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FROM THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS TO THE IRISH DRUID.

FROM LUCIAN OF SAMOSATA TO JOHN TOLAND.

FOREWORD TO THE READER.

PeterDeLaCrau is not the author of the great texts submitted in this collection or anthology to the readers' reflection. Only the comments or transitions are due to his pen..

The objective is the forthcoming online publication of an encyclopedia of religions, such as Wikipedia, which is resolutely non-conformist, not to say revolutionary.

Although he is not the author who wrote this book, Peter DeLaCrau nevertheless accepts to take responsibility for all its defects. Remarks and suggestions can therefore be sent to him and to others in order to improve the multiple passages from one language to another (17th century English Gaelic Greek Latin etc...), and to rectify the numerous mistakes.

WHY THIS BOOK?

Nothing will ever replace the personal meditation including about the obscure or incomprehensible lays sprinkling these books and which were intentionally inserted in order to oblige you to think out to find your own path. These books are not dogmas to be followed blindly and literally. As you undoubtedly know it, it is necessary to be wary of the letter like of the plague. The letter kills, only the spirit gives life! Nothing replaces either the personal experience, and it is by walking on that we find the path. Therefore count only on your own forces for this quest for the Grail. What is important it is the attitude to be adopted in the life and not the details of the dogma.

Among the texts which fed the conflict between Hellenism and Christianity in the first centuries of our era, those of the great pagan adversaries, as Celsus, Porphyry or the emperor Julian, were systematically eliminated by the Christian tradition and we find fragments of them only in the refutations whose they were the object.

The Greek and Roman Intellectuals of the first three centuries of our era considered the Christians, rightly besides, as a dangerous sect having given itself as a goal to conquer the whole Mankind, although claiming to scorn the things of this World. Particularly Celsus, Lucian of Samosata, Porphyry of Tyre and the emperor Julian. Lucian of Samosata showed for example, not without humor, in his satirical novel entitled "the death of Peregrinus"; to what extent Christians were men not very interested by the philosophers, but very gifted to make some of them appear as rabbits pulled out of a hat. The hero of his novel is indeed a swindler of the worst kind, exactly like certain neo-druids of today with initiatory names finishing in - os; who benefit from the naivety of their fellow men in order to extract money from them, for the greater glory of God of course, and to become one of their charismatic leaders. This criticism of Christianity was double: it succeeded at the same time the pagan criticism of the Judaism, but also, to a certain extent, the Jewish criticism of Christianity. Fascism, Nazism, at the very least extreme right-wing! Will answer some people through a great litany and lexicon of rhetoric in connection with Celsus; from the charge of racism in the courts of this unfortunate country (as if the religion were a race!) to the more hypocritical insinuation (if it is not himself, then it must be his twin brother, etc.).

If we may legitimately allocate to monotheism some virtue, we should not ignore for all that, that it was and remains generally a source of intolerance. The monolatry, it is a binary vision of the world. The roots of the democracy and of the logical reasoning are obviously pagan and polytheistic because of the confrontation of cultures, and not of their mutual exclusion.

The true interbreeding, not that in vogue today, through a great litany and lexicon of rhetoric, which is not a fusion, but a mosaic or a juxtaposition, of cultures or of communities still quite distinct. Three different musics on a stage it is not some interbreeding, at most some eclecticism, three musics which become as one, new and different, that, it is some interbreeding!

The establishment of paternity of the values at the origin of our civilization necessarily leads us to reject the Jewish origin that people wrongfully allocated to them [see the historical delirium of certain Irish monks of the Middle Ages. Editor's Note]. But, let us notice it, this refusal to be Jewish through adoption does not oppose us to the Jews themselves, who did not wish to adopt us, but to the Christian Churches which claim to incarnate the new chosen people heir to the Hebrews of the Old Testament [...] Let us repeat it here: they are not the Jews [...] who converted us of force; it is not them who choked every free thought, who burned our manuscripts and our "witches" like the beautiful and unfortunate Hypatia evoked by Toland ; it is not them who, after having colonized us, after having colonized our minds and having mortified our bodies, used us as cannon fodder in their missionary expeditions. They are the Christian Churches!

The Christians should finally admit that religion and moral principles of the Four Gospels are by no means due to an unspecified (more or less direct) divine intervention in the human history; but quite simply to the work (of philosophical reflection) of the generations and generations of Essenian Jews who followed one another close to Qumran on the shores of the Dead Sea.

The treatise of Celsus against the Christians is very clear on this subject. All in all, the Judaism that we know today, resulting more or less from the revolt of the Maccabees against the Hellenization of Israel (the globalization of the time); constitute the reaction of a healthy people which intended to preserve its religion and did not want to disappear in the chaos of peoples that was the Hellenistic East then. [...]

The one who claims he is pagan and attacks the only Judaism or, through Christianity, the Judaism, that one targets the wrong enemy. He is unaware of the irreducible opposition which exists between Judaism and Christianity since Paul tore off the Christian message from the Jews to give it to the "non-Jews" (Goyim) and to universalize its impact. He is unaware of the fact that Christianity is less the product of the Judaism than of the Hellenistic civilization resulting from the decline of Greece in which it was immersed and developed [...]

If the neo-paganism had to be defined negatively, we could say that it is primarily a not-Christianity. Still should we distinguish in Christianity the established religion from the popular religiosity, the Christian dogma strictly speaking from the figure of Christ... or from that of the Virgin, avatar of the Mother Goddess-or-demoness; and, finally, the dualistic orthodoxy from the heretic or mystic currents which were openly or more secretly Unitarist, even pantheistic.

The neo-paganism is not anti-Semitism... It is not racism... 1) It is not either elitism with metaphysical claims in the way of the New Right-Wing ...Lastly, it is not either esotericism likely to lead to the most pathetic slides, from the simple swindle to the suicidal or homicidal frenzy, following the example of the recent case of the Solar Temple in France and Switzerland. If we must, in the decades which preceded us, to seek precursors; it is certainly not in the "theosophists" or the "ariosophists" (to quote only them), claiming to be the custodians of a thousand-year-old secret tradition, that we can reach only by the (sometimes expensive) initiation that they issue, that we would find them; but among these freethinkers who, by shaking the unbearable yoke of Christianity, did not reject for all that any spirituality.

As many others observed it before us, what forms specifically Christianity, it is the separation. The separation between the World and the Divinity; the separation between the body and the soul, the World (i.e., essentially, the Nature) and the body of the man being the object of the contempt of Christians; the separation between the men reduced to being only isolated monads - the separation between the husband and his wife, the mother and her son, the father and his daughter; each one in search of the individual salvation, that the secularization of our society [ultimate result of the fight of the Christianity against the sacredness in all its forms. Editor's note] will change into the search for individual happiness - thus paving the way for this ultimate separation denounced by Marx under the name of alienation. The separation of the Man from himself.

1. Beyond the Rhine, it is within the "Monist League," a declared foe of the German clericalism and militarism, founded in 1906 by the biologist Ernst Haeckel, and in the "proletarian Free-thinkers," where social democrats, communists and anarchists met themselves; that asserted themselves, at the beginning of this century, a neo-pagan cosmology and praxis. Though materialistic (but this materialism led them to replace the Man in Nature, not to extract him from it in the way of the Christians); monists and proletarian Free-Thinkers were not satisfied with acquitting the Germanic ancestors of the German people, their manners and their religious beliefs, they also celebrated the solstices and various other seasonal festivals. Certain German Jews, such Karl Wolfskehl of the "Munich Cosmic Circle" (of which were members also Ludwig Klages and Alfred Schuler) and Ernst Wachler, died in deportation in the camp of Theresienstadt in 1944-1945, were among the pioneers of this movement.

Some groups of extreme right-wing align themselves today with certain ideas of the paganism. It is necessary about them to speak of groupuscules, so much they are marginal within a radical right-wing almost always linked with an above all identity Christianity or Biblism.

But we cannot, however, suggest that to be pagan would consist in swallowing all kinds of superstitions or being tempted by the dictatorship [...] because during more than a thousand years, the European civilization was this pagan humanism defined by Protagoras: "The Man is the measure of all things." We say well the Man and not God! Transposed into Brehon or Gaelic law that gives us: "The sacredness (the nemet) it is man.

In short, finally, it is still the atheist Diogenes Laertius who best summarized what it was necessary to do in this field.

"Understand * the gods, nothing to do wrong, and to be a man, a true one." Lives and opinions of eminent philosophers. Book I, prologue 6.

*Understand not meaning necessarily to approve. We can for example understand the legitimate preoccupation of safety of the State of Israel without approving in any point its policy and while continuing to think that the solution which would consist in building a binational State instead of two distinct States, is not racist in itself but only utopian. For the time being....

LUCIAN OF SAMOSATA (120-180).

Lucian was born in Syria, in Samosata, a city located on the banks of the Euphrates, capital of the Commagene, a small kingdom which, after having preserved a shadow of independence during the reign of the first emperors, became a Roman province at the time of Domitian. The date of his birth could not be fixed with precision. It is placed with probability around the last years of the reign of Hadrian, or the first of that of Antonin the pious, from 120 to 140. The name of his father, a poor and obscure man, is remained unknown. When Lucian, coming out of the public schools, was old enough to learn a trade, his father placed him in training at an uncle sculptor. His beginnings were not very happy. He broke the marble shelf that one had given him to be cut. His uncle inflicted to him a beating which initiated him to the trade through tears. Lucian fled while crying to his mother, who curses thousand times the brutality of her brother, comforted the child, and got from her husband that he was no longer sent to learn this hard way.

Lucian, pushed towards the letters by a vocation that he made famous in his allegorical vision of the Dream, embraced initially the trade of a lawyer and pled in the courts of Antioch. But hardly he had known, following his own consent, all the nuisances of this trade, cheating, lie, impudence [the situation hardly changed today] the cries, the fights and thousand other things still, that he left there the lawsuits and the paraphernalia of the delaying tactics to turn to rhetoric. He started to travel... in Ionia, Achaia, Macedonia, Italy and finally in Gaul. It is in this country, and particularly in Marseilles or in the valley of the Rhone, that he was liked and that he made a fortune. It is at least what he acknowledges to us in the course of one of his accounts. Become rich, and enjoying a great reputation of rhetor, he returned a second time to Greece, lived in Athens in the intimacy of Demonax, attended the suicide of Peregrinus; and entered the second phase of his talent, by beginning to play his role of a philosopher and satirist.

It is understood easily that such brilliant works brought to him not only the benevolent glances of the audience but the immense reputation about which he came to boast in Samosata in an already advanced age. He

does not seem, however, to have remained a long time in his hometown. He started again his travels through Cappadocia and Paphlagonia, accompanied by his old father and some people of his family, until the moment when he was appointed for an administrative position in Egypt by Marcus-Aurelius or Commodus.

From this biographical outline, let us pass now to that of our author, contemplated in the multiple forms where his admirable talent was expressed. It is quite difficult to determine to which School, to which sect are attached, I do not dare to say the convictions, but at least the philosophical sympathies of Lucian. It is the particularity of the mocking and of the doubt to let the mind wander in a continual fluctuation and vivacity. How then to require solid and fixed doctrines from the doubter and scoffer par excellence? There would be, however, some injustice to accuse him of an absolute Pyrrhonism. His common sense, which makes him discover the defect of the different systems, and to announce the pitfalls where will break in turn the Academy, the Lyceum as well as the Porch; informs him, at the same time, that there are certain undeniable principles, certain positive truths, on which is based every criticism, and even any negation. If I am not mistaken on the meaning of a passage of the treatise entitled Hermotimus; it seems to me that Lucian, far from withdrawing in an exclusive skepticism, that people reproach him traditionally, declares with a perfect sincerity that he is seriously looking for the philosophical truth.

“HERMOTIMUS. Well, well; are we to give up philosophy, then, and idle our lives away like the common herd?

LYCINUS. What have I said to justify that? My point is not that we are to give up philosophy, but this: whereas we are to pursue philosophy, and whereas there are many roads, each professing to lead to philosophy and Virtue, and whereas it is uncertain which of these is the true road, therefore the selection shall be made with care.”

And further.

“LYCINUS. It says that seeing and going through all philosophies will not suffice, if you want to choose the best of them; the most important qualification is still missing.

HERMOTIMUS. Indeed? Which?

LYCINUS. Why (bear with me), a critical investigating faculty, mental acumen, intellectual precision and independence equal to the occasion; without this, the most complete inspection will be useless. Reason insists that the owner of it must further be allowed ample time; he will collect the rival candidates together, and make his choice with long, lingering, repeated deliberation; he will give no

heed to the candidate's age, appearance, or repute for wisdom, but perform his functions like the Areopagites, who judge in the darkness of the night, so that they must not regard the pleaders, but the pleadings. Then and not till then will you be able to make a sound choice and live a philosopher."

They are not there the words of a hardened and intolerant skeptic; they are there rather those of a judicious and sincere eclectic. Descartes did not follow another way, when he proposed to reach through the doubt the discovery of truth. The impartiality of this same eclecticism appears in an even more significant way in a passage of the Fisherman; where Lucien answers the Philosophy who asks him what trade he practices:

"I profess hatred of pretension and imposture, lying, and pride; the whole loathsome tribe of them I hate and you know how numerous they are.

PHILOSOPHY. Upon my word, you must have your hands full at this profession!

LUCIAN. I have; you see what general dislike and danger it brings upon me. However, I do not neglect the complementary branch, in which love takes the place of hate; it includes love of truth and beauty and simplicity and all that is akin to love. But the subjects for this branch of the profession are sadly few; those of the other, for whom hatred is the right treatment, are reckoned by the thousands. Indeed there is some danger of the one feeling being atrophied, while the other is overdeveloped.

PHILOSOPHY. That should not be; they run in couples, you know. Do not separate your two branches; they should have unity in diversity.

PHILOSOPHY. You know better than I, Philosophy. My way is just to hate a villain, and love and praise the good."

Old men without dignity, shameless seekers of inheritances, crowd at the same time superstitious and incredulous, flatterers and parasites selling their freedom for a place around the table of the rich person, ignorant and talkative rhetoricians; and over all, a mass of minds indecisive, irresolute, given up to indifference; this fatal disease of the times when the virtuous emulation, the generous desire to do well, and the firmness of the convictions, are missing. Such was the world which was spread out under the observant gaze of Lucian.

"What were the philosophers that Lucian held up to public ridicule? They were the dregs of the human race. They were a set of beggars, incapable of applying to any useful profession or occupation; men perfectly resembling the « Poor Devil » who has been described to us with so much both of truth and humor; men who are undecided whether to wear a livery, or to write the almanac of the « Annus Mirabilis », the marvelous year; whether

to works on reviews, or on roads; whether to turn soldiers or priests; who, in the meantime, frequent the coffee-house, to give their opinion upon the last new piece, upon God, upon being in general, and the various modes of being who will then borrow your money, and immediately go away and write a libel against you in conjunction with the barrister Marchand, or the creature called Chaudon or the equally despicable wretch called Bonneval." Thus Voltaire, the eye of his century, considers the philosophers contemporary of Lucian, but the picture that Lucian himself outlines to us in Icaromenippus, is even strong and spicy.

"There is a class which has recently become conspicuous among men; they are idle, quarrelsome, vain, irritable, lickerish, silly, puffed up, arrogant, and, in Homeric phrase, vain cumberers of the earth. These men have divided themselves into bands, each dwelling in a separate word maze of its own construction, and call themselves Stoics, Epicureans, Peripatetics, and more farcical names yet. Then they take to themselves the holy name of Virtue, and with uplifted brows and flowing beards exhibit the deceitful semblance that hides immoral lives; their model is the tragic actor, from whom if you strip off the mask and the gold-spangled robe, there is nothing left but a paltry fellow hired for a few shillings to play a part.

'Nevertheless, quite undeterred by their own characters, they scorn the human and travesty the divine; they gather a company of guileless youths, and feed them with solemn chatter upon Virtue and quibbling verbal puzzles; in their pupils' presence, they are all for fortitude and temperance, and have no words bad enough for wealth and pleasure: when they are by themselves, there is no limit to their gluttony, their lechery, their licking of dirty pence. But the head and front of their offending is this: they neither work themselves nor help others' work; they are useless drones, of no avail in council nor in war; which notwithstanding, they censure others; they store up poisoned words, they con invectives, they heap their neighbors with reproaches; their highest honors are for him who shall be loudest and most overbearing and boldest in abuse."

But this shameless rabble which put down and degraded the human mind was not enough. A daring phalanx of magicians, soothsayers, wizard, three-card trick players, horoscope casters, fortune

tellers, manufacturers of ointments, oracles, talismans and amulets; exploited the crowd always keen on magic and

supernatural, and all the more credulous as the trick is coarser. From all sides, people gathered around these miracle makers, to whom they lavished admiration, money and divine honors. Lucian, faithful to his role, does not fail to uncover these shameless or godless and lawless cheats, these unblushing liars, whose he traced the type in the life of Alexander of Abonoteichus and to scoff with his ordinary common sense their superstitious practices or their private scandals.

Some people have claimed, but without evidence, that Lucian had embraced the Christian faith, and that he had then apostatized.

It is certain indeed that Lucian of Samosata was fully informed about the Christian origins. In his *Philopseudes*, or "Lover of lies," he alludes several times to Christianity [episode of the Hyperborean able to walk on water, of the Syrian from Palestine who exorcized the lunatics, etc.].

He wrote two works about the false prophets of the second century: *Alexander of Abonoteichus* therefore, dedicated to Celsus, and the *De morte Peregrini*, On the death of Peregrine.

The text suffered much and particularly the paragraphs concerning the appearance of Peregrinus among the Christians.

* The *Almanac of the Marvelous Year* or the men-women. Work by the Father Coyer published in 1748 and we don't know too much why, having caused Voltaire's ire.

ON THE DEATH OF PEREGRINE.

.....“It was then that he learned the wondrous lore of the Christians, by associating with their priests and scribes in Palestine. And—how else could it be?—in a trice he made them all look like children, for he was a prophet, cult leader, head of the synagogue, and everything, all by himself. He interpreted and explained some of their books and even composed many, and they revered him as a god, made use of him as a lawgiver, and set him down as a protector, next after that other, to be sure, whom¹¹ they still worship, the man who was crucified in Palestine because he introduced this new cult into the world.

Then at length Proteus was apprehended for this and thrown into prison, which itself gave him no little reputation as an asset for his future career and the charlatanism and notoriety-seeking that he was enamored of. Well, when he had been imprisoned, the Christians, regarding the incident as a calamity, left nothing undone in the effort to rescue him. Then, as this was impossible, every other form of attention was shown him, not in any casual way but with assiduity, and from the very break of day aged widows and orphan children could be seen waiting near the prison, while their officials even slept inside with him after bribing the guards. Then elaborate meals were brought in, and sacred books of theirs were read aloud, and excellent Peregrinus—for he still went by that name—was called by them, ‘the new Socrates.’

Indeed, people came even from the cities in Asia, sent by the Christians at their common expense, to succor and defend and encourage the hero. They show incredible speed whenever any such public action is taken; for in no time, they lavish their all. So it was then in the case of Peregrinus; much money came to him from them by reason of his imprisonment, and he did not procure a little revenue from it. The poor wretches have convinced themselves, first and foremost, that they are going to be immortal and live for all time, in consequence of which they despise death and even willingly give themselves into custody; most of them. Furthermore, their first lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brothers of one another after they have transgressed once, for all by denying the Greek gods and by worshipping that crucified sophist himself and living under his laws. Therefore they despise all things indiscriminately and consider them common property, receiving such doctrines traditionally without any definite evidence. So if any charlatan and trickster, able to profit by occasions, comes among them, he quickly acquires sudden wealth by imposing upon simple folk.

However, Peregrinus was freed by the then governor of Syria, a man who was fond of philosophy. Aware of his recklessness and that he would gladly die in order that he might leave behind him a reputation for it, he freed him, not considering him worthy even of the usual chastisement. Upon returning to his home, he found that the matter of his father’s murder was still at fever heat and that there were many who were for pressing the charge against him. Most of his possessions had been carried off during his absence, and only his farms remained, amounting to fifteen talents; for the entire property which the old man left had been worth perhaps thirty talents, not five thousand as that utterly ridiculous Theagenes asserted. Even the entire city of Parium, taking along with it the five that are its neighbors, would not fetch that much, including the men, the cattle, and all the rest of their belongings. However, the charge and complaint were still aglow, and it was probable that before long somebody would appear. against him; above all, the people themselves were enraged, mourning over a good old man (as he was called by those who had seen him) so impiously slain. But observe what a plan our clever Proteus discovered to cope with all this, and, how he escaped the danger. Coming before the assembly of the Parians—he wore his hair long by now, dressed in a dirty mantle, had a wallet slung at his side, the staff was in his hand, and in general he was very histrionic in his get-up—manifesting himself to them in this guise, he said that he relinquished to the state all the property which had been left him by his father of blessed memory. When the people, poor folk agape for largesses, heard that, they lifted their voices forthwith: ‘The one and only philosopher! The one and only patriot! The one and only rival of Diogenes and Crates!’ His enemies were muzzled, and anyone who tried to mention the murder was at once pelted with stones.

He left home, then, for the second time, to roam about, possessing an ample source of funds in the Christians, through whose ministrations he lived in unalloyed prosperity. For a time he batted himself thus; but then, after he had transgressed in some way even against them—he was seen, I think, eating some of the food that is forbidden them, they no longer accepted him, and so, being at a loss.....”

The skeptic Lucien seems nevertheless to have found his master at the time of his passage in Gaul (in the area of Marseilles) where a high-knower of the druidiaction (druidecht) stole a march on him the pawn through his interpretation of the Greek mythology itself.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE OR HERCULES.

Our Heracles is known under the local name of Ogmios; and the appearance he presents in their pictures is truly grotesque. They make him out as old can be, the few hairs he has left (he is quite bald in front) are dead white, and his skin is wrinkled and tanned as black as any old salt's. You would take him for some infernal deity, for Charon or Iapetus--any one rather than Heracles. Such as he is, however, he has all the proper attributes of that god: the lion's-skin hangs over his shoulders, his right hand grasps the club, his left the strung bow, and a quiver is slung at his side; nothing is wanting to the Heracleian equipment.

Now I thought at first that this was just a cut at the Greek Gods; that in taking these liberties with the personal appearance of Heracles, the Celts were merely exacting pictorial vengeance for his invasion of their territory; for in his search after the herds of Geryon, he had overrun and plundered most of the peoples of the West.

Counter-lay No. 2.

Geryon was the king of a country of the Extreme West (Osismios): Erytheia, a red island lost in the mist for some people, Tartessus (Cadiz in Spain) for others. The legends present him to us as being three-headed, what could therefore connect him with certain representations of Hornunnos. He was the son of Chrysaor (the warrior with the gold sword, born himself from the blood of Medusa) and of Callirhoe (the daughter of the ocean). It was the strongest man most in the world (by definition, if he was a death god-or-demon). His only company consisted of a red cattle herd (at least, for the Greeks, but they were perhaps quite simply stags), kept by a dragon with seven mouths (child of Typhoon and Echidna) and a two-headed watchdog.

N.B. As usual, the Greeks therefore collected a local legend and understood nothing from it. The Celtic war dogs were very known at the time.

However, I have yet to mention the most remarkable feature in the portrait. This ancient Heracles drags after him a vast crowd of men, all of whom are fastened by the ears with thin chains composed of gold and amber, and looking more like beautiful necklaces than anything else. From this flimsy bondage they make no attempt to escape, though escape must be easy. There is not the slightest show of resistance: instead of planting their heels in the ground and dragging back, they follow with joyful alacrity, singing their captor's praises the while; and from the eagerness with which they hurry after him to prevent the chains from tightening, one would say that release is the last thing they desire. Nor will I conceal from you what struck me as the most curious circumstance of all. Heracles's right hand is occupied with the club, and his left with the bow: how is he to hold the ends of the chains? The painter solves the difficulty by boring a hole in the tip of the god's tongue, and making that the means of attachment; his head is turned round, and he regards his followers with a smiling countenance.

For a long time, I stood staring at this in amazement: I did not know what to make of it, and was beginning to feel somewhat nettled, when I was addressed in admirable Greek by a Gaul who stood at my side, and who besides possessing a scholarly acquaintance with the Celtic mythology

[THEREFORE A HIGH-KNOWER OF THE DRUIDIACTION OR DRUIDIECHT. Editor's note], proved to be not unfamiliar with our own. 'Sir,' he said, 'I see this picture puzzles you: let me solve the riddle.

We Celts connect eloquence not with Hermes, as you do, but with the mightier Heracles. Nor need it surprise you to see him represented as an old man. It is the prerogative of eloquence that it reaches perfection in old age; at least if we may believe your poets, who tell us that

Youth is the sport of every random gust,

Whereas old age

Has that to say that passes youthful wit.

Thus we find that from Nestor's lips honey is distilled; and that the words of the Trojan counselors are compared to the lily, which, if I have not forgotten my Greek, is the name of a flower. Hence, if you consider the relation that exists between tongue and ear, you will find nothing more natural than the way in which our Heracles, who is Eloquence personified, draws men along with their ears tied to his tongue. Nor is any slight intended by the hole bored through that member: I recollect a passage in one of your comic poets in which we are told that there is a hole in every glib tongue's tip.

Indeed, we refer the achievements of the original Heracles⁶, from first to last, to his wisdom and persuasive eloquence. His shafts, as I take it, are no other than his words; swift, keen-pointed, true-aimed to do deadly execution on the soul.' And, in conclusion, he reminded me of our own phrase, 'winged words.' " Such was his explanation of this god.

NOTE ON THE ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY.

The main glory of Lucian as a novelist, it is to have provided to Swift some of the picturesque ideas, and not the least original, that we admire in the *Gulliver's Travels*. The "true stories" tell the imaginary odyssey of Lucian himself, who explores other continent beyond the oceans. Throughout these "zany" travels, he meets a fabulous bestiary, stays one moment in the island of the blessed, is swallowed by a whale, goes on the moon, imagines already television! This text full with inventions, absolute masterpiece of Lucian, first work of science fiction in the History, was often a source of inspiration, particularly for the *Gulliver's Travels* by Swift and the voyage of *Pantagruel* in the Fourth Book by Rabelais.

The *Odyssey* is the primitive type of all these stories. Homer had led his hero in regions where then nobody ever landed, and which had existed only in his rich and fertile imagination. Others wanted in turn to win fame by these discoveries which you could make without leaving your study; and they told what they had dreamed about a new country of the Cimmerians, or even about a more fantastic area still. Iambulus, says Lucian in his introduction of the true History, composed, on the productions of the Ocean, a crowd of incredible tales; "the whole thing is a manifest fiction, but at the same time pleasant reading. Many other writers have adopted the same plan, professing to relate their own travels, and describing monstrous beasts, savages, and strange ways of life."

The oldest documents of the Greek thought in this field are the poems of Homer, although he had precursors.

One of the oldest Greek legends speaks to us indeed about an area exploited by Phoenicians, that of the Black Sea. The fabulous expedition of the Argonauts was initially directed towards these environs. Started from Iolcus, it would have gone in Colchis, in the mouth of the Phasis. The poems devoted to this expedition are relatively recent; oldest is in the Orphic hymns, but they are based on older legends.

THE POLAR VOYAGE OF ULYSSES.

In the *Odyssey* by Homer, we find four passages, up to now unexplained, which, by comparing them, give us solid reasons to think that Homer made his heroes to travel up to the pole; and that he used for that the data of a very old relation of a polar voyage.

They are the following "insertions": book X, lines 82-86 (insertion 1); book X, lines 190-192 (insertion 2); book XI, lines 13-19 (insertion 3); book XII, lines 3-4 (insertion 4).

Let us examine first the insertion No. 1 (Book X, lines 82-86): the country of the Lestrygonians.

For six days we sailed and on the seventh, we came to the lofty citadel of Lamus,
Even to Telepylus of the Laestrygonians, where herdsman calls
To herdsman as he drives in his flock, and the other answers as he drives his forth.
There a man who never slept could have earned a double wage,
One by herding cattle, and one by pasturing white sheep;
For the out goings of the night and of the day are close together.

The poet therefore says to us while joking that the shepherd, who returns home generally late, could take over the herds of the cowboy who gets up early, to go out again, and thus earn double wages. The out goings of the night and of the day are so close, because the outgoing - duration - of the night is so short that immediately the course of the day begins again. The grammarian Crates of Mallus (2nd century before our era) already understood, and all the commentators agree with him, that Homer described here the short nights of summer of the high latitudes in the north, of which he was to have some knowledge. This indication has no relationship with the course of the story, but it is perfectly used to clear up the meaning of the lines 190-192 about Aeaëa and seems, in the intention of the poet, intended to prepare to that! But how therefore? Here, we must start from the well-established fact that Homer imagined a voyage of Ulysses directed towards the North-West. We must also suppose that the hero continued towards the north, from Telepylus of the Lestrygonians to Aeaëa. What he tells about Telepylus, that the summer nights are short, corresponds to a region located at the south of the polar circle.

We are at a place of passage, where the day and the night go out consequently thought the same door (the two shepherds personify them). In the mental representation of the time, the Far North was compared to the place where the east and the west overlapped. A topological place, if it is preferred, appearing single whereas it is the result of a fold or overlapping, as if the two ends of the rising and setting sun, because of the circular character of the terrestrial disk, were connected.

In the north of the Aegean space, it is a boundary point where the sun at the same time sets down and rises. This is why the Colchis, place of the Golden Fleece that Jason pursues, is being equated to the north and not to the west, in the imagination of the time. All that is on the borders (beyond the Oceanus River) tend towards being gathered in the north and to define a crossing point between east and west (through which the directions and the sunbeams spread again). The wake of the boat of Ulysses boat is not far from that of the boat of Jason. The Homeric text says it besides: only the nave Argo could pass the wandering rocks; the latter not being to be located at the entrance of the Bosphorus, but in these northern lands where east and west meet. The Circe of the Odyssey is located in a kind of north pole which gives access as well to the sea routes of the Euxine Sea (Black Sea) as to those of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Roland Herkenrath (article published in *Stimmen der Zeit Monatschrift für das Geistesleben der Gegenwart* - October 1925) sees in these lines the first evidence of a tour in the Far North, off Scandinavia, where the sun does not set down at the summer solstice. If you do not sleep, to undertake a double activity is therefore possible. The great specialist in the Odyssey, the French Victor Berard, as for him, places the country of the Lestrygonians between Corsica and Sardinia. The upholders of a voyage of Ulysses in North Atlantic will share the point of view of Herkenrath, even if instead of Scandinavia, Iceland is named, or Scotland. However the poet keeps obviously the description of a Mediterranean landscape within a subarctic and arctic climate (that of the Lestrygonians, of Circe, of the Cimmerians, of the country of the dead). Two stories therefore should be supposed: an old account representing these exchanges that the Mycenaean Mediterranean Sea practiced with the Baltic for amber and with the Atlantic for tin, and whose archeology becomes guarantor; and a more modern account: Homer incorporates data of the old account without worrying too much about the inconsistencies. More striking is that when Ulysses, landing on the island of Circe, says to know no longer where the sun rises and sleeps, and some lines after sees rising the dawn rising and a stag running!

Let us come now to the insertion 2 (book X, lines 190-192): the island of Circe, a very strange passage. To put to us on the right track, let us see initially the circumstances when it occurs. In his previous adventures, Ulysses had been attacked by man-eating Lestrygonians, had lost there eleven of his twelve boats with their crews and had been able to save barely his own ship and its people. They land on an unknown beach and then, frightened or exhausted to have had to row hastily, they remain there without moving two days and two nights, wrapped in their coats. The third day, the hero pulls himself together; he climbs a height to look around him. They are on a small island; in its center smoke goes up from a forest (as we will see later, it is the residence of the magician Circe). A hart, killed on the way of the return, boosts the morale of the companions. But it is only the next morning, what Ulysses dares to summon them to a council.

It is a question of sending men out on reconnaissance: an alarming mission, the previous experiments and particularly among the Lestrygonians having brought much misfortune to them. Ulysses tries to convince them by his speech.

But when the sun set and darkness came on,
Then we lay down to rest on the shore of the sea.
And as soon as early Dawn appeared, the rosy-fingered,
I called my men together, and spoke among them all:
'Hearken to my words, comrades, for all your evil plight.
My friends, we do not know where the darkness is or where the dawn,
Neither where the sun, who give light to mortals, goes beneath the earth,
Nor where he rises; but let us straightway take thought if any device be still left us.
As for me I do not think that there is.
For I climbed to a rugged point of outlook,
And beheld the island, about which is set as a crown the boundless deep.
The isle itself lies low, and in the midst of it my eyes saw smoke
Through the thick brush and the wood.'

The day before the burning sunbeams had pushed to the brook the stag that he was going to kill. Therefore they were able to find their bearings with the sun: the exact opposite of the lines 190-192! The poet introduces there these lines (190-192) into his poem, but they do not come from his poetic invention nor from his own imagination. We should not believe him able to have forged himself such contradictions. Their contents must be inspired to him in a way from the outside.

But for the moment, we are in front of another enigma: how can we understand that here, on Aeaea, the travelers, stripped of any possibility of orientation, recognize no longer neither the east nor the west? The poet gives us an invaluable clue, approximately hundred lines before (insertion 1), when he speaks to us about the Lestrygonians (Book X, lines 82-86).

If we place Aeaea north of the polar circle, Ulysses arrives in a place where an uninterrupted day, the polar day, prevails. That brings us back to that about which he complains in front of his companions in the lines 190-192. During the polar day, which increases with the latitude, the sun moves around the earth, without setting down nor rising, a little above the horizon. The consequence is that we can no longer distinguish the east from the west and that, as the stars are obscured by the day light, it becomes therefore impossible to find one's bearings. Another means would be to have landmarks, but Ulysses sees no one of them, only the open sea. If the poet says to us in the line 82 and following that the travelers arrived in the areas of the North with very short summer nights; he explains to us in the lines 190 and following that they reached the latitudes of the uninterrupted days; with this result that, in consequence of the lack of sunset and of sunrise, they can no longer find their bearings. These two insertions have without any doubt a nature of geographical indication, except that the second one was introduced at the same time into the account. This common character, we could almost say external, of simple geographical indication, is also highlighted by the fact that the description of the landscapes does not seem to be influenced by it. It does not correspond to the high latitudes, but rather to the homeland of the poet, with its completely different climatic conditions. In Telepylus (insertion 1), there is a road on which the Lestrygonians drive heavily loaded carts from the mountains to the towns; and on Aeaea (insertion 2), the stag feeds in a wood, Circe give the companions changed into pigs some acorns, some beechnuts and the red fruits of dogwood. That does nothing but add to the contradictions signaled higher between these insertions and the descriptions by the poet in the continuation of the story. And it is precisely because of their incoherent nature that we called them "insertions."

But the poet does not know only the polar day on Aeaea, he also knows the polar night and places it not very far from Aeaea. He speaks about it in the insertion 3 (Book XI, lines 13-19). Indeed, Ulysses, supported by the north wind (X; 505 and following), crossed in one day the sea and an arm of the Oceanus River which surrounds completely the terrestrialk disc, then landed on the other bank of this river, at the place where there is the entrance of the underground world.

He came to deep-flowing Oceanus, which bounds the Earth,
Where is the land and city of the Cimmerians
Wrapped in mist and cloud. Never does the bright sun
Look down on them with his rays
Either when he mounts the starry heaven
Or when he turns again to earth from heaven,
But baneful night is spread over wretched mortals.

We already drew the attention onto the opposition between the Cimmerians, i.e. "the men of the darkness," and the Lestrygonians with their short nights, but still bigger is the opposition with the polar day on Aeaea. The proximity between them of these three places - country of the Lestrygonians, island of Aeaea and land of the Cimmerians - proves that the "baneful night" of the latter is also part of the polar manifestations. But here, the description of the reality is obviously inaccurate. Instead of saying quite simply that the territories in the Far North are wrapped in darkness during a part of the year, the poet leaves the inhabitants of a portion of these areas, the Cimmerians, groping constantly in the night and the mist, for the great benefit of his epic. It was well necessary that an eternal night reigns at the entrance of Erebus. We could conclude from it that the poet had imagined the short nights of the Lestrygonians and the polar day of Aeaea as permanent states but it is not certain. That he took the precaution to introduce the last two insertions so that they stick as much as possible to the thread of the account, the beautiful surroundings that this idea provides to the voyage in Hades shows it to us. The Cimmerian darkness shade the descent of the hero, the rise of Helios and the merry round of Eos greet them when he goes back up.

