

The Semitic Trinity

This is an incomplete draft.

January 2018

Note from Bernard

Dear Moses, (Shall I call you by your new name in the interviews?)

As you know I am working on another panel for the hall on the theme of the 3 Semitic inspired religions with roots in ancient Judaism.

Behind the 3 figures, and in an attempt to reflect their mental concept of the divine being, I am painting three patterns, hardly symbols, behind the Muslim the platform from a mosque dome, the rose window behind the Christian - but for the Jew I was having a problem.

You have introduced me to a mystical system that existed within Judaism like the Sufi mystics existed within Islam.

From what I have read in [1], the ideas developed in Egypt comprised a spiritual system based on a set of symbols - alphabetic and numbered that coded meaning.

That gave me the immediate clue as to how to find this symbol of the divine being - especially in a religion which expressly forbids the making of a graven image.

The clue seems to lie in language. Can you say something about the use of the Jewish characters and numerals? What are the arcana that (they?) divided into?

You showed me an image in which the Star of David was associated with 2 other figures - can you explain why you chose this image?

This philosophy is said to be 'Hermetic.' Is it associated also with 'Hermes' who was the mischievous 'Mercury' in the Greek Pantheon? Does this philosophical system illustrate the merging of Greek, Egyptian and Jewish thought?

Behind each tradition, there is an inspired figure - hot-line to God; Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. To who does the Tarot refer?

Is there a tarot card that refers to the divine being?

The Hebrew alphabet and gematria

According to modern scholarship, written language began in the fourth millenium BC with the Akkadian language of Mesopotamia written in cuneiform script from about 3500 BC. Other writing systems which developed in the ancient world include alphabets for Hebrew/Aramaic and Coptic (Middle East), Greek and Latin (Mediterranean area), Sanskrit (India), and Chinese.

We know that some if not all of these ancient languages had a sacred function in accordance with the cultures, social structures and world views of ancient civilizations. Written language would have been largely the prerogative of priesthoods and priest-kings which then served the common functions of religion and government. Thus, the idea of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet serving as sacred symbols as well as the profane uses of written language is not as surprising as it may seem when viewed in the historical context. Egyptian hieroglyphs were similarly multifunctional and the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet function as *bija* (seed) mantra symbols which can be combined to form more complex mantras.

Unlike our writing system which has dedicated numerical symbols, the Hebrew letters also served as numbers. This is employed in the Kabbalistic method of gematria which associates words with numbers by means of the numerical values of their constituent letters.

Many books have been written on gematria while computational algorithms have been used in recent years to search for codes in the Hebrew bible. A simple example of gematria is the Hebrew name of God, Yod-He-Vau-He (Jehovah or Yahweh):

$$\text{Yod+He+Vau+He} = 10 + 5 + 6 + 5 = 26$$

This is a discipline that soon becomes compulsive for the interested student. At first, one is susceptible to the feeling that gematria provides a key to unlock the secrets of nature. A sceptic would say that the seemingly meaningful patterns and associations discovered through gematria are just random coincidences which any systematic search process would eventually find.

One can do gematria with the English alphabet using sequential letter values A = 1, B = 2 and so on through Z = 26. Remarkably, this gives

$$\text{GOD} = 7 + 15 + 4 = 26.$$

One of the most interesting results I have personally discovered is

$$\text{SEED} = 33 = \text{PHI}$$

where the Greek letter ϕ (phi) is conventionally used to denote the golden ratio

$$\phi = \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2} = 1.618\dots$$

It is well known that the phi ratio is a central feature of sacred geometry and ubiquitous throughout nature.

On the sceptic's side, gematria seems to work just as well as with English as with Hebrew and some significant words and names do not immediately yield interesting numerical results. I contend that it takes a combination of gematria with intuition to obtain interesting results: that the method itself can guide one's intuition.

The tarot

The tarot comprises of 22 major and 56 minor arcana. The Oxford Dictionary of English (ODE) defines **arcana** as (1) *secrets or mysteries* and (2) *either of two groups of cards within the tarot pack*. The singular noun **arcanum** shares its origin with **arcane** which means *understood by few; mysterious or secret* [ODE] and derives from Latin **arcere** *to shut up* from **arca** *chest*.

The tarot is popularly understood as a system of divination or 'fortune telling' based on a set of cards, the 22 major arcana (trumps) and the 56 minor arcana which correspond to the modern deck of 52 playing cards plus four additional court cards (a knight in each suite ranking between the knave or jack and the queen) . From the perspective of Hermetism, the tarot is quite a different proposition which can be summarized as a system for self-initiation and discovery applicable to the meaningful questions and mysteries of life.

In Hermetism, INITIATION is based on what are known as ARCANA or mysteries. Arcanum ... is a mystery, necessary for the cognition of a definite kind and number of things, laws or principles; a mystery without which one cannot operate, since the necessity of that cognition has been born in us; a mystery accessible to a mind strong and curious enough to see that knowledge Used broadly, all scientific sentences which explain any kind of practical activity can be placed under this term [MS Lesson 1].

The Tarot is neutral; neither good nor evil in itself, just like figures which can express any quantity, suitable or unsuitable, true or false. The whole system is based on the Universal Principle which manifests itself in every sphere of life. We may call it the 'Law' ... The symbols used are letters of the old Hebrew alphabet, plus figures and numbers. Three veils for three worlds. This is comfortable, for knowing the meaning of such a letter-symbol, and so on, that is, the fixed idea behind it, we can operate just as a mathematician does with algebraic formulas and terms. It is also very valuable for those, who being tired of the usual occult bungling which occurs at the present time, want to found

their studies on a firm basis, without sacrificing their reason and logical thinking. [MS Introduction].

