

THE UNDERGROUND STREAM

"Everything flows and nothing abides:
everything gives way and nothing stays fixed."

- Heraclitus

Michael Psellus

"... whatever little wisdom I have collected I did not draw from a flowing spring; nay, I found the wells obstructed. I opened them, I cleansed them and, with great toil, extracted the water that lay at a great depth." ¹

There are many layers of interpretation to this piece by Psellus. Firstly, it is obvious that the wells opened and cleansed are not physical wells. Psellus offers us an analogy of how the obstructions of 'wisdom' are removed. The analogy is of a liquid nature, and thus situated within the symbolic family of the Element WATER. Nevertheless, Psellus did extract and collect wisdom material. According to John Duffy:

"The extraordinary thing about Psellos is that, singlehandedly, he was responsible for bringing back, almost from the dead, an entire group of occult authors and books whose existence had long been as good as forgotten." ²

From the *Hermetica*:

"For so lofty is the doctrine of things divine, that it is beyond the reach of any effort of merely human thought; and if you do not hearken to my words with keen attention, my teaching will wing its way beyond you, and flow past you, or rather, will flow back thither whence it came, and mingle with its source." ³

"Now be completely present, give me your whole attention, with all the understanding that you are capable of, with all the subtlety you can muster. For the teaching about divinity requires a divine concentration of consciousness if it's to be understood. It's just like a torrential river, plunging headlong down from the heights so violently that with its rapidity and speed it outstrips the attention not only of whoever is listening but also of whoever is speaking." ⁴

In 1995 Antoine Faivre & Karen-Claire Voss published a landmark article in the journal *Numen*, in which they set out a critical cartography of what has subsequently been identified as 'Western Esotericism'.

"Throughout this article the reader can find words which are evocative of nature. Some, like stream, river, and current, refer to water, to movement, others, like field, harvest, and cultivation, refer to earth, to growth." ⁵

As an example, let us look at the use of the word 'streams':

¹ Michael Psellus, *Chronographia*, ed. E. Renauld, i. pp. 135 -8. Quoted in: Cyril Mango, *Byzantinism, The Empire of New Rome*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1980, p. 144. Michael Psellus, (or Psellos) was an 11th century Byzantine philosopher, politician and scholar, (1018 - 1079).

² John Duffy, *Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic: Michael Psellos and Michael Italikos*, *Byzantine Magic*, edited by Henry Maguire, 1995 Washington, Dumbarton Oaks, p.83.

³ Scott translation, p.287

⁴ Peter Kingsley, *Knowing Beyond Knowing: The Heart of Hermetic Tradition*, *Published in Parabola*, Spring 1997

⁵ Antoine Faivre & Karen-Claire Voss, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religions*, *Numen*, Vol. 42, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, p. 71.

“On the one hand there are three "traditional sciences," three rivers as it were, which do not seem to belong to any epoch, and which-are understood more or less independently from the epochs in which they appear: alchemy, astrology, and magic in the Renaissance sense of *magia*.

And:

“Alongside these, we also find the appearance of a number of trends (often starting with a foundational text), like streams hollowing out their bed at relatively determinable moments. These streams are far from being strangers to the three great rivers because they intermingle.”⁶

Antoine Faivre & Karen-Claire Voss are not the first to use what I term *Water Symbolism* to describe the transmission. In an earlier period, Elaine Pagels suggests:

“The concerns of gnostic Christians survived only as a suppressed current, like a river driven underground. Such currents resurfaced throughout the Middle Ages in various forms of heresy; then with the Reformation, Christian tradition again took on new and diverse forms.”⁷

Writing about the Grail Tradition, we have this observation from Emma Jung:

“As if a subterranean watercourse had been tapped at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, a great number of different adaptations of the same material was produced in quick succession, not only in French, but in German, English, Welsh, Spanish and the northern languages.”⁸

The period that Emma Jung suggest here would be between 1175 – 1225 – A.D.

The great English Poetess and researcher Kathleen Raine, continues the theme with:

“In Europe the symbolic language of tradition, woven and interwoven both within and outside Christianity, is basically Platonic and neo-Platonic. Like an underground river that from time to time sends up springs and fountains, Platonism emerges in different centuries and different countries, and wherever its fertilizing waters flow, there the arts are reborn and flourish. For no renaissance has ever yet come of iconoclasm and rejection of the past, but, on the contrary, from renewed contact with tradition: as the Gothic architecture from a renewed study of the Greek philosophy of numbers; the Florentine renaissance and all that followed from Ficino's Latin editions of the Platonists; . . . ”⁹

And again, in Allan Combs:

“Now, Neoplatonism was one of the great underground influences in the development of Western civilization. Though it is not commonly discussed, and has not generally been in the best favour of the Church Fathers (to put it mildly) Neoplatonism has nevertheless moved like an underground stream, surfacing at key moments throughout history to influence thinkers and artists. It was, for instance, influential in the work of many painters of the Renaissance and afterward. It was also

⁶ Antoine Faivre & Karen-Claire Voss, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religions*, *Numen*, Vol. 42, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, p. 52.

