*, section three, ch. 12. [43] As-Suyuti, part 3, pp.181-192. [44] D. et J. Sourdel, *La Civilisation de l'Islam Classique*, B. Arthaud, Paris 1968, p.131. [45] Mentioned for instance in *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 6, *hadith* 249. [46] Baring, Cashford, pp.412,707. [47] Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, Bollingen Series XCI, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1969, pp.55-67. [48] Jean-Paul Bourre, *La quête du Graal*, Dervy, Paris 1903. [49] *The Rig-Veda, Hymn XXXII to Indra*. [50] Roerich, *Altai-Himalaya*, p.33. [51] Roerich, *Shambala*, pp.107-108,119. [52] Plato, *Timaeus*, 70 d-e, 71 d-e, in *The Collected...*, p. 1194.

XI. MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

A. THE PROPHECY

“Ye are not the speakers, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you”

Matthew 10:20

Most of the previously mentioned prophets had in common the gift of *prophecy* that is to be distinguished from *premonition* (anticipation of future events).

The prophets were messengers, conveying the Word of God received through revelation. Hence, the gift of prophecy came directly from the Divine.

It is worthwhile showing here that premonition and other parapsychological phenomena could originate in magic, in relations with dead spirits, which were not only far from but quite opposed to divinity. Chapters XV C and XX D will provide further details in this respect.

The prophecy granted by God was only the external manifestation, the effect. What was, however, its cause? The *Bible* gave an explicit answer to this question: all the prophets, irrespective of their importance, were endowed with the Spirit of God.

The *Bible* is so full of these references that we could not afford to quote them all here but we can only point them out to interested readers. There are more than forty such references in the Old Testament. By way of contrast, the Gospels included just a few (Matthew 3:11 and John 7:39; 14:16-17; 15:26; 20:22) while Acts only contain about a quarter of the number of references within the Old Testament.

The number of those who have received the Spirit of God (the common term used in the New Testament was the Holy Spirit) was large: Joseph (Genesis 41:38), Bezaleel (Exodus 35:31), Moses (Numbers 11:17), the seventy elder men chosen by Moses (11:25), Balaam (24:2-3), Joshua (27:18), Othniel (Judges 3:10), Gideon (6:34), Jephthah (11:29), Samson (14:6,19), Saul (1 Samuel 10:6; 11:6; 19:23), David (16:13), Saul's messengers (19:20), Eliyah (1 Kings ch. 17), Elisha (2 Kings 2:15), Amasai (1 Chronicles 12:18), Azariah (2 Chronicles 15:1), Jahaziel (20:14), Zecharias (24:20), Daniel (Daniel 4:8) etc. etc., only for the Old Testament.

We shall now review the qualities, sometimes transitory, granted by the Spirit of God.

First of all, as we have seen, there was the gift of prophecy.

God “took of the Spirit that was upon him³³⁷ and put it upon the seventy men, the elders; and it came to pass, that when the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not repeat [it]” (Numbers 11:25). “Then the Spirit of God came upon him. And he took up his parable, and said... ” (24:2-3). Samuel told about Saul (*Shaul*, Hebr.): “the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them” (1 Samuel 10:10), “and the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied” (19:20). “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy” (Joel 2:28; see also, with minor changes Acts 2:17). Similar references could be found in the New Testament, too: “Holy men of God spake under the power of [the] Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).

The *Qur'an* reads about *Ruh-ul-Lah* (Spirit of God, Arab.). “We have sent you Ruhan (an Inspiration)” [1]. “And We gave Jesus³³⁸, the son of Mary, clear signs and supported him with Ruh-ul-Qudus³³⁹” [2]. “The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word³⁴⁰ that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit (*Ruh*) from Him” (4.169; cf. 2.254; 5.109). Likewise, we come on the term *Hukman* (prophethood, Arab.) [3]. *Al-Hikmah* (Arab.) literally means *wisdom* but also *knowledge* (*understanding*) (2.272; 3.43,48,73,75; 4.57,113; 17.41; 31.11; 33.43; 43.63; 62.2).

The Spirit of God also used to grant superhuman powers (*siddhi*, Sanskr.), for instance psychic ones: “your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions” (Joel 2:28), as well as uncommon physical powers, like in the case of Samson: “The Spirit of Yahweh came upon him, and he rent it³⁴¹ as one rends a kid, and nothing was in his hand” (Judges 14:6). The same book also reads about Samson: “And the Spirit of Yahweh came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew of them thirty men” (14:19).

In the *Qur'an* we read: “He has confirmed them with a Spirit from Himself” (58.22).

The Spirit of Yahweh turned Saul “into another man,” after he had been

³³⁷ It is about Moses.

³³⁸ *'Aissa* (Jesus, Arab.).

³³⁹ Holy Spirit (Arab.).

³⁴⁰ *Kalimat-ul-Lah* (Word of God, Arab.).

³⁴¹ That means a lion.

anointed to be a king (1 Samuel 10:6), and turned others into chiefs. Yahweh told Moses: “I will take the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, and thou shalt not bear it alone” (Numbers 11:17). “Daniel surpassed the president and the satraps, because an excellent Spirit was in him” (Daniel 6:3).

As for Bezaleel, Yahweh “has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship” (Exodus 35:31). “Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them” (Nehemiah 9:20). “But then is a Spirit which is in man; and the breath³⁴² of the Almighty giveth them understanding. It is not the great that are wise; neither do the aged understand judgment” (Job 32:8-9). Nebuchadnezzar’s son told Daniel: “I have heard of thee, that the Spirit of the gods is in thee, and [that] light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in thee” (Daniel 5:14). Since Daniel had the power of reading Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams, the latter acknowledged: “for as much as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation; but thou art able, for the Spirit of the holy gods is in thee” (4:18). Therefore, the emperor “made him master of the scribes, magicians, Chaldeans, [and] astrologers” (5:11). Nebuchadnezzar told the one whom he called “master of the scribes”: “I know that the Spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret is too hard for thee, tell me of the visions of my dream which I have seen, and the interpretation of it” (4:9). And about Joseph who also had the power of reading the Pharaoh’s dreams, the latter said (Genesis 41:38): “Shall we find [one] as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?” To complete the review of these granted qualities we shall quote Zechariah (12:10) to whom God has said: “I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication.”

B. THE SECRET MANIFESTATION OF THE KUNDALINI

*“There is nothing covered which shall not be
revealed, and secret which shall not be known”*

Matthew 10:26

The Kundalini has been at the foundation of any revelation and spiritual progress. That is why most religious traditions referred to it in a more or less

³⁴² See ch. XI D.

symbolical manner. In China she is called *Tao*, in Kabbalah *Shekhinah*, in Islam *Assas*, in Africa *N'go*, and so on.

The Kundalini was known in the Judeo-Christian tradition under the name of the Spirit of God (in the Old Testament) or Holy Spirit (in the New Testament). Spirit derived from *spiritus*³⁴³ (Lat.). Therefore, the full meaning of the Holy Spirit was the Holy Breeze. Etymologically, the Tetragrámmaton *YHWH* is a modification of the verb *hawah* (to be, which also means *to breathe* Hebr.), or *hayah* (to be, to exist, Hebr.). *Yahweh* can be also related to the Sanskrit word *yahweh* meaning *everflowing* [4], which evokes the permanent flow of the divine vibrations (Paramchaitanya). Other names given to the Kundalini were “water of life” (or “living water”), “glory of God” etc. All these symbols would be widely analyzed in the following sections XI C, D and E.

The prophets named by the *Bible* were not the only ones to whom the divine grace granted unusual powers. The history of spirituality mentioned other examples too. These chosen ones had probably in view the ignorance of the people in those times who could have been tempted to evil actions, instances that were far from few. They decided that the access to such powers had to be protected against the curiosity of the multitude, through a strict secret. Therefore, the path to the Self Realization, and the knowledge about the Kundalini and her manifestations were hidden under metaphors, allegories and symbols so that only the initiates could perceive their real meaning.

The examples are many in the Old Testament. Among the first ones, mention will be made of the passages in the Book of Daniel. Michael, the Angel sent by God, announces the prophet that his words will remain a secret to the unauthorized (the *wicked*), being only revealed to the righteous ones at the moment of Resurrection, of deliverance (Self Realization): “At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that is found in the book... And they that are wise shall shine³⁴⁴ as the brightness of the expanse; and they that turn the many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever. And thou, Daniel, close the words, and seal the book, till the time of the end. Many shall diligently investigate, and knowledge shall be increased” (12:1,3-4). “Go thy way, Daniel; for these words are closed and sealed till the time of the end... none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall

³⁴³ Equivalent of *pneúma* (Gr.); another equivalent is *nous* (Gr.) That means “mind” as well.

³⁴⁴ It is about the luminous manifestation, which goes with enlightenment (ch. XI E).

understand” (12:9-10).

Prophet Isaiah, wrote down in his turn the sayings of God: “Now go, write it before them on a tablet, and record it in a book, that it may be for the time to come, as a witness for ever” (30:8). As for the time of Resurrection, “in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book” (29:18).

The ancient teachings in India were no exception. Here it is what Theofil Simenschy wrote on this topic: “One drastically needs to be initiated by a proper master in order to grasp the mystical teachings. This is why, most of the time, a European does not understand almost anything from its esoteric (secret) teaching as we find it, for instance, in the *Upanishads* or in the philosophy called Yoga” [5]. We should add it here that this misunderstanding of the westerners has facilitated the proliferation of the false gurus, pretended teachers of the so-called yoga. The *Upanishads* commended: “This profoundest mystery one should not mention to anyone who is not a son, or who is not a pupil, or who is not tranquil” [6], and a similar text can be found in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. As a matter of fact, the *Upanishad* is everywhere described by the comparable word *rahasyam* (secret, mystery, Sanskr.), because it represents a secret doctrine which brings to light *satyasya astyam* (truth of the truth, Sanskr.).

“The one who knows, will not talk; and the one who talks, will not know,” said Lao-tse [7].

More recently, Plato (c.427-c.347 BC) provided us with more samples of the profound Socratic wisdom and, as we have seen, they cannot be decoded unless there exists a *key* of interpretation. In his commentaries to *Timaeus*, Partenie [8] wrote about some texts of the philosopher [9]: “they were interpreted by the adepts of the unwritten doctrine as one of Plato’s hints to that esoteric theory of the first principles that had to be conveyed only to the initiates. The advocates of Plato’s oral doctrine rely on Aristotle’s testimony in his *Physics* [10] that made a reference to Plato’s unwritten teaching (*ágrapha dógmata*, Gr.) and on certain evidences of the ancient authors [11] including references to a discourse entitled *On Good* that Plato delivered either in public or in a restricted group. The hypothesis of the esoteric nature of this discourse can also be grounded on several passages from Plato’s writings [12] about this subject of the first principles that cannot be understood by the ignorant.”

In his turn, Aristotle (384-322 BC) reserved his more specific teachings (called *akroamatikós*, Gr.) to a few chosen of his disciples, Alexander the Great being one of them.

We would see (ch. XIX C) that the Self Realization is associated to a state of joy or bliss (*ananda*, Sanskr.). From this perspective, the commandment:

“A stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy³⁴⁵” (Proverbs 14:10) reveals the secret nature of the teaching.

The *Book of Enoch* often stressed on the esoteric nature of what the author has discovered. “Another angel, who proceeded with me, spoke to me; and shewed me the first and the last secrets in heaven above, and in the depths of the earth, in the extremities of heaven, and in the foundations of it, and in the receptacle of the winds” [13]. Likewise, the keeping of the secrets from the unauthorized ones is also mentioned, since it is said about the fallen angels: “In heaven have you been; secret things however have not been manifested to you” [14].

It is known that the heads of the Pharisee academy communicated—to their favorite pupils—certain divine secrets, such as *The Work of the Chariots* (Ezekiel, ch. 1), *The Work of the Creation* (Genesis, ch. 1), *The Secret Names of God* [15]. Josephus Flavius mentioned that the Essenes never “discover any of their doctrines to others” [16].

It stands to reason that two thousand years ago, the Jewish people could not be ready to receive the message of Jesus and that is why the Savior kept certain information only for His disciples. When the apostles asked Jesus Christ about the people who were listening to Him: “«Why speakest thou to them in parables³⁴⁶»? He answeringly said to them: «Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of the Heavens, but to them it is not given»” (Matthew 13:10-11; cf. Mark 4:10-11; Luke 8:9-10). “Many other signs therefore also Jesus did before his disciples, which are not written in this book” (John 20:30; cf. 21:25). And the Old Testament wrote: “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples” (Isaiah 8:16).

It was repeatedly said that the words of Jesus were not understood even by His apostles themselves: “Peter answering said to him: «Expound to us this parable». But he said: «Are ye also still without intelligence?»” (Matthew 15:15-16; cf. 16:9; Mark 6:52; 7:18; 8:17,21; 9:10,32; 10:38; Luke 2:50; 9:45; 18:34; 24:25,45; John 10:6; 12:16). In his turn, Isaiah wrote: “The whole vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which they give to one that can read, saying: «Read this, I pray thee»; and he saith: «I cannot, for it is sealed»” (29:11).

It is beyond doubt that the sacred writings stored up a hidden teaching, and this is especially the case of the *Bible*. Certainly, it is not about those computerised encoding as it was claimed with a great skill for sensational but with as little credibility by M. Drosnin in his *The Bible Code* [17] where he

³⁴⁵ Of the heart.

³⁴⁶ *Parabolé* (Gr.).

pretends that the Pentateuch was computerised encoded by its author (divine or otherwise) in order to predict our future.

The apocryphal, namely hidden writings, claim to contain these secret teachings. Chapter XX C4 would provide more details on the secret teaching of the Gnostics.

The reading of the Scriptures has been shown to reveal more meaning beyond the literal, apparent one (ch. IV). The epistles in the New Testament frequently refer to “the mystery... as it have now been revealed to his holy apostles, and prophets in [the power of the] Spirit” (Ephesians 3:3-5,9; cf. 1:9; Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 4:1; Colossians 1:26; 2:2; 4:3). Let us remember also that each and every allegory evoking the chakras in Revelation ends up with the following commandment repeated seven times: “He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies” (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22). The esoteric significance of the Scriptures underlined by the similar warning “He that has ears to hear, let him hear” often occurs not only in the gospels (Matthew 11:15; 13:9,43; Mark 4:9; Luke 8:8 etc.) but also in the Qur’an: “In that is a sign for a people who understand” (16.67; cf. 2.159,205,217,221,230,242 etc.). The Qur’an reads about God: “He grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and he, to whom wisdom is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding” [18].

The *Zohar* offers an instance of advice towards learning the secret teaching: “Rabbi Simeon opened his discourse with the text: *And I put my words in thy mouth*³⁴⁷. He said: «How greatly is it incumbent on a man to study the *Torah* day and night... When a new idea is formulated in the field of the esoteric wisdom, it ascends and rests on the head of the *Zaddik*, the life of the universe»” [19].

A strict protection of the spiritual secrets would later characterize the Christian Church. This was not, however, its exclusive privilege since, according to Origen (c.185-254), the fact that certain doctrines are kept hidden from the masses in order to be revealed only after the transmission of the exoteric teachings, is not specific to the Christian religion only [20]. In the opinion of the same author, “Christians are divided into two categories: the believers and the knowers... The revelation offers moral instruction to the simple ones and gnosis to the perfect ones” [21]. For some “things done according to the history (that) could be adapted to these mystical senses,” Jesus “made use of them, concealing from the multitude the deeper meaning” [22]. Irenaeus (c.130-c.200) showed that the tradition had not been conveyed by the written but by the spoken word and implied that “the apostles had

³⁴⁷ Isaiah 51:16.

known hidden mysteries, which they were in the habit of imparting to «the perfect» apart and privily from the rest” [23]. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386) confessed: “before catechumens³⁴⁸ do we speak plainly of the mysteries: but many things we often speak in a veiled way, that the believers who know may understand, and they who know not may get no hurt” [24]. Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite wrote in the 5th century: “See that none from the non-initiated should hear these things” [25]. Paul Vulliaud, a contemporary Catholic author showed: “The Dogma, in its divine part, constituted the revelation reserved to the Initiates, under the «Discipline of the Secret». Tenzelius claimed to have traced back the origin of this «law of the secret» to the end of the second century... Emmanuel Schelstratos, librarian of the Vatican, rightly noted it in apostolic times... The Apostles and the Fathers have preserved in secret and silence the «Majesty of the Mysteries». St. Denys the Areopagite has of set purpose the use of obscure words... Neither the Prophets nor Christ Himself revealed the Divine Secrets with such clearness as to make them comprehensible to all” [26].

We can, by no means, guess at the mysteries preserved in the archives of the famous but hardly accessible Vatican Library. Very few people have had the chance to reach them and even fewer have revealed what they found. The others have taken these secrets to their graves. To get just an idea of the immensity of that hiding place, we shall only say that the length of the shelves in the secret part of the library total up *tens of kilometers!*

Despite all this, even the best-guarded secrets are ultimately brought to light since, as the Gospel reads: “A city situated on the top of a mountain cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14).

In the followings, we shall present more details on the manifestation of the Kundalini secret energy.

C. THE COOL BREEZE

“Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very small hands of mine”

Rabindranath Tagore [27]

Turek explained that “mankind is at the point of conscious interface between the physical and spiritual. This interface is entered without effort or

³⁴⁸ Adult person who is ready to receive baptism, in the primitive Christianity.

thought, it is spontaneous³⁴⁹ and natural. It can be felt via the central nervous system as a physical sensation, it is an actualisation, not something imagined as a theory or concept... Despite the subtle nature of these deeper levels, they are ultimately demonstrable physically. That is, our physical senses³⁵⁰ confirm the truth or otherwise of the theory. Scientific methods in fact verify the results³⁵¹, but of course they cannot fully explain them” [28].

XI - 1 The Kundalini awakening is manifested through a cool breeze that one could feel above the Sahasrara (on the top of the head, or the fontanel bone), on the center of the palms of the hands or of the soles. The experience of Self Realisation is thus confirmed by feeling this cool breeze. This effect has been witnessed by thousands of persons who received the Self Realisation from Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi during the public programs held all around the world. The phenomenon was described by a journalist who participated in the experiment [29] as well as by L. Heart [30]. Tompkins and Bird quote similar events. “Vogel could tangibly feel on the palms of his hands... some sort of energy... he felt a slight cooling sensation followed by what he described as a series of electrical pulses” [31].

The ancient Indian Scriptures mentioned the cool breeze. Thus, in one of the Vedic hymns—referring to purity (*aripra*, Sanskr.): ritual, moral or divine within the holy realm—the gods Ashwini are asked the following: “We beg you to be for us of the cooling essence” (*ta no bhutam mayobhuva*, Sanskr.) [32]. *Mayobhu* was used in association with the Ashwini, the medicine, the stones conferring eternal life (*swayambhu*, ch. XV A; similarly the alchemists had the *lapis philosophorum*, ch. IV) and the deities related to water, soma etc., that is 37 times in all. *Mayobhuva* appeared again in the same hymn after ten stanzas [33]. Brahman is the unifying principle of the universe: “He on whom the sky, the earth, and the atmosphere are woven, and the wind, together with all life-breaths, Him alone know as the one Soul” [34]. “Brahman is prana” [35] (vital breath, Sanskr.). “The Breath... is the most superior” [36], that ensures the functioning of our faculties. “They call it «Breath» for the vital breath is all these” [37]. “The Wind among the gods, breath among the vital breaths” [38]. “Prajapati made Himself like air and penetrated into the inner beings of the people, to enlighten their consciousness... the Breath was His body” [39]. “An artery, known as Sushumna, rises, serving as the passage of the Prana. Through that

³⁴⁹ *Sahaj* (Sansk.).

³⁵⁰ Paresthesia (ch. X).

³⁵¹ For instance as light (ch. XI E).

artery, when the Breath has joined it by the sacred syllable OM, and by the mind, let him proceed upwards, and without using any of the organs of sense, let greatness perceive greatness. From thence he goes to selflessness, and through selflessness he ceases to be an enjoyer of pleasure and pain; he obtains the Absolute” [40]. “The Breath rises in the Sushumna until the crown of the head” [41]. “In Sushumna, the Breath leads the pure man into a pure world” [42]. “When the breath flows through the Sushumna, mind becomes steady” [43]. “Whosoever is driven by the Breath of Life, he will be reborn” [44]. “He understood that Brahman is Breath. For truly, indeed, beings here are born from Breath, when born they live by Breath, on deceasing they enter into Breath” [45]. “Breath is consciousness; consciousness is Breath” [46].

Many great incarnations have told about the holy breeze or wind and the resulting coolness, too. Krishna says: “As the mighty air moving everywhere ever, abides in the ethereal space... of purifiers I am the wind” [47]. Gyaneshwara wrote: “The Kundalini uncoils herself, shakes off her lethargy, and stands erect... She then reaches the palms... creating a draught, the life wind emerges... and creates a cooling sensation in the body internally as also externally” [48]. Adi Shankaracharya (c. AD 800) refers to the Devi (Goddess) as a bamboo “bearing in its (hollow) interior pearls³⁵², kept in their places by Thy very cold breath; it wears a pearl outside also” [49]. The *Devi Mahatmyam* associated the manifestation of the Goddess to a cool emanation: “They saw also Your Face resembling the Moon, giving out (cool) rays” [50].

Vayu (Sanskrit) is the wind or universal breath out of which the macrocosm is woven; likewise, on the microcosmic level, man is woven out of five breaths governing the vital functions: *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana* and *samana* (Sanskrit).

The Taoist correspondent of Vayu is the vital breath or energy animating the cosmos, and it is called *Ch'i* (gas or ether, Chin); it fills up the space between heaven and earth.

Marduk, the supreme god of Babylonia, summoned the seven winds to obey him. Usually they included the tempest, the whirlwind, the hurricane, but also “the wind which had no equal” [51].

The antiquity has provided evidences about the coolness, usually associated to the breeze or the living water (other details in chapter XI D). Thus, archaeologists have found some tablets in the Egyptian tombs where Osiris was asked to give *cold water* to the dead.

³⁵² The *bamboo* is the Sushumna; the *pearls* are the chakras, out of which the external one is the Mooladhara.

Anaximander saw the universe as an organism (ch. II) animated by *pneúma* (breath, breathing, Gr.), the cosmic breath [52] (ch. I). The *Odyssey* read about “the Elysian plain³⁵³... [where] always ocean sendeth forth the breeze... to blow cool on men” [53]. In his turn, Virgil urged: “*regradere ad Auras*” (ascend again to the breaths, Lat.). Hermes, the owner of the caduceus (ch. IX) was also the master of breaths. Caliban reminded the “sweet airs that give delight and hurt not” [54]. We should also mention that the Muse (*moúsa*, Gr.) that inspired the enlightened people was supposed to be the “Queen of the Winds” or the “Mountain Goddess” (from *oúros*, fair wind, Gr.; linked to the Egyptian uraeus and the alchemical uroboros; ch. IX).

As we have previously shown, in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God was depicted as the inspirer (inner breath) of the prophets, while the New Testament read: “Every Scripture [is] divinely inspired” (2 Timothy 3:16).

The opening of Genesis (1:2) reads about the Spirit of God (*Ruah Elohim*, Hebr.; *Ruha Elahi* or *Elahh'*, Aram.; etymologically: the Breath of God; literally: the Wind of God). In various instances *Ruah* appears translated by *breath* (Psalms 119:131; 135:17), *breath of the Almighty* (Job 32:8) as well as the mysterious *breath* received as a secret revelation (4:12,15) etc. In the *Septuagint* this breath was translated as *pneúma* (Gr.). This is the divine
 XI – 5 breath coming out from the mouth of God to create and sustain life. “Yahweh Elohim formed man, dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul” (2:7). “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4; cf. 32:8). “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe... that they may live” (Ezekiel 37:9). The wind was also assumed to have come from God: “Thou didst blow with thy wind” (Exodus 15:10, in *King James Version*; breath in Darby’s). “And there went forth a wind from Yahweh” (Numbers 11:31). God appoints winds as his messengers (Psalm 104:4, in *The New Jerusalem Bible*). “Thou takest away their breath, they expire and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth” (Psalms 104:29-30), which led to the old Christian prayer: “Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your devotees, set on in them the holy fire of Your love, send Your Spirit, and all will be created; and the face of earth will be renewed” [55]. This also reminds the prayer of the eschatological epiclesis³⁵⁴: “Come, Holy Spirit and renew the creation!”

³⁵³ Or the Elysian Fields—lodge of eternal life, of the completely cleansed souls, i.e. of these who have regained their original purity.

³⁵⁴ *Veni Creator Spiritus* (Lat.).

After death “the Spirit returns unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). “My days are a breath” (Job 7:16).

God manifested Himself to Eliyah on Mount Horeb as a *gentle breeze*: “Thence came a mighty wind³⁵⁵, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before Yahweh. But Yahweh was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake. But Yahweh was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But Yahweh was not in the fire. And after the fire came the sound of a gentle breeze³⁵⁶. And when Eliyah hear this, he covered his face with a cloak” (1 Kings 19:11-13, in *The Jerusalem Bible*), exactly as Moses did when he encountered God (Exodus 34:33,35).

Other times, the Divine manifests itself as a whirlwind. “Yahweh answered Job out of the whirlwind” (Job 38:1; 40:6). Since the whirlwind clearly suggests the rotation of the subtle energy within the chakras (ch. XV F), the former is associated to the wheels (*chakras*, Sanskr.). Thus, Isaiah depicts “their wheels as a whirlwind” (5:28). The journey of Eliyah up to the heaven should be understood as a metaphor depicting his Self Realization (like for Muhammad—ch. II, IV, or Solomon—ch. XIII): “Elijah went up by a whirlwind into the heavens” (2 Kings 2:11; cf. 2:1). The sentence in Job: “From the chamber [of the south] cometh the whirlwind, and cold from the winds of the north” (37:9) describes the awakening of the Kundalini as a whirlwind, and the resulting feeling of coolness above the fontanel bone. Indeed, according to the topography of the subtle body, “north” points at the top that is the Sahasrara, while “south” indicates the bottom i.e. the sacrum bone where it resides the Kundalini.

“*Spiritus ubi vult spirat: et voce eius audis, sed necis unde veniat, aut quo vadat; sic est omnis, qui natur est ex spiritu*” (The wind blows where it will, and thou hearest its voice, but knowest not whence it comes and where it goes; thus is every one that is born of the Spirit, Lat.; John 3:8; cf. Ecclesiastes 11:5). “He breathed into [them], and says to them: «Receive [the] Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). After Jesus rose from the dead, He announced it to His disciples: “ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit after now not many days” (Acts 1:5) and, indeed, “when the Day of Pentecost was now accomplished, they were all together in one place. And there came suddenly a sound out of heaven as a violent impetuous blowing, and filled all the house where they were sitting” (2:1-2).

³⁵⁵ “Hurricane” in other translations.

³⁵⁶ Other translations (e.g. *King James Version, The New Jerusalem Bible, Darby*) use other terms instead: “light murmuring sound,” “still small voice” etc.

In other instances, too, the wind is the envoy (manifestation) of Divinity: “As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it” (Psalms 103:15-16).

Genesis reads about “Yahweh Elohim walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (3:8), but the ancient variants contain the noun *wind*. The association of the two terms exactly denotes the manifestation of the Kundalini as the cool breeze accompanying the Divinity. If you keep to the Path of God (Proverbs 3:6), i.e. the Sushumna, “it shall be health for thy navel, and moisture³⁵⁷ for thy bones” (3:8). “For they have refreshed my spirit and yours” (1 Corinthians 16:18). “And we have rather rejoiced... by reason of the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all” (2 Corinthians 7:13). “In order that I may come to you in joy by God’s will, and that I may be refreshed with you” (Romans 15:32). Or, as it would be shown, the Self Realization brings joy (ch. XIX C).

A well-known symbol of the cool feeling is the dew, on which the *Bible* read: “As the dew of Hermon that descendeth on the Mountains of Zion³⁵⁸; for there hath Yahweh commanded the blessing, life for evermore” (Psalms 133:3). “My head is filled with dew” (Song of Songs 5:2). In the Hebrew original, Isaiah 26:19 read: “for the dew of lights [is] your dew.” Also, we should quote the miraculous dew granted by God at the request of Gideon (Judges 6:36-38). The *Zohar* mentions the “dew from on high, from the head of the King.” “That dew, as we have learnt, comes down by degrees till it reaches the lower Garden of Eden, and becomes impregnated with its perfumes. Then a spirit containing two other spirits arises and... enters the door of the cave.” “It is written: «My head is filled with dew». It is that dew which comes out of the Head that shall resurrect the dead ones in the future times, as it is written: «since the dew falling upon you is a dew of light»... That dew falls on the «Orchard of sacred apple-trees»” [56]. In the above we can easily recognize: the Self Realization (*Resurrection*), the Sahasrara (*the head; the head of the King*), the Brahmaraṇḍhra (*the orchard of sacred apple-trees, the lower Garden of Eden—on this Earth*), the chakras (*the degrees*), the entities ruling over the three channels (*the spirits*) and the Agya chakra (*the door*). Also Goethe in *Faust* made a reference to the dew on the Sahasrara: “his head is bathed in dew” (*Sein Haupt... badet ihn im Tau*, Germ.) [57].

The Essenes believed that after death, the righteous dwell in a place always refreshed by a cool breeze [58].

³⁵⁷ Coolness (in other translations).

³⁵⁸ *Tzion* (Hebr.).

The early Christian tombs bear inscriptions begging Christ to give *coolness* to the souls of the dead. The commemorative liturgies of the Roman-Catholic Church request *refrigerii sedes* (cold places, Lat.) for the dead, while the Byzantine liturgies wish to the departed to rest “in a place of green, in a place of coolness.” Likewise, from a *hadith* it results that verdure (grass) was associated to coolness. In the Romanian mythology of death, the customs officers of the Paradise finally would let the pilgrim pass “the two paths,” “the dew at his feet, the frost at his loins” [59].

The Wisdom of Solomon expressed the relationship existing between the Great Goddess, called here *Hokmah* (Wisdom, Hebr.; *Sophia*, Gr.; *Sapientia*, Lat.) i.e. the Power of God (*Adi Shakti*, Sanskr.), and the Holy Breath: “She is a breath of the power of God” [60].

Enoch declared: “I beheld the winds occupying the height of heaven, arising in the midst of heaven and of earth” [61].

One of the Dead Sea scrolls had a text reading like this: “The wind then sweeps on and passes; and they make of their strength their god” [62].

The Gnostic Scriptures bring forth other references to the cool breeze: “A drop from Light and Spirit came down to the lower regions³⁵⁹ of Almighty in chaos... That drop revealed their molded forms through the breath, as a living soul” [63]. “When this came about by the will of Mother Sophia—so that Immortal Man might piece together the garments there... —(he) then welcomed the blowing of that breath” [64]. Mother Sophia said: “Because of this, then, I came here, that they might be joined with that Spirit and Breath, that [...] and Breath, and might from two become one, just as from the first, that you might yield much fruit and go up to Him Who is from the Beginning, in ineffable joy and glory and [honor and] grace of [the Father of the Universe]” [65]. “It is the Foundation that supports every movement of the Aeons that belong to the mighty Glory. It is the Foundation of every foundation. It is the Breath of the Powers” [66]. Some Gnostic texts as those of the Sethians mentioned by Hippolytus and the *Paraphrase of Shem* concerning the Ophites replaced Sophia through Moluchtas, the serpent-like Wind [67], i.e. the Kundalini (ch. IX).

The Gnostic sect of the Cathari distinguished between three manifestations [68] that we can easily identify with terms familiar to us: *Spiritus Principale* that is the third Person of the Trinity (*Adi Shakti*), *Spiritus Paraclitum* that protects us (*Kundalini*), and *Spiritus Sanctum* designating the personal Spirit of each, or the Self (*Atman*).

A number of ancient Chinese Christian manuscripts also refer to the Holy

³⁵⁹ Likewise, in the human embryo the Kundalini energy goes towards the lower region of the spinal cord—i.e. the sacrum bone (ch. II).

Breeze called *the Wind of Great Mercy* [69], and *the Cool Wind*, which Professor Saeki explains that it means *the Holy Ghost* [70]. Here are a few quotations. “The Lord of Heaven, therefore, made «the Cool Wind» to enter a virgin named Mo-yen” (i.e. Mary) [71]. “The Lord of Heavens may look like the wind in His countenance; and who could possible see the wind?” [72]. “The Divine Power³⁶⁰ of God may be something like the wind” [73]. “It is said that the Messiah was on the earth for thirty days after He had risen from the dead and taught (the disciples) saying: «you shall be given power over all the creation without exception and shall understand even all speeches and languages». He also added a promise saying: «The Holy Wind shall be granted from Heaven to those of you who will come forward and pray for it” [74].

Origen said that *psyché* (soul, Gr.) came from *psychrós* (cool, in a masculine form, Gr.) [75]. Probably, he relied on Aristotle affirmation that the word *psyché* was originally based on the word *psychrón* (neuter form) because of the breath and the cool sensation (*ktápsyxis*, Gr.), and this is the correct name for the soul [76], hence associating the breeze with its coolness.

The coolness was also familiar with the Gnostics as shown by Schuon: “«coolness» penetrates into Christian gnosis” [77].

In the 5th century, Bishop Diadochus of Photicaea was recorded as the first who used the repetition of the mantra on Lord Jesus that was adopted by the Hesychasts (ch. XXV A). In his famous *Centuries*, he explains “by ceaseless invocation of that Name, the fire³⁶¹ of the divine grace embraced the heart³⁶²... the divine grace enlightens his whole nature in a deeper feeling and inflames it with a great love of God.” He also referred to the “breeze of the Holy Spirit that raises up the heart” [78], that is the place of the Self (*Atman*, Sanskr.; ch. XIX C).

In her visions, Hildegard of Bingen has attributting to God the following saying: “With every breeze, as with invisible life that contains everything, I awaken everything to life... The waters flow as if they were alive... And thus I remain hidden into everything... For I am life” [79].

The *Aquarian Gospel* mentioned the following words of Christ: “These things I speak while with you in the flesh, but when the Holy Breath shall come in power, lo, she will teach you more and more, and bring to your remembrance all the words that I have said to you. There is a multitude of

³⁶⁰ *Adi Shakti* (Sansk.) manifesting as the Kundalini.

³⁶¹ Ch. XI E.

³⁶² Ch. XIX C.

things yet to be said; things that this age cannot receive, because it cannot comprehend. But, lo, I say, Before the great day of the Lord shall come, the Holy Breath will make all mysteries known. The mysteries of the soul, of life, of death, of immortality; the oneness of a man with every other man³⁶³ and with his God” [80].

Before leaving the sphere of Christianity, we would like to quote William Blake: “The Breath Divine does move,/ And the Breath Divine is Love” [81]. In his *Milton*, the poet describes how “with cold hand Urizen stoop’d down... pouring on/ To Milton’s brain the icy fluid from his broad cold palm” [82]. In Khalil Gibran’s well-known book, *Jesus, the Son of Man*, the author put the following words about Jesus in the mouth of the bride in Cana: “Then He looked in my eyes and said: «My blessing shall be upon you». When He said that I felt as it were a gush of wind rushing through my body” [83]. While referring to that divine manifestation, the great poet Wordsworth wrote: “Oh, there is blessing in this gentle breeze.../ The sweet breath of heaven/ Was blowing on my body, felt within/ A correspondent breeze, that gently moved/ With quickening virtue, but is now become/ A tempest, a redundant energy” [84].

The Jews still have a reminiscence of an ancient tradition, *shophar* (horn, XI - 2 Hebr.), after which, the head of the community blows a ram horn on the New Year (*Rosh ha-Shanah*, Hebr.)³⁶⁴ the first day of *Tishri*, the seventh month of the religious year (first month of the secular year), in the climax of the ceremony. “Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day: for this is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob” (Psalms 81:3-4). This is also a recollection of the moment when the walls of Jericho fell down flat at the sound of the ram horn (Joshua 6:20). A similar tradition is met with Hindus who blow a conch (ch. XV F). This symbolizes the breath of the Kundalini, while the horn is the sign of the divine Power, the *Adi Shakti* (ch. VIII).

The *Zohar* mentioned the sacred breath, in connection to the subtle body (sephirotic tree): “A breath which comes from the future world shakes the branches of the Tree of Life, which spreads the fragrance of the future world and brings out the holy souls. These souls come up waking each other... and the Tree of Life rejoices” [85]. The manifestation (awakening) of the holy souls refers here to the divine entities controlling the chakras, while the joy is the *ananda* felt by the Yogis (ch. XIX C). The Kabbalists were talking about “a special pneuma, the «Sabbath soul», [which] enters into the

³⁶³ Connection to the collective consciousness (ch. II and X).

³⁶⁴ Or *Yom Teruah* (Day of Blowing the Horn, Hebr.).

believer, enabling him to participate in the right way... in the secrets of the pneumatic world” [86].

As far as the alchemists were concerned, “by «spirit» they understood a semimaterial pneuma, a sort of «subtle body»” [87]. In the language of alchemy used in the text of *Aurora Consurgens*: “In the seventh and last place he inspireth, when by his breathing he maketh the earthly body spiritual, of which it is sung: Thou by thy breathing makest man to be spiritual. Solomon³⁶⁵: The Spirit of the Lord filled the whole world. And the Prophet³⁶⁶: And all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth” [88]. It is interesting that in the above-mentioned alchemical treatise, the author equates the spirit in the above Psalm with the living water (ch. XI D): “Send forth thy Spirit, that is water, and they shall be created, and thou shalt renew the face of the earth” [89].

In a similar way to the *Bible* referring to the *inspiration* of the prophets (see *supra*), the *Qur'an* wrote: “We have revealed to thee a Spirit³⁶⁷ of Our bidding” (42.52). The Holy Book of Islam also refers to the wind (breeze). “It is Allah who sends the winds... As such (will be) the Resurrection³⁶⁸” [90]. “And of His signs³⁶⁹ is that He looses the winds, bearing good tidings and that He may let you taste of His mercy... and that you may seek His bounty; haply so you will be thankful” (30.45). “It is He that looses the winds, bearing good tidings before His mercy” (7.55). “By the winds (or angels or the Messengers of Allah) sent forth one after another” [91] where “*the winds*” are mentioned three times. The *Qur'an* also contains a text similar to the above from Genesis 2:7, referring to Adam about whom God said: “I... breathed into him of My spirit” (15.29; cf. 32.8; 38.72). The tradition reminds Tirmizi (209-279 A.H.) who recorded a *hadith* that read: “May Allah grant freshness to man who hears my Sayings, keeps and preserves them in memory and acts according to them” [92].

The following passages from the *Qur'an* also refer to the feeling of coolness. “We gave him back to his mother that her eye might be refreshed”

³⁶⁵ *The Wisdom of Solomon* 1:7.

³⁶⁶ Psalms 32:6.

³⁶⁷ *Ruhan* (inspiration, breath, Arab.).

³⁶⁸ *Nushur*, with the same meaning as *Qiyamah* (Arab.)—the Resurrection (or *yaumu-l-Qiyamah*, the day of Resurrection, Arab.) signifying the Self Realization.

³⁶⁹ These signs (*bayyinat*, Arab.) refer to *Qiyamah*.

[93]. “So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes; a reward for what they did” [94]. “This is most proper, so that their eyes may be cool and that may not grieve, and that they should be pleased, all of them, with what you gave them” [95]. It is a proved fact that all along the meditation the Yogis feel a cool breeze passing over their eyelids covering their closed eyes.

In her excellent book *The Light of the Koran* [96], Flore Descieux wrote: “What tradition relates about Khadija reveals that she had the vibratory experience of the Kundalini one day when she was waiting for the return of the caravan led by Muhammad. The burning rays of the sun would not permit anyone to go outside and the heat imposed its laws on every dwelling place. Meanwhile, despite the tiredness which was overcoming her eyes, tired from the waiting, Khadija suddenly felt a delightful cool breeze fill the room and, in the same moment, the Prophet appeared before her.” The same phenomenon was reported by Muhammad’s son-in-law, ‘Ali: “Then he (the Prophet) came to our house when we were already lying down on our mats; we wanted to get up but he said: «Stay where you are» and he came so close to us that I felt the cold of his feet on my chest” [97].

Schuon signaled the beautiful synthesis Islam realized between two kinds of the Kundalini manifestation: “There is also a connection between light³⁷⁰ and coolness, for the sensation of both is liberating; what is light outwardly is coolness inwardly... In Islam it is taught that at the end of time light will become separated from heat, and heat will be hell whereas light will be Paradise; the light of heaven is cool and the heat of hell is obscure” [98].

Sufism developed a theory consistent with the Hindu cyclic concept implying the “renewing of creation at each breath” (*tajdid al-khalq bil-anfak*, Arab.) [99], where we find the Spirit of God manifested as “breath.” This fully matched the Christian epiclesis quoted above.

The *Popol-Vuh*, the sacred book of the Quiche Indians, descendants of the Maya population, read about Eecatl, god of the wind (*Vayu*, in Sanskrit), XI - 4 who is one of the forms of Quetzalcoatl, *the feathered serpent* (ch. IX) [100].

* * *

In chapter X, it was said that all the chakras have their correspondences in the palms. For centuries, the Yogis have used *hasta mudras*³⁷¹ (hands XI - 9 postures, Sanskr.) in order to control the subtle energy flow through the . . . 12

15, 16

³⁷⁰ Ch. XV E.

³⁷¹ *Mudra* (symbol, Sanskr.).

corresponding chakras, and to prevent diseases, which are supposed to originate in the energy imbalance (ch. XXII C). The mudras are also vital keys in interpreting Buddhist iconography. Thus, the hand of the Buddha is open to say that it holds back no secrets from the disciple. In the XI - 9 *bhoomisparsha mudra* (attestation of the Earth, Sanskr.) the hand is lowered, 10 fingers touching the ground, meaning that the Buddha takes from the Earth a testimony to his Buddhahood (for the subtle signification of this mudra XI - 18 used also by Christians see ch. XV C). In the *dhyana mudra* the palms 19 oriented upwards rest on the knees to receive the energy of the heavens. The XI - 17 *anjali mudra* is a gesture of adoration or prayer used also in Christianity. In XI - 11 another mudra the forefinger and the middle finger point to heaven while the XI - 12 others are folded; Christ is often shown making this gesture. The position of the hands and fingers symbolize inner feelings and wordless narratives in the ritual dances called “the dances of the hands” in India and Southeast Asia [101].

As a matter of fact, the hand reflects the assembly of the entire body. That is why the bridegroom “asks for the hand of his future wife.” Muslims use to wear Fatima’s hand image as a talisman. The Jewish children wear small amulets representing a hand and the Jewish future bride receives a golden hand as a gift. Both hands total up ten fingers, that it is exactly the number of sephiroth in the Tree of Life. Also, there is an analogy between *yad* (hand, Hebr.), *yod* (letter-symbol of Divinity) and *yada* (to know, to love, to obey, Hebr.) [102]. The palmists claim to “read” a man by his palms. Jung notices that the primitives are “bowing the head, showing the palms,” while according to our forms of politeness when shaking hands we “use both hands. Before people of great authority we bow with uncovered head, i.e., we offer our head unprotected” [103]. The term “manifestation”—that was frequently used in our book—derives from the Latin *manus* (hand): that which is manifest may be sensed by the hand or has been created by the hand of the Divine.

The hands are the means of conveying the Spirit, of communication with the Divinity. Therefore, the last words of Jesus before dying were: “Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit” (Luke 23:46).

The cool breeze, as it was shown in the above, is perceived in the palms (but also in the soles or even other parts of the body). The Scriptures indicate this very clearly.

“Father had given him all things into his hands” (John 13:3; cf. 3:35) which reveals that the hands synthesized the whole subtle body (*all things*).

An ancient Chinese Christian manuscript read about God’s manifestations in the hands and legs: “There has been, indeed, two manifestations (of the

One Godhead). For instance, these may be likened to one's right and left hands or legs" [104].

Enoch offers a text related to the above: "the angels shall inquire into your conduct... the sun, the moon, and the stars, shall they inquire respecting your sins" [105]. The sun and the moon indicate Pingala and Ida nadi, while the stars are the planets corresponding to the chakras and the fingers, I I - 6 respectively.