The island of Aeaea presents another characteristic, which is described in the fourth insertion (Book XII, lines 3-4). What is said in these lines also appears incomprehensible if not even more

inconceivable than the second insertion: "We could find there neither east nor west." That brings back in fact to the same meaning, perfectly clear. Let us listen to them in their context. In the eleventh book, Ulysses joined Hades from Aeaëa, in the twelfth, he returns to the island and tells.

Now after our ship had left the stream of the river Oceanus
And had come to the wave of the broad sea,
And the Aeaëan isle, where is the dwelling of early Dawn
And her dancing-lawns, and the risings of the sun,
There on our coming we beached our ship on the sands,
And ourselves went forth upon the shore of the sea,
And there we fell asleep, and waited for the bright Dawn.

That the companions of Ulysses doze on the beach while waiting for the clearness of the day (5-6), i.e., the dawn who, however, has her dwelling on this island (3-4); and immediately after the rosy-fingered dawn appears (8); that further the sun, which rises on this island (4), sets down there a little later (31); all these contradictions surprise us no longer. They are similar to those which were already introduced by the insertion 2 (Book X, lines 190-192).

But here another gap, insurmountable, is opened, between the assertion of the poet that it is on this island that are the residence of the dawn and the sunset; and the irrefutable assumption of the same poet, assumption which is based on the insertions 1 (X, 82 and following) and 2 (X, 190 and following), namely that the ship of Ulysses was misled in the North-West, in the high latitudes. Did the poet lose himself his faculties of finding his bearings that he mixes up the east and the west? This passage resisted up to now every attempt at explanation. However, what the poet describes here is a reality, surprising, of course, but which appears really in the polar zone. Nevertheless, and it is quite comprehensible, that was not really understood by the poet.

Here what we had to say about these four passages of the odyssey. These four insertions form a whole, they indicate the north and are complementary by giving a complete description of the state of the sun and light in the Scandinavian areas. On the geographical level, they refer to three close places and want to show phenomena which are related to the geographical position of those. Of course, the indications over the short summer nights among the Lestrygonians locate us in the high latitudes of the polar regions. In consequence of the proximity of the island of Aeaëa and of the land of the Cimmerians, the indications on the natural phenomena in the corresponding insertions must also indicate the north. And indeed, these passages, which without this assumption would be incomprehensible, become clear, word for word. Together they provide a complete image surprisingly exact of the Arctic luminous phenomena. The first insertion shows us the short Summer nights, the second and the fourth the polar day with its multiple characteristics, the third, the polar night. They share the same astonishing contradiction between their contents and the other descriptions of the landscape in the same region. These insertions can be compared with boulders which stand alone on a green meadow, among carved stones. In other words, the climatic conditions of these places, such as the poet describes them, really do not go with the geographical position that the insertions assign to them. Those therefore do not come from the poet, but from the outside. He found them didn't invent them, and he left them as they were, foreign and contradictory.

The knowledge brought by these insertions, which make it possible to the poet to introduce Ulysses as a polar traveler, reached him from outside. Already their otherness compared to the text which surrounds them shows it to us, while it excludes that they originate in the own experience or the free invention of the poet. We see well also how much the poet himself is not absolutely in a position to appreciate the impact of this information. In itself, this knowledge appears to him completely attested; he places the reality which they contain with the same conviction as the apparently contradictory climatic conditions as he describes according to his country and that he puts just next. Thus the "sunrises" in the north-western high latitudes and the daybreak in the east, in his homeland (insertion 4). The information contained in the insertions was indeed well attested; they convey, with a stunning exactitude and precision, the real conditions. One difference nevertheless: the shift concerning the place and the length of the polar night of the Cimmerians, unless it is a bad comprehension of the source. We can therefore put with certainty the following proposition forward: the information that the poet gives us about the polar regions are based on a sure knowledge which reached him from outside. The goal of the poet by introducing these insertions was the glorification of Ulysses. While placing us from this point of view, we have an outline on the way in which the poet organized the work thanks to the use and the treatment of these passages. They were too greatly useful to him for the manufacture

of the epic so that he could do without them. His hero was to beat all records in entrepreneurial spirit, in pure courage, in inventive cleverness and in triumphing tenacity, in all the actions that a man could achieve. He therefore led it, through all kinds of adventures, down to Hades, in the image of Hercules himself. Like this one on earth, Ulysses was to be the man who, on the sea, goes around the earth and the sea to the Ocean, the river of the borders; who sees all the countries and all the habits of the men and resists all the threatening dangers. The poet wanted to thus give a wide and complete image of the world. He had information about the seas in the Far North and its strange phenomena because bold sailors had already come up to there. It was necessary that his hero also undertakes this adventure. It was necessary that he goes where the shepherd who returns home greets the one who goes out; where are the sunrises and the residences as well as the dances of the dawn, where man can no longer distinguish the west from the east to calculate his route; there finally where the Cimmerians are wrapped in an eternal night. i.e., in the distant north-west. Many other tales of sailors go in that direction, which he would have liked to tell if the regions where they take place were not so fuzzy. He was to let his heroes be thrown by the storm in this distant north-west, because the Atlantic Ocean was well beyond the sea traffic of his time, well beyond its limits, Libya and Sicily; and that the poet himself was in the darkness with regard to the remote seas of the west and north. There, he could arrange the scene of the adventure according to his own desires and develop his story without constraint nor control. And then the sea to Colchis, located formerly in a remote east, had approached too much for the Greeks of Homer's time so that new tales still find their place in it. And the south-east was already taken, in the same Odyssey, by the voyage of Menelaus.

That must be the reason why our poet also placed in the distant north-west the expedition of the Argonauts. It makes them also touch the polar regions. Let us present this episode quickly. At the time of the passage of Ulysses in the second dangerous place, the Planctae or wandering rocks, at the time of his return since Aeaea; the poet says that no boat nor bird went yet without damage in front of these rocks: only the nave Argo therefore could have rounded them with the assistance of Hera at the time of his return voyage from Aeaea (Book XII, lines 69-72).

The name of Artakia, that the poet gave to the spring close to Telepylus, the city of the Lestrygonians (Odyssey, X, 108), is the same one (Artakie) as that of the spring of Kyzikos in the Propontis (Sea of Marmara), made famous by the Argonauts; that shows, according to any probability, that the poet thought of the voyage of the Argonauts. The fact that Homer makes the "glorious Argo," the star of the first and mythical sea adventure of the Ancient world, to cross the road of his Ulysses, proves it. Perhaps wanted he to mean that Ulysses surpassed Jason in glory; the latter had not reached the true polar areas and had not gone to the Cimmerians then into Hades.

We know at least a source of the description of the voyage of Ulysses. But it would be a mistake to seek on our maps the places named by this source, like, for example, to take the Lestrygonians for a Germanic tribe in Scandinavia. There is nothing in Homer which goes in this direction.

Age of the source?

Since we know that Homer himself used its information, we may make it go back very early, in any case well before the eighth century before our era. It is difficult to determine with certainty from where this information came to him. Certainly not from the Greek sea traffic of his time, it did not go rather far. The greatest probability is that it came to him from the Phoenicians which, in the twelfth century before our era, had removed from the Cretans the sovereignty over the seas; and pushed their navigation as far as in England even in the waters of the North and of the Baltic Sea. In what form this knowledge was handed down on the Greek land? It is necessary to think rather of chanted songs. If it was a question in this very old account not of a voyage during which they would have been misled by chance, but of sea voyages of exploration, perhaps repeated; then what remains of it speaks us about the daring achievements of a time which cannot be compared in no way with our modern means of navigation. They have nothing to envy from the polar expeditions in our time (this excellent study is extracted from the remarkable website www.utqueant.org).

In spite of the progress of the Greek colonization towards around the 6th century, the cyclic poets, Pindar, Aeschylus, do not add much to the Homeric geography; they respect the mythical side of it. But at that time the poets are already no longer the official interpreters of the ideas of their time. Rational science was born with prose; philosophy, history, geography, develop at the same time.

The great geographer of the 3rd century before our era was Pytheas. Pytheas was a true scientist, observing with a gnomon the shadow of the sun at the summer solstice; he had deduced the latitude of Marseilles, fixing it at 30.300 stadia away of the equator, that is to say 43° 17' 18"; the mistake is of

less than one minute. He was a true scientist and all that he said of his voyages WAS TRUE, BUT HE WAS CALLED A LIAR HIS ENTIRE LIFE.

At the same time as the expeditions of Alexander moved back towards the East the terminals of the world known of the Greeks, they were indeed moved back towards the North-West, by a voyage of exploration as admirable as that of Hanno, carried out by Pytheas of Marseilles. The seafarers of Tartessus had spoken to the inhabitant of Marseilles about these areas, but they remained to a large extent unknown.

To withdraw his city from the Carthaginian blockade of Gibraltar which prevented the trade with the Atlantic Coast, he accomplished initially a voyage towards the east. Exploring the Azov Sea to the mouth of the Don, he tried in this way to reach the country of the Hyperboreans in order to bringing back amber and copper from it. This attempt having ended in failure, Pytheas was charged by his fellow countrymen with exploring the external sea to seek the production countries of tin and amber, in order to remove this trade from the Carthaginians.

Guided by the pieces of advice of his master, Eudoxus of Cnidus, he started by calculating the latitude (height of the pole) of Gadir (Cadiz), and observed, in the strait of the Pillars of Hercules, the phenomenon of the tide. He rounded the Sagres point (cape St-Vincent), reached in three days the cape Finisterre, and in three other days Celtic islands, among which he mentions Uxisama (Ushant), in the vicinity of the Ostdamnians.

From there, he crossed the English Channel, and landed in the Cantium (Kent), which was then inhabited by Bretons. He studied their manners: he speaks about their huts, their barns, their harvests, their drinks and about their lack of sun. After two days and half of navigation, he came back to the continent at the end of the Celtica, stopped among the Ostiones in the mouth of the Rhine, and there observed the height of the pole. At the end of three days and half, he reached the Cattegat and the northern point of Jutland. There he heard, among the Cimbri, the legend of the Dead Sea (Morimarusa, probably brought by the Phoenician seafarers), he visited the country of the Goths (Sweden), entered it up to the island of Alabas, where he saw the peat used as fuel; and got some information about the islands in the Baltic Sea surrounding Scania. From there he went, in two days, to the (Prussian) coast of the Baltic, where was collected the amber, that the Germanic people came to seek there; connected the Goths of the Vistula, reached the islands of Latris (Rügen) and Nerthu ? got information on the reindeer, the elk and various productions of the northern countries; and soon left the sea he had entered, in order to go into the Far North of the British Isles.

There he was informed that in a land named Thule, at the summer solstice, the sun did not set down and that beyond was a frozen sea called Cronium.

Geminus: "Pytheas says, in connection with the observations that he noted in his treatise "On the ocean";

Pytheas says that the barbarians revealed to us the sleeping place of the sun; it was found that in these regions the night was very short, lasting in some places two hours, in others three hours, so that the sun, going to rest, rose again after a short interval."

Was this, as Pliny and Martianus Capella suggest it, a region close to the pole? Was this the Eastern coast of Greenland? Was this Iceland, one of the Orkneys islands, one of the Shetlands, one of the Faroe islands, even one of the Lofoten?

In front of the blur of the indications of Pytheas, perhaps we will know it never with certainty.

The Thuleans lived of millet, roots and on some other vegetables. Pytheas also speaks about a fermented drink, made with honey, that the inhabitants used in Thule. This drink could only be mead. But here the passage which mainly unleashed the mind of the critics. The Celtic sailors (some Picts??) of these islands had indeed informed him that "towards north and in all these places, there is neither earth in existence by itself nor yet sea nor vapor, but instead a sort of mixture of these similar to a marine lung in which the earth and the sea and all things together are suspended, and this mixture is as if it were a fetter of the whole existing in a form impassable by foot or ship."

Some people seized this quotation to call fabulous all the account of Pytheas. It was to go too far. Others rather endeavored to determine what this strange thing, called marine lung, was; but we don't know yet if it should be arranged among the animals, or among the plants. As Pytheas acknowledges

himself that he knew these things only by hearsay; there is reason to believe that this impenetrable, chaotic mixture, of air, earth and water, was the poetic image of the thick fogs which enveloped these floating icebergs, the frightening ice barriers of the Eastern coast of Greenland. Perhaps also did Pytheas confuse this legend of the marine lung, with the seaweed sea (Sargasso Sea), that the Phoenicians were certainly to have met in their Atlantic seafaring, and which astonished Christopher Columbus later.

The Irish geographer Dicuil, much later, in his famous "Liber de mensura orbis terrae," will identify this ultimate Thule with Iceland, but this is discussed much.

In short, Pytheas did not find what was ordered to him to go and seek; but he came back with strange stories about the areas he had visited, about the ice barrier he had discovered, on the multitude of strange animals which peopled the seas in the north.

Artemis was the name of his boat; the voyage lasted more than six months; when he told his odyssey as all that he had seen, he was called a liar. The importance of the discoveries of Pytheas was ignored. People remembered especially about him his mistake concerning the dimension of Great Britain that exaggerated very probably because of the curves of the coastline, giving it a 40.000 stadia circumference, and the concept of Thule, mysterious land in the Far North.

The fact that we evoke here the voyage of Pytheas does not have to disconcert. First because it is indeed a travel, the stages of it are relatively well reported to us and of which we guess the ideological implications, but especially because Pytheas and Euhemerus are put on an equal footing by Strabo.

"Now, really, all this does not fall short of the fabrications of Pytheas, Euhemerus and Antiphanes. Those men, however, we can pardon for their fabrications — since they follow precisely this as their business — just as we pardon jugglers."

As we can see it through the quoted text, the appraisal of Strabo is very negative. A little further, however, he moderates his judgment by saying that, according to Polybius, it was better to give credence to Euhemerus than to Pytheas; because the first say to have sailed towards the only region of Panchaia, whereas the second affirms to have sailed to the borders of the World and to have recognized all the northern part of Europe.

The account of the Marseilles sailor is, however, more trustworthy than that of the Messenian, insofar as it appears to us here and there confirmed by topography. However, the Ancients obviously had difficulty to distinguish some truth in each work, because of the magic character that the distance of the described regions gave to the one and to the other. The wonders of Panchaia that Euhemerus had to describe could be considered as very plausible because undoubtedly inspired by the reports of travels later than the conquest of Asia; whereas the strange phenomena described by Pytheas, like the "suspended sea" or the night of two or three hours; ran up against the incredulity of Mediterranean people for whom this kind of spectacle was absolutely not usual!

A portion of the information reported by Pytheas is probably due to direct observations from himself; but another is undoubtedly borrowed from the Celtic sailors met by him in the ports of the Atlantic, particularly as regards its ultimate part.

Nevertheless his voyages brought him a considerable success in the Greco-Roman audience and, beyond, struck the imagination of the scholars until the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The great geographer of the 20th century before our era was Eudoxus of Cnidus, disciple of Plato and heir to the Pythagorean traditions.

Dionysius Periegetes, Greek writer, born in Alexandria, was the author of a poem about geography entitled *Periegesis*, or *Survey of the World*, and lived, according to the popular belief, in the 1st century of our era. Here are some extracts.

To begin my song of the earth and broad sea
And the rivers and cities and countless tribes of men.

Line 69. First of all, as one begins, the Iberian Sea flows forth.

Line 74. After this comes the Galatian stream, where the land of Marseilles lies stretched, with its curved harbor.

Line 288. After the Iberians are Mount Pyrene and the homes of the Celts, near the springs of the fair-flowing Eridanus, beside the streams of which once in the solitary night the Heliades cried, lamenting Phaethon.

There the children of the Celts, seated beneath the poplars, Milk the tears of gold-gleaming amber. Next after this are the haunts of the Tyrrhenian land. To the east of this appears the start of the Alp, through the middle of which flow down the waters of the Rhine, towards the furthestmost wave of the northern sea.

Line 570. Nearby there is another path of islets, where the wives of the noble Amnitian men on the opposite shores excitedly perform the sacred rites for Bacchus according to custom, wreathed with clusters of black-leaved ivy by night. And the clear sound of the tumult rises. Not so on the banks of the Thracian Apsynthus do the Bistonians call upon loud-roaring Eiraphiotes; not so beside the black-eddyding Ganges do the Indians, with their children, lead the revelry in honor of loud-thundering Dionysus, Not as the women in that land raise their cries of 'Euoe.'

All the Greek superstitions, all the daydreams relating to the far west (osismios), echo in the pages of the True Story.

The material was not missing to Lucian for his novel, it was enough for him to glean here and there in the mass of more or less incredible stories collected by his predecessors. We can hardly doubt that majority of the accounts having inspired Lucian, such the Hyperborea by Hecataeus of Abdera, or the islands of the sun by Iambulus, did not belong to already distant times; as we could see it with the episode of Ogmius explained to our author at the time of his passage in Marseilles, and his allusion to the myth of Hornunnos renamed Geryon. Lucian therefore had to borrow many of the elements of his "true Story" from the druidic mythology at the time of his sojourn in Gaul, in any case it is what suggests the astonishing resemblance between this text and the legend of St. Brendan. The collection of fantastic dreams was rather rich so that it was only necessary to prune and choose in what had already been worked out by others, as well Greek as Celtic. Furthermore, Lucian chose with a perfect tact and his burlesque odyssey is a very pleasant reading. The work has hardly one defect, that to be incomplete. It stops at the end of the second book, there even when the author announces several others, which were to contain the account of his adventures after his shipwreck on the continent of the antipodes.

The travel is for Lucian a mirror of the Other, of this Barbarian, of whom the Greeks were so afraid ; a travel beyond the borders, of the boundaries known by the Greeks, since its starting point, the Pillars of Hercules, is already out of the limits of the Greek imagination; where precisely usually the accounts of exploration stop.

We should not forget, to understand the sequence of the episodes that Lucian admits the popular design relating to the shape of the World. For him, as for the majority of his contemporaries, the Earth is a disk floating on the water of the Ocean, and the Ocean itself, at the horizon, merges with the Sky. The travelers had often dreamed of discovering this junction point between the terrestrial one and the celestial one. It is therefore necessary to imagine a fixed vault separated from the earth by some air. A swirl of this air could consequently carry very well towards the celestial space. And the popular imagination placed for a long time among the Hesperides (the daughters of the Setting Sun), the Fortunate Islands where therefore the blessed ones lived eternally.

Indeed it remains to Lucian to take us along towards an "other world"; that towards which Ulysses had been led by Circe and where he had met his mother, that which all the great heroes of the Ancient world had visited (Orpheus, to wrest from the death his wife Eurydice): the kingdom of those who are no longer.

But Lucian chose to parody. His adventure therefore will not be full with dangers, like that of the ancient heroes and he will arrive in the simplest possible way in the island of the Blessed . [In Greek mythology, the islands of the Blessed, in old Greek makàrôn nesoi, are a place where the virtuous soul/minds enjoyed a perfect rest after their death. They were placed at the Western borders of Libya, in the Atlantic Ocean therefore. Their function and their characteristics make them very similar to the Elysian Fields, of which they are probably a late variation. Editor's note].

The travelers land in this place which enchants them, occasion for Lucian of a long description of the comfort of the country. But they are soon stopped. Then they are led to Rhadamanthus, who rules over the island. They are brought in front of him to be judged. Ulysses entrusts to Lucian a letter for Calypso who lives in the island of Ogygia. But they reach, first of all, the island of the wicked. Here are punished the writers who did not tell the truth, among whom Ctesias of Cnidus as well as Herodotus. Then the island of Dreams appears. Lastly, they reach Ogygia, where Lucian can discharge his mission.

END OF THE ADVENTURE.

The voyage begins again and, after two days of storm, our travelers are attacked by savages who sail in pumpkin-shaped ships. Then they are pirates mounted on dolphins. Lucian and his companions wash up on an enormous gigantic bird's nest (some Halcyon birds); they are forced to hoist their ship on trees in order to go through a forest, reach an island inhabited by bullheaded pirates. They still visit a new island, that of the Witchery. Then our navigators arrive finally to the "end of the world."

Let us point out also that, for Lucian, another source of inspiration existed then: the idea of Atlantis, which is presented as an anti-world, also located "beyond the Pillars of Hercules," boundaries between the known and unknown world...

While we are about it let us stress that this mythical continent, in the bad sense of the term, of Plato, who muddled the posterity well with all his stories about God or the Demiurge or the Divine one, is only a fable; and that it is dismaying to see this allegory justifying the worst intellectual and even straightforwardly financial swindles (celtomania, druidomania, perennial Tradition, etc) still today.

LUCIAN AND HIS TIME.

The novels in vogue, at the time of Lucian, fell almost all under two distinct categories, the metamorphoses and the imaginary travels. One of the most famous writings of Lucian is that which is entitled: *Lucius or the ass*.

It is a novel having for a topic the metamorphosis man/animal, but dealt in a burlesque and satirical way.

We claim by no means that the high-knowers the druidiaction (*druidecht*) admitted the possibility of such shamanic changes (of a human being into an animal). All that we can say, it is that the practice of the metamorphoses, old ritual and magic technique, remained in the stories... And that we have there the explanation of the famous priestesses in the island of Sein, a legend and not history which, at the time, according to Pomponius Mela III, 6,48, claimed to take any animal form at their whims and fancies.

"In the Britannic Sea, opposite the coast of the Osismi, the isle of Sena belongs to a Celtic deity and is famous for its oracle, whose priestesses, sanctified by their perpetual virginity, are reportedly nine in number. They call the priestesses *Gallizenae* and think that because they have been endowed with unique powers, they stir up the seas and the winds by their magic charms, that they turn into whatever animals they want, that they cure what is considered incurable among other peoples, that they know and predict the future."

To want to confirm the materiality of the facts thus reported would be to waste one's time. Our only matter is to clarify somewhat the general context of this comic novel by Lucian; by drawing the attention of the reader to the fact that the possibility of the change of human beings into animals was then a still largely widespread idea (and is besides still so today, particularly in the Islam and the Quran).

In 1951, in Pont-Saint-Esprit, in the French department of the Gard 135 people had to be hospitalized urgently and 6 of them died poisoned by some bread, infected by rye pin. The victims had horrible *aislingi* (visions) and believed they were attacked by tigers or snakes. They thought to be changed into wild beasts. The hallucinogens therefore seem likely to explain certain cases of appearances of werewolves during the Middle Ages (see the case of the three daughters of *Airitech*, killed by *Cas Corach*).

The lay of the werewolf was written in the 13th century by Marie de France, who lived at the court of England, and whose the fairyhood in her works made the success.

The lady of a noble baron doubted the fidelity of her husband, who disappeared three nights per week. When she questioned him, he revealed his secret. Struck by a curse, he was sentenced to take regularly the appearance of a werewolf, *bisclavret* in Breton language, and to live on blood and violence. He found again human form by putting on his clothing, but became wolf as soon as he removed them...

Having declared herself widowed, the baroness married her accomplice. Both would undoubtedly have enjoyed a peaceful existence if the king had not met the werewolf. Encircled and wounded by the hounds, the baron could take a last chance. Tightening the stirrup of the king between his legs, he licked the boot of his former master. Amazed, the king brought back this extraordinary animal to the court and made it his favorite animal, ordering everybody to treat it with respect. Filled up with gratitude, the wolf adopted a model control.

At that moment, the knight presented himself to the castle. Generally docile, the werewolf recognized the traitor and attacked him suddenly, obliging it to leave the places. Thereafter, the king, accompanied by the wolf, visited the unfaithful baroness. Flinging itself on her, the animal tore off from her the end of her nose. The truth appeared. The baroness confessed her crime and gave back the clothing of her husband, thus allowing the latter to find again his human form.

Ireland has also a rich folklore relating to the werewolves perhaps because the wolves abounded there a very long time, whereas they had been eradicated from England. At one time, the island was even called "wolf land" and people created, by crossing of races, the formidable greyhound of Ireland; a kind of wolfhound "bigger of bone and limb than a colt " according to the expression of a writer of the 16th century.

In his book entitled *Topographia Hiberniae* (Topography of Ireland. Distinction 2 chapter 19), the monk Gerald of Wales reported to us the mishap of a priest and a lad who had left Ulster in order to go in the County Meath.

One night, they stopped in an unknown forest and kindled a fire beneath a large tree. Suddenly a wolf emerges which declared to them: "Rest secure, and do not be afraid." He presented himself as a man having formerly lived with his wife in the former county of Ossory, in the South-west of Leinster. For an unknown reason, this kingdom had been struck by a curse: every seven years, a couple of villagers was condemned to change themselves into wolves. If the husbands survived this ordeal, they were allowed to find again their human form at the end of the seventh year and to return on their premises. Another couple was to then take their place. He and his wife had achieved a portion of the punishment, but his wife had fallen sick and could die from one moment to another. Having finished his account, the wolf turned to the priest and says to him: "I beseech you, inspired by divine charity, to give her the consolations of your priestly office." He wished that his wife receives the last rite in order to have a Christian end.

The priest accepted. He followed the wolf in deep undergrowth where they discovered the she-wolf hidden in a hollow tree trunk. The animal poured forth "human sighs." Although disposed to achieve the ultimate rite the priest hesitated to offer the consecrated wafer.

The wolf, tearing off with his claws, the skin covering the head of his partner, revealed her face of an old woman. When the priest, finally convinced, had completed his prayers, the wolf took them back to their bivouac. And, the next morning, he led them out of the wood.

The story does not say what the fate of the animals was thereafter. But, to attest the veracity of his account, Gerald of Wales claimed that the incident had been reported to Rome to collect there the opinion of the pope himself.

It is impossible to distinguish the fancy from the reality in such stories, but what is sure, it is that the various fictionalized accounts utilizing werewolves flourished a long time in the Old World; striking the imagination of a vast audience largely disposed to believe the changes man animal.

In spite of the famous episode of the pythoness of Endor, who made appear the ghost of Samuel, or the devil changed in Samuel, before Saul (1st Book of Samuel, chapter XXVIII - verses 3 to 20); the Bible providing no indication in this respect, the theologians of the Church were in the obligation to find a rational explanation. Difficult task!

By admitting that Satan could indeed change the human beings into wolves, they contradicted categorically one of the essential doctrines of the Christian religion, namely that only God has the capacity of creation. But, if the wizards and the demons were unable to create a wolf, at least could they project their soul/mind in the body of this animal? There still, the doctrines answered no. Such a change would have formed a distortion of the divine reality, involving that the metamorphosed individual, man or demon, had capacities being equivalent to those of God.

The Grenier's case in 1603 contributed to modifying the attitude of the judges with regard to the werewolves. The person in charge of the board of inquiry which studied the circumstances of his crimes considered him unable to express a rational thought.

"The change into a wolf happened only in the disorganized brain of the lunatic, the lawyer wrote. Consequently, it was not a punishable crime."

That the courts had, or not, a revelation, the judges consequently started nevertheless to consider the cases of werewolves with a kind of toleration. Many explanations were put forward over centuries. According to certain people, the demon was able to disturb imagination to the point "that his victim truly believes to be himself changed into and to have wandered in the countryside by killing men and animals."

In its work of 1621, entitled *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Robert Burton also regards lycanthropy as a form of insanity.

Supposing that these assumptions were well founded, they remained without effect. The frightened population preferred the explanations of the magic type. If the wolves were a natural scourge, comparable with the plague or the famine, the werewolves were to be regarded as supernatural demonstrations of the evil.

Closer to us in the time the issue of October 1977 of the *American Journal of Psychiatry* reports the history of a forty-nine-year-old woman who believed herself to be a wolf.

Being based on these symptoms, her doctors could trace the psychological profile of the standard lycanthrope, hardly different from the conclusions of certain doctors and enlightened thinkers of yesteryear. They consider that the lycanthrope suffers (1) of schizophrenia, (2) of an organic cerebral syndrome accompanied by psychosis, (3) of a psychotic depressive reaction, (4) of a hysterical neurosis of dissociative type, (5) of a maniac-depressive psychosis and (6) of psychomotor epilepsy. Although such symptoms seem to apply to the many cases of lycanthropy recorded over years, they do not explain everything. The obsessing image of the werewolf, with red eyes, scarlet nails, hairy body and rough skin, remains unexplained. Perhaps is this a distant recollection of the legends concerning the elite warriors in prey to the warlike furies that the Celts compared to wolves (see the tribe name of Volcae).

It is not excluded either that certain "werewolves" were the tragic victims of the rage. This virus, conveyed by the dogs, the wolves and other mammals, including the bats in America, transmits a disease which undermines the central nervous system. It creates in the human being an uncontrollable excitation and causes painful contractions of the muscles in the throat, which prevent the patient from drinking. In the absence of medical intervention, death generally occurs from three to five days after the appearance of the first symptoms.

Another disease can be confused with the lycanthropy. It is the porphyria (nothing to do with Porphyry of Tyre of course), rare genetic disorder that leads to a pigment deficiency in the red blood cells. At the time of the colloquium organized in 1985, by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, David Dolphin underlined the coincidence of the symptoms of the porphyria with many characteristics described in the lycanthropes. He quoted particularly a strong photosensitivity, which causes great pains in the patients confronted with the daylight and force them to live in an almost darkness. Moreover, as the disease develops, the appearance of the victim becomes increasingly morbid. His skin is faded and a form of hypertrichosis (unusual development of the hairiness on the face and the body) can appear. The patient tends towards developing cutaneous lesions and ulcerations which end up in attacking the cartilage and the bones, causing a progressive deterioration of the nose, ears, eyelids and fingers. The teeth as well as the nails and the adjacent flesh can take a reddish or ochre color because of the porphyrin deposit, a component of the blood hemoglobin. This disease is often accompanied by mental disorders, by various forms of hysteria or of delirium, via some maniac-depressive psychoses. This illness being congenital, the cases of lycanthropy can have proliferated in precise places. At a time when medicine was only in its infancy, the unlucky victim of this disease could therefore easily become an outcast and a scapegoat, his ill being allocated to the intervention of demonic forces.

We will never know the religion, or rather the religions, of the men of the postglacial era.

Of the magic rites generally related to hunting that we guess complex, nothing remains any more! Only chains of symbols on the rocks and the walls, only evidences with the rare documents resulting from excavations, of the shamanist techniques and mythologies, expression strictly speaking of the Siberian and Central-Asia religious phenomenon, inherited from Prehistory. From the Lapps to Tchuktches of Eastern Siberia, Yakuts or Tunguses beyond the Arctic circle, with Buryats of the lake Baikal and the Mongols. Evidence was found, showing the practice of shamanism at least as of the Paleolithic era. Many caves were the place of ritual ceremonies, and their walls can be decorated with semi-human, semi-animal, figures, like the famous "wizard" of the cave of the Three-Brothers, in the Ariège. The unceasingly repeated elk or still the reindeer and the stag, water birds and sea mammals, horse, bear, fish, wild boar and the dog, with dotted contours; unceasingly changing according to the more or less oblique rays of the rising sun, of the sun at its zenith and finally of the setting sun; carry on the memory of a multitude of peoples of the vastness of the Eurasian continent, having all an intimate communion with the universe or bits sensed differently.

The shamanism is not a religion: it is a practice, a technique, which makes possible a "spiritual flight" of an oneiric nature. Often using hypnotic or hallucinogens, the shaman leaves his body and meets spiritual entities of totemic nature. In the event of game shortage, the shaman falls into a trance, and his soul/mind (anaon), released from its body, leaves to the meeting with the guardian soul/mind of animals. A melting of totemic type – a man being able to place himself under the specific protection of such or such animal-shaped soul/mind and to support favored relations with this soul/mind - can take place.

These out of body experiences, of altered state of consciousness and of perception of realities different are not without reminding of the NDE accounts; told by the people who, declared clinically dead, were resuscitated, and report what they saw, at death's door.

So that his soul/mind (anaon) can leave its body and join the ethereal world of the protective soul/minds he will solicit, the shaman takes hallucinogenic psychoactive drugs. A very ancient practice. In Latin America, the followers of the neo-shamanism resort also readily to the psycho-active plants. The members of the Santo Daime, a sect from Brazil, take all some ayahuasca, a beverage reserved to the shamans.

These practices are based on the idea that the world is a construction of the mind. It would be enough to hustle a little our mental categories to see it differently, with more acuteness, and to discover paranormal faculties.

The chemists attribute the power of the ayahuasca of the shamans to synergetic association between the liana *Banisteriopsis caapi* and the leaves of the shrub *Psychotria viridis*. The alcaloids present in the decoction increase the serotonin level, the hormone of happiness. The ethnologists speak readily about a entheogenic effect (feeling of the divine in oneself) or empathogenic effect (which makes it possible to put oneself in the other person's shoes) rather than hallucinogenic. It is inappropriate to speak about hallucinations, since the *aislingi* or visions of the shamans, far from being the productions of their imagination, are in their eyes much more real than the perceptions of the ordinary world.

Let us repeat it once again! Contrary to what our Muslim friends think about certain Jews changed into apes or pigs, there is in such cases no real change of a human being into an animal, except as regards certain details or certain behaviors (spiky hairs, dilated pupils...)

The only thing which can change, but always in a very temporary , even transitory, way, it is the psyche or the mindset of the individual and some of his senses, which can be augmented up to equalize those of animals. You can have eagle eyes, to have a keener hearing, etc. As Charcot had already noticed in his time, the strength of an epileptic person can, for example, being multiplied by ten in the event of crisis.

But all this in no case makes man an animal, nor even a man in the body of an animal.

On the other hand, and there, we agree with Porphyry (see his analysis of the resurrection of the body and of the end of the world); whatever the means used (prayers, ad hoc training or various drugs) never a man will be able, by his own means, to fly in the airs like a bird.

CELSUS.

Celsus lived in the second century, in the reign of the Antonine dynasty. He is therefore former to Porphyry and Julian. He is the author of a work, the Logos Alèthès, True Discourse or True Word, in which he consigned his argumentation on the Christianity of his time. The work was not handed down to us, but he is partly known by a refutation ascribed to Origen, the Contra Celsum - Against Celsus -. We know a little the biography of Porphyry, and more still that of Julian; Celsus, on the other hand, is practically unknown for us. Of the person and life of Celsus, we know only what he entrusts himself to us in his work, and therefore through what reports to us, with many uncertainties, his adversary Origen. The research carried out by Schwartz confirms that the author of the True Word is well the Celsus become a friend of Lucian of Samosata and he seems in substance to have shared the skepticism of the great laughter from Samosata.

Celsus appears, according to Lucian (in his treatise about Alexander of Abonoteichus § 5) as being also the author of a treatise against the magicians - kata magon -; and the True Discourse seems to be a development, centered on the Christology, of this "Against the magicians"; a work as beautiful as useful made for inspiring wisdom and prudence to all those who will read it.

Celsus believes in a higher God-or-demon, too high above the World to deal himself with it in detail, and who delegates this task to subordinate beings: demons, genies, pagan gods, angels, according to the religions. It is not therefore, strictly speaking, a free thinker or an atheist. He deserves nevertheless to arouse our interest.

He feels the deepest contempt with regard to the Eastern worships, denounces those of them who believe without reason in the begging priests of Cybele and the soothsayers, in the excessively pious people of Mithra and Sabazios, in all that we can meet, apparitions of Hecate or of other demons of the same kind...

His methodical criticism, in the name of the reason, of the incipient Christianity, is the first written reaction of the pagan world facing this new religion.

His main concern is the safety of the country. He thinks, with clearness, that a triumph of Christianity would involve a fall of patriotism [he would have said perhaps the same thing about Islam if he had lived in our time].

The "true word" is an analysis without sectarianism, but developed with rigor, honesty and sincerity. Celsus highlights the contradictions of the "new religion" that the free thinkers will take over starting from the 16th century. He accuses Christians to be some "stateless persons" while at the same time trying to show them that they can, without betraying their faith, live in peace with the Roman Empire, if they fulfill their duties of a citizen.

