

Hermetic Masonry in the Gnostic Tradition – Notes 5 III

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The Astral Light and the Mystery of Shin

The mystery of Shin Ψ is revealed by understanding the key to the Occult Sciences. According to Eliphas Levi, Shin Ψ is the mediating fire; it is the horns of Moses and the fork (or trident) of Satan. The ternary exists in the universal light, and is called by the Kabalists "od", "ob" and "aour":



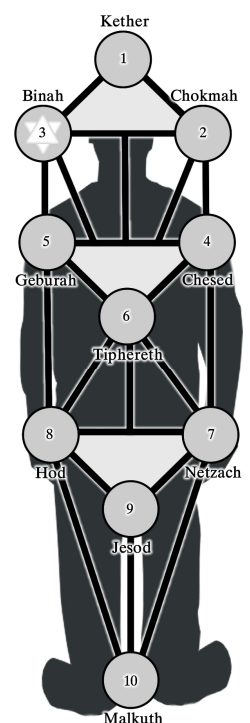
1. It is called "od" [וד] when it is active, and this is what the hermetic philosophers called their occult fire, or their sulfur, spread out, they say, in the whole of nature;
2. It is called "ob" [וב] when it is passive, and it is then the passive magnetism of somnambulists and *mediums*: it is through "ob" that the Pythonesses divined (as it is said in the Bible with regard to the witch of Endor);
3. And it is called "aour" [אור] or 'universal gold' when it is equilibrated; and it is thus that Creation begins through the establishment of equilibrium in this light which then becomes the instrument of Creation.

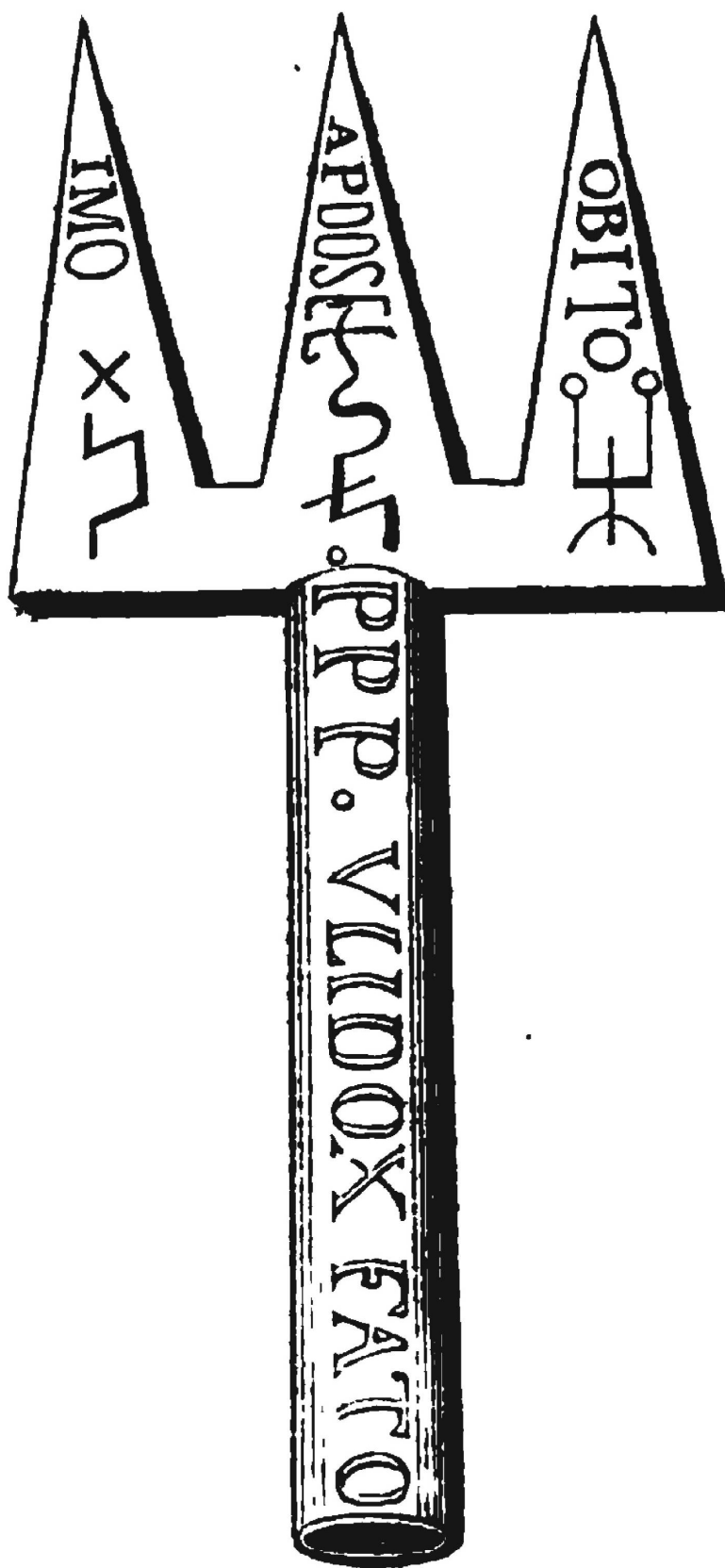
The harmony of the Elohim said: "Let there be light [aour], and there was light [aour]." (see Gen 1:3) The universal light reveals its four properties (analogous to the letters of the sacred tetragrammaton יהוה) by four distinct series of phenomena, which we call: electricity, magnetism, heat and light or splendor. Since what our modern physicists call light is only one of the many phenomena of the universal light, which can be called the radiant visibility or 'visible light'.