The *Qur'an* is quite explicit when refers to the day of *Qiyamah* (Resurrection, Arab.). "On that day will We set a seal upon their mouths, yet shall their hands speak unto Us, and their feet shall bear witness of that which they shall have done" [106]. A text close enough to the previous translation could be also found in another variant [107]. Another translation reads: "Man will be a witness against himself [as his body parts (skin, hands, legs etc.) will speak about his deeds]" [108], pointing to the catches caused by the respective (wrong, evil) deeds. In chapter X, the chakra catches were shown to be felt as paresthesias on the fingers which enables their removal and the recovery of good health. This fact is fully acknowledged by the *Qur'an*: "Yes. We are able to put together in perfect order the tips of his fingers" [109]. Khalil Gibran asked himself: "Will ever the day come when we will feel with the fingers of our hands those great secrets, which we now feel only with the fingers of our faith?" [110].

The Shi'ites believe that at the coming of the *Mahdi* (ch. XIX C) "they will receive instructions and direction from the Imam who will write on the palms of their hands" [111].

The wounds suffered by Christ on the cross acquire a special significance. Piercing means transcending the Anahatha chakra, the abode of Atman being stabbed with the spear symbolizes the liberation of the Spirit, its ascension to God. The water and the blood that came out therefrom are associated to the Spirit: "For they that bear witness are three: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood" (1 John 5:8). The points where the palms and soles of the Savior were pierced, representing the very projections (correspondent points) of the Sahasrara chakra, indicate the transcending into the Kingdom of Heavens (the equivalent of which is the Sahasrara). The place of the Sahasrara is XI - 6 usually marked with a spiked wheel or a lotus flower (typical symbol of a 7 chakra) in the center of the soles of the statues representing the great XI - 8 incarnations, for example, the huge statue of the Lying Buddha in Nirvana (12th century), located in Gal Vihara, Polonnaruva (Sri Lanka) [112]. A 3rd century document mentioned an analogous mark symbolizing the thousand petals of the Sahasrara on Avalokiteshwara's feet: "When he lifts up his feet, the soles of his feet are seen to be marked with a wheel of a thousand spokes"

[113], since the Sahasrara is “the lotus with a thousand petals” (ch. II).

The palms facing upwards are directed so that they should receive the Kundalini energy (from a holy person) or transmit this subtle energy XI - 19 (towards another person), as it has been described in texts and depicted in . . . 26 artistic imagery.

“I stretched out my hands and approached my Lord/ For the stretching of my hands is his sign” [114]. “Lift up your hands in the sanctuary” (Psalms 134:2). “By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders done among the people” (Acts 5:12; cf. 14:3). “They laid their hands upon them, and they received [the] Holy Spirit” (8:17). “Give me also this power, in order that on whomsoever I may lay hands he may receive [the] Holy Spirit” (8:19). “Having prayed, they laid their hands on them” (6:6; cf. 9:17; 13:3). Moses was asked by God to see if another person had the same spirit and he had to put his hands over him (to feel the cool breath or breeze): “Yahweh said to Moses: «Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and thou shalt lay thy hand upon him»” (Numbers 27:18). The result was positive: “Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the Spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him” (Deuteronomy 34:9).

The *Zohar* tells how a number of wise men “spread their hands towards Rabbi Simeon, turning their fingers up to the sky” [115]. For the Kabbalists this gesture had not yet lost its meaning; on the contrary, they were fully aware of its esoteric significance: “Indeed, this «spreading of hands» has a profound symbolical significance. When a man spreads out his hands and lifts them up... he symbolically unites the ten Words (Sephiroth)” [116].

XI - 13 The raising of palms to the sky, hence to Divinity, is an old practice ever 14 since the Egyptian antiquity [117] the gesture being preserved unaltered by the orants from other civilization. The pre-Columbian goddess Coatlicue was depicted “with the typical gesture of the stretched hands” [118]. Old Christian images (such those in the frescoes—especially the votive ones—and icons from the Romanian, Russian or Byzantine churches [119]) show the believers with their palms facing upwards, stretched in the direction of a holy person, to receive the Kundalini energy from the latter. This knowledge and its symbolism seem to have been lost towards the end of the Middle Ages, as many gestures used now by Christians have lost their original meaning (ch. XV C, XV F, XIX C). A similar gesture exists with Muslims, as it can be noticed in a painting (representing *The Accession of Selim III to the Throne* in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul) where the high officials stand with their palms facing upwards to the sultan who was not only the civil ruler but also the religious chief.

* * *

The practicing of Sahaja Yoga proves that the feeling of heat in the palms indicates a negative manifestation (ch. X). “Upon the wicked he shall rain... fire... and scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup” (Psalms 11:6). “For wickedness burneth as a fire (Isaiah 9:18). In the same respect, the *Qu’ran* reads about the hostile entities: ”The jinn created We before of the fire flaming” (15.27).

Tapas (Sanskrit.) means *heat* as well as *asceticism*. However, heat denotes a defective manifestation, while asceticism is not a *sine qua non* condition in Yoga. Moreover, after finishing the initial ascetic training in classical Yoga, one has to go beyond this stage to get the Self Realization. “Asceticism is a preliminary exercise,” remarks Zimmer [120], who in addition refers to “the damned, who... burn in their own flames” [121]. The Jain religion also estimated penance to be useless. In India, the perseverance on penance was looked on as a devilish trait. “*Perseverare diabolicum*” (to persevere is devilish, Lat.) is an adage to the well-known saying: “*Errare humanum est*” (to make mistakes is human, Lat.). Krishna tells Arjuna: “Those men... who perform violent austerities,... being foolish oppress the group of elements in their body and Me also dwelling in the body. Know these to be demoniac in their resolves” [122]. The new method of Sahaja Yoga excludes any type of ascetic practices from the very beginning (see our Introduction).

In an occult—hence against divine—process Simon Magus showed that “first, the human pneuma transformed itself into warm nature” [123], wherefrom it can be inferred that pneuma (breeze) is naturally cool.

In his *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries* Mircea Eliade devoted two paragraphs to the relationship between magic and heat. The former is *The “Magic Heat” and the “Mastery of Fire”* [124], the latter—*The “Magical Heat”* [125]. He wrote about the ascetic effort of *tapas* producing heat and added that “a number of primitive traditions represent the magico-religious power as «burning»,” explaining that for the shamans “the «magical heat» is related to another technique that may be called the «mastery of fire»... Heat and fire, on the plane of mystical physiology, indicate the awakening of a magico-religious power.” Surprisingly enough, the great historian of religions claimed that “he who awakens the *Kundalini* feels an intense warmth... the part of the body traversed by the *Kundalini* is burning hot” [126], thus advocating the *FALSE* hypothesis of the *Kundalini* being associated with heat. Actually, this concerns the punishment of unauthorized persons (shamans, false gurus) trying to awaken the *Kundalini* energy

through blamable techniques as tantric sexual practice, for instance. We shall see the example of Prometheus in the aftergoing (ch. XI E). The heat experienced during a fever is a pretty good sign the body was invaded by a malevolent entity. However, Eliade admitted that the fire “may be divine or demoniac” but made no distinction between them. His confusion went so far as declaring: “Jesus, as well as the devil, are «masters of fire»” [127]. As a matter of fact, the divine fire (Kundalini) is a cold fire that is not consuming (burning), like that which was seen by Moses on Mount Horeb.

Hillary Wiesner, the girl-friend of Eliade’s disciple Ioan Couliano—a very negative person, strongly attracted to magic and occult practices in general of which, it seems he was a practitioner—said about the latter: “He’s a walking Encyclopedia of Religions, but someone who knows everything but the truth” [128]. Wiesner’s definition, we believe, is equally applicable to Eliade who, although a great scholar and a genuine erudite, was not at all a spiritually realized person. Eliade confessed that he was a possessed being: “when I am «inspired»—as they say—or, rather, possessed, then I work quickly... when I’m «possessed» then it’s day and night” [129]. In an interview granted to Gabriel Liiceanu in 1990, Emile Cioran expressed his conviction on Eliade: “In my opinion, he was not a religious being... One can not imagine an erudite praying. The history of religions always meant to me the negation of religion” [130]. We shall quote here from two of Eliade’s letters addressed to Cioran: “I am obsessed either by asceticism or by orgy... It is a pity that it is difficult to let yourself led by God, as they³⁷² say, and still remain in your world, your family, make politics, literature or even lessons—all this seems to me angelically simple, that is inaccessible.” “If I am to write, I will write a book—my last book—on the non-European, traditional, metaphysical «truth», the only one in which I believe. All that I have written so far does not in the least express the truth in which I believe. I have not lied—but I think that I have been playing. All I have said refer more to my own experiences (which have always been genuine), but they have no importance ultimately” [131]. As a matter of fact, this *last* book was never been written...

³⁷² Oxford Group Movement.

D. THE WATER OF LIFE

“I will give to him that thirsts of the fountain of the water of life freely”

Revelation 21:6 (also 22:17)

Through the association to the coolness experienced during its manifestation, the Kundalini is often called *the water of life* or *the living water*, both in the Scriptures, especially in the *Bible*, and in the tradition of the Gnostics, the Templars etc., and in the folklore of different peoples.

The complementary, close relation between the Tree of Life and the Water of Life is a widespread topic of the universal symbolism. Chapter IV, for instance, provided with some examples such as the rivers springing out from the roots of the Tree of Life in Eden (Genesis 2:9-10). There is a similar relation between the living water and the staff (also meaning the tree of Life, ch. IV). Thus, Yahweh said to Moses: “thy staff with which thou didst smite the river, take in thy hand, . . . and thou shalt strike the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink” (Exodus 17:5-6; cf. 7:20; Numbers 20:8; Deuteronomy 8:15).

“There is a river the streams whereof make glad³⁷³ the city of God” (Psalms 46:4). “And it shall come to pass that every living thing which moveth, whithersoever the double river shall come, shall live . . . for these waters shall come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh” (Ezekiel 47:9; cf. 47:1; Joel 3:18). “And it shall come to pass in that day [that] living waters shall go out from Jerusalem³⁷⁴” (Zechariah 14:8). The Spirit of God manifested through the Kundalini is the source of wisdom (Exodus 35:31; Nehemiah 9:20; Job 32:8; Daniel 5:14). “The fountain of wisdom is a gushing brook” (Proverbs 18:4). “With joy³⁷⁵ shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isaiah 12:3). “There shall be upon every high mountain and upon every hill that is lifted up, brooks [and] watercourses . . . and the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that Yahweh bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the wound of their stroke” (30:25-26). In this synthetic sentence Isaiah associated the living water to the Self Realization (*salvation*), to the

³⁷³ Bliss, *ananda*.

³⁷⁴ The New (Heavenly) Jerusalem is the symbol of the Sahasrara.

³⁷⁵ *Ananda*.

Sahasrara (*high mountain/hill*; ch. II), the transcending of the side channels (*sun* and *moon*), the *light* (ch. XI E), and number *seven* indicating the chakras.

Enoch also referred to the living water. Thus, the sinful people are told: “shall you be . . . consumed, withered, because you have forsaken the fountain of life” [132]. “Over these fountains also I perceived a place which had neither the firmament or heaven above it, nor the solid ground underneath it; neither was there water” [133], therefore stressing out the subtle feature of these “fountains.” Another apocryphal text read: “I washed myself wholly in living water” [134].

Previously we have described an ancient Jewish ritual when the priests waved thyrsi symbolizing the subtle body (ch. IX). At the same time they intoned Isaiah 12:3 previously quoted. The *Talmud* wrote, referring to the Festival of Sukkoth: “The Holy One, blessed be he, said: «Pour water before me on the khag»” (*khag*, feast, festival, Hebr.) [135]. As we shall show, also Hindus worshipped the divinity while pouring out water at god’s feet (*padya*, Sanskr.; ch. XV E).

The *Zohar* reads about the “supreme source illuminating all the «lamps»; it is a spring whose waters do not stop flowing” [136]. The association between living water and light (ch. XI E) is typical for the manifestation of the Kundalini.

The symbolism of the living water is also found in the Christian Scripture, where not by chance the living water appears in the Gospel according to John and in John’s Revelation. It accompanies the first miracle performed by Jesus at the wedding in Cana. “There were standing there six stone water-vessels, according to the purification³⁷⁶ of the Jews” (John 2:6). “Jesus says to them: «Fill the water-vessels with water». And they filled them up to the brim” (2:7). Number six indicates the chakras up to the Agya, and excepting the Sahasrara³⁷⁷. “Up to the brim” shows, however, that the Self Realization cannot be attained if not including the Sahasrara. The moment of changing water—not into *wine*, as it was mistakenly interpreted (ch. XV E), but into the *living water*³⁷⁸ of the Kundalini—thus denotes the Self Realization and

³⁷⁶ It is a clear hint to cleansing the subtle body prior to Self Realization.

³⁷⁷ Jesus opened the cosmic Agya, but the seventh chakra (Sahasrara) has not been enlightened until the present times (ch. XIX C and D).

³⁷⁸ The confusion went as far as using the term of *living water* to denote the distilled drinks, i.e. the brandy: *eau de vie* (Fr.), where this is actually a burning *water*, more accurately rendered by the term *aguardiente* (Span.)—see ch. XI C: the damned heat.

indicates the beginning of the miracles made by Christ. “Verily, verily, I say unto them, except any one be born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” (3:5). “He that believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this he said concerning the Spirit, which they that believed on him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet³⁷⁹, because Jesus had not yet been glorified” (7:38-39). “Whosoever drinks of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst for ever, but the water which I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into eternal life” (4:14). “And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, going out of the throne³⁸⁰ of God and of the Lamb” (Revelation 22:1). “The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne... shall lead them to fountains of waters of life” (7:17).

Edmond Bordeaux-Szekely searched a number of Essene manuscripts in the secret Library of Vatican and of the Habsburgs that he published under the name of the *Essene Gospel*. At the end of the fourth and last book dealing with the holy rivers we read: “Here you have come inside the last circle, in the secret of secrets, that had existed a long time before Enoch³⁸¹... Now, you will discover the three holy rivers³⁸² and the means to cross them; thus you will bathe in the heavenly light and will know what you could only dream of... At the hour before sunrise... you will enter the holy river of life... And when you will embrace the brother Tree, the holy river of life will flow all through your body and its power will make you shiver³⁸³... Then you will become the Tree of Life that sends down its roots into the heart of the holy river of life... Go down into the holy rivers of this life... enter the Kingdom of the heavenly father and become one with Him” [137].

Similar mentions were found in the Dead Sea scrolls like: “Listen to me and be sti[ll] before me.]... I have understood, to drink from [the Well of Life]... a Well of de[ep] Waters... “ [138]... “like a Fountain of Living Water which all me[n...]” [139]. There are also references (with obvious Gnostic elements) reminding the fontanel: “holy Secret, and place of Splendor and the highness of the beauty of the Fou[untain], [majesty] and the gathering-place of power, honor, praise and mighty wonders and healings,

³⁷⁹ It is what it will happen on the Pentecost day (ch. XI E).

³⁸⁰ The Sahasrara.

³⁸¹ Its name often appears in the *Essene Gospel*.

³⁸² Ida, Pingala and Sushumna nadis.

³⁸³ You will feel the vibrations.

and miraculous works, Secret Wisdom and image of Knowledge and Fountain of Understanding, Fountain of Discovery and counsel of Holiness and Secret Truth... deep wells... every stream, de[ep] waters... water... [al]l their Secrets... “ [140]. A hymn read about “a fount of living waters which shall not fail. When they are opened they shall not run dry; they shall be a torrent [overflowing its banks] and like the [bottom]less seas. They shall suddenly gush forth which were hidden in secret” [141].

The alchemical processes include references to *aqua permanens*, which denotes the Kundalini, too.

Christian literary texts of the realized authors also read about the living water. We shall give just two examples. Sir Ivain, the hero of the Arthurian novel *The Knight with the Lion*, had his sobriquet from the lion (vehicle of the Goddess; ch. XX A) guiding him through the difficult steps of his austerities: scantily dressed (in rags), he wanders (as a *sanyasi*; ch. XV B) in the wilderness (ch. IV), his body is weakened, his hair is long, he is a friend of the beasts and eats the same food as they (a typical image of an ascetic). He had discovered a well (fontanel of the Sahasrara) full of living water (the Kundalini) near a tree (subtle body), with birds (spiritual entities controlling the chakras and the channels; ch. IV) singing on its branches, he had defeated the watchman (obstacles, subtle blockages) and had become a consort (Masculine Principle, Atman) of the Lady of the Well (Feminine Principle, manifestation of the Goddess) acquiring thus mastery over the living water. Closer to our times, Wordsworth wrote: “Look forth!—that Stream behold,/ That Stream upon whose bosom we have passed/ Floating at ease while nations have effaced/ Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold/ Long Lines of mighty kings—look forth, my soul!/ (Nor in this vision be through slow to trust)/ The living Waters, less and less by guilt/ Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,/ Till they have reached the eternal City—built/ For the perfected Spirits of the just!” [142].

The living water is also talked about in the *Qu'ran*. “It is God who sends down out of heaven water, and therewith revives the earth... Surely in that is a sign for a people who have ears” (16.67). The Scripture also depicts “in the Gardens of Delight³⁸⁴... immortal youth going round about them with goblets, and ewers, and a cup from a spring (no brows throbbing, no intoxication)” (56.12, 17-19). “Therein [is] a fountain whose name is called Salsabil... When thou seest them then thou seest bliss and a great Kingdom” (76.18, 20). “Narrated Abu Sa’id al-Khudri:... The Prophet added: «... They will be thrown into a river at the entrance of Paradise, called the Water of

³⁸⁴ The Eden, i.e. the Sahasrara (ch. III and IV).

Life... Those people will come out (of the River of Life) like pearls³⁸⁵ ... and then they will enter Paradise»” [143]. The first book of Rumi [144] reads about a story in which ‘A’ishah, the Prophet’s young wife, noticed a rain that did not wet his clothes and received the following answer: “O, woman of pure heart!... God revealed to your pure eyes the rain of the Invisible! This rain does not come from the clouds. Other clouds exist and another sky!” After the Islamic tradition, the father of the Arab people, Isma’il, together with his mother Hagar, drank living water from the Zamzam well near Mecca (cf. Genesis 21:19).

The *Bible* mentioned that the fountain of Eden was the place where the Tree of Life was growing, therefore it has become the folklore tradition of many eastern peoples to put the fountain of water near a tree, like in the case of the dwellings in Arabic countries regarded as an image of the Paradise: a square yard (Eden as a symbol of perfection; ch. I), which has in its center XI - 29 a fountain of springing water (like the Kundalini out of the fontanel). This pattern was adopted by the Moors to Spain and then took on by the Latin- XI - 28 American countries in the construction of the *patio*.

The tradition about the living water could be encountered with other peoples too.

The supreme god of the Sumerians, An, had “the water of everlasting life.” In one wing of the Mari palace (2000 BC) stood the image of the XI - 27 Mother-Goddess of fertility. From a vessel in her hands flowed perpetually «the water of everlasting life» [145]. Also Isis was “the goddess of the Tree of Life”, offering “the water of immortality.”

Tao-Te-King also refers to the living water: “The great Way³⁸⁶ flows everywhere, both left and right. All things derive their life from it, and it does not turn away from them. It accomplishes its work... It provides for and nourishes everything” (34.1) [146].

A fragment from the pre-Socratic wisdom found on one of the golden tablets unearthed in the 19th century in the northern Italy reads of a spring “whose cold water starts flowing from the Mnemosyne³⁸⁷ lake, and had guards protecting it. Then it spoke with the following words: «I am a son of

³⁸⁵ The pearl denotes the Sahasrara (ch. XV A).

³⁸⁶ “The Great Tao flows like a waterfall” (in other variants, e.g. Tao Jian Wen’s translation).

³⁸⁷ One of the three original Muses corresponding to the subtle channels (ch. II).

the Earth and of the Sky³⁸⁸ studded with stars, hence, I am of a heavenly descent. This is, however, known even to you... ». They will give you water from the godly spring and you will presently stay at the head³⁸⁹, next to the other heroes³⁹⁰ [147].

The oriental tradition reminded a Hyperborean (or polar) fountain that Alexander the Great had been seeking but never found because of his impatience. However, the fontanel is exactly *the pole* of the human skull (ch. II).

Plato wrote also about the living water and coolness connecting them to other manifestation of the Kundalini as Fire, a topic which would be discussed in the next coming section: "All... takes place in order that the body, being watered and cooled, may receive nourishment and life. For when the respiration is going in and out, and the fire, which is fast bound within, follows it, and ever and anon moving to and fro³⁹¹" [148].

E. THE FIRE AND THE LIGHT

*"A great sign was seen in the heaven: a Woman clothed with the sun"*³⁹²

Revelation 12:1

The Kundalini subtle energy is a vibratory energy, somehow like the electromagnetic radiations (ch. II), which are perceived by our senses within a certain frequency range, under the form of light. The nature of the Kundalini energy is, however, different. The devices used by physicists cannot measure it yet, a reason justifying the term of *subtle*. However, the subtle energy can impress the photographic film whenever the vibration 38,40 frequency (or its related wave length) corresponds to the sensitivity of the film in the camera. It is to be stressed out that there are used ordinary

³⁸⁸ The extremities of the Sushumna channel: the Mooladhara (Earth) and the Sahasrara (Heaven).

³⁸⁹ The Sahasrara.

³⁹⁰ As realized souls, the heroes had reached the state of immortality and were considered by Hesiod to be a divine race (ch. XIX A).

³⁹¹ Cf. the Self Realization described in the *Upanishads* (ch. IV).

³⁹² Ch. XX C1.

cameras and materials, under ordinary conditions.

However, some visionaries were able to directly perceive these vibrations as luminous manifestations, which seemed to be an ordinary thing in the old times.

It was for the first time in the history of the Yoga practice, when the experience of such manifestation of the Kundalini has been proved through an objective method during the experiments of Sahaja Yoga. At present, there are thousands of photographs of an amazing variety recorded on such instances, ranging from luminous spheres or other shapes to irregular or parallel curves, some of them suggesting through their shape and color (yellow-orange), either the biblical brass fiery serpent (ch. IX) or flames, wherefrom the metaphor of *fire*. Some of them have appeared in press and were published in books by passionate researchers [149]. In many cases persons from different countries, completely ignorant of the Yoga experiments took photographs showing the luminous manifestations of the Kundalini. The fact that such tangible manifestations have appeared in our time is not devoid of importance, if we relate them to the following saying of an old priest from a Buddhist monastery reported by the distinguished Russian scholar Nicholas Roerich: “These fiery signs accompany the era of Shambala” [150] (see ch. XIX D).

From the onset, it has to be pointed out that the symbol of Fire to which the Kundalini energy is compared, has nothing in common with the physical reality of fire, since the former pertains to a subtle manifestation. On the contrary, the qualities of the spiritual “fire” are opposed to those of the ordinary fire: it does not produce combustion, it is a “cold fire”, being rather associated to coolness and breeze (breath, wind; ch. XI C) or water (ch. XI D) that would extinguish the common fire.

When Moses went on Mount Horeb, “the Angel of Yahweh appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thorn-bush³⁹³;... and behold, the XI - 31 thorn-bush burned with fire, and the thorn-bush was not being consumed” (Exodus 3:2). “The cloud of Yahweh was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night” (Exodus 40:38). We come across other similar description of the Kundalini manifestations as fire (Exodus 19:18; Deuteronomy 4:11-12; 5:4-5,22-24; Zechariah 2:5), brightness (Ezekiel 1:27-28), lightning, white as snow (Matthew 28:3). “Let us walk in the light of Yahweh”—is the urge of Isaiah (2:5). “The nations shall walk by its light” (Revelation 21:23). Other metaphors (lamps, stars, light beams) were previously presented (ch. IV, VIII). God taught Aaron and his sons, through Moses, to pray so that: “Yahweh makes his face shine upon thee” (Numbers 6:25). The Psalms (4:6;

³⁹³ *Bátos* (Gr.); *rubus* (Lat.).

31:16; 80:3,7,19; 90:8; 119:135) oftentimes mentioned the shining of God's face (light of His countenance).

A pilgrim of the 6th century, Antonin Martyr states in his *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum* or *Itinerarium Burdigalense* (566; also called *Itinerarium Antonini*) that he was unable to see the face of Jesus on a miraculous picture supposed as being not wrought by human hand (*achiropoite*, Gr.), because he was blinded by the light which emanated from it (ch. XXV A), and also because "the face changed constantly before the eyes which looked at it" [151]. Indeed, it so happens to the face of a *Maha Avatara* (Great Incarnation, Sanskr.).

The Psalm 67:1 read: "God be gracious unto us, and bless us [and] cause his face to shine upon us (Stop³⁹⁴) that thy way may be known upon earth, thy salvation among all nations." Here we notice the discontinuity of the text suggesting that the "stop" indicates the *omission of some words* (see ch. X). The divine light transmitted to the people allows them to *know the way* of God (the channel of the Kundalini) and hence, their *salvation* (Self Realization, second birth, enlightenment, Moksha³⁹⁵, Nirvana, Satori etc.; see our Introduction), which would become possible even for *all nations*. Here is a wonderful prophecy of the chance offered to mankind presently (ch. XIX D).

XI - 30 A most important text, which relates the hands to the subtle energy perceived as rays, belongs to Habakkuk: "[His] brightness was as the light: rays [came forth] from his hand and there was the hiding of his power" (3:4).

Sometimes, God manifested His Spirit as breath and fire making "His ministers a flame of fire" (Psalms 104:4). The divine manifestation is frequently called, however, *the glory of Yahweh* (*kavod*, glory, Hebr.; *dóxa*, Gr.—in the *Septuagint*) (for instance Exodus 16:7,10; 24:15-17; Isaiah 35:2; 40:5; John 11:40 etc.), and thus replace the term *Face of God*. In Gothic, *wulpus* (like *vultus*, face, cheek, Lat.) is the majestic glory (*dóxa*, Gr.), whereas the adjective *wops* is the equivalent of *daimonysómenos* (Gr.), being related to *godly*.

The topic of the Light was richly presented in the *Book of Enoch* from which a few examples will be quoted. "I beheld seven stars, like great blazing mountains and like spirits" [152]. "I... saw a mountain of fire flashing both by day and night. I proceeded toward it, and I perceived seven splendid mountains, which were all different from each other" [153]. "In the columns

³⁹⁴ *Selah* (Hebr.).

³⁹⁵ The equivalent term is *peduth* (Hebr.), the redemption, which will be brought by God at a specific time.

of heaven I beheld fires, which descended without number, but neither on high, nor into the deep” [154]. The energy channels are described as *rivers of fire*, in a palace³⁹⁶ built with stones of ice: “And in the midst of these stones tongues of living fire... there were rivers full of living fire, which encompassed it” [155]. “I saw two rivers of fire glittering like the hyacinth³⁹⁷” [156]. Sometimes, the entities of the chakras are called sons of angels: “I beheld the sons of the holy angels treading on flaming fire, whose garment and robes were white” [157]. Enoch specified that it was a *burning but cold fire*: “A flame burned around its walls and its portal blazed with fire. When I entered into the dwelling, it was hot as fire and cold as ice” [158].

According to the apocryphal *Psalms of Solomon* and *Vision of the Son of Man*, the latter will destroy the negativity by a flaming breath (“the Law which is fire”) [159].

Goddess Wisdom (*Hokhmah*, Hebr.) has also that attribute being described as the “reflection (*aparantos*, radiance, Gr.) of the eternal light” [160], a term echoing Isis in a magical papyrus, where she speaks of herself: “I am in the rays of the sun” [161]. However, Wisdom “is indeed more splendid than the sun, she outlines all the constellation” [162].

The Kabbalists talked about the “emanation of energy and divine light.” The myth of the Shekhinah in Kabbalistic teaching considered her embodied in the image of Light. She was identified with the radiance of the Holy Spirit, the fiery *Pleroma* from which all creation emanates. This recalls the radiance of goddess Inanna and her descent through the seven planetary spheres [163]. The Shekhinah was considered immanent in humans as “a radiant body” that could be revealed personally to the individuals. The *Zohar* discloses that “all that the Israelites saw then they beheld in one Light in which were focused all the other lights, and they yearned to possess it. Said the Holy One, blessed be He, unto them: «This light which ye have seen on Mount Sinai, in which all the colors of the other lights are combined, and which ye so desire, shall be yours: have it, take it unto yourselves!» And these colors which she combines are the gold, silver, brass etc., mentioned here” [164]. Similar brightness was perceived during the Transfiguration on the Mount (Matthew XI - 32 17:2; Mark 9:3; Luke 9:29), at the holy grave (Matthew 28:3) and on the XI - 33 Pentecost day (Acts 2:3). More details are given below and in chapter XXV XI - 39 A.

³⁹⁶ *Hekhaloth* (Hebr.).

³⁹⁷ Semiprecious yellow-reddish stone, analogous to the color of the light emissions on the photos recorded with the Sahaja Yoga practitioners.

The Light is associated with the baptism of Jesus in two very old Latin codices of the Gospel according to Matthew, the *Vercellensis*³⁹⁸ and the *Sangermanensis*³⁹⁹. The first one read: “A great light from the water lit up and all the surroundings, so that all were afraid.” And the second uses almost the same words: “A great light shone from the water” [165]. Also Justin Martyr quotes from a gospel unknown to us “when Jesus had gone to the river Jordan, where John was baptizing, and when he had stepped into the water, a fire was kindled in the Jordan; and when he came out of the water, the Holy Ghost lighted on him like a dove” [166]. The same appears with Pseudo-Cyprian [167].

In his turn, John the Baptist heralded that Jesus would perform a baptism entirely different from the water baptism practiced by himself: “I indeed baptize you with water to repentance, but he that comes after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not fit to bear; he shall baptize you with [the] Holy Spirit and fire” (Matthew 3:11). This was confirmed by Christ: “For John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit after now not many days” (Acts 1:5), thus announcing the event on the Pentecost day. “I have come to cast a fire on the earth; and what will I if already it has been kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it shall have been accomplished” (Luke 12:49-50).

XI - 32 An important moment in the accounts of the apostles is the Transfiguration that occurred on the Mount Tabor (*tabur*, navel, Hebr.). The navel is found, however, on the solar plexus level and, in the Kabbalistic tree with 11 sephiroth it is represented by the Tiphereth, which corresponds to the sun (ch. IV). On the mount, Jesus appeared to his disciples resembling a sun radiating a light that was alien to those places. “His face shone as the sun, and his garments became white as the light“, and the Father appeared as “a bright cloud” (Matthew 17:2,5; cf. Mark 9:3. Significant information on that event comes from Luke (9:29): “As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance became different” (*tò eidos tou prosopón autou héteron*, Gr.), thus pointing to the necessity of prayer (meditation and uttering of mantras). It was the Self Realization manifested in the divine range, since the disciples wanted to make three tabernacles (i.e. dwellings of Divinity) for Jesus, Moses and Elias⁴⁰⁰ (symbolizing the *Trimurti*), which could be connected to the three powers of the channels (ch. II). Actually, that happened not only then, since

³⁹⁸ Or *Codex a*, in Old Latin, at Vercelli, from the 4th century.

³⁹⁹ Or *Codex G*, from Saint-Germain, Paris.

⁴⁰⁰ The spelling for Eliyah used in the New Testament.

“when Jesus slept, whether by day or by night, the brightness of God shone upon him” (*claritas Dei splendebat super eum*, Lat.) [168]. “If therefore thy whole body [is] light, not having any part dark, it shall be all light as when the lamp lights thee with its brightness” (Luke 11:36). Revelation also describes the Son of man: “His head and hair white like white wool, as snow; and his eyes as a flame of fire; and his feet like brass... and his countenance as the sun shines in its power” (1:14-16; cf. 2:18; 19:12).

Many researchers assumed that the Transfiguration occurred actually on Mount Hermon instead of Tabor, since in the earliest of the Mark codices the place mentioned in the posterior Mark 9:2 as “a high mountain” was actually described as “a very (due to its position in the sentence it means even “exceedingly”) high mountain,” which is not the case of rather low (562 meters high) Mount Tabor but of Mount Hermon (the highest mount in Israel, 2814 meters high) [169].

The topic of fire became classical through the representation of the Kundalini as the manifestation of the Holy Spirit descended over the heads of the apostles on the Pentecost day. The descent was first announced by “a violent impetuous blowing, and filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues, as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with [the] Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:2-4). The accuracy of the description of the Kundalini manifestation is totally bewildering: there were *not* tongues of fire, but “*as of fire*.” The ancient Chinese Christian texts mentioned before, contribute with an interesting specification about the *secret of the Way* (Sushumna), that leads to Self Realization: “Ten days after the Messiah had ascended into Heaven, He again added more faith to the disciples, and «admitted them into the secret of the Way», and gave them the Holy Spirit” [170].

The *Gospel according to the Hebrews* includes a remarkable statement: “In the books which the Nazarenes use it is said that rays⁴⁰¹ issued from his eyes⁴⁰² whereby they were terrified and put to flight” [171]. The same with Jerome: “They did not resist him, for a certain fiery and starry light shone from his eyes, and the majesty of Godhead gleamed from his face” [172]. These accounts remind of Revelation (1:14) and Malachi (3:2): “He will be like a... fire.”

The Gnostic texts also read about a mysterious light in relation to the Tree of Life, the Living Water and the Divine Mother. “There is a Light [that] dwells hidden in Silence and it was first to [come] forth... It is a hidden

⁴⁰¹ Ch. VIII.

⁴⁰² *Radii proderunt ex oculis eius* (Lat.).

Light, bearing a Fruit of Life, pouring forth a Living Water from the invisible, unpolluted, immeasurable Spring, that is, the unreproducible Voice of the glory of the Mother, the glory of the offspring of God; a male Virgin by a virtue of a hidden Intellect, that is, the Silence hidden from the All, being unreproducible, an immeasurable Light, the source of All, the Root of the entire Aeon. It is the Foundation that supports every movement of the Aeons that belong to the mighty Glory. It is the Foundation of every foundation” [173]. Other Gnostic manuscript says that when the disciples were on the Mount of Olives, “a great light appeared so that the mountain shone from the sight of Him who had appeared. And a voice called out to them saying: «Listen to My words... I am Jesus Christ»... Then a voice came to them out of the light” [174]. The apocryphal *Wisdom of Jesus Christ* described Him as “a great angel of Light” who teaches them “the secrets of the holy plan” of the universe and its destiny [175]. Another Gnostic author referred to the divine Light: “It is immeasurable, since it dwells in the Immeasurable One. It is a mystery. It is [unrestrainable] by [the Incomprehensible One]. It is invisible [to all those who are] visible in the All. [It is a Light] dwelling in Light” [176]. Another text read: “I saw a new light, greater than the light of day. Then it came down upon the Savior” [177]. Like the initiates of the Mysteries before them, the Gnostics had a vision of the body of “light” beneath the physical form. In certain Gnostic texts Jesus appears to His disciples after His resurrection (*anástasia*, Gr.) in His “body of light” [178]. That is why the *Great Work* of alchemy aimed to discover the nature of Spirit, to perceive the mystery of the “fiery light” and to see face-to-face the “body of light” that was the foundation of the human body as well as the “matter” of the universe [179].

For the first time in the Christian literature, Origen considered that all we could feel and imagine about God would be only a tiny spark of light [180]. This idea, later developed in the Western world, would become central in Meister⁴⁰³ Eckhart’s system, however in a totally different context. Origen was more specific on the topic by stating that Christ is of a fiery nature, likewise the Holy Spirit: “I have read somewhere that the Savior said—though I am not sure whether someone put these words in the Savior’s mouth, or whether He truly remembered them—at any rate, I read that He said: «He that is near me is near the fire⁴⁰⁴. He that is far from me is far from the Kingdom»” [181]. “For in sacred language God is called a fire” [182]. The text (originally in Latin) is quoted in Greek and with a greater

⁴⁰³ *Meister* (Germ.), *Magister* (Master, Lat.).

⁴⁰⁴ *Qui iuxta me est, iuxta ignem est* (Lat.).

confidence by Didymos [183]. Its source was discovered at our times as *The Gospel of Thomas*, where the full text is: “Jesus said: «He who is near me is near the fire, and he who is far from me is far from the Kingdom». Jesus said: «The images are manifest to man, but the light in them remains concealed in the image of the light of the Father. He will become manifest, but his image will remain concealed by his light»” [184] (see ch. II).

Hippolytus [185] was familiar with the concepts of the Indian yogis (called by him *gymnosophistai*, naked sages, Gr.): “But there is also with the Indians a sect... These affirm that God is light, not such as one sees, nor such as the sun and fire.”

Clement of Alexandria showed: “that fire like a pillar, and the fire in the desert, is the symbol of the holy light which passed through from earth and returned again to heaven, by the wood [of the cross⁴⁰⁵], by which also the gift of intellectual vision was bestowed on us” [186]. The fire column is, naturally, the Kundalini. In the Hindu mythology it is Vajra (Indra’s lightning, analogous to the one of Jupiter Tonans or his equals: the Scandinavian Thor, the German Donar, or even the Geto-Dacian Zalmoxis; ch. XIX B). “Yahweh went before their face by day in a pillar of a cloud... and by night in a pillar of fire” (Exodus 13:21; cf. 14:19-20; 16:10; 19:9; 20:21; 24:15,16; 33:9-10; Numbers 9:15; 12:5; Deuteronomy 31:15; Nehemiah 9:12; Isaiah 4:5 etc.). The Manichaeans and the Muslim esoteric trends refer to a light column bringing the souls back to their Principle.

Clement of Alexandria also brought us other commentaries of this special fire. “The fire is conceived of as a good power and mighty, destroying the worse and preserving the better, for which reason this fire is called in the prophets intelligent” [187]. “We say that the fire sanctifies... ; meaning not the all-devouring vulgar fire but that of wisdom, which pervades the soul passing through the fire” [188]. *Pistis Sophia* spoke of “a great, exceedingly violent, wise fire and it burneth up the sins” [189]. And Minucius Felix showed: “There the intelligent fire burns the limbs and restores them, feeds on them and nourishes them” [190].

We would mention also the example of Zostrianos—recorded as early as the Gnostic writings—who received the vision of “the angel of the knowledge of eternal light” [191].

Pope Gregory I, the Great (540-604) referred also to the mystics who have attained union with God, but in a very strange way. Armstrong shows that instead of referring to the Divine Light, Gregory “used the metaphors of cloud, fog or darkness... His God remained hidden from human beings in an impenetrable darkness that was far more painful than the cloud...

⁴⁰⁵ A symbol of the subtle body (ch. IV).

experienced by such Greek Christians as Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite... In the East, the Christian experience of God was characterized by light rather than darkness” [192] (ch. XXV A).

Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite advised to attain to union with “the rays of the Godhead,” while Lossky explained that the “divine rays penetrate the whole created universe, and are the cause of its existence” [193].

In one vision of Hildegard of Bingen, God described Himself as follows: “I, the highest and fiery power... I, the fiery life of divine essence... I remain hidden in every kind of reality as a fiery power. Everything burns of Me in the way our breath constantly moves us, like the wind-tossed flame in a fire” [194].

Sushumna, situated between the side channels, was described by Dante through the metaphor of a bright, luminous river from Paradise: “I saw a light, in river form, glow tawny betwixt banks painted with marvelous spring” [195].

The *Qur'an* is regarded as the Islamic great manifestation of the Paraclete, the Descent (*at-Tanzil*, Arab.) performed by the Holy Spirit (*ar-Ruh*, Arab.), designated as a revealing function, by means of *Jibrayil* (archangel Gabriel). For those who reached the Paradise (Sahasrara), “God... has procured them radiance⁴⁰⁶ and gladness, and recompensed them... with a Garden” (76.11-12), that is the Eden. Similarly to the divine manifestation under the shape of the burning thorn bush on the Mount Horeb, the *Qur'an* described Allah as He “who has made for you out of the green tree fire and lo, from it you kindle” (36.80). The green tree is, obviously, the Tree of Life, the subtle body, while the fire—used only by those authorized by God to kindle other fires—is the manifestation of the Kundalini, which makes it possible to the true initiate to give self Realization to his disciple. “Have you considered the fire you kindle? Did you make its timber to grow, or did We make it?” (56.70-71) “God is the Light of the heavens and the earth... Light upon Light” (24.35). “Our Lord, perfect for us our light” (66.8). It is said about the righteous ones: “Allah... gave them Nadratán” (a light of beauty, Arab.) [196]. The Qur'anic texts on the Light (*an-Nur*, Arab.) have inspired famous Sufi teachers such as Suhrawardi, the master of enlightenment (*sheikh al-ishraq*, Arab.) and al-Ghazali (ch. XXV B) in his famous treatise *Mishkat al-Anwar* (The Niche of Lights, Arab.).

The *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* depicted the Light in connection with the divinity as “the Primal One, the Pure Light, without beginning, without end”

⁴⁰⁶ *Nadratan*.

[197]. “Wherever I look, I see only You⁴⁰⁷. The True Guru has inspired me to see You. The Divine Light within is revealed, O Nanak” [198]. “Your Divine Light is contained in all” [199]. “By His Command, the Lord of Light fashioned the Universe, and infused His Divine Light into it. From the Lord of Light, all light originates” [200]. Guru Nanak also wrote: “The body is a mansion, a temple, the home of the Lord; He has infused His infinite Light into it” [201].

The light was associated with both God and Goddess as far as back as Sumer and appeared again and again in connection with their union.

A Hindu instance of luminous theophany⁴⁰⁸ was Krishna’s sister, Vishnumaya who was transformed into a lightning when the tyrant Kansa wanted to kill her. In his turn, when his enemies were threatening him Krishna appeared “with a body like a pyre gushing forth myriads of gods” [202].

The fire which symbolized the Kundalini can be encountered in the cult of Zoroaster where there is represented a chalice with a flame. The same XI-54 flaming chalice was engraved on the Hebrew silver shekels of the time of XI-54 Solomon and of even more ancient times. In the excavated sites of the periods from Chandragupta Maurya, one encounters the same powerful stylized image. Likewise, the Bodhisattvas in Tibetan images are holding the chalice blossoming with tongue of flames (ch. X). One may also remember the Druid chalice of life. Aflame, too, was the Holy Grail [203].

The Buddha used to say: “I do not stack wood to feed the fires on altars. I am fanning a flame within myself... The hearth is my own heart, and the flame is my mastered Self” [204].

XI-54

Ulysses, a great initiate no doubt, had the spiritual elevation reflected on his face as light; just like Moses in front of his people (ch. VIII), the Greek hero manifested “a change in his face.”

Anchises told Aeneas: “And flowy waters, and the starry flame,/ And both the radiant lights, one common soul/ Inspire and feeds and animates the whole./... Th’ethereal vigour is in all the same,/ And every soul is filled with equal flame” [205]. The text on the one side depicts metaphorically the all-pervading Primordial Power (Adi Shakti), and on the other equates its manifestation (Kundalini) with the light (fire) and (living) water.

It is now proper to mention at the opposite end, the case of Prometheus who had *stolen* the Fire from heaven to bring it down on earth. Divinity

⁴⁰⁷ An allusion to the *Qur’an*: “Whithersoever you turn, there is the Face of God” (2.109).

⁴⁰⁸ Ch. XV A.

sanctioned this attempt of Self Realization made by an unauthorized person (similar to the false gurus of today) by stealing. It was no accident that the eagle (in Hinduism: Garuda, a vehicle of the Supreme Divinity) attacked his liver, the organ most sensitive to heat (the “burning” mentioned by Eliade; ch. XI C). The Indian sages paid a great importance to this organ: “Of all the various organs in the body, the liver is supreme” [206]. The Chinese called it, the “treasure organ.”

The fire brought by Prometheus had a heavenly origin: it descended from the Olympus of the immortals for the sake of the mortal humans. At Eleusis, Demeter laid in the fire the king’s youngest son, Demophoön—“a singular method of obtaining immortality.” “«I am not dead»—so sings the Maize God of the Core Indians of Mexico after he is given over to the fire. «May younger brothers (mankind) appear but once. Do they not die forever? But I never die; I appear continually»” [207]. Among another tribe of Mexican Indians, the Tahumares, three days old boys “are carried three times through the smoke” [208].

