

FROM CAGLIOSTRO

TO

ARCANA ARCANORUM

By

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For years, several authors have referred to the existence of the Arcana Arcanorum. Some have done so with full reason of personal acquaintance, such as Jean Mallinger, Jean Pierre Giudicelli de Cressac-Bachelerie and Michel Monereau. Others speak without having the least idea of what it was about. In order that the apprentice mason separate the wheat from the chaff, so that he understands that the Order to which he belongs, is really a Path, I wished to write the following overview.

Cagliostro and the Arcana Arcanorum

In 1614, the doctor and alchemist Michael Ma•er (1568-1622) titled his first book *ÒArcana ArcanissimaÓ*. This work was dedicated to the English doctor William Paddy, friend of Robert Fludd. Up to the 18th century, the expression “Arcana Arcanorum “ is found in Rosicrucian literature, for example in “The Secret Symbols “of Altona, published in 1785 and 1788. Til the end of 18th century, the expression Arcana Arcanorum designates materials (teachings and rituals) from which Cagliostro would draw in the course of his numerous journeys amongst the initiatic Orders of Europe. His teaching do not evoke the Arcana Arcanorum, but the *Secreto Secretorum* (the Secret of Secrets), to which it is similar. Taking into account the secrecy which surrounds these practices, examination of the teachings of Cagliostro constitutes the best possible approach to the study of the contents of the Arcana Arcanorum such as they were in this era. teachings and rituals descended from these materials are revealed at the summit of several Orders, under diverse forms, more or less complete.

Remitted on October 8, 1816 to the Grand Orient of France, an abridgement of the last four degrees of the rite of Misraim are presented November 20 1816 to the five members of an examination committee. Written in Italian, it is entitled “Arcana Arcanorum” . These Arcana Arcanorum returned to Italy, about 1816, by the Joly brothers, Gabboria and Garcia who had received them in 1813. They were introduced in the Rite of Misraim, in parallel to the last four degrees, of 87e to the 90e, which didn’t until then present any operative aspect

More recently, practices descended from the Arcana Arcanorum were integrated in the fourth and last degree of the Order of Hermes Tres-Megistus (O.H.T.M.) founded in 1927 by Emile Dantinne (1884-1969), Jean Mallinger (1904-1982) and Francois Soetewey.

THE CIRCLES OF ADEPTS

Up to the 18th century, the adepts meet and work on similar concluding paths . Let us cite two circles of this type:

* the German Order of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System and above all the Order of the Initiated Brothers of Asia, on distinctly kabbalistic foundations. Cagliostro crossed Germany in 1779 where he participated to various alchemical and theurgical works in the Masonic milieu .

* the School of Naples- city where Cagliostro stayed in 1783- heiress to Chaldean, Egyptian and Pythagorean currents . Its materials appear to have been Hebraic << Kabalistics>> til the 18th century.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE ARCANA ARCANORUM

These circles of adepts involved themselves in the study of three distinct domains, but in permanent interrelation, for each contributes to the realization of the other two :

1. A theurgic system of invocation of the Holy Guardian Angel or of a plurality of angels. The invocations of the eon guide and those of four, seven, nine angels come down to us from this time.
2. Practice of metallic alchemy in the laboratory. The texts that were given to me to consult, work with antimony.
3. Practice of internal alchemies, using the processes and substantial qualities of the physical body considered as an athanor, this “ oven of constant temperature of the alchemists “. Every element, every stage of metallic alchemy finds its correspondences in the body of the adept. This effects a permanent way of Return between the exterior Work and the interior Work.

The Arcana Arcanorum insists on theurgy, considered as a key opening for the initiate the way to the practice of metallic and internal alchemies to which they are only an introduction. They suggest a technique of making contact with the eon guides whom he takes to relay to him the unveiled secrets of internal alchemy.

1. THE EVOCATION OF ANGELS

“ The seventy two returned all happy, saying: “Lord, as the demons we are submitted in your name!
“ He said to them: “. Now that I
have given you the power of trampling underfoot snakes, scorpions, and all the
power of the Enemy, nothing will harm you. However don't rejoice at this, that the spirits are
submitted to you; but rejoice that your names are written in the heavens.” Luke 9, 20.