Celsus reproaches the Christians for professing a new faith based on no rational basis. He knows passages of the Bible and perhaps uses a former anti-Christian Jewish work.

The work of Celsus would be for us, if it had been able to escape the stakes of the Inquisition, an incomparable information source. It is beyond doubt that Celsus knew better than any other writer the Christianity and the books which were used as a basis for it, particularly those of the Gnostic Christian current. Origen, in spite of his remarkable instruction, is astonished to have still so many things to learn from him.

The work therefore disappeared, but seventy years later, between 246 and 249, Origen wrote of it a refutation in eight books entitled Contra Celsum, quoting abundantly the work and answering each argument. To build his argumentation, Origen, indeed, reproduced most of the text by Celsus (estimated at 70% in verbatim plus 20% in substance or idea). A reconstruction of more than three quarters of the whole of the work therefore could be realized.

PRELIMINARY WARNING.

What Celsus says in this book is not easy to understand, for several reasons.

The first is that Origen does not distribute nor does publish the book of Celsus but analyzes it or comments on it, and that it is therefore not always easy to distinguish the text by Celsus from of its comment by Origen. Who besides was not interested in making luminous and attractive the thought of Celsus.

The second one is that they are ways of thinking or to see the world which are no longer ours. We are no longer in the same civilizations. Celsus indeed seems to distinguish 2 levels of divinity. The highest being, unutterable, in a way a deus otiosus very above the business of this world and one or more

lower divinities, genies spirits or demons, to whom he delegated its creation power, responsible for the business of this world. The translation of Origen does not fix the things.

The third one is that several successive translations were necessary so that this text arrives to us.

From the Greek to our language via the Latin tongue.

To Translate the Greek word "daimon" by "demon" for example was perhaps not a good idea. The word daimon in Greek language indeed had a meaning completely different from that which we give to it today after 2000 years of Judeo-Christianity. The daimon at the beginning is only a kind of lower god or of genie, sometimes hostile to man, but not always.

The demon of Socrates was his intuition and his premonition. "Something which takes you, carries you away and forces you" to leave a place where will be held a fight, a brawl, a demonstration, an avalanche or a disaster just after your departure. The guardian angel or the good fairy are the religious forms of it. The works about the shamanic trance, about the psychedelic experiments related to the taking of LSD, about hypnosis or meditation, suggests introducing a hierarchical order of the state of consciousness. The daimôn or intuition would be one of them.

PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY.

The daimon of Socrates had so great a reputation, that Apuleius, the author of the "Golden Ass," who was himself a magician of good repute, says in his "Treatise on the Genius of Socrates," that a man must be without religion who denies it. You see that Apuleius reasons precisely like brothers Garasse and Bertier: "You do not believe that which I believe; you are therefore without religion." And the Jansenists have said as much of brother Bertier, as well as of all the world except themselves. "These demons," says the very religious and filthy Apuleius, "are intermediate powers between ether and our lower region. They live in our atmosphere, and bear our prayers and merits to the gods. They treat of succors and benefits, as interpreters and ambassadors. Plato says, that it is by their ministry that revelations, presages, and the miracles of magicians, are effected."

Cæterum sunt quædam divinæ mediæ potestates....Per hos eosdem, ut Plato in symposio autumat, cuncta denuntiata; et majorum varia miracula, omnesque præsagium species reguntur."(Apuleius. De deo Socratis).

This is powerful reasoning!

As I have never seen any genii, demons, peris, or hobgoblins, whether beneficent or mischievous, I cannot speak of them from knowledge. I only relate what has been said by people who have seen them.

Conclusion. There is no culture which does not have spirits, angels, archons, archangels, genies, demons, demiurges, fravashis, jinns, cherubs, seraphs, æons, elves, goblins, muses nor fairies. The only question is to know if we make them external beings belonging to the official institution (the angels of the celestial Hierarchy, for the Ecclesia from where the Church); or if they are repelled , by exclusion, in the Gehenna of the Hell or of the Hells.

In short, the translation by "genie" or "spirit" would have been better perhaps. Whence our use sometimes in this essay of the words "genie" or "spirit" to convey the Greek "daïmon."

Therefore let us not forget THAT WHAT FOLLOWS IS NOT THE GENUINE WORK BY CELSUS BUT WHAT WE CAN GUESS FROM IT ACCORDING TO THE REFUTATION THAT ORIGEN MADE OF IT WITHOUT FEAR OF BEING CONTRADICTED BY THE LATTER AND WITH GOOD REASON.

Its starting point is primarily made of the remarks by Origen but....

- Worked again from the translation point of view.

- Presented in a different order which seemed more judicious to us.

LOGOS ALETHES OR TRUE WORD.

CELSUS AND JUDAISM.

There is an authoritative account of the very beginning of the world, respecting which there is a constant agreement among all the most learned nations, and cities, and men. The world is uncreated and incorruptible, and only the things on earth underwent deluges and conflagrations, but all these cataclysms did not happen at the same time.

Moses having learned the doctrine which is to be found existing among wise nations and educated men, obtained the reputation of being divinely inspired. These herdsmen and shepherds concluded that there was but one God, named either the Highest, or Adonai, or the Heavenly, or Sabaoth, or called by some other of those names which they delight to give him in this world and they knew nothing beyond that.

But it makes no difference whether the God who is over all things be called by the name of Zeus, which is usual among the Greeks, or by that, e.g., which is in use among the Indians or Egyptians.....

Moses and the prophets, who have left to them these books, not knowing at all what the nature of the world, and of man, is, have woven together a web of sheer nonsense. Their cosmogony is extremely childish. By far their most silly idea is the distribution of the creation of the world over several days, before even days existed: for, as the heaven was not yet created, nor the foundation of the earth yet laid, and nor the sun yet existing, how could there be days?

Moreover, taking and looking at these things, would it not be absurd in the first and greatest God to issue the command: Let this first thing come into existence, and this second thing, and this third; and after accomplishing so much on the first day, to do so much more again on the second, and third, and fourth, and fifth, and sixth? After this, of course, he is weary, like a very bad workman, who stands in need of rest!

But it is not in keeping with the fitness of things that the great God should feel fatigue, or work with his hands, or give forth commands.

He has neither mouth nor voice.

He possesses nothing else of which we have any knowledge.

Neither did he make man in his image; for the great God is not such an one, nor like any other species of tangible creature.

The great God partakes of no form or color nor does he even partake of "motion."

He is beyond words.

He cannot be expressed by name.

He has undergone no suffering that can be conveyed by words because Divinity is beyond all suffering.

ORIGEN'S COMMENTARY.

Producing from history other than that of the divine record, those passages which bear upon the claims to great antiquity put forth by many nations, as the Athenians, and Egyptians, and Arcadians, and Phrygians, who assert that certain individuals have existed among them who sprang from the earth, and who each adduce proofs of these assertions, Celsus says:

" Their narrative of the creation of man is exceedingly silly. The Jews, then, leading a groveling life in some corner of Palestine, and being a wholly uneducated people, who had never heard that these matters had been committed to verse long ago by Hesiod and innumerable other inspired men, wove some most incredible and insipid stories, viz., that a first man was formed by the hands of the great God, and that the great God had breathed into him the breath of life, and that a woman was taken from his side, that the great God issued certain commands to them, but that a serpent opposed these, and gained a victory over the commandments of God; thus relating certain old wives' fables, and most impiously representing the great God as a weak being at the very beginning (of things), unable to convince even a single human being whom he himself had formed.

Counter-Lay No. 3.

It goes without saying that we cannot support this criticism of Judaism which is against the anti-racist laws passed by our country but Celsus was apparently not captivated by the philosophical profundity of the biblical writings nor by the personality of Moses (who was all except a great democrat) and he

announced it since it was still possible to say it in his time. After Constantine it will be no longer possible.

Celsus continues while making fun with the very idea that the Power of the universal God can be mingled in things here below as in things alien to itself.

As if certain devices of sabotage directed against his will, as if they came from a creator different of the great God, and were tolerated by the supreme Divinity, need to be completely disabled.

Well, the great God, after giving his power to the creator, demands it back again ? What god gives anything with the intention of demanding it back? For it is the mark of a needy person to demand back (what he has given), whereas the great God stands in need of nothing.

Why, when he delegated (his power), was he ignorant that he entrusted it to an evil being?

Why does he pass without notice a snake who was counter-working his purposes?

Why does he send secretly, in order to destroy the works of the creator? Why does this snake secretly employ force, and seduction, and deceit?

Why does he allure those who [as you assert], have been condemned by their creator, and carry them away like a slave dealer?

Why does this snake teach them to steal when their Lord is not present? To flee from their father?

Why does he claim them for himself against the father's will?

Why does he profess to be the father of strange children?

Admirable, indeed, is the god who desires to adopt those sinners who are condemned (by another god), some wretched, and, as themselves say, some offscourings (of the society) and who is unable to recapture then punish his messenger [the snake], who escaped from him!

If these are his works, how is it that the great God created evil? And how is it that he cannot persuade (men)? And how is it that he repents on account of their ingratitude and wickedness? He finds fault, moreover, in those he made, and hates, and threatens, and destroys his own offspring?

But if he does not destroy his own offspring, whither could he delocate them because it is himself who created this world?

Counter-lay No. 4.

In short, Celsus emphasizes there the silly anthropomorphism of the Judeo-Muslim-Christian people, anthropomorphism they do not stop yet to denounce in others. How do you say already ? Yes: to make fun with the straw that someone has in the eye, while yourself it is a beam that is in yours.

In what follows, Celsus will attack once again the Christians of the Gnostic type (we sometimes feel he knows only them) who distinguish three very different entities.

The first, that these Christians call the higher god, the sovereign god, and who, according to them, is well too above all this to be worried with that.

The second that they call the creator of this World, the worker of the World, the demiurge, is God in the sense through which our Judeo-Muslim-Christians fellows usually understand it. The god-or-demon of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, creator of the heaven and of the earth, of the Man, in short God, goddamn it!

The third entity to which these Christians (of the Gnostic tendency) allude is the famous tempting snake of the Jewish Bible; a sworn enemy of the creating demiurge God , sabotaging his work secretly, but also only sincere friend of Mankind, according to them.

They speak then of a flood, of a monstrous ark, having within it all animals, and of a dove and a crow as messengers, falsifying and recklessly altering the story of Deucalion; not expecting, I suppose, that these things would come to light, but imagining that they were inventing stories merely for young children.

Altogether absurd is the account of the begetting of the sons and heirs....

Editor's note. From the embarrassed long presentation, which follows, of the argumentation of Celsus, by Origen, we can deduce and restore substantially the following speech.

Of this kind are all their other accounts: conspiracies of the brothers, crafty procedure of mothers; God presenting his sons with asses, and sheep, and camels and the Righteous persons with wells; then still some brotherly competitions, the horrible revenge of two brothers against those of Sichem, the adventure of Lot and his daughters worse than the crimes of Thyestes; the selling brothers, the sold

brother, the deceived father, the dreams of the chief baker and of the chief cupbearer of the monarch and those of Pharaoh himself explained by Joseph, the release and the marvelous fortune of this one; the brothers pushed by the famine into Egypt, the recognition scene, the transportation of the body of the father into the tomb; and, by Joseph, the illustrious and divine nation of the Jews, after growing up in Egypt to be a multitude of people, was then commanded to sojourn somewhere beyond the limits of the kingdom, and to pasture their flocks in districts of no repute.

The Jews therefore are only fugitives from Egypt, who never performed anything worthy of note, and never were held in any reputation or account because no remarkable event in their history is found recorded by the Greeks.

Rather do I wish to show that Nature teaches this: namely that the great God made nothing that is mortal, and that his works, whatever they are, are immortal, but theirs mortal. And the soul is the work of the great God, while the nature of the body is different. And in this respect there is no difference between the body of a bat, or of a worm, or of a frog, and that of a man; for the matter is the same, and their corruptible part is alike. A common nature pervades all the previously mentioned bodies, and one which goes and returns the same amid recurring changes.

No product of matter is immortal. On this point these remarks are sufficient; and if anyone is capable of hearing and examining further, he will come to know (the truth).

Neither have tangible things been given to man (by the great God), but each individual thing comes into existence and perishes for the sake of the good running of the whole passing, agreeably to the change which I have already mentioned, from one state to another.

There will neither be more nor less good and evil among mortals. There neither were formerly, nor are there now, nor will there be again, more or fewer evil in the world (than have always been). For the nature of all things is one and the same, and the generation of evil is always the same.

It is not easy, for one who is not a philosopher to ascertain the origin of evil, though it is sufficient for the multitude to say that it does not proceed from the great God, but cleaves to matter, and has its abode among mortal things; while the course of mortal things being the same from beginning to end, the same things must always, agreeably to the appointed cycles, recur in the past, present, and future.

Although a thing may seem to you to be evil, it is by no means certain that it is so; for you do not know what is of advantage to yourself, or to another, or to the whole world.

Therefore God does not need to amend his work afresh. And it is not as a man who has imperfectly designed some piece of workmanship, or executed it unskilfully, that God improves the world, in cleaning it by a flood or by a conflagration.

Counter-lay No. 5.

Then Celsus will criticize the Judeo-Islamic-Christian design as what the universe was created only for man (anthropocentrism).

But that I may speak not of the Jews alone (for that is not my object), but of the whole of nature, as I promised, I will bring out more clearly what has been already stated: All things came into existence not more for the sake of man than of the irrational animals.

ORIGEN'S COMMENTARY.

Celsus and those who think as him therefore assert that what was created was not created to provide the needs of the rational beings more than those of plants, trees, herbs, or thorns.

Thunders, lightning, and rains are not some manifestations of God.

Even if one were to grant that these were the manifestations of God, these manifestations are brought into existence not more for the support of us who are human beings, than for that of plants, trees, herbs, or thorns.

Although you may say that these things, viz., plants, and trees, and herbs, and thorns, are useful for men, why will you maintain that they grow for the use of men rather than for that of the most savage of irrational animals?

We indeed by labor and suffering earn a scanty and toilsome subsistence, while all things are produced for them without their sowing and plowing.

And if you will quote Euripides's saying that "The Sun and Night are slaves to mortals" why should they be so in a greater degree to us than to ants and flies? For the night is created, in order that they may rest, and the day that they may see and resume their work.

If one were to call us the lords of the animal creation because we hunt the other animals and live upon their flesh, we would answer: "Why were not we rather created on their account, since they hunt and devour us? Nay, we require nets and weapons, and the assistance of many persons, along with dogs, when engaged in the chase; while they are immediately and spontaneously provided by nature with weapons which easily bring us under their power. In this way God rather subjected men to wild beasts than the contrary.

With respect to your assertion, that God gave us the power to capture wild beasts, and to make our own use of them, we would say that, in all probability, before cities were built, and arts invented, and societies such as now exist were formed, or weapons and nets employed, men were generally caught and devoured by wild beasts, while wild beasts were very seldom captured by men.

If men appear to be superior to irrational animals on this account that they have built cities, and make use of a political constitution, and various forms of government, or sovereignties, this is to say nothing to the purpose, for ants and bees do the same. Bees, indeed, have a queen, who has followers and workers; and there occur among them wars and victories, slaughtering of the vanquished, cities and suburbs, a succession of labors, and judgments passed upon the idle and the wicked; for the drones are driven away and killed.

The ants set apart in a place by themselves those grains which sprout forth that they may not swell into bud, but may continue throughout the year as their food. When ants die, the survivors set apart a special place (for their interment), and that their ancestral sepulcher such a place becomes.

When they meet one another they enter into communication, for which reason they never mistake their way; consequently they possess a full endowment of reason, and some common ideas on certain general subjects, as well as a voice by which they express themselves regarding accidental things.

Counter-Lay No. 6.

Celsus shares obviously the prejudices of his time in connection with the ants and their form of communication. What removes nothing from his criticism of the silly anthropomorphism of the Judeo-Muslim-Christians.

Now, if one were to look down from heaven upon earth, in what respect would our actions appear to differ from those of ants and bees?

In certain individuals among the irrational creation there exist magic powers.

But if, however, men entertain lofty notions because of their possessing the power of sorcery, yet even in that respect are serpents and eagles their superiors; for they are acquainted with many prophylactics against diseases, and also with the virtues of certain stones which help to preserve their young. If men, however, fall in with these, they think that they have gained a wonderful possession.

If, because man has been able to grasp the idea of God, he is deemed superior to the other animals, let those who hold this opinion know that this capacity will be claimed by many of the other animals; and with good reason: for what would anyone maintain to be more divine than the power of foreknowing and predicting events? Men accordingly acquire the art from the other animals, and especially from birds. And those who listen to the indications furnished by them become possessed of the gift of prophecy. If, then, birds, and the other omen animals, which are enabled by the gift of God to foreknow events, instruct us by means of signs, so much the nearer do they seem to be to the society of God, and to be endowed with greater wisdom on His behalf, and to be more beloved by Him. The more observant of men, moreover, say that the animals hold meetings which are more sacred than our assemblies, and that they know what is said at these meetings. They show that in reality they possess this knowledge, when, having previously stated that the birds have declared their intention of

departing to some particular place, and of doing this thing or the other, the truth of their assertions is established by the departure of the birds to the place in question, and by their doing what was foretold. Moreover no race of animals appears to be more observant of oaths than the elephants are, or to show greater devotion to divine things; and this, I presume, solely because they have some knowledge of God.

Counter -Lay No. 7.

Celsus evokes there certain animal faculties: the seasonal migrations, the capacity to feel the storms coming, the winter which arrives, etc. It looks like Hitchcock and his famous movie on the birds! It is true that it was a very widespread belief in his time. We are unaware, on the other hand, to what he alludes when he speaks about the elephants.

All things, accordingly, were not made particularly for man, any more than they were made for lions, or eagles, or dolphins, but that this world, as being God's work, might be perfect and entire in all respects. For this reason all things have been adjusted, not with reference to each other, but with regard to their bearing upon the whole. God takes care of the whole, and his providence will never forsake it. It does not become worse; nor does this great God after a time bring it back to himself; nor is he angry on account of men any more than on account of apes or flies; nor does he threaten these beings, each one of which has received its appointed lot in its proper place.

Immediately after this, Celsus, assailing the contents of the first book of Moses, which is entitled "Genesis," asserts that the Jews endeavored to derive their origin from the first known race of jugglers and deceivers, appealing to the testimony of dark and ambiguous words, whose meaning was veiled in obscurity, and which they misinterpreted in their way to the unlearned and ignorant, but that such assertions had never been called in question during the long preceding period, although at the present time the Jews dispute about them with certain others.

The second point relating to the Jews which is fitted to excite wonder is that they worship the heaven and the angels who dwell therein, and yet pass by and neglect its most venerable and powerful parts, as the sun, the moon, and the other heavenly bodies, both fixed stars and planets, as if it were possible that "the whole" could be God, and yet its parts not divine; or (as if it were reasonable) that they treat with the greatest respect those who are said to appear to such as are in darkness somewhere, blinded by some crooked sorcery, or dreaming dreams through the influence of shadowy specters, while those who prophesy so clearly and strikingly to all men, by means of whom rain, and heat, and clouds, and thunder (to which they offer worship), and lightning, and fruits, and all kinds of products, are brought about,-by means of whom the great God is revealed to them-the most prominent heralds among those beings that are above-those that are truly heavenly angels-are to be regarded as of no account!

As the Jews, then, became a peculiar people, and enacted laws in keeping with the customs of their country, and maintain them up to the present time, and observe a mode of worship which, whatever be its nature, is yet derived from their fathers, they act in these respects like other men, because each nation retains its ancestral customs carefully, whatever they are, if they happen to be well established among them. And such an arrangement appears to be advantageous, not only because it has occurred to the mind of other nations to decide some matters differently, but also because it is a duty to protect what has been established for the public advantage; and also because, in all probability, the various quarters of the Earth were from the beginning allotted to different superintending spirits, were thus subjected to various governments. In this manner the administration of the world is carried on. And whatever is done among each nation in this way would be rightly done, wherever it was agreeable to the wishes (of the superintending powers), while it would be an act of impiety to get rid of the institutions established from the beginning in the various places in the world.

We might adduce Herodotus as a witness on this point, for he expresses himself as follows: "For the people of the cities Mares and Apis, who inhabit those parts of Egypt that are adjacent to Libya, and who look upon themselves as Libyans, and not as Egyptians, finding their sacrificial worship oppressive, and wishing not to be excluded from the use of cows' flesh, sent to the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, saying that there was no relationship between them and the Egyptians, that they dwelt outside the Delta, that there was no community of sentiment between them and the Egyptians, and

that they wished therefore to be allowed to partake of all this food. But the god would not allow them to do as they desired, saying that that country was a part of Egypt, which was watered by the inundation of the Nile, and that those were Egyptians who dwell to the south of the city of Elephantine, and drink of the River Nile.”

Such is the narrative of Herodotus. But, continues Celsus, Ammon in divine things would not make a worse ambassador than the angels of the Jews, so that there is nothing wrong in each nation observing its established method of worship. Of a truth, we find very great differences of assessment prevailing among the nations, and yet each seems to deem its own by far the best. Those inhabitants of Ethiopia who dwell in Meroe worship Jupiter and Bacchus alone; the Arabians, Urania and Bacchus only; all the Egyptians, Osiris and Isis; the Saïtes, Minerva; while the Naucratices have recently classed Serapis among their deities, and the rest according to their respective laws. Some abstain from the meat of sheep, and others from that of crocodiles; others, again, from that of cows, while they regard swine's meat with loathing. The Scythians regard it as a noble act to banquet upon human beings. Among the Indians, too, there are some who deem themselves discharging a holy duty in eating their fathers, this is mentioned in a certain passage by Herodotus. For the sake of credibility, I shall quote his very words:”For if any one were to make this proposal to all men, viz., to select out of all existing laws the best, each would choose, after examination, those of his own country. Men each indeed consider their own laws much the best, and therefore it is not likely than any other than a madman would make these things a subject of ridicule.

But that such are the conclusions of all men regarding the laws, may be determined by many other means, and especially by the following anecdote. Darius, during his reign, having summoned before him those Greeks who happened to be present at the time, inquired of them for how much they would be willing to eat their deceased fathers? Their answer was that for no consideration would they do such a thing. After this, Darius summoned those Indians who are called Callatians who are in the habit of eating their dead parents, and asked of them in the presence of these Greeks, who learned what passed through an interpreter, for what amount of money they would undertake to burn their deceased fathers with fire on a pyre? On which they raised a loud shout, and bade the monarch say no more. Such is the way, then, in which these questions are regarded. And Pindar appears to me to be right in saying that “custom” is the king of all things.

If, then, in these respects the Jews were carefully to preserve their own law, they are not to be blamed for so doing, but those persons rather who have forsaken their own usages, and adopted those of the Jews. And if they pride themselves on it, as being possessed of superior wisdom, and keep aloof from intercourse with others, as not being equally pure with themselves. We have heard that their doctrine concerning heaven is not peculiar to them, but, to pass by all others, is one which has long ago been received by the Persians, as Herodotus somewhere mentions. “For they have a custom,” he says, ‘of going up to the tops of the mountains, and of offering sacrifices to Jupiter, but giving the name of Jupiter to the whole circle of the heavens.”

And I think that it makes no difference whether you call the highest being Zeus, or Zen, or Adonai, or Sabaoth, or Ammon like the Egyptians, or Pappaeus like the Scythians.

Nor would the Jews be deemed at all holier than others in this respect, that they observe the rite of circumcision, for this was done by the Egyptians and Colchians before them; nor because they abstain from swine's meat, for the Egyptians practiced abstinence not only from it, but also from the flesh of goats, and sheep, and oxen, and fishes as well; while Pythagoras and his disciples do not eat beans, nor anything that contains life.

It is not probable, however, that they enjoy the favor of the great God, or are loved by him differently from others, or that angels were sent from heaven to them alone, as if they had allotted to them some “land of the blessed” for we see both themselves and the country of which they were deemed worthy.

Counter-Lay No. 8.

It is to be an allusion to the events occurring then in Palestine. The bloody suppression of the Zealot rebellions by the Romans, the destruction of Jerusalem, etc.

Let this whole band, then, take its departure, after paying the penalty of its vaunting....Not having the knowledge of the great God, but being led away and deceived by the artifices of Moses, or having become his pupil to no good end.

CELSUS AND CHRISTIANITY.

Let the second party come forward [the Christians]. I shall ask them whence they come, and whom they regard as the originator of their ancestral customs. They will reply, "No one!" because they spring from the same source as the Jews themselves, and derive their instructions and superintendence from no other quarter in the world, notwithstanding they have revolted from them.

Those Christians who have made progress in their studies say that they are possessed of greater knowledge than the Jews. They deserve credit for their ability in discovering true doctrines but the Greeks are more skillful than any others in judging, establishing, and reducing to practice the discoveries of barbarous nations. Because Judaism, upon which Christianity depends, is barbarous in its origin.

The Christians entered into secret associations with each other contrary to law. It is by the names of certain spirits, and by the use of incantations, that the Christians appear to be possessed of miraculous power.

They teach and practice their favorite doctrines in secret, and they do this to some purpose, seeing they escape the penalty of death.

Their agapes have their origin in the common danger, and are more binding than any oaths.

The dangers are comparable with those which were encountered by such men as Socrates for the sake of philosophy but some Christians do not even wish to give or to receive a reason for what they believe and use such expressions as "Do not ask questions: just believe," and "Your faith will save you." Celsus also writes that some Christians say: "The wisdom in the world is evil, and foolishness a good thing."

Counter-lay No. 9.

Perhaps an allusion to some remarks by St. Paul.

COMMENTARY BY ORIGEN.

Celsus urges to follow reason and a rational behavior in accepting doctrines because anyone who believes people without so doing is certain to be deceived. He compares those who believe without rational thought to the begging priests of Cybele and soothsayers and to the worshippers of Mithra and Sabazius and whatever else one may meet such as apparitions of Hecate or some other spirits.

For just as among them scoundrels frequently take advantage of the lack of education of gullible people and lead them wherever they wish so also this happens among the Christians.

If they were willing to answer my questions (which I do not put as one who is trying to understand their beliefs, for I know them all), all would be well. But if they will not consent but say, as they usually do: "Do not ask questions," and so on, then it will be necessary to teach them the nature of the doctrines which they affirm, and the source from which they come.

Is it not ridiculous to suppose that, whereas a mere mortal, who became angry with the Jews, slew them all from the youth upwards, and burned their city (so powerless were they to resist him), the Almighty God, as they say, being angry, and indignant, and uttering threats, should (instead of punishing them) send his own son, who endured the sufferings we know?

But what certain Christians and (all) Jews maintain, the former that there has already descended, the latter that there will descend, upon the earth, a certain God, or Son of a God, who will make the inhabitants of the earth righteous, is a most shameless assertion, of which the refutation does not need many words.

What would be indeed the meaning of such a descent upon the part of the great God? Would it be in order to learn what goes on among men? But does he not know all things already?

Therefore he does know all things, but does not will make (men) better, nor is it possible for him by means of his divine power to make (men) better.

Here Celsus criticizes the Christian idea that God himself came down to men and that he would leave his abode thus.

"If you were to change a single one, even the least, of things on earth, all things would be overturned and disappear."

Now the great God, being unknown among men, and deeming himself on that account to receive less than his due, would desire to make himself known, and to make trial both of those who believe upon him and of those who do not, a little like those who have recently come into the possession of great riches, and who make a display of their wealth; but thus they testify to an excessive but typically human ambition on the part of the great God.

Nay, not even with the desire to test by his unspeakable and divine power those who do or who do not believe upon him, does the great God himself take up his abode in certain individuals, or send on earth his Christ [Khriston in the Greek text of Origen].

God does not desire to make himself known for his own sake, but because he wishes to bestow upon us the knowledge of himself for the sake of our salvation, in order that those who accept it may become virtuous and be saved, and those who do not accept may be shown to be wicked and be punished accordingly.

After so long a period of time, then, did the great God now bethink of making men live righteous lives, but neglect to do so before?

It is perfectly manifest that the Christians babble about the great God in a way that is neither holy nor reverential; in order to excite the astonishment of the ignorant, and that they do not speak the truth regarding the necessity of punishments for those who have sinned.

Certain most impious errors are committed by them, due to their extreme ignorance, in which they have wandered away from the meaning of the divine enigmas, creating an adversary to the great God, the devil, and naming him in the Hebrew tongue, Satan. Now, of a truth, such statements are altogether of mortal invention, and not even proper to be repeated, viz., that the Almighty God, in his desire to confer good upon men, has yet one counterworking him, and is helpless. The Son of God, it follows, is vanquished by the devil; and being punished by him, teaches us also to despise the punishments which he inflicts, telling us beforehand that Satan, after appearing to men as he himself had done, will exhibit great and marvelous works, claiming for himself the glory of God, but that those who wish to keep him at a distance ought to pay no attention to these works of Satan, but to place their faith in him alone.

Such statements are manifestly the words of a deluder, planning and maneuvering against those who are opposed to his views, and who rank themselves against them.

The Ancients allude obscurely to a certain war among the gods, Heraclitus speaking thus of it: "One must say that there is a general war and discord, and that all things are done and administered in strife." Pherecydes, again, who is much older than Heraclitus, relates a myth of one army down upon in hostile array against another, and names Kronos as the leader of the one, and Ophioneus of the other, and recounts their challenges and struggles, and mentions that agreements were entered into between them, to the end that whichever party should fall into the Ocean should be held as vanquished, while those who had expelled and conquered them should have possession of heaven. The mysteries relating to the Titans and Giants also had some such (symbolic) meaning, as well as the Egyptian mysteries of Typhon, and Horus, and Osiris. These are not like the stories which are related of a devil, or demon, or, of a man who is an impostor, who wishes to establish an opposite doctrine.

Homer refers obscurely to matters similar to those mentioned by Heraclitus, and Pherecydes, and the originators of the mysteries about the Titans and Giants, in those words which Hephaestus addresses to Hera as follows: "Once for your cause I felt his matchless might, hurled headlong downward from the ethereal heaven" and in those of Zeus to Hera:--"Has thou forgot, when, bound and fixed on high, from the vast concave of the spangled sky, I hanged you trembling in a golden chain, and all the raging gods opposed in vain? Headlong I hurled them from the Olympian hall, stunned in the whirl, and breathless with the fall."

The words of Zeus addressed to Hera are the words of the great God addressed to matter; and the words addressed to matter in an allegorical way signify that the matter which at the beginning was in a

state of discord (with God), was as taken by him, and bound together and arranged under laws, which may be compared to chains; and that by way of chastising the demons who create disorder in it, he hurls them down headlong to this lower world. These words of Homer were so understood by Pherecydes, when he said that beneath that region is the region of Tartarus, which is guarded by the Harpies and Tempest, daughters of Boreas, and to which Zeus banishes any one of the gods who becomes disorderly. With the same ideas are also closely connected the peplos (tunic) of Athena, which is beheld by all in the procession of the Panathenaea. For it is manifest from this that a motherless and unsullied spirit has the mastery over the daring of the Giants.

The Son of God is punished by the devil, and teaches us that we also, when tortured by him, ought to endure it..... Now these statements are altogether ridiculous. For it is the devil who ought rather to be punished, and those human beings who are calumniated by him ought not to be threatened. I can tell how the very thing occurred, viz., that they should call him "Son of God" Men of ancient times termed this word, as being "born of God," both his child and his son. Both the one and other "Son of God," then, greatly resembled each other.

Counter-Lay No. 10.

Celsus therefore considers that all these myths are images or allegories and that they are not to be taken literally. In any event as the ancient amarcolitanoi had already understood it very well by warning categorically against the abusive use of the writing, letter kills, and memory only gives life.

The belief has spread among them, from a misunderstanding of the accounts of these occurrences, viz. that after lengthened cycles of time, and the returns and conjunctions of planets, conflagrations and floods are wont to happen. Because after the last flood, which took place in the time of Deucalion, the lapse of time, agreeably to the vicissitude of all things, requires a conflagration, this made them give utterance to the erroneous opinion that the great God will descend here below, like a torturer, to set fire to it. In that they can be compared with those who, in the Bacchic mysteries, introduce phantoms and other objects of terror.

Counter-Lay No. 11.

For the high-knower of druidiaction (druidecht) both were to occur simultaneously at the end of the world at the time of its final, but provisional destruction: the fire (the conflagration by flashover about which Celsus speaks) and the water (the flood about which Celsus speaks).

Strabo, Geography IV, 4: "They say that men's souls, and also the universe, are indestructible, although both fire and water will at some time or other prevail over them."

Let us resume the subject from the beginning, with a larger array of proofs. I make no new statement, but repeat what has been long admitted. The great God is good, beautiful, and blessed, and that in the best and most beautiful degree. But if he comes down among men, he must undergo a change, a change from good to evil, from virtue to vice, from happiness to misery, and from best to worst. Who would make choice of such a change? It is the nature of a mortal, indeed, to undergo change and remolding, but of an immortal to remain the same and unaltered. The great God could not therefore accept to change thus.

The great God either really changes, as these assert, into a mortal body, and the impossibility of that has been already declared; Or else he does not undergo a change, but only causes the beholders to imagine so, and thus deceives them, being thus guilty of falsehood. Now deceit and falsehood are nothing but evils, and would only be employed as a medicine, either in the case of sick and lunatic friends, with a view to their cure, or in that of enemies, when one is taking measures to escape the danger they represent. But no sick man or lunatic is a friend of the great God, nor does the great God fear anyone to such a degree as to shun danger by leading him into error.

The Jews say that (human) life, being filled with all wickedness, needed one sent from the great God on earth, that the wicked might be punished, and all things purified in a manner analogous to the first deluge which effected the purification of the earth, according to the accounts both of Jews and Christians.

According to Origen Celsus writes then that the overturning of the tower (of Babel) happened with a similar object , and the destruction by fire, of Sodom and Gomorrah on account of their sins, related by Moses in Genesis, is, moreover, compared by Celsus to the story of Phaethon.

The more modest of Jewish and Christian writers meaning are ashamed of these things and they take refuge in allegory. The allegorical explanations, however, which have been devised are much more shameful and absurd than the fables themselves, inasmuch as they endeavor to unite with marvelous and altogether insensate folly things which cannot at all be made to harmonize. They endeavor nevertheless to give these stories an allegorical signification, although some of them do not admit of this, but on the contrary admit that they are simply exceedingly silly inventions.

The Christians, making certain additional statements to those of the Jews, assert that the Son of God has been already sent on earth on account of the sins of the Jews; but that the Jews hating tortured Jesus, and given him vinegar to drink, have brought upon themselves the divine wrath.

Counter-Lay No. 12.

Let us be clear on this subject. The vinegar was the ordinary wine of privates. As its name indicates it, the sour wine is quite simply wine become sour, was simply bad wine. That's all! The soldier who gave this drink to Jesus wanted only to relieve his suffering one moment.

O Jews and Christians, no God or son of a God either came or will come down (to earth). But if you mean that certain angels did so, then what do you call them? Are they gods, or some other race of beings? Some other race of beings (doubtless), and in all probability spirits.

Of such a nature do I know the work to be, entitled "Dialogue between Papiscus and Jason," which is fitted to excite pity or hatred instead of laughter. It is not my purpose, however, to confute the statements contained in such works; for their fallacy is manifest to all, especially if any one will have the patience to read the books themselves. To assert that in all these cases the great God interposed in a very marked degree is an absurdity.

Celsus then compares all the race of Jews and Christians to a flight of bats or to a swarm of ants issuing out of their nest, or to frogs holding council in a marsh, even to worms crawling together in the corner of a dunghill, and quarreling with one another as to which of them were the greater sinners, while asserting that the great God shows and announces to us all things beforehand; and that, abandoning the universe, and the regions of heaven, and this great earth [which is his abode] , he becomes a citizen among us alone, and to us alone makes his intimations, or does not cease sending and inquiring, in what way we may be associated with him forever.

Jews and Christians a similar to worms which assert that there is a great God, and that coming immediately after him, we who are made by him are altogether like unto the great God, and that all things have been made subject to us -earth, and water, and air, and stars- that all things exist for our sake, and are ordained to be subject to us.