Kerényi, when referring to Hecate, made the following commentaries. “She is thus explicitly called the «bringer of light»... The torch is XI - 54 characteristic not only of Hecate, it also plays an important part in the Demeter and Persephone cult. One torch, two torches held by the same goddess, three torches in a row, or the «crossed torch»⁴⁰⁹... all these occur as attributes of both Demeter and Persephone; and this variety of forms proves that we are dealing with... a symbol” [208]. However, the Athenian goddess Hecate who carries the torch (also called *Phosphóros*, light carrier, Gr.) is nothing else than one of the *gunas* (ch. II), the tendency of the central channel, i.e. the Kundalini.

Plato and Stoic philosophers considered *pneúma* (breath, Gr.; ch. XI C) to be the pure fire of ether. Plato uses the following image: “a helpless prisoner, chained hand and foot in the body” [209], thus referring to the Kundalini imprisoned inside the sacrum bone.

Our book (ch. IV, IX, and previous sections of XI) has repeatedly revealed the multiple relationship tree—staff—serpent—water—fire that is an additional argument advocating the theory of the Kundalini symbolism as manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Here are two further examples. Ever since XI - 54 the *Rig-Veda*, Agni, the god of fire, was called the “furious serpent” [210]. Other reptiles are also associated to fire: the salamander is a classical example and was adopted as an alchemical symbol. According to the Greek legend, the fire sprang out from a staff, and the “inventor” of fire was

⁴⁰⁹ The three crossed torches represent the crossing of the three channels in the Agya chakra (ch. II).

Hermes.

How these images were reflected in the artistic representations will be XI - 41 presented below. XI - 52

Maybe the most impressive and eloquent creations belong to Fra Angelico XI - 33 who was obviously a realized soul. We, particularly, find them in his frescoes of the San Marco monastery in Florence. Above the Sahasrara of the saints, a little flame (or sometimes a star) was painted by the great visionary as in XI - 44 the twelve *Musician Angels* surrounding the central panel, *Madonna and Child* of the Linaiuoli Triptych in San Marco Museum, *The Announcement*, *Mocking of Christ*, *Lamentation*, or the paintings belonging to the Vatican Museum (*Virgin with St. Dominic and St. Catherine*), those in the Louvre Museum (*Crowning of the Virgin*), or in the National Gallery in London (*Christ glorified in Paradise*) etc. [211].

In Botticelli's illustrations to Dante's *Paradise*, the angelic armies and XI - 42 holy spirits are represented as flames [212].

Many artists rendered Kundalini as the Holy Spirit descending on the Virgin Mary and the apostle's heads, in the shape of small flames, on the Day of Pentecost. Here we shall mention the paintings of El Greco [213] and XI - 39 the engravings of Gustave Doré [214], the brilliant illustrator of the *Bible*, among other masterpieces. The latter also depicted the light above the Sahasrara of some mythological characters [215]. XI - 43

Sometimes, the Virgin Mary and the Child radiate vibrations as a flame ring entirely surrounding them [216], or they have their heads surrounded by an unusually wide, shining disk (many compared it with a sun) largely exceeding the auras that are usual for the realized souls (saints). This is XI - 46 *Omkaara*, the Kundalini energy of OM, as a light emitted by the Agya chakra. 48 , 53 One can see such examples in the famous Isenheim altarpiece [217]. The XI - 45 Kundalini also appears as a shining mist like a cone with the apex in the . . . 48 Sahasrara, as in the case of Zurbaran's *St. Lawrence* in the Hermitage XI - 49 Museum, St. Petersburg. The dome vaults of the Chora church (Kariye 50 mosque of today) in Istanbul are adorned with two exquisite mosaics XI - 51 rendering the genealogy of Christ. In both mosaics, from the heads of the ancestors (in a radial arrangement around the central figure) columns of orange light are coming out and converge to the center [218]. William XI - 30 Blake's work abounds in suggestive representations of this divine light, such as *Orc in the fires of energy*, and *Glad Day* [219].

The imagery of Islam represent flames instead of the holy faces. There are XI - 35 plenty of such examples [220]. XI - 55

Chapter XXV A will provide details on the perception of this *divine fire* by the genuine Christian saints.

NOTES

[1] *NQ*, 42.52. [2] *Ibid.*, 2.87. [3] *Ibid.*, 26.83; 28.14. [4] Merlin Stone, *The Paradise Papers*, Virago, London 1976, pp.119,128-130. [5] Theofil Simenschy, *Cultura și filosofia indiană în texte și studii (Indian Culture and Philosophy in Texts and Studies)*, Bibliotheca Orientalia, București 1978, vol. I, p.40, o.t. [6] *The Maitri Upanishad* 6. 29; cf. *The Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad* 6.3.12; *The Svetasvatara Upanishad* 6.22; also *The Bhagavad-Gita* 18.67. [7] Lao-tse, *Tao-Te-Ching* (transl. by Chin Tao-Kao), ch. 81. [8] Plato, Romanian edition, *quoted work*, note 108 to *Timaeus*, o.t. [9] Plato, *Timaeus* 48c, 53d, in *The Collected...*, pp.1175,1180. [10] Aristotle, *Physics (Physica)* IV.2, 209b14, in *The Complete...*, vol. 1, pp.356-357. [11] Aristoxenus, *Elementa harmonica* II, 30-31; Simplicius, in *Aristotelis Physica* 6-11, 25-31 (Diels, Kranz); Themistius, *Oratio* 21, 245 C-D; Proclus, *Commentary to Philebus* 4-18 (Cousin); Albinus Didascalicus 27.1, p.129 (Louis); Alexis, fragm. 152 (II, 353 Kock); Amphis, fragm. b (II, 237 Kock); Philippides, fragm. b (II, 303 Kock). [12] Plato, *The Republic* 536b-540c (transl by B. Jowett), *Parmenides* 136d-e (transl. by F.M. Cornford), *Phaedrus* 275d-277a; *Letter VII* 334a-e (transl. by L.A. Post), in *The Collected...*, pp.767-772,931,520-522,1582-1583. [13] *The Book of Enoch* 59.12-13. [14] *Ibid.*, 16.3. [15] Graves, Podro, p.368. [16] Josephus Flavius, *The Wars of the Jews* II.8.7, in *The Works...*, p.495. [17] Michael Drosnin, *The Bible Code*, Simon & Schuster, New York 1997. [18] *NQ* 2.269. [19] *The Zohar* I, 4b, vol. I, p.18. [20] Origen, *Contra Celsum* VII.6. [21] Origen, in Migne, *P.G.*, vol. 12, col.547. [22] Origen, *De Principiis (Peri archon)* IV.1.15. [23] Irenaeus, *Ref.* III. 3.1. [24] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechism (Catechetical Letters)* VI.29. [25] Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, *On the Divine Names and the Mystical Theology*, 2. [26] Paul Vulliaud, *Études d'Ésoterisme catholique*; quoted by Schuon, *The Transcendent...*, pp.142-143. [27] Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali*, 1, in Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali. A Collection of Indian Songs*, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York 1971, p.23. [28] Turek, pp.44-45. [29] Diana Ionescu, *Trezirea puterilor spirituale care sunt în voi (Awakening of Spiritual Powers within You)*, in *Magazin*, p.13, (August 1, 1992). [30] Heart, p.40. [31] Tompkins, Bird, p.22. [32] *The Rig-Veda* 8.8.9. [33] *Ibid.*, 8.8.19. [34] *The Mundaka Upanishad* 2.2.5. [35] *The Chandogya Upanishad* 4.10.4. [36] *Ibid.*, 5.1.12. [37] *Ibid.*, 5.1.15. [38] *Ibid.*, 4.3.4; *The Maitrayani Upanishad* 6.20, Adyar 1921. [39] *The Maitrayani Upanishad* 2.26. [40] *Ibid.*, 6.21. [41] *The Yogatattwa Upanishad*. [42] *The Prashna Upanishad*. [43] *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* II.5 (42). [44] *The Atharva-Veda* 11.4. [45] *The Taittiriya Upanishad* 3.3. [46] *The Shankayana Upanishad* 5. [47] *The Bhagavad-Gita*

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XII. THE VESTIGES OF MOSES

“Moses the servant of Yahweh died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Yahweh. And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-Peor, and no man knows his sepulcher to this day”
Deuteronomy 34:5-6

Regardless of speculations proposed by some authors, this chapter and the next one should be regarded as introductory to chapter XIV, since they provide evidences about milestones left—many centuries after Moses and Solomon—by the exiled Israelites on their way from Babylonia to more eastern lands.

A little before his death, “Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah” (Deuteronomy 34:1). The same book offered further geographical specifications like: “in the valley opposite to Beth-Peor, in the land of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon” (4:46). “Two kings of the Amorites, who were on this side of Jordan, towards the sun rising... on this side of the Jordan, eastward and as far as the sea of the plain, under the slopes of Pisgah” (4:47-49).

Later on, researches have been trying to locate the tomb of the great prophet. In the kingdom of Jordan, not far from the Israel border, there is a mountain called Nebo where the grave of Moses is believed to be located. However, other text of the Scripture reveal the existence of *two places* called Nebo. Thus Nehemiah counted: “The men of the other Nebo, fifty-two” (7:33).

The *Bible* wrote that he saw the Promised Land from the mountain where he died (see below: Numbers 27:12-13; Deuteronomy 32:48-50), “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Deuteronomy 11:9; cf. Exodus 33:3). “We came to the land to which thou didst send us, and surely it flowed with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it” (Numbers 13:28), therefore, this was not a metaphor but a reality which does not fit the location in the *Bible*, since Palestine is far from being such a fertile land. The great physician Servetus, contemporary with Calvin and Melanchton, traveled to the Holy Land and described it as barren instead of flowing with milk and honey. The Church labeled this fact as a heresy and he was burned alive [1]. That’s why people started a search for the grave of Moses in a different place.

One hint came from John Chrysostom who pointed at east: “But what? Tell me, are not the bones of Moses himself laid in a far off land in the

East?" [2].

Beth-Peor (Hebr.) literally meant *house (or place) of gaping, or opening* [3], for instance a valley opening into a plain.

In Persian, the Jhelum River (ch. III) in Kashmir was called *Behat (Vehat, Vieth, Kashmiri; Vitesta, Sanskr.)* [4]. The little town of Bandipur situated in the valley of this river opening out into a wide plain near the Lake Wular, was once called Behat-poor [5]. This fits with the description as the "sea of the plain" (ch. III). The former Behat-Poor, Beth-Peor or Bhutapura [6], the Bandipur of today is 80 km north of Srinagar [5].

The hamlet Hashbah (Hazba)—mentioned as Heshbon in the *Bible*—is only 18 km northwest of Bandipur [7]. The reference in Song of Songs (7:4) sends us to "the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Beth." However, Hashbah is famous for its pools⁴¹⁰ of fish [3]. The gate of Bath (or Beth) corresponds to the meaning of *opening* indicated above.

The hill of Pisgah (Pishnag of today) is about 1.6 km northeast of Aham Sharif and 5 km northeast of Hashbah. The plain of Mowu (Moab in the *Bible*) is 6.5 km northeast of Mount Nebo (also called Baal Nebu or Nil-toop) [8] which is about 13 km northeast of Bandipur, which is dominated together with the valley Lolab by this peak. Nil-toop means "the top of Mount Nebo" [9]. From here it is visible the entire Kashmir Valley [10].

This is how the five geographical points in the Old Testament regarding the tomb of Moses exist in this area of Kashmir only a few kilometers from one another. The fertile land of Kashmir fits perfectly the description of the Promised Land, which was seen by the prophet before his death (ch. III).

Kersten [5] reports that there is a tomb near the hamlet of Booth, whose watchman, the Wali Rishi⁴¹¹, tells the tourists that the place has been worshipped by holy sages (*rishi*, Sanskr.) since times going back to more than 2700 years ago. A pillar-shaped landmark pushing about one meter out of the soil was regarded by Kersten to have possibly been the tombstone of Moses, while Khwaja Nazir Ahmad located the sepulcher of Moses on the top of Baal Nebu, oriented in the east-west direction like the Jewish graves, in contrast with other neighboring tombs in the north-south direction like the Muslim ones [3]. The traveler may admire from the top of the nearby hills a flourishing, evergreen land, a true paradise (ch. III) where "milk and honey

⁴¹⁰ Surprisingly enough, in the *Bible*, Heshbon was two times associated with *Yaazer* (Isaiah 16:8,9), and this last word is phonetically almost identical to *yezer* (lake, Slav.; also Roman.) or *yaz* (pond, Roman.).

⁴¹¹ Some decades earlier, when the same places were visited by Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, the custodian (*Mutawali*, Arab.) was Ghafar Rishi.

flow” (Deuteronomy 11:9).

As shown in the *Bible* God did not allow Moses, before his death, to enter the Promised Land but let him only to see it: “Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes; for thou shalt not go over this Jordan” (Deuteronomy 3:27). The same book goes on placing that land, eastward of Jordan “as far as the sea of the plain, under the slopes of Pisgah” (4:49). It is possible that “this Jordan” (*h-yrđn hzh*) had nothing in common with the Jordan River of Palestine and “the sea of the plain” is (as already shown) the Lake Wular of Kashmir. It is odd that in the Old Testament, “Jordan” (*yrđn*) is never accompanied by the word “river” (*nhr*). Salibi interprets *yrđn* as “rugged” or “ridge.”

A text of Deuteronomy (32:48-50) read: “And Yahweh spoke to Moses that same day, saying: «Go up into this Mountain Abarim, Mount Nebo... and die on the mountain wither thou goest up»,” while another passage of Numbers (27:12-13) said: “Get thee up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land that I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy peoples.” Considering these two excerpts related to the above-mentioned quotation of Deuteronomy (3:27), one could identify Abarim with Pisgah. Mohammad Yasin suggests that Abarim is the same as Mount Ablu just above Mount Nebu. From both sites one enjoys a beautiful view of the Kashmir Valley [11].

Hazrat Abu Huraira narrated that the Prophet said: “He (Moses) died there. If I were there I could have pointed out to you his tomb on the path of a rugged hill” [12].

There are also other records of the location of the tomb of Moses in Kashmir (see also ch. XIII) coming especially from the historians of Kashmir reviewed by Khwaja Nazir Ahmad [3]. Abdul Qadir wrote: “Moses came to Kashmir and people believed in him. Subsequently they continued to believe in him, others did not. He died and was buried here. There people of Kashmir call his tomb «the Shrine of the Prophet of the Book⁴¹²»” [13]. Muhammad Azam mentioned: “Saug Bibi was also a renowned hermitess and excelled men in meditation and prayer. Near to her tomb is a place which is known as the sepulcher of Moses, the Prophet of God (may our salutation be on him), and people assert that many benefits are derived from that place” [14]. Similar references are to be found in other Kashmiri writings [15].

European travelers and writers also wrote about this topic. François Bernier (who was a courtier of Emperor Aurangzeb) noted among his reasons

⁴¹² Muslims call both the Jews and the Christians: “People of the Book” (*ahl al-Kitab*, Arab.) i.e. of the *Bible*.

backing the theory that Kashmiris were descendants of Israel (ch. XIV): “The fourth ground is the belief that Moses died in this city of Kashmir and that this took place within a league of it” [16], while Dr. George Moore said: “Moses himself came among them to teach them the worship of one God” [17]. Lieutenant-Colonel Torrens mentioned: “There is a belief too, that Moses died near the capital of Kashmir and that he is buried there” [18]. Quoting the authority of Badi-ud-Din, Mrs. Harvey stated: “According to one eminent authority Kashmir was inundated on account of the relapse of the inhabitants to idolatry, after having been taught the worship of One God by Moses, who died there and whose tomb is by some said to be still pointed out” [19].

These places, like others in Kashmir, have preserved some names recalling the great Hebrew prophet up to this day. Thus, there are four of them bearing the name *Maqam-i-Musa*⁴¹³ (the place [of rest] of Moses, Arab.).

One is in Handwara Tehsil near Auth Wattu (Eight Ways)—and this place is also called *Ayat-i-Maula* (Signs of God, Arab.) or *Aitmul*—at about 3 km north of Bandipur and equally far from Pischah but in the opposite direction, going to the Lake Wular and to Srinagar.

Another is placed at Shadipur, a few kilometers away of Wular Lake, where the waters of Jhelum merge with the Sindh River. At this junction, and in midstream there is a rock called *Maqam-i-Musa* or, sometimes *Kohna-i-Musa* (cornerstone of Moses, Arab.) [5]. ‘Ubay bin Ka’b [20] narrated about the meeting of Moses with Khwaja Khizr, which is an indication that this event took place in Kashmir since *Khwaja* (Master) precedes many names of respectable Kashmiris, while *Khizr* (i.e. al-Khidr) is a very popular name among the local population. The *Qur’an* mentioned that Moses with his servant Yusha’ bin Nun reached “the junction of the two seas” [21]. The expression *Majma-ul-Bahrain* does not mean merely a junction of two rivers, but signifies that the two rivers must lose their identity as if they fall into the sea that is exactly what happens with Jhelum and Sindh before entering the Lake Wular. Thus, Moses with his companion reached this junction and they “took refuge on the rock” (18.62). And it is from this place that “they returned upon their tracks” (18.63). Coming back from this journey Moses meets somebody (not named in the *Qur’an*, but considered to be al-Khidr) to whom God said: “We had given mercy from Us, and We taught him of knowledge proceeding from Us” (18.64). Also al-Khidr told Moses: “I have knowledge from God that you do not have” [22]. This confirms the facts

⁴¹³ *Musa* is the name given to Moses by the Arab people. *Maqam* (Arab.) corresponds to *statio* (Lat.)—a halt place.

previously shown (ch. VIII) about the particular importance of al-Khidr whom the Muslim tradition regards as the Master of all who seek a mystic truth [23].

The third place bearing the name of Maqam-i-Musa is at Pischah, and the fourth is near Bandipur.

There is another place still called *Sang-i-Musa* (stone of Moses) at Bijbihara, about 40 kilometers southeast of Srinagar. This place was also mentioned in the *Rajatarangini*. One may see here a stone that is supposed to have special powers: *Kah Kah Pal* (*kah*, eleven, *pal*, big stone, Kashmiri; close to *Kabbalah*?). It weighs about 50 kilograms. The legend says that the stone would rise through its own power and remain suspended at about one meter, if eleven people touched it with one finger while uttering *kah-kah, kah-kah* at the same time [5]. The number eleven plus the stone itself acquired the significance of Israel's twelve tribes. Actually, the tradition held that out of twelve tribes, one (that of Levi, called there Lari) had been disinherited. The number eleven, in Hinduism, points at *Ekadesha Rudra*, the eleven powers of god Rudra. And in Hebrew *qadesh* means *holy*.

Other places remembering the traces of Moses were mentioned as *Kohna-i-Musa*: one of them near Shadipur was indicated above [24], while the other is situated at Rampur [25]. Last but not least there is another place in Awantipur called *Gund-i-Musa* (or *Gund-i-Khalil*).

Facing the above considerations, we find it difficult to subscribe to the above hypothesis, regardless how tempting could be the idea of Moses' tomb located in Kashmir (first encountered with Nazir Ahmad and developed by Fida Hassnain, then embraced by Kersten, Yasin, and others). We think that the toponyms recalling the great prophet and the local legends about Moses being buried in Kashmir took their source long ago, with the nostalgic descendants of the "lost tribes of Israel" living in Kashmir (ch. XIV), as a way of paying their respect to the imposing biblical personality. Other authors take into account quite the reverse hypothesis: places in Palestine were given names recalling those in the lost paradisaal land (Kashmir) abandoned by Abraham's forefathers.

NOTES

[1] *Apud* Baring, Cashford, p.529. [2] John Chrysostom, *Homily XXVI: On the Epistle to the Hebrews 11:20-22*, § 2; *apud* Yasin, p.23; forged variants read “in a strange land,” as in *The Early Church Fathers and Other Works*, William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Edinburgh 1867, Oxford translation revised by Rev. Frederic Gardiner, Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn., Eternal World Television Network, 1996. [3] Nazir Ahmad, pp.265-266. [4] Pirzada Ghulam Hasan bin Abdur Rashid Shewa, *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, mss., Shri Partap Library, Srinagar 1891, vol. I, p.150 sq. [5] Kersten, pp.53-55. [6] Kalhana, VIII. 2431. [7] *Survey of India*, Topo Sheet No.43 J/10. [8] *Ibid.*, Topo Sheet No.43 J/15. [9] D.J.E. Newall, *The Highlands of India*, Handison & Co., London 1887, vol. II, pp.78,79,84,86,87,90. [10] *Survey of India*, Topo Sheet No.43 J/11. [11] Yasin, p.20. [12] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 2, *hadith* 16. [13] Abdul Qadir ben Qazi-ul-Qazat Wazil Ali Khan *Hashmat-i-Kashmir*, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, mss. no.192, 1748, f.7. [14] Khwaja Muhammad Azam Deedamari, *Tarikh-i-Azami*, mss. no.81, Babar Library, Calcutta, A.H. 1148, Srinagar, Ghulam Mohd. Noor Mohd., printed by Muhammadi Press, Lahore 1747, p.84. [15] Mufti Ghulam Muhammad Nabi Khaniyari, *Wajiz-at-Tawarikh*, mss. No.532 and 1048 with Muhammad Shah Saadat, Oriental Research Library, Srinagar 1857, vol. I, p.28; Pirzada Ghulam Hasan, vol. III, p.74. [16] Francis Bernier, *Travels in the Moughal Empire*, Archibald Constable, London 1891, p.174. [17] George Moore, *The Lost Tribes and the Saxons of the East and the West*, Longmans, Green, Longman & Roberts, London 1861, p.137. [18] H.D. Torrens, *Travels in Ladakh, Tartary and Kashmir*, Sanders, Ormby & Co., London 1862, p.268. [19] Mrs. Harvey, *The Adventures of a Lady in Tartary, Thibet, China and Kashmir*, Hope & Co., London 1853, vol. II, pp.200-201. [20] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 6, *hadith* 249. [21] *NQ* 18.60. [22] *Apud* Ibn al-‘Arabi, *The Bezels...*, p.260. [23] Armstrong, *A History...*, p.237. [24] Kalhana, I. 70. [25] Sir Aurel Stein, *The Ancient Geography of Kashmir*, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta 1899, p.166.

XIII. ON THE “TRACKS” OF SOLOMON

As for the cities received from Solomon as a present, Hiram “*called them the land of Cabul*”

1 Kings 9:13

After the death of Moses, the twelve tribes of Israel gradually strengthened their power, but not sufficiently as to form a unified state. The power of the judges did not last enough as to permit the achievement of this desideratum. The Hebrews needed a powerful king.

At the end of the 11th century Samuel anoints David as king (1013-973 BC). Under his rule, during the following century, Israel became a unitary state with its capital at Jerusalem.

The famous temple would be built under the reign of Solomon (973-932 BC), David’s son.

Just as David’s fame was due to his military victories, in the same way Solomon’s reputation relied on his proverbial wisdom (his name, *Shlomo* means *peaceful*, from *shalom*, peace, Hebr.).

As a compensation for the substantial contribution—given in money and in precious wood—to the building of the temple, Solomon gave twenty cities as a present to his friend King Hiram of Tyr: “And they did not please him. And he said: «What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother?» And he called them the land of Cabul⁴¹⁴” (1 Kings 9:12-13). Kabul, which presently is Afghanistan’s capital, formerly belonged to the great Indian Empire.

Following the tracks of Solomon, from Tyr to Kabul, the traveler would
XIII meet first in Iran 130 km northeast of Shiraz, the citadel of Pasargadae
- 1 (capital of ancient Persia under Cyrus the Great), which is known as *Tall-i-Takht* or “throne hill,” linked with the name of Solomon (the ruins included the “Tomb of Solomon’s mother” and a tower known as the “Prison of
XIII Solomon”). The next place, encountered in Azerbaijan (the ancient Shiz), is
- 1 called *Takht-i-Suleiman* (Throne of Solomon) [1].

On a mountain, near to Srinagar, there are the remains of a temple that was named *Takht-i-Suleiman*, too. An old inscription read that King Gopadatta (or Gopananda—not to be confused with the Gopadatta of Gandhara) had restored the temple in AD 78 on its old, damaged foundations.

⁴¹⁴ *Pledged* or according to others *of no value*.

Many authors⁴¹⁵ [2] recorded the fact.

The Qur'an [3] bears many references to the trip by air (38.36) performed by Solomon whose "morning⁴¹⁶ was a month's (journey), and its afternoon⁴¹⁷ was a month's (journey)" (34.12) "towards the land which We had blessed" (21.81). Gaining support from this tradition many writers have referred to King Solomon visiting Kashmir and resting on the hill named Takht-i-Suleiman. Thus, all the Kashmiri historians from whom we will mention here - 1 only a few [4] note this fact. Pirzada Ghulam Hasan [5] quoted another author who mentioned: "Hazrat Suleiman came by air and stopped at the hill and therefore the place is named Takht-i-Suleiman" [6]. Pundit Ram Chand Kak who was superintendent of the Archaeological Department of Kashmir before becoming Prime Minister of Kashmir said: "Moses is a very common name here, and some ancient monuments, still to be seen, disclosed them to have been a people who came out of Israel. For instance, the remains of an edifice built in a high mountain is called to this day the Throne of Solomon" [7].

There is also a Takht-i-Suleiman on the Hindu-Kush and the tradition claims that Solomon landed there by air too. Last but not least, in Pakistan, south of Peshawar there is Suleiman-Khel.

According to Zahoor-ul-Hassan, Kashmir was also known as the Garden of Solomon [8].

Hargopal Khasta Kaul wrote on Kashmir: "Muslims call this land a replica of heaven on earth⁴¹⁸ and also named it the Garden of Solomon. There are many shrines in the land. They say that Hazrat Suleiman came here and that Hazrat Musa passed through and died in the land⁴¹⁹" [9]. It was because of this tradition that Hazrat Syed 'Ali of Hamadan who visited Kashmir in 1372, named the valley as *Bagh-i-Suleiman* (Garden of Solomon) and Mir Saadullah gave this very name to his famous epic history of Kashmir.

Western writers such as George Forster [10], G.T. Vigne [11], Mrs. Harvey [12], Lieutenant-Colonel Torrens [13] and General Newal [14] referred to the same topic. George Moore said that according to the tradition of Kashmiris, Solomon visited them [15]. In his turn, Bernier gave detailed

⁴¹⁵ Ch. XXIII B.

⁴¹⁶ *Ishraq* (stride from sunrise until midday).

⁴¹⁷ *Ashi* (stride from the midday decline of the sun to sunset).

⁴¹⁸ Ch. III.

⁴¹⁹ Ch. XII.

reasons for his similar views: “A third [fact] in the common tradition [is] that Suleiman visited the country... and that the small and extremely ancient edifice was built by him and is therefore called the Throne of Solomon to this very day” [16].

To close this chapter we would like to express our scepticism with regards to any veridical vestiges of Solomon extant in Kashmir and its surrounding lands, and adopt similar conclusions as those presented in our previous chapter.

NOTES

[1] *The 1911 Edition Encyclopedia*, s.v. Architecture; Jona Lendering, *Pasargadae*, www.livius.org/pan-paz/pasargadae; R. Naumann et al., *Takht-i-Suleiman und Zendan-i-Suleiman, ...die Ausgrabungen im Jahre 1960*, in *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1961, col. 28-68; *Takht-i-Suleiman und Zendan-i-Suleiman, Grabungsbericht 1961*, in *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1962, col. 633-693; Burchard Brentjes, *Die iranische Welt vor Mohammed*, Koehler & Amelang, Leipzig 1967, p.78, o.t. [2] Nazir Ahmad, pp.368-369,372,375,381-382. [3] *NQ*, pp.534,691,733. [4] Pandit Saif-ud-Din *Lub-i-Tarikh*, mss. with Prof. Aslam, Srinagar A.H. 1243 (1865), f.3B; for details: Hargopal Khasta Kaul, *quoted work*. [5] Pirzada Ghulam Hasan, vol. III, p.10. [6] Mulla Ahmad, *Waqiat-i-Kashmir*. [7] Pandit Ram Chandra Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir*, The Indian Society, London 1933, p.75. [8] Zahoor-ul-Hassan, *Nigaristan-i-Kashmir*, p.98. [9] Hargopal Khasta Kaul, pp.17,47. [10] George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, R. Faulder, London 1808, vol. II, p.11. [11] G.T. Vigne, *Travels...*, vol. I, p.379. [12] Harvey, vol. I, p.246. [13] Torrens, note to p.268. [14] Newal, p.51. [15] Moore, pp.137,145. [16] Bernier, p.432; also p.391.

XIV. THE ODYSSEY OF THE TEN LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL

“And Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria, unto this day”

2 Kings 17:23

Solomon died in 932 BC, and his throne passed to his son Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:43). Due to dissensions between the people and the successor of the great king and to a revolt around the year 926 BC, ten northern tribes formed the kingdom of *Israel* (12:16) under the rule of Jeroboam (12:20). The two tribes (of Judah and Benjamin) that remained in the south and that were ruled by David’s house named their kingdom *Judah* (12:17). “And Israel fell away from the house of David, unto this day” (12:19).

Israel suffered from repeated attacks of the Assyrians whose ruler, Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kings 15:29)—called in the *Bible* also Tilgath-Pilneser (1 Chronicles 5:26)—took “Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria” (2 Kings 15:29). “In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria⁴²⁰ took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria” (17:6). After the sudden death of the Assyrian king the contest was carried forward by Sargon II (721-705 BC) whose chronicles report: “In the first year of my reign, I besieged and conquered Samaria... I led away into captivity 27,290 people who lived there” [1]. The tribes of Israel carried into captivity under the above historical circumstances, are called *hunted or scattered sheep*: “Israel is a hunted sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria devoured him, and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones” (Jeremiah 50:17). “They were scattered because there was no shepherd... My sheep have been scattered upon all the face of the earth, and there was none that searched, or that sought for them” (Ezekiel 34:5,6).

The kingdom of Judah resisted as a vassal state for more than a century, paying taxes, until King Nebuchadnezzar II, at the command of the Babylonian army would conquer Jerusalem (587-586 BC), destroying the town and the temple (2 Kings 24:10-13). A part of the population was deported by the conquerors (Babylonian captivity; 24:14-16). After half a century of exile, in 538 BC King Cyrus II of Persia allowed the Hebrews to come back again to their homeland (Ezra 1:1-4); these people belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (1:5).

⁴²⁰ Shalmaneser V (727-722 BC), the successor of Tiglath Pileser III.

The destiny of the other deported Hebrews was another story. The ten tribes captured by the Assyrians were led to the east, and then no more was known about them. However, there is much evidence that they never returned to Palestine.

In the fourth year of the reign of Darius, Zechariah speaking of Israel said that God had “scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations... so that no one passed through nor returned” (7:14). According to the prophecy, the Lord will take them out of the country of their captivity but not for going back home: “I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel” (Ezekiel 20:38).

Jesus Himself considered these tribes as lost, calling them “the lost sheep of Israel’s house” (Matthew 10:6; 15:24) and “the children of God who were scattered abroad” (John 11:52), telling: “the Son of man has come to seek and to save which is lost” (Luke 19:10). The Lord stated: “I will myself feed my flock... I will seek the lost” (Ezekiel 34:15-16). These words could explain the presence of the Savior in Kashmir (ch. XXIII B). The epistle of James was addressed “to the twelve tribes which [are] in the dispersion” (1:1).

A short time thereafter, Josephus recorded a discourse of Agrippa to the people of the Jews, admonishing them: “You sent embassies to those of your nation that are beyond Euphrates, to assist you in your raising disturbances” adding: “all that are in habitable earth are [under the] Romans. Unless any of you extends his hope as far as beyond the Euphrates, and suppose that those of your own nation that dwelt in Adiabene will come to your assistance” [2]. More than six centuries after the return of the deportees, Josephus reported: “There are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.” Actually, Josephus acknowledge a much larger dispersion of the Hebrews, quoting an expert source: “And Strabo himself... speaks thus:... «Now these Jews are already gotten into all cities; and it is hard to find a place in the habitable earth that hath not admitted this tribe of men, and is not possessed by them»” [3].

The prophet Ezra (Hebr.; Esdras was the name given to him in the western canon) wrote four books. The first and second books of Esdras are the same as *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* in the *Authorized Version*. The third and the fourth book of Esdras are pseudepigrapha⁴²¹, called—in the *Apocrypha of Authorized Version*—*Esdras 1* and *2*, and were accepted by the Church as “the Word of God” until the Council of Trent (1546), when they were rejected as “uninspired.” In his second (authorized) book, Ezra gave the list

⁴²¹ Writing falsely ascribed to an author (Gr.)

of all the families who came back home (2:2-57; 8:2-14). Much more interesting was, however, the apocryphal *Second Esdras* (*Fourth Ezra*) that read about “the ten tribes which were led away from their own land into captivity in the days of King Hoshea, whom Shalmaneser the king of the Assyrians led captive; he took them across the river, and they were taken into another land... and go to a more distant region... Through that region there was a long way to go, a journey of a year and a half; and that country is called Arzareth” [4].

An old manuscript [5] says that in the time of the Shan Sabi dynasty, a people called *Ben-i-Israel* (Children of Israel) used to live in Asareth. Thomas Ledlie considered Asareth to be the Hazara District in Pakistan and the adjoining territory of Kashmir. The old border of Asret in Swat was on the opposite bank of the Indus River and ran into Kashmir, higher up near Chilas [6].

An ancient Sanskrit text [7], dealing with the tradition on the origin of Kashmir, gave the list of the tribes, which were settled in this valley, when it emerged out of the lake. Thus, there were mentioned “Darvas, the sons of Dara, the descendants of Judah”, “Ahasuerus, of the tribe of Ahasuerus” (see Ezra 4:6), “Khashas, the descendants of Noah’s son, Kush” (ch. III).

The Old Testament told us that “Tilgath-Pilneser, king of Assyria... carried them away... and brought them to Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the Gozan River,—unto this day” (1 Chronicles 5:26). However, Dr. Joseph Wolff, a Christian missionary reported that a chief rabbi claimed that Halah is Balkh (formerly Balakh), and Habor is Bokhara [8]. On the other side, Rabbi Abba, the son of Kahana showed that Habor stood for Adiabene. According to another rabbinical tradition, the ten tribes passed over a river flowing through the land of Cush [9], i.e. the Kashmir (ch. III).

In the 5th century, Jerome said: “Until this day the ten tribes are subject to the king of the Persians, nor has their captivity ever been loosened”, adding that “the ten tribes inhabit at this day the cities and mountains of the Medes” [10].

Alfred Edersheim draws the following conclusion: “Still the great mass of the ten tribes was in the days of Christ, as in our own, lost to the Hebrew nation” [11].

According to Sabrina Kerbel, “The most commonly accepted date of arrival in India of the Ben-i-Israel is 732-730 BCE (before the destruction of the First Temple) when they first settled in the villages of the Konkan, south of Bombay, and then eventually moved to Bombay” [12].

It is a known fact that the Bactrians, the Scythians and the Parthians disintegrated the Persian Empire. The Parthian Empire extended from the

Jhelum River up to 2400 km to the west, while the Bactrians settled in Afghanistan, and the Scythians ruled over Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. *Ben-i-Israel* (term which is used also in the *Qur'an*, for instance in 17.103,106), the descendants of the Israel tribes followed their masters covering a vast area including these countries. The tribes in Afghanistan known as *Shinwari*, *Efradi*, *Reuven* and *Gadun* are supposed to be the successors of the Israeli tribes of *Simeon*, *Ephraim*, *Reuben* and *Gad*. Apparently, the *Bible* points out that the tribes of Israel were predestined to settled down in Kashmir as the land promised by God (ch. III), around Mount Abarim or Pisgah, near Mount Nebo (ch. XII): “Get thee up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land that I have given unto the children of Israel” (Numbers 27:12).

Khwaja Nazir Ahmad reviewed no less than nine Islamic sources and seventeen books and papers by western authors—ranging since 717 A.H. (1339) until the 20th century—stating about the presence of Ben-i-Israel in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He did the same for Kashmir as we shall see further on [13]. Some of Nazir Ahmad’s references come from Ghulam Ahmad’s book published as early as 1899. In their turn, Kersten, Hassnain and Levi presented proofs that after centuries of wandering and political confusion, the “lost tribes” reached “the Promised Land,” “the land of their parents” (ch. VI), that was in the north of India.

Over a thousand years ago, the book of Shi’ite tradition entitled *Asul-i-Kafi* mentioned the existence of a Kashmiri king whose forty courtiers were deep in the knowledge of the *Torah* and used to read the sayings of Abraham and the Psalms [14]. Ferrier wrote: “When Nadir Shah, marching to the conquest of India, arrived at Peshawar, the chief of the tribe of Yusuf Zyes⁴²² presented him with a *Bible* written in Hebrew” [15]. Joseph Wolff found in Kashmir an ancient copy of the *Torah* written on a 14.5 m long leather scroll [16].

Apart Kalhana’s famous chronicle *Rajatarangini* (dealing with the succession of the kings of Kashmir until about 1150, and not with its people), the first real historian of that territory was Mullah Nadiri whose chronicle [17] covered the period between the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin and that of Sultan Sikandar (1378-1418). Afterwards Mullah Ahmad wrote another chronicle [18]. Both of these accounts stated clearly that the inhabitants of Kashmir were the descendants of the tribes of Israel.

Abdul Qadir ben Qazi-ul Quzat Wasil Ali Khan based on many evidences explained that “Ahl-i-Kashmir Ben-i-Israel and the inhabitants of Kashmir are the Children of Israel” adding that they had come from the Holy Land

⁴²² Or the tribe of Joseph [14].

[19].

Hargopal Khasta Kaul described Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits as being of Jewish countenance and descent [20].

Jesuit Catrou stated that “the Kashmiris are descendants of the Jews,” adding that “*Moses* is a very common name there” [21]. The physician S. Manouchi who was in the service of Emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707) wrote: “There is an old tradition that these Jews who were led as captives by Shalmaneser settled in Kashmir and that the people of that country are the descendants of these Jews... There are several vestiges of a race of descendants from the Israelites. The air of the face and the looks of the present inhabitants have something of what is peculiar to the Jews, which distinguishes them from all other peoples” [22].

In the middle of the 19th century the Identification Society of London was set up with the purpose of finding of the ten lost tribes of Israel. As a result, there were altogether approximately thirty works, mostly by British authors, which proved that the people of Kashmir were of Israelite ancestry. Several examples could be given [23], out of many.

Of these studies, Kersten mentioned five, while Nazir Ahmad quoted, only about Kashmir, no less than twenty-three. They were written by travelers, writers and historians, most of them noting that the local people XIV had striking features reminding of the Jewish type, as well as life style, - 3 behavior, character, traditions, customs, ethics, attire, language that were of Israelite origin. To support this idea, Nazir Ahmad showed many photos taken from Kashmir and from Palestine, and made a parallel to their similar customs concerning: birth, marriage, mourning, funeral procession and burial, food, observance of the Sabbath and festivals (Passover and Tabernacle feast), as well as other habits [13].

The French scientist and traveler, G.T. Vigne—who was a member of the Royal Geographical Society—wrote: “The father of Ermiah⁴²³ (was) the father of Afghans... He was contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar, called himself Ben-i-Israel and had forty sons. His thirty-fourth descendant in a direct line, after a period of two thousand years, was Kys... who lived in the time of the Prophet Mohamed” [24]. Dr. James Brice and Keith Johnson mentioned about the Afghans: “They trace their origin to Saul, King of Israel, calling themselves Ben-i-Israel” [25]. A. Burnes maintained that the legend of Nebuchadnezzar proved that they were transferred from the Palestine to Ghore and Bamian, northwest of Kabul, and kept their religion until 682, when the Arab chief Khaled ibn Abdallah converted them to Islam faith [26].

Jean Herbert draws the attention on the Jewish communities in India

⁴²³ Jeremiah.

“settled down there, maybe from the 6th century BC” [27]. Nicholas Roerich wrote: “In the valley of Sindh the prophet Elijah is revered in a special manner: A legend told about the prophet sitting in his cave and saving fishermen and travelers... Mohammedans and Hindus... equally reverence the prophet Elijah” [28]. Though founding the fact extremely strange, Sir Younghusband admitted: “The people are in appearance of such a decided Jewish cast... certainly, as I have said, these are real Biblical type to be seen everywhere in Kashmir, and especially among the upland villages” [29].

It was the merit of Khwaja Nazir Ahmad to draw up several lists quoting over 400 names of tribes, clans, families, individuals, villages, regions, estates and other geographical terms of the *Bible*, in close linguistic connection with the same names or some similar ones from Kashmir and its environs [13]. These were taken randomly, and it is sure that they are more than those mentioned. Although it is not our intention to quote them fully, still we shall give only a few, as examples.

Kashmir	Bible	Reference	Kashmir	Province	Bible	Reference
Amal	Amal	1 Chron.7:35	Aguru	Kulgam	Agur	Prov. 30:1
Asheria	Asher	Gen. 30:13	Babel	Anantnag	Babel	Gen. 11:9
Bal	Baal	1 Chron. 5:5	Gochan	Anantnag	Goshen	Josh. 11:16
Dara	Dara	1 Chron. 2:6	Harwan	Srinagar	Haran	2 Kgs 19:12
Gomer	Gomer	Gen. 10:2	Keran	Kamah	Keran	1 Chron. 1:41
Kanaz	Kenaz	Judg. 3:9	Lasharoun	Srinagar	Lasharon	Josh. 12:18
Lavi	Levi	1 Chron. 2:1	Mamre	Srinagar	Mamre	Gen. 14:13
Matri	Matri	1 Sam. 10:21	Nain-wa	Avantipura	Nain	Luke 7:11
Phalu	Phallu	Gen. 46:9	Perah	Jammu	Parah	Josh. 18:23
Raphu	Raphu	Num. 13:9	Rei	Kulgam	Rei	1 Kgs 1:8
Shaul	Saul	1 Chron. 4:24	Suru	Bhawan	Shur	Gen. 16:7
Tellah	Telah	1 Chron. 7:25	Tema-puna	Kulgam	Tema	Gen. 25:15
Zattu	Zattu	Ezra 10:27	Uri	Uri	Uri	Exod. 31:2

As far as the ancient temples of Kashmir, Nazir Ahmad noted that they XIV are on no account inspired by the Hindu architecture or even by the -1 Hellenistic one but by Israelite temples as, for instance, that of Martand near Mattan (13 km far from Islamabad), which is the most famous temple of Kashmir. Likewise it is Takht-i-Suleiman (ch. XIII) on a hill facing Dal Lake and the capital Srinagar, which is a faithful replica of the tomb of Absalom in the woods of Ephraim in the Josaphat Valley, not far from Jerusalem. The *Princip's Tables* assigned the construction of the Throne of Solomon before 250 BC [30]. Jesuit Catrou wrote about the vestiges of Kashmir: “Some ancient monuments still to be seen discover ‘em to be a people come out of Israel. For instance the ruins of an edifice built on a high mountain is called at this day the Throne of Solomon” [21], while Bernier spoke about an

“extremely ancient building, which bears evident marks of having been a temple for idols, although named Tact-Souliman⁴²⁴, the Throne of Solomon” [31]. Ram Chandra Kak wrote in his turn: “Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini* (I.341), definitely states that King Gopaditya built a shrine of Jyeshthesvara on the Gopadri (modern: Takht-i-Suleiman), but it cannot be asserted with certainty that the present temple is the same as that which was built by Gopaditya. It appears, however, probable that that shrine occupied the same position” [32]. The author considered that the temple must be at least a century or so earlier than that of Martand.