That which is named the “ first quarantine” is described in the catechism of
Master of the the Egyptian Rite. There, Cagliostro reveals the means which culminate in the
retirement of forty days “ in order to succeed in regenerating the degenerate man” . At the end of
this confinement, “ man doesn't inhale anymore then that to a
perfect rest in order to could arrive at immortality and could say of him
“I Am Who Am” , words which, according to the Bible, are those of God to Moses,
from the burning bush. Retired in a three storied pavilion called
Sion, constructed according to architecturally precise prescriptions, he
will deliver himself to long hours of meditation, to works having for their goal
preparation of the sacred pentagon, and from the thirty third to the fortieth day
will communicate with the Angels. He will have at this time acquired
infinite knowledge embracing the past, the present and the future and “his
power will be immense”.

After thirty three days, he begins to Ç receive the favor of visible communications with the seven
primordial angels and to know the
seals and the numbers of these immortal Entities. “ After the fortieth
day, he receives the first “ pentagon, which is the virgin paper on which
the primordial angels placed their numbers and their seals” thus that
seven “secondary pentagons” on whom” only seven angels have
placed its seal”. By the pentagons, he “orders the immortals in the name of
God” with the “effect of obliging or ordering the aerial spirits, and
of doing many marvels and of miracles”. This constitutes the
theurgic ritual . According to Cagliostro, its goal is “ obtaining the Pentagon and becoming
morally perfect.”

We again find the origin of such a path in the masonic system of
the Flaming Star of Tschoudi and in the rituals of the Golden Rosy Cross.
The Golden Rosy Cross itself received the evocation of Ç seven primordial angels È or of Holy
Guardian Angel. from more ancient sources. For the evocation of
Holy Guardian Angel, The sacred magic., better known under the name of the Book
of Abramelin the Mage is an important antecedent. Preserved in the library of the Arsenal in Paris,
it was published in English language in 1898 by S. L.
MacGregor Mathers (1854-1918). Robert Ambelain published it in
contemporary French language in 1959. The book was assigned to Ç Abraham the Jew È who
would have been born in 1362. This text, considered by Aleister Crowley as essential for all
esoteric work, was translated of Latin to the 18th
century and was probably written in the XVe century. The books which compose the

“ forbidden work of Cornelius Agrippa”- explicitly cited by Cagliostro in the first quarantine- is also of XVe century. However, the origins of the theurgy and the evocations of the angels are more ancient. They go back also to the XVe century, with the works of Pelagius, the hermit of Majorca whose Anacrise was republished by Robert Amadou; to the XIVE century with Pierre of Abano; to the first centuries of the Christian era with the Chaldean Oracles, assigned to a certain Julien called “ the chaldean” and to his son Julien named “the theurgist “. A text such as the Anacrise contains many similar rites to those of Cagliostro. This remark is equally true for a grand number of rituals of the Renaissance.

The expression “do many marvels and miracles” is a deceptive.

it appears useful then that the theurgy (as the title of the first quarantine of Cagliostro specifies) serves over all to “ become morally perfect”. This path rests on the classic pattern of death and of rebirth. It implies a process by which the initiate dies to the darkness in which humanity fell in order to be born again to a superior life. This “perfection” could be obtained by the performance of rites where the symbolism is present from the beginning, but is not explained and illustrated other than progressively and in sections as the of the candidate progresses. It is the model for the ceremonies of the Egyptian Masonry of Cagliostro which caused the birth of many so-called “Egyptian” masonic rites. All these rites owe a good share of their rituals and doctrines to Cagliostro. For Cagliostro, a continuity existed between “Egyptian masonry” and the theurgic rites. The first was only a preparation and a symbolic representation second. The initiate of rite Egyptian, prepared by his masonic work , could pass to the theurgic techniques with the feeling of natural continuity .

The relationship between the Arcana Arcanorum and the the Egyptian Rites are ambiguous. A rite such as that of Misraim was born under the form of a purely kabbalistic system , without the Arcana Arcanorum which were grafted in parallel to its last degrees years latest, after their arrival from Italy. So, the 89e degree of Rite of Misraim suggests the following program: “ In this degree that one could call the last of the Masonic Rite of Misraim, one is given a developed explanation of the relationships of man with divinity, by the mediation of the celestial spirits. This degree, the most astonishing of all, requires the greatest strength of mind, the greatest purity of morals and the most absolute faith. The password is Uriel, name of one of the chiefs of the celestial legions, who communicates more easily with men.” Later, they were newly lost. Some parties reinstated the Egyptian Rites through other orders.