Eliphas Levi: Imagination and the Microcosm-Macrocosm

All forms correspond to ideas, and there is no idea which does not have its proper and peculiar form. The primordial light (which is the vehicle of all ideas) is the mother of all forms and transmits them from emanation to emanation (becoming diminished or altered according to the density of the medium). Secondary forms are the reflections which return to the home (or hearth) of the emanated light. Forms of objects (being a modification of the light) remain in the light whereas the reflection expels them. Thus the astral light, or the terrestrial fluid (which we call the great magical agent) is saturated with images or reflections of all types. Our soul can evoke and submit these images or reflections to its imagination (which is what the Kabalists call the *diaphane*). These images are always present to us and are only erased by more powerful imprints of reality during waking hours, or by the preoccupation of the mind (which makes our imagination inattentive to the moveable panorama of the astral light).

The world is magnetized by the light of the sun, and we are magnetized by the astral light of the world. That which operates in the body of the planet, is repeated in us. There are three analogical and hierarchic worlds within us, as there are in all of nature. Man is the microcosm or little world and according to the dogma of analogies: everything that is in the big world is reproduced in the little world. **There are therefore three centers of fluidic attraction and projection in us: the brain, the heart or epigastrium, and the genital organ.** Each of these organs is one and double, that is to say, we find the idea of the ternary therein. Each of these organs attracts in one way and repels in another. It is by means of these apparatuses that we place ourselves in communication with the universal fluid, transmitted in us through the nervous system. It is also these three centers which are the seat of a triple magnetic operation.





The Trident of Paracelsus.

This trident, figure of the ternary, is formed from three pyramidal teeth superimposed upon a greek or latin tau [τ].

Upon one of its teeth one sees a yod [י] crossing a crescent on one part, and on the other [part] an intersecting line, [a] figure which hieroglyphically reminds [us of] the zodiacal sign of the crab [♋].

Upon the opposite tooth is a mixed sign reminding [us of] that of the twins [♊] and that of the lion [♌].

Between the claws of the crab one sees the sun [☉], and next to the lion [one sees] the astronomic cross [+or x].

Upon the teeth of the middle is hieroglyphically traced the figure of the celestial serpent, having the sign of Jupiter [♃] for [its] head.

On the side of the crab one reads the word OBITO, [meaning] "go away, back up"; and on the side of the lion one reads IMO, [meaning] "come on, persist".

In the center, and near the symbolic serpent, one reads AP DO SEL, [which is a] word composed of an abbreviation, a word composed kabalistically and hebraically, and finally [a word] of a complete and vulgar root: AP, which must be read AR, because they are the two first greek letters of the word ARCHEUS¹; DO, which must be read OD [♄] and SEL [a French word meaning: SALT].

They are the three primary substances, and the occult names of Archeus and Od [♄] express the same as the sulfur and the mercury of the philosophers.