Now, since certain among us commit sin, the great God will come or will send his Son to consume the sinners with fire, but the rest of us may have eternal life with him.

Counter-Lay No. 13.

In Short, what Celsus wants to say, it is that the Judeo-Muslim-Christian religion, in addition to the fact that it is even more childishly anthropomorphic than many paganisms than, however, it does not stop ridiculing , is also anthropocentric (on anthropocentrism, see Spinoza).

It is folly on their part to suppose that when the great God, as if he were a cook, introduces the fire (which is to consume the world), all the rest of the human race will be burnt up, while they alone remain, not only such of them as are then alive, but also those who are long since dead and who latter will arise from the earth clothed with the selfsame flesh (as during life); for such a hope is simply one

which might be cherished by worms. For what sort of human soul therefore is that which would still long for a body that had been subject to corruption?

Counter-Lay No. 14.

Druidic mythology for a long time answered this objection of Celsus. The bodies in question will be no longer then according to the high-knower of the druidiaction (druidecht), rotten bodies, but appreciably different bodies, though still very human.

"The shades of dead men seek not the quiet homes of Erebus or death's pale kingdoms; the same soul/mind (anaon) governs the limbs in another world. The death is only the middle of a long live; if you know well what you sing.

Happy the peoples beneath the Great Bear thanks to their error; because etc.etc. (Lucan, Pharsalia I, 450-458.)

This opinion is not shared by some of the Christians, and they pronounce it to be exceedingly vile, and loathsome, and impossible; for what kind of body is that which, after being completely corrupted, can return to its original nature, and to that selfsame first condition out of which it fell into dissolution?

Being unable to return any answer, the first ones betake themselves to a most absurd refuge, viz., that all things are possible to God. But the great God cannot do things that are disgraceful, nor does he wish to do things that are contrary to his nature. And even if (in accordance with the wickedness of our own heart) we desired anything that was evil, it does not necessarily mean that the great God would accomplish it nor must we believe that it will be done at once.

For the great God does not rule the world in order to satisfy aberrant desires, or to allow disorder and confusion, but to govern a nature that is upright and just. For the soul, indeed, he might be able to provide an everlasting life; while dead bodies, on the contrary, are, as Heraclitus observes, more worthless than dung. The great God, however, neither can nor will declare, contrary to all reason, that the flesh, which is full of those things which it is not even honorable to mention, is to exist for ever. For he is the reason of all things that exist, and therefore can do nothing contrary to reason therefore contrary to himself.

Then Celsus stages a Jew disputing with Jesus, and confuting him, on many points; and in the first place, he accuses him of having invented his birth from a virgin.

The great god whose nature is not to love a corruptible body, would have intercourse with her because she was beautiful?

The makers of the genealogies, from his feeling of arrogance, made Jesus to be descended from the first man, and from the kings of the Jews but the carpenter's wife could not have been ignorant of the fact, had she been really of such illustrious descent.

It is improbable that the great god would entertain a passion for the mother of Jesus, because she was neither rich nor of royal rank, seeing no one, even of her neighbors, knew her. It was a poor woman of the country, who gained her subsistence by spinning.

But let us now return to where the Jew is introduced, speaking of the mother of Jesus, and saying "that when she was pregnant she was turned out of doors by the carpenter to whom she had been betrothed, as having been guilty of adultery, because she bore a child to a certain soldier named Panthera."

When convicted of adultery and hated by her husband, a carpenter, and turned out of doors, she was not saved by divine power, nor was her story believed. Such things have no connection with the kingdom of heaven.

After wandering about for a time, in a certain Jewish village therefore she disgracefully gave birth to Jesus, an illegitimate child

Counter-Lay No. 15.

Some remarks in passing.

The Greek mythology is, however, filled with mere mortals allured by gods and particularly Zeus. What proves that it is not so different than that from the "barbarian" mythologies stigmatized by this philosopher.

A short stay in Egypt of Jesus and his family is admitted by the Christians.

Celsus seems to insinuate that Jesus would be gone back there during a certain time thereafter.

Then Jesus having hired himself out as a servant in Egypt on account of his poverty, and having there acquired some miraculous powers on which the Egyptians greatly pride themselves, returned to his

own country, highly elated on account of them, and by means of these proclaimed himself divine then began to teach this doctrine, being regarded by Christians as the Son of God.

But it was by means of sorcery that he was able to accomplish the wonders which he performed; and foreseeing that others would attain the same knowledge, or do the same things, therefore he made a boast of doing them by help of the power of the great God, while excluding such from his kingdom. But if they are excluded, while he himself is guilty of the same practices, he is a cursed man; but if he is guilty of nothing in doing such things, neither are they who do the same as he.

Counter-Lay No. 16.

See the passages of the New Testament warning against what this book calls the false prophets, those "who will perform great signs and wonders, to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (Matthew, 24.24).

Why should it be you alone, rather than innumerable others, who existed after the prophecies were published, to whom these predictions are applicable? And if you say that every man, born according to the decree of Divine Providence, is a son of God, in what respect should you differ from another?

CRITICISM FROM THE CELSUS' JEW. The prophecies referred to the events of his life may also suit other events as well. Countless individuals will convict Jesus of falsehood, alleging that those predictions which were spoken of him were intended to them.

Chaldeans are spoken of (by Jesus) as having been induced to come to him at his birth, and to worship him while yet an infant as a God, and to have made this known to Herod the tetrarch; but that the latter sent and slew all the infants that had been born about the same time, thinking that in this way he would ensure his death among the others; and that he was led to do this through fear that, if he lived to a sufficient age, he would obtain the throne.

But if, then, this was done in order that you might not reign in his stead when you had grown to man's estate; why, after you did reach that estate, do you not become a king, instead of you, the Son of God, wandering about in so mean a condition, hiding yourself, and leading a miserable life up and down?

What need, moreover, was there that you, while still an infant, should be conveyed into Egypt? Was it to escape being murdered? It was not likely that a God should be afraid of death; and yet an angel came down from heaven, commanding you and your friends to flee, lest you should be captured and put to death! And was not the great God, who had already sent two angels on your account, able to keep you, his only son, there in safety?

CRITICISM FROM THE CELSUS' JEW. Jesus having gathered around him ten or eleven persons of the people, the very wickedest of tax gatherers and fishermen, who had not acquired even the merest elements of learning, fled in company with them from place to place, and obtained his living in a shameful and begging manner.

The old fables which attributed a divine origin to Perseus, Amphion, Aeacus, and Minos were not believed by us. Nevertheless, that they might not appear unworthy of credit, they represented nevertheless the deeds of these personages as great and wonderful, and truly beyond the power of man but what have you done that is noble or wonderful either in deed or in word? You have made no miracle, although they challenged you in the temple to exhibit some unmistakable sign that you were the Son of God.

When you were in water, beside John, you say that what had taken the appearance of a bird from the heaven alighted upon you. What credible witness beheld this apparition or heard this voice from heaven declaring you to be the Son of God? What proof is there of it, save your own assertion, and the statement of another of those individuals who have been executed along with you?

Well, let us admit that these cures, or the resurrection, or the feeding of a multitude with a few loaves, from which many fragments remained over, or those other stories of a marvelous nature were actually wrought by you.

These are nothing more than the tricks of jugglers, who profess to do more wonderful things, and the feats performed by those who have been taught by Egyptians and who in the middle of the market-place, in return for a few pittance, expound the secrets of their most venerable arts, or will expel demons, dispel diseases, invoke the souls of heroes, exhibit expensive banquets, and tables, and

dishes, and dainties having no real existence, and who will put in motion, as if alive, what are not really living animals, but which have only the appearance of life.

Since, then, these persons can perform such feats, shall we of necessity conclude that they are well "sons of God" or must we admit that they are rather the proceedings of sorcerers under the influence of an evil spirit?

Such a body as yours could not have belonged to the great God. The body of the great god would not have been so generated as you, O Jesus, were.

The body of the great god is not nourished with such food...

Counter-Lay No. 17.

Muhammad agrees with Celsus on a point: the fact that Jesus had to eat in order to live proves that he was not God.

And the body of god does not make use of such a voice as that of Jesus, nor employ such a method of persuasion as he. These processes of his were those of a wicked and God-hated sorcerer (goetian). The resurrection of the dead, the divine judgment, the rewards to be bestowed upon the just, and the fire which is to devour the wicked, are stale doctrines and there is nothing new in your teaching upon these points. Many other persons would appear such as Jesus was, to those who were willing to be deceived.

Counter-Lay No. 18.

The imaginary Jew that Celsus stages for the needs of his demonstration apparently attaches little importance to the resurrection and to the last judgment. Was he still Sadducean?? On this point it seems indeed much more Roman than Jewish.

CELSUS THEN COMES to the charge not to have believed in Jesus, as in a God, that the Christian converts bring against the Jews.

The converts from Judaism have forsaken the law of their fathers, in consequence of their minds being led captive by Jesus; that they have been most ridiculously deceived, and that they have become deserters to another name and to another mode of life.

If anyone predicted that the Son of God was to visit mankind, he was one of our prophets, and a prophet of our God. John, who baptized Jesus, was a Jew.

How should we therefore who have made known to all men that there is to come from God one who is to punish the wicked, treat him with such disregard when he came? Was it that we must be chastised more than others?

How should we deem him to be God, who not only in other respects, as was currently reported, performed none of his promises, but who also, after we had convicted him, and condemned him as deserving of punishment, was found attempting to conceal himself, or endeavoring to escape in a most disgraceful manner, but who was betrayed by those very ones whom he called disciples?

A God could neither flee nor be led away as a prisoner; and least of all could he be deserted and delivered up by those very ones who had been his associates, and had shared all things in common, had taken him for their teacher, who was deemed to be a Savior, and a son of the greatest God, even an angel.

Counter-Lay No. 19.

The chronology given by Celsus is therefore extremely clear: a) judgment and sentence b) arrest c) execution. And not as in the four Gospels: a) arrest b) judgment and sentence c) execution.

The Christians, like persons who in a fit of drunkenness lay violent hands upon themselves, have corrupted the Gospel from its original integrity, to a threefold, and fourfold, and many-fold degrees, and have remodeled it, so that they might be able to answer objections.

Counter-Lay No. 20.

It is besides what Muslims say still.

The disciples of Jesus, having no undoubted fact on which to rely, devised the fiction that he foreknew everything before it happened

The disciples of Jesus wrote such accounts regarding him, by way of extenuating the charges that told against him: as if any one were to say that a certain person was a just man, and yet were to show that he was guilty of injustice; or that he was pious, and yet had committed murder; or that he was immortal, and yet was dead; but subjoining to all these statements the remark that he had foretold all these things.

How is it credible that Jesus could have predicted these things and how could the dead man be immortal?

What god, or spirit, or prudent man would not, on foreseeing that such events were to befall him, avoid them if he could; whereas he threw himself headlong into those things which he knew beforehand were to happen.

How is it that, if Jesus pointed out beforehand both the traitor and the perjurer, they did not fear him as a God, and cease, the one from his intended treason, and the other from his perjury?

These events, he predicted as being a God, and the prediction therefore must by all means come to pass.

The great God, therefore, who above all others ought to do good to men, and especially to those of his household, led on his own disciples and prophets, with whom he was in the habit of eating and drinking, to such a degree of wickedness, that they became impious and unholy men ? He who shared a man's table would not be guilty of conspiring against him; but after banqueting with God, he became nevertheless a conspirator against him? And, what is still more absurd, the great God himself plotted against the members of his own table, by converting them into traitors and villains!

Why does he mourn, and lament, and pray to escape the death, expressing himself in terms like these: "O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me?"

Counter-Lay No. 21.

Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. Matthew 26.39; Mark 14.36; Luke, 22.42.

For you do not even allege this, that he seemed to wicked men to suffer this punishment, though not undergoing it in reality; but on the contrary, you acknowledge that he really suffered.

Counter-Lay No. 22.

It is, however, well what Christian Gnostic writers and Muslims claim. Jesus was not really crucified himself in flesh and bone. It was only an appearance or an optical illusion.

Those who were his associates while alive, who listened to his voice, and enjoyed his instructions as their teacher, on seeing him subjected to punishment and death, neither died with him, nor for him, nor were even induced to regard punishment with contempt, but denied even that they were his disciples, and now you die along with him ?

What great deeds did Jesus perform therefore as being a God? Did he put his enemies to shame, or bring to a ridiculous conclusion what was designed against him?

No calamity happened even to him who condemned him, as there did to Pentheus, viz., madness and dismemberment.

If not before, yet why now, at least, does he not give some manifestation of his divinity, and free himself from this reproach, by taking vengeance upon those who insult both him and his Father?

You will not, I hope, say now of him that, after failing to gain over those who were in this world, he went down to Hades to gain over those who were there.

Counter-Lay No. 23.

It is, however, well what the Christians claim: Jesus went down into hell.

The Christians deemed Jesus to be the Son of God, because he healed the lame and the blind and, moreover, because, as they assert, he raised the dead.

O light and truth! He distinctly declares, with his own voice, as you yourselves have recorded, that there will come to you even others, employing miracles of a similar kind, who are wicked men, and sorcerers; and he calls him who makes use of such devices, one Satan. So that Jesus himself does not deny that these works at least are not at all divine, but are the acts of wicked men; and being compelled by the force of truth, he at the same time not only laid open the doings of others, but convicted himself of the same acts. Is it not, then, a miserable inference, to conclude from the same works that the one is God and the other sorcerers? Why ought the others, because of these acts, to be accounted wicked rather than this man, seeing they have him as their witness against himself? He has himself acknowledged indeed that these are not the works of a divine nature, but the inventions of certain deceivers, and of thoroughly wicked men.

By what, then, were you induced to become his followers? Was it because he foretold that after his death he would rise again?

Come now, let us grant to you that the prediction was actually uttered. Yet how many others are there who practice such juggling tricks, in order to deceive their simple hearers, and who make gain by their deception?--as was the case, they say, in Scythia, with Zamolxis, the slave of Pythagoras; and with Pythagoras himself in Italy; even with Rhampsinitus in Egypt (the latter of whom, they say, played at dice with Demeter in Hades, and returned to the upper world with a golden napkin which he had received from her as a gift); and also with Orpheus among the Odrysians, Protesilaus in Thessaly, Hercules at Cape Taenarus, and Theseus. The question is whether any one who was really dead ever rose with a veritable body. Or do you imagine the statements of others not only to be myths, but to have the appearance of such, while you have discovered a becoming and credible termination to this drama in the voice from the cross, when he breathed his last, and in the earthquake and the darkness? While alive he was of no assistance to himself, but when dead he rose again, and showed the marks of his execution, and how his hands were pierced with nails. However who beheld this? A half-frantic woman, as you state, and some other one, perhaps, of those who were engaged in the same system of delusion, who had either dreamed so, owing to a peculiar state of mind, or who, under the influence of a wandering imagination, had formed to himself an apparition according to his own wishes, which has been the case with numberless individuals; or, which is most probable, one who desired to impress others with this portent, and by such a falsehood to furnish thus an occasion to impostors like himself.

THE CELSUS' JEW NOTES THEREFORE that Jesus accordingly exhibited after his death only the appearance of wounds, and was not in reality so wounded as he is described to have been.

Counter-Lay No. 24.

Some remarks.

Women... Yes, Celsus was not less misogynist than the early Christians (the apostles). It should be recognized well that the women were always the weak point of Mankind in this field, were always more credulous than men in the matter. Today still it is especially themselves who haunt the churches (the author of this compilation can tell you) and are their last pillars; and it is not rare either to see some of them demonstrating in our streets to claim a right which they have already, that to wear a veil as St. Paul advises it, or straightforwardly in the Afghan way. To the great surprise of the ordinary human being author of this compilation. How indeed is it possible to fight with eagerness voluntarily and in an unconstrained manner to be subjected, treated on an unequal footing, as half of a man, as an eternal housemaid of the men, son father and older brother? The god-or-demons really, blind those they want to ruin.

If Jesus desired to show that his power was really divine, he ought to have appeared to those who had ill-treated him, and to him who had condemned him, and to all men universally.

Who that is sent as a messenger conceals himself when he ought to make known his message?

While he was in the body, and no one believed upon him, he preached to all without intermission; but when he might have produced a powerful belief in himself after rising from the dead, he showed himself secretly only to one woman, and to his own boon companions,

While undergoing his punishment he was seen by all, but after his resurrection only by one?

If he wished to remain hid, why was there heard a voice from heaven proclaiming him to be the Son of God? And if he did not seek to remain concealed, why was he punished? And why did he die?

His having wished, by the punishments which he underwent, to teach us also to despise death, required that after his resurrection he should openly summon all men to the light, and instruct them in the object of his coming.

The conclusion of all these arguments regarding Jesus is thus stated by the Jew: He was therefore a man, and of such a nature, as the truth itself proves, and reason demonstrates him to be.

Counter-Lay No. 25.

The Jews, in their vast majority, refused to see in Jesus, and we understand them, the Zorro (glorious Messiah) liberator of their nation, expected. It is therefore undeniable that the embodiment on earth of God within his chosen people, had as a consequence that the aforementioned chosen people did not believe in his own Messiah.

Celsus having thus dealt with the paradoxical topic par excellence of the VERUS ISRAEL (the true Israel it is no longer, according to the Christians, Israel, but themselves, strange consequence of the coming of the Messiah); he comes to another criticism of the Jews and of the Christians, particularly their proselytism.

No wise man believes the Gospel, being driven away by the multitudes who adhere to it.

Christians at first were few in number, and held the same opinions; but when they grew to be a great multitude, they were divided and separated, each wishing to have his own individual party: for this was their object from the beginning.

Being thus separated through their numbers, they confute one another, still having, so to speak, one name in common, if indeed they still retain it. Because this is the only thing which they are yet ashamed to abandon, while other matters are determined in different ways by the various sects.

Their union is the more wonderful, the more it can be shown to be based on no substantial reason.

Unless, of course, the rebellion mind would be a substantial reason, as well therefore as the advantages which accrue from it, and the fear of external enemies. Such are the causes which give stability to their faith.

The Dioscuri, Hercules, Aesculapius, and Dionysus, are believed by the Greeks to have become gods after being men, but Christians cannot bear to call such beings gods, because they were at first men, and yet they manifested many noble qualities, which were displayed for the benefit of mankind, while they assert that Jesus was seen after his death by his own followers, but as if they said that "he was seen indeed, but was only a shadow!

After he has laid aside these qualities, he would be therefore a God: (but if so), why not rather Aesculapius, and Dionysus, or Hercules?

Because a great multitude both Greeks and Barbarians say that they have frequently seen, and still see, no mere phantom, but Aesculapius himself, healing and doing good, or foretelling the future. Such miracles were performed in all countries, or at least in many of them. For example, the case of Aesculapius therefore, who confers benefits on many, and who foretells future events to entire cities, which were dedicated to him, such as Tricca, Epidaurus, Cos, Pergamum; and along with Aesculapius Aristeas of Proconnesus, a certain Clazomenian, and Cleomedes of Astypalaea.

Counter-Lay No. 26.

To the examples which follow and quoted by Celsus let us add also the true martyrdom undergone by the Hesus/Cuchulainn enchained to the pillar stone in Muirthemne.

Christians ridicule those who worship Jupiter, because his tomb is pointed out in the island of Crete; and yet they worship him who rose from the dead, although ignorant of the grounds on which the Cretans observe such a custom.

Christians weave together erroneous opinions drawn from ancient sources, trumpet them aloud, and sound them before men, as the priests of Cybele clash their cymbals in the ears of those who are being initiated in their mysteries.

The following are the rules laid down by them. "Let no one come to us who has been instructed, or who is wise or prudent (for such qualifications are deemed evil by us); but if there be any ignorant, or unintelligent, uninstructed, or foolish persons, let them come with confidence."

Counter-lay No. 27.

This is likely an allusion to certain statements of St. Paul. 1 Corinthians, 1. 26 . We preach a messiah stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles....not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise..."

By which words, acknowledging that such individuals are made for their God, the Christians manifestly show that they desire and are able to gain over only the silly, the mean, or the stupid men, with women and children.

The individuals, who in the market places perform the most disgraceful tricks, and who gathers crowds around them, would never approach an assembly of wise men, nor dare to exhibit their arts among them; but wherever they see young men, a mob of slaves, a gathering of unintelligent persons, thither they thrust themselves in, and show themselves off.

In private houses workers in wool and leather, or fullers, and persons of the most uninstructed and rustic character, not venturing to utter a word in the presence of their elders and wiser masters; but when they get hold of the children privately, and certain women as ignorant as themselves, they pour forth wonderful statements, to the effect that they ought not to give heed to their father and to their teachers, but should obey them; adding that the former are foolish and stupid, and neither know nor can perform anything that is really good, being preoccupied with empty trifles; but that they alone know how men ought to live, and that, if the children obey them, they will both be happy themselves, and will make their home happy also.

But while thus speaking, if they see one of the instructors of youth approaching, or one of the more intelligent class, or even the father himself, the more timid among them become afraid, while the more forward incite the children to throw off the yoke, whispering that in the presence of the father and teachers they neither will nor can explain to them any good thing, seeing they turn away with aversion from the silliness and stupidity of such persons as being altogether corrupt, and far advanced in wickedness, and such as would inflict punishment upon them; but that if they wish to avail themselves of their aid, then they must leave their father and their instructors, and go with the women and their playfellows to the women's apartments, or to the leather shop, or to the fuller shop, that they may attain to perfection; and by words like these therefore they gain them over.

Counter-lay No. 28.

On this point, Celsus goes too far because every trade has its value , there are only silly folks, even if the current French Post treats his staff as if the opposite is true. The very example of Islam today also shows that you can be a brilliant educated and cultivated student (bin Laden), and at the same time a blind fanatic of the worst kind. But let us return to the speech of our friend Celsus !

That I bring no heavier charge than what the truth compels me, any one may see from the following remarks. Those who invite to participation in other mysteries, make proclamation that they are intended for : "Everyone who has clean hands and a prudent tongue"; others again thus: "He who is pure from all pollution, and whose soul is conscious of no evil, or who has lived well and justly". Such is the proclamation made by those who promise purification from sins. But let us hear what kinds of persons these Christians invite. "Every one, they say, who is a sinner, who is devoid of understanding, who is a child, and, to speak more generally, whoever is unfortunate, him will the kingdom of God receive." But do you not call him a sinner, then, who is unjust, a thief, a housebreaker, a poisoner, a committer of sacrilege, and a robber of the dead?" What others would a man invite indeed if he were issuing a proclamation for an assembly of robbers?

Christians say that it was to sinners that their God has been sent. Why was he not sent to those who were without sin? What evil is it not to have committed sin?

The great God will receive the unrighteousness man if he humbles himself on account of his wickedness, but he will not receive the righteous man, although he looks up to him, adorned with virtue from the beginning .

Those persons who preside properly over a trial make those individuals who bewail before them their evil deeds to cease from their piteous wailings, lest their decisions should be determined rather

emotion than by a regard to truth; whereas the great God does not decide in accordance with truth, but in accordance with flattery ?

All men, then, without distinction, ought to be invited, since all indeed are sinners.

What is this preference of sinners over others?

The Christians utter these exhortations for the conversion of sinners, because they are able to gain over no one who is really good and righteous, and therefore open their doors to the unholy and most abandoned of men.

And yet, indeed, it is manifest to every one that no one by chastisement, and much less by merciful treatment, could effect a complete change in those who are sinners both by nature and custom, for to change nature is an exceedingly difficult thing. On the other hand, they who are without sin are partaken of a better life.

Christians assert that the great God will be able to do all things but he will not desire to do anything wicked, even if one were to admit that he has the power, but not the will, to commit evil.

Their great God, like those who are overcome with pity, being himself overcome with pity, alleviates the sufferings of the wicked through pity for their wailings, but casts off the good, who do nothing of that kind, which is the height of injustice.

The teachers in Christianity act like persons who promise to restore patients to bodily health, but who prevent them from consulting skilled physicians, by whom their ignorance would be exposed.

They betake themselves therefore to young persons and silly rustics, saying to them: Flee from physicians. See that none of you lay hold of knowledge; knowledge is an evil; knowledge causes men to lose their soundness of mind. Man perishes through wisdom; give heed to me, I alone will save you. Official medicine destroys those whom it promises to cure.

The Christian teacher acts like a drunken man, who, having entered a company of drunkards, should accuse those who are sober of being drunk.

The teacher in Christianity suffers from his eyes and his disciples are suffering from the same disease, he acts such a one among a company of those who are afflicted with ophthalmia, accuses those who are sharp-sighted of being blind.

These charges I have to bring against them, and others of a similar nature, not to enumerate them one by one, I affirm that they are in error, and that they act insolently towards the great God, in order to lead on wicked men by empty hopes, and to persuade them to despise better things in the life, saying that if they refrain from them it will be better for them.

Counter-Lay No. 29.

There still, they are to be allusions to the sermons of St Paul. As we saw it on several occasions, no one is obliged to follow Celsus to the end of his conclusions. To be firstly worried about the modest men, the little men, and the underlings, is by no means an unacceptable defect. But we should not exaggerate either in the other direction, and there Celsus is entirely right. Let us come now to the other remarks from our friend and which relate primarily TO THE Gnostic Christians. WE SAY THE Gnostic Christians WELL. THE Gnostic Christians. THE Gnostic Christians. THE Gnostic Christians. SEE OUR ESSAY ON THIS SUBJECT.

The Jews accordingly, and the Christians have the same God.

It is certain, indeed, that the members of the great Church admit this, and adopt as true the accounts regarding the creation of the world which are current among the Jews, viz., concerning the six days and the seventh.

Some of them therefore will concede that their God is the same as that of the Jews, while others maintain that he is a different one, to whom the latter is in opposition, and that it was from the former that the Son came.

What could be more foolish or insane than such senseless wisdom? For what blunder has the Jewish lawgiver committed in this case? and why do you accept, as you say, by means of a certain allegorical and typical method of interpretation, the cosmogony which he gives, and the law of the Jews, while it is with unwillingness, O most impious man, that you give praise to the Creator of the world, who promised to give them all things; who promised to multiply their race to the ends of the earth, to raise them up from the dead with the same flesh and blood, and who gave inspiration to their prophets; you slander Him! When you feel the force of such considerations, you acknowledge that you worship the same God; but when your teacher Jesus and the Jewish Moses give contradictory decisions, you seek another God, instead of him: the Father!

Let us then pass over the refutations which might be adduced against the claims of their teacher, and let him be regarded as really an angel. But is he the first and only one who came (to men), or were there others before him? If they should say that he is the only one, they would be convicted of telling lies against themselves. For they assert that on many occasions others came, and sixty or seventy of them together, but that these became wicked, were cast under the earth and punished with chains, and that from this source originate the warm springs, which are their tears; and, moreover, that there came an angel to the tomb of this said being--according to some, indeed, one, but according to others, two--who answered the women that he had arisen (from the dead). For the Son of God could not himself, as it seems, open the tomb, but needed the help of another to roll away the stone. And again, on account of the pregnancy of Mary, there came an angel to the carpenter, and once more another angel, in order that they might take up the young child and flee away (into Egypt). But what need is there to particularize everything, or to count up the number of angels said to have been sent to Moses, and others among them? If, then, others were sent similarly, it is manifest that he also came from the same God. But he may be supposed to have the appearance of announcing something of greater importance (than those who preceded him), as if the Jews had been committing sin, or corrupting their religion, or doing deeds of impiety; for these things are hinted at.

Therefore he is not the only one who is recorded to have visited the human race, and even those who, under the pretext of teaching in the name of Jesus, have made the Creator an inferior being, and have given in their adherence to one who is a superior God and father of him who visited (the world), assert that before him certain beings came from the Creator to visit the human race.

There is a third class of Christian who call certain persons "carnal," and others "spiritual" and there are some who give themselves out as Gnostics. There are some who accept Jesus, and who boast on that account of being Christians, and yet would regulate their lives, like the Jewish multitude, in accordance with the Jewish law.

Certain Simonians exist who worship Helene, or Helenus, as their teacher, and are called Helenians, certain Marcellians, so called from Marcellina, Certain Carpocratians from Salome, and others who derive their name from Mariamne, and others again from Martha, and Marcionites whose leader was Marcion.

There are others who have more wickedly invented some being as their teacher and spirit, and who wallow about in a great darkness, more unholy and accursed than that of the companions of the Egyptian Antinous.

You may hear all those who differ so widely saying: "The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world."

Counter-Lay No. 30.

Once again, let us repeat it, Celsus targets there mainly the Gnostic Christianity insofar as it was then apparently in the eyes of Celsus, the first form of Christianity.

These things are stated much better among the Greeks (than in the Scriptures) and in a manner which is free from all exaggerations and promises on the part of God, or the Son of God.

For example, Plato, although maintaining that the chief good cannot be described, in words, in order to avoid the appearance of retreating to an irrefutable position, subjoins a reason in explanation of this difficulty, as the "nothingness" can't be explained in words.

Plato is not guilty of boasting and falsehood, giving out that he has made some new discovery, or that he has come down from heaven to announce it, but acknowledges whence these statements are derived. Accordingly, we do not say to each of our hearers: "Believe, first of all, that he whom I introduce to thee is the Son of God, although he was shamefully bound, and disgracefully punished, and very recently was most contumeliously treated before the eyes of all men. Believe it even the more (on that account)".

If these bring forward this person, and others, again, a different individual (as the Christ), while the common and ready cry of all parties is, 'Believe, if you are saved, or else begone,' what shall those do who are in earnest about their salvation? Shall they cast the dice, in order to divine whither they may betake themselves, and whom they shall join?

Christians declare the wisdom that is among men to be foolishness with God because of their desire to win over by means of this saying the ignorant and foolish alone.

Christians are sorcerers who flee away with headlong speed from the more civilized class of persons, because they are not suitable subjects for their impositions, while they seek to decoy those who are more rustic.

COMMENTARY BY ORIGEN. Celsus wished to show thereby that this statement was an invention of ours, but borrowed from the Grecian sages, who declare that human wisdom is of one kind, and divine of another.

He imagines that the subject is borrowed from some words of Plato imperfectly understood.

This saying, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," manifestly proceeded from Plato, and Jesus perverted the words of the philosopher.

Counter-Lay No. 31.

The word "camel" seems to be here a mistranslation for "rope."

Certain Christians, having misunderstood the words of Plato, loudly boast of a 'super-celestial' God thus ascending beyond the heaven of the Jews.

These things are already obscurely hinted at in the accounts of the Persians, and especially in the mysteries of Mithra, which are celebrated among them.

They continue to heap together one thing after another, discourses of prophets, and circles upon circles, and effluents from an earthly church, and from circumcision; and a power flowing from one Prunicos, a virgin and a living soul; and a heaven slain in order to live, and an earth slaughtered by the sword, and many put to death that they may live, and death ceasing in the world, when the sin of the world is dead; and, again, a narrow way, and gates that open spontaneously. In all their writings (is mention made) of the tree of life, and a resurrection of the flesh by means of the "tree," because, I imagine, their teacher was nailed to a cross, and was a carpenter by craft; so that if he had chanced to have been cast from a precipice, or thrust into a pit, or suffocated by hanging, or had been a leather cutter, or stone-cutter, or worker in iron, there would have been (invented) a precipice of life beyond the heavens, or a pit of resurrection, or a cord of immortality, or a blessed stone, or an iron of love, or a sacred leather! Now what old woman would not be ashamed to utter such things in a whisper, even when making stories to lull an infant to sleep?

What needs to number up all those who have taught methods of purification, expiatory hymns, spells for averting evil (the making of) images, or resemblance of demons, the various sorts of antidotes against poison (to be found) in clothes, in numbers, stones, plants, roots, or generally in all kinds of things?

I have seen in the hands of certain presbyters belonging to the Christian faith barbarous books which contain the names and marvelous doings of spirits; and these presbyters of their faith professed to do no good, but all that was calculated to injure human beings.

Those who employ the arts of magic and sorcery, and who invoke the strange names of spirits act like those who, in reference to the same things, perform marvels before those who are ignorant that the names of spirits among the Greeks are different from what they are among the Scythians.

Counter-Lay No. 32.

Once again, let us repeat it, Celsus speaks here especially about the Gnostic Christianity which seems to be the only one to exist in his eyes.

To all that, Christians object then: How, now, shall I know God? And how shall I learn the way that leads to him? And how will you show him to me? Because now, indeed, you throw darkness before my eyes, and I see nothing distinctly.

Those whom one would lead forth out of darkness into the brightness of light, being unable to withstand its splendors, have indeed their power of vision affected and injured, and so imagine therefore that they are smitten with blindness.

ORIGEN'S COMMENTARY. Celsus asks us how we think we know God, and how we shall be saved by Him ?

He asserts that the answer which we give is based upon a probable conjecture, and he describes it in the following terms: "Since God is great and difficult to see, he put his spirit into a body that resembled ours, and sent it down to us, that we might be enabled to hear him and become acquainted with him."

But Celsus adds, as the Son of God, who existed in a human body, is a spirit, this very Son of God would not be immortal [since there is no kind of spirit which lasts for ever]. Certain Christians besides don't admit that God is a spirit, but maintain that only with regard to his son.

He concludes from that therefore that the great God must necessarily have given up the ghost; from which also it follows that Jesus could not have risen again with his body. For the great God would not have received back the spirit which He had given after it had been stained by contact with the body. Had he wished to send down his spirit from himself, what need was there to breathe it into the womb of a woman? For as one who knew already how to form men, he could also have fashioned a body for this person, without casting his own spirit into so much pollution; and in this way he would not have been received with incredulity.

Counter -Lay No. 33.

Case of the bishop in Sinope named Marcion precisely, who considered that Christ was not born from the Virgin Mary, but appeared on earth in Capharnaum in the form of an already adult man.

In the Gospel according to Marcion, the God of the Jewish Bible, creator of this world, is a god with pitiless justice and who punishes with severity those who infringed his Law; but Jesus, himself, was sent by another God, superior, a God who is himself, only goodness.

Since a divine spirit inhabited the body (of Jesus), it must certainly have been different, in respect of grandeur, or beauty, or strength, or voice, or impressiveness, or persuasiveness. For it is impossible that he, to whom was imparted some divine quality beyond other beings, should not differ from others; whereas his person did not differ in any respect from another, but was, as they report, little, and ill-favored, and ignoble. Moreover he did not show himself to be pure from all evil.

Again, if the great God, like Jupiter in the comedy, should, on awaking from a lengthened slumber, desire to rescue the human race from evil, why did he send this Spirit of which you speak into one corner (of the earth)? He ought to have breathed it alike into many bodies, and have sent them out into all the world. Now the comic poet, to cause laughter in the theater, wrote that Jupiter, after awakening, dispatched Mercury to the Athenians and Lacedaemonians; but do not you think that you have made the Son of God more ridiculous in sending him only to the Jews?

Counter-Lay No. 34.

Old problem raised by the concept of chosen people. Unless sticking to the ancient druidic tautology consisting in declaring that every people is chosen by its gods, and reciprocally since Man makes the gods in his image; we do not see why the higher God of all the men, cause of this world and of the whole universe, would be more the father of the ones than of the others. Why the Single To Be God should deal more with the Jews than with the poor Galatians, for example? This idea of chosen people bears in itself the racism as the clouds have the storm in them. The concept of chosen people is for the racism what the draft is for the war. And in 1914, even Jean Jaures could not be opposed to it. This true crime against the spirit was, however, taken over by the Christians with the concept of their theologians thus stated in Latin language: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus!* Outside the Church there is no salvation! The Goyim in the Christian meaning of the term, in other words, the non-baptized persons, are doomed to the hell of Dante.

Although knowing all things, the great God was not aware of this, that he was sending his Son among wicked men, who were both to be guilty of sin, and to inflict punishment upon him.

They set no value on the oracles of the Pythian priestess, of the priests of Dodona, of Clarus, of Branchidae, of Jupiter Ammon, and of a multitude of others; although under their guidance, we may say that colonies were sent forth, and the whole world peopled. But those sayings which were uttered or not uttered in Judea, but after the manner of that country, as indeed they are still delivered among the people of Phoenicia and Palestine, these they look upon as marvelous sayings, and unchangeably true.