Kashmirian is different from the other Indian languages that originated from Sanskrit, a fact that was proved by Sir George Gregson. On the contrary, it shows some similarities to Hebrew. Professor E.J. Rapson referred to *Kharoshti* language of northwestern India and Pakistan, which XIV exists in this part of Asia since the 5th century BC. Kharoshti resembles to - 2 Aramaic and is written from right to left like *Brahmi*, also using the Semitic alphabet [33]. George Moore mentioned many Hebrew inscriptions that were found on the ancient sites of India. Not far from Srinagar, near Taxila there were found inscriptions in Aramaic. One of them appeared on a wall in Sirkap and dated back to the 3rd century BC [34]. Kharoshti numerals were found on many tiles excavated at Harwan, Ahan, Khurhom and Mattan. There are many other references [35].

Richard Temple noted that an important percentage of the Kashmiri words is neither Indian, nor Persian nor Arabic [36]. Mufti Muhammad Sasliq came to the conclusion that the nucleus of the Kashmirian is drawn from the Hebrew language [37]. Later on, Abdul Ahad Azad wrote: “The language of Kashmir derives from Hebrew. According to tradition, in ancient times Jewish peoples settled here, whose language changed into the Kashmirian of today. There are many Hebrew words that are quite obviously connected with the language of Kashmir” [38].

Here are some examples among those given by Kersten [39]

Hebrew	Kashmirian	Meaning
Aaz	Aaz (az)	today
Ahad	Ahad (ak)	one
Ahal	Hal	belt
Ajal	Ajal	death
Akh	Akh (-ui)	single
Aob	Aob	ample
Aosh	Aosh	tears
Arah	Arah	saw
Asar	Asar	plague
Awah	Awah	agree

⁴²⁴ Sic!

and by Nazir Ahmad [13].

Hebrew	Meaning	Kashmirian	Meaning
Abital	father of the dew	Abtal	under water
Achor	affliction with sorrow	Achor	causing grief
Asiel	created by God	Asiel	angelic person
Atal	to be dark	Atal	bat
Bacca	weeping	Baca	howling
Baal	natural stream	Baal	spring
Beri	man of well	Beuri	well
Dumeh	silence	Domb	quiet
Gozan	stone quarry	Gozan	mountain peak
Shaul	fox	Shaul	fox

In spite of so many researches, nobody, as far as we know, raised the question: Why the deported Israelites have chosen Kashmir as their destination? In our opinion, based on what we have explained in chapters III and VI, either they followed an ancient tradition (still alive in their memory but lost afterwards) and wanted to return to the place their forerunners came from, or even were tempted to recover the lost Paradise where Genesis have placed Adam and Eve.

NOTES

[1] Quoted by Keller, p.263. [2] Josephus Flavius, *The Wars...* VI.6.2, in *The Works...*, p.608; *Ibid.*, II.16.4, pp.508-509. [3] Josephus Flavius, *The Antiquities...* XI.5.2, in *The Works...*, p.241; *ibid.* XIV.7.2. [4] 2 Esdras 4 Ezra 13:40-45 in *The Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, National Council of Churches of Christ in America. The same concept was also found in the *Apocalypse of Baruch* [*The Book of the Apocalypse of Baruch the Son of Neriah*], 77,78, in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (transl. by R. H. Charles), Oxford Press, Oxford 1913, vol. II. [5] *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p.179; *apud* H.W. Bellew, *The Races of Afghanistan*, Thacker Spink, Calcutta 1880; quoted in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Jesus in India*, The Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Department, Rabwah, Pakistan 1962, p.127, also p.103. [6] Thomas Ledlie, *More Ledlian*, Calcutta Review, January 1898; also Bellew, quoted work. [7] *The Nilamata Purana*, *apud* Hassnain, Levi, p.27. [8] Joseph Wolff, *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara in the years 1843-1845*, John W. Parker, London 1846, second edition, vol. I, p.14; *apud* Ghulam Ahmad, p.130. [9] Moore, pp.148-150. [10] Jerome, *Sixtus tomus operum* 6.7; 6.80. [11] Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah*, The Religious Tract Society, London 1906, reprint, The Christian Classics Ethereal Library at Calvin College, last updated on March 29, 2000. [12] Sabrina Kerbel, *India Boasts a Thriving Jewish Community*, in *The Canadian Jewish news*, September 10, 1998. [13] Nazir Ahmad, pp.289-337. [14] Joseph Wolff, quoted by Moore, p.145; also in Ghulam Ahmad, pp.134-135. [15] Joseph Pierre Ferrier, *History of the Afghans* (transl. by William Jesse), J. Murray, London 1858, p.4; quoted in Ghulam Ahmad, p.141. [16] Claudius Buknain, *Christian Researches in India*, pp.22,229. [17] Mullah Nadiri, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*⁴²⁵ mss. with Ghulam Mohi-ul-Din Wanchu, Srinagar A.H. 832 (1454). [18] Mullah Ahmad Kashmiri, *Tarikh-i-Waqiat-i-Kashmir*⁴²⁶, Suraj Prakash Press, Amritsar A.H.1322 (1844). [19] Abdul Qadir ben Qazi-ul Qazat Wazil Ali Khan, f.77b and 88b. [20] Hargopal Khasta Kaul, part I, p.73. [21] François Catrou, *Histoire générale de l'empire du Mogol*, Ju. De Nully, Paris 1715. [22] S. Manouchi, *Memories*, *apud* James Hugh, *History of Christians in India from the Commencement of the Christian Era*, Seeley & Burnside, London 1839, vol. II, pp.287-288. [23] For instance: Sir Thomas Holditch, *The Gates of India*, Macmillan and Co., London 1920, pp.49-50; Joseph Wolff,

⁴²⁵ *History of Kashmir.*

⁴²⁶ *History of the events of Kashmir.*

Narrative... ; Joseph Wolff, *Researches and Missionary Labour among the Jews and Mohammedans and other Sects*, Nisbet, London 1835; Josphe Wolff, *Journey to Kashmir*, Nisbet, London 1837; Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Cinq années de voyage en Orient 1846-1851*, Michel Levy Frères, Paris 1856; Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Eight Years in Asia and Africa from 1846 to 1855*, Hanover 1859. [24] G.T. Vigne, *A Personal Narrative of a Visit in Ghuzni, Kabul and Afghanistan*, Whittaker, London 1840, p.166; also quoted in Ghulam Ahmad, p.137; cf. Kersten, p.65. [25] James Bryce, Keith Johnston, *Comprehensive Description of Geography*, William Collins, London and Glasgow 1880, s.v. *Afghanistan*, p.25. [26] Sir Alexander Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara*, p.139; mentioned in Bryce, Johnson, and Ghulam Ahmad, quoted places. [27] Herbert, p.29. [28] Roerich, *Altai-Himalaya*, p.73. [29] Sir Francis Younghusband, *Kashmir*, Adam and Charles Black, London 1909, p.130. [30] James Prinsep, *Essays on Indian Antiquities*, J. Murray, London 1858, pp.329-331. [31] Bernier, p.399. [32] Ram Chandra Kak, p.76. [33] Edward James Rapson, *Ancient India, from the earliest times to the first century AD*, Cambridge University Press 1914, p.19. [34] F.A. Khan, p.121, illustr. to p.128. [35] Fida M. Hassnain, *Hindu Kashmir*, p.12; Mohi-ud-Din Hajni, *Maqalat* p.99; Bashir Ahmad, *Humayun*, Lahore 1940. [36] Richard Temple, *Sayings of Lala Ded*, p.65. [37] Mufti Muhammad Sasliq, *Qabr-i-Masih*, Qadian 1936, pp.72-110. [38] Abdul Ahad Azad, *Kashmiri Zaban Aur Shairi*, Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy, vol. I, p.10. [39] Kersten, p.69.

XV. WORSHIPPING OF GOD

From the text of the Old Testament we can infer that, under certain conditions, communication between man and his Creator became possible.

In Genesis, the archetypal human beings who dwelt in the Garden of Eden were in direct communication with God, but the initiative of communication did not belong to them. The same was in the case of Cain and then of Noah to whom God addressed only by means of monologue. However, these situations were circumstantial.

A special place was reserved for Abraham, because God established with him a true dialogue. The great prophet was the first who invoked Him, at Bethel: “There he built an altar to Yahweh and called on the name of Yahweh” (Genesis 12:8; cf. 13:4). Then he even asked questions: “Lord Yahweh, what wilt thou give me?” (15:2).

From the very beginning then we notice that this first communication on man’s own initiative—actually only an invocation on God’s name—required, however, the fulfillment of special conditions, in this case, the building of an altar. The conditions would increase with time, becoming a whole ritual, indicated to Moses just by the One to Whom it was dedicated.

So it could be seen, the prophets had a privilege, in that they were in permanent and direct communication with God through revelation, because His Spirit was within them (ch. XI).

The ensemble of rules mentioned in the *Bible* could be structured as follows: the creation of the framework and its arrangement, the choice of the moment, the preparation of the place and of the participants, the invocation, the offerings and the sacrifices, as well as other rituals (for instance, the circumambulation) and the interdictions, the latter ones being mentioned within the categories listed above.

A. CREATION OF THE FRAMEWORK AND ITS ARRANGEMENT

“Noah built an altar to Yahweh”
Genesis 8:20

The rituals all have the common characteristic in that they all took place in a specially chosen place. Noah was the first one who was reported to have built an altar. Afterwards we found out that it was not made at random, but

at the location which had been hallowed (or indicated to be auspicious) by a previous appearance: “And there he built an altar to Yahweh who had appeared to him” (Genesis 12:7). The cases are frequent when God Himself used to indicate the place where He could be worshipped (Deuteronomy 12:5,11; 14:23; 15:20; 16:2; 23:16; 26:2; 31:11; Joshua 9:27; 2 Chronicles 7:12), as well as the existence of places inauspicious for performing the ritual: “Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest” (Deuteronomy 12:13).

Sanctuaries were usually placed on high places (*bamah*, singular; *bamoth*, plural, Hebr.; see below: *swayambhu*, Sanskr.). The sacrifice of Isaac was set on a mountain (Genesis 22:2). God Himself chose the place of the ritual: “Get thee into the land of Moriah, and there offer him up for a burnt-offering on one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Genesis 22:2). Likewise, God designated Mount Horeb to Moses: “Ye shall serve God upon this mountain” (Exodus 3:12). “An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me, and shalt sacrifice on it the burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings” (20:24). “Moses... built an altar under the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel” (24:4). During Solomon’s enthroning, “the people sacrificed on the high places” (1 Kings 3:2).

The cave was the place of election for the mysteries (Mithra, Demeter etc.) as well as for primitive Christians (catacombs). However, the cave is related to the Feminine: womb—*kumbha*⁴²⁷—cauldron (of Cerridwen)—*kratér* (the bowl of Pymander⁴²⁸ filled with spirit)—Grail—alchemical *vas* and *athanor* (alchemical furnace; from *al-tannur*, oven, Arab.). Generalizing on this, Mircea Eliade showed: “In the immense Carpatho-Danubian and Balkan area, as well as elsewhere (Asia Minor, Iran, India etc.), from the most ancient times down to the beginning of our century, mountain summits and caves have been the favourite retreat of ascetics, monks and contemplatives of every description” [1].

The place of worship could be even a mere tree, as when Abraham addresses to God and His companions the request: “Lord... rest yourselves under the tree” (Genesis 18:3-4) indicating the oaks of Mamre (18:1). The altars were arranged under green trees, on the top of the mountains or hills; they were built up or made out of rocks or erected pillars (Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 7:5; 12:2,3; 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 16:4; 17:10 18:4; 2 Chronicles 31:1; 34:4; Isaiah 57:5,7; Jeremiah 2:20; Ezekiel 6:13; 20:28; Hosea 4:13). At other times the altar could be very simple: “An altar of earth

⁴²⁷ Ch. XV E.

⁴²⁸ Or Poimandres.

shalt thou make unto me” (Exodus 20:24). Later on the altar was placed under a tent (Exodus 25:9; ch. 26-27,36), then a temple was built around it (1 Kings 5:5; ch. 6), which became a church (basilica, Lat.), a simple chapel or a magnificent cathedral in Christianity. In other places and cultures, the Divine was worshipped in a pre-Columbian pyramid, a ziggurat, a tower, a stupa, a pagoda, a mosque, while less developed communities were content to have a mere clearing in the woods or a shrine in a cave, for instance.

The altar represented the microcosm and was the catalyst of the sacred. All the liturgical gestures and all the architectural lines converged towards it, because it reproduced, on a smaller scale, time (ch. XV B) and the whole universe [2]. On the altar or near to it, offerings and sacrifices were brought (ch. XV E).

XV-15 In Judaism the altar will get a square shape (as the spatial projection of mandala, the Hindu precinct of the temple; ch. I; see also below) becoming the *Holy of Holiest* of the temple in Jerusalem. Christians also took up this name. Altars for libations there existed in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and pre-Columbian America. In Christianity it stood for Golgotha, the place of the willing sacrifice of Christ. The Vedic altar represented time, symbolized by *Kala chakra* (wheel of the universe, Sanskr.) in motion.

Philo said that a sanctuary had the significance as being a place of secrets, of divine mysteries. During the wandering of the Jews through the desert, the moving sanctuary (*mishkhan*, dwelling; from *shakhan*, to dwell temporarily, in a tent, Hebr.) which sheltered the holy Ark of the Covenant was the Tent of Meeting (*Ohel Moed*, Hebr.; Exodus 40:2), or the Tent of the Testimony (*Ohel ha-Eduth*, Hebr.; *tabernacle*, Lat.) which Solomon replaced with a temple.

Numerous temples from the 6th-5th millenniums BC were found in the southeast of the continent in the area called by the well-known historian XV-1 Marija Gimbutas “Old Europe.” The most famous one is the columnar temple at Căscioarele (Boian culture, Romania, about 5000 BC). The western wall has painted on it a red serpent wound up in a ritual medallion, whereas the room has in its center two columns decorated with a serpentine drawing (ch. IX) [3].

The temple (*templum*, sanctuary, auspicious place, Lat.; *témenos*, sacred precinct, Gr., derived from the Indo-European root *tem* which means to cut, mark out or share) meant the place set-aside for the gods, the sacred enclosure around the shrine and a spot that could not be touched [4]. It was also reserved for offerings or sacrifices. In Vedic India, a temple (*dhakka*, Sanskr.) included a sanctuary (*niketana*, Sanskr.).

The temple reflected the divine world and was the terrestrial reply of the

celestial cosmic archetype (Josephus Flavius, Philo).

In the ruins of Gezer, in Palestine, eight pillars of stone situated on a hill XV-2 were discovered. The place was called Bethel (*Beith-el*, House of God, Hebr.). Bethel (modern Baytin, former Luz) lies about 15 kilometers north of Jerusalem where archaeological evidences witness almost continuous settlements from the 21st century BC to the first century AD. “And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had talked with him, a pillar of stone... And Jacob called the name of the place where God had talked with him, Beth-el” (Genesis 35:14-15). The name appears also as El-Beth-el (35:7) with the significance “God of Beth-el” (also 28:11,17-19,22). Eliyah “took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob... and with the stones he built an altar in the name of Yahweh” (1 Kings 18:31-32) i.e. repeated and amplified the deed of Moses, then he surrounded the sacred perimeter with a water trench. Isaiah also mentioned “a pillar... to Yahweh” (19:19). Joshua (24:26-27) erected a stone as a testimony of the covenant concluded with God. In the Old Testament, some of these stones were given names. “Jacob said to his brethren: «Gather stones». And they took stones, and made a heap... And Laban called it Jegar Sahaduta⁴²⁹, and Jacob called it Galeed⁴³⁰... and Mitzpah⁴³¹” (Genesis 31:46-47,49). Like in the case of the stone pillars (*linga*, Sanskr.) worshipped in India as symbols, they were brought offerings (pouring of oil). “And Jacob... took the stone... and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it” (28:18). The word *sahaduta* suggests an interesting interpretation, since *saha* (inborn, Sanskr.) has the significance analogous to *swayambhu* (see below).

The erected stones were the symbols of the divine presence or, at least, the supports of the spiritual influences. John the Baptist unequivocally said: “God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (Matthew 3:9).

The equivalent of *Bethel* (*byt'l*) was the Greek *baetylos*, a cone-shaped pillar, anointed with oil or blood, in which the divinity was supposed to dwell.

The holy place was, sometimes, the stage where the Divine became manifest, as for example when He was invoked at the altar, by Eliyah: “And the fire of Yahweh fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench” (1 Kings 18:38; cf. Leviticus 9:24; Judges 6:21). Other manifestations were

⁴²⁹ Heap of witness (Aram.).

⁴³⁰ Heap of witness (Hebr.), meaning “the heap is a witness.”

⁴³¹ Watch tower (Hebr.).

described in the foregoing (ch. XI C-E).

Theophanies (*theopháneia*, manifestation of the Divinity, Gr.) consecrated the holy places, which in any religion, for this reason, represented the center of the universe. The rock or the altar, the tent or the temple was considered to be the dwelling of the Divine, the symbol of the real presence of This One. “Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no Rock: I know not any” (Isaiah 44:8) told God to Jacob. “They shall make a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8). There are numerous other references to the *Rock* (Deuteronomy 32:4,15,30,31; 2 Samuel 22:2-3,32,47; Psalms 18:31;28:8; Isaiah 44:8 and so on).

XV-16 However, the theophany (that was exemplified in ch. XI, especially section E) was not specific to the *Bible*. Zeus showed himself to Semele and that is why she found her death unwanted; and Demeter, at the court of King Keleos in Eleusis suddenly touched the upper part of the room, filling the doorway with the brilliance of divine light.

One had to respect the holy place: “Whatever toucheth the mountain shall certainly be put to death: not a hand shall touch it, but it shall certainly be stoned, or shot through” (Exodus 19:12,13). It is known that Aaron’s sons were punished because of breaking the rules: “And there went out fire from before Yahweh, and devoured them, and they died before Yahweh” (Leviticus 10:2). The same happened to Core and his men (Numbers 16:32,35).

Stone is alive and it can give life. The man who took his birth out of a stone was mentioned in Semitic traditions: “On the Rock that begot thee was thou unmindful” (Deuteronomy 32:18). Some Christian legends considered that even Christ was born like this. Jesus is called the *Living Stone*: “a living stone, cast away indeed as worthless by men, but with God chosen, precious” (1 Peter 2:4; cf. 2:6-8). In *The Gospel of Thomas* Jesus acknowledged the divine presence in the stones: “Lift up the stone and you will find me there” [5]. To Him were attributed the words: “thou art Peter⁴³² and on this rock I will build my assembly⁴³³” (Matthew 16:18). The authenticity of the latter would be commented on in chapter XX C2. Certain Romanian carols sing about Christ born out of stone [6].

XV-14 It is also said that Mithra have been born out of a stone slab. In China, the

⁴³² *Kepha* or *Kephas* (rock, Aram.) that was interpreted as *stone*; Peter comes from *pétra* (Gr.; also Lat.).

⁴³³ *Ekklesia* (Gr.): assembly, community—of the believers, which represented not an institution. There are fraudulent editions of the *Bible* where *Church*, an institution that appeared much later, replaced *assembly*.

Great Yu and his son K'i were born out of stones that had been split. The philosopher's stone was supposed to be the instrument of regeneration (ch. IV). Jung talked about the feeling of "being reborn in stone" [7]. In many of his works, Mircea Eliade mentioned the concept that considered the stones being the signs of a special spiritual reality, or instruments of a spiritual force whose receptacle they were [8].

The chakras were seen to reflect certain divine qualities. At the same time some precious stones are related to each and every chakra [9]: coral (Mooladhara), topaz (Swadhisthana), emerald (Nabhi, Void), ruby (Anahatha), sapphire (Vishuddhi), diamond (Agya), pearl (Sahasrara), though the first and the last are not "stones" as such but they result out of living organisms.

The precious stone cast by God from His magnificent Throne, called *Shethiyah* (from *Shath Yah*, the foundation of the world, laid down by *Yah*, God, Hebr.) by the *Zohar* [10] comes to signify swayambhu. The Shekhinah was called the "Precious Stone." We shall quote here the alchemist Zosimus who mentioned many times the "whitest stone, which is in the head" (*tón pánu leukótaton líton tón egkephalon*, Gr.) [11], thus possibly indicating the Sahasrara. In his *Jesus Manifest*, Merejkowski wrote about "the pearl of God's kingdom" [12].

The primary image of the Goddess was the stone as well as the vessel (chalice; *kratér*, Gr.) since her epiphanies in the Neolithic era until the Grail legend. The stone was a symbol of the Mother Earth. This was also the case with the black stone of Pessinunt (ch. XX A) representing Cybele, the Great Mother Goddess of the Phrygians (*Matar Kubile*, from the Semitic *gabel*, mountain; *mataram*, mother, Sanskr.). King Attalus of Pergamum was supposed to have given the Goddess in the shape of a sacred black stone, which was subsequently taken to Rome with great honor.

Whether the deified stones were *linga* (Shiva's symbol) or Briton XV-4 *menhirs*, they were universal symbols. The same for some Celtic *megaliths* XV-3 (*méga*, big; *líthos*, stone, Gr.), as well as the *omphalós* (Gr.; *umbilicus*, XV-6 Lat.—navel; here, that of the Earth) of Delphi⁴³⁴—a conical stone (similar to *linga*) that is thought to have been brought by an eagle (equivalent to Garuda) sent by Zeus, the supreme Divinity. We remind that the Eleusinian Mysteries (ch. XV C) took place in the presence of an *omphalós* [13]. As it was previously shown, mount Tabor signified the navel (ch. XI E). Mount

⁴³⁴ Delphi was considered the Navel of the Earth (ch. V) and was visited by pilgrims from the entire Greek World (from Spain to the Black Sea). The sanctuary was closed only in 381 by the Byzantine emperor Theodosius the Great.

Gerizim in the center of Palestine was thought to be *the navel of the earth* (*tabur eretz*, Hebr.): “Behold, people are coming down from the Navel of the Earth⁴³⁵” (Judges 9:37, *The New Jerusalem Bible*, and also [14]).

The stone of Heliopolis, called Benben by the Egyptians, symbolized the primordial hillock on which the god Atum created the first pair of people. According to some interpretations the obelisk and the pyramid (or, at least, XV-8 its peak called *pyramidion*, which represented it on a smaller scale) had their origin in Benben.

The Trojan *palladion* was believed to be of heavenly origin. Other example is the thunder-stone (meteorite) sacred to the god Terminus at XV-10 Rome. The sacred stone of Kermaria (Morbihan, the southern Bretagne) carried on it the sign of the swastika (ch. I). In Vietnam, the erected stones were considered to be the house of the protective spirits and they served as shields against evil influences, which they drove away.

The litholatry (from *lithos*, stone and *latreia*, worship, Gr.) was widespread with the pre-Islamic Arabic people. The god Bethel of the western Semites was a sacred stone that they worshipped as a manifestation of the divine presence, as a receptacle of God’s power. Thus, a rectangular stone impersonated the god Dhu Sharah.

XV-9 *Ka’ba*, the Black Stone (*Hajr-E-Aswad*, Arab.) of Mecca was named *the House* (of God, *Beit ul’lah*, Arab.) in the *Qur’an*: “Abraham and Isma’il with him, raised up the foundations of the House” (2.121), because according to the tradition this meteorite would have been brought there by Abraham. We should not forget that the tradition claims that Ka’ba was originally a pearl, that is the symbol of the Sahasrara. The white pearl is sometimes called *kuni*, a name related to the Goddess (ch. XX D). However, Muslims pray in any place, after having delimited a space on the ground that separated them from the impure outer world. The habit of orientation towards Mecca (orientation towards Ka’ba, actually) comes, obviously, from this swayambhu emitting subtle vibrations.

We have already seen that *Swayam-bhuva* was the name of the first Manu (ch. VII) meaning “the self-created” (Sanskrit). Also the Egyptian Supreme God Ra was named “the self-created being.” *Swayambhu* was the name given to some rocks or stones that were considered to be emerged naturally of Mother Earth and to emit vibratory energy, which could be felt by the Yogis. “Truth shall spring out of the earth” read a Psalm (85:11). In the Indian state of Maharashtra there were eight of such venerated stones regarded as the manifestation of Lord Ganesha (*Astha Vinayaka*; from *ashta*, eight, and

⁴³⁵ Wrong translations use instead: “tops of the mountains” (Darby), “very center of the land” (*NET Bible*) etc.

Vinayaka, one of Ganesha's names, Sanskr.) representing the Earth element. In the same state, Hanumana was worshipped in an erected stone around which a temple dedicated to this divine being was built. On the Indian subcontinent, the precious stones were believed to be dwellings of certain spirits. However, swayambhus are found in other geographical areas too. XV-7

A swayambhu can even be a whole mountain as in the manifestation of Ganesha (at Ganapatipule⁴³⁶, on the shores of the ocean, in the south of Maharashtra) as well as another mountain (70 kilometers from Nasik) that was revered as the swayambhu of Goddess Durga (Saptasingi). Other examples of sacred mountains were the Ararat, the Horeb (called like that in the "E" and "D" texts) or the Sinai (name given to the sacred mountain of the Hebrew in the "J" and "P" texts; ch. VII), the Qaf, the Olympus but also the Himalayas where it is the Mount Kailash (Shiva and Parvati's residence), Meru (name given by Hindus; Sumeru by Buddhists), the mythical Mount of the Gods—*axis mundi*—considered to be the center of the Buddhist mandala, XV-17 the singular Mount Uluru (Ayers Rock) of Australia or the Cervin XV-12 (Matterhorn) peak in the Alps. XV-11

It was quite natural for the abode of the Divine to be built according to well-established principles. God said to Moses: "According to all that I shall shew thee, the pattern of the tabernacle... even so shall ye make" (Exodus 25:9). "And see that thou make [them] according to their pattern, which hath been shewn to thee in the mountain" (25:40). "All this [said David,] in writing by Yahweh's hand upon me, instructing as to all the works of the pattern" (1 Chronicles 28:19). The orders regarded not only the design of the construction, but also the selection of the proper materials. The rules were observed during the erection of the Tent of Meeting and its annexes (ch. 25-27;30;36-38), or the Temple and its related constructions (1 Kings, ch. 5-7).

Christians also observe precise rules when they have to erect holy buildings. Thus, the cross-shaped design of the churches represented Christ XV-22 being crucified, the heart being at the altar. A reference to this can be found in the Gospel according to John, which spoke of "the temple of his body" (2:21).

"If thou make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy sharp tool upon it, thou hast profaned it" (Exodus 20:25). We could see reiterated here the fear that the chosen people should not fall back on the previous polytheistic idolatry, a thing which was synthetically and generally expressed in one of the ten commandments: "Thou shalt not make thyself any graven image or any form of what is in the

⁴³⁶ *Ganapati* (ruler over the Ganas, Sanskr.) is another name of Ganesha.

heaven above, or that is in earth beneath, or what is in the waters under the earth, thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them” (Exodus 20:4,5, repeated with changes in Deuteronomy 5:8,9). “Ashamed be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols” (Psalms 97:7). Further records contained more details referring to: “molten gods” (Leviticus 19:4), “carved (graven) images,” “statues,” or “figured stones,” “the forms of any figure” (male, female, beast) (Leviticus 26:1; also Deuteronomy 4:16-18). God ordered Moses to destroy the idols, the statues, the idolized columns (totems) but also the green trees dedicated to the idols and the altars on mountains and hills (Deuteronomy 12:2,3; also Exodus 34:13).

XV-23 That fear was not devoid of meaning since the desire of returning to polytheism and idolatry was incessantly tempting the Jews. It was Aaron’s golden calf (Exodus 32:1-4), idols from the Judges period (Judges 2:11-13; 3:6,7,12; 6:25; 8:33; 10:6), idols worshipped by Solomon (1 Kings 11:5-8,33), Jeroboam’s two golden calves (12:28-33) venerated also by Jehu (2 Kings 10:29), Judah’s totemic columns (1 Kings 14:23), Asherah’s (Astarte’s) statues made by Maachah (15:13), and by Ahab as well as the altar dedicated to Baal (16:32-33), and even the famous brass serpent which would have been destroyed by Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4). There were many other examples (ch. XX B).

XV-24 It appeared that here there was a contradiction between fighting idolatry on the one hand, and on the other hand worshipping the material symbol in which the Divinity manifested Itself: a tree, an erected stone or a pillar, a mountain, a rock or an altar etc., though some of the texts from above lead to the conclusion that the interdiction especially referred to the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations. However, even defined like this, the prohibition would be immediately broken in the orders given to Moses as regarded the casting of the two golden cherubim in the Tent of Meeting (Exodus 25:18-20; 37:7-9) or the twelve oxen supporting the molten sea made by Solomon (1 Kings 7:25), and, especially in the Christian art where there were plenty of anthropomorphic works (zoomorphic also: the dove of the Holy Spirit, for example), which represented God, Jesus, the saints and even the church benefactors portrayed in paintings (frescoes) or statues within the holy buildings.

The aforesaid rituals and rules found their correspondence in the ceremonial performed, for instance, in India where the later was associated even with the building of the current dwellings.

The building of the Angkor Wat temple of Cambodia was attributed to Lord Indra himself, the celestial architect being Vishwakarma (omnificent god, an incarnation of Brahma to whom it is attributed a treatise on

architecture [15]). Both Hindu (for instance Khajuraho or Angkor) and Buddhist temples had the horizontal structure of a *mandala* since they represented a heavenly archetype, an image of the cosmos (*imago mundi*, Lat.); the same for the sacred cities. We should mention as examples: the Heavenly Jerusalem (New Jerusalem) of Revelation (3:12; 21:12-17), the ideal city of Plato described in *The Republic*, the temples of the Imperial Rome realized after a specific ceremony, the palace Sihagiri in Ceylon—model of the celestial town Alakamanda [2]. Circles and squares drawn from a common center appeared in the ancient Italy like in the Buddhist East as the ground plan *par excellence* on which everything is built. On it all the little worlds—cities and shrines—are constructed. The word for word significance of mandala was that of a circle, but that was often enclosed in a square. In chapter II we have mentioned Shri Chakra having on each side of the external square precinct a central gate, and inside an ensemble of superposed triangles with their vertex upwards and downwards. An analogy with this Yantra, can be found with the Meso-American glyptic, or with the well-known seal of Solomon, a star-shaped hexagon, also named the Shield of David (*Mogen David*) or the Magi Star, which was not specific to the Jews but was a universal symbol, encountered within many nations. Mandala was the space symbol of *Purusha* (Lord, Sanskr.), and *Vastu-Purusha mandala* was the sign of divine presence in the center of the world. Thus, the Hindu temple was Purusha dismembered as a result of the descent (*Avatara*, Sanskr.) into a bodily shape. In Buddhism, mandala represented the Buddha or the Bodhisattva. For Jung, the mandala-symbol is “a sort of atomic nucleus about whose innermost structure and ultimate meaning we know nothing” [16].

B. CHOICE OF THE MOMENT

*“The set feasts of Yahweh, which ye shall proclaim
as holy convocations—these are my set feasts”
Leviticus 23:2*

The worshipping of God took place either permanently or at a previously established time, and the moment and the duration of the ritual were as those ordered by the Divine to Moses (Leviticus 23:1,2).

One had “to light the lamp continually” (Exodus 27:20; Leviticus 24:4). “Aaron and his sons shall dress them from evening to morning before Yahweh” (Exodus 27:21; Leviticus 24:3). And the incense had to be burnt

on the altar (Exodus 30:1) “every morning when he dresseth the lamps... and when lighteth the lamps between the two evenings” (30:7,8). These are actually offerings of light and incenses with sweet odors brought to the divinity (ch. XV E—*aarti*).

“Keep the Sabbath⁴³⁷, therefore; for it is holy unto you... the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, holy to Yahweh”; whoever broke the commandment was to be put to death (31:14,15).

Other feasts took place yearly, at the time fixed by God: “Thrice in the year thou shalt celebrate a feast to me” (23:14; 34:23). It is about the celebration of the feast of the unleavened bread (*Pesah*⁴³⁸, Hebr.), seven days in the first month of the year, Nissan (*Nisan* or *Ahib*, month of the flowers, Hebr.), about that of the harvest (or the weeks celebration, *Shavuoth*, Hebr.) and, at the end of the year, the feast of the in-gathering (23:15,16; 34:18,22). The day of the atonement (*Yom Kipur*, Hebr.) was celebrated “in the seventh month on the tenth day of the month” (Leviticus 16:29; 23:27). “On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the feast of booths (*Hag ha-Sukkoth*, Hebr.), seven days to Yahweh” (23:24) “when ye have gathered in the produce of the land” (23:39). “These are the set feasts of Yahweh, which ye shall proclaim as holy convocation” (23:37).

Jewish years were counted from the Creation of the World, which was estimated to be in the year 3760 BC. The anniversary day of the creation of the world (*Rosh ha-Shanah*, the head *rosh* of the year *ha-shanah*; the new year, Hebr.) that is the first day of the Tishri month reminding the sacrifice of Isaac.

For the first Jews, the current calendar was a monthly one, after the Phoenician model. The word *yerah* (calendaristic month, Hebr.) proceeded from *yareah* (moon, Hebr.). “«It shall come to pass from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath, to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me», saith Yahweh” (Isaiah 66:23; cf. 1:14; 1 Kings 4:7; 2 Kings 4:23; Ezekiel 46:1,3; Amos 8:5 etc.). At the time of their exile in Mesopotamia, the Jews became used to the Chaldean lunar-solar calendar: the months depended on the phases of the Moon, and the year’s duration was fixed, together with the seasons, by the Sun.

The months of the Jewish calendar were of 29 or 30 days, and the

⁴³⁷ *Shabath* (rest, Hebr.).

⁴³⁸ It became *Pascha* (Lat.), with the derivatives *Pasqua* (Ital.); *Pâques* (Fr.) etc. in the Latin countries. The English word *Easter* (*Oster*, Germ.) derived from the Anglo-Saxon Goddess of the Dawn, whose name was *Eoastre* and whose feast was celebrated at the time of the spring equinox.

difference of 365-354 = 11 days per year was recovered every three years by means of “intercalation,” that is by inserting after Adar (February-March), the twelfth month of the year, of a supplementary Second Adar.

To the sect of Essenes, the time of worship (both calendrical and horary) played a very important role. The calendar adopted by them was on a solar basis—having fifty-two weeks (354 days)—and a similar practice appeared in the *Book of Jubilees* and the *Book of Enoch*.

“In the first month, between the two evenings is the Passover to Yahweh” (Leviticus 23:5). “And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast of unleavened bread to Yahweh” (23:6). “On the first day ye shall have a holy convocation... And ye shall present to Yahweh an offering by fire seven days; on the seventh day is a holy convocation” (23:7,8). The Easter (*Pesah*, the pass over, Hebr.—which was performed by the destroying angel who spared the Jewish houses when the Lord sent the tenth plague on Egypt: the death of the firstborn) commemorated the liberation from the Egyptian bondage. So, Easter took place in the first month of the year (Exodus 12:2,11,12) called Nissan and it was marked by the ritual sacrifice of the lamb (12:3-11) and seven days from Easter outwards one ate unleavened bread (12:15,17-20) (feast of the unleavened bread).

“After the seventh Sabbath⁴³⁹ shall ye count fifty days; and ye shall present a new oblation to Yahweh... And ye shall make proclamation on that same day—a holy convocation shall it be unto you” (Leviticus 23:16,21). This day (of the fiftieth) was the Whitsuntide or Pentecost or *Shavuoth*, in the third month of the year, when the reception of the *Torah* by Moses was celebrated.

In the seventh month followed the day of the atonement (*Yom Kipur*), and then the celebration of the booths (*Sukkoth*), about which we have already spoken above.

Even the moment of the holy construction was fixed through divine commandment: “On the day of the first month, on the first of the month, shall thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting” (Exodus 40:1,2; cf. 40:17). The consecration of Solomon’s temple was celebrated through *Hanukah* (feast of devotion or of the lights, Hebr.) in relation with the seven-branched lamp stand *hanukiah*.

The Hindu year (*shaka*, Sanskr.) also consisted of twelve months (*maase*, Sanskr.) (the first one, called *Chaitra*, the last one—*Falgun*) and it began around the vernal equinox. The traditional celebrations are dated in relation with the phases of the moon; the days (*titha*, Sanskr.) were counted beginning with the first one after the new moon (*Amavasya*, Sanskr.), or after

⁴³⁹ After the Easter.

the full moon (*Purnima*, Sanskr.) respectively (in both cases: *Pratipada*, then *Dvitya*, *Tritya* etc.). The lapse of time between the new moon and the full one was *Shukla Paksha*, and that between the full moon and the new one was *Krishna Paksha*.

It is interesting to note that, according to the Hindu calculations the present-day Yuga (or cosmic age) started on Friday, February 18, 3102 BC [17], as compared to the year 3760 BC given for the creation of the world, according to the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Apart from the similarities, there was a great conceptual difference about time.

Maha Yuga (Great Yuga, Sanskr.) totaled 4.32 million years, consisting of four ages: the first one, *Satya Yuga* of 1.728 million years; then *Treta Yuga* with a duration of 1.296 million years, *Dvapara Yuga* of 864,000 years and *Kali Yuga* of 432,000 years (representing three, two and one quarter, respectively, of Satya Yuga). It is worth noticing that a list composed in Greek c. 280 BC by the Babylonian erudite priest Berossos gives a total sum of 432,000 years for the period between the world creation and its destruction (by the Flood). Around AD 1100, the *Edda* epics describes Odhinn's hall of heroes, *Valhalla* as comprising 540 times 800 warriors that is precisely 432,000.

A thousand Maha Yugas (4,320 million terrestrial years) represented only one day (*Kalpa*, Sanskr.) of Brahma's life. Brahma's night was as long as the day was. Thus, the *Laws of Manu* wrote: "the sum of one thousand ages of the gods (makes) one day of Brahman, and his night has the same length" [18]. Psalm 90:4 acknowledges an analogous disproportion between the earthly time and the Divine time: "For a thousand years, in thy sight, are as yesterday when it is past, and [as] a watch in the night." The *Qur'an* provides similar norms of the divine Time: "surely a day with thy Lord is as a thousand years of your counting" (22.46; cf. 32.4). The existence of a Brahma, measured in such "days" and "nights" lasted 108⁴⁴⁰ "years" after which followed an equal lapse of time of total re-absorption, then the existence of a new Brahma began [19].

As compared with these huge periods of the cosmic cycles, the individual's life became completely insignificant. Now we understand why the Indians granted a minimal importance to the historical time, creating the impression of timelessness. India thought about time and thought about itself in biological terms (in terms of the species), in geological or in astronomical terms, not in terms of the ephemeral individual.

In opposition with this concept, the Judeo-Christian testamentary

⁴⁴⁰ 108 is a holy number (see our Introduction).

chronicles took into account individuals and lives, but not *Life*.

According to Mircea Eliade the coincidence of the mythical moment with the current one entails the abolishment of the profane time and the reconstruction of the Cosmic Time, through the continuous regeneration of the world [2].

The Christian view about time, which is strictly linear and evolutionary, was outlined even since the 2nd century BC by Irenaeus of Lyons, resumed by Basil, Gregory, and eventually worked out by Augustine of Hippo. The concept of non-recurrence is in a flagrant contradiction with the cyclic natural phenomena: the revolution of celestial bodies (planets and satellites, comets), the sequence of the seasons, phases of the Moon, the day-night alternation, the vegetation cycle, the high and ebb tide, the inhalation and exhalation, as well as what Eliade called *the eternal return*.

The cyclic concept is present in other cultures (the topic will be developed in ch. XIX A). For example, Capra considered Heraclitus a “Greek Taoist”: “He shared with Lao-tse not only the emphasis on continuous change, which is expressed in his famous saying «Everything flows⁴⁴¹», but also the notion that all changes are cyclic” [20]. Plato and Aristotle were adepts of the phenomenon of recurrence, at least in art and science. Erich Frank showed: “These philosophers believed that even their own ideas were only the rediscovery of thoughts which had been known to the philosophers of previous periods... The history of the universe in its periodic passages from evolution to dissolution is conceived as a biological process... And during the process the strangest histories take place; yet nothing that has not, in the endless wheeling of the aeons, happened many, many times before” [21].

Despite the general remark above regarding the time in Judeo-Christian religions, the re-creation of the world appears in the *Bible*, though it has not been canonically acknowledged, remaining only as an eschatological promise (see ch. XIX A).

In India, since ancient times there were two types of rituals: rituals that took place all the time and rituals that had a pre-established time. In the first category there were traditional prayers, which were performed three times a day: at dawn, at noon and at twilight. Manu Vaivaswata showed that the gods themselves established the three moments of the day for the sacrifice: the sunrise (*Surya udite*, Sanskr.), noon (*madyandine udite*, Sanskr.) and the sunset (*nimruchi* or *atuchi*, Sanskr.) [22]. In Hatha Yoga, at the rising of the sun some disciples performed a series of exercises known under the name of *Sun Salutation* (*Surya Namaskara*, Sanskr.). However, as a rule, the XV-25

⁴⁴¹ *Panta rhei* (Gr.), according to Heraclitus of Ephesus.

exercises (*asana* and *pranayama*, Sanskr.) or the meditations were performed daily at the break of day or in the twilight (*sandhya*, Sanskr.); others recommended that they should be performed before sunrise and after sunset respectively.

A practice recalling Surya Namaskara is mentioned in the *Talmud* (Sukkah 51b): “Our forefathers when they were in this place [first Temple] turned their backs to the sanctuary and their faces toward the east and bowed to the rising sun in the east.” Josephus Flavius stated that also the Essenes used to recite prayers to the rising sun.

The regularity of prayers was also observed in Christianity especially in monastic life. Liturgical services followed one another in the daytime every three hours (all in Latin): *prima* (6 a.m.), *tertia* (9 a.m.), *sexta* (noon), *nona* (3 p.m.); then followed *vespers* before the sunset, and *completa* before going to bed. Before the sunrise, *matutini* and *laudi* were performed. Also in Islam, at the muezzin’s calling—according to the tradition (*sunna*, Arab.)—the devotee addresses the ritual prayer (*as-salah*, Arab.) to God, five times a day: at dawn, around noon, at 4 p.m., in the late afternoon just before dark and at a certain hour on the night, although the *Qur’an* made the provision that prayers should be done only three times daily.

Among the most important Hindu rituals there was an ensemble of a dozen perfective ceremonies or *sacraments* (*samskara*) the basic nucleus of which consisted of the following four: the first birth (biological); the second birth, between the ages of 8 and 12, as a ritual of initiation into a studious life; the marriage—considered to be the third birth; the fourth i.e. the funeral ceremony. The four stages (*ashrama*) are thus marked: the study (*brahmacharina*) of the disciple (*shishya*) under the guidance of the master (*guru*), the family life (*grihasthya*), the retreat into solitude (*vanaprastha*—literally: retreat in the forest) and the life as a wandering monk (*bhikshu*) begging his food (*sanyasa*) and renouncing his family and surrounding world.

By the beginning of the year (on about mid-January) the *Makar Sankranti Pongal* (of Tamil origin) took place, which marked the end of the month *Pausha* (December-January) including the winter solstice (*Uttarayana*). *Vasanta Panchami* honors the goddess Saraswati or Bhoomi Devi (Mother Earth) and was celebrated towards the end of January or the beginning of February. *Maha-Shivaratri* (great night of Shiva) was held on the second half of February. Then the onset of the spring was celebrated through *Holi* (*Hutashanti*), the feast of colors, which reminded the creation of colors through Krishna’s power and the destruction of the demon Holika. Depending on the moon phases, in March-April (*Vaisakha*) the birth of Rama

(Ramachandra) called *Ramanavami* (*navami*, the ninth day, Sanskr.) is celebrated, when they read the *Ramayana*. *Mahavira Jayanti*, dedicated to the founder of Jain doctrine was in April, and the celebration of the Buddha was in May. Krishna's birthday (*Krishna Janam Ashtami*) took place in July-August (*Sravana*). It was in August-September when was worshipped Lord Ganesha—*Ganesha Chaturthi*. September-October marked the great feast of goddess Durga, *Navaratri* that lasted nine nights and commemorated her victory over the demon Mahishasura. Then it is the time of reading the sacred book *Devi Mahatmyam* (Glory to the Great Goddess, Sanskr.), a section of the *Markandeya Purana*, an important medieval Shakta encyclopedic text. *Dassera* (*Dushehra*), when Rama killed the demon Ravana, was celebrated close to this festival. After about twenty days, in October-November, there is *Diwali* (*Dipa-wali*, row of lights, Sanskr.), the festival of lights, dedicated to goddess *Lakshmi* (Abundance; from *lakhsha*, one hundred thousand, Sanskr.). The full moon in October-November indicates the birth of Karttikeya, *Karttika Purnima*. It is surprising that, as we have seen above, the Jews also have a Feast of Lights (*Hanukah*) when they kindle oil lamps and celebrate the victory of Good over Evil just like in India.