In the first meaning of term, the Arcana Arcanorum is therefore the theurgical evocation of one or several angels by talismen, seals, pentagons or other techniques. The Arcana Arcanorum revealed in the highest degrees of the initiatic Orders quoted at the beginning of this exposition call attention to this definition, if the same elements of the second quarantine of Cagliostro show through at times. Far from being an end in itself, this evocation marks the beginning of a path. Benefiting from the aid of the Guardian Angel or evoked angels, the initiate undertakes the process of transmutation. This evocation permits to the initiate to enter into possession of the key. It remains for him to penetrate the part of being able to use it in the proper way.

2/ THE CONQUEST OF IMMORTALITY

Ç And it came to pass, as he prayed, that the aspect of his face became changed, and his garment, a shining and glistening white. Luke 9, 29.

“ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,”. Galatians 4, 19.

In descending Sinai, Moses had a rejuvenated face, vivid with light. Cagliostro suggests that after moral (that is to say psychic) regeneration, during which he will have increased his faculties, an initiate is ready to regenerate physically. The final objective of the two quarantines are evoked subtly in the catechism of Companion in the Egyptian Rite that he dictated to Saint Saint-Costard; “ D. What is the use of and why I always must wear a talare? R. Man being regenerate morally and physically, he regains the great power that the deprivation of his innocence had made him lose. This power procures for him spiritual visions and at first, he recognizes that the physical garment of all mortal consecrated to the Eternal must be the clothes [talare]. A similar one was worn, in all the religions and in all the times, by the those who sacrificed, priests or men devoted to God. “

It is in the catechism of Mistress of the Egyptian Rite of Adoption that this program of forty days retirement figures ,inspired by the one that Moses made on the Sinai on leaving Egypt, for regeneration and physical immortality. During this second quarantine which had to be repeated every fifty years, the adept attempts to become physically and no longer only morally perfect. Accompanied by a friend, the candidate will shut themself up in a house in the countryside having a room whose windows are to the south. The operation must begin in the full moon of May; during the first sixteen days the food will consist only of light soups and tender plants and the patient will always leave table a little hungry . The initiate will drink the May dew, collected from sprouting wheat on pure and white linen. He will begin the meal with a large glass of dew and will finish it with a biscuit or a simple crust of bread. The seventeenth day, at sunrise the candidate for regeneration must extract a palette of blood, that is to say a light blood-letting. Starting from this day, he will take some white drops of balm of azoth , six the morning and six the evening, in increasing the dose two drops by day until the thirty second. The third thirty day, after the same regime, he will remain in bed until the end of the quarantine. He will take a grain of Materia Prima. On first wakening, after bleeding himself, he will absorb a first grain of universal medicine, he will repeat this the following days. After an unconsciousness of three hours, then convulsions, perspirations and considerable evacuations , he will change the bed linen. He will then eat some beef consomme which has had the fat removed, seasoned with refreshing and laxative plants. The following day he takes the second grain of universal medicine. The day after, he will take a tepid bath . The thirty sixth day, the third and last grain of universal medicine. A deep sleep will follow. The hair,teeth, the nails and skin will blacken and be renewed. The thirty eighth day, bath with the abovementioned aromatic herbs . The thirty ninth day, he will swallow, in two spoonfuls of red wine, ten drops of the elixir of Acharat. The fortieth day, he will return home rejuvenated and perfectly recreated. Thanks to the strengths thus acquired, the regenerated man will be able to “ propagate the truth, annihilate vice, destroy idolatry and spread the glory of the Eternal”.

What does this this apparently dark text teach us ? At spring, during the full moon of May , the initiate isolate themself physically and psychologically for the purpose of undertaking its operation, the first arcana of internal alchemies. He