⁷ Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, p.153.

⁸ Emma Jung, *The Grail Legend*, p.10.

⁹ Kathleen Raine, *Traditional Symbolism in Kubla Khan*, *Studies in Comparative Religion*, Vol. 1, No.3. www.studiesincomparativereligion.com

influential in the thinking and writing of the remarkable 15th century theologian, Nicholas of Cusa (1404-1464) . ." ¹⁰

Cecil Collins:

"Beneath our technological civilization, there still flows the living river of human consciousness within which is concentrated in continuity the life of the kingdoms of animals, plants, stars, the earth and the sea, and the life of our ancestors, the flowing generations of men and women: the sensitive and the solitary ones, the secret inarticulate longing before the mystery of life. The artist is a vehicle of the continuity of that life and his instrument is the myth and the archetypal image."

¹¹

Perhaps compare to the Rhizome of Jung:

Carl .G. Jung:

"Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Its true life is invisible, hidden in the rhizome. The part that appears above ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away - an ephemeral apparition. When we think of the unending growth and decay of civilizations, we cannot escape the impression of an absolute nullity. Yet I have never lost a sense of something that lives and endures underneath the eternal flux. What we see is the blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains. In the end the only events in my life worth telling are those when the imperishable world irrupted into the transitory one."

Nagas are snakes that may take human form. They tend to be very curious. According to traditions nāgas are only malevolent to humans when they have been mistreated. They are susceptible to mankind's disrespectful actions in relation to the environment. They are also associated with waters – rivers, lakes, seas, and wells – and are generally regarded as guardians of treasure. [NAGAS @ WIKIPEDIA](#)

How could we possibly make Nagas sick? The most direct way to affect a Naga is to pollute water. Pissing in water is considered bad [the Tibetans say that pissing in water will cause the Nagas to give one skin problems]. Ejaculating in water (especially lakes, rivers, the ocean) is the WORST. Putting toxic chemicals in water can make Nagas sick. Then indirectly, polluting the planet in other ways can make Nagas unhappy.

Unhappy Nagas make bizarre weather patterns. It will be hot when it should be cold. It will be excessively rainy. It will be a bad drought year. Nagas are especially associated with the fertility of soil and the rain required to grow crops. Make the Nagas unhappy, and the crops will probably suffer. How much depends on how unhappy they are. ¹²

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¹⁰ Allan Combs, Inner and Outer Realities: Jean Gebser in a Cultural/Historical Perspective, University of North Carolina-Asheville. Saybrook Graduate School-SF. <http://www.cejournal.org/GRD/Realities.htm>

¹¹ Cecil Collins , from *The Vision of the Fool and other writings*. enlarged edition Ed. Brian Keeble, Golgonooza Press, Ipswich 2002)

¹² <https://astrodharma.me/tag/nagas-and-water/>



Margaret Starbird suggests this interpretation for Arcanum 14:

“The esoteric meaning here is that the tenets that were thought to have been exterminated are carefully transferred for safety sakes into another vessel.”¹³

Gaston Bachelard:

“. . . Water is a natural mirror; it offers the possibility of poetic transposition of forms, and it also has a depth which immediately leads the poet to a cosmic narcissism. The idealized image reflects itself on the subject. Moreover, through the reflection given by nature the whole world tends to beauty; water itself dreams.”¹⁴

Transmission – the Two Vases as interpreted by Margaret Starbird – *Trans-form* – across the forms – PROTEUS – PROTEAN – see Edgar Wind on this – in this sense too, *The Invisible Lineage*, the Rosicrucian’s, shape-shifting, and the film *Transformers*

NOTE: River = water = re-surge = *sorgente* – ‘stream’ in Italian/Latin . . .

surge - noun - 1- a sudden powerful forward or upward movement: tidal surges. 2 -a sudden large temporary increase. 3 - a powerful rush of an emotion or feeling. verb -1 -move in a surge. 2 - increase suddenly and powerfully. 3 - Nautical (of a rope, chain, or windlass) slip back with a jerk. ORIGIN - C15 (in the sense 'fountain, stream'): the noun from Old French *sourgeon*; the verb partly from the Old French stem *sourge-*, based on Latin *surgere* 'to rise'.

resurgent - adjective increasing or reviving after a period of little activity, popularity, or occurrence. DERIVATIVES - **resurgence** noun – ORIGIN- C18 (as noun): from Latin *resurgent-*, *resurgere* 'rise again'.