In India, the moon phases are essential for setting the exact data of the feast above. The fluctuation of the feast time also comes from the auspicious or inauspicious characteristic of the days. The most auspicious feast days are the seventh (*saptami*, Sanskr.) and the ninth (*navami*, Sanskr.) after the new or the full moon.

The worshipping of the Divine, in different specific forms of manifestation, was performed through religious ceremonies (*Puja*, Sanskr.), during which the devotion (*bhakti*, Sanskr.) was expressed. *Bhakti* literally means “part,” “participation”; *bhakta* is the one who gave his part to the Divine, signifying dedication, especially of the self.

In the end, we shall notice that other peoples had feasts based on the solar calendar, that took place for instance at equinoxes (such as the spring equinox when the Romans celebrated *Dies Hilaria*) or at solstices (like the Sun adoration practiced by the Druids over the summer solstice, or like *Saturnalia* of the Romans over the winter solstice). “The great pontiffs and military chiefs led by their king used to go on processions on the smooth mountain slopes at the time of solstices and equinoxes” [23].

C. PREPARATION OF THE PLACE AND OF THE PARTICIPANTS

*“Ye shall hallow yourselves, and ye shall be holy;
for I am holy”*

Leviticus 11:44,45; 19:2

*“Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father
is perfect”*

Matthew 5:48

Once the time of God’s worship has been established, a series of preparations follows, both of the sacred places and, especially of the participants, according to the commandments given by God.

First, the consecration of the altar was performed with particular care: “Seven days shalt thou make atonement for the altar and hallow it; and the altar shall be most holy: whatever toucheth the altar shall be holy” (Exodus 29:37). The seven days symbolized the complete cycle of Creation, hence eternity: “And God had finished on the seventh day his work which he had made” (Genesis 2:2).

The place and the objects of cult had to be anointed with oil sometimes perfumed (Exodus 30:25) in order to be consecrated: “And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all there is in it, and all its utensils” (40:9): the altar and its objects, the laver (Exodus 40:10,11; also Leviticus 8:10-11).

The preparation of the participants followed, in which particular attention was paid to the ones who officiated (the priests). In this way both the place and the ones who worshipped God were hallowed (Leviticus 11:44,45; 19:2—see above). “And the priests also who come near to Yahweh, shall hallow themselves, lest Yahweh breaks forth on them” (Exodus 19:22). “And there will I meet with the children of Israel; and shall be hallowed by my glory. And I will hallow the tent of meeting and the altar, and I will hallow Aaron and his sons, that they may serve me as priests” (29:43,44). “And thus shalt thou do to Aaron, and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate them” (29:35).

To the priests (Aaron and his sons) God ordered: “Thou shalt not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, and thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tent of meeting, lest ye die—[it is] an everlasting statute throughout your generations” (10:9; cf. Ezekiel 44:21; for details see ch. XV E).

Touching the dead was something forbidden for the priests (Leviticus

21:1-4), and the high priest was not allowed “to come near any person dead” (21:11). In this we saw the fear of a dead entity entering these servants of God (possession; ch. XXII D). The magic practices were proscribed as vehement as the idolatry. “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (Exodus 22:18). “Ye shall not practice enchantment, nor use auguries” (Leviticus 19:26). “Turn not unto necromancers and unto soothsayers; seek not after them to make yourselves unclean” (19:31). “And the soul that turneth unto necromancers and unto soothsayers... I will set my face against that soul, and will cut him off among his people” (20:6). “And if there be a man or a woman in whom is a spirit of Python or of divination⁴⁴² they shall certainly be put to death” (20:27). “There shall not be found among you he... that useth divination, that useth auguries, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or one that inquireth of a spirit of Python⁴⁴³, or a soothsayer, or one that consulteth the dead” (Deuteronomy 18:10-11; cf. 18:14). “Saul had put away the necromancers⁴⁴⁴ and the soothsayers out of the land” (1 Samuel 28:3; see also 28:9). Concerning the inquiry about the future, Jesus told the disciples; “It is not yours to know times or seasons, which the Father has placed in his own authority” (Acts 1:7). Only the righteous could enter the City of God, while “without [are] the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loves and makes a lie” (Revelation 22:14-15; cf. 21:8). Jesus said: “Leave the dead to bury their own dead” (Matthew 8:22).

It goes without saying that all those who were occupied with these things mentioned above were expelled from the holy ceremonies.

We would mention that also the Gnostics manifested an obvious hatred of astrology [24].

It should be remembered that the Jews had astrological knowledge but it was related only to Divinity and not to man, being never used for divination (astrology). “[Seek him] that made the Pleiades and Orion” (Amos 5:8). “By his spirit the heavens are adorned; his hand hath formed the fleeing serpent” (Dragon constellation; Job 26:13). “I am... the bright morning star” (Revelation 22:16). Ephraim the Syrian manifested a critical view against “the foolish who worshipped and served all the stars” [25].

The position of all the great religions was unanimous in denouncing occult practices. We found the earliest critical attitude in the *Code of*

⁴⁴² Or who is a necromancer or a soothsayer.

⁴⁴³ Or a necromancer.

⁴⁴⁴ Or those who had a spirit of Python.

Hammurabi, which forbade sorcery.

Both Hinduism, as a religion, and Yoga practices denounced magic (*smashan vidya*, *preta vidya*, Sanskr.), which applied to the spirits of the deceased that were in the place reserved for them (*preta loka*, Sanskr.) or the collective subconscious (*para loka*, Sanskr.). The false gurus have succeeded in introducing these spirits (*preta* or *bhoot*, Sanskr.) into the bodies of their disciples, like parasites, and thus, they become possessed. With this in mind, some of these “gurus” used the powers of the subconscious (*wama margi*, Sanskr.) through sex, i.e. through Tantrism, while others forced their “patients” to starvation and deprivation and in this way, by weakening their resistance, they were then able to introduce the spirits of the superconscious (*savya margi*, Sanskr.) into them. In both cases, the victims were destroyed; many of them became real patients in psychiatric clinics. The topic will be dealt with extensively in chapter XXII D.

Necromancy (the invocation of the spirits of the deceased to perform divination), which derived from archaic funerary rituals, was tolerated in ancient Greece and in Rome, but the ones who practiced it aroused divine anger. Pindar said that Aesculapius was struck by the thunderbolt of Zeus when he brought—through magic—the dead Glaucus back to life again. The disciples of Aesculapius from Epidaurus, Tithoraea and even Athens, as well as Apollonius of Tyana were accused of such deeds. Herodotus mentioned that “the soothsayers, with their feet tied together, their hands bound behind their backs, and their mouths gagged, are thrust into the midst of the brushwood; finally the wood is set alight” [26]. As it is known, the burning alive of the practitioners of occultism was taken over by the Catholic Church.

Lao-tse wrote: “Let Tao rule the world and the spirits will not show their powers. Not because of the loss of these powers, but because these powers will do no harm to the people” [27].

The *Qur’an* makes no exception to this: “By thy Lord’s blessings thou art not a soothsayer neither possessed” (52.29). A *hadith* shows that “to practice sorcery” was one of “the seven great destructive sins” [28]. As for divination, the Islamic tradition shows that the unbelieving ghosts want to enter the heavens and spy on the plans of Allah, but the angels throw stars burning them to ashes [29]. The *Qur’an* reads: “O, believers, question not concerning things which, if they were revealed to you, would vex you... A people before you questioned concerning them, then disbelieved in them” (5.101). Verily, if we could know our future, we would not necessarily be happy. The Islam condemned different kinds of divination, amulets, talismans and magic practices. Al-Barbahari used to say about astrology: “Do not search the stars too intensely, unless you want to set the hours of prayers; beyond that, you

fall into impiety” [30].

Adopting such attitudes against the divine, determined the decay of some famous civilizations of the ancient world as in Egypt and Mesopotamia. At the opposite position, the keeping of the old Dharma principles explains the perennial Indian spiritual traditions.

The unauthorized practices such as magic, occultism, and all paranormal activities are deviations from the archetypal divine principles. About these divine principles Jung showed that: “their violation has at its consequence the «perils of the soul» known to us from the psychology of primitives. Moreover, they are the unfailing causes of neurotic and even psychotic disorders, behaving exactly like neglected or maltreated physical organs or organic functional systems” [31]. René Descartes called the occult teachings (magic, astrology, alchemy) “*des mauvaises doctrines*” (damaging tenets, Fr.) [32].

Besides the prohibition against those practicing occultism, there were other criteria for exclusion from the ceremony, too. “And of thy seed throughout their generation that hath any defect, shall not approach to present the bread to his God” (Leviticus 21:17); neither “to present Yahweh’s offerings by fire” (21:21); “a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or one limb longer than the other, or a man that is broken-footed, or broken-handed, or hump-backed, or withered⁴⁴⁵ or that hath a spot in his eye, or hath the itch, or scabs, or his testicles broken” (21:18-20).

Likewise, in Sumer, a person was not admitted as a priest, who was cross-eyed, with irregular or lacking teeth, having crooked or knotty fingers, suffering from skin or genital diseases [33]. The important characters in the Roman accounts were disqualified from the story, once they have been mutilated. This was the case of Horatius Cocles (Cyclops) and Mucius Scaevola (Left-handed, as he had lost his right hand). The Romanian folk tradition is reflected in the tale about *Harap-Alb* where the Red King warned his son against glabrous or red-skinned (i.e. with skin diseases) peoples.

The exclusion of those with physical defects from the holy ceremonies should not be surprising, since, according to the *karma* concept (ch. XXIV) these marks could be the consequence of the evil actions perpetrated in the previous lives.

The preparation for the religious ceremony consisted in ablution, in putting on the sanctioned clothes and in the anointment (Exodus 29:4-9; 40:12-15; Leviticus 8:6-9, 12, 13).

Etymologically, *ablution* meant the removing of the clay (*ab-lutio*, Lat.), of the mud covering us. After ablution we became clean. The small particles

⁴⁴⁵ Or a dwarf.

of earth (dust, etc.) were considered to be a sign of uncleanness. God does not like any impurity in deeds, food, and animals. Before entering holy places, one had to wash one's hands, one's feet; one had to rinse one's mouth or even to take a bath. Purification meant detachment from all earthly contacts and signified heavenly aspiration instead: the return to the very sources of life. Ablution, supposedly, signified the assimilation of the qualities of a spring that meant the purity of a crystal together with the invisible forces of water.

The first abluion mentioned in the *Bible* was offered to God Himself when Abraham told the Lord: "Let now a little water be fetched, that ye may wash your feet" (Genesis 18:4). Then Lot invited the two angels saying: "wash your feet" (19:2). To his brothers, Joseph "gave water, and they washed their feet" (43:24). Laban "gave... water to wash his⁴⁴⁶ feet, and the feet of the men who were with him" (24:32). For other examples see Job 9:30; Song of Songs 5:3; Mark 7:3; Luke 7:44.

Touching the feet is a sign of extreme respect paid to great saints or incarnations not even in India but in the *Bible* too. Thus behaved the apostles in front of Jesus: "And they coming up took him by feet and did him homage" (Matthew 28:9).

Washing somebody's feet on Maundy Thursday is regarded as significant and sacred [34].

The Lord commanded Moses: "Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring near the entrance of the tent of meeting and shalt bathe them with water" (Exodus 29:4), which Moses did (Leviticus 8:6). The washing of the feet of the priests took place both at the entrance into the holy place and before approaching the altar, and this washing was performed in a special laver (Exodus 30:18-20; 40:31,32). "And they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they may not die" (30:21). "And the priest shall wash his garments, and he shall bathe his flesh in water" (Numbers 19:7). "If he washes them⁴⁴⁷ not nor bathes his flesh, then he shall bear his iniquity" (Leviticus 17:16).

The preparatory rules did not apply to the priests only: The one who was not clean (in his spirit) had to "bathe in the water" (Deuteronomy 23:11). "Yahweh said to Moses: «Go to the people, and hallow them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes»" (Exodus 19:10). And Moses did what he had been told to (19:14). "Blessed [are] they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and they that should go in by the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14). The Yogis know that, through

⁴⁴⁶ Abraham's reliable servant.

⁴⁴⁷ His clothes.

wearing, the garments accumulate negativity and thus have to be washed up frequently.

Cleansing the Temple of Jerusalem from negativity by chasing away the usurers and merchants of offerings (Matthew 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45; John 2:14,15) is a call to purify our subtle body (consistent with the well-known metaphor of the temple as the body of Jesus) of all the catches of the channels and chakras.

Beyond the sanitary aspect, the washing signified cleansing from any dirt, spiritual impurity included. Therefore, if we take into account the symbolism of washing as a spiritual purification, we may consider that the water for ablutions was a real *living water* (ch. XI D), just like the Kundalini which, after her awakening cleanses the chakras and the nadis, removing any negativity which one has accumulated throughout present or previous lives (ch. XXIV).

“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; —cease to do the evil” (Isaiah 1:16). “Wash thy heart, Jerusalem, from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thou?” (Jeremiah 4:14) At the same time, the washing of the hands symbolized also the absolution of any responsibility, the refusal to assume it. Pilate’s example became classic (Matthew 27:24).

Here is what Homer wrote: “They washed their hands and took up the barley-meal... while Chryses lifted up his hands and prayed on their behalf” [35]. In the *Homeric Hymns* we find the idea that the purity of the soul was much more important than the cleansing of the skin since for the evil one, a whole ocean would not be enough to wash away the dirt from his soul. The concepts of moral purity (of the consciousness, of the soul) and of the inner repentance, appeared in Greece relate to the cult of Apollo in Delphi. In his *Golden Ass*, Apuleius told that he purified himself seven times in the sea before addressing Isis.

Josephus Flavius showed that “the washing [with water] would be acceptable... supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by the righteous” [36].

The *Community Rule* of the Essenes found at Qumran shows about the one who despises the rules of the community: “He shall not be reckoned among the perfect; he shall neither be purified by atonement, nor cleansed by purifying waters, nor sanctified by seas and rivers, nor washed clean with any ablution. Unclean, unclean shall he be... as long as he despises the precepts of God” [37]. However, the true cleansing was understood to come from the “spirit of holiness” and implied also “humble submission” (i.e. surrendering of the ego; ch. XIX C). It was interesting that in another manuscript coming

from the same source, we find that, along with various rules concerning food, that it was forbidden to use water which had not been prepared at least a day ahead [38], which was tantamount to its consecration. Josephus adds that the Essenes were not allowed to eat food prepared by people not belonging to the brotherhood. The *Community Rule* further states: “when the table has been prepared... the Priest shall be the first to stretch out his hand to bless the first-fruits of the bread and new wine” [39]. The *Messianic Rule* of the same origin reads: “they shall gather for the common [tab]le, to eat and [to drink] new wine... let no man extend his hand over the first-fruits of bread and wine before the Priest... Thereafter, the Messiah of Israel shall extend his hand over the bread, [and] all the congregation of the Community [shall utter a] blessing⁴⁴⁸” [40].

Some Sahaja Yoga techniques were known which could charge water, as well as food, with the vibratory energy of the Kundalini. Thus a vibratory harmony was achieved between the food and the Swadhsthana and Nabhi chakras. Water and food prepared in this way could also be used for therapeutic purposes, a fact that was experimentally proved in the Sahaja Yoga centers in Russia, Australia, United Kingdom and India.

XV-26 In the New Testament, it was John (alone) who described in his Gospel Jesus washing the feet of the apostles. This fact was full of significance. a First, the gesture had a sacred meaning as Jesus told Peter: “Unless I wash thee, thou hast not part with me” (John 13:8). Thus, it implied the spiritual purification because Jesus—knowing that there was a traitor among the apostles—stated: “ye are clean, but not all” (13:10-11). And, finally, the foot soak was established as a permanent practice: “ye also ought to wash one another’s feet; for I have given you an example that, as I have done to you, ye should do also” (13:14-15).

XV-26 It is well known in Sahaja Yoga, that foot soaking is an excellent way to purify the lower chakras of the Mooladhara, the Swadhsthana and the Nabhi. It should be remembered that the Ocean of the Void is generated by the rotation of the Swadhsthana chakra round the Nabhi chakra (ch. IV). These chakras control the functions of the organs to develop in the human embryo out of the *uro-genital block*, with a common origin in the intermediate mesoderm. After the first weeks of intra-uterine life, the sex organs (Mooladhara) start separating from this block. The kidney starts its secretor function in the 12th week. About that time the spleen starts secreting the blood cells. Even after their differentiation, both the urinary and genital apparatuses develop in a close relationship [41].

A common practice is to dissolve salt into the water (element of the

⁴⁴⁸ That is a *mantra* (ch. XV D).

Void), the former representing another purifying element—the Earth (specific to the Mooladhara). Jesus told His apostles: “Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). He added: “Salt [is] good” (Luke 14:34; Mark 9:50). “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another” (Mark 9:50). However, Sahaja Yoga has disclosed that central Nabhi chakra is the seat of satisfaction, while its left aspect brings about inner peace. Prophet Elisha in the Bible wonderfully described the technique, when talking about the purification of the Jericho waters with salt. “He said: «Bring me a new cruse, and put salt in it». And they brought it to him. And he went forth to the sources of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said: «Thus saith Yahweh: I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence anymore death or barrenness». And the waters were healed to this day, according to the saying” (2 Kings 2:20-22). Chapter XV E will further specify on the significance of the salt element. The same result was obtained through immersion of the feet (up to the ankles) into a river or into the sea. The combination of the two elements, Water and Earth, was otherwise mentioned in the *Bible*: “The priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and the priest shall take of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle⁴⁴⁹, and put it into water” (Numbers 5:17). In the Kabbalistic ritual described by Eleazar of Worms (c.1200), both the master and the disciple had to stand in running water, usually up to their ankles [42].

Sahaja Yoga prescribes a cold foot soak to those having a “hot liver” due to hyperactivity (catch of the right or “hot” channel), whereas warm water is recommended in case of the left (“cold”) channel catch. In the Romanian folk tradition, those implied in an intensive intellectual activity are advised to “put their feet into cool water.” Many people are aware of the relaxing and soothing effect of the foot soak but very few know the origins of this remedy.

Many of the rules stated in the *Bible* were also to be found in other rituals of the ancient people, and India kept the old traditions and still follow some of them even today.

The initiation rituals (mysteries⁴⁵⁰) practiced in various ancient cults, started by a purification (*kátharsis*, Gr.), which included ablutions, fasting

⁴⁴⁹ The holy tent where the Jews kept the Tablets of Law (Exodus 40:20-21; Deuteronomy 10:1-5), a manifestation of God that is a source of vibratory energy.

⁴⁵⁰ *Mystérion* (mystery, Gr.) comes from *myein* (to close, Gr.—both the eyes and the mouth) and tallies with *myo* found as *myéo* (to initiate in mysteries, Gr. [43]), all of them having the same root with *mythos* from *mythó* (to speak to oneself, in silence, Gr.) and *mutus* (mute, Lat.), wherefrom the relation with initiation in the myth secrets.

and confession of sins, they being taken over by the Christian religious practice. In the following, *ablution* will designate the partial or total contact of the body with water, from the simple sprinkling up to the complete immersion, where both extremes are met with in the Christian baptism ritual (ch. XXII B).

Some considered immersion to be a return to the original matrix, to the source of life; therefore immersion represents regeneration, rebirth, but at the same time breaking off with the past, as water isolated us from the natural environment we live in (ch. XXII B).

The bathing was that ritual which accompanied a man over his whole lifetime, marking its stages: baptism, puberty and death (washing of the corpse). The Nazarene's initiation was preceded by a bath, and in the Middle Ages a bath took place before the consecration of knights. It is remarkable that in Hindustani, *nazar* indicates a point above the nose and between the eyebrows (Agya chakra of the Yogis) where the sages of the old put their attention during meditation, while *nazaren* means "to envision" or "to behold."

The divine cult was in use since the ancient ages, in Sumer and Egypt. The ritual included the material service to the god: his statue was washed and decorated, he was offered drink and food whilst songs and fumigation delighted his senses—incense burning [44]. In the Greek tradition, the statues of the gods (Athena at Phaleron, Hera etc.) were immersed into water in order to be purified, as it happened in India presently as in the ancient times. In Aphrodite's temple at Paphos in Cyprus, the statue of the goddess was washed clean and carried down by her priestesses to the waves. On March 27, in Rome, Cybele's silver statue was washed in the Alma River and was decorated with flowers by the priest who wore red garments (red was an apothropaic color, believed to chase away the evil powers). Ovid reminded the ritual bathing of the cult statue of the goddess by her female worshipers for the period of the *ludi Megalenses*, the festival of April 4 dedicated to *Magna Mater Idaeae* [45] i.e. Cybele, whose Phrygian origin was associated with the Mount Ida (Dindymus), in Asia Minor. The washing, which was called *lavatia*, took place the last day of the *Hilaria* (Festival of Joy) celebrating the return or ascent of the soul to its source. After the ablution, the statue was garlanded with flowers, decorated and anointed with perfumed oils. Lucius Apuleius (AD 125 - c.170) described the ritual of "sprinkling with the water of the sea" taking place March 5 for *Isis navigium* (ship, Lat.). The high priest used to perform this mystery of Isis with the aim of purification [46]. The same procedure was employed in the cult of Demeter through immersion into the sea as well as in the Apollonian games [47].

Eleusis was a city in the vicinity of Athens that, according to tradition, had been founded by the Thracians. It sheltered the famous sanctuary called *telestérion* (initiation place, Gr.) estimated by the archaeologists to date back to the 15th century BC. The *Little Mysteries* were celebrated in the month of Anthesterion (February) while the *Great Mysteries* in the month of Boédromion (September). The Eleusinian Mysteries started with the cleansing (*kátharsis*, Gr.) of the initiate in the sea, called the “banishing”, together with the sacrifice of the piglets. There was also the day of purification called *Asklepeia*, in honor of the god *Asklepios* (Gr.; *Aesculapius*, Lat.) of Delphi and Cos. Other day there was the celebration of serpent *Iacchos* (son of Zeus; ch. IX). We suppose that it was connected to the secret power of the serpent Kundalini. This was followed by a day of resting, fasting, purification and sacrificing. Then it was achieved *teleté* usually translated by initiation (*teleó*, to initiate, Gr.). However, the root *tel* indicates the *achievement* since *teleó* also signifies to *achieve* or to *complete* a work. Towards the end of the nine days of the Great Mysteries, the *Legomena* consisted of a short ritual invocation, which was followed by the *Deiknymena* (presentation of *hiera*, the sacred objects). The *Epopteia* (state of contemplation) also implied the showing of *hiera*. All this ritual reminded the Hindu celebration of the Puja (see below). Plutarch wrote: “to die is to be initiated” through a play on words (*teleutan* or *teleisthai*), which could be related to getting the second birth through Self Realization. Many mysteries implied “the death” of the initiate, which signified the death of the ego, when the neophyte comprehended the deep mystery of non-duality that is he received the enlightenment. Some called it the “little death” or the experience of the bridal chamber, i.e. the mystical union between the Kundalini and Atman in the Sahasrara. That “death” re-enacted the descent unto the lower world (which in fact it is ours) of Kóre-Persephone (symbolizing the Kundalini going down the embryo), or the journey of Demeter to find there her daughter (meaning the descent of the Goddess on the earth, as well as the finding of the true Self into its hidden depth), then her ascent unto the upper world (elevation of the Kundalini up to the Sahasrara). One of Jesus’ parables included some mysterious words: “Verily, verily, I say unto you: Except the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24). That perfectly fits with the rewarding “death” experienced by the Eleusinian initiate, since Demeter was the Goddess of cereals. Analogous mysteries were performed at Samothrace and Lemnos.

The Mysteries of Eleusis have their replicas in other spiritualities. Analogous funeral rites are encountered in India where a symbolic cremation

inaugurated the stage (*ashrama*, Sanskr.) of a *sanyasa* (ch. XV B). Other occurrence is the consecration of a Christian monk who is a sort of burial. Schuon explains that all these symbolic deaths represent the extinction of the ego, and “that is what saints have in view in describing themselves as «the greatest of sinners»; if this expression has a meaning⁴⁵¹, it applies to the *ego* as such” [48].

Eleusis means “the Place of Happy Arrival” from which the *Elysian Fields* (where the cool breeze was felt; ch. XI C) took their name. The fact XV-28 that King Triptolemus of Eleusis was depicted between two snakes [49] or seated on a chariot drawn by snakes is full of significance (ch. IX). All these connections support the idea that the respective initiation consisted of Self Realization. The Eleusinian Mysteries lasted for about 2000 years, until the 4th century AD when Theophrastus proscribed them and later the Goths destroyed the temple.

According to a ritual—which was originally dedicated to the goddess Anatha, but took over by the Jews on their arrival in Palestine—there was uttered: “The Holy One, blessed be he said: «Pour out water before me at the Feast»” (which inspired Isaiah 12:3). Graves and Podro considered that this custom “could be connected with the worship of the divinity by Hindus while pouring out water at god’s feet” [50], and that happened since the old times up to date (see *infra*).

Some would argue that even the *lex talionis* would represent a purification ritual (by shedding the blood of the one who was guilty of murder). We found it first mentioned in Genesis (9:5-6) when God told Noah: “And indeed your blood, [the blood] of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every animal⁴⁵² and at the hand of man, at the hand of each [the blood] of his brother, will I require the life of man. Whose sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” “He that striketh a man, so that he dies, shall certainly be put to death” (Exodus 21:12). These rules became extended later on: “If mischief happen, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, branding for branding, wound for wound, stripe for stripe” (Exodus 21:23-25; cf. Leviticus 24:17-21; partly quoted in Matthew 5:38). “Almost all things are purified with

⁴⁵¹ We have shown (ch. IX) that “sin” is a false concept within Christendom.

⁴⁵² The hemobolium mentioned above, the ritual bleeding during the animal sacrificing practiced by the Jews (ch. XV E) and the Muslims (the Ramadan ram).

blood according to the Law, and without blood shedding there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). “If anyone shall kill with [the] sword, he must with [the] sword be killed” (Revelation 13:10; cf. Matthew 26:52).

The New Testament mentioned the “sprinkling of [the] blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:2) for a symbolical sanctification, this being the sign of the new covenant (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25). The sprinkling with the animal’s blood was also practiced in Judaism.

According to the tradition, Mithra chased a bull escaped from the cavern, XV-29 captured it and brought it back into the cave where he sacrificed it. This reflects the myth of the goddess Durga who killed the demon (*asura*, XV-30 Sanskr.) Mahisha who took the shape of a buffalo. The participants to Mithra’s cult periodically repeated this act, *in divinis*. The height of a cave was divided in two by a perforated platform. The bull was sacrificed in the upper section and its blood dripped down to “baptise” the initiate who was standing in a pit and thus was regenerated. The same happened in the cult of Cybele and Attis with the blood of the sacrificed animal (*hemobolium*, Lat.): *taurobolium* (for a bull), or *crinobolium* (for a ram), that were both mentioned in the Old Testament as well (Isaiah 34:7). For other examples see Exodus 12:7; 24:5,6,8; Leviticus 1:5; 3:8; 16:14,15,18,19 etc.

Plato recorded the *taurobolium* performed by the Atlantis kings [51]. One of the analysts of the Greek philosopher’s work made the hypothesis that this ritual had been inspired from an Egyptian custom mentioned by Herodotus [52].

The Danubian equivalent was the hunting of the bison (Dragoş’ legend) also found with the Dacians who practiced Mithra’s mysteries.

The sprinkling of the threshold with the cattle blood was also met with the old Germans or the Bedouins in Karnak.

For the New Year’s Eve the gates in China were symbolically decorated with red paper to chase away the demons.

The bullfighting in practice presently is nothing but a reminiscence of the killing of the Mithra’s bull.

In Hinduism consecration was performed even while building of the altar or temple, which had the meaning of repeating the cosmogony act not only because the respective sacred place represented the universe, but also because it represented various temporal cycles. The Brahmin ritual re-enacted the creation of the world out of the elements: the water in which the clay was molded was the Primordial Water, the ground that served as foundation was the Earth, and the side walls represented the Air (atmosphere) and so forth. Each stage of the building process was accompanied by explicit stanzas, which defined precisely the cosmic part just

created [53]. The altar of fire was Prajapati; and Prajapati was the year [54]. By reconstructing Prajapati (Progenitor, Sanskr.), cosmic time was restored together with the altar. The altar of fire had five layers, each of them was a season, and the five seasons made up a year, so that Agni, the fire-altar, was the year [55].

XV-31 It was known that in India ablutions have always had a central place in everyone's life. Their origin is in the ancient civilization of the Indus valley (3rd millenary BC), being attested by the Great Bath found in Mohenjo-Daro. Since the earliest times of the *Vedas* until now, water has been considered a tangible manifestation of the divine essence. Like in Genesis, otherwise: "The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (1:2). Until today, the vessel or the pitcher full of water showed the presence of the Divine, which replaced a sacred image. During prayer, the water was believed to be the place where the Divine sat (*pitha*, Sanskr.). The immersion into water meant to penetrate the supreme secret of life. When the Sage Narada asked Lord Vishnu to reveal the secret of Maya (Illusion, Sanskr.) Vishnu indicated that water was an initiatory element, instead of giving a verbal answer. We have previously seen the relation between the Ocean of Illusions (Void), the Nabhi chakra, the Water element, the principle of Guru and the Dharma (ch. V, VII, IX, X). The secret of everlasting life, revealed by Guru Narada implied respect towards Dharma (the individual one, which was in harmony with the cosmic one) placed on the level of the Nabhi chakra and of the Void as well as the connection (Yoga) through the awakening of the Kundalini (serpent which sustained Vishnu—the Principle of Spiritual Evolution—on the Primordial Waters).

The water element is not present in the subtle body only through the Nabhi and the Void. The three holy rivers corresponded to the three channels (*nadi*, river, Sanskr.), namely: the *Ganges* (*Ganga*, Sanskr.), which symbolized the energy of the left channel, the *Saraswati* corresponding to the central channel, and the *Yamuna* (*Jumna*)—to the right channel. In Allahabad, the joining point of these rivers, the Saraswati flows underground, hidden from sight, in contrast with the Ganges and Yamuna; likewise, the Sushumna is secret and inaccessible as compared to the more attainable side channels (see the hidden rivers from Eden; ch. II). The Saraswati was shown to be "the river of Paradise" (ch. III), hence a *nadi* (river, subtle channel) leading to the heavenly Kingdom (Sahasrara), that is the Sushumna. Moreover, in the Grail's symbolism (ch. X) the holy chalice was finally taken to the citadel of *Sarras* where its trace was lost, which might be again related to the Saraswati. Matthews explained that when Galahad has reached the otherworldly city of Sarras, he attained the state of

Nirvana [56].

Yamuna was the daughter of the old Vedic god Surya (Sun), while the Ganges originated from Shiva, wherefrom the relation to the respective channels. The big river flowed out of Shiva's hair⁴⁵³, which was matted in a XV-32 loop (*jata*, Sanskr.), one of god's names being *Dhurjati* (having heavy matted locks, Sanskr.). Yogis considered that bathing in the waters of one of these sacred rivers caused the energy re-balancing (the removing of the blockages in the respective channel). These blessed waters were believed to represent the earthly manifestation of the beverage of the gods, *amrut* (*amrita*, Sanskr., ch. XV E).

During Holi (ch. XV B), the participants are sprinkled with colored water. XV-33 In fact, they are the specific colors of the chakras (ch. XV E), the ritual signifying their opening (Self Realization). In the Babylonian civilization the sprinkling of water was used in rituals of exorcism. Sprinkling with water was practiced during the festival of vegetation, in Atargatis' temple from Bambike. The sprinkling with holy water used by the Christian priest (Orthodox or Catholic) was commonly in use and it performed a double role—that of hallowing and of exorcism. In Catholicism, Christians take holy water with the tips of their fingers and put it in the middle of their forehead. It was obviously a protection sign and in India its correspondent was the kumkum dot put on the middle of the forehead (Agya chakra). Further references will be made in the aftergoing.

Authentic Indian saints, those who attained illumination (Self Realization), just like the Buddha, were “worshipped during their lives as human bearers of the Absolute Truth” [57]. Devotion to the saints was expressed through the *Puja*, by ablutions (e.g. washing of the feet, *padya*, Sanskr.), decoration with flowers and ornaments, offerings (*homa*, Sanskr.), devotional songs (*bhajan*; from *bhaja*, worship, Sanskr.), invocations (*mantra*, Sanskr.; ch. XV D) etc. Instead of this the veneration of the effigy (*pratima*, Sanskr.) implied as we have seen the ritual ablution too. Zimmer described this ritual as follows: “The god is welcomed as a guest, with flowers, obeisance, washing of the feet, food, water for bathing, cloth for XV-37 garments, jewels, perfume, incense, offerings of various kinds, praise” [58]. All these constitute *upachara* (from *upachar*, to approach, with the intention of serving; to wait on; to attend) which entails: *asana* (seating the image), *swagata* (welcoming the divinity), *padya* (water for washing the feet), *arghya* (offerings), *kumbha* (vessel), *madhuparka* (honey, ghee, milk and

⁴⁵³ The top of the head is the Sahasrara, whose geographic correspondent is the Himalayas (ch. IV) out of where the Ganges springs out.

curd; see *amrut*—ch. XV E), *snana* (water for bathing), *vasana* (cloth for a garment; see below the shawl offered by the Greeks), *abharana* (jewels), *gandha* (perfume), *pushpa* (flowers), *dhupa* (incense), *dipa* (lights—of oil lamps), *naivedya* (food), *namaskriya* (*kriya*, action—of saying prayers; i.e. uttering *nama*, the name of the deity) [59].

A collective work analyzed the protocol described by the text drawn up by the Council of Trent in parallel to the Hindu practice (given in the parentheses): “The Catholic Church, enjoying a rich experience of the centuries and clad in their brilliance, introduces the mystical blessing (*mantra*), incense (*dhupa*), water (*snana*, *padya* etc.), lights (*dipa*), bells (*ghanta*), flowers (*pushpa*)...” [60]. Not less surprising is also finding out that in ancient Greece, at the end of the veneration ceremony dedicated to the Goddess, people offered her a saffron colored shawl woven by maids for the duration of nine months.

Schuon signals, on the opposite side: “There are neo-Hindu «reformers» who want to «reject all these fables about cults, this blowing of conches⁴⁵⁴, this ringing of bells», and even «all pride of knowledge and study of the *Shastras*, and all those methods for attaining personal deliverance... ». But if the Brahmins had not blown conches during thousands of years, none of you «reformers» of India today would even exist!” [61].

The effigy of divinity (sometimes a stone cylinder called a *linga*, at other times, the holy rock, a *swayambhu*) was not the only one to receive such special attention: the objects of the cult, which were used throughout the Puja, were decorated with kumkum, because they also were considered to symbolize different aspects of the divine manifestation. The big-bellied vessel or pitcher (*kumbha*, Sanskr.) filled with water represented the Universal Matrix, whereas the water was the symbol of the Primordial Ocean. The pitcher represented Vishnu; in its spout was Shiva, and Brahmadeva with all the *Shaktis* (Holy Mothers, Sanskr.) were in the middle and at the bottom of it; the four *Vedas* and all the hymns, the Holy Rivers—Ganges, Yamuna, Godavari, Narmada (Narbada, Nerbudda), Sindh and Kaveri—were also there.

XV-39 The Islam is also very strict regarding the ablutions that are compulsory five times a day before the ritualistic prayer (*salat*, Arab.).

Sahaja Yoga has elaborated a purification technique consisting in beating the ground with the heel of the left shoe (*shoe-beating*). The heel corresponded to the Mooladhara chakra, which was connected with the Earth, and its left aspect is placed at the root of the Ida, the channel of desire, that is why the method is an excellent means of cleansing this channel.

⁴⁵⁴ Ch. XV F.

Beating the ground is accompanied by writing with the finger on the earth. This practice has its connections with the *Bible* and the Islam as well.

Originally, the Old Testament mentioned a gesture meant to stress a decision or a promise. “This [was the custom] in former time in Israel concerning redemption and concerning exchange, to confirm the whole matter: a man drew off his sandal, and gave it to his neighbor, and this was the [mode of] attestation in Israel” (Ruth 4:7). “And he that had the right of redemption said to Boaz: «Buy for thyself». And he drew off his sandal” (4:8). Nehemiah (5:13) wrote: “I shook my lap, and said: «So God shake out every man from his House... that performeth not this promise».” Later on, the meaning developed, implying the detachment from all evil things. God said about the wicked kingdom of Edom: “Upon Edom will I cast my sandal” (Psalms 60:8).

Jesus told to His disciples: “Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye go forth, out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet” (Matthew 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5). The same happened to “Paul and Barnabas... having shaken off the dust of their feet against them” (Acts 13:50-51; cf. 18:6). “Even the dust of your city which cleaves to us on the feet do we shake off against you” (Luke 10:11). In other words, having abandoned the bad thing, through writing it on the ground, everything that is impure and negative gets away from us through beating it with the heel. It is worth remembering that in the turning point of the episode of the adulterous woman threatened of being lapidated, “Jesus, having stooped down, wrote XV-40 with his finger on the ground” (John 8:6). After finishing that, “he lifted himself up” and asked he that is without sin to first cast the stone at her. “And again stooping down he wrote on the ground” (8:8).

We have seen above that daily ablutions are mandatory in Islam. However, since in the old time, many believers lived (and still do) in desert zones deprived of water, instead of ablution (*wudhu*, Arab.) or of taking a bath in a ceremonial way (*ghusl*, Arab.) the Muslims were allowed to perform *tayammum* by putting or striking lightly the hands over clean earth XV-41 and then passing the palm of each on the back of the other, blowing off the dust. That signified removing of dust that had absorbed all the uncleanness. The *Qur'an* reads: “If... you can find no water, then have recourse to wholesome dust and wipe your faces and your hands” (4.46). “Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah: Allah's Messenger said: «... The earth has been made for Me (and for My followers) a place for praying and a thing to purify» (performing *tayammum*)” [62]. The washing of feet could be replaced with the Sunnites (*sunna*, tradition, Arab.) by the rubbing of the boots. On the contrary, the Zaydites of Tabaristan (9th century) were advised: “to stop rubbing their

footwear instead of proceeding to ablution” [63]. The Twelver Shi'ites (ch. XIX C) refused straight away these practices that simplified the ablution. Besides that rubbing of the footwear, another Islamic tradition connected to shoe-beating the impure or negative things with the left shoe was reported by Abu Saeed al-Khudry who said that the Prophet taught his companions to spit under the left foot. Abdullah ibn ash-Shakeer told that his father said: “I prayed with the Messenger of God and saw him spit then rub his sputum with his left footwear” [64]. The dust from the footsteps of the Messenger is also referred to in the *Qur'an* as “a handful [of dust] from the hoof print of the Messenger” [65].

XV-42 The technique conceived by Sahaja Yoga, wonderfully and efficiently joins all the elements above. Bhoomi Devi, in her endless compassion, absorbs the entire negativity that is presented to her.

Not only Mother Earth, but also her fruits have the quality to absorb the negative influences determining the blockage of the chakras and subtle channels. Thus, the cleansing technique known as *madka* (Sanskrit) implies placing hot pepper and lemons in an earthen pot with water (combination of the Earth and Water elements—see above, the foot soak). The hot pepper here is used to remove the catches of the left channel often caused by the dead entities that enter there, whereas lemons cleanse the right channel. In order to make it absorbing the evil influences, the pot is kept in the bedroom, opened over the night and covered over daytime. When the fruits have loaded with negativity, the pot together with its content is thrown into running water or buried into the ground.

XV-43 The traveler through the Arabic countries may have noticed several hot peppers hanging on strings above the house entrances. The same tradition exists in India. In Romania, there is the custom of “decorating” the kitchen or dining room, especially with various vegetables always including hot pepper, but this habit is generally connected to the harvest festival, since this is a common autumn practice. The cleansing effect of the hot pepper could partly explain why certain populations, especially Islamic and Hindu ones, largely consume the hot spices.

XV-44 For entering the holy place, the participants had to be bare-foot. Mother Earth (*Bhoomi Devi*, Sanskrit), as *Prithivi*, has been venerated in India since ancient times. The syntagma “the holy earth of India” is perfectly true, since in India there were incarnated many saints whose steps charged with holy vibrations the land on which they walked. Besides Water (and as we would see Fire or even Air), the purification was done by the element of Earth too. The natural elements presented above correspond to the chakras and energy channels and that is why their use allows the harmony between man and

Mother Nature to be restored. Thus, we understand the importance and particular significance of the ecology on a subtle level too. It is odd that despite the general recognition of the Mother Earth and that Nature was never the Father, the native land is sometimes called fatherland!

“Draw not nigh hither: loose thy sandals from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5; cf. Joshua 5:15; Acts 7:33). In Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Islam, the access to the sacred XV-45 places is not allowed unless barefooted. However, other religions have forgotten this ancient custom. Such an instance appeared, even in the old times, with the Jewish lawgivers that neither recommended nor prohibited the taking off the shoes.

Walking barefoot in sacred places was considered to be not only a sign of respect but, as Sahaja Yoga shows, it represents also a helpful method to use the Earth element for purification. The contact between the ground and the terminals of the energy paths (i.e. the locations in the soles corresponding to X-1 the subtle centers; ch. X, XI C) allows Mother Earth to absorb all the causes producing blockages in the entire subtle system. Sitting right on the ground, in the Lotus position (*padmasana*, Sanskr.) with crossed legs (as Muslims XV-46 did⁴⁵⁵), gave the best contact between the Mooladhara chakra (“root” of the subtle body) and the Earth, and it was an excellent remedy for the purification of this chakra.

Prostration by touching the earth with the forehead (*namaskara*, XV-47 Sanskrit)—as its Christian equivalent, genuflexion—was not only a sign of 49 high respect, but it was also a way of purification of the Agya chakra (placed in the center of the forehead) and was practiced on a large scale by the genuine Yogis. The meaning of this gesture is humiliating the ego that must be bent down until it is completely absorbed into its source (origin). Examples of this gesture could be found in the Old Testament too: “The man stooped, and bowed down before Yahweh” (Genesis 24:26; cf. 24:48,52). “I fell down before Yahweh” (Deuteronomy 9:18; cf. Nehemiah 8:6). “He bowed down on the earth, and put his face between his knees” (1 Kings 18:42). “They shall bow down to thee with face toward the earth” (Isaiah 49:23; cf. 49:7). And there were also other prayers examples. Muslims also practiced XV-48 prostration (*irka*, Arab.) during their prayers to God. The *Zohar* describes the protocol before entering the seventh hall (i.e. the supreme chakra, *the Kingdom* of the Sahasrara): “Here there are kneeling, prostration, obeisance, the spreading forth of the hands, and the falling upon one’s face, in order to attract the favor of the supernal Will” [66].

⁴⁵⁵ Presently, Muslims still use—unconsciously and unfortunately inefficiently—many of the secret techniques of the East.

Sometimes, the bending is accompanied by touching the earth with the right hand. This is a custom with Orthodox Christians. Muslims use to say: “Taribat Yaminuka” which means: “let your right hand touch the ground.” After receiving his enlightenment under the Bo tree, the Buddha touched the earth with his right hand [67] (see also ch. XI C). Antheus, the son of Goddess Earth (Gaia, Gr.) gained new powers whenever touching Mother Earth.