Upon the rod of iron, which must serve as the trident's handle, one sees three times the letter P. P. P., [which is a] phallic and lingamic hieroglyph; then the words VLI DOX FATO, which must be read by taking the first letter as the number of the pentagram in roman numerals, and completing [it] thus PENTAGRAMMATICA LIBERTATE DOXA FATO, [a] character [which is] equivalent to the three letters of Cagliostro's L.P.D.: liberty, power, duty.

On one side, absolute liberty; upon the other, necessity or invincible fatality; in the middle REASON, [the] kabalistic absolute which creates universal equilibrium.

This admirable magical summary by Paracelsus can serve as [a] key to the obscure works of the kabalist Wronski, [a] remarkable scholar who has been led (more than once) away from his ABSOLUTE REASON by the mysticism of his nation and by the shameful financial speculations of a very distinguished thinker.

Every time, we render him the honor and glory of having discovered, before us, the secret of the trident of Paracelsus.

Thus Paracelsus represents the passive with the crab [♋], the active with the lion [♌], [and] intelligence or equilibrated reason with Jupiter [♃] or the king-man [who] dominates the serpent; then he equilibrates the forces by giving the fecundity of the active figure to the passive with the sun [☉], and [by giving] the space and the night to the active in order to be conquered, and to be illuminated under the symbol of the cross [+or x].

He says to the passive: "Obey the impulse of the active, and walk with it through equilibrium even with resistance." He says to the active: "Resist the immobility of the obstacle; persist and advance."

Then he explains these alternating forces with the great central ternary: LIBERTY, NECESSITY, REASON. REASON in the center; LIBERTY AND NECESSITY as counter-weights.

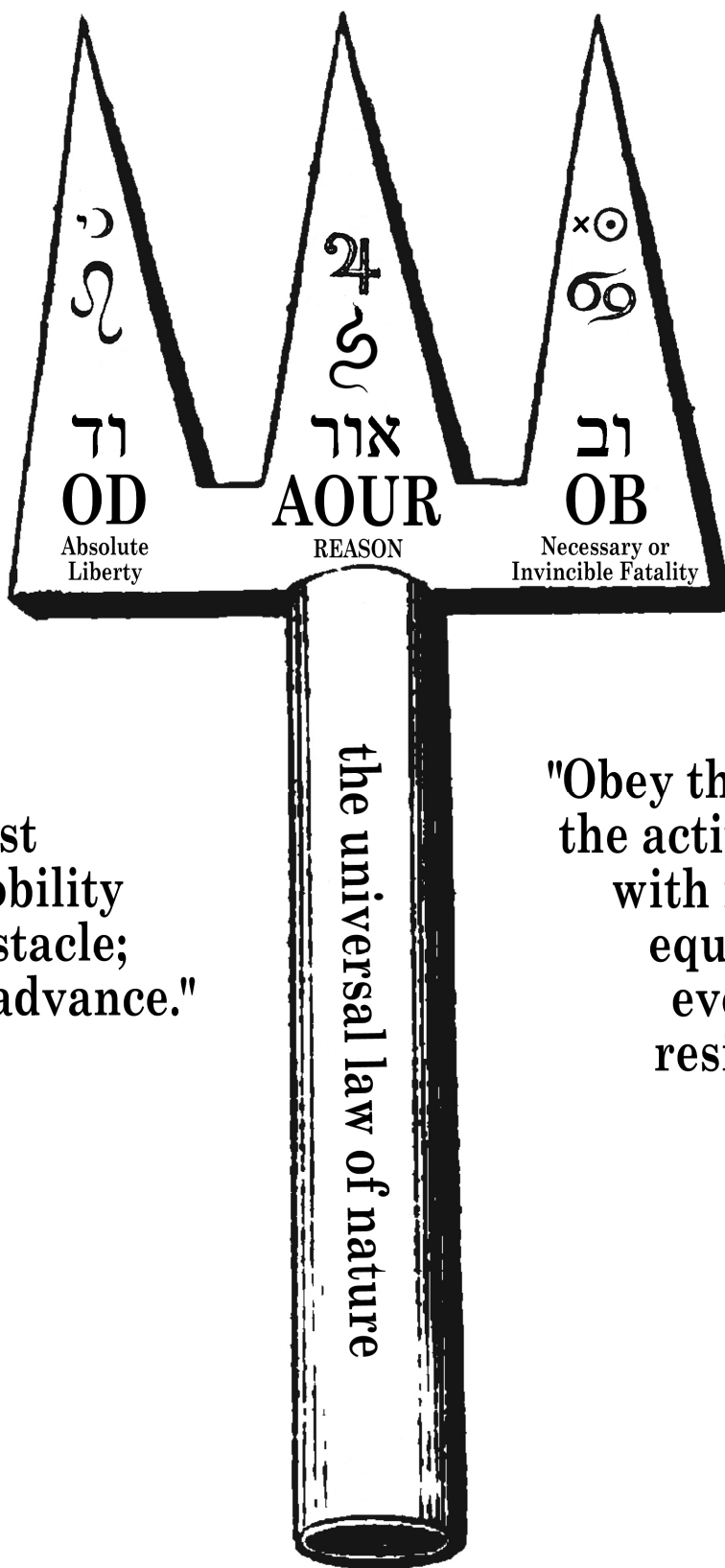
Here is the strength/force of the trident: within it is the shank and the base; this is the universal law of nature; this is the essence itself of the verb, realized and demonstrated by the ternary of human life, the archeus or spirit, the 'od' [♄] or the plastic mediator, and the salt or visible matter.