There are many who, although of no name, with the greatest facility and on the slightest occasion, whether within or without temples, assume the motions and gestures of inspired persons; while others do it in cities or among crowds, for the purpose of attracting attention and exciting surprise. These are accustomed to say, each for himself, "I am God; I am the Son of God"; or "I am the Divine Spirit; I have come because the world is perishing, and you, O men, are perishing for your iniquities. But I wish to save you, you shall see me returning with heavenly power. Blessed is he who now does me homage.

On all the rest I will send down eternal fire, both on cities and on countries. And those who do not know the punishments which await them shall repent and grieve in vain; while those who are faithful to me, I will preserve eternally." To these promises are added strange, fanatical, and quite unintelligible words, of which no rational person can find the meaning for so dark are they, as to have no meaning at all but which give occasion to every fool or impostor to apply them to suit his own purposes.

Counter-Lay No. 35.

If Celsus had lived at that time, he would have said, of course, the same thing of Muhammad and of the Quran dooming to hell the infidels and promising the paradise to those who would pander to his every whim.

How could he, who was punished in such a manner, be shown to be God's Son, although these things had been predicted of him?

In their books the great God does the most shameless deeds, or suffers the most shameless sufferings.

For what better indeed was it for the great God to eat the meat of sheep, or to drink vinegar and gall, than to feed on filth?

Those who support the cause of Christ by a reference to the writings of the prophets can give no proper answer in regard to statements in them which attribute to the great God that which is wicked, shameful, or impure.

But pray, if the prophets foretold that the great God--not to put it more harshly--would become a slave, or become sick or die; would there be therefore any necessity that the great God should die, or suffer sickness, or become a slave, simply because such things had been foretold? Must he die in order to prove his divinity? The prophets would never utter predictions so wicked and impious. We need not therefore inquire whether a thing has been predicted or not, but whether the thing is honorable in itself, and worthy of the great God. In that which is evil and base, although it seemed that all men in the world had foretold it in a fit of madness, we must not believe regarding God. How then can the really pious mind admit that those things which are said to have happened to him, could have happened to one who is God?

If these things were predicted of the most high God, are we bound to believe them simply because they were predicted?

Although the prophets may have foretold truly such things of the Son of God, it is impossible for us to believe in those prophecies declaring that he would do or suffer such things.

If the prophets of the God of the Jews foretold that he who should come into the world would be the Son of their God, how he could command them through Moses to gather wealth, to extend their dominion, to fill the earth, to put their enemies of every age to the sword, and to destroy them utterly, which indeed he himself did -as Moses says-threatening them, moreover, that if they did not obey his commands, he would treat them as his avowed enemies; whilst, on the other hand, his son, the man of Nazareth, promulgated laws quite opposed to these, declaring that no one can come to the Father who loves power, riches, or glory; that man ought not to be more careful in providing food than the ravens; that they were to be less concerned about their raiment than the lilies; that to him who has given them one blow, they should offer to receive another? Whether is it Moses or Jesus who teaches falsely? Did the Father, when he sent Jesus, forget the commands which he had given to Moses? Or did he change his mind, condemn his own laws, and send forth a messenger in order to say it?

Counter-Lay No. 36.

Celsus insists therefore heavily on the incompatibility between the message of the Jewish Bible (the law of retaliation, the law and the punishment in the event of infringement) and that of the four Gospels: love! (At least theoretically.)

He feels that two such opposite messages cannot have the same origin; because, of course, he cannot suppose for one moment that the true higher god can be mistaken to this extent and change his opinion following the example of a common mortal like you and me.

IN CONNECTION WITH THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION OF BODIES Celsus apparently referred the Christians to the cases of the oracles of Trophonius, of Amphiaraus, and of Mopsus.

The gods who are in human form do not show themselves there for once, or at intervals, like him who has deceived men, but they are ever open to intercourse with those who desire it.

After they have been in this way utterly refuted and vanquished on the subject, they still, as if regardless of all objections, come back again to the same question: "But how then shall we see and know God? How can we know God, unless by the perception of the senses? For how otherwise than through the senses are we able to gain any knowledge?"

This is not the language of a sage; it comes not from the soul, but from the flesh. Let them hearken to us rather, if such a spiritless and carnal race is able to do so! If, instead of using your senses, you look upwards with the soul; if, turning away the eye of the body, you open the eye of the mind thus and thus only will you be able to see God. And if you seek one to be your guide along this way, you must firstly shun all deceivers and jugglers, who will introduce you to phantoms. Otherwise you will be acting the most ridiculous part, if, whilst you pronounce imprecations upon those others that are recognized as gods, treating them as idols, you yet do homage to a more wretched idol than any of these, who indeed is not even an idol or a phantom, but a dead man, and you seek a father like to him.

You perceive better, then, how men divinely inspired seek after the way of truth, and how well Plato understood that it was impossible for all men to walk in it. But as wise men have found it for the express purpose of being able to convey to us some notion of him who is the first, the unspeakable Being, -a notion, namely; which may represent him to us through the medium of other objects, -they endeavor either by synthesis, which is the combining of various qualities, or by analysis, which is the separation and setting aside of some qualities, or finally by analogy; -in these ways, I say, they endeavor to set before us that which it is impossible to express in words. But I should therefore be surprised if you could follow in that following course, since you are so completely wedded to the flesh as to be incapable of seeing ought but what is impure....

Things are either intelligible -which we call substance- being; or tangible, which we say prone to change: with the former is truth; from the latter arises error. Truth is the object of knowledge; truth and error together form opinion. Intelligible objects are known by the reason, tangible objects by the eyes; the action of the reason is called intelligent perception, that of the eyes vision. As, then, among visible things the sun is neither the eye nor vision, but that which enables the eye to see, and therefore renders vision possible, and in consequence of it tangible things are seen, all sensible things exist and itself is rendered visible; so among things intelligible, something which is neither reason, nor intelligent perception, nor knowledge, is yet the cause which enables the reason to know, which renders intelligent perception possible; and in consequence of it knowledge arises, all things intelligible, truth itself and substance have their existence; and itself, which is above all these things, becomes in some ineffable way itself intelligible.

Counter-Lay No. 37.

A course of philosophy not easy to follow indeed. There Celsus appears obviously as a follower of the Platonic concept of Idea. Nobody is obliged to be 100% satisfied by such concepts, John Toland showed it well to us.

Greek philosophy is a philosophy among others. There were some of them as interesting that of the great Indian thinker named Shankara for example (700?750).

These things are offered to the consideration of the intelligent; and if even you can understand any of them, it is well. And if you think that a Divine Spirit has descended from the great God to announce divine things to men, it is doubtless this same Spirit that reveals these truths, and it was under the same influence that men of old made known many important truths. But if you cannot comprehend these things, then keep silence; do not expose your own ignorance, and do not accuse of blindness those who see, or of lameness those who run, while you yourselves are utterly lamed and mutilated in mind, and are interested only in a merely animal life, the life of the body, which is the mortal part of our nature.

Since you are so eager for some novelty, how much better it would have been if you had chosen as the object of your zealous homage some one of those who died a glorious death, and whose divinity

might have received the support of some myth to perpetuate his memory! If you were not satisfied with Hercules or Aesculapius, and other heroes of antiquity, you had Orpheus, who was confessedly a divinely inspired man, who died a violent death. But perhaps some others have taken him up before you. You may then take Anaxarchus, who, when cast into a mortar, and beaten most barbarously, showed a noble contempt for his suffering by saying: "Beat, beat the envelope of Anaxarchus, for himself you do not beat," a speech surely of a spirit truly divine. But others were before you in following his interpretation of the laws of nature. Might you not, then, take Epictetus, who, when his master was twisting his leg, said, smiling and unmoved, "You will break my leg"; and when it was broken, he added: "Did I not tell you that you would break it?" What saying equal to these did your god utter under suffering? If you had said even of the Sibyl, whose authority some of you acknowledge, that she was a child of God, you would have said something more reasonable. But you have had the presumption to include in her writing many impious things, and set up as a god one who ended a most infamous life by a most miserable death. How much more suitable than he would have been Jonah in the whale's belly, or Daniel delivered from the wild beasts, or any of a still more portentous kind! They also have a precept to this effect, that we ought not to avenge ourselves on one who injures us, or, as he expresses it: "Whosoever shall strike you on the one cheek, turn to him the other also." This is an ancient saying, which had been very well expressed long before, and which they have only reported in a coarser way. For Plato introduces Socrates conversing with Crito as follows:

"Must we never do injustice to any?"

"Certainly! "

"Since we must never do injustice, must we therefore not return injustice for an injustice that has been done to us, contrary what most people think?"

"It seems to me that we should not."

"But tell me, Crito, may we do evil to any one or not?"

"Certainly not, O Socrates."

"Well, is it just, as it is commonly said, for one who has suffered wrong to do wrong in return, or is it unjust?"

"It is unjust. Yes; for to do harm to a man is the same as to do him injustice."

."You speak truly. We must then not do injustice in return for injustice, nor must we do evil to anyone, whatever evil we may have suffered from him."

Thus Plato speaks; and he adds: "Consider, then, whether you are at one with me, and whether, starting from this principle, we may not come to the conclusion that it is never right to do injustice, even in return for an injustice which has been received; or whether, on the other hand, you differ from me, and do not admit the principle from which we started?"

"That has always been my opinion, and is so still!"

Such are the sentiments of Plato, and indeed they were held by divine men before his time. But let this suffice as one example of the way in which this and other truths have been borrowed and corrupted. Anyone who wishes can easily by searching find more of them.

Counter -Lay Nr 38.

The great sociologist Gaston Bouthoul explained well in his tract devoted to the social variations and changes, that all the human or humanistic values had been already discovered or for a long time emphasized; and that no invention or discovery of values was actually possible, that only the hierarchical order of these values could vary. All new religion therefore doesn't consist of an invention of new values but of a reorganization of the aforementioned values in the society, a shift of the priorities; the emphasis from now on being placed on such or such value and no longer on such or such other, become secondary.

Let us say therefore that the Christians rediscovered on their side a certain number of values. It is not a crime and that is better than the opposite. On the other hand, what we can reproach to them is to do constantly as if they had been the first men, or the only ones, to have preached them. We are there on the boundary of the intellectual dishonesty or lie.

Celsus is against the retaliation law such as it appears in the Bible and, according to him, the first to have, in the clearest way, rejected this Jewish law, was not Jesus, but Plato.

It is certain that it is preferable to leave the infernal cycle of revenge and vendettas, but self-defense too is also the most sacred right. We may not prohibit somebody to defend himself or his. Not forgetting that each ill deed is also to find its punishment, in a way or another.

Let us pass on to another point. They cannot tolerate temples, altars, or images. The Christians do not consider to be gods that is made with hands, on the ground that it is not in conformity with reason to

suppose that images, fashioned by the most worthless and depraved of workmen, even in many instances also provided by wicked men, are such.

In this they are like the Scythians, the nomadic tribes of Libya, the Seres who worship no god, and some other of the most barbarous and impious nations in the world. That the Persians hold the same notions is shown by Herodotus in these words: "I know that among the Persians it is considered unlawful to erect images, altars, or temples. They charge those with folly who do so, because, as I conjecture, they do not, like the Greeks, suppose the gods to be of the nature of men." Heraclitus also says in one place: "Persons who address prayers to these images, without knowing who the gods or the heroes are really, act like those who speak to the walls".'

What wiser lesson have they to teach us than Heraclitus? He certainly plainly enough implies that it is a foolish thing for a man to offer prayers to images whilst he does not know who the gods and heroes are. This is the opinion of Heraclitus but as for them, they go further, and despise without exception all images. If they merely mean that the stone, wood, brass, or gold, which has been wrought by this or that workman cannot be a god, they are ridiculous with their wisdom. For who, unless he be utterly childish in his simplicity, can take these for gods, and not for offerings consecrated to the service of the gods, or images representing them? But if we are not to regard these as representing the Divine Being, seeing that the great God has a very different form, as the Persians concur with them in saying, then let them take care that they do not contradict themselves; for they say that God made man in his own image, that he gave him a form like to himself.

Counter-Lay No. 39.

According to Celsus, the early Christians began therefore by being all iconoclasts and against the use of statues or pictures as support for worship or prayer.

However today it is enough to put his feet thirty seconds in a church [what did not happen for a long time to the author of this compilation, it is true. "The last time that I witnessed a ceremony of the Catholic worship, the procession of St. Peter to the port, it was in Toulon in 2007; it was especially to make it discovered by my oldest son John-Wolf, and in addition we did not enter the church to attend the mass, even if himself had been an altar boy; we waited outside with the tourists the going out of the statue of the patron saint of fishermen] to see some in plenty, including among the men in black (the Orthodox priests). What did it occur? Did God and the Holy Spirit once again change their opinion?

Sometimes they will admit that these images, whether they are like them or not, are made and dedicated to the honor of certain beings. But they will hold then that the beings to whom they are dedicated are not gods, but spirits, and that a worshipper of the great God ought not to worship spirits. In the first place, I would ask why we are not to pay homage to the spirits? Is it not true that all things in universe are ordered according to the will of the great God, and that His providence governs all things? Is not everything which happens in the universe, whether it be the work of God, of angels, of other demons, or of heroes, regulated by the law of the Most High God? Have these not been assigned with various departments of which they were severally deemed worthy? Is it not just, therefore, in these conditions, that he who worships the God should serve those also to whom the great God has assigned such powers?

It is impossible for a man, they say, to serve many masters. It is the language of sedition, it is used by those who separate themselves and stand aloof from all human society. Those who speak in this way ascribe their own feelings and passions to the great God. It does hold true among men, that he who is in the service of one master cannot well serve another, because the service which he renders to the one interferes with that which he owes to the other; and no one, therefore, who has already engaged himself to the service of one, must accept that for another. In like manner, it is impossible to serve at the same time heroes or spirits of different natures. But in regard to the highest God, who is subject to no suffering or loss, it is absurd to be on our guard against serving several little gods, as when we had to do with semi-gods, or other spirits of that sort. He who serves thus many little gods does that which is pleasing to the Most High God, because thus he honors those who belong to Him. It is indeed wrong to give honor to any to whom the great God has not given liberties, but in honoring and worshipping all belonging to God, we will not displease him who is their master.

And indeed he who, when speaking of God, asserts that there is only one who may be called Lord, speaks impiously, implying that there are separate factions in the divine kingdom, and that there

exists one who is his enemy; therefore he divides the kingdom of God, and encourages sedition therein.

Counter-Lay No. 40.

The reasoning of Celsus, such as it is expounded by Origen, is not easy to understand. We can better grasp it by thinking about the reason of the insistence of Islam on the famous war cry: "There is no God but Allah" and about the scandal known as the satanic verses (the three goddesses daughters of Allah).

Celsus is perfectly right on this point; as on that which follows. There is no reason for reserving to the only triad Father-Son-Holy Ghost the theological reasoning of the single god in three persons or hypostases (vyuha in Hinduism); there can be a holy poly-unity, a Single To Be God in several persons or hypostases like Zeus, Taranis, Isis, Lug, Hesus, Osiris, the Celtic Hercules called Ogmios, etc.

Such is also the alternative. Either there is a dualism, God and Devil are of equal force and clash in a fight with an uncertain * outcome. Or the devil and the demons can act in this world only with the permission of the great God and with his agreement, since he is much more powerful than them, and that changes everything.

* Except in the case of Zoroastrianism and its heirs, where the final triumph of the forces of light is assured what will save the world and will bring xvarnah back in it, unlike Manicheism where only souls can be saved and not the world.

If you tell them that Jesus is not the single Son of God, but that God is the Father of all, and that he alone ought to be truly worshipped, they will not consent to discontinue their worship of him who is their leader in the sedition. They call him Son of God, not out of any extreme reverence for the great God, but from a wild will to extol this Christ.

That I may give a true representation of their faith, I will use their own words, as given in the book which is called Celestial Dialogue: "If the Son is mightier than God and the Son of man is Lord over him, who else than the Son can be Lord over that God who is the ruler over all things? How comes it that while so many go about the well, no one goes down into it? Why are you afraid when you have gone so far on the way? Answer: You are mistaken, for I lack neither courage nor weapons."

Counter-Lay No. 41.

The author of this compilation, Peter DeLaCrau, being neither Pico della Mirandola neither a fount of science, nor a fortiori a prophet or a man of God, but an ordinary human being; he confesses humbly that, for once, he does not see very well to what Celsus alludes in this fragment of his work. Damage, to know it would have much interested him! It is apparently a text resulting from the (once again?) Gnostic Christian movement and entitled "Celestial Dialogue."

Is it not evident, then, that their views are precisely such as I have described them to be? They suppose that another God, who is above the heavens, is the Father of him whom with one accord they honor, that they may honor this Son of man alone, whom they exalt instead of the great God, and whom they assert to be stronger than the God who rules the world, and that he rules over him. And hence that maxim of theirs, "It is impossible to serve two masters at the same time", is maintained for the purpose of keeping up the party who are on the side of this Lord.

ORIGEN'S COMMENTARY. Christians shrink from raising altars, statues, and temples; and this, Celsus thinks, is the badge or distinctive mark of a secret and forbidden society.

God is the God of all alike; he is good, he stands in need of nothing, and he is without jealousy. What, then, is there to hinder those who are most devoted to his person from taking part in public feasts. If these idols are nothing, what harm will there be in taking part in their feast? On the other hand, if they are spirits, it is certain that they too are creatures of the great God, and that we must believe in them, sacrifice to them according to the laws, and pray to them, that they may be propitious to us.

Counter -Lay No. 42.

Celsus is perfectly right, the real explanation of this attitude of rejection of the early Christians towards all that did not result from Judaism is in no way the vain philosophical or metaphysical pretext that they put forward for that; "Nobody can serve two Masters at the same time." A Christian of today indeed

can very well visit a Shinto temple in Japan or attend the marriage of a Muslim friend. The only true cause of this intolerance of then on the behalf of Christians is that they still had in their inheritance the old anti goy or anti goyim racism of their Jewish ancestors.

If in obedience to the traditions of their fathers they abstain from such sacrifices, they must also abstain from all animal food, in accordance with the opinions of Pythagoras, who thus showed his respect for the soul and its bodily organs. But if, as they say, they abstain that they may not eat along with demons, I admire their wisdom, in having at length understood, that whenever they eat they eat with demons, although they only refuse to do so when they are looking upon an animal sacrificed. But when they eat bread, or drink wine, or taste fruits, do they not also receive these things, as well as the water they drink and the air they breathe, from certain spirits, to whom have been assigned these different kingdoms of nature?

We must either not live, and indeed not come into this life at all, or we must do so on condition that we give thanks first fruits and prayers to genies, who have been set over the things of this world: and that we must do as long as we live, in order that they may prove good and propitious for us.

The learned Greeks say well that the human soul at its birth is placed under the charge of certain genies.

The satrap of a Persian or Roman monarch, or ruler or general or governor, even those who fill lower offices of trust or service in the state, would be able to chastise those who despised them and will the satraps and ministers of earth and air be insulted with impunity?

If they who are addressed are called upon by barbarous names, they will have power, but no longer will they have any if they are addressed in Greek or Latin.

ORIGEN'S COMMENTARY.

Celsus next represents a Christian as saying: "Behold, I go up to a statue of Jupiter or Apollo, or some other god, I revile it, and beat it, yet it takes no vengeance on me."

Do you not see, good sir, that even your own demon is not only reviled, but banished from every land and sea, and you yourselves, who are as it were an image dedicated to him, are bound and led to punishment, and fastened to the stake, whilst your demon--or, as you call him, 'the Son of God'--takes no vengeance on the evildoer?

You will not endure his being compared with Zeus or Apollo. You mock and revile the statues of our gods; but if you had reviled Bacchus or Hercules in person, you would not perhaps have done so with impunity. But those who crucified your God when present among men, suffered nothing for it, either at the time or during the whole of their lives. And what new thing has there happened since then to make us believe that he was not an impostor, but the Son of God?

He who sent his son with certain instructions for mankind, allowed him to be thus cruelly treated, and his instructions to perish with him, without ever during all this long time showing the slightest concern? What father was ever so inhuman? Perhaps, indeed, you may say that he suffered so much, because it was his wish to bear what came to him. But is it open to those whom you maliciously revile, to adopt the same language, and say that they wish precisely to be reviled, and therefore they bear it with patience; for it is best to deal equally with both sides, although these (gods) severely punish the scorner, so that he must either flee and hide himself, or be taken and perish.

Counter-Lay No. 43.

Celsus is a poor prophet. Hundred and fifty years later precisely (starting from the Edict of Milan passed by Constantine) distinguished favors began to be lavished on the Christians who were excessively favored by the emperor. On the other hand, Celsus once again is perfectly right. The "double standard" is one of the constants of the pseudo-reasoning of the Judeo-Muslim-Christians.

What need is there to collect all the oracular responses, which have been delivered by priests and priestesses, as well as by others, whether men or women, who were under a divine influence? All the

wonderful things that have been heard issuing from the inner sanctuary?--all the revelations that have been made to those who consulted the sacrificial victims? And all the knowledge that has been conveyed to men by other signs and prodigies? To some the gods have appeared in visible forms. The world is full of such instances. How many cities have been built in obedience to commands received from oracles; how often, in the same way, delivered from disease and famine! Or again, how many cities, from disregard or forgetfulness of these oracles, have perished miserably! How many colonies have been established and made to flourish by following their orders! How many princes and private persons have, from this cause, had prosperity or adversity! How many women who mourned over their childlessness, have obtained the blessing they asked for!

Counter-Lay No 44.

Case for example of the Celtic-Roman spring sanctuaries, of the waters in Bath and of the spring of Chamalieres (in France).

How many have turned away from themselves the anger of spirits! How many who were maimed in their limbs, have had the use of them restored! And again, how many have met with summary punishment for showing want of reverence to the temples; some being instantly seized with madness, others openly confessing their crimes, others having put an end to their lives, and others having become the victims of incurable maladies! Some even have been slain by a terrible voice issuing from the inner sanctuary.

Just as you, good sir, believe in eternal punishments, so also do the priests who interpret and initiate into the sacred mysteries. The same punishments with which you threaten others, they threaten you. Now it is worthy of examination, which of the two is more firmly established as true; for both parties contend with equal assurance that the truth is on their side. But if we require proofs, the priests of the heathen gods produce many that are clear and convincing, partly from wonders performed by demons, and partly from the answers given by oracles, or various other modes of divination.

Besides, is it not most absurd and inconsistent in you, on the one hand, to make so much of the body as you do, to expect that this body will rise again [from among the dead], as though it were the best and most precious part of us; and , on the other, to expose it to such tortures as though it were worthless?

The men who hold such notions, and therefore are so attached to the body, are not worthy of being reasoned with; for in this and in other respects they show themselves to be gross, impure, and bent upon revolting without any reason from the common belief.

So I shall direct my discourse to those who hope for the enjoyment of eternal life with the great God by means of the soul or mind, whether they choose to call it a spiritual substance, an intelligent spirit, holy and blessed, a living soul, the heavenly and indestructible emanation of a divine and incorporeal nature, in short by whatever name they will designate the spiritual part of man. They are rightly persuaded that those who live well shall be blessed, and the unrighteous shall all suffer everlasting punishments. From this doctrine therefore neither they nor any other should ever swerve.

Since men are born united to a body, whether to suit the order of the universe, or that they may in that way suffer the punishment of sin; or because the soul is oppressed by certain passions until it is purged from these at the appointed period of time-for, according to Empedocles, all mankind must be banished from the abodes of the blessed for 30,000 years-we must therefore believe that they are entrusted to certain beings as keepers of this prison-house.

Counter-Lay No. 45.

Note in connection with the Fortunate Islands or Islands of the Blessed .

The peoples located by the Greeks beyond the Pillars of Hercules by going towards north, were all more or less Celtic, from Tartessus, of which the best known king had a Celtic name, Arganthonius, to the Cimbri in Denmark. Many men or peoples designated with the name of Hyperboreans by the Greeks (Abarix for example) therefore were in reality quite simply some Celts. The Greeks consequently were very early in touch with this civilization and its legends. Particularly these of the Islands in the west of the world where the sun sets down or these in the north of the world where the sun never sets (see the voyages of Pytheas, etc.).

The Christians must make their choice between two alternatives.

-If they refuse to render due service to the gods, and to respect those who are set over this service, let them not come to manhood, or marry wives, or have children, or indeed take any share in the affairs of life; but let them depart with all speed, and leave no posterity behind them, that such a race may become extinct from the face of the earth.

-Or, on the other hand, if they will take wives, bring up children, taste of the fruits of the earth, partake of all the blessings of life, and bear its appointed sorrows (for nature herself has allotted sorrows to all men; for sorrows must exist, and earth is the only place for them), then must they discharge the duties of life until they are released from its bonds, and render due honor to those beings who control the affairs of the world, if they would not show themselves ungrateful to them. For it would be unjust in them, after receiving the good things which they dispense, to offer them nothing in return.

Let anyone inquire of the Egyptians, and he will find that everything, even to the most insignificant, is committed to the care of certain genies. The body of man is divided into thirty-six parts, and as many genies of the air are appointed to the care of it, each having charge of a different part, but it is true that others make the number much larger. All these genies have names in the language of that country ; as Chnoumen, Chnachoumen, Cnat, Sicat, Biou, Erou, Erebiou, Ramanor, Reianoor, and other such Egyptian names. They call upon them, and are cured of diseases of this particular part of the body. What, then, is there to prevent a man from giving honor to these or to others, if he would rather be in health than be sick, rather have prosperity than adversity, and be freed as much as possible from all plagues and troubles?

Care, however, must be taken lest any one, by familiarizing his mind with these matters, should become too much engrossed with them, lest, through an excessive regard for the body, he should have his mind turned away from higher things, and allow them to pass into oblivion.

The more just opinion is that spirits desire nothing and need nothing, but that they take pleasure in those who discharge towards them offices of piety.

But perhaps we ought not to despise the opinion of those wise men who say that most of the earth spirits are taken up with carnal indulgence, blood, odors, sweet sounds, and other such sensual things; and therefore they are unable to do more than heal the body, foretell the fortunes of men and cities, or do other such things as relate to this mortal life.

Therefore we must offer sacrifices to them, in so far as they are profitable to us, for to offer them indiscriminately is not allowed by reason.

Counter-Lay No. 46.

The ideas that Celsus expounds then explain mainly the more or less violent persecutions undergone at certain times by the most fanatic ones of the Christians, the Parabolani (some true Taliban). But we are nevertheless not forced to go as far as obsequiousness.

We must never in any way lose our hold of God, whether by day or by night, whether in public or in secret, whether in word or in deed, in whatever we do, or abstain from doing.

If this is the case, what harm is there in seeking the favor of the rulers of the earth, whether of a nature different from ours, or human princes and emperors ? For these have gained their dignity through the instrumentality by God of spirits or genies.

Counter-Lay No. 47.

In other words, genies spirits or demons are the instruments of the divine Providence, some secondary causation in a way.

We are not so mad as to stir up against us the wrath of emperors and princes, which will bring upon us sufferings and tortures, or even death.

And if anyone commands you to celebrate the sun, or to sing a joyful triumphal song in praise of Minerva, to celebrate their praises seem will be like the higher praise rendered to the highest God; for piety, in extending to all things, becomes more perfect.

If you are commanded to swear loyalty to a human monarch, there is nothing wrong in that. For to him has been given whatever there is upon earth; and whatever you receive in this life, you receive from him.

We must not disobey the ancient writer, who said long ago: "Let one be king, whom the son of crafty Saturn appointed!" If you set aside this maxim, you will deservedly suffer for it at the hands of the emperor. For if all were to do the same as you, there would be nothing to prevent his being left in utter solitude or desertion, and the affairs of the men would fall into the hands of the wildest or most lawless barbarians; then there would no longer remain on earth any of the glory of your religion or of the true wisdom.

You do not think all the same that if the Romans were, in compliance with your wish, to neglect their traditional duties to gods and men, and were to worship the Most High, or whatever you please to call him, that he will come down and fight for them, so that they shall need no other help than his.

Counter -Lay No. 48.

There still Celsus proves to be a poor prophet if we consider what is said traditionally in the Christian circles in connection with the victory of the emperor Constantine at Milvius in 312 (*in hoc signo vinces*).

For this same God, as yourselves say, promised of old this and much more to those who served him, and see in what way he has helped them and you! They, in place of being masters of the whole world, are left with not so much as a patch of ground or a home; and as for you, if any of you transgresses even in secret, their prohibition, he is sought out and punished with death.

Surely it is intolerable for you to say that if our present rulers, on embracing your opinions, are defeated by the enemy, you will still be able to persuade those who rule after them; and after these have been beaten, you will persuade their successors and so on... If only it were possible that all the inhabitants of Asia, Europe, and Libya, Greeks and Barbarians, all to the uttermost ends of the earth, were to come under one law! But anyone who thinks this possible, knows nothing.

Until at length perhaps, when all who have yielded to your persuasion have been vanquished some more prudent ruler shall arise, with the foresight of what is impending, and will destroy you all utterly before he himself perishes.

ORIGEN'S CONCLUSION.

Therefore Celsus urges us to help the emperor with all our might, and to labor with him in the maintenance of justice, to fight for him; and if he requires it, to fight under him, or lead an army along with him. Celsus also urges us to take office in the government of the country, if that is required for the maintenance of the laws and the support of religion.

EDITOR'S CONCLUSION.

Is it necessary to specify that we do not share all the ideas of Celsus and that Greek philosophy, as John Toland saw it very well, is on certain points too, highly debatable.

FOR COMPARISON.

In order to compensate for the fact that we will not mention here the famous life of Jesus by Renan (1863), below are some excerpts of how a great modern-day mind can see Christianity.

"The sight of the Acropolis was like a revelation of the Divine, such as that which I experienced when, gazing down upon the valley of the Jordan from the heights of Casyoun, I first felt the living reality of the Gospel. The whole world then appeared to me barbarian. The East repelled me by its pomp, its ostentation, and its impostures. The Romans were merely rough soldiers; the majesty of the noblest Roman of them all, of an Augustus and a Trajan, was but attitudinising compared to the ease and simple nobility of these proud and peaceful citizens. Celts, Germans, and Slavs appeared as conscientious but scarcely civilized Scythians. Our own Middle Ages seemed to me devoid of elegance and style, disfigured by misplaced pride and pedantry, Charlemagne was nothing more than an awkward German stableman; our knights louts at whom Themistocles and Alcibiades would have laughed. But here you had a whole people of aristocrats, a general public composed entirely of connoisseurs, a democracy which was capable of distinguishing shades of art so delicate that even our most refined judges can scarcely appreciate them. Here you had a public capable of understanding in what consisted the beauty of the Propylon and the superiority of the sculptures of the Parthenon. This revelation of true and simple grandeur went to my very soul. All that I had hit her to seen seemed to me the awkward effort of a Jesuitical art, a rococo mixture of silly pomp, charlatanism, and caricature.

These sentiments were stronger as I stood on the Acropolis than anywhere else....there are none of those deceptions which, in French churches more particularly, give the idea of being intended to mislead the Divinity as to the value of the offering. The aspect of rectitude and seriousness which I had before me caused me to blush at the thought of having often done sacrifice to a less pure ideal. The hours which I passed on the sacred eminence were hours of prayer. My whole life unfolded itself, as in a general confession, before my eyes. But the most singular thing was that in confessing my sins I got to like them, and my resolve to become classical eventually drove me into just the opposite direction. An old document which I have lighted upon among my memoranda of travel contains the following:

PRAYER WHICH I SAID ON THE ACROPOLIS WHEN I HAD SUCCEEDED IN UNDERSTANDING THE PERFECT BEAUTY OF IT.

"Oh! nobility! Oh! true and simple beauty! Goddess, the worship of whom signifies reason and wisdom, thou whose temple is an eternal lesson of conscience and truth, I come late to the threshold of thy mysteries; I bring to the foot of thy altar much remorse. Ere finding thee, I have had to make infinite search. The initiation which you did confer by a smile upon the Athenian at his birth I have acquired by force of reflection and long labor.

"I am born, O goddess of the blue eyes, of barbarian parents, among the good and virtuous Cimmerians who dwell by the shore of a melancholy sea, bristling with rocks ever lashed by the storm. The sun is scarcely known in this country, its flowers are seaweed, marine plants, and the colored shells which are gathered in the recesses of lonely bays. The clouds seem colorless, and even joy is rather sorrowful there; but fountains of fresh water spring out of the rocks, and the eyes of the young girls are like the green fountains in which, with their beds of waving herbs, the sky is mirrored.

"My forefathers, as far as we can trace them, have passed their lives in navigating the distant seas, which your Argonauts did not know, I used to hear as a child the songs which told of voyages to the Pole; I was cradled amid the souvenir of floating ice, of misty seas like milk, of islands peopled with birds which now and again would warble, and which, when they rose in flight, darkened the air.

"Priests of a strange creed, handed down from the Syrians of Palestine, brought me up. These priests were wise and good. They taught me long lessons of Cronos, who created the world, and of his son, who, as they told me, made a journey upon earth. Their temples are thrice as lofty as thine, O Eurhythmia, and dense like forests. But they are not enduring, and crumble to pieces at the end of five or six hundred years. They are the fantastic creation of barbarians, who vainly imagine that they can succeed without observing the rules which thou hast laid down, O Reason! Yet these temples pleased

me, for I had not then studied thy divine art and God was present to me in them. Hymns were sung there, and among those which I can remember were: "Hail, star of the sea... Queen of those who mourn in this valley of tears..." or again, "Mystical rose, tower of ivory, house of gold, star of the morning..." Yes, Goddess, when I recall these hymns of praise my heart melts, and I become almost an apostate. Forgive me this absurdity; thou canst not imagine the charm which these barbarians have imparted to verse, and how hard it is to follow the path of pure reason.

"And if you knew how difficult it has become to serve thee. All nobility has disappeared. The Scythians have conquered the world. There is no longer a Republic of free citizens; the world is governed by kings whose blood scarcely courses in their veins, and at whose majesty you would smile. Heavy hyperboreans denounce thy servants as frivolous... A formidable Panbaeotia, a league of fools, weighs down upon the world with a pall of lead. Thou must fain despise even those who pay your worship. Do you remember the Caledonian who half a century ago broke up thy temple with a hammer to carry it away with him to Thule? He is no worse than the rest... I wrote in accordance with some of the rules which you love, O Théonoé, the life of the young god whom I served in my childhood, and for this they beat me like a Euhemerus and wonder what my motives can be, believing only in those things which enrich their trapezite tables. And why do we write the lives of the gods if it is not to make the reader love what is divine in them, and to show that this divine past yet lives and will ever live in the heart of humanity?

"Dost thou remember the day when, Dionysodorus being archon, an ugly little Jew, speaking the Greek of the Syrians, came hither, passed beneath thy porch without understanding you misread thy inscriptions, and imagined that he had discovered within thy walls an altar dedicated to what he called the Unknown God? Well, this little Jew was believed; for a thousand years thou hast been treated as an idol, O Truth! for a thousand years the world has been a desert in which no flower bloomed (Ernest Renan; *Recollections of My Youth*, 1883, chapter II). But let's go now to Jesus' life according to Celsus and not according to Renan.

COUNTER-LAY No. 49.

LIFE AND DEATH OF JESUS ACCORDING TO CELSUS.

THE WORK OF CELSUS HAVING NOT REACHED US BECAUSE OF THE CHRISTIAN CENSORSHIP WHICH WAS UNLEASHED AGAINST IT, OUR READER WILL QUICKLY WONDER, BUT FROM WHERE DO YOU GET ALL THESE CONSIDERATIONS ON JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY THAT YOU ASCRIBE TO HIM?
ANSWER...