This gesture is used in Sahaja Yoga to cleanse the Mooladhara chakra (which corresponds to the Earth) and/or the left channel originating in that chakra. As for the practitioner who wants to purify his right channel, he will raise his left hand to the heaven, palm towards the body, thus using the cleansing capacity of the Air (Ether). That practice reminds the *Bible*: “My (left) hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spread abroad the heavens” (Isaiah 48:13), the earth being of feminine and the heaven of masculine gender (ch. XX A). We have repeatedly shown (ch. I, IV, VIII etc.) the particular importance given by the Kabbalists to the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Its graphical sign \aleph represents the frontal view of a man with his left hand pointing to the sky while his right hand touches the ground.

For sure, there are many gestures which had been adopted in the Christian tradition and whose real significance was completely forgotten. The ancient secrets were lost in a ritualistic cut off from its essence. An example among many others (see ch. XIX C) was that of putting the two hands together when we pray. Maybe sometimes we feel that this gesture helped us to concentrate better on the Divine. We have previously explained the relation revealed by Sahaja Yoga regarding the connections between the chakras and the palms, the latter reflecting the assembly of the subtle body (ch. X). When we put together the palms of our hands we obtained a perfect balance of the two channels which lead to an intensification of the Kundalini energy (vehicle of communication with God), which could thus circulate easily, and it also increased our capacity to concentrate throughout the Yoga meditation. In India (as well as in other countries, e.g. in Japan), pressing the palms together is a sign of greeting (*anjali*, Sanskr.), while the Hindus utter *namaste* (Sansk.). The word *namah*⁴⁵⁶ (Sansk.) signifies a deep respect, or worship.

Another purifying element was the Fire, having cleansing powers like Water and signifying reconciliation with God. “And one of the seraphim flew unto me, and he had in his hand a glowing coal... and he made it touch my

⁴⁵⁶ See the phonetic identity with *naamah* (beauty, pleasant Hebr.; see ch. XIX C), which was the name of Enoch’s daughter who was Noah’s wife.

mouth, and said: «Behold, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin expiated»” (Isaiah 6:6,7). Fire was used in religious rites by means of oil lamps, candles or torches (in processions; ch. XV F) in Christian religion, Islam, Hinduism etc., but also within the Yoga purifying techniques, particularly for the left (*cold*) channel and all the chakras of the left side. The purification through fire, *Agnihotra*, was described in the *Vedas*. However, fire was especially used in offerings and sacrifices (ch. XV E).

The ritual and sacrificial usage of the oil was characteristic for Mediterranean and Near Eastern people (but not only, as we shall see below). The anointment with holy oil was used not just for holy places or for the objects of cult, but also for the Lord’s servants as well. The Lord commanded Moses: “anoint them and hallow them, that they may serve me as priests” (Exodus 28:41). “And Aaron and his sons thou shalt anoint, and shall hallow them, that they may serve me as priests... A holy anointing oil shall this be unto me” (30:30,31). “Thou shalt take the anointing oil, and pour [it] on his head, and anoint him” (29:7). As for the high priest: “the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him” (Leviticus 21:12). “Let thy garments be always white, and let not thy head lack oil” (Ecclesiastes 9:8).

The unction was the symbol of light and purity, as well as of prosperity, which was regarded as a sign of divine blessing, of joy and brotherhood. Thus, Moses said about Asher: “Let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil” (Deuteronomy 33:24), and Job (29:6) stated: “the rock poured out beside me rivers of oil.”

The anointment was distinctive for prophets, priests and sovereigns being a symbol of consecration. Saul (1 Samuel 10:1), David (16:13) and Solomon (1 Kings 1:39) were thus anointed. The Lord ordered Elijah to anoint Jehu as king and Elisha as a prophet (19:16). The anointment bestowed divine protection: “Touch not mine anointed ones, and do my prophets no harm” (Psalms 105:15). “Now know I that Yahweh saveth his anointed” (20:6). In the old rituals the unction with oil granted protection from demons and “sealed” the body. The anointment was considered “the seal of the word” and able to grant protection like a mantra (ch. XV D) and thus preventing the return of the devil. This was probably the earliest meaning of the word seal [68]. In Psalms we can also find other references to the anointment on the head (23:5; 133:2) or in general (92:10). For other examples see Ruth 3:3; 2 Samuel 14:2; Daniel 10:3. The unction healed the sick and the infirm ones too (Mark 6:13; James 5:14-15).

The anointed one acquired also the everlasting grace of the absolute knowledge, which was comparable to the Self Realization: “And ye have

[the] unction from the Holy [one], and ye know all things” (1 John 2:20). “The unction which ye have received from him abides in you, and ye have not need that any one should teach you; but as the same unction teaches you as to all things, and is true and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him” (2:27).

Jesus was *The Anointed One* (*Messiah*—from *Meshiah*, Aram.; *Mashiah*, Hebr.; *Christós*, Gr.). However, He was anointed, too, in a proper sense, under various circumstances: “A woman, having an alabaster flask of very precious ointment, came to him and poured it out upon his head as he lay at table” (Matthew 26:7; cf. Mark 14:3). “And behold, a woman in the city, who was a sinner... having taken an alabaster box of myrrh... began to wash his feet with tears; and she wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed [them] with the myrrh” (Luke 7:37-38). “My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she has anointed my feet with myrrh” (7:46). “It was [the] Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment” (John 11:2). “Mary therefore, having taken a pound of ointment of pure nard of great price, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair” (12:3). After that, Jesus told His disciples that she had “kept this for the day of my preparation for burial” (12:7) which was the Jewish custom. “They took therefore the body of Jesus and bound it up in linen with spices, as it is the custom with the Jews to prepare for burial” (19:40). “Mary of Magdala and Mary [the] mother of James and Salome bought aromatic spices that they might come and embalm him” (Mark 16:1). “And women... having returned they prepared aromatic spices and ointments... ; in the morning they came to the tomb, bringing the aromatic spices which they had prepared” (Luke 23:55-56; 24:1).

Jesus urged us: “Anoint thy head and wash thy face” (Matthew 6:17).

The Gnostic Scriptures associated the anointment with the olive tree as the Tree of Life (ch. IV), and with the cross. “The Tree of Life is in the middle of garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we get the chrism⁴⁵⁷, and from the chrism, the resurrection” [69]. “Holy oil, which wast given to us for unction, and hidden mystery of the cross, which is seen through it” [70]. “Lord, come abide upon this oil, as thou didst abide upon the tree, and they who crucified thee were not able to hear thy word” [71]. Even Origen quoted the sentence: “I have been anointed with white ointment from the tree of life” [72].

In Christianity the anointment—just as bathing—belonged to the rituals performed over one’s lifetime: first, at the baptism (on the breast and on the back, i.e. on the chakras; ch. XXII B), then in the course of the religious

⁴⁵⁷ *Chrisma* (unction, Gr.).

service (the anointment on the forehead) and finally, as extreme unction given to the dying.

Auboyer showed that the ointment (with oils sometimes perfumed) was used in ancient India [73]. It was well known to Yogis that the anointment (especially with coconut oil) on the Sahasrara facilitated the Kundalini's connection to the universal vibratory energy (Paramchaitanya) through the fontanel bone. Also the effigies of deities are anointed (with clarified butter, *ghee*) which gives them a fresh, clean appearance.

The Indian women wear a red dot (*tika*, *bindu*, drop, star, Sanskr.) on XV-50 their foreheads. During ritual ceremonies, all participants, regardless of their sex, wear tika, as a sign of their special devotion, but also as a subtle protection of the Agya chakra in the middle of the forehead (Shiva's third eye). Besides the red pigment (kumkum) other colors might be used and the small dot may become a vertical or horizontal line (single or multiple) or curved to form a U, in the latter cases representing a distinctive sign for people belonging to a caste or a social group or the devotees of a specific deity.

Throughout the Puja the kumkum might be also used to decorate the feet of the deity and people present there might also put the red dot on their wrists (corresponding to Mooladhara), as well as on their foreheads. Referring to Passover, God said to Moses: "It shall be for a sign to thee on thy hand, and for a memorial between thy eyes" (Exodus 13:9,16).

The first sign mentioned in the Bible referred to Cain: "Yahweh set a mark on Cain, lest any finding him should smite him" (Genesis 4:15). "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men" (Ezekiel 9:4; cf. 9:6). In the Hebrew original it is not said what this mark was but the *Septuagint* saw in this mark the Greek letter T (many times, the crucified was hanged on a T-shaped pole, therefore suggesting also the cross of the side channels in Agya; ch. XIX C). The mark was on the forehead: "as an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead" (3:9). However, the diamond was seen above as the gem of the Agya chakra in the center of the forehead which is governed by Jesus who said about the Son of man: "For him has the Father sealed, [even] God" (John 6:27). This sign, like a seal is the mark of immortality born by the saints (those having the Self-Realization). Revelation also mentions "the men who have not the seal of God on their foreheads" (9:4; cf. 7:3). "His name [is] on their foreheads" (22:4; cf. 14:1). The Kabbalists take the sacred seal of the forehead to be David's hexagonal star with the holy Tetragram (6+4=10 sephiroth) in its center. However, the number of star corners plus the central inscription gives 6+1=7 chakras (ch. IV).

The ointments were used in the cults dedicated to Osiris and Mithra, and

thus Tertullian told us that “Mithra... sets his marks on the foreheads of his soldiers” [74].

We do not find it necessary here to enter into further details concerning the ritual garments indicated in the *Bible*: “These are holy garments; and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and put them on” (Leviticus 16:4). We would only discuss here about a single element, which did have a special significance—the girdle or the belt.

The text in the Old Testament describes the girdle as being made of three intertwined threads (Exodus 28:8; 39:5). Having different colors (therefore different functions), the three threads symbolized the specific energies of the three subtle channels. The *Zohar* brings the confirmation of it, when showing that on the Resurrection day (i.e. that of Self Realization), “a pillar of three colors is brought forward” to the soul [75]. Also the Ecclesiastes mentioned the “threefold cord” (4:12).

In order to be sanctified, the priests had to wear that girdle (Exodus 29:5; Leviticus 8:7,13); the same happened throughout feasts (Leviticus 16:4), for instance on Passover (Exodus 12:11). Elijah girded up his loins (1 Kings 18:46; 2 Kings 1:8), also had Gehazi (4:29), one of the sons of the prophets (9:1), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:17). Archangel Michael had his loins girded with pure gold (Daniel 10:5), while John the Baptist wore a leather girdle about his loins (Matthew 3:4), like Elijah (2 Kings 1:8). Job said twice: “Gird up now thy loins like a man” (Job 38:3; 40:7). Jesus recommended to the disciples: “Let your loins be girded about” (Luke 12:35; John 21:18) and appeared Himself girded with a golden girdle (Revelation 1:13). “And righteousness shall be the girdle of his reins, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins,” said Isaiah (11:5) about God. In this we see a reference to the qualities of the respective chakra: the Nabhi, on the level of the navel (the loins), which is the center of Dharma that means of the religion, which implies both *righteousness* and *faithfulness*.

“Narrated Ibn ‘Abbas: «The first lady to use a girdle was the mother of Isma’il»” [76], i.e. Hagar (*Hajar*, Arab.). Aphrodite used to wear a “curious embroidered girdle in which all the magic resides,” reminiscent of Inanna’s [77].

XV-51 In India the sacred rope (*upavita*, Sanskr.) was also made of three intertwined cotton threads, also having three different colors (like the Judaic belt) representing the three gunas (i.e. the channels). Through the initiation ceremony, the Guru girdled the young boy (8-12 years old) with it. They were both, in a certain way, oriented towards the cardinal points and the master uttered the following: “She has come to protect us against evil, to purify our skin, encloaking herself with a force, due to the power of

breaths⁴⁵⁸, the holy girdle, the goddess friend!” [78]. Therefore the girdle symbolized the fulfillment of a covenant, acquiring the power to sanctify and to initiate; at the same time it became a symbol announcing the powers with which the wearer of the girdle was invested. Starting from that moment, considered as the second birth, the wearing of the girdle became compulsory for those in the superior castes, during their daily prayers.

D. INVOCATION

*“Whosoever shall call upon the name of
Yahweh shall be saved”*

Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21

The symbolism and the use of the divine name represented a permanent characteristic of all theistic religions, as well as in the forms of Buddhism that were close to these.

The invocation was performed before, during or after offerings, or sacrifices, or independently, as prayers, for example.

Abraham performed the first invocation mentioned in the Old Testament: he “build an altar to Yahweh, and called on the name of Yahweh” (Genesis 12:8).

By calling the Name the devotee was reminded⁴⁵⁹ of the Divinity which brought forth the divine presence: “In all places where I shall make my name remembered, I will come unto thee, and bless thee” (Exodus 20:24) said God to Moses. “Remember me, and I will remember you” (*adhkuruni* ‘*adhkurkum*, Arab.; *The Qur’an* 2.147). According to a *hadith*, God said: “I am the companion of him who remembers me” (*ana jalisu man dhakarani*, Arab.) [79]. During the prayer rite, one say: “God hears him who praises him” [80].

The first sentence in the Old Testament says: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). The text, actually, starts in the following way: “*Bereshit bara Elohim* (In principle has Gods, Hebr.; *sic!* The subject is in the plural whereas the predicate in the singular) *et ha’shamaim ve et ha’aretz*” (the heavens and the earth, Hebr.). Here the word *Elohim* was the plural of *El* (Semit.; from *Ilu*, god, Akkad.) that meant

⁴⁵⁸ It is a precise specification of the typical energies of the three channels, revealing the significance of the three intertwined threads.

⁴⁵⁹ *Anámnesis* (Gr.).

Mighty. The singular *Eloah* (the Supreme, Hebr.; compare to *Allah*, Arab.) appeared later on and had an allegorical meaning (see for instance Psalms 18:31; Isaiah 44:8 etc.). In the biblical texts *El* gradually got the sense of *Lord* or *Master* and was sometimes part of some sacred names: *Eliyah* (Yahweh is my God, Hebr.), *El'azar*, but also *Yisra'el* (the one who fights God, Hebr.; Genesis 32:28), *Gabri'el* (God's man, Hebr.; Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19), *Mikha'el* (Who is like God, Hebr.; Daniel 10:13,21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7), *Yehezq'el* (whom God makes strong, Hebr.; Ezekiel 1:3; 3:8), and *Immanu'el* (God is with us, Hebr.; Isaiah 7:14; 8:8; Matthew 1:23) are examples of God-bearer names (*theophóros*, Gr.).

It should be remarked that this inclusion of God into individual names denotes the aspiration at *union* (Yoga) with the Absolute, which is obvious especially in Hinduism where the word *Atman* is considered as part of *Brahman*. Still more obvious, the phenomenon is present in the Latin languages where *io* (I, Ital.) is included in *Dio* (Godhead, god, Ital.) and especially in Romanian where *eu* (I, Roman.) is a part of *Dumnezeu*⁴⁶⁰ (Godhead, Roman.) as well as of *zeu* (god, Roman.). It should not be surprising that, in Sanskrit, *Deva* (deity) contains the name given to the Primordial Woman (*Eva*, Lat. of *Eve*) who was a divine manifestation, just like Adam (ch. XIX C).

Elohim had the significance of the Powerful Ones (Hebr.). The *Bible* sometimes translated it by the singular form (as above, in Genesis 1:1), although normally it should appear as plural like in Genesis 3:22: "Behold, Man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." The plural form appeared also in the theonym *Elohey ha-Elohim* (God of gods, Hebr.), for instance in Deuteronomy 10:17: "Yahweh your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, the Great God" (*El*, Hebr.). "The gods" (*h-'lhym*; Genesis 22:1,3,9) ordered Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. This kind of formulations would result in the existence of the divine plurality.

God defines Himself: "I am the First, and I am the Last, and beside me there is no God" (Isaiah 44:6; cf. 43:10; 48:12), which send to Brahman who existed before creation and will exist after the final destruction (end of cycle).

Another phrase denotes God as *the Ancient of days* (Daniel 7:9; also 7:13,22). Hence, Clement of Alexandria identified God with Absolute Time. Jesus is "Lord of all time and space" [81], *the One who is, who was and who is to come* (Revelation 1:4,8), *the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last* (1:8,11; 22:13). The same concept is

⁴⁶⁰ From *Dominus Deus* (Lord God, Lat.; it corresponds approximately to Yahweh Elohim).

encountered with the first epistle of John (1:1; 2:13,14). Enoch repeatedly uses the epithet *the Ancient of days* [82].

However, the most important name, the secret one was the tetragram YHWH, for Yahweh⁴⁶¹. Yahweh—the holy name of the Unutterable and Unnamable—appeared for the first time as *Yahweh Elohim*, in Genesis (2:5), where it was translated *Yahweh (your or our) God* (see for instance Deuteronomy 4:4; 29:29 etc.). “YHWH is Elohim”—*Yahweh is (or art) God* (Deuteronomy 4:39; 1 Kings 18:37). Since God disclosed the name of *Yahweh* to Moses only after the exodus, some exegetes suppose that this name was not part of the earliest national tradition, which used only the Canaanite *El*.

The Tetragram is translated through *I am*: “*Eheyeah asher eheyeah*”⁴⁶² (I am⁴⁶³ That I am, Hebr.), as God said to Moses (Exodus 3:14). *YHWH* is related to *hyh* (the semivowels “w” and “y” are interchangeable in Semitic languages), an archaic form of the verb “be.”

The introductory sentence of *Tao-Te-King* also bears witness about the Secret Name: “The name that can be named is not the eternal name” [83].

In the *Vedas*, Purusha was called *Tad Ekam* (This One, Sanskr.). One remarks the great similitude between *Ekad* (Unique, Sanskr.), *Ehad* (the One, the Only One, Hebr.), and *al-Ahad* (the One, Arab.; it is used as a name of Allah).

“Yahweh our God is one (*Ehad*) Yahweh” (Deuteronomy 6:4). “Beside me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6; cf. 43:10; 45:5,6; 48:12; Exodus 20:2-3).

“There is no god but He” said the *Qur'an* (6.106). This corresponds to *ilaha illa' Llah*, which is integrated to the *shahadah* (testimony, Arab.; of faith; 2.256; 3.1), where *ilah* literally means *divinity*. This sentence has two parts, the former negative and the latter affirmative: *La ilaha* (There is no divinity) *illa' Llah* (except the Divinity, *Allah*). Being inspired by the *shahadah* (contemplation, Arab.), the Sheikh Ahmed al-'Alawi, composed the invocation of all the divine attributes (*as-sifat al-ilahiyah*, Arab.): “*La quddusa* (holy, Arab.) *illa 'llah*,” “*la 'alima* (wise man, scholar, Arab.) *illa 'llah*” etc.

Keeping the secret, the Angel who fought against Jacob, refused to say his name (Genesis 32:29). Likewise did the Angel addressing to Manoah

⁴⁶¹ More plausible than *Jehovah*.

⁴⁶² “*Ego sum qui sum*” (Lat.)

⁴⁶³ *I am* embraces *all* the holy names, since “God (Elohim) spoke all these words, saying: «I am Yahweh thy God...»” (Exodus 20:1).

(Judges 13:18): “How is it that thou askest after my name, seeing it is wonderful?”

De Souzenelle [84] made the following remark full of significance for the present section: “The Tetragram *Yod-He-Vau-He* was uttered in the secrecy of the Temple, once a year, by the great priest, in a *vibratory* manner that was lost” (emphasis added). Also the famous visionary Hildegard of Bingen believed that “singing of words reveals their true meaning directly to the soul through bodily vibration” [85].

The divine name could not be spoken, for God Himself could not be defined in any way, not even by words. And, still, Jesus said: “I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world” (John 17:6). Even the Old Testament reads: “I will declare thy name unto my brethren” (Psalms 22:22). Also Shekhinah’s name was as holy as Yahweh’s, since it was not spoken of directly. She was referred to, however, as “That Woman” or “That Female” rather than by her ineffable name [86]. Revelation also refers to a secret name: “a name written, which no one knows but he that receives [it]” (2:17). Like this, all three monotheistic religions are discerning of the secret names of God.

The prohibition also existed in the Greek world, since Herodotus and Pausanias used to say: “I am not permitted to name the name of that god” [87].

The secret essence of the name was appropriated in Islam: “Narrated Abu Huraira: «Allah has ninety-nine names, i.e. one hundred minus one»” [88]: from the first one (*al-Awwal*) to the last one (*al-Akhir*). The one who will get to know all these names will enter Paradise. The Great Name (*al-ism al-A'zam*, Arab.) was the secret one which completed the number of names to one hundred. Chevalier and Gheerbrant showed: “The quest for the «Lost Word» so often invoked, is that for the Primordial Revelation for which the symbolism of primeval language is another synonym. In Muslim tradition, the language concerned is «Syriac», or «Solar», a patent way of expressing the «light» drawn into the primeval spiritual center” [89], the Syriac being an Aramaic language from the Semitic family. From this point of view the diversification of the original language into more languages at *Babel* (confusion, Hebr.), described in Genesis (11:6-9), led to the loss of primordial knowledge. For Primordial Revelation was Knowledge (*Vidya*, Sanskr.) and Wisdom (one of the Ganesha’s four qualities; ch. XIX C), the mother of the *Vedas*. The sage Kashyapa (*Vision*, because it is the anagram of *pashyaka*, vision, Sanskr.) was “the Natural son of the Blessed One, born of his mouth, born of the dhamma⁴⁶⁴, formed by the dhamma” [90].

⁴⁶⁴ In Pali; *Dharma* (in Sanskr.).

The one hundred names given to Allah constitute not an exception. Hindus have the habit of reciting the multiple names of the worshipped Deity. Sometimes there are *one thousand names* (*Sahasranama*, Sanskr.; also *Rahasyanama-Sahasra*, thousand secret names; *nama*—name, Sanskr.) like the names of Vishnu gathered in *Shri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram* (*stotram*, hymns, Sanskr.), those of the Great Goddess, in *Shri Lalitambika Sahasranama Stotram*, or of Shiva, in *Shri Shiva Sahasranama Stotram* [91]. Let us remember, too, that the alchemists used to say: “*Habet mille nomina*” (he has thousand names, Lat.).

Such collections of sacred names meant for recitation are also in Christianity. Hasdeu referred to “the 72 Names of Christ, or the canon of Christ”, mentioned in the *Rojdanic* (Zodiac, Slav.) [92] and provides their list after Nissard [93], together with the following text: “Here are the Names of Jesus Christ; anyone who carries them during his journey on land or sea, will be protected against all kinds of dangers and perils, if he utters them with belief and devotion.”

Nissard also gave a list of “the Names of the Holy Virgin.” Let us remind here the *Golden Legend* where a knight renounces the world and enter the Cistercian order. There he repeated incessantly the words *Ave Maria* and thus he became a highly realized soul (saint) [94].

A special mention should be made of the double invocation *Jesu Maria*, which is also in use among Christians and denotes the equivalence given to both of them (ch. XIX C, XX C3).

The addressing names in the *Bible* are attributive in that they denote qualities or divine hypostases⁴⁶⁵ (hypóstasis, singular; hypóstaseis, plural, Gr.). God said to Moses: “I am that I am... Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: «I am» hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:14). “Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob... This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations” (3:15). “My strength and song is Yah⁴⁶⁶” (15:2). Other appellatives of God (kinuyim, Hebr.) are Compassionate, Great Forgiving, Venerable etc. The attributive names will be discussed at large in chapter XIX A.

One can give many examples for the divine appellations used in the Old Testament. The Psalms (104-106; 111-113; 115-117; 135; 146-150 etc.), for example, end with the word *Halleluyah* (Praise to You, Yah, Hebr.; from

⁴⁶⁵ Determinative form of the impersonal essence of reality.

⁴⁶⁶ *Yah* may be the archaic short form of *Yahweh* that seems to express His *Absolute*, rather than His *continuous* existence.

Yahweh, the Lord). *Adonai* (Lord, Master, Hebr.) was considered an intensive plural, like *Shaddai* (usually met under the form *El-Shadai* as in Genesis 17:1), that is God Almighty (28:3; 35:11; Exodus 6:3), although this is not the exact meaning (see ch. XX B). *El-Shadai* was first used by God when introduced Himself to Abraham (Genesis 17:1): “I am the Almighty God”, while He was addressing Moses by employing the name of *Yahweh*, translated by the Lord (Exodus 6:6). Observe the analogy to *Sada-Shiva* (Sansk.) with the same meaning! *Adonai* was considered to be the unutterable name whereas *Yahweh* is the name that cannot be uttered.

The Psalms contain a number of references to the invocation of the name of God: “With my voice I will call to Yahweh, and he will answer me from the hill of his holiness” (3:4). “Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee” (50:15). “In my trouble I called unto Yahweh, and he answered me. Yahweh, deliver my soul” (120:1-2). “Yahweh is nigh unto all that call upon him, unto all that call upon him in truth” (145:18). “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it” (81:10). Isaiah wrote in his turn: “Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called [thee] by thy name; thou art mine” (43:1). “Seek ye Yahweh while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (55:6).

Moses' hymn reads: “Give hear, ye heavens, and I will speak” (Deuteronomy 32:1). The cry (*tzaaq*, Hebr.) is also used on other occasions. “Behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me” (Exodus 3:9). “If he cries at all unto me, I will certainly hear his cry” (22:23).

“Hear, Israel!” is a sacred invocation in the Deuteronomy (5:1; cf. 4:1) meant for acknowledging the uniqueness of God: “Hear, Israel! Yahweh our God is one Yahweh” (*Shem'a Yisrael, YHWH Elohenu, YHWH ehad*, Hebr.—6:4). It constitutes the beginning of the 15 verses (6:4-9; 11:13-21) including 170 essential words written on 22 lines (see ch. IV) making up the XV-53 *mezuzah* written on a wrapped roll of parchment in a container of wood or horn affixed on the gates of their houses. On the backside it has written the Holy Name of *Shaddai* visible through an aperture. A similar roll is bound XV-54 by the Jews round their hand and their forehead (*tephilin*, phylacteries, Hebr.) and on the gates of their houses: “These words, which I commend thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shall impress them on thy sons, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou goest on the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign on thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and upon thy gates” (6:6-9). The prophets of Baal used to invoke their god in a similar invocation: “Baal, hear us!” (1 Kings 18:26; King James Version).

The invocation of the divine name produces important consequences for

the caller.

“Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee” told God to the psalmist (50:15; cf. 107:6,13,19,28). “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him” (91:15; cf. Job 22:27; Zechariah 10:6; 13:9). “Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called [thee] by thy name: thou art mine” (Isaiah 43:1). “Seek ye Yahweh while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (55:6). “And so I prayed, and understanding was given to me; I entreated, and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me” the *Wisdom of Solomon* reads [95].

“Ye are already clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you” (John 15:3). “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, this will I do” (14:13). “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give you” (15:16; 16:23,24,26). “Ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life in his name” (20:31). The first epistle to the Corinthians was intended to “all that in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:2).

Another kind of invocation was the one addressed to the Heavenly Father by Jesus, in the last moment of His sacrifice on the cross (Matthew 27:46): “*Eli, Eli*⁴⁶⁷, *lamah sabachtani*?” which was translated into: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken⁴⁶⁸ me?” We will be at pains to credit this *interpretation*, because it cannot be taken as a correct translation. Jesus had declared in His *Sermon on the Mount*: “Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:7-8). Likewise: “Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; but I knew that thou always hearest me” (John 11:41-42). However, since besides the meaning of “forsaken,” *shabeyah* (Hebr.) means “to praise,” “to glorify,” the sentence might have a more logical meaning becoming: “My God, my God, to what [degree] hast thou praised me?” These words finished the prayer of the Therapeutae⁴⁶⁹ sect thus expressing their amazement at the graces received. On the last evening spent with the disciples, Jesus said: “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee” (John 17:1; cf. 17:5; 12:23). “Father, glorify thy name...

⁴⁶⁷ *Eloi* (Aram.); or *Elohi* (Hebr.).

⁴⁶⁸ *Egkatélipēs* (Gr.).

⁴⁶⁹ They were practicing asceticism similar to the Essenes.

I both have glorified and will glorify [it] again⁴⁷⁰” (12:28), using apparently the same verb *shabeyah*. Even if we would accept the canonical translation of Christ’s saying, this send us to the prophecy: “Saith God: «For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee»” (Isaiah 54:7), which changes totally the general meaning.

The invocation based on the repetition of the divine name is encountered in Hinduism (*japa*, Sanskr.), in Buddhism (*nienfo*, Chin.; *nembutsu*, Japan.), in Hesychasm (*prayer of the heart*), in Islam (*adh-dhikr*, Arab.). The former two are analyzed in this section, while the latter two would be dealt with in chapter XXV A and B. As for the Kabbalists, they claimed that if somebody “spends the whole day reading just this one verse⁴⁷¹, he attains eternal beatitude” [96].

The sacred syllable AUM (OM) was the Primordial Sound, the Creative Sound, or the Verb (ch. I). It was the essence of the *Vedas*, therefore of the sacred science. It was the first and most important mantra and, at the same time, constituted the basic thought-form (*Brahma-bija*; *Brahma-vidya mantra*). In the primordial language, it has the significance of assent, of surrender. “Verily, this syllable is assent; for whenever one assents to anything he says simply OM. This, indeed, is fulfillment—that is, assent is” [97]. It was also called the Passer-by, the One who passes you to the other border (*Tara* or *Tarini*, Sanskr.). In the *Upanishads*, it was said: “The mystic syllable OM is the bow. The arrow is the soul (Atman), [and] Brahman is said to be the mark (*lakshya*). By the undistracted man is It to be penetrated. One should come to be in It, as the arrow [in the mark]” [98]. “The past, the present, the future—everything is just the word OM. And whatever else that transcends threefold time—that, too, is just the word OM” [99]. We find here again the words of the Savior (Revelation 1:8) mentioned formerly.

This syllable OM was integrated—as a rule in the beginning—within the other mantras, for instance, in the *Gayatri*⁴⁷² mantra [100] (power of each chakra’s Elements), called also *the triple hymn*: *OM Bhuh, OM Bhuvah, OM Swah, OM Mah, OM Janah, OM Tapah, OM Satyam, OM Tat Savitur Varenyam Bhargo Devasya, Dhi Mahi, Dhiyoyonah Prachodayat, OM Apo Jyoti Raso Mritam, OM Bhur Bhuvah Swarom*. “Nothing in the *Vedas* is

⁴⁷⁰ *Kai edóxasa kai pálin doxás* (Gr.).

⁴⁷¹ From the *Torah*; here, it was about a statement from an old *Midrash* saying that the one who keeps reading verse 36:22 in Genesis (“Lotan’s sister was Timna”, completely insignificant) the whole day long, will receive eternal bliss.

⁴⁷² Meter in the Indian prosody, with 3 x 8 syllables.

superior to the Gayatri. No invocation is equal to the Gayatri... The Gayatri is the mother of the *Vedas* and of *Brahmins*... For the Gayatri is Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva and the *Vedas*” [101]. The “twice-born” must recite Gayatri at dawn, at noon and at sunset. Gayatri is mentioned in the *Rig-Veda* as well as in the *Upanishads* [102].

Another example is the well-known mantra used especially by the Buddhists: *OM Mani Padme Hum* (*OM, the Jewel*⁴⁷³ *in the Lotus heart*).

A is the primordial sound, common to all the others: it includes and is included in all the other sounds. Likewise, it is the first letter of the Sanskrit alphabet. It corresponds to the first part of the Self (*Vaisvanara*, the one that is common to all the people), to the awakened state, respectively. It is produced in the back part of the opened mouth.

U corresponds to the second part of the Self (*Tajasa*, the Fiery), to the dream, respectively. It stands for a mid position since the mouth closes gradually from *A* to *M*. *U* is produced with the opening for *A* but forged by the rounded lips. Likewise, dream is made up from the consciousness of the awakened state forged by the unconsciousness of the sleep.

M corresponds to the third part of the Self (*Prajna*, the Conscious), to the deep dreamless sleep, respectively. It is produced with the mouth closed, which is, actually, the basic state from where all the speech sounds originate and, at the same time, it is the end of them.

Silence follows and surrounds the syllable AUM (OM). It is the fourth part of the Self (*Atman*), which is mute, unutterable. During the utterance of OM, silence is present elsewhere, on a transcendent level, staying the same over the entire creation, manifestation and dissolution of the universe. Silence corresponds to the *fourth state* (*turiya*; ch. XIX C). “Thus OM is the Self (Atman) indeed. He who knows this, with his self enters the Self—yes, he who knows this!” [103].

From AUM there originate the bija-mantras (see *infra*), keys of any language, elements of the sound power from which the mantra power derives. Some examples: Ain(g), Hrim, Shrim, Klim, Krim, Gam, Hum etc. We may notice the identity of the first one (Ain) with the Hebrew name of the divinity dominating the sephirotic tree (ch. IV).

AUM was, par excellence, the manifestation of Divinity (ch. XIX C). Closely related to this, the Hebrew word *amen* adopted (at the end of the prayer) by the Christian liturgy was the *creative breath* (spirit) invoked to fulfill the prayer. It is this word that was used by Jesus to conclude *Our Father* (Matthew 6:13) with the same goal. *Sepher Yetzirah* said that *Memra* (Word, Hebr.; the equivalent of the Greek *Lógos* and the Latin *Verb*) created

⁴⁷³ This is the Self (Atman), as a reflection of God.

any object and any thing through its Name One.

The concept of the Primordial Word also appeared in the holy writing of the ancient Persians, the *Avesta*, which said that the first words that existed before the Heaven, Water and Earth were “Asa para asmen” [104].

In a Gnostic writing, the prayer becomes a chant of sacred words and vowels containing a short *A*, then a very long *O* interrupted by a medium *U* that resembles well to *AUM*. After singing the chant, the master is asking: “Lord... acknowledge the Spirit that is in us” [105], entering afterwards into an ecstatic state.

The Gnostic Marcus referred to “the case of infants who have just been born, the cry of whom, as soon as they have issued from the womb, is in accordance with the sound of every one of these elements... the seven powers” [106]. We may consider that *the second birth* related to the Primordial Sound AUM is on a vibratory level exactly like *the physical birth* that means the acquiring of *breath* (ch. XI C) i.e. the beginning of breathing through the infant’s first cry.

The word *mantra* comes from *manana* (to meditate, Sanskr.). *Tra* is a suffix designating the instrument, the tool, and the Sanskrit *man* is “to think,” “to have in *mind*” (etymologically also related to *mens*, Lat.). The mantra is therefore the sacred thought-form for evoking or bringing to mind of the inner presence of the Divine. The mantra always has an action, a specific effect for which it is utilized. The art of using mantras is a secret well preserved by the recipient. Revelation wrote that it will be “a new name written, which noone knows but he that receives [it]” (2:17).

The origin of the mantra was related to Manu, the Father of the mankind. The mantra was charged with all the power (Shakti), and it allowed the perception of Brahman through the eye of the heart (Anahatha chakra), which caught sounds that were not heard.

The mantras are in a way identical to deities and are inseparable from them. “The power of a deity is inherent in its name, its formula, its mantra, which becomes the subtle vehicle through which contacts can be established between deity and worshiper. Through adequate mantras any sort of being can be evoked. Mantras are therefore the key to all rituals in all religions... «Verily, the body of the deity arises from the basic thought-form [or seed mantra⁴⁷⁴]]» [107]. Each deity is represented by a distinct mantra, and it is only through mysterious sounds that images can be consecrated and become «alive». It is the power of the mantra which brings down the deity and makes it enter the image... The first perception of a mantra is always attributed to a direct contact between a human being and a divinity. The mantra has to be

⁴⁷⁴ *Bija-mantra* (Sansk.).

first directly received from a divine incarnation or to be witnessed by a seer as a supernatural vision. Hence «he who [first] utters the mantra is its seer» [108].

The number of sound-elements used in all languages to form «articulate syllables» or *varnas* is limited by the capabilities of the human vocal organ and the aptitude for differentiation of the ear. These elements are common to all languages, although most languages use only a part of them. These sound-elements of language are permanent entities, independent of the evolution of language, and can be spoken of as everlasting or eternal. The *Tantras* attribute to them an independent existence and describe them as living, conscious sound-powers, equated with the deities... The main monosyllabic mantras are called basic-thought-forms or seed-mantras (*bija-mantra*)... The primordial language is believed to have been made of such ideophones and was therefore essentially monosyllabic” [109].

Here there are some applications of the mantras: attaining liberation (*moksha*), worship of the manifest forms of divinity, communicating with deities, warding off evil influences, exorcising devils, the cure of diseases, preparing curative (vibrated) water, purifying of the body [110].

According to the *Manava Dharma Shastra*: “undoubtedly, a Brahmin reaches the highest goal by muttering prayers only” [111].

However, Yogis knew that abuse and indiscriminate use of mantras was prejudicial to the one who used the mantras. This was also the case with taking the name of God in vain, which signified more than just being an abusive use: “Thou shalt not idly utter the name of Yahweh thy God, for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that idly uttereth his name” (Exodus 20:7). Also Jesus stressed on the appropriate usage of the word: “Every idle word which men shall say, they shall render an account of it in judgment day: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:36-37).

Deshayes [112] underlined another aspect that has to be taken into account: the ritual was less efficient if the name of the Divine was not uttered with the greatest accuracy. As it was known, the word played an essential role in oriental thinking, and this concept was widespread, for instance, in India and China, but not only there.

The use of some sacred formulas was common to other traditions, too. For instance, Isis won from Ra the secret of his name and so gained supremacy over him by her knowledge of the “word of power.” By means of the sacred name of God she “became a goddess of like rank and power to Ra” [113]. The secret name of the “Most High” anticipated the unpronounceable holy name of Yahweh according to the before-mentioned Hebrew tradition. Also

“Thoth utters the magic words of power” [114]. Some Homeric verses on deities were recited for “straightening the soul” [115] or for the “peace of the soul” [116], the latter characterizing the *hesychia* (ch. XXV A).

Uttering of the divine name of the Buddha is called *Buddha nusmriti* (Sanskrit), *nienfo* (Chin.), *nembutsu* (*namu Amida-Butsu*, praise to Buddha Amida, Japan.) for the *Amida* (Chin., Japan.; *Amitabha*, infinite light, Sanskrit) cult. “Is it not said that to think of the Buddha Amitabha and to pronounce his name... purifies us of all transgressions committed by us in all our lives during eighty thousand million *kalpas*?” The Chinese master Tao Ch’ao believed that if the devotee would utter without interruption the name of Buddha with one sole thought, leaving no room in his mind for anything else, then he is sure to be reborn in the presence of Buddha. The Chinese Shan Tao and the Japanese Ippen held similar positions [117].

In Islam, *da’wah* (call, invocation, Arab.) was represented by a complex system of secret correspondences, which were used for both exorcism and meditation, within a ritual implying a certain diet, the respecting of the moral code, ablutions and incense burning. According to the Islamic tradition, the recitation of the holy words induces the descent of the divine grace (*Shekhinah*). “Narrated al-Bara’:... The Prophet said: «That was as-Shekhinah, which descended because of (the recitation of) the *Qur’an*» [118].

One of the most common invocations in Islam is *Bismillah* (the complete mantra is *Bismil ‘llahi ‘r-Rahmani ‘r-Rahim*: In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, Arab.) in the beginning of the *Qur’an* and of each *surah* (chapter, Arab.) with an exception (the ninth *surah*, at-Tauba, the Repentance, Arab.), considered to be an addition to the previous one. The XV-52 invocation *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is Most Great⁴⁷⁵, Arab.) is also quite widespread. This opens the canonical prayer and is called the *Takbir*. “Magnify Him with all the magnificence” (17.111) or “Thy Lord magnify” (74.3). It should be noticed that Allah is a Name which goes beyond the Islamic faith: “the Compassionate Father” is called *Allaha* in the ancient Chinese Christian sutras⁴⁷⁶ that represent a synthesis of Eastern and Western spirituality, fusing Buddhism, Taoism and Christian faith. The uttering of XV-52 *Allahu Akbar* meant to cleanse the Vishuddhi chakra, must be performed while keeping the forefingers (corresponding to Vishuddhi) into the ears and

⁴⁷⁵ A translation that is closer to the real significance would be *Allah is Supreme*, indicating the transcendence. *Akbar* is the superlative from *kabir* (great, Arab.).

⁴⁷⁶ In Martin Palmer’s translation.

looking towards the ether (sky), which is the specific element of this chakra. Vishuddhi is the chakra of communication. It thus controls all the aspects ensuring communication: speech, hearing, gestures, face mimics, eye movements and the like (ch. I). At the same time it is the chakra of the collective consciousness achieved by communication, by our belonging to the Whole. However, the element characterizing it, the ether, is the ideal medium currently ensuring communication through acoustic and electromagnetic vibrations (light but also Hertzian waves: radio broadcast or other frequencies as in TV, radar etc.).

The *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* read: “The soul obtains peace through meditation on the Lord’s Name” (*Brahm giani man hovat sookh*). “Lord’s Name is the mainstay of the one who has Divine knowledge” (*Brahm giani kai naam aadhaar*). “God’s Name is the only jewel and ruby. Through the Name, truth, contentment and Divine knowledge are obtained” (*Ratan javehar naam. Sat santokh gian*) [119].

The *Zohar* shows that the Holy One manifested His attributes of Grace and Severity in “seventy-two holy Names, according to the threefold order” [120]. However, *grace* means the left Anahatha, therefore the Ida channel, whereas *severity* indicates the right Anahatha, thus the Pingala channel.

Gershom Scholem, an expert of Kabbalah, devoted an entire subchapter to the topic of the divine name considering that all the names are related to the Tetragram. He showed that after Menahem Recanati (c.1300), the true name of God consisted of the totality of the manifestations of the divine powers. We remember (ch. IV) that the consonants of the Hebrew alphabet were regarded as different configurations of the divine Power (*Adi Shakti*, Sanskr.). According to Abraham Abulafia⁴⁷⁷, “the other names of God, and the appellatives, or *kinnuyim*,... went through several sets of permutations and combinations.” Also, Scholem refers to “the initiates, who know and understand these principles of permutations and combinations” [121]. Or, the creator of Sahaja Yoga, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi specified that she made up her method by studying the *divine permutations and combinations* reflected on the level of human being.

The same as in Judaism, Islamic esoterica understand the whole universe as a book whose letters are the cosmic elements that, by their innumerable combinations and under the influence of the divine Ideas produce worlds, beings and things [122].

The Kabbalists considered the Heavenly Voice (*Bath Qol*, literally: Daughter of the Voice, Hebr.) to have been audible in the Talmudic era [123]. Rabbi Mendel Torum of Rymanów (d. 1814), one of the great Hasidic

⁴⁷⁷ Quoted by his disciple, Joseph Gikatilla.

saints (ch. XXV C), claimed that all that was revealed and heard by Israel on Mount Sinai was only the *aleph* with which in the Hebrew text the first commandment begins, the aleph of the word '*Anokhi* (I am, Hebr.). In Hebrew the consonant aleph⁴⁷⁸ represents nothing more than the position taken by the larynx when a word begins with a vowel (corresponding to *spiritus lenis*). Thus the aleph may be said to denote the source of all the articulate sound, and indeed the Kabbalists always regarded it as the spiritual root of all other letters, encompassing in its essence the whole alphabet and hence all other elements of human discourse [124] (see above; also ch. IV). In the Kabbalists view, *tikkun* of prayer is none other than that of the Holy Name itself, the Name of God, in which the sephirotic world is encompassed (ch. IV). Besides of that, “in the practical Kabbalah and in Abulafia’s writings, one gathers that the omission may have concerned the intonation of the letter combinations, breathing technique⁴⁷⁹, or certain movements of the... hands⁴⁸⁰ that had accompanied the process” [125].

We have seen above that one aim of the mantras is the opening of the chakras and the channels, thus preparing the way for the ascent of the Kundalini. In this respect, the *Zohar* tells us: “As the sacrificial smoke ascends to the heaven when the pontiffs officiate and the Levites sing hymns, likewise the spirits rise up from one palace to another one when people address their prayers to the supreme Light, the Light of the lights” [126]. “The sacrificial offerings is also like this. The smoke ascends and every one receives of it as much as he needs, the priests with their devotion and the Levites with their pleasant songs: each included with the other, and hall is conjoined with halls, spirit with spirit, so that they are united together in their places, as is fitting for them, limb with limb, and they are perfect through one another, and are unified through one another, so that they become one and illumine each other. Then the soul of all shine in perfection, as is right, until a supernal light is stimulated and everything enters the holy of holies and is blessed and filled... with blessings, above and below” [127] “Man’s prayer cleaves the ethereal spaces, cleaves the firmament, opens doors and ascends on high. At the moment of daybreak, when light emerges from darkness, a proclamation resounds through all the firmaments, saying: «Make yourselves ready, ye sentinels at the doors, chiefs of the Palace—each one to his post!»... Since there are chiefs in charge with guarding the doors of heavenly

⁴⁷⁸ Ch. I.