Personally, I have come to understand the tarot as a map of life and the treacherous path to self-realization. Every now and again, I will become aware of how perfectly a real-world event or situation expresses a particular arcana or archetypal scenario of the tarot.

Example of insight provided by the tarot

Sometimes a specific world event suggests one or more particular arcana in a more or less obvious way. The events of 9/11 are a case in point which suggest primarily The Tower (Arcanum XVI) and secondarily The Moon (Arcanum XVIII). The card for XVI depicts a tower being struck by lightning while two towers are a main feature of the other card.

We can regard the events of 9/11 as a hypothetical marker for the decline of the Anglo-American (or western) empire. This gets into geopolitics, false flags, and questions behind of how and why it happened. There is an abundance of evidence that should make us question the official story. It is surprising how the masses can be hypnotized into compliance by watching TV and being fed a superficially plausible narrative (state sanctioned propaganda). To my mind, this process is represented by Typhon (Arcanum XV). Perhaps this is the hermetic way of explaining the notions of sin and the devil being used by the church as instruments of social control. But there is subtlety here too. For a civilized society, the extreme unethical elements must be kept in check to prevent descent into total chaos and lawlessness. Without the broad context of society as a whole and life on earth as a 'school for souls,' this becomes thought control which must be fought against. The wise person is thankful for the wisdom available to the earnest seeker of truth, and never more so than in the current era of information technology.

The USA grew in strength from its beginnings in the 18th century, became a superpower with the development and deployment of the atom bomb in 1945, and became the sole superpower after the opening of the Berlin wall in 1989 and subsequent decline of the USSR. Since then, China has become the world's leading industrial power and will soon overtake the US in terms of its GDP. The economic and political systems of the west (capitalism and democracy) stand in opposition to those of China and Russia (communism). Since the beginning of the cold war, western propaganda has done its utmost to instil a fear of communism into its citizen. Judging by the words and behaviour of prominent politicians and think tanks, one cannot help feeling that the capitalist mindset views the Marxist philosophy with a sense of mortal terror. Our lack of familiarity with Chinese and Russian culture and language is a barrier to knowing whether they are equally hostile towards us but I

personally am inclined to the view that these are human beings just like us and that the the negative propaganda is mainly produced by those in power in their attempt to maintain that power. Let us see whether Mouni Sadhu's explanation of the 16th arcanum can throw any light on the matter.

The alphabetic sign corresponding to the Sixteenth Arcanum is Ayin and its numerical value is 70. As the hieroglyph there is a 'material tie' or bond, or in other words 'a connection in a state of tension, similar to a stretched spring in mechanics, which will convey the idea better. The purpose of the preceding arcanum was the generation of such bonds; but, in its methods, logic excludes this or another postulate. This idea is expressed in the *first title* of the Sixteenth Arcanum (in the plane of the Archetype)—ELIMINATIO LOGICA. So, mother *deduction*, recognizing the necessity of *logic*, uses it for the building of theses. But confirmation of one thesis can be (and is) the result of the logical exclusion of all others. This exclusion creates metaphysical reactions in the basic laws of thinking, which here play the role of the 'stressed bonds'.

The necessity of harmonious existence for a separate pentagram compels that pentagram to generate an astral current of the *Nahash* type. This current uses astral reactions and *confirms* the life of one form, while it destroys another. From this comes the *second title* of the Sixteenth Arcanum—CONSTRICTIO ASTRALIS (astral constraint). It is also the basic principle of the whole of Ceremonial Magic.

The complicated way of bringing about transformations in the development of the universe sets in motion an instrument called *Fatum* (Fate) which, with the help of the physical reactions belonging to the 'bonds in a state of tension', preserves some forms, and at the same time destroys others. So we have the third title of the arcanum—DESTRUCTIO PHISICA (physical destruction).

The scientific name of the arcanum is TURRIS DESTRUCTA or TURRIS FULGURATA (destroyed or fulminated tower), the vulgar one is the 'House of God'. The corresponding sign is *Capricorn*.

The card of the Sixteenth Arcanum shows us a tower, shattered by a thunderbolt from the dark night sky. Struck by the lightning, two men fall from the top of the tower. One has a crown on his head, while the other has only dishevelled hair. The limbs of one of them form a figure similar to the letter Ayin. Here is the justification for the third title of the arcanum, which leads, according to the Law of Analogy, to two other titles.

The *physical destruction* is clearly visible, it is the shattered tower. But there were still the two men, who evidently wanted to remain on the top, but because of energetic counteraction in the form of the elec-

tric discharge (lightning) they were thrown down, despite the authority possessed by one of them (symbolized by the crown). This is just the *astral compulsion*, which is the second title of the arcanum. The first one, *logical exclusion*, is a consequence of the second, and does not need any more explanation. The higher power does not recognize any rank and directs the principle of compulsion [MS Lesson 73].

Topics to develop

- Map of life, accumulated and codified wisdom of independent students of life. Joseph Campbell's Hero and Watcher on the threshold archetypes. Journey of the hero.
- Origins of Hermetism and the tarot
 - Ancient Egypt, Thoth
 - Eleusinian Mysteries
 - Neoplatonism
 - Gnosticism
 - Cathars
 - Rosicrucians
 - Suppression by the church
 - Giordano Bruno and the beginnings of modern science
- TAROT, ROTA, TORA