FROM THE WORK OF THE GREAT CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN SPECIALIST IN BIBLICAL EXEGESIS ORIGEN (185 ?253) ENTITLED IN GREEK " PROS TON EPIGEGRAMMENON KELSOU ALETHE LOGON " OR IN LATIN "CONTRA CELSUM," AND WHICH, AS FOR IT, WAS COPIED AND COPIED AGAIN, WELL, BY THE COPYIST MONKS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

"The Christians have corrupted the Gospel from its original integrity, to a threefold, and fourfold, and many-fold degrees, and have remodeled it, so that they might be able to answer objections." It is there the preliminary, but fundamental, proposition, on which Celsus insisted. And it will also be, rightly or wrongly, the opinion of Muhammad four centuries after.

According to Celsus the accounts of the sectarians of Jesus - those which are reported in the New Testament - are therefore extremely distant from what reality was.

This assertion of Celsus will be taken over by Porphyry, around 270 – a generation after Origen - who will affirm that "the evangelists are inventors and not historians of the events they tell concerning Jesus" (fragment No. 15 of the Harnack edition).

Same story, in the 4th century, in Faustus of Milevis, Manichean bishop died circa 390, and author of a tract in 33 books, the Capitula, on which his former follower Augustine commented after his death in his Contra Faustum. The author stresses that the Gospels were made up neither by Jesus, nor by his apostles, Matthew, and John, nor by their disciples, Mark and Luke; but by late writers who usurped the names of the Apostles and of their disciples, to validate their "discordant and contradictory" statements. He declares that it is well known.

"If there are parts of the Testament of the Father which we are not bound to observe (for you attribute the Jewish law to the father, and it is well known that many things in it shock you, and make you ashamed, so that in heart you no longer regard it as free from corruption, though, as you believe, the Father Himself partly wrote it for you with His own finger while part was written by Moses, who was faithful and trustworthy), the Testament of the Son must be equally liable to corruption, and may equally well contain objectionable things; especially as it is allowed not to have been written by the Son Himself, nor by His apostles but long after, by some unknown men, who, lest they should be suspected of writing of things they knew nothing of, gave to their books the names of the apostles, or of those who were thought to have followed the apostles, declaring the contents to be according to these originals. In this, I think, they do grievous wrong to the disciple of Christ, by quoting their authority for the discordant and contradictory statements in these writings, saying that it was, according to them, that they wrote the Gospels, which are so full of errors and discrepancies, both in facts and in opinions, that they can be harmonized neither with themselves nor with one another."

The Gospels therefore, having been rewritten many times - Celsus, Porphyry, Faustus of Milevis- they comprise several editorial layers; isn't it possible to highlight certain elements falling under the oldest, if not original composition of these Scriptures, elements likely to point out the real profile of Christ, the one who is presented by the Jew of Celsus, for example?

Celsus believes by no means in the divinity of Christ (and therefore in his resurrection).

"Such a body as yours could not have belonged to the great God. The body of the great god would not have been so generated as you, O Jesus, were.In their books the great God does the most shameless deeds, or suffers the most shameless sufferings.

For what better indeed was it for the great God to eat the meat of sheep, or to drink vinegar and gall, than to feed on filth?The body of the great god is not nourished with such food... His person did not differ in any respect from another, but was, as they report, little, and ill-favored, and ignoble.

Moreover he did not show himself to be pure from all evil.....

Christians ridicule those who worship Jupiter, because his tomb is pointed out in the island of Crete; and yet they worship him who rose from the dead, although ignorant of the grounds on which the Cretans observe such a custom."

In the eyes of Celsus, the Christians believe to adore a divine being; they adore in fact only a dead. And this dead is not resurrected.

"The question is whether any one who was really dead ever rose with a veritable body."

While alive he is seen " but when dead he rose again, and showed the marks of his execution, and how his hands were pierced with nails. However who beheld this? A half-frantic woman, as you state, and some other one, perhaps, of those who were engaged in the same system of delusion, who had either dreamed so, owing to a peculiar state of mind, or who, under the influence of a wandering imagination, had formed to himself an apparition according to his own wishes, which has been the case with numberless individuals; or, which is most probable, one who desired to impress others with this portent, and by such a falsehood to furnish thus an occasion to impostors like himself.

If Jesus desired to show that his power was really divine, he ought to have appeared to those who had ill-treated him, and to him who had condemned him, and to all men universally.

Who that is sent as a messenger conceals himself when he ought to make known his message?

While he was in the body, and no one believed upon him, he preached to all without intermission; but when he might have produced a powerful belief in himself after rising from the dead, he showed himself secretly only to one woman, and to his own boon companions,

While undergoing his punishment he was seen by all, but after his resurrection only by one?

If he wished to remain hid, why was there heard a voice from heaven proclaiming him to be the Son of God? And if he did not seek to remain concealed, why was he punished? And why did he die?

His having wished, by the punishments which he underwent, to teach us also to despise death, required that after his resurrection he should openly summon all men to the light, and instruct them in the object of his coming.

Moreover, this dead lived and ended wretchedly.

"Jesus having gathered around him ten or eleven persons of the people, the very wickedest of tax gatherers and fishermen, who had not acquired even the merest elements of learning, fled in company with them from place to place, and obtained his living in a shameful and begging manner....."

What a hard language and which tallies badly with the facts reported in the Gospels! Is the history, the true one, at this point different? Celsus will give us fuller precise details.

According to the Jew staged in the "True discourse" Jesus was considered as a goetian.

"These processes of his were those of a wicked and God-hated sorcerer (goetian)".

The Greek word "goes /go etos" is generally translated by a sorcerer, what aims to make Jesus a charlatan! The term generally used by the translators is that of a trickster and appears closer to reality. In Philo (De Specialibus legibus I, 315), the word is used in the meaning of "a false prophet, impostor," and it is the antithesis of "prophet."

Flavius Josephus (Antiquities, XX, 97) regards Theudas as a goetian whereas this one, in the same paragraph, claimed to be a prophet. The two terms, goetian (false prophet) and prophet, are therefore clearly opposed.

Jesus had declared: "Truly I say to you that this generation shall not pass till all these things be done. (Mk, 13, 30.) As nothing of all that kind happened, for Celsus, he is therefore a false prophet, and it is a point on which insists the imaginary Jew who is used as spokesperson by him.

"How should we deem him to be God, who not only in other respects, as was currently reported, performed none of his promises, but who also, after we had convicted him, and sentenced him as deserving of punishment, was found attempting to conceal himself, or endeavoring to escape in a most disgraceful manner, but who was betrayed by those very ones whom he called disciples? A God could neither flee nor be led away as a prisoner; and least of all could he be deserted and given up by those very ones who had been his associates, and had shared all things in common, had taken him for their teacher, who was deemed to be a Savior, and a son of the greatest God, even an angel."

The abandonment by all of at the time when Jesus is arrested is in Mark 14,50. This episode is reported three times by Saint Justin, once in his Apology and twice in his dialogue with Trypho.

"After he was crucified, even all His acquaintances forsook Him, having denied Him; and afterwards, when He had risen from the dead..." "For after His crucifixion, the disciples that accompanied Him were dispersed until he rose from the dead." "The apostles (who repented of their flight from Him when he was crucified, after he rose from the dead...)"

Height of infamy, this false prophet would be only a half-Jew bastard ! Isn't it said "that when she was pregnant she was turned out of doors by the carpenter to whom she had been betrothed, as having been guilty of adultery, because she bore a child to a certain soldier named Panthera."

What is the origin of this legend? Undoubtedly a nickname given to Jesus by the Jews or Judeo-Christians wanting to counter the ascending orientation in the Christianity of then, the Pagan-Christianity.

Nothing proves indeed that it is a Roman legionary, the nearest in the area first official Roman legion being stationed far enough away from Jerusalem, in Northern Syria (Raphanea, Laodicea, even Antiochia). Moreover, there were only two possible garrison sites in Judea at that time, Caesarea, the administrative capital, where there were to be a few hundred men at the disposal of the prefect, and the fortress Antonia in Jerusalem which had to house a few dozen reserve soldiers commanded by a Roman non-commissioned officer. The Panthera in question could therefore only have been an auxiliary soldier, not necessarily Jewish, it is true, of the Roman army.

The Contra Celsum is the first to mention this; we find it also in some passages of the Talmud concerning Jesus and removed by the ecclesiastical censorship of the Middle Ages; they were more or less well preserved in some rare manuscripts (codex of Munich, Strassburg, Vienna) and form what it is called the Hesronot Hashass.

TALMUD OF BABYLON.

- In the tractate Sanhedrin 43 a of the Babylonian Talmud "On the eve of the Passover Jesus was hanged" and in 67 a "...They hanged him (Ben Stada) on the eve of Passover. Ben was the son of Padira...the paramour was Pandira. The husband was Pappos ben Judah. His mother's name was Stada. His mother was Mary."

- In the tractate Shabbath 104,13 of the Babylonian Talmud : "The son of Stada was the son of Pandira."

- In other Hebrew writings, like the Toledot Yeshu, it is also alluded to the illegitimacy of Jesus. All these writings date from the 10th century, but were put together well before.

- The Book of the history of Jesus, published in 1681 by Wagenseil in his "Tela ignea Satanae" (volume II, p. 3,4,5) made Joseph Pandira the seducer of Mary and the father of Jesus but Pandira is there by no means a Roman soldier.

- In the History of Jesus published by Huldreich in 1705, Joseph Pandira of Nazareth is Jewish; and so little Roman, that instead of fleeing in Babylon, it is in Egypt that he withdraws with Mary her accomplice and his child. Or rather his children since the text speaks of brothers of Jesus. Allusion perhaps to the brothers and sisters of Jesus evoked in the Gospels.

Let us note that the name of Pantira, generally attributed to the father of Christ, is also allotted either to Christ himself, or to his grandfather Jacob (Epiphanius of Salamis in Cyprus). And that speaks for the assumption put forth above: Pandira is only a nickname. It is besides what Epiphanius indicates.

Pandira - also found in the form Panthira, Panthera, Pattira, etc. according to the texts - was also interpreted as a corruption of the Greek word parthenos "maiden, virgin"; Christ being known as the son of the Virgin "O uios tes parthenou," but this meaning cannot apply to Jacob known as Pandira! Another interpretation is that of Heulhard: Kana (zeal) + Torah (the Law).

N.B. We mention these painful polemics of the Talmud only for the sake of completeness because as far as the philosophical level is concerned, we find them unworthy.

More plausible is the etymology regarding Pandira as a hybrid term, resulting from the semi-Greek, semi-Hebraic language that the Jews of the Diaspora spoke; it can be a corruption of PAN-THORA, formed of the Greek pan "all" and from the Hebrew Thora "the Law."

In short, a hybrid name just like is that of Jesus-Christ, formed in the same way - on the Hebrew Yeshuah, shortened form of Yehoshua "Yahweh saves" (same name that Joshua) - and on the Greek Christos, transcribed Christus by Latin speakers = "anointed" (with oil). It is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Messiah. In the historical books of the Old Testament, they are especially the kings who are thus called, "crowned by an anointing of holy oil."

Let us have a little charity towards our Christian brethren and therefore let us admit very readily that the fact this nickname was applied as well to Jesus as to his father and his grandfather; eliminate any possibility of involvement of a true Roman soldier in this history.

Even let us admit that this nickname fits extremely well to Christ, if we refer to his words gathered in the Gospels. Mt, 5,17-18: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law (Torah) or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything (pan) is accomplished."

And in Luke (16, 16-17), he resumes: "It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the smallest point of God's law (Torah) to be overturned."

The only problem, it is that Jesus never loses, during his ministry, an opportunity of infringing the prescriptions of Moses. He violates deliberately the Sabbath, he despises sacrifices, he forgives the adulteress, he despises circumcision... and he lets himself be crucified on the cross, in spite of the curse of Moses on those who will be hanged at the gallows. Besides in front of this contradiction, Marcion* came from there to dispute the authenticity of this word (Tertullian, Ad. Marc. IV, 3,7).

* Bishop of Sinope in the 2nd century. Christian intellectual who first published the letters of Saint Paul (the first ten, gathered under the name of Apostolicon). Excommunicated by the Church of Rome in 144.

David had many sons and many daughters. We may say that probably his family did not die out as soon as. Moreover, according to 1 Chronicles 3, many families resulting from David came after the exile to live in Judaea. Gamaliel is known as being a descendant of David. "As there had been kept in the archives up to that time the genealogies of the Hebrews ... Herod burned all the genealogical records... A few of the careful, however, having obtained private records of their own, either by remembering the names or by getting them in some other way from the registers, pride themselves on preserving the memory of their noble extraction. Among these are those already mentioned, called Desposyni, on account of their connection with the family of the Savior..." (Eusebius, H.E.I. VII, 1314). It is therefore not impossible that at the beginning of the 1st century, some families could boast a Davidic ascent.

On several occasions, Jesus is called lestes, a Greek word generally translated by "a robber."

The Jew of Celsus compares Jesus to a robber and says for example that "any similarly shameless fellow might be able to say regarding even a robber and murderer (lestou kai androfonou) whom punishment had overtaken that such a one was not a robber, but a god, because he predicted to his fellows that he would suffer such punishment as he actually did suffer."

"No good general and leader of great multitudes was ever betrayed; nor even a wicked captain of robbers (lestarchos) and commander of very wicked men, who seemed to be of any use to his associates; but Jesus, having been betrayed by his subordinates, neither governed like a good general, nor, after deceiving his disciples, produced in the minds of the victims of his deceit that feeling of good will which, so to speak, would be manifested towards a brigand chief."

The Greek word lestes means "an armed robber" in the meaning of a brigand, pirate, in opposition to kleptes "a thief who steals" (cf "kleptomaniac").

In the case which occupies us, the translation of lestes, lestarchos by "a bandit, chief of brigands" are misleading, because too restrictive. Michael McGoodwin in his summary of the Jewish war also translates the Greek word by terrorist, guerilla fighter, freedom fighter.

- Ezekias, father of Judas the Galilean (the "sophist" founder of the movement of the Zealots), who was caught by Herod and was put to death for having devastated the borders of Syria with an important troop; is called archilestes "head of robbers" by Flavius Josephus (War of the Jews, I, 204 - II, 56; Antiquities XVII, 271).

- This same historian calls similarly Eleazar son of Deinaeus, chief of rebels in the reign of Caius, Claudius and Nero (Antiquities XX, 121/XX, 160-161; Wars of the Jews, II, 235-236).

Flavius Josephus, referring, at the time of the revolt of 66 - 73, to the band of "robbers" of Manahem (last of the sons of Judas the Galilean); use the substantive (in the plural genitive) lestrikou (Autobiography, XI, 46), or the adjective lestrikou (op. cit., V 21, p. 4).

In the same way, Eusebius (H.E. IV, VI, 1 - 3) considers Bar Kokhba, alias Simon Prince of Israel, as a "a robber and a murderer" (phonikos kai lestrikos tis aner). However this Bar Kokhba considered himself as the expected Messiah of Israel was recognized Messiah king, and that hundred years exactly after the mission, fallen through according to the Jews, of the Christ contemporary of Tiberius; he is the hero of the Jewish insurrection of 132-135, in the reign of Hadrian, which was caused by this Messianic hope of the Jews; he called "redemption" his separatist reign. The word lestes therefore refers to rebels, losers of History, and as such regarded as "robbers." The gestures of the overcome people are always depreciated by the historians. As the famous Brennos/Brennus said it: woe to the vanquished!

However lestes is the word which characterizes Jesus in the writings of Celsus . Could this one be, at the time of the disorders which marked the governorate of Pontius Pilate, leader of an armed troop, just like were Ezekias, Eleazar Ben Deinaeus, Manahem, then Bar-Kokhba? Jesus Barabbas "son of the Father."

If the Gospels had been written in Aramaic language, "son of the Father" would have been written BAR ABBA. In the versions of the New Testament transcribed in Greek, the word Abba is one of the rare Aramaic terms quoted on several occasions. In Mark (14, 36): Abba, Father, everything is possible for you; in the epistle to the Romans (8, 15): We cry: Abba! Father! In the epistle to the Galatians (4, 6): The Spirit of the Son (of God) calls out: Abba, Father.

However, in the Gospels, it is an individual appearing only at the time of the Passion which has this epithet; he is known as Barabbas (O legomenos Barabbas). The final -s final being a Hellenization of the Aramaic expression.

It is an important prisoner (Matthew, 27, sentenced for a murder that him and some rioters made during a sedition (Mark, 15,7); he is a lestes, a rebel (John, 18,40).

Moreover, this Barabbas is called Jesus in certain manuscripts of the Gospel according to Matthew. Six Greek manuscripts (of which the codex Koridethi of Tiflis, 9th century), two Syriac versions (Hierosolymitan Syriac version), an Armenian version and some scholia.

But at the time of Origen, one counted on the contrary the specimens which removed Jesus before Barabbas. Origen approves this removal besides because, he says, "ne nomen Jesus conveniat alicui iniquorum." "It is not fitting that the name of Jesus should have been borne by sinners" (Com. in Matt, 121). He thus gives the very clear reason why was removed, in a large number of specimens, the name Jesus before Barabbas. It is inconceivable, on the contrary, that this name was added and we cannot admit that such a characterized variant is the result of a mistake of copyists. It is therefore necessary to accept, with Burkitt, Mac Neil, and Klostermann that the text of Matthew mentions Jesus Barabbas. It is probable that the manuscripts of Mark and Luke were modified like the greatest number of those of Matthew.

We would have thus therefore the same day two Jesus...

- A Jesus SON OF GOD "Found subverting our nation, opposing payment of taxes to Caesar and claiming to be Messiah, a king." (Luke, 23,2), accused of sedition, called lestes by Celsus, and given up by envy/jealousy (phthonon) (Matthew, 27,18).

- A Jesus BARABBAS, imprisoned with his accomplices for a sedition (dia stasin) stirred up in the town and for a murder (phonon) (Luke XXIII, 19) (Mark XV, 7); also called "brigand" lestes (John XVIII, 40).

What a coincidence!

Several scholars suggested therefore that Jesus and Barabbas are actually the same character artificially duplicated.

Besides let us be astonished by the brutal reversal of a population whose Gospels, however, note, the passion for Jesus.

Celsus presents Christ as a rebel (*lestes*), a false prophet (*goetian* *), sentenced for crime, he was therefore not mistaken by ascribing to Christ the misdeeds of the seditious Barabbas judged at the same time as him.

* *Goetian* = false prophet since this Greek term is used in this sense by Flavius Josephus to describe the messianic leader Theudas, who calls himself a prophet.

As for the meaning of the Greek word *lèstés* (robber brigand) see also above.

The obligation for Pontius Pilate to release a Jew guilty of rebellion against Rome on a simple requirement of the crowd in Jerusalem is legally indefensible taking into consideration Roman law; no document comes to support the existence of such a Jewish custom. Flavius Josephus and Philo present to us rather the prefect Pilate as an intransigent senior official. The Sanhedrin was perhaps charged with the investigation of the case, and when it appeared clear that Jesus was guilty, he was given up to Pontius Pilate who only had authority to judge and make the sentence enforced. The offense fell well within the jurisdiction of the prefect as the choice of the torment inflicted to the Nazarene proves it: the crucifixion, archetypal Roman capital punishment. The authors of the Gospels - with an aim of depoliticizing their hero - played with words by affirming that Christ had been given up "by envy" (*phthonos*) and not for murder (*phonos*).

In other words, it is to depoliticize the events contemporary of Pontius Pilate that JESUS Barabbas (son of the Father) was separated from Jesus BARABBAS (in capitals), who was arrested, according to Mark during an insurrection *en te stasei* (XV, 7); what the gospel according to Luke changes prudently into a certain rebellion *dia stasin tina* (XXIII, 19).

The Latin word matching *lestes* is *latro*, it is it that we find in the Latin translation of the Gospel according to John: "*erat autem Barabbas latro*," and according to Matthew: "*duo latrones*."

The word *latro* has generally a military meaning, and designates two categories of enemies of the Roman order: inside, the brigands, the deserters, the outlaws, the social outcasts who wreak insecurity; outside, the peoples who attack the borders of the Roman world; it usually designated bands of insurgents who rejected the Roman authority, before and after Jesus. In our modern language, it would be the equivalent of "rebels."

Let us note in passing that this episode (that of the good thief) is well the proof that the hero of the Four Gospels was arrested during a rebellion because it is clear that they are two comrades in arms who speak to Jesus, the first to reproach him the failure of the coup attempt, the other to renew his certainty to die for the good cause.

The conventional translation of all the editions of the Gospels veils the historical meaning of this word. Latin *latro* "soldier, mercenary," then "highwayman" is opposed to *fur* "robber" like the Greek *lestes* is opposed to *kleps*.

A term perhaps analogous to that of *lèstés* and translated by the Latin *latro* will also be used in the 4th century by the praeses (governor) of Bithynia named Sossianus Hierocles in his work entitled in Greek *Philalethes logos* or "Truth loving discourse," which has disappeared today because of Christian censorship but of which two Christian authors, Eusebius of Caesarea and Lactantius, have preserved extracts.

Eusebius of Caesarea wrote a whole work (*Against Hierocles*) to refute him.

As for Lactantius below for example what can be found in his work on the *Divine Institutions*.

"Christ driven out by the Jews, gathered a band of nine hundred and committed acts of brigandage (*latrocinia fecisse*)" (*Divine Institutes*, V, III, 4).

Are these these disciples who, famished (in spite of the capacity that has Christ to multiply loaves and fishes) and condemned by the Pharisees; do not hesitate, by going through the grain fields, to pick some heads of grain and to eat them by rubbing them in their hands on Sabbath? (Mt XII, 1-8; Mk II, 23-28; Luke VI, 1-5.)

These data substantiate the interpretation given to the Greek word *lestes*; but it is not the matter of chance: the version of Celsus is that which was common among the - Greeks and Latin - authors adversary of the Christians, and continued in the 4th century: the governor of Bithynia (Sossianus Hierocles) took over the vocabulary of Celsus.

This topic also exists in the Jewish literature which is not entirely dumb about Christ. The Josippon - in a mention which is missing in the Greek version of Josephus – attributes a movement of revolt to rebels who were partisans of the Nazarene Jesus. The Toledot Yeshu of Wagenseil affirms that: “ With him [Jesus] were two thousand men, all of them wearing identical garments.....Yeshu came with all his band and Judas went out before him.....they seized Yeshu.....the men of Jerusalem overcame and defeated that bastard son of a menstruating woman with his faction and they killed many of them.”

These considerations also give all their meaning to the saying of the Jew of Celsus relating to the Apostles and that we have already mentioned above: “Jesus having gathered around him ten or eleven persons of the people, the very wickedest of tax gatherers and fishermen, who had not acquired even the merest elements of learning, fled in company with them from place to place, and obtained his living in a shameful and begging manner.”

It is an allegation which we find besides in the Epistle of Barnabas (V, 9): “ He chose His own apostles who were to preach His Gospel, [He did so from among those] who were sinners above all sin, that He might show He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners...."

However the Ancients never doubted the authenticity of this epistle, held in high regard by Clement of Alexandria, called a Catholic epistle by Origen; it is still in one of the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament, the Codex Sinaiticus; on the other hand, it disappeared from the Codex Vaticanus.

Several among the apostles seem, according to their denomination, to have been members of the Zealots. The presence of Zealot elements very active in the first Christian community is indeed generally admitted.

Such is the case of Simon called the Zealot, o Zélotes (according to Luke, 6,14-16 and Acts, 1,13), and in the parallel account of Mark (3, 18) and of Matthew (10, 4) the Kananaïos (ton Kananaion); designation translated wrongly by “Simon the Cananean” (“from the country of Canaan”). It is in fact the Greek transcription of an adjective drawn from the Hebrew word qana (plural qanaim meaning “Zealot”).

Some authors noticed the play on words existing between the Hebrew/Aramaic word qana “reed,” Latin “canna” and the Hebrew/Aramaic word qana “Zealot.” The Roman soldiers regarded every rebel as Zealot; and it would be the reason why, at the time of the Passion, they put in the right hand of Christ, as a royal scepter, a reed, as a sign of his membership to the sect of the Zealots (Matthew XXVII, 29). In addition, these same soldiers beat Christ on the head with a reed. However the reed does not have a stem suitable to beat somebody. They concluded from it that the reed qana was a symbol or a rather known sign at that time to designate a Zealot: qana.

In the same way, the epithet “Barjona” given to Simon-Peter (Matthew XVI, 17) generally translated by “Son of Jonah” (cf. John, I, 42) is regarded by certain authors as representing the words Hebrew barjon and Aramaic barjona meaning “outlaw, rebel.”

The nickname Iscariot applied to Judas (Matthew, X, 4) is explained, from the point of view of the language, as a corruption of sikariot “sicarius” in Aramaic language. The traditional explanation Is (ish) Keriot “man from the village of Keriot” is to be rejected; no place with this name is known, and the only example of a man who is named in this manner, Is Tob (II Samuel VI, 8), translated by “man of the village of Tob,” is prone to controversy.

It is to prove the membership of Christ to the sect of the Zealots that the Pharisees ask to him whether it is necessary to pay or not the tax due to Caesar (Matthew, 22,16; Mark 12,14; Luke, 20,22).

Certain scholars wonder whether the son of Zebedee - James and John - were not themselves members of the Zealots. The nickname, that Jesus gives them, Boanerges “sons of thunder” (Mk 3,17) is justified by their desire to resort to violence by proposing to destroy by the fire down from heaven the inhospitable Samaritans who refuse to receive Jesus (Luke 9,54).

But what a Zealot ultimately?

The word means “He who is zealous for the Law, zealous to achieve the orders of God”; it is drawn from a Greek verb meaning “to have ardor.”

The Zealots constitute the extremist wing of the party which refused to admit the Roman domination, party made official by Judas of Gamala (or of Galilee), founder of the fourth Jewish sect, died at the time of the Revolt of the Census, the year when is born Christ. According to Flavius Josephus (Ant. XVIII, 24), “Judas the Galilean was the author of the fourth branch of Jewish philosophy. These men agree in all other things with the Pharisaic notions; but they have an inviolable attachment to liberty,

and say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord. They also do not value dying any kinds of death, nor indeed do they heed the deaths of their relations and friends, nor can any such fear make them call any man lord"...."And since this immovable resolution of theirs is well known to a great many, I shall speak no further about that matter; nor am I afraid that anything I have said of them should be disbelieved, but rather fear, that what I have said is beneath the resolution they show when they undergo pain" (Antiquities XVIII, I, 6).

The Zealots represent the most perfect expression of the theocratic ideal; and to carry it out they preach the holy war, but they do not do only that to preach it, they secretly prepare it by attacking the occupying Roman power; initially by isolated actions and rebellions as it was the case in the reign of Herod; for finally starting an open war in 66-70 with Manahem, the last of the sons of Judas of Galilee as chief, and with his relative Eleazar Ben Jairus.

According to Hippolytus (Philosophumena or Refutation of all heresies, beginning of the 3rd century), the Zealots or Sicarii were Essenes (book IX , § 26). "The Essenes have, however, in the lapse of time, undergone divisions, and they do not preserve their system of training after a similar manner, inasmuch as they have been split up into four parties. For some of them discipline themselves above the requisite rules of the order, so that even they would not handle a current coin of the country, saying that they ought not either to carry, or behold, or fashion an image....

the adherents of another party, if they happen to hear anyone maintaining a discussion concerning God and His laws— supposing such to be an uncircumcised person, they will closely watch him and when they meet a person of this description in any place alone [Islamic terrorism before Islam is invented?] they will threaten to slay him if he refuses to undergo the rite of circumcision. Now, if the latter does not wish to comply with this request, an Essene spares not, but even slaughters. And it is from this occurrence that they have received their appellation, being denominated (by some) Zelotae, but by others Sicarii."

In 1964, Yadin, professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, announced the existence of a scroll discovered in Masada and whose text is exactly the same one as that of a roller discovered in Qumran. The great question is therefore, what was doing this scroll ascribed to the Essenes in the fortress of Masada occupied by the Zealots

Many scholars estimate, on the strength of Philo, that the Essenes were pacifist ones in the modern meaning of the word. Such is not the case. They simply abstained from taking part in wars as a long time as those were not in agreement with their concepts, i.e., ordered by God. Yadin thinks that the Essenes also took part in the Great Revolt against the Romans.

It appears therefore obvious, according to the writings of Josephus (the wars of the Jews, II, 20, 4) that they took part in the war by the Zealot's side. Josephus reports that at the beginning of the revolt the commander of the important central sector - N&W of Judaea - was a certain John the Essene. Yadin esteems that a considerable number of Essenes joined the rebellion, which, according to him, explains the presence of the scroll of the sect of Qumran in Masada. The debate remains open. But isn't it strange to see these modern scholars agreeing with Hippolytus?

The Roman response brought the destruction of the Temple and the bloody crushing of the Jewish resistance with the fall of Masada in 72. The Zealots did not disappear for all that: hundred years after the Crucifixion in the reign of Hadrian a new insurrection broke out where Simon Bar Kokhba made himself proclaimed at the same time Messiah and prince of Israel (with the support of Rabbi Akiba). This war was ended with 135 by the destruction of Jerusalem.

In many apologetic writings of the Antiquity, it is the memory of a criminal Jesus who was preserved. Thus, in the first half of the 3rd century, Minucius Felix, author of the Octavius, famous dialogue with three characters, stages a pagan, Caecilius Natalis, a Christian Octavius Januarius, the whole arbitrated by Minucius himself.

Caecilius":He who explains their ceremonies by reference to a man punished by extreme suffering for his wickedness, and to the deadly wood of the cross, appropriates fitting altars for reprobate and wicked men, that they may worship what they deserve. Now the story about the initiation of young novices is" (IX, 4).

Octavius: "For in that you attribute to our religion the worship of a criminal (hominem noxium) and his cross, you wander far from the neighborhood of the truth, by thinking either that a criminal (noxium) deserved, or that an earthly being was able, to be believed God." (XXIX, 2.)

It is possible that the work of Celsus is also the source of the argumentation of this Octavius.

In the beginning of the 4th century, we can read in the Passion of St. Tarachus and Andronicus: " Iniquissime, non scis quem invocas, Christum hominem quemdam factum, sub custodia Pontii Pilati positum, cujus acta reposita sunt."What means roughly (my 7 years of Latin are distant): " Wretch!

know you not that this Jesus, in whom you confide, was sentenced by Pontius Pilate! We have the acts of this malefactor.” [Editor’s note. No longer today].

In spite of variants, it is therefore still the same basic topic which returns. Porphyry: “ Christ was put to death by right-minded or just judges,—in other words, he deserved to die.”

The apologist Justin affirms, in his Dialogue with Trypho a Jew (§ 103) written in the middle of the 2nd century, that Jesus was attacked on the Mount of Olives by “ some of your nation, who had been sent by the Pharisees and Scribes, and teachers, came upon Him from the Mount of Olives, those whom Scripture called butting and prematurely destructive calves surrounded Him.” (This information does not appear in the canonical texts.)

Jesus therefore seems a “brigand” of course, but a brigand of a particular kind, because Celsus writes that it is a revolt (stasin) which was formerly the cause of the constitution of the Jewish people and later of the Christians.

In the same way that the Jews are Egyptians by descent, and had abandoned Egypt after revolting against the Egyptian state, and despising the customs of that people in matters of worship, they suffered from the adherents of Jesus, who believed in him as the Christ, the same treatment which they had inflicted upon the Egyptians; and the cause which led to the new state of things in either instance was a rebellion against the state....In the same way that the Hebrews dated the beginning of their political existence from the time of their rebellion, so also is this, that in the days of Jesus others who were Jews rebelled (estasiakenai) against the Jewish state, and became His followers.”

“Christians at first were few in number, and held the same opinions; but when they grew to be a great multitude, they were divided and separated, each wishing to have his own individual party: for this was their object from the beginning.”

This allegation of Celsus is clear and accurate. According to Celsus concretely, it is therefore as a leader of insurrectionists that Christ appeared.

Origène objects: “Neither Celsus nor they who think with him are able to point out any act on the part of Christians which savors of rebellion.”

Claudius (41 - 54) “Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus expelled them from Rome” (Claudius Iudaeos, impulsore Chresto assiduus tumultuantes, Roma expulit...). Various scholars affirm that Chrestus can be a Latinized Greek family name, Chrestos (pronounced Christos because of the phenomenon of iotacism) meaning “good,” and not a transliteration of Christos meaning “anointed,” equivalent of the Hebrew “messiah.” Possible! But that Jesus in the eyes of the authorities looked like a political agitator, there is no doubt. From time immemorial the (messianist or not) resistance fighters were compared to highwaymen in order to occult the political (or religious) motives of their action. Therefore let us not be astonished by the attitude of Celsus and that of the historians.

Obviously, this leader of rebels (archilestes), presented as a descendant of King David, revolted against the established order, presented himself as Messiah; “In accordance with prophecies,” which speak about the one who is to come as of a frightening conqueror being to become the king of the peoples (cf. Apocalypse). The true Jewish Messiah is always seen as a nationalist military leader (the Jewish people being the people chosen by God) having to subdue all the pagan peoples and to reign over the World. Such a design is opposed to the “Son of man,” according to Daniel, who is supposed to come from the Heaven and to found a kingdom which is not of this world.

JESUS ARREST.

The synoptic gospels mention only an intervention by the servants of the high priest reinforced by Pharisees, thus ultimately by the private militia of the Sanhedrin.

The most strangely accurate text in this regard is that of the Gospel of John, 18:12..

Jesus was arrested by a troop of indigenous auxiliaries (speira) placed under the orders of a chiliarch (chiliarchos) reinforced by men from the high priest (hyperetes).

3 Greek words are to be explained: speira, chiliarcos, and hyperetés.

The speira. Corresponds theoretically to the Roman cohort, i.e., about 600 men. Can designate any group of soldiers in general.

The chiliarch is the officer commanding theoretically a thousand men but it can also be the commander of a cohort or even less so in this case a simple tribune .

Hyperetes. Are servants or bailiffs who are members of the Temple's staff.

The titulus of the cross as for it (John 19, 19) I.N.R.I. suggests clearly a purely political crime.

As pastor Oscar Cullmann of Basel underlines it in his book *the State in the New Testament* : « Jesus was crucified by the Romans on the very political charge of being a messianic insurrectionist; such is the meaning of the inscription 'king of the Jews' which Pilate attached to the cross and it is between two *lestai*, two zealots, that Jesus was therefore crucified.

Cullmann suggests that up to half the disciples were Zealots but rather strangely he would deny that Jesus himself condoned these views and he speaks of the disciples as 'former' zealots.

Same case with Professor Brandon of Manchester: Jesus himself was not a zealot.

It would be therefore in reality a terrible a terrible miscarriage of justice!

Cullmann does not take into account the fact that the ecclesiastical censorship emptied the works of the historians of their substance. There lies the content of the problem. The desert of our information appeared in the Constantinian era, by concealing the non-religious existing documentation.

That Jesus is presented as a prophet in the eyes of his followers, and as a false prophet in the eyes of his opponents, that is understood very well. It is more difficult to adapt the reasons which make Jesus a *lestes* sentenced as such by the established authorities, to those which present this same Jesus as a peaceful being in the Gospels. "Is the miscarriage of justice" really due to a misunderstanding, or is it not explained by another reason? "Because what the Gospels present, it is not the Jesus such as he was in reality; but the idea that, under the combined influence of the belief and of the direct or indirect memories, people had at the time of their drafting; i.e., in the second Christian generation, at a moment when Christianity had already appreciably evolved. Professor Brandon wondered whether the peaceful "remarks" of Jesus would not have been introduced, afterwards; to make forget the violence whose Jesus and his disciples would have been guilty, and of which the purification of the Temple and the brawl in Gethsemane let a blurred memory remain.

There are in the Gospels terrible words which clash. There are, of course, the curses to the cities of the shore of the Lake Tiberias which did not believe in him; to the scribes and Pharisees (Mt 23,13-36) which accommodated relatively well the Roman presence, to Jerusalem which kills the prophets (Mt 23,37-39; Luke 13,34-35); to the present generation. "You snakes, you brood of vipers! Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation" (Mt 23 33-36).

But to that it is necessary to add injunctions which are those that a Zealot had been able to utter: "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Because I came to put division.

From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law. A man's enemies will be the members of his own household" (Mt 10,34-36, Luke 12,49-53).