⁴⁷⁹ Ch. XXV C.

⁴⁸⁰ Ch. XXII E.

palaces... The seven palaces are the residences of the King. Once arrived in all these palaces, the prayers unite and form together a crown to God” [128]. “Maybe we would ask ourselves why are we praying step by step to the Holy One, blessed be him; the prayer is addressed to one or to another Sefirah;... why we pray Father and Mother who are at the right and left and at the middle Pillar? But the truth is that the name of Yahweh lies in each and every Sefirah; but since the prayer is destined to the Shekhinah, the latter raises from the right side when it is about to grant compassion in the world⁴⁸¹ and from the left side when it is about to exert severity⁴⁸²... That is why the prayer have to comprise all the ten Sephiroth; since any holy act requests the presence of all the ten” [129]. How wonderfully these texts render the invocation of the divine (*spirits, chiefs*) aspects (manifestations) enabling the Kundalini (*Shekhinah*) to ascend from chakra to chakra (*heavenly palace, doors, sephiroth*), including the channels (*left side, right side, and middle Pillar*) up to the Sahasrara (*crown of God*) integrating them all (*union of the prayers*).

In order to enter the heavenly halls of God’s palace, the sage Hai Gaon of Babylon (939-1038) recommends: “He must fast a specified number of days, he must place his head between his knees whispering softly to himself the while certain praises of God with his face towards the ground. As a result he will gaze in the innermost recesses of his heart and it will seem as if he saw the seven halls with his own eyes, moving from hall to hall to observe that which is therein to be found” [130]. One can easily identify here the ascetical practice of the Hesychasts and other mystics (ch. XXV). Lossky added: “The ladder of cataphatic theology, which discloses the divine names drawn, above all, from sacred Scripture, is a series of steps up which the soul can mount to contemplation” [131]. Here, the chakras are *the steps*, the subtle body (or maybe the central channel) is *the ladder*; the *contemplation* is known to be a *step* preceding meditation.

The use of the mantras had a well-defined goal and character. For example, while worshipping the Fire (*Havan*) when the offerings were given, the *OM Swaha* mantra (connected with the purifying Power of the fire) was uttered, and during libations the *Vasat* mantra was employed (ch. XV E).

The power of mantras can be used for healing (ch. XXII C) but also in other purposes. Here are just a few instances.

⁴⁸¹ Compassion designated the left channel (on the right side of the body seen from the front; ch. IV)—see above.

⁴⁸² Severity designated the right channel (on the left side of the body seen from the front; ch. IV)—see above.

The ancient Egypt had a myth about Isis, saying that when she applied a balsam (containing honey mixed with other ingredients; ch. XV E), the goddess intoned the secret *word of power* that she learned from Ra [132]. Marion Weinstein explained that the initiates of the Mysteries of Isis were emulated by the goddess by learning to work with the *words of power*, which the author believes were affirmation techniques used for healing and self-transformation [133].

We have seen that impurities can be removed through Water, Fire or Earth. However, the same result can be also obtained through the force of the word. Also, it was explained that food is endowed with subtle (vibratory) energy (ch. XV C). One of the simplest methods to obtain this result is the uttering of mantras. Hindus usually address them to goddess Annapurna (*anna*, food, Sanskr.).

This practice is encountered with other religious beliefs. “The people eat not until he⁴⁸³ has come, because he blesses the sacrifice; afterwards they eat that are invited” (1 Samuel 9:13). Jesus, “having taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to the heaven, and blessed; and having broken the loaves, he gave [them] to the disciples... ” (Matthew 14:19), with the variant “having taken the seven loaves and the fishes, having given thanks, he broke [them] and gave [them] to his disciples... ” (15:36). During the Last Supper, Jesus “had given thanks” (*eucharistésas*, Gr.) to God (Luke 22:19; cf. Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22, all using the same⁴⁸⁴ Greek term). That was taken over by the eucharist through the *epiklesis*, the invocation of the Holy Spirit that accomplishes the transformation of the gifts (i.e. the bread and the cup) [134]. That is why before sitting down to eat, Christians use to say the prayer *Our Father* that is also an excellent mantra but it aimed at a different target, namely the Agya chakra (ch. XIX C).

The *Qur'an* reads: “Eat of that over which God’s Name has been mentioned, if you believe in His signs” (6.118). “We have appointed for every nation a holy rite, that they may mention God’s name over such beasts of the flocks as He has provided them” (22.35), i.e. destined for eating. That is why one utters the *Bismillah* before eating. “According to an idea current among Muslims, a meal taken without the *Bismillah* is eaten in the company of Satan” [135]. This sacred formula is also taken before performing ablutions.

The *Zohar* wrote: “The blessing has to be uttered over the bread and the

⁴⁸³ Samuel.

⁴⁸⁴ Even if it was translated as “having blessed” (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22).

wine” [136].

Zoroaster’s adepts also used the mantras. The mantra in their holy book *Avesta* recommended for purifying the water was “Apò at yazamaide” [137].

Plato wrote in his turn: “All men... at the beginning of every enterprise, whether small or great, always call upon God” [138]. The Greek author mentioned elsewhere the opportunity of invoking the gods before any action [139].

The ancient people being aware of the power of words it was also an obvious fact in Herodotus’ writing [140] reading that the soothsayers were sent to death with their mouths gagged (ch. XV C), in order to prevent them for uttering any words.

The believers assemblies or communities play an important part in the recitation of mantras (prayers) whose effect is intensified (it becomes synergetic).

A first example was the Last Supper that became the model of eucharist celebration. In the 5th century, the author of the *Areopagitica* defined the eucharist as the “sacrament of the assembly” and this is the foundation of the entire liturgy. The eucharistic prayer of Basil the Great reads: “Unite all of us to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and Cup in the communion of the Holy Spirit” (*eis koinonían tou Hagíou Sou Pneúmatos*, Gr.) [141]. The Byzantine rite of liturgy improperly differentiates between “the consecrated” (clergy) or the initiates, and “the non-consecrated” (laity), that is the uninitiated. How far from the teaching of Christ! He accepted to die on the cross to “gather together into one the children of God who were scattered” (John 11:52). All Christians were, otherwise, called *saints* in the old times [142]. The Old Testament called the believers: godly (Psalms 149:1). Consistent with the concept of the great mystic Ibn al-‘Arabi the title of “saint” may be conferred only on one whose individual identity has become spiritually annihilated in the Supreme Identity, i.e. has got his/her Self Realization [143].

The teaching of Jesus on the importance of collective (*ekklesia*, Gr.; *sangha*, Sanskr.; *umma*, Arab.; notice how close it is to *Uma*, light, Sanskr.—one of the names of the Goddess; in Christianity the collective is regarded as the divine Bride) penetrates through the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. “Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20). “That they may be all one, as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee” (John 17:21). “That they may be one as we” (17:11). Resurrected Jesus showed Himself to His disciples while they were together in the house (20:19,26). At the time of the Pentecost, the disciples “gave themselves all with one accord to continual prayer” (Acts

1:14). “And when the day of Pentecost was now accomplishing, they were all together in one place” (2:1) and only then did the Holy Spirit descend on them. “And all that believed were together” (2:44). “And they... lifted up [their] voice with one accord to God” (4:24). “And the heart and soul of the multitude of these had believed were one” (4:32). “That ye may with one accord, with one mouth, glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 15:6). The Psalms read: “I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee” (22:22). Last but not least, Lord’s Prayer uses the plural form “Our Father,” thus underlying the importance of the collective prayer.

Irenaeus of Lyons used to say: “*Ubi ecclesia, ibi Spiritus Domini... et omnis gratia*” (Where the assembly is, there also is the Spirit of God... and every grace, Lat.) [144], where the Holy Spirit is the full manifestation of the Kundalini (ch. XXI). The Old Testament frequently mentioned the collective, for example in Leviticus, as *holy convocation* (23:4,7,8,21) or in the Psalms where praise is given to Yahweh “in the congregation of the godly” (149:1).

Also the Rabbis held that when a group of Jews studied the *Torah* together, the Shekhinah⁴⁸⁵ sat among them [145].

The synergism of the collective meditation is well known in Sahaja Yoga where it was experimentally proved that, under these conditions, the vibrations of the subtle energy (*Paramchaitanya*) are very strongly perceived and the state of thoughtless awareness (*Nirvichara Samadhi*) is more profound.

After the seventh trumpet had been blown (that is when the seventh mantra had been taken to open the seventh and last Primordial Chakra, the Adi Sahasrara, i.e. the Kingdom of God; ch. II) to announce the Resurrection time, the Great Incarnation (*Maha Avatara*, Sanskr.) appeared in an apotheosis: “a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars” (Revelation 12:1) (ch. XX C1).

We have already shown that the Kundalini energy has a vibratory nature, just like light (ch. XI E), and like sound, we should add. Similar to the invocation by uttering mantras, the song could play an important role in realizing the connection with the Absolute. Indian devotional songs (*bhajan*, Sanskr.) were carriers of beneficial vibrations and—together with the taking of mantras—made it easier for the people to get deeper into a state of meditation. The same happens while listening to the music composed by highly realized souls such as Vivaldi, Mozart etc. It can be said that a resonance takes place between the subtle body and the vibrations created by the mantras or by the devotional songs. Schuon explains: “Music—like

⁴⁸⁵ Ch. XX B.

dancing⁴⁸⁶—is the art of bringing terrestrial shadows back to celestial vibrations and divine archetypes” [146].

Moses along with the children of Israel said: “I will sing unto Yahweh for He is highly exalted” (Exodus 15:1). The earliest text in the *Bible* reads: “Myriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron... answered them: «sing to Yahweh, for He is highly exalted»” (15:20,21). “Then sang Deborah and Barak, the son of Abinoam, on that day saying:... «I will sing to Yahweh, I will hymn to Yahweh the God of Israel»” (Judges 5:1,3). The psalms composed by David represented a religious lyrical poetry of a peerless beauty and of great intensity of feelings. The word *psalm* derived from *psállein* (to pluck the strings, Gr.) and *psalmós* meant an instrument with strings. From here we can deduce that, when David used to play his harp to Saul with the view to exorcise him, he put words (mantras) into his tune. The symbolism of the (three- or seven-string) ancient lyre was mentioned in the proper place (ch. IX).

Similar examples are not absent from the New Testament. Thus, when Jesus and His disciples had their Last Supper, they sang a hymn (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26).

In a letter addressed by Pliny the Younger to the Emperor Trajan while being the governor of Bithynia (AD 111-113) it was mentioned that the early Christians “used to get together on a certain day, at dawn, and they raised in turns songs of glory to Christ, as to a god” (*Christo quasi deo*, Lat.) [147] (ch. XVIII).

The great writings of the Greco-Roman antiquity started with incantation formulas: “Sing, o Goddess, the anger of Achilles son of Peleus” (*The Iliad*) [148]. “Arms, and the man I sing” (*The Aeneid*) [149]. Orpheus is regarded as the inventor of the lyre [150] and he was the leader of the Muses, which brought him the name of Musagetes. According to tradition he was the son of the god Apollo (of the Thracian King Oiagros in other opinions) and of the most prominent Muse, Calliope, who had the power of inspiring the prophets. Some philologists correlate *moúsa* (Muse, Gr.) not only to *mousiké* (music, Gr.) but also to *mántis* (fortune teller, Gr.). Many Greek authors (Tiresias, Pindar, Euripides, Aeschylus etc.) considered themselves prophets (*prophétes*, Gr.) inspired by Muses, while the Latins called the poet: *vates* (prophet, Lat.). Orpheus is believed to have lived a century before the Trojan war and to have taken part in the Argonauts expedition in search of the Golden Fleece (ch. V) which means that he was a great initiate. After Aeschylus he could enchant even the rocks while Euripides wrote: “If I possessed the tongue and the melody of Orpheus, to charm... ” [151].

⁴⁸⁶ Ch. XV F.

Aristophanes acknowledged that indeed, Orpheus revealed us the initiation mysteries, “showed us the heavenly way” [152]. Ovid wrote: “*Carminum dum tali silvas animosque ferarum Threicius vates et saxa sequentia ducit*” (Through his song, the Thracian poet takes along the forests, their beasts and the rocks to follow him, Lat.) [153]. The “Thracian poet” is, naturally, Orpheus and the Latin word *carmen* (song, chant, hymn, poem, Lat.; *poiesis*, Gr.), coming obviously from the Sanskrit *karma* (action, also ritualistic one) originally meant *incantation*. The French *charme* or the English *charm* deriving from Latin, means “enchantment.” Hence, that *chant* of Orpheus was a ceremonial tune with a ritualistic value: *rite* comes from *rita* (cosmic order, Sanskr.) and signifies attuning with the cosmic, divine order. The Stagirite showed it that there is a power (*dynámeis*, Gr.) of words that, when revealed, gives one the perfect discretion between true and false. The words are, thus, carriers of energy that manifest in their effect [154]. In Phaedo, Plato compared the soul with the harmonious sound of the lyre. “Oh, friend! This body is His lyre;/ He tightens its strings, and draws from it the melody of Brahma” [155], “The sovergin Lord’s lyre plays unstruck” said Kabir [156], while a Zen koan urged: “Play your stringless lute” [157].

E. SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS

“*Rabbi Eleazar said: «There is a mystery relating to the offerings... which I have seen in the book of Enoch»*”

The Zohar [158]

The sacrifice (*yajna*, Sanskr.) is as old as the world. “In ancient days the Lord of creatures (Prajapati) created men along with sacrifice... By this foster ye the gods and let the gods foster you” [159]. The sacrifice is indissoluble linked to sacredness and it comes from *sacer facere* (to make sacred or whole, Lat.). Hesiod wrote: “When gods and men parted, sacrifice was created” [160]. Thus, sacrifice is meant to restore the union (*Yoga*, Sanskr.) between gods and men, i.e. “to make the whole” accordingly to the latter Latin meaning above.

People who used to sacrifice human beings to the gods surrounded the Jews. Since the Jews themselves had been polytheists until the time of Abraham, it appeared to be necessary, once they passed to monotheism, to replace human sacrifices with animal sacrifices. That’s why we should not XV-55 be surprised that Abraham was ready to sacrifice his only son at God’s

commandment (Genesis 22:2); Abraham was decided to obey (22:9-10), but at the last moment he was stopped by the Angel of Yahweh (22:11-12). Through this, on the one hand, his faithfulness to God was put to test, and on the other, the substitution of a human sacrifice with an animal sacrifice was established (22:13), meaning a total break from the previous religion.

The bringing of offerings was as old as the act of sacrifice itself. Cain, the farmer, brought of the fruit of the ground as an offering to the Lord (4:3), while Abel, the shepherd, offered the first offsprings born of his flock (4:4). And Abraham told the Lord and His companions: "I will fetch a morsel of bread" (18:5), actually some cakes of wheaten flour and calf, butter and milk (18:6-8). Here, we shall, by and by, notice that *none* of the last three products was for *fasting*. Gideon asked God: "Depart not hence, I pray thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee" (Judges 6:18).

God would tell Moses the exact rules concerning the place, the time, the nature and the manner in which these offerings have to be presented.

The sacrifice and offerings were placed to altars or tables especially intended for that purpose (Genesis 8:20; 22:9; Exodus 25:23-30; 30:1-10 etc.).

The day decided on for the sacrifice was one that was chosen by the Divine (ch. XV B), otherwise, the sacrifices and the burning of incense took place twice a day, in the morning and in the evening (29:38-41; 30:7-8).

A special attention was given to the first fruits of the land (22:29; 23:19; 34:26) as well as the first-born, if male, of the animals (Genesis 4:4; Exodus 13:2,12-13; 22:30; 34:19-20; Leviticus 27:26; Numbers 3:13; 18:15-17; Deuteronomy 15:19). Likewise the firstborn son had to be sacrificed to God, to redeem the firstborn in Egypt killed by the Divine to bring about the Hebrews' release from bondage (Exodus 13:2,12,13; 22:29 etc.). "According to the Law of Moses, they brought him to Jerusalem to present [him] to the Lord as it is written in the Law of [the] Lord: «Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord»" (Luke 2:22-23).

The circumcision of every male child who was eight days old represented a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham and his people (Genesis 17:10-14) and it also had the meaning of a sacrifice.

The sacrificing of animals was very common over ancient times: from Babylonia (the pig was sacrificed to Marduk) and Egypt (the bull and the pig were sacrificed to Osiris), to Greece and Rome. In the Athenian Eleusion, on the 16th Boédronion (September-October) a suckling pig was sacrificed to Demeter, while a bull was sacrificed to Dionysus. Dumézil finds similitudes in the sacrifices of the Indo-European peoples: *ashthapadi* (literally: eight steps, Sanskr.) and *fordicidia* (Lat.), *sautramani* (Sansk.) and *suovetaurilia*

(Lat.) etc. [161]. In Israel it was Abraham's ram, then the lamb for Passover, but also calves, kids or adult male animals as well as birds.

Sacrifice could be performed either by complete burning (*holocaustus*, Lat.; *holokaustos*, Gr. from *hólos*—all and *kaustós*—burnt, Gr.) or oblations for the priests. Sacrifices were used with the goal of worshipping, forgiveness, consecration, showing gratitude etc. (Leviticus 7:37).

The blood of an animal was sprinkled on the altar (Exodus 29:12,16,20; Leviticus 1:5,15; 3:2,8,13; Numbers 18:17) and the priests (Exodus 29:20,21) (hemobolium mentioned above in ch. XV C).

The fat of the sacrificed animal had a special destination: “their fat shalt thou burn as an offering by fire for a sweet odor to Yahweh” (Numbers 18:17 also Genesis 4:4; Exodus 29:25; Leviticus 17:6; cf. 3:5,16; 4:31). “The priest shall wave them as wave-offering before Yahweh; it is holy for the priest” (Numbers 6:20; cf. 18:11,18; Exodus 29:26,27; Leviticus 7:30,34; 8:27,29). It is fully surprising to find a perfect identical custom called *aarti* (see below) in India from ancient times until today. Other offerings by fire also were waved: “thou shalt put all this in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons, and shalt wave them as a wave-offering before Yahweh” (Exodus 29:24), and after that they were burnt on the altar.

The fruits of the land were offered either as such or processed. “Thou shalt not delay the fullness of thy [threshing-floor] and the outflow of thy [wine-press]” (Exodus 22:29; cf. 23:19; 34:26; Deuteronomy 26:2); “the first-fruits green ears of corn roasted in fire, corn beaten out of full ears” (Leviticus 2:14) prepared with oil and frankincense (2:14-15); wafers, unleavened cakes and unleavened bread of fine flour mingled with oil, sometimes with frankincense too (Exodus 29:2,23; Leviticus 2:1-7; 5:11 etc.; Numbers 15:4 etc.).

“No oblation which ye shall be made with leaven; for no leaven and no honey shall ye burn [in] any fire-offering to Yahweh” (Leviticus 2:11; cf. 6:17).

God accepted Abel's offering with pleasure (Genesis 4:4) since fat was “an offering by fire for a sweet odor to Yahweh” (Numbers 18:17). That is why spices were added into the fire: first was frankincense (Exodus 30:7-8; Leviticus 2:1,14 etc.; Numbers 16:18 etc.). We notice that *incense* is *qetoreth* (Hebr.; *qtr*, Phoenician, Ugaritic), a word that also means *knot*, *joint*, *union* [162], thus hinting to the *state of union with God* (*Yoga*, Sanskr.). “Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying: «And thou, take the best spices—of liquid myrrh five hundred [shekels], and of sweet cinnamon the half—two hundred and fifty, and of sweet myrtle two hundred and fifty, and of cassia five hundred... and of olive oil a hin; and make of it an oil of holy ointment, a perfume of

perfumery after the work of the perfumer»” (Exodus 30:23-25). “And Yahweh said to Moses: «Take fragrant drugs—stacte, and onycha, and galbanum—fragrant drugs and pure frankincense; in like proportions shall it be. And thou shalt make it into incense, a perfume, after the work of the perfumer, salted, pure, holy»” (30:34-36).

Salt also was an important ingredient. The Hebrew Law was compared to salt [163]. “Every offering of thine shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thine oblation; with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt” (Leviticus 2:13; cf. Ezekiel 43:24). Likewise said Christ: “Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt” (Mark 9:49). That saying which appeared in the *Codex Cantabrigiensis D* [164] was dropped out of the canonical text in the 4th century, and was restored—thanks to the former and the *Italocodices*—only in the later Latin *Vulgate* and Greek *Textus Receptus*⁴⁸⁷ [165]. The *Gospel of Philip* adds: “The apostles said to the disciples: «May our entire offering obtain salt»” [166]. Plato wrote: “Salt... is, as the law testifies, a substance dear to gods” [167].

Salt is the Earth. Jesus told His apostles: “Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). As such, it is an ingredient meant for cleansing (ch. XV C). Christ revealed it to His disciples: “Salt [is] good” (Luke 14:34; Mark 9:50). “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another” (Mark 9:50). Not only salt, but also Fire has the power to purify. “Every one shall be salted with fire,” Jesus announced (Mark 9:49). It was through the purifying effect of Fire that Lot’s wife who disobeyed the divine commandment was changed into salt. God punished her for having looked backwards (Genesis 19:26), which shows how dangerous it is to fall pray to the conditionings of the past. Graves and Podro showed that “salt meant a «spiritual discernment» in Jerusalem” [168]. However, Sahaja Yoga has disclosed that discernment depends on the subtle condition of a secondary center called the *Hamsa* XV-56 *chakra*. It is said that the gander (*hamsa*, Sanskr.) can drink only the milk out of a water-milk mixture exactly as discrimination (*viveka*, Sanskr.) helps man to separate good from evil. The Hamsa is located under the Agya chakra, at the root of the nose, more exactly, where the eyebrows meet. The blockage of Hamsa can be removed by putting *ghee* (clarified butter, Sanskr.) into the nostrils or by drawing salted water through the nose (ch. XV C). We shall remind here the prophecy about Jesus referring precisely to the butter helping discrimination between good and evil: “Therefore will the Lord himself give

⁴⁸⁷ *Textus Receptus* is the name given to the Greek version due to Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (published in 1516 by Johann Froben), and also to its third edition by Robertus Stephanus (Estienne) of Paris in 1550.

you a sign; Behold, the virgin shall conceive and shall bring forth a Son, and call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good” (Isaiah 7:14-15), where honey is also a holy ingredient. The Hamsa is related to the Vishuddhi chakra, where the latter can be cleansed through salted water gurgles. Butter also enables the purification of the Vishuddhi chakra, which is ruled by Krishna who loved to eat butter. These practices of Indian origin are also met in the folk medicine that has been using them with excellent results. Gurgling or putting water inside the nose is performed within the Islamic ablution ritual (*wudhu*, Arab.) too.

Libation⁴⁸⁸ “in the sanctuary shall . . . be poured out to Yahweh” (Numbers 28:7). In Christianity we again find the drink offering during the funerary ritual, when someone’s mortal remains were sprinkled with a mixture of oil and wine; this gesture was also repeated during commemoration services. The pouring of water over the rainmaking women as well had the significance of a drink offering and it was meant to request the Divine for rain. This custom could be found in many cultures, for example in the entire Balkan Peninsula [169].

A very important tradition was the sharing of the offerings among those performing the ritual. “They shall eat the things with which the atonement was made, to consecrate [and] to hallow them; but a stranger shall not eat [of them], for they are holy” (Exodus 29:33; cf. Leviticus 10:14,15; 22:10). These words could denote that the respective food products were charged with vibratory energy.

Almost universally spread was the consumption of the offerings and it referred not only to the food but also to the drinks. At the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John, chapter 2) we learned about Jesus’ first miracle. The table companions shared the water changed into *wine* (?). And at the Last Supper Christ shared bread and drink to His disciples, both being previously hallowed by uttering the name of the Father (Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20). It was strange that the drink was believed to have been wine, since in the New Testament there was no mention of it; actually, this was nothing else than “the fruit of the vine” (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18) which was the fresh juice of the grapes, i.e. the unfermented must (see *infra*). It is interesting that during the mysteries of Mithra the initiated received bread and a cup of water accompanied by the repetition of certain words, while as early as Justin (c.150) the eucharist was based on partaking bread and wine and water. An early eucharistic canon of about AD 225 refers only to the bread and the cup [170]. Likewise, the Liturgy of St.

⁴⁸⁸ Drink-offering (Exodus 30:9).

Basil the Great said: “All of us, who take communion from a piece of bread and from a chalice, let us be united together by the communion of the same Holy Spirit.” Therefore, in the latter two sources it was no mention about wine at all. An evidence of wrong use for the term *wine* could be found in the *Testament of Levi* [171] describing a coronation ritual of Levi, the High Priest: “The second washed me with pure water, and fed me with bread and wine, the most holy things.” Or, it was impossible to mention *wine* as a *most holy thing* because it was *strictly forbidden* to priests.

The ritual met at the Last Supper was the symbol of the new covenant between the Divine and people (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34) becoming a communion (*communio*, Lat.: tie, union—into faith). Later on it became eucharist (*eucharistia*, thanksgiving, Gr.) in Christianity; this communion means the receiving of a part (here of the bread that was broken, divided into pieces and of the drink everybody shared of the same cup).

The eucharist was believed to grant *sistarsis* (mystic fusion, Gr.) with the Son of God. This was made up of sacrifices, songs and processions, which preceded the initiation in the ancient rituals. In the case of the apostles the *sistarsis* took place during the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

The *ritual banquet*, very common in ancient cults, was to be found again in Christianity as the one related to the funeral ceremonies (burial feast, requiem); a simplified form of this ritual banquet was the offering of alms.

One can see in the *Bible* that the Divine rejected all that was fermented, as *wine* or *any strong drink* or *dough* (yeasted) i.e. *leavened bread* (see above), which was named “polluted bread” (Malachi 1:7). The examples are *overwhelming in number*.

In chapter XV C we have mentioned that alcoholic drink was forbidden for the priests (Leviticus 10:9; Ezekiel 44:21). Likewise, for the one who “have vowed the special vow of a Nazarite to consecrate themselves to Yahweh; he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink; he shall drink no vinegar of wine, nor vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat grapes, fresh or dried” (Numbers 6:2-3; see in this respect also Amos 2:12). And the Angel of Yahweh said to the mother of Samson whose son was vowed to be a Nazarite: “drink not wine nor strong drink” (Judges 13:4,14). In this respect see also Psalms (60:3; 75:8), Proverbs (23:29-31), Isaiah (51:17,22). The same did the *Testament of Judah*: “be not drunk with wine; for wine turneth the mind away from the truth, and kindleth in it the passion of lust, and leadeth the eyes into error” [172]. “Woe unto them that, rising early in the morning, run after strong

drink; their linger till twilight, [till] wine inflameth them” (Isaiah 5:11; cf. 5:12,22). The great prophet bitterly exposed the guilty ones: “The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink; they are overpowered by wine, they are gone astray through strong drink; they have erred in vision, they have stumbled [in] judgment. For all tables are full of filthy vomit, so that there is no [more] place” (28:7-8). Not only the priests were forbidden to consume alcoholic drinks: “It is not for kings to drink wine, nor for rulers [to say]: «Where is the strong drink?»—lest they drink and forget the Law” (Proverbs 31:4-5; cf. Ecclesiastes 10:16-17).

Noah’s sad example speaks for itself: “He drank of wine, and was drunken, and he uncovered himself in his tent” (Genesis 9:21). It should be added here that behaving like that he also took off his holiness! The same happened to Lot who was made drunk by his daughters (19:32-33).

None of the true saints had ever consumed such drinks. Archangel Gabriel announced Zacharias about John the Baptist: “he shall drink no wine nor strong drink” (Luke 1:15). “For John the Baptist has come neither eating bread nor drinking wine” (7:33). The New Testament commanded: “And be not drunk with wine, in which is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18).

Hegesippus quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea [173] recorded that James the Just never touched wine.

As far as the Essenes are concerned, Professor Vermes declared: “More likely than not, the «wine» drunk by the sectaries, «the drink of the Congregation», was unfermented grape-juice” [174].

The Gnostics criticized the so-called Christians for indulging in drinking wine. To give just an example, the *Authoritative Teaching* regards “drinking of wine” as a “debauchery” [175]. An ancient Chinese Christian manuscript condemned those “who were addicted to wine drinking” [176]. The Marcionites performed the eucharist with water instead of wine. The Bogomils believed that Satan invented wine, and they also have a very clear antinomic stand in relation to the doctrine, sacraments, and ethics of the Church [177]. They believe that the Devil planted the vine in Paradise, and “the Devil secretly put his savor in it” [178].

The arguments brought forth by the Christian “advocates of wine” were the episode at the wedding of Cana (John 2:1-10) and the Last Supper. However, on the ground of the aforementioned, these allegations should be rejected.

Now, let us try to find out the possible origin of this monstrous confusion that was deliberately cultivated along two millenniums in order to justify the filthy vice of some so-called “good” Christians.

There are two words in the Old Testament: *tirosh* (fresh grape juice, Hebr.) appearing for example in the Proverbs 3:10; Isaiah 24:7; Hosea 9:2; Joel 2:24, and *yayin* (wine, Hebr.) as in Isaiah 24:9. As for the latter term, a distinction is sometimes made between *new wine* (new, unfermented grape juice; Matthew 9:17) and *old wine* (that is, the old, fermented must; Isaiah 25:6). The confusion was caused by using the word *wine* not only for the fermented must but also, improperly, for the *grape unfermented juice*. One such example is found in the Book of Job: “Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; like new flasks, it is ready to burst” (32:18-19). However, this happened only in the case of *must* due to fermentation and never with *wine*, where must was always put in *new flasks (new skins)*. Here is, otherwise, a revealing text: “Nor do men put new wine into old skins, otherwise the skins burst and the wine is poured out, and the skins will be destroyed; but they put new wine into new skins, and both are preserved together” (Matthew 9:17). The *must* is *obviously* called here (new) *wine*. We recall the sharing of bread and new wine by the Qumran Community (see *supra*: ch. XV C).

Jesus was called “wine drinker” (Luke 7:34) which was implausible even for the part of His disparagers. The drink in question was “the fruit of the vine⁴⁸⁹” (*yayin ha-meshumar; meshumar*, not fermented, Hebr.), i.e. fresh must, like the drink served for the Last Supper when He told: “Verily I say unto you, I will no more drink at all of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25: cf. Matthew 26:29; Luke 22:18). It was said that during the six days of Creation God has prepared this drink that would be still existent in its original grapes ready for serving new at the banquet given to the just in the Kingdom of Heaven [179]. In Jotham’s parable (Judges 9:13): “the vine said to them: «Should I leave my new wine, which cheers God...?»” The new wine is obviously grape juice; in the vine grapes there is nothing but grape juice, and wine itself cannot cheer up God.

Sometimes, in the New Testament *tirosh* and *yayin* were translated by *oínos* (wine, Gr.) thus giving way to confusion. Thus was possibly the use of the word *must* instead of *wine*, as in Acts that read of the opinion of the mob about the apostles who, having received the grace of the Holy Spirit, had begun to speak in outlandish languages: “Others mocking said: «They are full of new wine»” (2:13) which determined Peter’s answer: “These are not full of wine, as you suppose” (2:15). It was, obviously, not *must (new wine)* but *wine* containing alcohol since only the latter induces intoxication.

Jean Herbert stressed on the fact that “any fermented and alcoholic drink

⁴⁸⁹ The “wine” that is contained in the grapes.

is rejected with aversion by the true orthodox Hindu” [180]. The *Laws of Manu* showed that “killing of a Brahmin and drinking (the spirituous liquor called) Sura... they declare (to be) mortal sins (*mahapataka*, Sanskr.)” If a Brahmin drinks spiritual liquor he becomes a Sudra and in his next life he will be an insect, a bird feeding on ordure or a destructive beast [181]. During his time, Krishna forbade the use of wine to the inhabitants of Dwaraka. Most of them were killed, even his son Pradyumna, because they transgressed this rule [182]. On the great priest Decaeneus, a genuine initiate no doubt, it was written: “he was honoured like a god⁴⁹⁰... and, in sign of obedience, the Dacians agreed with destroying their vines and living without wine” [183].

The *Qur’an* also condemned the drinking of wine (*khamr*, Arab.) and presently Islam withholds a particular position by its constant opposition. “Wine and arrow-shuffling⁴⁹¹... are an abomination, some of Satan’s work; so avoid it” (5.92; cf. 5.93; 2.216). “Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said: «... a person, at the time of drinking an alcoholic drink is not a believer»” [184]. The Muslims should not come to their prayers in a state of intoxication: “O believers, draw not near to prayer when you are drunken” (4.46). Also when ‘Umar’s son had transgressed the rule prohibiting alcohol, his father ordered his punishment with the mandatory eighty lashes, and this caused him death.

Likewise, the Sikh Scripture rejects alcoholic beverages: “By drinking, his intelligence departs, and madness enters his mind; he cannot distinguish between his own and others!—he is struck down by his Lord Master. By drinking, he forgets his Lord Master, and he is punished in the Court of the Lord” (*Jit peetai mati door hoyi baral pavai vich aayi. Apnaa paraayaa na pchhanayee khasmahu dhakke khaayi. Jit peetai khasam visrai dargah milai sjaayi. Jhoothaa mad mool na peechayee je kaa paar vassayi*) [185].

In the Vedic religion sacrifice represented the essence of creation (Purusha’s self-sacrifice, whose body delivered the elements necessary for the creation of the Universe [186]). For instance, the sacrifice performed during the building of a house (or of a bridge, a temple etc.) imitated, on a human level, the primordial sacrifice celebrated *in illo tempore*⁴⁹² for creating the world.

The *Upanishads* wrote: “This whole world, verily, is just food and the

⁴⁹⁰ *Kathistato theós* (Gr.).

⁴⁹¹ Connected with divining-arrows.

⁴⁹² At that time (Lat.), signifying “the primordial time.”

eater of food” [187]. God declares: “I am food! I am food! I am food! I am a food-eater! I am a food-eater! I am a food-eater!... I am the first-born of the world-order” [188]. Any living creature is compelled to devour another living creature in order to survive. “From food, verily, creatures are produced whatsoever [creatures] dwell on the earth. Moreover by food, in truth, they live, moreover into it also they finally pass” [189]. “From food created things are born. By food, when born, do they grow up. It both is eaten and eats things, because of that it is called food” [190]. The physical body is regarded as “the illusory covering of food” (*annamayakosha*, Sanskr.).

“Verily, [the life of] a person is a sacrifice. His [first] twenty-four years are the morning soma-libation... Now the [next] forty-four years are the mid-day libation... Now, the [next] forty-eight years are the third [i.e. the evening] libation” [191]. This was the division of the one hundred and eight years, a complete man’s life (see *ashrama*, ch. XV B).

Originally, the ceremony of sacrifices was simple since the head of the family was often a priest, a poet and a king all in one. Later on, in the ceremony described in the *Vedas* the tasks were divided amongst sixteen priests that corresponded to the number of the petals of the Vishuddhi chakra, which represented the subtle center of collective awareness. Each priest had specific duties, going so far as to measure the length of the logs for the fire, and to determine the shape of the vessel for libations. The earliest word designating the occupation of priest, was *purohita* (Sansk.) which signified more than priest: he was the chief’s friend and counselor, the king’s minister and companion in times of peace and war. At first, his main occupation was to make the usual sacrifices but, once the Brahmins had appeared, he took a step towards political power [192]. Unlike domestic ceremonies (such as baptism, confirmation, marriage etc.) that were family, village or local customs, the public or private sacrifices, described in *Sranta* sutras, bore the mark of sacerdotal influence. The priest led the ceremony (*ritvija*, Sanskr.) according to the prescribed rules (*yajnikia*, Sanskr.), and he was attended on by the proper performer (*advaryu*, Sanskr.), as well as by the one who made the invocation (*hotar*⁴⁹³, Sanskr.), and by the custodian (*brahmin*, Sanskr.).

In the Vedic times, a ruler who desired to offspring performed *ashwamedha*⁴⁹⁴ (horse-sacrifice, Sanskr.), which was a royal privilege. The *Brahmanas* and *Srauta-sutras* give full description of the sacrifice. Thus, a horse of a certain color was consecrated through a ceremony, and then it was

⁴⁹³ *Zaotar*, in Mazdaism.

⁴⁹⁴ It was still practiced more than thousand years ago.

turned loose to wander all over the country for a whole year. The king and his army followed the animal. In foreign lands, the local ruler was forced either to fight or to submit. After the victorious return from this campaign, at the end of the year, the horse was either really, or figuratively sacrificed throughout a great festival. Similarly to Prajapati, the sacrificed represented the image of the cosmos: the atmosphere (belly), the directions of the space (ribs), the sky (back), the stars (bones), the ether (flesh), the wind (breath), the celestial fire Agni (open mouth), the sun (eye), the dawn (head), the east (fore part), the west (hind part), the earth (under part of his belly), the year (Atman), the seasons (limbs), the months (joints), the days and nights (feet) etc. [193]. A similar ritual appeared later on in Rome, where the horses for the cavalry were dedicated to Mars (between February 27 and March 14, the feast of the *Equines*), which meant the beginning of the military campaign. At the end of this campaign, on October 15 (*Equus October*), a horse with the head decorated with cereals was sacrificed on the altar of Mars as a thanksgiving for the harvest. The tail of the horse was cut off and brought into the king's palace to sprinkle the palace with its blood (hemobolium, ch. XV C).

Through the religious ceremonies (*puja*, Sanskr.) the deity was offered rice (*akshatam*, Sanskr.) colored with turmeric (curcuma or *haldi*, Sanskr.), coconuts (offered to Ganesh) with kumkum on the three spots on the top (the three eyes of Shiva), flowers (*pushpa*, Sanskr.), sweets (*ladhus*, Sanskr.), cereal cakes, fruits; the deity was decorated and was also offered perfumes (*gandha*, Sanskr.).

The *Vedas* dedicated the greatest number of their hymns to the Fire, which is represented on a *terrestrial* level (Agni), on an *intermediate* level as lightning (Indra) and on a *celestial* level as the Sun (Surya). The ritual fire was Agni that represents a purifying element: "God Agni climbed the crests of the sky and liberating Himself of sin, liberated us of the curse" [194]. Since all that it was purified by Fire was also offered to gods, "verily, he who purifies here is a sacrifice" [195].

Within the ritual of the sacrifice, three fires had to be lit. The first, *grahapatya* (master of the house, Sanskr.) constituted the center of family rituals and it was lit from the domestic fire and was its ritual equivalent. The householder's fire was brought into the house after the marriage ceremony XV-63 when a sacrifice was offered to the fire lit by the newly married (*grihyagni*). It was from it that the other fires were lit. The second, *ahavaniya* (Sansk.) was intended to the bringing of offerings, and third one, *anvaharyapachana* (Sansk.) was the one, which baked the extra offerings, i.e. rice for the priest and for the memory of ancestors.

“All this universe, conscious and unconscious, is made of Fire (Agni) and offering (Soma)” [196]. Agni is all that burns, or devours, or digests. Soma is all offering, or devoured, or consumed (food, fuel, oil for sacrifice). Fire corresponds to the solar channel, whilst Soma—to the lunar one. “Whatever red[-gold] form fire has, is the form of heat; whatever white, the form of water; whatever dark[-blue], the form of food (Soma)... The reality is just «the three forms»... For from these [three forms] they knew [everything]” [197]. Or, these were precisely the traditional colors attributed to the three channels. The solar channel is golden-reddish like the Sun or the fire—even its name is showing this: Pingala (*pingesha*, the yellow one, Sanskr.). *Rajo guna* is red (the relationship to be noticed is: *rajas*, fire—*rakta*, red—*ranj*, to tint with red, Sanskr.). The moon channel has the color of the night, dark blue (*nila*, Sanskr.) like the *tamo guna* (*tamas*, darkness, Sanskr.). The central (main) channel or *nadi* (river) has the color of water, white (*sukla*, Sanskr.) like the *sattwa guna*, that is luminous and clear.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* says: “Some yogis offer sacrifice to the gods while others offer sacrifice by the sacrifice itself into the fire of the Supreme” [198]. The Supreme means Brahman; however, the Swadhisthana chakra, under the sign of Fire, is the seat of Brahmadeva; thus, the above passage signifies the exhortation to awaken this chakra within ourselves, that is to say Brahma.

The ceremony for worshipping the Fire (*havan*, Sanskr.) was performed XV-57 in a square (*vihara*, Sanskr.), which had a swastika in the middle and which was surrounded by fruits and flowers that were offered to the Fire. The main element of the sacrifice was the libation made by pouring clarified butter (*ghee*, Sanskr.) into the sacred fire, the same as the fat burnings “for a sweet odor to God” mentioned in the *Bible*. As a concentrate of vital forces, butter symbolized all the energies: those of the cosmos, those of the spirit, of gods and of people, whom it refreshes when spluttering in the fire of sacrifice. While the invocations were uttered, the participants threw camphor and a mixture of rice, fried barley, barley flour and other seeds assorted with flavors (*samaghri*, Sanskr.). The burning meant the dematerialization of the offering, which was reduced to its pure, spiritual reality by the virtue of the fire. So, fire became a vehicle (a messenger) between Earth and Heaven, between man and Divinity. It is through Fire that man could feed the gods through the mouth of Agni: “Agni is the mouth of the gods; through this mouth they take their breath” [199].

In India and in other cultures, too, cremation was the final fire ceremony being used in funeral rituals.

Fire, just like the Kundalini, had the power to act against gravity: it rose

upward (ch. IV). It gave brightness, joined things by melting them together and especially it burned and destroyed all negativity, because it assumed the state of *Swaha* (offering; Shakti of the Fire, Sanskr.). When the inner fire (Kundalini) awakened in a Yogi, through Self Realization, it enlightened the pure attention (*Nirmala Chitta*, Sanskr.). Through the ceremony of Havan the participants placed everything in the *Adi Nabhi*, which, through its power of discretion burned all that was negative. Fire cleansed the atmosphere, it purified the Ether, chasing away all negativity and lethargy and enlightening all that had been created.

The Buddha substituted the sacrificial fire of Hinduism for the inner fire of enlightenment (Self Realization): “I do not stack wood to feed the fires on altars. I am fanning a flame within myself. The hearth is my own heart, and the flame is my mastered Self” [200]. In the *Upanishads* also it was stated that the external burning was not the true burning. Hence, the fire symbol represents the Kundalini (ch. XI E).

This purifying and regenerating significance of the fire spread all over the world, from the West to the Far East, from ancient Rome to Angkor. The Catholic liturgy of the fire took place on the eve of Easter Sunday (on Good Saturday in the Orthodoxy: “Come and take the light!” was an appeal both to purification and to spiritual regeneration), or in the beginning of the year, in Shintoism. The festival of the lights (*Diwali*, Sanskr.) in India is considered in the same manner, being celebrated with fireworks and a great number of candles. Likewise, the Jews have their feast of lights (*Hanukah*; ch. XV B).

The use of incense was universal and had the same symbolic value everywhere: it associated man with the Divine. Within Hindu rituals, the incense (*dhupa*, Sanskr.) represented the perception of the awareness, which is ubiquitous. In ancient times, servants “grated sandalwood on a soft moistened stone, blended the paste with oil, added flower petals, and sweet-smelling leaves, then molded them to form sticks” [201]. The custom of burning incense sticks was very common, not only in India but also in the whole of the Far East.

Libation of *soma* very often appeared in the *Vedas* (all the 114 hymns of the ninth book of the *Rig-Veda* are in praise of soma). This drink was sometimes regarded as a deity (*Somapati*), for instance in the *Soma-Veda*. This all-powerful god was the healer of all diseases, provider of riches, lord of all the other gods, and was sometimes identified with the Supreme Being. Soma was the milky juice of a climbing plant (*Asklepias acida*, after the name of Asklepios, god of medicine in ancient Greece), which in India was called *vanin* (Sansk.). The juice was extracted, processed, offered to the

gods, and then was drunk by the Brahmins.