William Harding writes:

¹³ Margaret Starbird, *The Woman with The Alabaster Jar, Mary Magdalen and the Holy Grail*, Bear & Company, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1993. p..112

¹⁴ Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams*

"It was said that while Saint Benedict built on the mountain top, the Cistercian built in the valley; flowing water has always been an intrinsic key to the secret of Cistercian sites, not only was running water essential to the material needs of the monastery, but springs and rivers have been associated with magical powers since the dawn of time and in the Christian Tradition streams and wells were always dedicated to the Virgin, as were all Cistercian Abbey Churches." ¹⁵

D. Z. Bor:

"All the sites of the cult of the virgin are at once haunted places with a long, mostly pre-Christian tradition. Deep under the churches of pilgrimage there are in most cases vast cavities, lodes of ore, radioactive springs, or hot or cold springs. Who discovered them, designated them, and ordered that temples should be built over them? And why? In order to prevent man's graspingness from violating them, to keep these special places of the Earth untouched? We do not know." ¹⁶

Tracy R. Twyman:

Arcadia, the place in Greece thought to be the home of the oldest antediluvian races, was also associated in medieval iconography and symbolism with the "underground stream" Alpheus, which was said to flow all the way to Sicily. According to the "prieure documents," the Benjaminites, who were ancestors of the Merovingian's, fled to the Arcadia region of Greece, and later migrated to Europe, becoming one of the ancestral origins of the Salian Franks. Rene D'Anjou did a great deal to promote the romantic idea of Arcadia and it turns up in much of his work, as well as Renaissance poems and songs.

René also depicted other Arcadian themes in his famous paintings, often showing himself standing next to a tombstone that looks eerily like the headstone at the grave of Marie de Blanchefort at Rennes le Chateau, including the inscription it bears. *Dagobert's Revenge* readers will recognize this woman's gravestone as being quite central to the Rennes le Chateau/Holy Grail/ Prieure de Sion mystery. This tomb can be seen in his painting *Le Fontaine d'Anjou*, and also in two of the illustrations from his illuminated manuscript, *Les Coeur d'Amours Espris (The Book of the Heart Possessed by Love)*. In these paintings, the tomb and the shepherds are associated with an "underground stream", Alpheus (from the Greek for 'source'), which according to the manuscript was, "brought forth by the sorcerer Virgil", whom Baigent, et. al. says "would have been associated with Arcadia by René's contemporaries." Alpheus is a real river in Arcadia, in Greece, and it really does go underground, re-emerging at the Fountain of Arethusa in Spain. This river represented an "underground stream" of secret knowledge passed down through the "subterranean" Grail families and the organizational offshoots of the Prieure de Sion. This is like the "clear and troubled fontaine" referred to in Charles Peguy's poem "The Cross of Lorraine", and these themes of the shepherds, the tomb and the underground Arcadian stream would later be picked up by Grail initiate Nicholas Poussin for his

¹⁵ Harding, Fra William P. The Origins of The Order of The Temple of Solomon, *R.I.L.K.O. Journal*, 54, Spring/Summer 1999, p.10.

¹⁶ D. Z. Bor, Master Stonemasons and the Light of Divine Wisdom, In: *Opus Magnum*, Trigon, Prague, 1997, [267-271].

painting *The Shepherds of Arcadia*, another item central to the Rennes le Chateau mystery.”

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“Like the spring in the church of the two Mary’s, one of many miraculous springs we will find along the way, these traditions serve as a source point for the broad esoteric current that King Rene himself labeled the underground stream of lost Arcadia. And with this knowledge -- the mystery hidden in plain sight, known to the Gypsies and the common folk -- the true history of that underground stream, the Gnostic Christianity of the west, can be traced through the centuries.”

A Monument to The End of Time, alchemy, Fulcanelli and the great cross **Angles of Co-Incidence**

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“... was it possible to be one of the Invisibles *without ever knowing it yourself?*”¹⁸

Adriana Berger:

“For, if there is a meaning in history, that meaning does not lie within the history of external events, but within the secret, occult, esoteric, and ontological roots of history. Corbin thus opposes historical and what he calls "gnostic" consciousness because there is a time different from that of history, a time which is real and sacred, which consists of events belonging to the invisible world and which take place within the soul, within the "creativity of the heart" (*himma*). Hence, Corbin comes to designate sacred history by the term Hiero-History (*Hiéro-Histoire*), which concerns not the external events but the esoteric hidden behind the exoteric.”¹⁹

In her collection of essays, *Time Bites*, Doris Lessing tells an interesting tale. Her Sufi teacher Idries Shah, founded a publishing house called Octagon Press, which commissioned Ernest Scott to write a book. This author, says Doris Lessing,

“... was invited to trawl through the centuries to find what evidence there might be for the persistent rumour that there is a hidden directorate influencing human affairs.”²⁰

What, is a hidden directorate?