"Whoever is not with me is against me" (Mt 12,30) (Luke 11,23).

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them"(Mt 5,17).

"I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me." (Luke, 19, 26-27).

"But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one." (Luke 22,36.) The term of sword cannot be taken metaphorically, but quite literally, because it is associated with concrete objects (purse, bag, cloak). We have there the categorical evidence that Jesus really recommended to his partisans to take a sword. The continuation proves it: " With that, one of Jesus's companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear" (Mt 26,51).

Jesus is astonished, moreover, that they come to arrest him by force : "Am I leading a rebellion (*lestes*), said Jesus, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me?Then everyone deserted him and fled" (Mk 14,48,50).

It is true that, in this last passage, Matthew makes Jesus say: "Put your sword back in its place,for all who draw the sword will die by the sword"; it is obviously a later additional clause. Not only is it contradicted by the context, but we find in the words of Jesus which survived the efforts of "pacification" of the writers, an undeniable content of violence. As Bertrand Russell makes it noticed, "one does find repeatedly in the Gospels a vindictive fury against those people who would not listen to his preaching."

The charge to be a troublemaker sticks to Christ, equated with a Davidic pretender aspiring to the throne of Israel.

"We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king....He stirs up the people" (Luke 23,2,5). The Nazarenes have the same reputation:

"We have found this man (Paul) to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazorene sect. He has even attempted to profane the Temple " (Acts XXIV, 5).

The Messiah, according to the beliefs of the time, was to be an earthly king, what explains the concern of Herod and the tradition of the murder of the boys in Bethlehem by the latter. (We say well "tradition.")

First of all, let us point out some of the cases which were the subject of gossip during the reign of Herod the great and the governorate of Pontius Pilate, reported by Flavius Josephus and Philo: sedition of Judas and Matthias (case of the golden eagle); deeds of Ezekias (father of Judas of Galilee); ransack of the royal arsenal at Sepphoris by Judas; case of the standards in the effigy of Caesar introduced by night in Jerusalem and which started a riot; the case of the misappropriation of the sacred treasure for the construction of an aqueduct; the massacre of Galileans to which Luke referred; the affair of the gold shields; the massacre of Mount Gerizim, etc.

The incident of the Temple.

Most of dogmatic or theological interpretations of this episode accept the history of the occupation of the Temple by Jesus, but they make it a spiritual or symbolic event.

The liberal critics rather tend towards doubting the authenticity of this episode: as the undertaking had required a great deployment of troops, they conclude from that it never took place.

Is it probable that Jesus could, without his followers themselves being armed; to present himself in the enclosure of the Temple, to drive out there with a simple whip of cord (sign of violence by itself) the merchants of cattle, sheep and pigeons, to scatter the coins of the exchangers and to overturn there their tables (John II, 14-15); it is to despise the presence of the guards, priests, Roman sentinels, with whom the garrison was reinforced in this period of Passover considered as being favorable to political agitations.

The sentence of the passage of Suidas, quoting Flavius Josephus: "Jesus officiated with the priests in the temple" must be borrowed from the integral Josephus and suggests that Christ found supports, probably in the young clergy.

The efforts made to give these passages "symbolic" or "allegorical" explanations yield in front of the obviousness of the text and the events such as we foresee them beyond the sources we have.

The Temple in Jerusalem was a vast building built in the 10th century before our era. Destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in - 586, it had been rebuilt hastily in - 518/516, on the return of the Jews from their exile in Babylon. At the time of the conquest of the Judaea by Pompeius in - 63, the Temple had to be besieged by the Roman legions (Antiquities XIV; Apion, II, 82).

Herod the great, foreign king (he came from Idumea) set up by the Romans, had undertaken to make Jerusalem one of the most beautiful cities in the Middle East; he rebuilds the sanctuary in a majestic way on a platform 460 m long 280 m wide occupying more than fourteen hectares; its rebuilding started in - 20 /-19. The peripheral buildings and the courts were completed only towards 62-64 of our era that is to say at the end of eighty years.

The descriptions of the Temple, destroyed in the year 70 during the siege of Jerusalem by the legionaries of Titus, were given to us by Flavius Josephus (War of the Jews, V, V; Antiquities VIII, 3), they were confirmed by the current reconstructions.

Many were the Jews who went there in pilgrimage once a year. A place of prayer, the Temple comprised on its circumferences, the hill of the Temple, in addition to dwellings for the officials, a vast complex of administrative buildings taking up a considerable number of people (up to 20.000 it is thought) to fulfill varied functions.

An important institution of the Jewish society, the Temple was also the place where the market took place, where all kinds of transactions were carried out. The authorities of the Temple managed the Treasure - the "Corban" - true National Bank (War of the Jews, VI, 282) where all the wealth of the

Jewish nation and of the diaspora was piled up; in the form of precious metals used in its decoration, as well as of gold coins and sums of money deposited by private individuals. Its protection was carried out by the Roman garrison settled in Jerusalem (a cohort of 500 to 600 men, accompanied by the usual auxiliaries) as well as by guards of the Temple; certainly very many, considering the importance of the places and of the crowds which passed there constantly. At the time of the great annual ceremonies of Passover, the multitude was considerable in the enclosure of the Temple, when the pilgrims come not only from Judaea and Galilee, but also from the whole diaspora, rushed. As the moment of Passover had the reputation to be favorable to the political agitations, the Romans reinforced their guards. The important garrison that they supported stood in the famous Tower Antonia, true fortress located at the North-West of the Temple Mount, and dominating all the Temple with its squares; moreover, it was connected to the porticos of the Temple by two staircases (Antiquities XV, 424). The Roman soldiers could thus enter the Temple easily and prevent the disorders (War of the Jews, V, 238-247). A few years later, when Paul was arrested (Acts XXI, 31-32 and 35) it is thus that the Roman tribune could intervene.

As Carmichael underlines it, it is incredible that Jesus could present himself in the enclosure of the Temple, scold bitterly the guards and the priests - without speaking about the Roman sentinels on duty, nor the famous exasperated exchangers - and "to hold" the Temple during some time; while using only his personal and spiritual authority.

The episode had to be important, because as of the "Cleansing" of the Temple, the priests and the scribes planned to make Jesus perish. It is there a central episode of the evangelical account. Jesus entered Jerusalem leading a troop of men; he occupied the Temple a certain time; he was betrayed, arrested, judged, sentenced and executed for rebellion.

According to the fourth Gospel (II, 14-15): "In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables."

The use of a "whip of cords" is already a sign of violence; but it gives only an extremely reduced image of what had to be the action undertaken by Jesus, in this period of Passover, in the middle of the thousands of pilgrims then present, of the many employees of the Temple, guards, and Roman soldiers. It is necessary to imagine the scene with the normal reaction of the cattle merchants, of sheep, without speaking about the exchangers in front of such processes. The truth had to be quite different, and the author of the fourth Gospel bowdlerized the event as far as to strip it of any reality. Robert Eisler pointed out as being out of doubt that the habit was to buy the doves from the authorities of the Temple themselves; so that the action of Jesus had to be directed directly against the official and Levite salesmen, and not against non-authorized merchants set up close to the Temple.

This tendency "to spiritualize" the facts was more obvious in the other Gospels (proof that the fourth Gospel is, for this account, older than the synoptic ones). The gospel according to Matthew is satisfied with saying: "

Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves" (XXI, 12). In the gospel according to Mark (XI, 11), we find the account of a visit of Jesus to the Temple, visits seemingly insignificant: "Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve."

But let us await for the continuation of the story (XI, 16): "Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts."

In other words, Jesus must have a sufficient armed force to make him able to capture this vast building and to keep it a certain time; on the evidence of the number of days during which he "taught" in the Temple, as he says to his pursuers, when they seized him (Mk XIV, 49). Moreover, this armed force was to be able to control not only the Roman soldiers and the guards of the Temple, but also the thousands of other Jews who would not have liked this initiative of a Galilean parvenu; according to the accounts which show the hostility of the Jewish crowd towards him after the sentence against Jesus.

In a word, to overcome the armed force, the followers of Jesus were to be armed themselves. And they were, it is undeniable.

CONCLUSION.

We have perhaps, with the Jew of Celsus - the version of the Romans of the time. But we cannot deny that Jesus had certain words not easily compatible with the God of love, and who find their full meaning "only if they are applied to the Zealots." Jesus has a behavior which by no means is fitting

with that of the savior God, the Christ known as “evangelical.” This discrepancy can be explained if these facts and words are those of a rebellious prophet, seen as a lestes and a goetian by Celsus and the critics of the first centuries, and being opposed to the Logos Christ .

According to Brandon, the presence of a Zealot (Simon) among Jesus’s disciples indicates that Zealot principles and aims were not incompatible with intimate participation in his mission. It is well as a Zealot that Jesus was sentenced by the Romans, it is between two lestei, two zealots, that he was crucified.

Where, then, did Jesus differ with the Zealots in this case?

To this question Brandon replies that Jesus’s conviction about the imminence of God’s kingdom, which would mean the end of Rome’s sovereignty, caused him to be less concerned than the Zealots with the immediate pursuit of the resistance to Rome. Jesus himself was not a Zealot.

According to Cullmann several of Jesus’s disciples had Zealot leanings, not only Simon, but probably Peter and Judas Iscariot (whose nickname Cullmann thinks may have come from the word sicarii, or the sect of the Assassins, who executed collaborators with the Romans with short daggers, particularly in festival crowds).

Nevertheless Cullman, for the same reason as Brandon, would deny that Jesus himself condoned these views. Jesus himself was not a Zealot.

Christ appears to us therefore with two singularly different faces. That can be understood only by an evolution of the historical Jesus liberator of Judaea into a Christ of love, savior of Mankind.

The Gnostic authors invented the Jesus, Word or Logos, emanation from the higher God; they made him go down literally on the body of the Jesus Christ crucified by Pontius Pilate. For that it was needed to depoliticize the latter, to remove from him “his first skin,” according to the expression of Renan and this is why the Jesus Christ of the Gospels is so incoherent or that the New Testament is full of contradictions.

The discordance between Celsus and the apologists like Origen comes from the fact that the first remembers primarily the “false prophet” executed for rebellion by Pontius Pilate; and that the second ones, on the contrary know only the semi-history, semi-mythical hybrid character that some Christian people made with him in the second century.

We can help comparing the fanaticism of the Zealots with the thirst for martyrdom of the first “Christians.” But comparison of behavior does not mean identity of belief necessarily.

After the crucifixion the Messianic movement was gradually divided into two different branches. One continuing to expect the Messiah, and consequently continuing the fight for independence, the other considering that Christ did not die, but is resurrected from the dead and that he is therefore well the announced Messiah.

But it is especially after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus and the destruction of the Temple in 70 that the illusions concerning the liberation of Israel collapse. The gap becomes wider still a little more between the two orientations ; the followers of Christ work out a new religion; most intransigent of the Messianists gather behind Bar Kokhba, whose uprising will be suppressed in 135; the State of Israel is then wiped off the map. The scission between the two sects from now on is consummated on the doctrinal level; their followers behave as warring brothers. About the year 150, Justin (First apology, 31) informs us that at the time of the war of Judaea, “Barchochebas, the leader of the revolt of the Jews, gave orders that Christians alone should be led to cruel punishments, unless they would deny Jesus Christ and utter blasphemy” (cf. also Eusebius, H.E. IV, VIII).

The Pharisees, themselves, accommodated themselves relatively well to the Roman occupation. At the time of the siege of Jerusalem, most famous of their doctors, Johanan Ben Zakkai, succeeds in leaving the city, and got from Vespasian the authorization to found a rabbinical school in the village of Javne close to Jaffa. There will be worked out, the Mishna (Repetition of the Law) the basic element around which will be born the Talmud.

The historians and the polemicists remembered especially the factual nature of the life of the Crucified of Pontius Pilate, pretender to the throne of David, came to apply all the Law (Panthora); announcing the nearest advent on earth of the Messianic times, the release of the foreign yoke, and consequently become rebellious to achieve his ends. His politico-religious program failed , an activist prophet for his partisans, but a false prophet (goetian) in the eyes of his opponents, he is regarded by the Romans and the Herodians as a rebel, a lestes; it is the fate of all the overcome leaders. Winner, he had been

proclaimed "king of the Jews" as the signboard of the cross suggests it (Jesus the Nazorene, king of the Jews) -; and as it was the case, hundred years after, for Simon prince of Israel, better known under the nickname of Bar Kokhba (Son of the Star); but who, once overcome, became Bar Koziba "Son of the lie" (Cassius Dio).

This setback was determining as well on the evolution of the Judaism as of the Christianity. Christ's faithful believed sufficiently in him to admit his resurrection and to see in him the Messiah. Upset by the defeat, they are attached too much to the memory of their charismatic leader to give up the hopes which they had placed in his person. Some of them even refuse to accept his final absence (cf. Slavonic version of Flavius Josephus).

They consider the earthly terrestrial life of Jesus only from the point of view of his glorification; from where the concealing of the essential facts referring to what he did in Jerusalem, from where the splitting of the character into a Jesus BARABBAS, historical character, and a JESUS Barabbas "son of the Father," the Jesus Christ of the Gospels.

His partisans knew to change his defeat into victory by affirming, first of all, that time had not come yet; then by transposing literally his earthly Kingdom of God in a Heavenly Kingdom, by depoliticizing the mission of Christ, by making Jesus say: "My Kingdom is not of this world"; thus changing the worldly hope of the Messianism into a spiritual hope.

The "miracle" was that the action of various currents of thought - as well Greek as Jewish - had as a result to transfigure the Christ Messiah Davidic pretender to the kingdom of Israel and crucified as an agitator by Pontius Pilate; as a Jesus Christ, prince of peace, and preacher of morals, redeemer of the World.

The new belief was transported out of Palestine, in the swirl of the world fed with Jewish and Greek civilizations (Gnostic currents, of Qumran, Neo-Platonism) and with the massive contribution of the Eastern worships from Hellenized Asia; in a world primarily characterized by the religious syncretism. The first Christian communities made considerable borrowing from the designs and the ritual ceremonies of the pagan mysteries (See John Toland).

The life of the evangelical Jesus shows indeed much resemblance to that of the myths of the Ancient world, as well Eastern as Greek and Roman. The triads for a long time preceded the Trinity. The Mysteries celebrated in the honor of Isis and Osiris in Egypt, Cybele and Attis in Phrygia, Adonis and Astarte in Syria, Tammuz in Mesopotamia, Mithra in Persia, Dionysus and Demeter in Greek land; where the sufferings, the death and the resurrection of the divinities, played a part all the more so determining in the genesis of the Christian religion, as they comprised a considerable emotional charge, and a great capacity of seduction. Toland attempted to show the influence of the mysteries on the formation of the Christology of St. Paul.

It is not in the Jewish world, it is not even in the properly Eastern world; it is in the Greco-Roman world that we discover the more striking analogies with the story of the miraculous conception of Jesus (legend of Attis, etc.....) ."

Justin Martyr, one of the first historians and defender of Christianity (100-165 of our era), wrote: "When we say that Jesus Christ was produced without sexual union, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended to heaven, we propound nothing new or different from what you believe regarding those whom you call the sons of Jupiter..... He was born of a virgin, accept this in common with what you accept of Perseus" (First apology chapters 21 and 22).

It is therefore obvious that Justin as well as other Christians of the time knew to what extent Christianity was similar in that with the pagan religions. However, Justin had a solution. The Devil had had perspicacity to arrive before Christ and to cause these characteristics in the pagan world.

The double belief in the Incarnation and Redemption, bases of the Paulinism, is a powerful element which contributed much to the change of Jesus Jewish prophet and patriot executed as a rebel against the State; in "Jesus, Son of God and born of a Virgin, Savior of the World dying for the expiation of our sins." The historical Jesus moved aside in front of the divinized Jesus.

In the 4th century, people will place the birth of the new God on December 25th, day of the winter solstice when the Nativity of the Sun (Natalis Invicti) was celebrated whereas nothing, but then nothing, in the Gospels, validates this completely symbolic date.

The ideological roots of Christianity therefore draw from the pagan religions. In this sense, we may say that, borrowed from the main worships then in vogue, the symbolic system and the rituals of the new religion (Eucharist, communion...) are previous to it (banquet of commensality "devogdonion" between the men and the god-or-demons, for example, worship of the demigods like Hesus or Hercules).

The syncretism which continues throughout the 3rd and 4th centuries, the wave of hope borne by the savior god-or-demons, supported by the expansion of the Roman Empire, made it possible the propagation of Christianity which; being based as of the time of Constantine, on a (then) activist and intolerant hierarchy, completely comparable with current Islamists, until in its preference for the black (see the orthodox priests still today in Greece); imposed it upon the illiterate crowd whereas, in the restricted circle of the well-read men, the muzzled intellectual elites could no longer put forward the least criticism.

The Logos is a topic borrowed from the Greek philosophers, it is the universal reason, the universal divine law which regulates at the same time the physical world and the moral world. But the Greeks never thought of giving to the Logos a distinct personality; it always remained for them a kind of abstraction, a cosmic force widespread throughout the world. The Jewish philosopher contemporary of Christ, Philo of Alexandria, develops a whole doctrine of the Logos in which he sees a power coming from God. However the Christian theologians, so to speak condensing this diffuse force, concretizing this abstraction, turned the Logos into a person, another God, a second God, the only son of God. Then, this divine character became flesh (Kai o logos sarx egeneto kai eskenosen en emin...) in the womb of a Virgin to give birth to Jesus Christ. (According to Hippolytus of Rome, Philosophumena or Refutation of all heresies, book X chapter 29.)

Origen distinguishes clearly between the complex elements that Jesus combined in his person. The man Jesus should not be confused with the Logos; if Christ suffered in his soul and his body, it is that this soul was human and human his body, without the essence of the divinity being changed in this union.

This evolution implied a repairing of the first texts of the New Testament which was completed practically only in the 4th century. Then, it was necessary to shrug off the writings of the first Christian historians (Papias, Julius Africanus, Hegesippus...), and to prune the writings of the non-religious historians (Josephus, Philo, Tacitus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio, etc) who are victims of all kinds of interpolations, changes and deletions. At the same time disappeared the tracts of the polemicists Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, the emperor Julian and others still. That was the "pious" work of the monks of the Early Middle Ages which had the monopoly of the preservation of the old parchments and papyrus, then of the transcription of the manuscripts which reached us.

This kind of substitution (phonon/phtonon) is not single and is found particularly when orthodoxy is in question or for reasons of suitability. Thus, in H.E. VI, V, Eusebius says that Potamiæna (martyr of Alexandria) was given up to erastes charged to make her lose her virginity; however the word erastes was replaced in certain manuscripts by the more suitable word aretas; in the same passage, the word pornoboskois, "who manages a house of ill repute," were replaced by monomachois "gladiators." And in many passages, the text of Eusebius seemed heretic in the eyes of such or such copyist who did not want to reproduce it such as it is; and who, non-content with introducing, to contradict the historian, marginal notices, did not hesitate to annotate it or to correct it. The modifications are recognizable when they are not copied in all the manuscripts. In the contrary case, there is no means to discern them in a sure way.

PORPHYRY OF TYRE (232-305).

Hellenized Phoenician, specialist in comparative religions, whose original name was Malchus, which means king, in Semitic language. He began by studying philosophy in Athens during about six years, with a rhetor called Longinus. Some think that it is this Longinus who would have advised him to change his name of Malchus into Porphyrius, purple being the color of the princes, a specialty of his birthplace.

Porphyry published in Athens a book of literary criticism and became quickly a specialist in allegorical interpretation; what enabled him later to see to what extent the Christians overused it (contradictions changed into mysteries, erroneous presentations of the facts changed into paradoxes and so on).

The exact meaning of the texts of the Bible indeed always be a problem for the Christians. For example, how Christ can be taken to a very high mountain from where one could see all the kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4.8; Luke 4.5)? SINCE SUCH A MOUNTAIN DOES NOT EXIST!

Defense of the Christians of the time, and of today: the theory of the divine inspiration! The Bible is not always to be taken literally. It is only a huge line of allegories inspired by God, full of paradoxes and mysteries.

As many other philosophers in his time, Porphyry sympathized then with many movements of thought before enlisting in Neoplatonism; because Porphyry became Neoplatonist only after his meeting in Rome with Plotinus, of whom he became the pupil (from 262 or 263 to 270).

What we know of Porphyry's philosophy comes primarily from his letter to Marcella (his wife).

Some authors think that Porphyry was a time tempted by Christianity. Porphyry's thought resembles Christianity indeed much on certain points (the soul/mind in the search of God never finds the rest, etc.); and besides that annoyed much St. Augustine who admired him and who was forced to admit therefore that he was not always completely wrong. The resemblance between certain Christian ideas and those of Porphyry comes nevertheless especially from the fact that Porphyry knew Christianity very well, and that he entered its own field to fight it.

Porphyry knew the Bible (it is one of the first to have stressed that it is impossible that Jonas could be swallowed by a fish or a whale) particularly the prophets; and the Gospels (that he found stripped of any philosophical or literary value, considering the poor quality of their Greek). He, moreover, probably attended sermons or public readings of Origen in Caesarea (that he left disappointed).

St. Jerome wrote his great commentary on Daniel only to counter his devastating analysis of the biblical prophecies (always written afterwards, of course, and not before, what would be too good). Porphyry knew very well the Palestine, the Syria, and Alexandria, that he had visited being young; what enabled him to see that certain evangelical accounts were inaccurate or impossible; for example, those which report us the history of Gadarenian demon-possessed men (Matthew 8,28-34; Mark 5,1-20; Luke 8,26-39).

In Rome Porphyry wrote in Greek a book in 15 parts, very read until 311, the year when Galerius promulgated his edict of Tolerance; this work became the target of all the attacks of the new sect. Became State religion, it obtained from it the auto-da-fe of all the existing specimens and these 15 essays against the Christians were therefore sentenced to public burning in 448.

The exact title of these 15 Porphyry's essays against Christianity is not known for us.

That under which they are generally mentioned, *Kata Christianon*, is confirmed only at the beginning of the Early Middle Ages. What we know about them comes from the critical, of course, references, quotations or paraphrases, spread here or there in the writings of a whole army of Christian authors from the 3rd to the 4th century.

The main part of these quotations was handed down to us by a certain Macarius Magnes, an author of the 4th or 5th century; who gathered them in his way and according to the plan which seemed to him most capable of serving his intention, with transitions of his own invention; in a book entitled in Greek *Apocriticus* or *Monogenes*.

Macarius does not quote by name the pagan writer whom he undertakes to refute point by point, perhaps without knowing him.

The book of Macarius of Magnesia reports a public debate, having taken place over five days, between an anonymous pagan philosopher and the Christian author. The pagan opponent strings together several series of objections against some passages of the New Testament, against Christ, the Apostles, St. Paul, or against the Christian doctrines. Then the Christian answers each one of these series of objections.

This text was found in 1867 in an incomplete manuscript which was published in 1876 by Charles Blondel under the title *Macarii Magnetis quae supersunt, ex inedito codice*. It disappeared thereafter, as disappeared several other manuscripts, known in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance, but remained unpublished. It was never republished since and only the objections were translated up to now. The literary and historical problems which it arouses are numerous: who was Macarius? Where and when he lived? Is the debate that he stages real or fictitious? Did he invent the objections which he ascribes to the pagan adversary or did he borrow them from an existing treatise? And in this case, who would be the author of it?

If this one seems at times imaginary as we said (unlike the Celsus seen by Origen), it is because Macarius rewrites the quotations from him that he makes. However, everything designates Porphyry as being well their source: topics, approach, conclusions and even style!

Therefore we would have there the remains of the polemic directed against Christianity by his greatest opponent. That it is Porphyry himself, a Porphyry's disciple, Sossianus Hierocles (the governor of Bithynia author of the book entitled in Greek, the *Philaetheis logoi*, the lovers of truth, where he paralleled Jesus and Apollonius of Tyana) or someone else.

These Porphyry's quotations made by Macarius Magnes, in an order which was by no means that of the original Porphyry's book, of course, and with transitions due to his hand; attack the key characters as the beliefs and the doctrines of the Christianity of then; because Porphyry knew about what he spoke as we said it (Marcella his wife was a churchy person).

The reported debate is probably fictitious, but Macarius undoubtedly didn't invent the objections that he ascribes to his adversary. Often indeed, in his answer, he shows that he did not understand the (historical or philosophical) impact of them.

KATA CHRISTIANON: AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS.

Translation, plan, and commentary, of Peter DeLaCrau and not of Raymond Joseph Hoffmann nor of Richard Goulet. nor of Thomas Wilfrid Crafer.

TAKEN IN ISOLATION THE CONTENTS WILL BE NEVERTHELESS ANALOGOUS TO THAT OF THE "APOCRITICUS" OF "MACARIUS MAGNES" PUBLISHED IN 1919 IN NEW YORK BY T.W. CRAFER, PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AT THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE OF LONDON

Come now, let us listen to that shadowy saying also which was directed against the Jews, when he said: "You cannot hear my word, because you are of your father the devil (the great slanderer), and you wish to do the lust of your father," [John, 8, 43-44].

Explain to us then who the mysterious Slanderer is, who is the father of the Jews. For those who do the lust of their father, do so fittingly, as yielding to his will, out of respect for him. And if the father is evil, the charge of evil must not be fastened on the children.

Who then is that mysterious father, by doing whose lust they did not hearken to Christ? For when the Jews said: "We have one father, even God," he sets aside this statement by saying: "You are of your father the great Slanderer." Who then is that great Slanderer, and where does he chance to be? And by slandering whom did he obtain this epithet? For he does not seem to have this name as an original one, but as the result of something that happened.

Even in this, it is he who tolerates the presence of a slander who will appear unscrupulous, while he that is slandered is consequently most guilty. If it is from a slander that he is called Slanderer, among whom did he appear and work the forbidden action? And it will be seen that it was not the Slanderer himself who did any wrong, but he who gave him excuses to do so.

It is the man who places a stake on the road at night who is responsible, and not the man who walks along and stumbles over it. It is the man who fixed it there who receives the blame. Just so, it is he who places an occasion of slander in the way who does the greater wrong, not he who takes hold of it or he who receives it.

And tell me another thing. Is the great Slanderer subject to human affections or not? If he is not, he would never have slandered. But if he is subject, he ought to meet with forgiveness; for no one who is troubled by ailments is judged as a wrongdoer, but receives pity from all as being sorely tried.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 50.

Porphyry therefore begins this part of his book directly with the problem of evil in Christian theology. And adopts in this respect the traditional Gnostic position. If God is omniscient and almighty, and created indeed this universe, then he is inevitably responsible ultimately for the existence of the evil in its center. The devil acts only with his authorization or his permission.

Porphyry continues consequently his analysis of Christianity by tackling the famous biblical maxim "woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!"; by pointing out that theoretically he who is to be blamed it is the one who caused the scandal and not the one who reveals it or proclaims it loud and clear (Matthew 18.7).

On this subject read the book of the French Rene Girard entitled: "I see Satan fall like lightning" and which by no means convinced us besides. Or then we did not understand everything. What is possible besides, we never claimed to deserve 20 out of 20 in French. French is indeed the Romance language furthest away from Latin and this because of its Celtic substrate. Ardoise, Auvent, Bac, Baccalauréat, Bachelier, Bâche, Balai, Banlieue, Bavard, Berge, Cabane, Changer, Chat, Coq, Darne, Drap ... etc. the list is long. The problem is that many Celtic words are thought Latin words, because they were Latinized and entered low Latin, whereas they are not found in classical Latin... In the life of St. Martin, we find the following sentence: "Certainly," replied Postumianus, "speak in Celtic, if you prefer it, provided only you speak of Martin. But for my part, I believe, that, even though you were dumb, words would not be wanting to you, in which you might speak of Martin with eloquent lips, just as the tongue of Zacharias was loosed at the naming of John. But as you are, in fact, an orator, you craftily, like an orator, begin by begging us to excuse your lack of skillfulness, because you really excel in eloquence. But it is not fitting either that a monk should show such cunning, or that a Celt should be so artful."

Notice about the survival of the gaulish. The life of Saint Euthymius written by Cyril of Scythopolis (today Bet Shean in Israel) besides mentions still a monk contemporary of the saint, therefore living in

the 6th century, named Procopius, native of Galatia, and who sometimes still spoke in Galatian. This is the paragraph LV (page 77 of the edition of Eduard Schwartz, Kyrillos von Skythopolis, Leipzig, 1939). The exact phrase is "His language was bound, he could no longer speak to us. If he was forced to do so, he spoke in the language of the Galatians."

All that is therefore very complicated. English definitely proves simpler indeed! From where its current success in the world under the name of Global English (Globish). And a language dies every 15 days in the world. On the 6900 currently indexed.

But let us return to Rene Girard. Can we really speak about anthropological relevance in connection with a book built on more lies or mistakes than truth?

Can a spiritual truth be based on a mistake or lie? Buddha never claimed something like that! It is only after their exile in Babylon, and perhaps under the effect of the influence of the Sumerian-Babylonian thought; that the Hebrews started to speak in various terms about the objective presence in the world of a force of evil called Devil, Satan, or Belial. Expressions used to designate this being or this entity HAVING NO OBJECTIVE EXISTENCE APART FROM THE "NATURAL" PROPENSITY OF MAN TO DO "EVIL" are obviously all of the periphrases of the kind "Great tempter," "Great slanderer" or "Snake."

It is said nowhere in the very of the legend of Adam and Eve that the tempter represented in this story in the shape of a snake was the Devil. It is the LATER right-thinking biblical mythology (see for example the Apocalypse of John 12, 9) which will identify this Snake of the Garden of Eden with a disguised Satan (Hebraic form) or Devil (form resulting from the Greek) i.e., Lucifer.

There always existed in Judaism a Gnostic current refusing to recognize in the creation of this world of sound and fury, the work of a good and reasonable God. The original uncertainty between El, form of God in the singular, and Elohim its form in the plural, could only cause many and many speculations questioning the absolute monotheism of the Jewish orthodoxy, whether it is Sadducee or Pharisee. This current of thought, dualistic in fact, consequently will maintain that there exist two gods. One of bad nature, the demiurge, created this bad and completely missed world. It is the god of the Bible or the deposed archangel called Lucifer Satan, etc.

The other, perfect good, is a god unfamiliar to this world, unknowable and inaccessible, located out of every reach and of any knowledge (in Marcion* and certain Judeo-Christian Gnostic authors).

* Bishop of Sinope in the 2nd century. Christian intellectual who first published the letters of Saint Paul (the first ten, gathered under the name of Apostolicon). Excommunicated by the Church of Rome in 144.

But it can happen that an emanation of this God of goodness breaks away from him and goes down on earth; to bring to men a little of the comforting light from a parallel world (the hereafter) they can reach while giving up the bad and cruel world.

For some of these Gnostic people or of these first true Christians, the serpent of the Genesis was one of these emanations sent by the true god, the one who is only love.

A Messiah can also, according to these Gnostic persons or these early Christians, to be embodied then in a human appearance, then, dying in his earthly envelope, to go back to the right-hand side of God. Thus Revealing the way of salvation.

This current of thought left strong traces in Christianity since; without going as far as believing in the existence of two gods, one good, the other bad ; today Christianity nevertheless admits the existence of a good god and of an evil spirit having the power to compete with him on earth (moderate dualism).

The doctrines of the good God, located out of the world, and of the bad God, creator and Master of our world; makes theoretically possible a multiplicity of intermediaries, the beneficial angels and the saving Messiahs who are Seth, Cain, the new Adam, Naas the serpent, Sophia the Wisdom, Jesus, Melchizedek; or the God-man of Simon Magus Magician.

The Judeo-Christians, on the other hand, came arrived in a much simpler (simplistic?) way to the idea of original sin. The Judeo-Christians see the evidence of the human forfeiture in the myth of Eve

tempted by the serpent, and claim to want only to protect Man against himself. It is there, of course, the excuse of all the despotisms.

The Hebraic legend keeps nevertheless the traces of an antiquated Eve still haloed with her Sumerian-Babylonians beneficial powers. In it indeed Adam calls his partner "Eve , mother of all living (Genesis 3.20). However it was there the title formerly awarded to the goddess-or-demoness Aruru, goddess-or-demoness, or fairy if this word is preferred, of love, among the Sumerian-Babylonians, of whom a priestess, in the epic of Gilgamesh, allured the first Man, Enkidu, in order to civilize him. With the love, this one will confer to him the knowledge or science, and in the Bible Eve will act in fact similarly with regard to Adam, but among the Hebrews God punishes the woman for that. Except for these Gnostics or heretics who condemn the attitude of this God (of the Elohim), by considering it unnecessarily cruel; Jews Christians and Muslims agree to find this punishment just; revealing thus the content of their thought (Man is made to serve God and to obey Him, not to be happy; even if some claim that Man can precisely find happiness by serving God – the Judeo-Christians –; and even straightforwardly while being only his slave – the Muslims –; etymologically speaking Islam indeed means "submission... to God").

N. B. Of course there existed men before the Adam of the Bible, and the Adam of the Bible is not the first of the men. He is only a symbol, borrowed from (Sumerian-Babylonian in fact) mythology.

But let us make a thorough investigation concerning the solitary rule of the only God and the manifold rule of those who are worshipped as gods. You do not know how to expound the doctrine even of the divine monarchy. For an only king is not one who is alone in his existence like in a deserted island, but who is alone in his rule. Clearly, he rules over those who are his fellow tribesmen, men like himself, just as the Emperor Hadrian was a monarch , not because he existed alone, nor because he ruled over oxen and sheep (over which herdsmen or shepherds rule), but because he ruled over men who shared his race and possessed the same nature.

Likewise the great God would not properly be called a monarch unless he ruled over other gods; for this would befit His divine greatness and His heavenly and abundant honor.

At any rate, if you say that angels stand before the great God, who are not subject to feeling and death, and immortal in their nature, whom we ourselves speak of as gods, because they are close to the Godhead, why do we dispute about a name? And are we to consider it only a difference of nomenclature? For she who is called by the Greeks, Athena is called by the Romans Minerva; and the Egyptians, Syrians, and Thracians address her by some other name. But I suppose nothing in the invocation of the goddess is changed or lost by the difference of the names.

The difference therefore is not great, whether a man calls them gods or angels, since their divine nature bears witness to them, as when Matthew writes thus: "And Jesus answered and said, you do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God; for in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven" (Matt. xxii. 29-30).

In the same way therefore he confesses that the angels have a share in the divine nature, those who make a suitable object of reverence for the gods, do not think that the god is in the wood or stone or bronze from which the image is manufactured, nor do they consider that, if any part of the statue is cut off, it detracts from the power of the god.

For the images of living creatures and the temples were set up by the Ancients for the sake of remembrance, in order that those who approach thither might come to the knowledge of the god in question when they go; or that, as they observe a special time and purify themselves generally, they may make use of prayers and supplications, asking from them the things of which each has need. For if a man makes an image of a friend, of course, he does not think that the friend is in it, or that the limbs of his body are included in the various parts of the representation but honor is shown towards the friend by means of the image.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 51.

The typically pagan word of Pontius Pilate on this subject is known (John 18-38: "What is truth? ").

Franz-Xavier Kraus sees in it a piece of evidence of powerlessness. "The question of Pilate to the Savior expresses the doubts which choked Mankind: it was mislaid in philosophy... nobody was born for him only!" (Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte für Studierende. Volume I)

It is quite exact that there are, in fact, several truth levels. On the level of the metaphysical truth, there exists, of course, only the truly real one outside which there is nothing therefore not even the truth; the eternal and infinite Fate; which is at the same time pure being, conscience, knowledge and bliss filling up everything. But this universal and including Tokade can be recognized only by high-level amarcolitanoi sages.

There is therefore a single higher truth, but it can appear in different ways to each one, because, let us repeat it once again, there are several levels of truth. What is good for one can appear inappropriate for the other can appear inappropriate for whoever is not ready to understand it. A true believer of the time (of pagan type therefore) could very well experiment several truth levels at the same time besides. He could design the higher Being in a completely abstract way and nevertheless to take part in the most complex rituals. See the letter of Maxim of Madaurus to St. Augustine and the case of Symmachus in Rome.