*Amrut (amrita, Sanskr.)*⁴⁹⁵ was the drink of the gods and it was believed that it could give immortality (from *mrita*, death, Sanskr., by adding the *a*-prefix of negation). In the *Puranas*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* it was shown (with some variations) that Vishnu was the one who urged the gods to produce the amrut by churning the Primordial Ocean. This happened when they were fighting the demons. This amrut gave strength back to the gods, so that they could defeat their enemies.

In the Hindu ritual, the one performing sacrifice drank the elixir of immortality resulting from the gods' banquet and this act had the significance of participation (see above: the communion) to the heavenly bliss (*ananda*, Sanskr.). Milarepa told about this ritual, performed by his Guru, Marpa. A libation that offered everlasting life was also found in Taoism and Shintoism. In ancient China, the performing of a sacrifice corresponded to a feast in the Temple of Ancestors, while the funeral banquets were very common over Etruscan, Greek and Roman times. The communion, called *omophagia*, appeared also in the cult of Dionysus. In the cult of Mithra it was performed with bread and water, while in Mazdaism, with *draoma* and *haoma* (having the same root as *soma* and analogous with *homa*, offering, Sanskr.). Clement of Alexandria [202] reported that through the Mysteries of Eleusis devoted to Demeter, the communion of the initiate was performed with *kykeon*, a drink made up of honey, barley and water.

In Hindu ceremonies dedicated to the worship of a deity (Puja), all the offerings, including the amrut and even the perfume, once accepted by the Divine, were shared amongst the participants.

Panchamrita is made up of five ingredients as its name showed (*pancha*, five, Sanskr.), and these were offered to the deity.

The milk (dugdha, Sanskr.) was given by the sacred cow *Kamadhenu* (Abundance, Sanskr.), which appeared from the depth of the Primordial Ocean. This milk contented the *Devarishis* (wise men who reached the level of gods, *Devas*, Sanskr.) and the ancestors.

The yogurt or buttermilk (dahi, Sanskr.) had the whiteness of the sky around the moon, when the halo appeared; all the gods liked it.

The clarified butter (ghrita or ghee, Sanskr.) was the food of the gods.

The honey (madhu, Sanskr.) was the quintessence of Mother Earth through the pollen. "For the one who followed Dharma, the wind became a sweet breeze; suave were the flows that rolled their waves for him! May the

⁴⁹⁵ Could be an equivalent of *ambrosia* (*ambrosis*, Gr.; notice the phonetic likeness) or *nectar*, the drink granting immortality, the favorite food of gods in ancient Hellas.

grasses of Mother Earth be sweet, may the night and dawn, the Earth and the Heavens be suave to him!”

The *sugar* (*sharkara*, Sanskr.) was extracted from sugar cane and was purified to become bright as crystal.

The *Bible* contains many references to the same ingredients as those used in the amrut, each having a holy significance. The syntagma that put milk and honey together was often used as a symbol not only for welfare but also, for the divine paradisiacal bliss (*ananda*). God said to Moses about the Hebrews: “I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them out... unto a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:8,17). The Promised Land flowing with milk and honey appeared often again (Exodus 13:5; 33:3; Numbers 13:27; Deuteronomy 26:9,15; Jeremiah 11:5; Ezekiel 20:6). Related to the significance of the amrut, the biblical expression indicates the promise of reaching immortality. Abraham gave milk and butter to the Lord (Genesis 18:8). Referring to Immanuel, the Virgin’s Son (i.e. Jesus; Matthew 1:23), God said: “butter and honey shall He eat” (Isaiah 7:14-15).

XV-58 The Phrygian god Attis (*he-goat*) had been nursed with honey and he-goat’s milk (*sic!*). The tradition said that Pythagoras was fed on honey his whole life. Ovid wrote that in the Golden Age (*Auraea Aetas*, Lat.) “streams of milk and streams of sweet nectar flowed, and yellow honey was distilled from the verdant oak” [203]. Herbert showed that in India, immediately after birth, there is the ritual of putting a honey and ghee mixture on the infant’s tongue by using a golden spoon or rod. The same instrument is then used to touch his ears and rub his shoulders with this mixture [204]. Tertullian mentioned the “mixture of milk and honey” given to the newborn children [205]. According to a custom of unknown origin Christians sometimes use to put honey in the infant’s first bath.

Milk was man’s primary drink, and it was also the primordial drink, as the Ocean of Milk was the Primordial Ocean. It was the symbol of knowledge and in an esoteric interpretation it represented immortality since it was connected with *the second birth*. In the morning prayer, when the milk was offered to the fire (*Agnihotra*) one had to say: “Indra and Agni give life to this milk, in a cheerful song, so that it should give immortality to the devotee who brings sacrifices” [206]. The Orphic texts disclosed a similar significance. Hercules was said to have sucked the milk of immortality from Hera’s breast. The Pharaoh nursed by the goddess (like Horus by Isis) acceded to a new, divine essence. According to a *hadith* reported by Ibn ‘Umar, Muhammad said that dreaming about milk meant dreaming about Science or Knowledge [207].

Yogurt was known in the biblical land since ancient times. Its name in Semitic languages was *laban*, meaning *white*; the same as the name given to Isaac's brother-in-law, Laban—Rebekah's brother (Genesis 24:29).

Butter had a sacred value and was invoked as a primordial Divinity from the earliest Vedic times. "That is the secret name of the butter, «tongue of gods», «navel of immortality»" [208]. "Drink the butter, (O, Vishnu), You who have butter as a matrix!" "Flows of butter... cleared inside by the heart and by the soul, lead our sacrifice to the Lord!" [209]. Butter was the delight of the child Krishna in Vrindavan. In the afterwards, the ritualistic use of the butter extended from India to the whole of Central Asia.

Honey was given a special consideration over antiquity. It was, actually, looked on as an ingredient with deep spiritual significance. Let us remember that it could not be used in preparing the offerings for the fire (Leviticus 2:11). "Eat honey, my son, for it is good" (Proverbs 24:13). "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey" (Song of Songs 5:1). The nourishment of John the Baptist was wild honey (Matthew 3:4). The pope's tiara is shaped like a beehive.

In the volume entitled *The Great Mother*, an entire chapter was called *The Great Mother, Queen of Bees* [210]. Here are some topics from it. A temple dated back from the 7th century BC from Çatal Hüyük in Asian Turkey (where many small statues of the Great Goddess were found; ch. XX A) shelters a fresco displaying bees and honeycombs. During the Old Empire, one of the titles of the Kings ruling the Lower Egypt was *Lord of Bees*. The bee was the Great Mother of the northern Egypt. The priestesses of Delphi were called *Mélistai* (honey bees, Gr.), a name connected also with the goddess of the moon: "The Moon is a hive and her bees are the stars." The tripod on which the oracle was seated had the shape of a beehive. When Plato was an infant, a bee sat on his lips. Cybele was the Queen of Bees. The same title was granted to Rhea in antiquity, her son Zeus being fed with honey and looked after by the daughters of *Melissus* (Honey Man) who, initially, was *Melissa* (Lady of Honey). The island of Malta (seat of many prehistoric mysteries in the center of the Mediterranean Sea) was called *Melytta* (Bee), in ancient times.

In the *Vedas*, honey was celebrated as a source of life and immortality and it was compared with milk and soma, the favorite drink of the gods: "You, two Rudras who are fond of honey" (*madhu*, Sanskr.) [211]. Honey represented the supreme bliss of the spirit and the *nirvana* state. In China, as well as in India, honey was associated with the element of Earth but also with the idea of *center*, that is why the sauces served to the emperor had to be thickened with honey. Honey designated mystic knowledge, spiritual goods

and revelation done to the initiated one. “The doctrine is that if you ate honey: the beginning is sweet, the middle is sweet, the end is sweet”—it was said in Buddhism. Virgil called honey “a heavenly gift of the dew,” since the dew was the symbol of initiation (ch. XI C). The Athenians offered honey cakes to the Great Serpent to keep him in his cave (the perfect symbol of the serpent Kundalini coiled in the sacrum cave). In the Eleusinian Mysteries honey was given “to the higher grade of initiate as a sign of new life” [212]. “In his work on *The Cave of the Nymphs* [213], Porphyry states that when candidates were initiated into the *Leontica* (Mithras in the form of a lion) «honey not water was poured over their hands, to wash them. . . . Furthermore, honey cleanses the tongue from all sins». . . . Celtic tradition strongly sings the praises of mead⁴⁹⁶ as the beverage of immortality, as does an archaic source” [214]. For the mystic brotherhood Bektashi (of Shi’ite rite) honey represented *al-Haqq*, the Transcendent Reality, the aim of any spiritual evolution, in which man merged with the divinity.

The custom of waving burning matter in order to offer a sweet odor to God (like for the wave-offerings in the Old Testament: Exodus 29:23-24, 26-27; Leviticus 7:30,34; 8:27,29; Numbers 6:20; 18:11,18; see *supra*) has XV-59 existed in India, since earliest times, under the name of *aarti* and it was practiced both for greeting Divinity and for closing the worshipping ceremony. A tray on which there were a burning oil lamp and vases with burning incenses (camphor, sandalwood paste) is waved while describing an arch (*bandhan*, tie, Sanskr.). This is an offering of light and spices in honor of the Divinity (ch. XV B). Meanwhile there are sung worship hymns special composed for the *aarti* or recited dedications devoted to Divinity. It is also auspicious to ring a bell and to produce sounds by blowing a marine conch (ch. XV F).

The correspondent of the *aarti* performed during Christian service by XV-62 waving the incense in a censer was a ritual probably inspired from the *Bible*: “And Moses said to Aaron: «Take the censer, and put fire thereon from off the altar, and lay on incense»” (Numbers 16:46).

The bell had an important place within the Hindu ritual. Its sound had the universal significance of exorcism and purification: it chased away the evil XV-35 influences and the demons. Related to this, in India, women wore anklets 36 with small bells, and metal or glass bangles on their wrists because it was believed that their sounds had the power to chase away the evil spirits. We found similar references in the *Bible* too: “The daughters of Zion are. . . making a tinkling with their feet” (Isaiah 3:16; cf. 3:18,19). More than that, the sound of the bell proclaimed the coming of the divinity. The Buddhist

⁴⁹⁶ Mead has honey as its main ingredient.

canon associated the divine voice with the sound of a golden bell, and in Islam it was considered that the sound of this one was the subtle sound of revelation. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, we again come across the bell, bearing similar significance. The priest in ancient Israel, when officiating, would wear a robe with golden bells (Exodus 28:33,34; 39:25,26): “that his sound may be heard when he goeth into the sanctuary before Yahweh, and when he cometh out, that he may not die” (28:35). The bells rang out at the approach of the Shekhinah, and the *sistrum* was used in the cult of goddess Isis. In Orthodox churches, the icons in the altar were uncovered at the sound of the bell, and in Catholicism, its sound marked the principal moments of the liturgy (*leitourgia*, Gr.). The Christian services were accompanied by the sound of the bell. A wooden or metal plate in the monasteries was sounded to call people for the hour of prayer, while in the Far East the gong was usually used in the holy rituals. XV-38

The bandhan corresponds to the rainbow. Shaped like an inverted U (∩), XV-60 the bandhan is the ideogram of goddess Ki-Ninhursag called “mother of the living” [215]. It should also be reminded that the Egyptians have adopted as a symbol of eternal life the *ankh*, which is a cross crowned by a bandhan. XV-61 The rainbow was the Ishtar’s necklace [216]. Shiva’s bow (Pinaka) resembles to a rainbow, which was made of a serpent with seven heads [217]. The rainbow includes seven colors that are exactly the colors of the chakras: orange-red (Mooladhara), yellow (Swadhisthana), green (Nabhi and Void), scarlet (Anahatha), sky blue (Vishuddhi), gray-violet (Agya) and white—synthesis of all (Sahasrara). The relationship between the *seven chakras* and the *three channels* in the crossing points of which the chakras are placed, also reappears on the chromatic register. The combinations among three basic colors corresponding to the three channels produce the seven colors of the chakras. The traditional basic colors, known to painters and printers for a long time, are *red* (color of the Mooladhara at the bottom of the Sushumna nadi), *yellow* (the Pingala nadi) and *blue* (the Ida nadi). It should be stressed out here that the choice of the red-green-blue combination used in TV was imposed by the limited range of luminophores available on the market, aimed at solving that technical problem. The rainbow represented the first covenant between Lord and man. After Noah offered up burning-offerings on the altar, “Yahweh smelled the sweet odor” (Genesis 8:21), which stresses out the relation between the rainbow, aarti and bandhan. “And God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: «And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you (9:9): my bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of the covenant between me and the earth»” (9:13, then 9:14-17). The reader must have been noticed the parallel existent between the *covenant*

(*bond*) represented by the rainbow and the *bond (tie)* of the bandhan having an identical shape. Likewise, the Scandinavian mythology mentioned a miraculous *bond* used at Odhinn's initiative to destroy an enemy of the gods [218]. A sign of integration, the bandhan corresponds to the Sahasrara, also called *throne* of the Divinity (ch. II etc.): "A throne stand in the heaven, and upon the throne One sitting... and a rainbow round the throne" (Revelation 4:2-3).

Here is how beautifully the *Upanishads* describe this manifestation of the Divinity: "The One who, Himself without color by the manifold application of His power (*Shakti Yoga*) distributes many colors in His hidden purpose" [219]. *Faust* reveals us the mystery of the rainbow as the synthesis of the secret being (subtle body) that grants the cool breeze of the Kundalini representing the aim of human evolution: "The multicolored arch... / Spreading around the diaphanous, cool thrill/ A mirror of the human endeavor... / In its colorful hues lies our life" (*Des bunten Bogens... / Umher verbreitend düftig kühle Schauer/ Der spiegelt ab das menschliche Bestreben... / Am farbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben*, Germ.) [220].

F. OTHER RITUALS

"I will wash my hands in innocence, and will encompass thine altar, O Yahweh"

Psalms 26:6

A ritual which is frequently met is circumambulation, or walking around a holy place, which concerns the delimitation of the two spaces: holy and profane, but not only that. The circumambulation (or its linear uncoiling as a procession) represents the archetype of *the Way*. The worshipper of Divinity in the holy place (temple etc.) follows a ritual path from the periphery to the center (spiral of the Kundalini). The walk of the devotee to the holy place signifies an initiatory way aiming at discovering the inner reality of the Self and getting the spiritual Realisation. This is how we should understand, for instance, the pilgrimage performed by Christians to the Holy Sepulchre or the one carried out by Muslims (*hajj*, Arab.) to Mecca. We should point out that Ibn al-‘Arabi has recommended that circumambulation should be made in a state of mystical awareness (ch. XXV B). Christian conceive approaching of the altar as a participation to salvation, wherefrom XV-67 the practice of religious processions. However, they fail to notice that, through the statement of Christ: "I am the Way" (John 14:6; see also ch. XIX

C), this archetype achieved a new level, which is located completely inside. The same archetype was also met (ch. II) in Yoga (Sushumna, the central channel), as well as in Taoism (Middle Path) and in Buddhism (Noble Eightfold Path). First came Jacob's aspiration: "If God will be with me, and will keep me on this road" (Genesis 28:20). Then, God urged: "Walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you" (Jeremiah 7:23). In the opening of his book Isaiah advised people to get their Self Realization by using specific words: "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths" (2:3). He was obviously talking about an inner, spiritual itinerary, and the *mountain of Yahweh* or the *house of God* denoted the Sahasrara (ch. II), while the *ways*, the *paths* were the subtle channels.

To overcome the obstacles, some Indian texts recommended that "the sacrificial house should be entered with the right foot", and that one should touch the ground "by doing three taps with the heel of the right foot" [221]. We notice here the resemblance to the "superstition" (name given to any tradition whose origins or reason are not known) according to which it is auspicious "to start your journey with the right foot", "to enter or to step over the threshold with your right foot." Or, the right channel is the channel of action that is controlled by Hanuman whose invocation was aimed at facilitating the endeavor.

The Buddha used to perform circumambulation by walking around the holy tree (*Bodh-Gaya*), and his followers practiced it around the stupa. The Tibetans had the same custom: they walked around the stupa (*chorten*) and Cambodians walked around the altar or a new house.

The quotation at the start of this section shows that after purification, the Jews went round the altar. They were knowledgeable of the power of circumambulation and used it by encompassing the body of the deceased in order to protect the latter against evil spirits, whereas reciting Psalm 91 [222].

The circumambulation was adopted by Christians when, during the XV-64 wedding ceremony, a circle was described ("Isaiah is dancing"). Likewise, a on Good Friday the believers went around the church (however, the ignorance misguided them in adopting the anticlockwise direction, which is an anti-divine action; see *infra*), while the priest encompasses the altar.

By taking over a pre-Islamic ritual, Muslims walked around the holy stone Ka'ba in Mecca. The history recorded that the first thing that Muhammad did when triumphantly entering Mecca was to go round (*tawaf*, Arab.) Ka'ba seven times [223]. The tradition says that the firsts who went round the holy

stone were Abraham and his son Isma'il [224]. Isma'il and his mother Hagar were buried close by, near the Zamzam well. The esoteric mysticism of the Sufis rejects the formal side of the ritual, showing that "what counts is to seven times encompass the inner Ka'ba of your heart" [225]. Another Islamic ritual practiced during the holy pilgrimage is *sa'y*, that is going between the As-Safa and Al-Marwah hills at Mecca seven times.

The instances of circumambulation are frequent in the folk tradition. Marcus Bandinus belonged to the Order of Minorite Friars, and was the archbishop of Marcianopolis (Lower Moesia), of Durostor and of Tomis on the Black Sea coast and steward of the Moldavian Catholic Church on the territory where he was living between 1644 and 1650. He wrote a report on the request of Pope Innocent II, published by V.A. Urechia [226], where he described a ritual of the Romanians in Transylvania where ten men followed by ten young maidens dug a furrow with the plough around the village at night, to protect it against the pest. The *Vedas* also prescribe a furrow drawn with the aim of framing the holy quadrilateral space inside which *ahavaniya* will be lit (ch. XV E). Aurel Candrea quoted a similar example in the county of Dolj and the same practice was described by an incantation against the pest in the county of Bihor. "A furrow ploughed around the village... is the typical ritual of defense against the plague among the Slavs and the Finno-Ugrians" [227]. In Serbia, seven furrows (see below: *bandhan*) were dug around the village while uttering formulas and incantations.

XV-64 In India, the circumambulation (*parikrama*, Sanskr.) was commonly practiced in all the holy places, in pilgrimages, and during the wedding ceremony (walking around the quadrilateral fireplace where the holy-fire was burning). Thus, in the *Rig-Veda* [228] it is requested from the bride and bridegroom to surround "the fire of Aryaman, o, Pushan" (*Aryamno Agnim pary etu Pushan*, Sanskr.) in the fireplace.

The direction of rotation was of a great importance. In India, Tibet and Cambodia, the rotation is done clockwise, i.e. by keeping always the center at the right. This was the direction of the apparent movement of the Sun. It was closely related to the 12 signs of the zodiac, the 12 months, the 12 suns (gods Aditya) or the 12 hours on the clock dial and had a cosmic value. Indeed, when seen from the earth, in numerous cases the arms of the galaxies are bent clockwise. Modern physics has established that two physical processes take place in the spiral arms of galaxies where new mass particles consequently are created. If a black hole is rotating anticlockwise and the electromagnetic radiations are emitted radially, the arms will be bent in the high gravity field to a spiral structure opened in the clockwise direction. The imitation of the astral rhythms signified the harmonization of the human

microcosm with the macrocosmic cycle. While the clockwise movement was considered beneficial and auspicious, the anticlockwise movement brought forth great disasters. The clockwise movement (*pradakshina*, Sanskr.) corresponded to the path of life, the celestial path, to the creation of the universe (*kalpa*, Sanskr.), while the anticlockwise movement (*prasatya*, Sanskr.) was the path of death (the above-mentioned black holes might be regarded as such an example), the terrestrial path and expressed the destruction of the cosmos (*pralaya*, Sanskr.), being used, with malevolent aims, by the tantrikas and other practitioners of black magic (ch. XXII D). However, the polar movement (i.e. the rotation of the stars around the pole) which was anticlockwise, was practiced in Islam, occasionally in Tibet (*Bonpo*) and in Angkor Wat, this one being the only exception in the Hindu architecture: it was the only temple which was opened facing west, therefore it was regarded as a funeral temple.

Plato referred to the rotation of the entire universe: “God himself assists the universe on its way and guides it by imparting its rotation to it”, showing that the rotation has two senses: one “when it is assisted on its way by the transcendent divine cause” and its opposite “when it has been released” by the divinity (the divine “releases his control”), saying about the retrieving of the first sense: “this change of motion we must regard as the most important and the most complete of all «turning-back» occurring in the celestial orbits” [229].

In Celtic tradition, clockwise (solar) circumambulation was generally employed as a sign of friendly intention; the opposite implied hostility, enmity or bloodlust [230].

Sahaja Yoga has established that the energy within the *chakras* (wheels, Sanskr.; one notice the similarity with *kýklos*, Gr., *circus*, *circulum*, Lat.—circle) is moving *clockwise* when you face the body, and *anticlockwise*, when you see its back. The frontal clockwise rotation of the hand around the chakras (*bandhan*, Sanskr.) will charge them with good vibrations, and at the same time will help to remove the cause that generated any local catches. By describing around the object seven circles the bandhan ensures the protection of the respective thing as well as the transmission of beneficial energy to food elements (ch. XV C and D). The right hand (of action) is used. The same technique would be used to surround the whole body with an aura of propitious vibrations, thus achieving a true shield of vibratory energy (ch. XXII D). God says to the protected one (Job 5:19): “In seven there shall no evil touch thee.” The hint to the chakras is obvious. In the Indian tradition, there is *Mahapurusha Chakravartin*—a term denoting XV-65 the universal Monarch who revolves the wheel. “He runs the sacred wheel”

(*chakram vartayati*). However, the Chakra (*Sudarshan*) was mentioned (ch. V) as the symbol of Vishnu, the divine aspect of evolution. After the Buddhist concept, Chakravartin was the secular correspondent of the Buddha about whom they also said: “he set in motion the wheel of the sacred doctrine” of liberation. There are also references to the “turning the Wheel of Truth.” Theodore bar Konai has shown that “the King of Glory have set in motion three Wheels” (*Gloriosum regem tres rotas impellentem*, Lat.) having different functions [231], probably related to the three channels.

Many ancient writings brilliantly confirm the Yoga concepts. To start with we shall refer to the *Bible*. The New Testament wrote about the “wheel of Creation” (James 3:6, *The New Jerusalem Bible*). While describing the XV-66 “visions of God,” Ezekiel⁴⁹⁷ (1:1) wrote: “the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels⁴⁹⁸” (1:20,21; cf. 10:17). Or, the subtle energy was seen to be the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. The prophet also added that the cherubs had *wheels* or *whirlwinds*, which he called *galgal*⁴⁹⁹ (10:13). The visionaries perceived the manifestation of the subtle energy as fire (ch. XI E), like in the case of Daniel, who described God’s throne comprising “flames of fire [and] its wheels burning fire” (7:9). Enoch also spoke about similar phenomena. “Among them were cherubim of fire” [232]. “The stars which roll over the fire” [233]. “I beheld a fire blazing and running along without cessation, which intermitted its course neither by day nor by night, but continued always the same” [234]. “I saw the winds which turn the sky” [235]. And the *Zohar* reads: “«When God created the world», he said, «He created seven firmaments above... and every firmament trembles from fear of its Master by whose command it moves...” [236], where the overlapped and moving firmaments are the chakras.

Many references are found in Plato who admitted of the existence of seven types of movement [237]. Speaking of the Creator he said: “The inner motion He divided... and made seven unequal circles having their intervals” [238]. “He gave to each of them two movements: the first, a movement on the same spot after the same manner...” [239]. “Making up out of all the four elements each separate body and fastening the courses of the immortal soul in a body which was in a state of perpetual influx and efflux” [240]. However, the influx and the efflux refer to the subtle energy. “Now there is only one way of taking care of things, and this is to give to each of them food

⁴⁹⁷ He called these mysterious entities: *hayoth* (Hebr., plural).

⁴⁹⁸ *Ophanim* (wheels, or forms, Hebr.).

⁴⁹⁹ In Aramaic.

and motion which are natural to it. And the motions, which are naturally akin to the divine principle within us, are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe. These each man should follow, and correct the course of the head which were corrupted at our birth, and by learning the harmonies and revolutions of the universe, should assimilate them should attain to that perfect life which the gods have set before mankind, both for the present and the future” [241].

An Aramaic text advised the practitioner: “He should... begin with combinations⁵⁰⁰, until he receives the influx of inspiration, *shepha' ha-Hokhmah*, and he should recite these combinations rapidly and turn the «wheel» as fast as he can, and this practice brings the Holy Spirit.” Scholem’s commentary on this text runs as follows: “These indications show an unmistakable affinity with the Yoga practices that had been disseminated among the Jews chiefly by Abraham Abulafia⁵⁰¹” [242].

In Indian processions, the deity was adorned with flower-garlands and XV-34 was seated in a cart drawn by oxen which have their horns painted in specific XV-68 colors. The cart was decorated with brightly colored *saris* and with palm and banana tree leaves. The participants sang devotional songs, danced and carried burning torches, in a procession preceding the cart. Firecrackers were thrown in their way; their sounds together with that of *a conch* were meant to drive away the demons. Incense was burnt, flowers and rice grains were thrown over the cart. A band of drums, cymbals, tambourines, flutes and trumpets headed the procession. The *Bible* described a similar ritual: “Let them praise his name⁵⁰² in the dance; let them sing psalms unto him with tambour and harp” (Psalms 149:3).

The dance was an ancient, ritualistic practice, which transformed the XV-69 personality. Just like Yoga, dance induced the achievement of one’s secret experience, ecstasy and eventually union with the divine essence. Rabindranath Tagore said that the Indian dance “is an ecstatic meditation in the motionless center of movement” [243]. Dance “is a holy prayer offered to gods in the very evolved language of gestures” [244]. *Raas* (Sanskrit) is the XV-72 *soul mood* expressed through *the dance*. The whirling dervishes were subjected to some kind of ecstasy when they practiced specific dances (XXV

⁵⁰⁰ These are combinations (and permutations) of letters of the divine name (ch. XV D).

⁵⁰¹ Considered by Scholem to be “the most outstanding representative of the ecstatic Kabbalah in the 13th century.”

⁵⁰² i.e. taking *mantras*.

B).

XV-70 Shiva, the Lord of Yogis (*Yogeshwara*, Sanskr.) was also the King of the 71 Dancers (*Nataraja*, Sanskr.).

The dance was an act of creation. The Universe was created by the dance of the Adi Shakti round the central pivot Sada-Shiva (ch. I). Shiva in his best-known hypostasis, as a dancer, was surrounded by a circle of flames (*prabha mandala*, Sanskr.) representing the vital cosmic processes, the Primordial Power (trajectory of the dance performed by the Adi Shakti), the lights of true Knowledge (*Vidya*, Sanskr.). The dancer kept his foot on Apasmara Purusha (Lord of oblivion and inattention, Sanskr.), the symbol of blindness of life and of ignorance (*avidya*, Sanskr.). Liberation (*mukti*, *moksha*, Sanskr.) was possible only by defeating Apasmara Purusha.

The Cosmic Dancer embodied five activities (*panchakriya*, Sanskr.): Creation (*srishti*, Sanskr.), i.e. the undoing, the overflowing; Maintenance (*sthiti*, Sanskr.) or the lasting; Destruction (*samhara*, Sanskr.) or re-absorption into the initial Unity; Hiding (*tiro-bhava*, Sanskr.) behind the masks of Maya; Favors (*anugraha*, Sanskr.) granted to the devotee, to the Yogi as a reward for his endeavor, materialized in the revelation that led to eternal liberation. All these were rendered by the posture of hands and feet

XI-9(*mudra*, Sanskr.) [245].

. . . 12 A Gnostic text throws an unexpected light on our topic. It is attributed to John, and reads about Jesus who, in Gethsemane, “gathered all of us together and said: «Before I am delivered up unto them⁵⁰³ let us sing an hymn to the Father, and so go forth to that which lieth before us». He bade us therefore make as it were a ring, holding one another’s hands, and himself standing in the midst... He began, then, to sing a hymn and to say: «... The Whole on high hath part in our dancing. Amen. Whoso danceth not, knoweth not what cometh to pass. Amen... Behold thyself in me who speak, and seeing what I do, keep silence about my mysteries. Thou that dancest, perceive what I do»” [246].

The conch (*shank*, Sanskr.) was used as an object of cult during the Puja where it represented divine, pure knowledge (*Nirmala Vidya*, Sanskr.). The Moon and the god of rain were inside the conch, on its back it had Prajapati, the Creator of Nature and at the opening there was Saraswati, the Goddess XV-73 of Rivers. The conch was also used in Indian ritual to produce sounds. Audible at a long distance the conch inspired horror on the battlefield at Kurukshetra. The brave Grandfather Bhishma, “the aged Kuru, his valiant grandsire, roared like a lion and blew his conch. Then conches and kettledrums, tabors and drums and horns suddenly were struck and the noise

⁵⁰³ That is: to the soldiers who would come to arrest him.

was tumultuous... The tumultuous uproar resounding through earth and sky rent the hearts of Dhritarashtra's sons" [247]. The *Bible* mentioned the breakdown of the walls of Jericho by blowing the ram horns (ch. XI C). XV-75 Yahweh said to Joshua: "Seven priests shall carry before the ark seven blast-trumpets; and on the seventh day shall ye go round the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets"⁵⁰⁴... And it went to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpets, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat" (Joshua 6:4,20). This sound evoked the Primordial Sound OM: that is why the conch is used in both Hindu and Buddhist rituals. In some of the Yoga experiences the sound of the conch was perceived internally. In China, a conch was used to remove the water from the Moon, i.e. the heavenly dew, but also the aquatic element Yin (while Yang, the fire, was removed from the Sun, by means of a metallic mirror).

"The conch has echoes of the pearl-oyster and of the pearl which it XV-74 contains... The pearl becomes speech or the Word. According to Burckhardt this is the significance of the conch depicted in Islamic art in some prayer niches... The conch is itself Lakshmi, Vishnu's Shakti... It is said, furthermore, that the conch encloses the *Veda* during periods of *pralaya* between two cycles of «appearance»⁵⁰⁵. Hence it holds the seed and potential evolution of future cycles" [248], which is OM.

To conclude the chapter we will give two quotations from the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The first one stated that worshipping of the Divine leads to spiritual accomplishment that is Self Realization: "By worshipping Him through the performance of his own duty does man attain perfection" [249]. The second one warned against the formalism of the ritualistic leading to destruction of those lacking Self Realization: "For I am the enjoyer and lord of all sacrifice. But these men do not know Me in My true nature and so they fall" [250].

⁵⁰⁴ Strictly: "the reverberating blast of the horn."

⁵⁰⁵ Of Brahman.

NOTES

- [1] Eliade, *Zalmoxis...*, p.60. [2] Eliade, *The Myth...*, pp.10-11,17,35-36. [3] Cf. Gimbutas, *The Civilization...*, p.262; *The Goddesses...*, p.71-72. [4] Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, pp.978-981. [5] NHL, *The Gospel of Thomas*, 46.27-28 (L.77). [6] Eliade, *The Forge...*, pp.43-44, note G, p.186. [7] Jung, *Memories...*, p.225. [8] Eliade, *Patterns...*, § 74, p.216; *The Myth...*, p.4. [9] Costian, *Adevărul...*, p.46; *Yoga Spontană* no.6, p.11 (1996). [10] *The Zohar* II, 222a, vol. IV, p.259. [11] Berthelot, *Collection des Anciens Alchimistes Grecs*, 1887, III, XXIX, 4; cf. also I, iii,1 and III, ii, 1. [12] Merejkowski, *Jesus Manifest*, p.84. [13] Carl Kerényi, *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Myth and Daughter*, Schocken, New York 1967, p.80. [14] R.G. Boling, *Judges*, Anchor Bible, Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y. 1975, pp.178-179. [15] *The Matsya Purana* 252.2. [16] Jung, Kerényi, pp.14,19; also *Eranos Jahrbuch* 1935, p.105. [17] Zimmer, *Myths...*, p.15. [18] *The Laws of Manu* 1.72. [19] *The Markandeya Purana* 46.21. [20] Capra, *The Tao...*, p.128. [21] Erich Frank, *Saint Augustine and Greek Thought*, The Augustinian Society, Cambridge, Mass. 1942, pp.9-10; *apud* Zimmer, *Myths...*, pp.19-20. [22] *The Rig-Veda* VIII 27.19. [23] Gheorghe Iacomi, Sanda Nicolau, *Ceahlăul în spiritualitatea românească (Ceahlău in Romanian Spirituality)*, Ed. Mesagerul, Cluj 1995.p.20, o.t. [24] Couliano, p.135. [25] Ephraim the Syrian, *Hymn XII*, in *Nineteen Hymns on the Nativity of Christ in the Flesh* from *The Early Church Fathers and Other Works* (transl. by J. B. Morris and A. Edward Johnston), William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Edinburgh 1867; Copyright Eternal Word Television Network 1996. [26] *History of Herodotus* IV.69, vol. III, pp.56-57. [27] Lao-tse, *Tao-Te-Ching* 60.3-6, (transl. Chin Tao-Kao), pp.74,75. [28] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 4, *hadith* 28; *Ibid.*, vol. 8, *hadith* 840. [29] *Coranul (The Qur'an)*; transl. by O. Isopescul), Ed. ETA, Cluj-Napoca 1992, p.49, and note 5 to p.273. [30] Sourdel, p.210, o.t. [31] Jung, Kerényi, p.76. [32] *Apud* Dumitriu, *Eseuri*, p.530. [33] Daniel, *Civilizația sumeriană*, p.75. [34] Armstrong, *A History...*, p.6. [35] Homer, *The Iliad* I, 446 sq. [36] Josephus, *Antiquities...* XVIII 5.2, in *The Works...*, p.396. [37] *The Community Rule, Ms. IQS* III, in Vermes, *The Dead...*, p.64. [38] *The Book of Jubilees* 2.29-30, from R.H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and...* [39] *The Community Rule, Ms. IQS*, VI, in Vermes, *The Dead...*, p.69. [40] *The Messianic Rule, Ms. IQSa* II, 20-21, in *ibid.*, p.102; cf. Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, Summit, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore 1991, p.136; William Sanford LaSor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, Erdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1972, p.101. [41] Andronescu, pp.48,156. [42] Scholem, *On The Kabbalah...*, p.136, and note 1. [43] Plato,

Symposium, 210a, in *The Collected...*, p.561; Plutarch, *Moralia*, 607b etc. [44] Deshayes, p.273. [45] Ovid, *Fasti* IV, vv.182-187, (transl. by James G. Frazer), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., William Heinemann Ltd., London 1976, pp.200/201-202/203. [46] Lucius Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* (transl. by Adlington, 1566), book XI, ch. 47. [47] Tertullian, *On Baptism (De baptismo)* V, (transl. by S. Thelwall). [48] Schuon, *Gnosis*, p.131. [49] Baring, Cashford, illustr. to p.387. [50] Graves, Podro, p.330. [51] Plato, *Critias* 119e, in *The Collected...*, p.1223. [52] C. Gill, *Plato, The Atlantis Story. 'Timaeus' 17-27. 'Critias'*, Bristol Classical Press, Bristol 1980; *apud* Plato, Romanian transl., *quoted work*, note 208 to *Critias*. [53] *The Satapatha Brahmana* 1.9.2.29; 6.5.1 sq.; 7.2.12 and 3.1.9. [54] *Ibid.*, 8.2.1.17-18. [55] *Ibid.*, 6.8.1.15; 1.2.18 sq.; Eliade, *The Myth...*, p.79. [56] Matthews, p.217. [57] Zimmer, *Myths...*, p.64. [58] Zimmer, *Philosophies...*, pp.582-583. [59] Sir John Woodroffe, *Shakti and Shakta*, Luzac & Co., Madras and London 1929, third ed., p.511. [60] *The Principles of Tantra*, Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) editor, London 1914-1916, 2 vol. pp. LXXI-LXXII. [61] Schuon, *Gnosis*, note 1 to p.65. [62] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 1, *hadith* 331. [63] Sourdell, pp.171-172,603, o.t. [64] Muslim, *Sahih*; quoted by Ibrahim Mustafa, *Hadith and the Corruption of the Great Religion of Islam*. [65] *NQ* 20.96. [66] *The Zohar* I, 44b, in *The Wisdom of the Zohar* vol. 2, p.612; cf. pp.605,607,609; cf. *The Zohar* I, 45a, in *Sepher Ha-Zohar*, vol. I, p.263. [67] Zimmer, *Philosophies...*, p.206. [68] *The Acts of Thomas*. In his introductory word (pp.56-57,59), Dr. Klijn refers to the Greek variant of the text, §§ 26 and 49. [69] *NHL, The Gospel of Philip*, 73.15-19. [70] *The Acts of Thomas*, § 121. [71] *Ibid.*, § 157. [72] Origen, *Contra Celsum* VI.27. [73] Auboyer, pp.88,269. [74] Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics (De praescriptione haereticorum)* XL, (transl. by Peter Holmes). [75] *The Zohar* I, 219a, vol. II, p.310. [76] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 4, *hadith* 583. [77] Baring, Cashford, p.352. [78] *Asvatayana Gryhasutra* 1.19. [79] Muslim, *Sahih* XLVIII.2. [80] Ibn al-'Arabi, *The Bezels...*, pp.280-281. [81] Clement of Alexandria, *A Hymn to Christ the Savior*, II, in *Paedagogos (The Instructor)*, III. [82] *The Book of Enoch*, 46.1,2; 47.3; 48.2; 54.1; 58.1 etc. [83] Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching* (transl. by Charles Muller), 1991, revised 1997. [84] De Souzaenelle, pp.31-32, o.t. [85] M. Fox, *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, Harper & Row, San Francisco 1988, p.110. [86] Baring, Cashford, p.640. [87] *Apud* Jung, *Memories...*, pp.249-250. [88] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 8, *hadith* 419. [89] Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, p.590. [90] *Samyutta-nikaya* 2.221; *apud* Eliade, *Myths...*, p.227. [91] Swami Vimalananda, *Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram* and *Sri Lalitambika Sahasranama Stotram*; Swami Chidbhanananda, *Sri Siva Sahasranama*

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Podro, p.383. [169] Frazer, vol. I, § 44. [170] Bettenson (ed.), *Documents of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press, London, Oxford, New York etc.. 1976, pp. 67,76 quoting Justin Martyr, *Apology (Apologiae)* I.66, and Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, respectively. [171] *The Testament of Levi* 8.5, in *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, III. [172] *The Testament of Judah* 14.1, in *ibid.*, IV. [173] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica (Church History)* II.23.5, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, vol. I, Christian Classics Ethereal Library at Calvin College, last updated on May 27, 1999. [174] Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Penguin Books, New York etc. 1997, p.32. [175] NHL, *Authoritative Teaching* 24.15-16; Pagels, *The Gnostic...*, p.113. [176] Saeki, § 182, p.44. [177] Couliano, pp.195,204-205. [178] Euthymius Zigabenus, *Panoplia dogmatica*, in Migne, vol. 130, col.1296-1297; Couliano, p.210. [179] *Sanhedrin* 99a; *Berakhoth* 34b; *apud* Graves, Podro, p.131. [180] Herbert, p.150, o.t. [181] *The Laws of Manu* 11.55; 11.98; 12.56. [182] Dowson, p.164. [183] Strabo, VII, 3, 11. [184] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 7, *hadith* 484. [185] Gurbani, *SGGS* 554, line 13. [186] *The Rig-Veda* 9.73; 10.90. [187] *The Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad* 1.4.6. [188] *The Taittiriya Upanishad* 3.10.6. [189] *Ibid.*, 2.2.(1). [190] *The Maitri Upanishad* 6.12. [191] *The Chandogya Upanishad* 3.16.1,3,5. [192] Cf. *The Aitareya Brahmana*, Anandashrama ed., 1931, 2 vol. [193] *The Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad* 1.1.1. [194] *The Atharva-Veda* XII.2. [195] *The Chandogya Upanishad* 4.16.1. [196] *The Mahabharata*, Shanti Parvan 338,52. [197] *The Chandogya Upanishad* 6.4.1-5. [198] *The Bhagavad-Gita* 4.25. [199] *Kapisthala-katha samhita* 31.20; *The Satapatha Brahmana* 3.7. [200] *Sumyutta-nikaya* I.169. [201] Auboyer, p.269. [202] Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1985, p.286. [203] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, book I, vv.111-112, in *Ovid in six...*, vol. III (I), p.10/11. [204] Herbert, pp.117,416. [205] Tertullian, *The Chaplet (De corona)* III. [206] *Le Véda*, Éditions Planète, Paris 1967, p.284, o.t. [207] El-Bokhari, *Les traditions islamiques*, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris 1914, vol. 4, p.456. [208] *The Rig-Veda* 4.58, in *The Rig Veda, an Anthology* (selected, translated and annotated by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty), Penguin Classics, London 1961, pp.126-127; *apud* Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, p.139. [209] Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *Dictionnaire...*, p.484, o.t. [210] Helmuth M. Bottchen, *Die Grosse Mutter*, Econ-Verlag, Düsseldorf 1968, ch. *Die Grosse Mutter, Bienen Königin*; *apud* Baring, Cashford, pp.118-120. [211] *The Atharva-Veda* 5.73.8. [212] Magnien, Paris 1950, pp.13-36. [213] Quoted in *ibid.*, p.344. [214] Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, pp.511-512. [215] Baring, Cashford, p.190. [216] *Ibid.*, p.477. [217] *The Mahabharata* 13.849;

13.6396. [218] Dumézil, p.199. [219] *The Svetasvatara Upanishad* 4.1. [220] Goethe, *Faust*, II, vv.4722-4727, o.t. [221] Daniélou, *The Myths...*, p.378. [222] Scholem, *On The Kabbalah...*, pp.154-156. [223] *Coranul*, p.20. [224] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 4, *hadith* 583. [225] Schuon, *Understanding...*, p.33. [226] *Codex Bandinus*; *apud Analele Academiei Române, Memorii, Secția istorică (Annals of the Romanian Academy, Memoirs, Historical Section)*, series 2, tom XVI, 1893-1894, pp.1-335, București 1895. [227] Eliade, *Zalmoxis...*, p.192. [228] *The Rig-Veda* 14.1.39. [229] Plato, *Statesman (Politicus)* 269c; 270a,c (transl. by J.B. Skemp), in *the Collected...*, pp.1034,1035. [230] Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, pp.201-202. [231] Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon (Contra Faustum Manichaeum)* XV.6. [232] *The Book of Enoch* 14.12. [233] *Ibid.*, 18.16. [234] *Ibid.*, 23.2. [235] *Ibid.*, 18.6. [236] *The Zohar* III, 9b, vol. IV, p.345. [237] Plato, *Timaeus* 34a, in *The Collected...*, p.1164. [238] *Ibid.*, 36d, p.1166. [239] *Ibid.*, 40a-b, p.1169. [240] *Ibid.*, 43a, p.1171. [241] *Ibid.*, 90c-d, p.1209. [242] Scholem, *On The Kabbalah...*, pp.187-188. [243] R. Tagore, *L'Inde et son âme*, Chitra, Bangalore 1928, p.69, o.t. [244] O.C. Gangoly, *Cultural Values of Indian Plastic Arts*, in *Prabuddha Bharata*, Mayavati, Himalayas 1935, p.553. [245] Zimmer, *Myths...*, pp.151-154. [246] *The Acts of John* 94-95. [247] *The Bhagavad-Gita*, 1.12-19. [248] Chevalier, Gheerbrant, *A Dictionary...*, pp.228-229. [249] *The Bhagavad-Gita* 18.46. [250] *Ibid.*, 9.24.