The idea, and its permutations are not new. It has a long life as a ‘persistent rumour’. Recently we had the phenomena of the da Vinci Code – which as Roger Wooliger says:

“As 'the greatest cover-up in human history' - Brown's own words - it has clearly intrigued Christians of all shades, as well as millions of agnostics who relish a good conspiracy theory.”

¹⁷Tracy R. Twyman, Profiles in Royalty: Good King René d’Anjou. <http://www.dragonkeypress.com/articles/>

¹⁸ John Crowley, *Aegypt*, [London, 1987 edition], p. 103.

¹⁹ Adriana Berger, Cultural Hermeneutics: The Concept of Imagination in the Phenomenological Approaches of Henry Corbin and Mircea Eliade, *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (Apr., 1986), p.145.

²⁰ Doris Lessing, *Time Bites*, Harper, 2005, p. 368. The book is: Ernest Scott, *People of the Secret*, Octagon Press.

Cover-up of what, we may ask?

In the tale, *Why the Dervish Hides Himself*, Rumi says to his son:

‘This may be done for defence against worldly people. Some deliberately act in a way which society might disapprove, to gain peace. The Prophet has therefore said: “God has hidden the Men of Greatest Knowledge.”²¹

The real name of the Assassins, is *Asasiyin* - Those of the Source - a name which is possibly related to *Essenes* . . . There were no assassinations, the violence was a cover-up to protect the transmission. Says Burke:

“The real fact is that this system, call it what you will, was most concerned about saving the most important knowledge available to mankind. This method was a master-stroke.”²²

Philp Pullman . . .

“We’ve had nothing but lies and propaganda and cruelty and deceit for all the thousands of years of human history. It’s time we started again, but properly this time . . .”

“There are two great powers,” the man said, “and they’ve been fighting since time began. Every advance in human life, every scrap of knowledge and wisdom and decency we have has been torn from one side by the teeth of the other. Every little increase in human freedom has been fought over ferociously between those who want us to know more and be wiser and stronger, and those who want us to obey and be humble and submit.”

Philip Pullman, *The Subtle Knife*, Scholastic, London, 1997.

Doris Lessing again . . . lensed through Roszak - - - The Hermetic Transmissions has a few Renaissance's to its credit, all based on the Archaeology of Ancient Wisdom. I wish to illustrate this aspect with a quote from Theodore Roszak's '*The Unfinished Animal*':

"In a recent novel, *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*, a work some critics have mistaken for psychiatric autobiography and others for science fiction, Doris Lessing has admirably captured the essential experience of the Hidden Wisdom. As an agent of the Gnostic Descent, her hero struggles valiantly to preserve the memory of his "briefing" - the redemptive instruction he carries into life from his preincarnated existence - against the distractions of personal affairs and adjustive psychiatry. "Don't forget". he is ordered before the descent by his commander "Merk" (Hermes-Mercury, the divine intelligence of the Gnostic tradition). "Keep the memory of this moment, keep it steady." And the message is embedded in his as "sealed orders"; a "brainprint" of mankind's future evolution beyond its present zombie state. The brainprint is triggered in him only late in life, taking the form of a schizophrenic seizure filled with wild visions and muddles reveries. But during the ordeal he wins through to the recollection that "There's

²¹ Idries Shah, *Caravan of Dreams*, The Octagon Press, London, 1968.

²² Lessing's essay on Omar Michael Burke, *Among the Dervishes*, *Time Bites*, Harper, 2005, p 308-314

something I have to teach. I have to tell people. People don't know it but it is as if they are living in poisoned air. They are not awake. They've been knocked on the head, long ago..."

But at the last moment his stamina ebbs and he fails in his mission, as have most of the agents of the Earth's many "previous Descents" now lost in the mists of fable and myth. His "mad" higher consciousness is literally jolted out of him by electro-shock therapy "... a professor of classics lecturing on the Homeric epithet." [Harper & Row.]

The same reservations of initiatory knowledge exist in the Mithraic religion:

"In a recent article Prof. C.W. Vollgraff has thrown new light on this question by making a firm distinction between the *Nymphi* and the *Chryfii*. The *Nymphi* are the Brides of Mithras, the *Chryfii* are the Hidden Ones, not 'secret members' of the community, but youths who, like the Spartan, have not yet been received as official members into the clan or cult; the 'hidden ones' who have not appeared in the full light of the public eye. They are the *elpides* who embody the future aspirations of the community (as noted at Dura-Europos). In a solemn ceremony the Fathers of the community introduce the 'hope of the future' to Mithras. Inscriptions from the same period prove that these *Chryfii* were sometimes of extreme youth, even small children being initiated in the mysteries." ²³

Eve - eau -French for 'Water' . .
Wisdom Waters - Hohmah - Sophia
p.75 - 9 Muses - Mountain
p.73 - Charity

²³ Abstracted from : *Mithras, the Secret God*, M.J. Vermaseren, London, 1963.