submits to a regime whose object is the purification of his organism by the means then known; particular food diet, bleeding, pure water pure, baths, sweatings. Then he begins the absorption of the Materia Prima which is here neither cinnabar nor potash! It is perhaps the Materia Prima about which Cyliani speaks centuries later, in *Hermes Unveiled*. The absorbed substance is dissolved (Solve) by this oven, this source of continuous fire that is the body. Just as the body of Hiram was in an advanced state of putrefaction when he was revived, the materials of the Great Work must be dissolved (solve), decomposed in order to liberate their power. So that the substance delivers its essence, beginning from the seventeenth day the initiate ingests drops of balm of azoth, a mixture of sulfur and of mercury (neither common sulfur or mercury), intimately and inseparably united, which comprise philosophical mercury. Thus rid of its coarse envelope, the obtained essence is assimilated by the blood. From that moment, it weaves and nourishes the construction (Coagula) of a particular incorruptible body, the soma psychikon, the golden wedding garment which replaces the tunic of slavery which with Adam was clothed since the fall. This type of path will appear completely incongruous to the contemporary freemason cut off from the hermetic sources of his Order. He knows that his lodge is a society in miniature, a picture of the outside society. But who has told him that it was also the reproduction of human microcosm? In like manner to Egyptian or Hindu temples, or cathedrals, it reproduces the head, arms, legs and all the organs of body. The entrance and the departure of the initiates, the position and the movements of the officers teach us the procedures of internal alchemy.

A method of rejuvenation which preceded Cagliostro is contained in the *Thesaurorum thesaurus*, a complex manual used by the Golden Rosy Cross, dated 1580, but certainly more recent. Under the title "How one uses Magic in order to change their nature and become young again", one reads very similar prescriptions to those of Cagliostro, often almost identical. The two rituals describe a magic retirement of forty days in very similar terms. The German text requires taking the Lapis Medicilanis Macrocosmi, obtained by laboratory alchemy which formulated the use earth and drops of rain, but suggests that one uses rainwater more easily. According to the German *Thesaurus*, it is necessary to add a "stone of the philosophers" obtained at the start by the distillation of his own blood; we found a similar reference to blood with Cagliostro. Cagliostro and the *Thesaurus* itself refer also to "grains of Materia Prima". These formulas in order to recover lost youth appear very perilous. They testify that the medical aspect is inalienable of this action, to the benefit of oneself and of others. The ancient Rose Cross practiced hermetic medicine. The people defended Cagliostro by recognising his devotion towards the sick. The objective of the Hermetic and Magic Fraternity of Myriam was the application of powers that the pupil could acquire for the recovery of others.

Internal way and external way

The evocation of angels glimpsed in the first chapter raises an “external way” and the conquest of immortality in the second chapter suggests an “internal way”. The evocation of angels is a procedure of calling on and making contact with outside Intelligences when the conquest of the immortality opens to the interior of the operator. The calling of angels without internal prolongation will satisfy the curiosity of the apprentice mage, but it will lead to an embittered agnosticism. To convince oneself it is sufficient to keeping intimately close to those occultists at the end of their career who thought that Magic was sufficient to itself. Inversely, too many scholarly alchemists have collected the most sophisticated procedures without arriving at how to make them work, then the light emanates from more ignorant apprentices whose heart is opened. The Spirit blows where it wills and it is neither secular magic or alchemy. The natural exercises of the arcanas are practiced in a religious setting , within an operating myth- in the noble sense of term- . By this myth, the candidate is focused toward his ideal and quietens his mind, which H. P. Blavatsky calls “ the great murderer of the Real”. Take the example of Christianity; prayer and liturgy teach to the neophyte to control his capricious and lunatic mood . “ A faithful is sad, throttled by worries of money, sick person: he comes to Easter and it is necessary for him to sing the Resurrection. He is happy to be alive, the heart full of joy: it is Good Friday and it is necessary for him to sing hymns before God crucified by men. Entering in the liturgical rhythm, it is to get used to no longer living one’s own small myth evolving according to its impressions, but to live as the Unique Man- the Second Adam-, to rejoice and to cry with humanity. When the mind is quiet, the heart opens. The myth , in the midst of which the alchemist operates has for its object the encouraging of this opening, this breathing of the heart. The alchemists knew how to be Christian, Moslems or Hindu while not identifying with the myth amidst which they operated. The adept knows how to recognize that a myth functions, but he is not conceited enough in order to imagine that only his myth functions.

The distinctions “internal way”, “ external way” are convenient, but are too rigid. On one hand, no result in the evocation of the angels can be obtained without the acquisition of a particular interior attitude. On the other hand, the conquest of immortality will conduct the neophyte to disaster if the angel neither remains nor guides. Let us simply say that, in this work, and at the core of ones of the same character one comes and goes unceasingly operating between Mage- or priest- and alchemist.