We have wanted to give [something] outside of [just] the explanation of this figure, because it is of the highest importance, and gives the measure of the highest genius to the occult sciences.

One must comprehend after this explanation why, in the flow of our work, we have always inclined ourselves, with traditional veneration for the true adepts, before the divine Paracelsus.

¹ The 'Archeus' refers to "the universal and particular agent of each individual; that which puts all of Nature into movement, disposes the germs and seeds of all sublunar beings to produce and multiply their species."

IMO
(come on,
persist)



OBITO
(go away,
back up)

"Resist
the immobility
of the obstacle;
persist and advance."

"Obey the impulse of
the active, and walk
with it through
equilibrium
even with
resistance."

the essence
itself
of the verb

The Human Light, the Astral Light and Love vs. Passion

The astral light has a direct action upon the nerves, which are its conductors in the animal economy of our physical organism, and which carry them to the brain; thus, in a state of somnambulism, one can see the nerves (even without the radiant light, since the astral fluid is a latent light, similar to how physics has recognized the existence of a latent heat). The astral light (being the instrument of life) is naturally fixed to all living centers. It attaches itself to the nucleus of planets just as it does to the heart of man (and by the heart we understand, in magic, the grand sympathetic nervous system), but it identifies itself with the life itself of the being which it animates, and it is through this quality of sympathetic assimilation that it divides itself without confusion. Thus it is terrestrial in its affinity with the sphere of the earth, and exclusively human in its affinity with men.

It is important to distinguish the human light from the astral light, and animal magnetism from universal magnetism. The astral light, subordinated to a blind mechanism and proceeding from centers which tend towards self-service, is a dead light and operates mathematically according to given impulses or according to fatal laws. The human light, on the contrary, is only fatal in the ignorant, who randomly make attempts to work with it. In the seer, human light is subject to intelligent understanding, submitted to the imagination and dependent upon the will.

This human light is ceaselessly projected by our willpower, thereby forming what has been called 'personal atmospheres'. The body absorbs what surrounds it and continuously radiates by projecting its *miasmas* (unhealthy or poisonous vapors/germs) and its invisible molecules. The spirit also absorbs and radiates what is around it in such a way that this phenomenon (named by some mystics *respiration*) really has the influence (both physically and morally) which is attributed to it. Thus, it is really contagious to breathe the same air as sick people, and to find oneself in the circle of attraction and expansion of the wicked.

When the magnetic atmosphere of two people is so equilibrated that the attractiveness of one absorbs the expansiveness of the other, then this produces an attraction which is named 'sympathy'. Then the imagination evokes in it all the rays or all the reflections analogous to that which it experiences, making a poem of the desires which captivate the will. If the persons are of different sexes, then it produces in them (or more often in the weaker of the two) a complete intoxication of their astral light, which is properly named passion or love.

Love is one of the great instruments of magical power, but it is formally forbidden to the magus (at least as an intoxication or as passion). Sexual love is always an illusion because it is the result of an imaginary mirage or reflection. The astral light is the universal seducer and is symbolized by the serpent of Genesis. This subtle agent is always active, always luxurious in its sap, always flowering with seductive dreams and sweet images. This force is blind in itself and subordinate to every will, whether for good, or for evil. It is an ever renewing circle of unbridled life, and gives vertigo to the imprudent. This corporeal spirit, this fiery body, this impalpable and ever-present ether, this immense seduction of nature, how to define it completely and how to qualify its action? Indifferent to some extent in itself, it lends itself to good as well as to evil; it carries the light and propagates the darkness; it can equally be called Lucifer and Lucifuge: it is a serpent, but it is also a halo; it is a fire, but it can also belong to the torments of hell which offers the promised incense to heaven.



To seize it in oneself, one must (just like the predestined woman, the allegorical VIRGIN WHO MUST CRUSH THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT) put one's foot upon its head. Kabalistically, the woman corresponds (in the elementary world) to the element water, and the serpent corresponds to the element fire. To subdue the serpent (to dominate the circle of the astral light) one must place oneself outside of its currents, that is to say: one must isolate oneself...

Willpower and the Astral Light

Every intelligent effort of willpower is a projection of the human fluid or light. In making use of the word fluid, we employ an accepted expression (and we seek to make ourselves understood by these means), but we are far from deciding that the latent light is a fluid. On the contrary, everything prompts us to prefer the system of vibrations in the explanation of this phenomenal existence.

A lucid willpower can act upon the mass of the astral light and (with the help of other willpowers, which it absorbs & encourages) can establish great and irresistible currents. The astral light condenses or rarefies itself according to how the currents accumulate more or less in certain centers. When it lacks sufficient energy for the nourishment of life, then illnesses of sudden decomposition follow (which are the despair of medicine).



The empire of the willpower over the astral light (which is the physical soul of the four elements) is represented in magic by the pentagram. When the magus has attained lucidity, he communicates and directs (at will) magnetic vibrations in the whole mass of the astral light. By means of these vibrations, he influences the nervous system of persons subject to his action, precipitates or suspends the currents of life, calms or torments, heals or renders sick, and finally kills or resurrects...

Magnetism between two people is, no doubt, a marvelous discovery; but the magnetism of a single person makes the willpower lucid and allows one to direct oneself (which is the perfection of the magical art). The secret of magnetic lucidity and to the direction of the phenomena of magnetism is controlled by two things: [1] the harmony of intelligent understandings and [2] the perfect union of their willpowers in a direction which is possible and determined by the science.

The astral light directs the instincts of animals and battles the intelligence (or intelligent understanding) of man and tends to pervert it through the richness of its reflections and through the lies of its images; which become a fatal and necessary action that is directed and rendered still more terrible by elemental spirits and by the suffering souls, whose restless wills seek out sympathies in our weaknesses, and tempt us not so much to destroy us as to make friends for themselves.

Animal magnetism is nothing but an artificial slumber produced by the union (either voluntary or forced) of two souls one of which is awake while the other sleeps (that is to say, of which one directs the other in the choice of the reflections so as to change dreams into visions and to know the truth by means of the images). It is for this reason that the electricity, caloric, light and magnetism, produced through ordinary physical means not only do not produce animal magnetism, but tend, on the contrary, to neutralize the effects of animal magnetism.

This book of consciousnesses which, according to christian dogma, must be manifest on the last day, is none other than the astral light in which the impressions of all the verbs are preserved, that is to say of all the actions and of all the forms (meaning: a person's causes and their effects).

Our acts modify our *magnetic respiration (or magnetic radiation)* in such a way that a seer can say, when approaching a person for the first time, if that person is innocent or guilty, and what their virtues or their crimes are.

Those who renounce the empire of reason and who enjoy misdirecting their willpower towards the pursuit of the reflections of the astral light are subject to the alternations of rage and depression which have originated all the marvels of demonic possession. It is true that impure spirits can act upon such souls through these reflections, making use of them like docile instruments and even habitually torment their organism, within which they come to reside by *obsession*, or by *embryonation*.