He can make present in the memory of its heart the deity with all the details of the image that artists and poets created of it, and to represent him, through meditation, with all his mythical actions; although knowing that all is only appearance, form in which appears on earth an inexpressible transcending immanent being. On the level of the usual, empirical, truth, there is therefore multiplicity of the things and of the entities, diversified ad infinitum.

However, since every multiplicity is only relative, the supreme Fate (Tokade) can very well, on this level of the things, being worshipped with various names (Termagant, Tervagan, Aton, Yahweh, the god of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, Allah, our lord Belin, etc.); since it is on this level (and on this level only) that the Tokad, the supreme Fate, can sometimes be seen as a personal God, endowed with attributes (a male, reproductive organ, a beard, a people, etc.).

"Regarding the various perceptions of Truth or (even Jewish Christian or Muslim) Reality, it is not therefore a question of trying absolutely to find which are those which are true, or which are those which are false; but of admitting once and for all that each one matches the capacity of comprehension of the individual in question, that each one corresponds to his level of awareness.

This tolerance of ancient paganism did not match an ethical Celtic geis (a requirement, it is always difficult to obey such requirements when you absolutize your own truth); but corresponded rather quite simply to a recognition without problems of the reality of the world, and of all the beings which it contains. This recognition leads itself to indulgence, equality of soul and inner peace.

Since also from these some have presumed to introduce Schools of thought; but " (St Hippolytus of Rome, a theologian still quoted by the today catechisms. Philosophumena, or the refutation of all heresies, chapter 22).

In the case of the sacrifices that are brought to the gods, these are not so much a bringing of honor to them as a proof of the inclination of the worshippers, to show that they are not without a sense of gratitude. And it is logical that the form of the statues should be the fashion of a man, since man is reckoned to be the fairest of living creatures and made in the image of God.

Counter-lay (commentary) No. 52.

It is there either a tactical allusion of Porphyry to the Judeo-Christian beliefs on the man, made in the image of God, or of a taking over of the ancient pagan idea thus expressed by Ausonius (in his eclogue on the use of the word libra). "Divinis humana licet componere": " We may compare things human with divine."

It is possible to get hold of their doctrine from another passage, which asserts positively that God has fingers, with which He writes, the following saying: "He gave to Moses the two tables which were written by the finger of God" (Exod. xxxi. 18).

Moreover, the Christians also, imitating the erection of the temples, build very large houses, into which they go together and pray, although there is nothing to prevent them from doing this in their own houses, since the Lord certainly hears from every place.

Counter-lay (commentary) No. 53.

Matthew 6. 5 : "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen."

Matthew 18.20. "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

There Porphyry points out one of the innumerable cases when the Christians do not do, but then not at all, what their teacher, however, asked them expressly to do.

But even supposing any one of the Greeks were so light-minded as to think that the gods dwell within the statues, his idea would be a much purer one than that of the man who believes that the Divine entered into the womb of the Virgin Mary, and became her unborn child, before being born and swaddled in due course, for it is a place full of blood and gall, and things more unseemly still.

I could also give proof to you of that insidious name ("gods") from your law, when it cries out and admonishes the hearer with much piety: "You shall not revile gods [elohim] , and you shall not speak evil of the ruler [nasi] of your people." [Exodus 22, 28]. For it does not speak to us of other gods than those already within our reckoning, from what we know in the words: "You shall not go after gods" (Jer. 7,6); and again: "If you go and worship other gods" (Deut. 11. 28).

It is not men, but the gods who are held in honor by us, that are meant, not only by Moses, but by his successor Joshua. For he says to the people: "And now fear him and serve him alone, and put away the gods whom your fathers served" (Josh. 24. 14). And it is not concerning men, but incorporeal beings that Paul says: "For though there be that are called gods, whether on earth or in heaven, yet to us there is but one God and Father, of whom are all things" (1 Cor. 8. 5).

Therefore you make a great mistake in thinking that God is angry if any other is called a god, and obtains the same title as Himself. For even rulers do not object to the title from their subjects, nor masters from slaves. And it is not right to think that God is more petty-minded than men.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 54.

There Porphyry arouses another point, the intellectual dishonesty of the Judeo-Christians who, although sharing with pagan many ideas, always did as if for them it was different. See also the remarks of Celsus on this subject. These Judeo-Christian lies are generally backed up by two different categories of arguments, of analyses or reactions, all also characterized by subjectivity of course (isn't love blind?)

First type of biased comments: systematic denigration of other spiritualities, of which they highlight only the worst aspects and of which they ignore systematically the best ones, of course.

What the Bible tells us about the polytheistic world lets us guess with difficulty the extent and the spiritual quality of the pagan religions, because it was not beneficial for the writers of the Bible to give objectively an account of it ". The mention of other deities almost always leads to a scolding racism. When a pagan ritual does not manage really to get from the Canaanite god of storm that he starts the rain, the Jewish prophet scoffs" (1 Kings 18.27).

Like always the truth is out there.

The pagans worship less the stones, the trees or the animals, than the forces of nature which made them present there and which take part of the divine one. Each god-or-demon or goddess-or-demoness is as an element, a manifestation of the divine potential.

Let us notice in passing that this effort of unification shows the somewhat exaggerated nature of the biblical argument against idols, such as it appears in the Deutero-Isaiah or the book of Wisdom.

Second type of equally little objective comments: the systematic praising to the skies of the ideas contained in the biblical texts; if necessary by giving them a serious little help, even by always finding good excuses or justifications for the horrible stupidities worthy of the Nazi (1 Samuel 27.9) or S.S. (2 Samuel 8.2; 12.31; 1 Chronicles 20.3) genocide; that they contain. The oldest parts of the Bible are still polytheistic and by no means monotheistic. Not based on philosophical premises worthy of this name, they do not deserve to be called monotheism, but only monolatry. The Bible is in the beginning basically monolatrous and not monotheistic in a stricter sense of the term, since it admits explicitly that

there exist other gods. Exodus 20.3: "You shall have no other gods before me." See also Deuteronomy 29.17; 29.25; 30.17.

The biblical speech does not say "There is one God there, namely Yahweh," but "Yahweh alone is our God" (nasi). Just like Israel is the people chosen among the peoples, Yahweh is the God chosen among the gods (elohim). The existence of other gods (elohim) is implicit. If not besides the loyalty of Israel to Yahweh as his only king (nasi) would not form a particular achievement. This speech on the unity not postulates the singularity of an existence (there is one god), but that of a relation (one nasi).

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 55.

REMINDER ABOUT THE LINKS POLYTHEISM/MONOTHEISM.

Among the Semitic people the usual name for God is El (Arabic Allah). In the Bible, we find El or more exactly Elohim in the plural (the gods). We also find the word Shaddai (Genesis 17.1) or Elion (Genesis 14.18).

Moses as for him, will prefer to call on a name of Midianite pagan origin corresponding, by play on words, to an old Semitic stem which meant in Hebrew: to be, to exist (YHWH). The God or Demiurge of Moses is a place god (a volcano? See Exodus 18. 5), but Isaiah and Jeremiah will join to him the word Sabaoth, which means in no way god of love, but god of armies, war god. It is an ethnic god not dealing with the other nations and who will therefore help Israel to drive out the various native peoples from Palestine (Exodus 33.3). But it will also be very quickly, although partially, because of Canaanite pagan influences, a baal, i.e., a protective god of ground, rain, and fertility (see the fable of Noah and its Mesopotamian parallels. Genesis 6). The Canaanites had a kind of "Trinity" with 4 persons: El, the Father, his wife Asherah or Astarte, mother of the gods, their son Baal and their daughter Anath, called the virgin. A germ of holy poly-unity in a way.

To impose the worship of YHWH, the Hebrews will borrow from El some of his traits and will preserve the creatures who are emanations from him, in the plural form Elohim. What the Hindus call vyuha and what the Muslims will call shirk (to condemn it).

The orthodox Hebraic religion made these entities the celestial court where YHWH is honored.

It will result from it an ambiguity on the person of the single God who will not fail to generate in the Judaism, and the Judeo-Christianity, dualistic speculations or speculations on the Trinity; ad infinitum. The Bible is indeed also filled with beings called malak in Hebrew, aggelos in Greek, in other words, angels. Called sometimes also sons of God in the Christian translations deprived of intellectual dishonesty.

"The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.....The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the giants who were of old, the men of renown" (Genesis 6.2; 6.4). For the Jews indeed it goes without saying, the angel always appears in forms falling within the male gender; either he fights against Jacob, stops the arm of Abraham about sacrificing his son, appears to Moses in a burning bush, interposes between the camp of Egyptians and the camp of Israel; or proposes to lead the chosen people towards the Promised land.

The angels therefore form integral part of the Hebraic religion. To represent them, the Jews sometimes had recourse to the Sumerian religious set of images. After the exile in Babylon (587 - 538); they even used Aryan religious images of Persia to speak about them.

In the Old Testament, the cherubs seem to be entities of semi-animal form, with two or four faces, having as function to protect. Those who are placed by God to prohibit on the Men any return in the earthly paradise (the Garden of Eden) will be equipped with blazing and whirling swords. The cherubs whose Ezekiel affirms that they carry the throne of the Glory of God are winged bulls similar to those who stood guard at the entrance of Sumerian temples (the famous kerubim). The cherubs appearing in the first temple of Jerusalem, on the other hand, were two female figures. Succeeded them two cherubs coupled, of which one was male and the other female, according to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175 - 164) who, while making the Temple destroyed, will denounce this "pornographic" inspiration of the Hebrews.

We know less, on the other hand, about the Seraphes (the Serafim or the burning ones) equipped with six wings (while you are at it!)

Those who appear in the story of the vocation of Isaiah are snakes of fire.

The orthodox Hebraic religion saw all these Elohim angels as being organized under the direction of leaders (four or seven following the times) called archangels. Michael, Raphael, Uriel, Gabriel.

The termination - El, which designates God as we saw, indicates most important ones.

Michael, prince of angels, occupies the top of this hierarchical pyramid, because his name means "the one who is like God." He is, in the books of Daniel, the angel who is the advocate of the nation of Israel, so that it is not completely destroyed. It would be therefore him who, in the last century, would have intervened in the middle of the Forties; to prevent that the genocide of the Jews of Europe, undertaken by the baptized Catholic Adolph Hitler, goes to its end; and so that the Jewish State takes shape finally in Palestine.

This torrent of imagination culminated with Christianity. Saint Paul, in his letter to Colossians, evokes five categories of angels (principalities, thrones, powers, dominations, virtues). In his Dictionary of angels, Gustav Davidson will count a thousand beneficial or evil creatures. Albert the great counted 66,666 legions of 66,666 angels each one, what would then bring their total to 4,444,355 556 (what funny monotheism!)

It is time to put an end to the imposture of the spiritual (or self-styled such) heirs to Abraham (Jews, Christians and Muslims). The Bible did not invent monotheism as we could see it, their beliefs not being founded on philosophical premises, the word monotheism is not that which is appropriate for the religion of former Hebrews.

It is, on the other hand, exactly that which is appropriate for the religion of Akhenaton, the Pharaoh who sidelined the gods of the Egyptian polytheism, to the great dismay of the clergy of then.

Neferkheperure Amenhotep (in Greek Amenophis IV - 1730 - 1354), dedicated by his parents to Ra as well Amun, was the first man [Zoroaster being a special case]; to decide to establish the worship of a single god, Aton/Aten, symbolized by the solar disk (previously named Ra or Re then Amun-Ra).

Probably in agreement with his wife Nefertiti. Her Aryan (Mitannian or Hittite more precisely) origin predisposed her indeed particularly to such a religious design: the rejection of the Egyptian polytheism (which was to be without interest for her).

Neferkheperure Amenhotep therefore decided to be dedicated only to a single god, Aten/Aton, considered to be primarily positive, and removed the sacrifices. For marking the break from his past well, he changed his name and was called from now on Akhenaten. In order to devote himself to the things of the new religion, he also gave up to his son-in-law Smenkhkare the management of the secular businesses.

This first monotheism was, alas, of exclusive type (that of which the Bible could remember) and not of inclusive or tolerant (monist) type. The statues representatives of the polytheistic piety nevertheless were not all destroyed: proof of a certain tolerance. The dispersion of the clergy of Amun, itself, was an act before anything political; just like the abolition of the sacrifices; (source of influence and profits for any self-respecting clergy as we will see it in the case of the true commands of the true god of the true religion revealed to his true people by the Egyptian - of culture - Moses); and their replacement by offerings of flowers outside the temples. It seems that Akhenaten was overthrown by the former clergy and the general Paatenemheb (future Horemheb) then sequestered until his death which has occurred a few years later. He was replaced by his second son-in-law, husband of his junior daughter, the young Tutankhaten, renamed for the circumstance Tutankhamun (- 1354 - 1345) and the former Egyptian polytheistic worship despised by Nefertiti, was restored. This revolution and this counter-revolution were not without influence, it is the least that we can say, on the religious ideas of the future Israel .

The Egyptologists recognized in Psalm 104 long passages translated into Hebrew of a canticle to Aten found at Amarna.

Therefore we can thus find in the former religions various forms intended to highlight the unity and the singularity of the Divinity; and being able to go as far as an exclusive notion of the unity of God, in the image of the Amarnian religion in the reign of Akhenaten. The religious history of ancient Egypt indeed worked out various discourses having the constant worry to link together the one and the multiple. We find in the Egyptian texts the predicate of the single one allocated by the anthems of the New Kingdom, particularly to the god Amun-Ra.

All "polytheistic" religions of the Ancient world, whether it is in Babylonia, in Egypt, in the Hellenistic Mediterranean world, or in India; cause, in their late stage, discourses on the unity designing the whole of the various gods as the aspects, the names or the manifestations, of a single deity who includes them [Translator's Note. It was also, of course, the case in the West of the druidism, let we not be stupidly racist!]

It is therefore in fact what we may describe as an inclusive and liberal monotheism.

Such discourses appear initially in the Egypt of the Ramessides, apparently in answer to the exclusive monotheism of Akhenaten. The inclusive monotheism [of druidism type. Translator's note] is close to pantheism. The unity of "God" with all the other gods can, according to the cases, go until becoming the unity of God with all that is. The exclusive monotheism, on the other hand, tends towards to solve in a clear way between God and the world, and places the emphasis on the transcendence of God, thus forgetting his immanence.

The founding document of the monotheism is therefore not the message inspired to the legendary Abraham (the poor one!) nor the revelation made to the Egyptian Moses ; who perhaps never existed (and you will not claim that it is not that which is important, but his race, even though). It was the decision of the Hellenized Jews in Alexandria, at the 3rd century before our era, to translate systematically by the same Greek word "theos" the various gods evoked by the biblical text (Yahweh, Elohim, El, El Shaddai, Elion, etc.).

This artificial, and somewhat intellectually dishonest, unification, due to the translation of the Septuagint, had an enormous repercussion, including among the non-Hellenized Jews. It is through this influence that it ends up determining Judaism, Christianity and Medinan Islam, all resulting from the biblical monolatry.

Again the following saying appears to be full of stupidity: "If ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote concerning me" [John 5, 46-47] .He said it, but all the same nothing which Moses wrote has been preserved. For all his writings are said to have been burnt along with the temple.

All that bears the name of Moses was written 1180 years afterwards, by Ezra and those of his time.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 56.

Of course Porphyry was completely right!

The law of Moses is a mixture of Mesopotamian law style code of Hammurabi, tribal habits, and various rules concerning the ritual purity of the priests, opportunely "rediscovered" in the time of the king Josiah (2 Chronicles 34 and 2 Kings 22.8 to 10).

The story has all appearances of a fable or of a legend dating from after the Exile and intended to make believed that the religion of the kingdom of Judah, before the disaster that was the capture of Jerusalem by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar; was well the same one as that after the Exodus, and not the kind of secularity open to all the worships which reigned there in the 6th century (Deuteronomy 30. These words are not, of course, from Moses himself, but were put in his mouth by Jewish intellectuals come or returned from Babylon).

Many exegetes admit it today, but how is it that the Christians waited for 2000 years to realize what one already knew in the 3rd century? Would the Holy Spirit remove every intelligence from those he inspires?

And even if one were to concede that the writing is that of Moses, it cannot be shown that Christ was anywhere called God, or God the Word, or Creator. Pray, who has spoken of Christ as crucified?

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 57.

The Messiah expected by the Jewish prophecies (because it is the Hebrew word Mashiach that the Greek word Christos translates well) was to triumph and by no means to be crucified as a robber. What, however, happened to Jesus according to Christians.

How is it that Christ said: "If I bear witness to myself, my witness has no value" and yet He did bear witness to Himself, as he was accused of doing it when he said: "I am the light of the world" (John VIII. 12, 13).

Come now, let us here mention another saying to you. Why is it that when the tempter tells Jesus: "Cast yourself down from the temple": He does not do it, but says to him, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God" whereby it seems that he spoke in fear of the danger from the fall? For if, as you declare, he not only did various other miracles, but even raised up dead men by his word alone, He ought to have shown forthwith that he was capable of delivering others from danger by hurling Himself down from the height, and not receiving any bodily harm thereby.

And the more so, because there is a passage of Scripture somewhere which says with regard to Him: "In their hands they shall bear you up, for fear that you dash your foot against a stone." So the really fair thing to do was to demonstrate to those who were present in the temple that he was God's Son, and was able to deliver from danger both Himself and those who were his.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 58.

In any event, none of these temptations took place, even in a dream! These temptations, which had no witness, since they are supposed to be produced in the desert (Matthew 4,1-11; Mark 1,12-13; Luke 4,1-13) what is quite convenient; were added by the teams having composed this initiatory legend in order to explain why Jesus, when he was living, did not make an impression on the minds of his contemporaries (the story of the Messianic secrecy).

Just a small mention in the Talmud of Babylon, even then!

Sanhedrin 43 a: "On the eve of the Passover Jesus was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favor, he was hanged."

And if we spoke now of this record likewise, it will appear to be really a piece of knavish nonsense, since Matthew says that two demons from the tombs met with Christ, and then that in fear of Him they went into the swine, and many were killed. Mark did not shrink from making up an enormous number of swine, for he puts it thus: "Jesus said unto him, Go forth, thou unclean spirit, from the man. And he asked him, what is thy name? He answered, many. And he besought him that he would not cast him out of the country. There was there a herd of swine feeding. The demons besought him that he would suffer them to depart into the swine. And when they had departed into the swine, they rushed down the steep into the sea. About two thousand, and were choked; they that fed them fled!" (Mark v. 8, etc.). What a myth! What humbug! What flat mockery! A herd of two thousand swine ran into the sea, and were choked and perished!

And when one hears how the demons besought Him that they might not be sent into the abyss, and how Christ was prevailed on and did not do so, but sent them into the swine, will not one say: "Alas, what ignorance! Alas, what foolish knavery, that he should take account of murderous spirits, which were working much harm in the world, and that he should grant them what they wished the most." What the demons wished was to dance through life, and make the world a perpetual plaything. They wanted to stir up the sea, and fill the world's whole theater with sorrow. They wanted to trouble the elements by their disturbance, and to crush the whole creation by their hurtfulness. So at all events it was not right that, instead of casting these originators of evil, who had treated mankind so ill, into that region of the abyss which they prayed to be delivered from, He should be softened by their entreaty and suffer them to work another calamity.

If the incident is really true, and not a fiction (as we explain it), Christ's saying convicts Him of much baseness, that he should drive the demons from one man, and send them into helpless swine; also that He should terrify with panic those who kept them, making them fly breathless and excited, and agitate the city with the disturbance which resulted.

For was it not just to heal the harm not merely of one man or two or three or thirteen, but of everybody, especially as it was for this purpose that he was testified to have come into this life. But to merely loose one man from bonds which were invisible, and to inflict similar bonds upon others; to free certain men happily from their fears, but to surround others with fears without reason, this should rightfully be called not right action but rascality.

In taking account of enemies and allowing them to take up their abode in another place and dwell there, He is acting like a king who ruins the region that is subject to him. For the latter, being unable to drive the barbarians out of every country, sends them from one place to another to abide, delivering one country from the evil, of course, but handing another over to it. If therefore Christ in like manner, unable to drive the demon from his borders, sent him into the herd of swine, he does indeed work something practiced which can catch the ear, but it is also full of the suspicion of baseness. For when a right-thinking man hears this, he passes a judgment at once, forms his opinion on the narrative, and gives his vote in accordance with the matter. This is the way he will speak: "If he does not free from hurt everything beneath the sun, but pursues only those that do the harm into different countries, and if he takes care of some, but has no heed of others, then it is not safe to flee to this man and be saved. For he who is saved, spoils the condition of him who is not, while he who is not saved becomes the

accuser, of him who is." Wherefore, according to my judgment, the record contained in this narrative is a fiction.

Once more, if you regard it as not fiction, but bearing some relation to truth, there is really plenty to laugh at for those who like to open their mouths. For come now, here is a point we must carefully inquire into: how was it that so large a herd of swine was being kept at that time in the land of Judaea, seeing that they were to the Jews from the beginning the most unclean and hated form of beast? And, again, how were all those swine choked, when it was a lake and not a deep sea? It may be left to babes to make a decision about all this.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 59.

This last Porphyry's remark (what do these unfortunate pigs in Jewish land?) is not applicable; the scene is supposed to occur in a zone of pagan settlement (the country of the Gadarenes) and not in a region subjected to the harsh law of the mysterious Moses.

Come, let us unfold for you another saying from the Gospel which is absurdly written and without any credibility, and has a still more absurd narrative attached to it [Matthew 14,25 ; Mark 6, 48]. It was when Jesus, after sending on the disciples to cross the sea after a feast, Himself came upon them at the fourth watch of the night when they were terribly troubled by the surging of the storm, for they were toiling all night against the force of the waves.

Now the fourth watch is the tenth hour of the night, after which three further hours are left. But those who relate the truth about that locality say that there is not a sea there, only a small lake coming from a river under the hill in the country of Galilee, beside the city of Tiberias; this is easy for small boats to sail across in not more than two hours, nor can it admit of either wave or storm.

So Mark goes very wide of the truth when he very absurdly gives the fabulous record that, when nine hours of the night had passed, Jesus proceeded at the tenth, namely the fourth watch of the night, and found the disciples sailing on the pond. Then he calls it a sea, and not merely that, but a stormy sea, and a terribly angry one, causing them fear with the tossing of the waves. He does this in order that he may thereupon introduce Christ as working some mighty miracle in having caused a great and fearful storm to cease, and saved the disciples in their danger from the deep, and from the sea. From such childish records, we know the Gospel to be a sort of cunningly woven curtain. Wherefore we investigate each point the more carefully.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) Nr 60.

Porphyry therefore had already understood, and this, as of the 3rd century of our era, that the Gospels are, not testimonies, or accounts, of witnesses; but works of fiction, made up haphazardly, in order to convince; and in which the authentic one occupies only a very mean place.

Moreover, there is another saying which is full of obscurity and full of stupidity, which was spoken by Jesus to his disciples. He said, "Fear not them that kill the body," and yet He Himself being in an agony and keeping watch in the expectation of his death, besought in prayer that his passion should pass from Him, and said to his intimate friends, "Watch and pray that the temptation may not pass by you." (Matthew 26, 36 sqq.). For these sayings are not worthy of God's Son, nor even of a wise man (who despises death).

Why did not Christ utter anything worthy of one who was wise and divine when brought either before the high-priest or before the governor? He might have given instruction to his judge and those who stood by and made them better men. But, on the other hand, he endured being smitten with a reed and spat on then crowned with thorns, unlike Apollonius [of Tyana] , who, after speaking boldly to the Emperor Domitian, disappeared from the imperial court, and after not many hours was plainly seen in the city then called Dicaearchia, but now Puteoli [Pozzuoli]. But even if Christ had to suffer according to God's commands, and was obliged to endure punishment, yet at least he should have endured his

Passion with some boldness, and uttered words of force and wisdom to Pilate his judge, instead of being mocked like any guttersnipe.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 61.

Why indeed to make matters simple when we can complicate them?

This god, who could bring happiness to Mankind by removing the sin of a simple touch of a magic wand since he is theoretically almighty; apparently on the contrary likes to come to this result (the happiness of Man) through backdoors, being expensive in suffering.

The ways of this god are really tortuous. This god would it be by chance, not a good god, but a malicious and sadistic god feasting on our sufferings (cf. the "lead us not into temptation" of the archetypal prayer)? What is certain, it is that his ways are mysterious as we saw it and that he likes the complications. Why make matters simple when you can complicate them?

The evangelists therefore were inventors and not historians of the events concerning Jesus. Each of them wrote an account of the Passion which was not harmonious but as contradictory as could be. For one records that, when he was crucified, a certain soldier filled a sponge with vinegar and brought it to him (Mark XV. 36). But another says : "When they had come to the place Golgotha, they gave him to drink wine mingled with gall, and when he had tasted it, he would not drink" (Matt. XXVII 33). And a little further, "About the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, Eloim, Eloim, lama sabachthani? That is, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew XXVII. 46). And another says, "Now there was set a vessel full of wine vinegar. Having therefore bound a vessel full of the wine vinegar with a reed, they offered it to his mouth. When therefore he had taken the wine vinegar, Jesus said: "all is finished," and having bowed his head, he gave up the ghost" (John XIX. 29).

Another says, "he cried out with a loud voice and said, 'Father, into your hands I will commend my spirit.' (Luke XXIII. 46).

From this out-of-date and contradictory record, one can receive it as the statement of the suffering, not of one man, but of many. For if one says: "Into your hands I will commend my spirit," another "all is finished," another "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" and another lastly "My God, my God, why did you curse me?" [Mark XV, 34 according to the Codex Bezae].

It is plain that this is a discordant invention, and either points to many who were crucified, or one who died hard and did not give a clear view of his passion to those who were present.

But if these men were not able to tell the manner of his suffering in a truthful way, and simply repeated it by rote, neither did they leave any clear record concerning the rest of the narrative."

It will be proved from another passage that the accounts of his very death were all a matter of guesswork. For John writes: "But when they came to Jesus, when they saw that he was dead already, they did not break his legs; but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John XIX, 33-35).

However only John has said this, and none of the others. Wherefore he is desirous of bearing witness to himself when he says: "And he that saw it hath borne witness, his witness is true" (XIX. 35). This is haply, as it seems to me, the statement of a simpleton. For how is the witness true when its object has no existence? For a man witnesses to something real; but how can witness be spoken of concerning a thing which is not real?

There is also another argument whereby this corrupt opinion can be refuted. I mean the argument about that Resurrection of His which is such a common talk everywhere, as to why Jesus, after his suffering and rising again (according to your story), did not appear to Pilate who punished Him but said He had done nothing worthy of death, or to Herod King of the Jews, or to the High-priest of the Jewish race, or to many men at the same time and to such as were worthy of credit, and more particularly among Romans both in the Senate and among the people. The purpose would be that, by their wonder at the things concerning Him, they might not pass a vote of death against Him by common consent, which implied the impiety of those who were obedient to Him. On the contrary he appeared to Mary Magdalene, a coarse woman who came from some wretched little village, and had once been possessed by seven demons, and with her another utterly obscure Mary, who was herself a peasant woman, and a few other people who were not at all well known.

And all that, although he said: "Henceforth shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds." (Matthew XXIV, 30). For if he had shown Himself to men of note,

all would believe through them, and no judge would punish them as fabricating monstrous stories. For surely it is neither pleasing to God nor to any sensible man that many should be subjected on his account to punishments of the gravest kind.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

We will insert here two or three objections of which we will reconstitute the substance, Macarius contenting himself to answer them without giving their text (the reasoning of Porphyry is not easy to reconstruct).

Answer of Macarius to an objection of Porphyry based on Matthew XVII. 15: "Have pity on my son, for he is lunatic," although it was not the effect of the moon, but of a demon.

MACARIUS. In answering this question, we will also consider the uncalled for rebuke which Christ adds to the multitude, in the words "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? "

The dragon or demon indeed was cunning enough to attack the boy at the changes of the moon, so that men might think that his sufferings were due to its influence. Thus by one act he accomplished two objects: for he both tortured the boy's body, and suggested blasphemy to the minds of those who saw it, for if they ascribed it to the moon's action, they would naturally blame in the end Him who created the moon.

Therefore Christ perceives that they likewise have been affected by the demon, and so calls them a "faithless generation," because of their ideas about the moon. By expelling the demon, he shows them consequently their error.

St. Matthew does not prove, by saying that a "lunatic" boy was brought to Christ, that he really was under the moon's influence. Like a good historian, he recorded things as he heard them, not as they actually were.]

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 62.

Let us specify, first of all, that it was usual in the Ancient world to attribute the madness to the influence of the moon.

As we mentioned it above, the reasoning of Porphyry is not easy to reconstruct.

Perhaps he points out the fact that the family of the boy thought that he was simply deranged, and that they saw by no means the intervention of the devil in all that, but that the Jesus of the Gospel according to St Matthew, himself, and the Christians after him, therefore, saw the intervention of a demon there.

What a stupidity! For what is useful to be god if it is to know less than cultivated people of one's time?

The father was perhaps a Hellenized Jew having rudiments of medicine. He had understood that his son was quite simply victim of epileptic fits, or prone to any mental illness. Jesus, on the other hand, less cultivated to him than this man, believed that it was because the child was possessed by a demon.

Come now, let us also make clear the question of those two sayings: "None is good save God," and "The man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good." [St. Mark X. 18 and St. Matt. XII. 35]......

.....

Counter - lay No. 63.

As for the first saying (Mark 10.18) Porphyry was to regard it as a proof that Jesus himself did not consider himself as God.

There is another dubious little saying which one may manifestly take hold of, when Christ says: Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying "I am Christ," and shall deceive many [Matthew 24, 4-5].

But behold! Three hundred years have passed by, and even more, and no one of the kind has anywhere appeared.
Unless indeed you are going to adduce Apollonius of Tyana, a man who was adorned with all philosophy. But you would not find another. Yet it is not concerning one but concerning many that Jesus says that such shall arise.

Let us touch on another piece of teaching even more fabulous than this, and obscure as night, contained in the words: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed;" and again, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven"; and once more, "It is like unto a merchant seeking goodly pearls." [Matthew 13, 31-33, 45-46].

These imaginings do not come from (real) men, nor even from women who put their trust in dreams. For when any one has a message to give concerning great and divine matters, he is obliged to make use of common images which pertain to men, in order to make his meaning clear, but not such obscure or unintelligible comparisons as these. These sayings, besides being base and unsuitable to such matters, have in themselves no relevant meaning or clearness. And yet it was fitting that they should be very clear indeed, because they were not written originally for the wise or understanding, but for babes.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 64.

This besides rather unjust Porphyry's remark is brought in fact by a very old mistranslation (misinterpretation) relating to the original Jewish expression (in Aramaic) used by the early Christians; and which by no means meant Kingdom of God (in the geographical meaning of the word: a land, a State, an Empire), but Reign of God (in the socio-political meaning of the term: his power, his command, his influence). For the rest, to see what John Toland and his "Christianity not mysterious" say.

Indeed Jesus said: "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes," [Matthew XI, 25].
And it is written in Deuteronomy (XXIX. 29), "The hidden things for the Lord our God, and the manifest things for us."

Therefore the things that are written for the babes and the ignorant ought to be clearer and not wrapped in riddles. For if the mysteries have been hidden from the wise, and unreasonably poured out to babes and those that give suck, it is better to be desirous of senselessness and ignorance. Is this the great achievement of the wisdom of Him who came to earth, to hide the rays of knowledge from the wise, and to reveal them to fools and babes?

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 65.

Other spiritualities adopted on this subject a diametrically opposite attitude.

Whom to believe? The high-knower of the druidiaction (druidecht) for example dispensed their teaching to whoever required it. The druidic message was not a secret message intended for any supposed elite of right-thinking persons, it was addressed on the contrary and by principle to everybody. The way leading to the true world was to be open not for rare chosen people, but for the greatest number possible of people. "They likewise discuss and impart to the youth many elements respecting the stars and their motion, respecting the extent of the world and of our earth, respecting the nature of things, respecting the power and the majesty of the immortal gods" (Caesar. B.G. VI, 14). "Alexander, in his book On the Pythagorean Symbols, relates that Pythagoras was a pupil of Nazaratius the Assyrian

and will have it that, in addition to these, Pythagoras was a hearer of the Galatae and the Brahmins."
*(Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, I, XV, 71.3 sqq.)

* The druids (Galatae) are therefore compared to the Fathers of Hinduism (to the Brahmins) in this text. "Thus philosophy, a thing of the highest utility, flourished in antiquity among the barbarians, shedding its light over the nations. And afterwards it came to Greece. First in its ranks were the prophets of the Egyptians; and the Chaldeans among the Assyrians; and the druids among the Celts; and the Samanæans among the Bactrians; and the philosophers of the Celts and the magi of the Persians."

Diogenes Laertius. Lives and opinions of eminent philosophers. I Prologue 1. "I. There are some who say that the study of philosophy had its beginning among the barbarians [...] the Indians have had their Gymnosophists; and among the Celts there are the people called druids or semnothes."

Prologue 6. "VI. The advocates of the theory that philosophy took its rise among the barbarians go on to explain the different forms it assumed in different countries. As to the Gymnosophists * and druids we are told that they uttered their teaching in riddles."

* Literally "the naked sages ." Undoubtedly some sadhu.

For St. Augustine also (the City of God, VIII, 9), the Celts appear among the people who have sages and philosophers. Besides the Catholic church admitted it officially through St. Hippolytus (the most important Roman Christian theologian of the 3rd century, still quoted by today catechisms).

"The Celts esteem the druids as prophets and seers, on account of their foretelling to them certain events, from calculations and numbers by the Pythagorean art; on the methods of which very art also we shall not keep silence, since also from these some have presumed to introduce schools of philosophy (heresies). (St. Hippolytus of Rome, theologian. Refutations of all heresies, 1,2,17, and I, 22.1 -2).

By way of gift of divination, it was rather to be their knowledge in astronomy, their capacity to predict the eclipses and some rudiments of the theory of probability; what our poor under-pope, more expert in obscurantism than in philosophy, of course, could not understand.

As had already seen it very well in his time the Celtic chief Indutiomarus blamed by Cicero in the doubtful plea which is his Pro M. Fonteio Oratio : "To think is a thing, to know is another one."

The ancient high-knower of the druidiaction (druidecht), was also a guide or a spiritual adviser helping the weak, the social outcasts, the exploited people, and he was therefore to work also to change the world by advising in this sense the kings or the princes (it would be said today the presidents or the ministers).

The high-knowers of the druidiaction (druidecht) always believed in the possibility of eliminating evil desire and hatred by the enlightenment of wisdom.

Below what these precepts intended for the young people (see the dish of Lezoux: nu gnate ne dama gusson) will produce a few centuries later in Ireland. The in a way "Deontological " pieces of advice that gives to his adoptive son, Lugaid of the red stripes, the future king of the warriors in the country, Cuchulainn. Cuchulainn who, let us remind of it, in the event of war, never transgressed the Fir Fer, killed neither the charioteers , neither the messengers, nor unarmed people; and it seemed to him neither noble, nor beautiful, to take the horses, the clothing, or the weapons, from killed men (in other words to strip them. See not the surah of the Quran devoted to the spoils but the text of the driving off of the cattle of Cooley).

You shall not be the cause (taerracht) of vehement and fierce quarrels ?

You shall not be arrogant (discir), inaccessible, haughty.

You shall not be intractable, experiencing hubris, precipitate, impulsive.

You shall not be bent down by the intoxication of having much wealth.

You shall not be an ale-polluting flea in the house of a provincial king.

You shall not make too many feasts to foreigners.

You shall not visit disreputable people, incapable of entertaining you as a king.

You shall not let prescription close on illegal possession.

Let witnesses be examined of who is the heir of land.

Let the scholars (senchaid) combine in truthful action in your presence.

Let the lands of the brethren be ascertained in their lifetime, peacefully.

Let genealogical lists be updated when generations multiply in branches,

Let the living be called up ; let them be revived on oath.

The place that the dead have resided in.

Let the heir be preserved in his lawful possession.

Let the strangers, on the other hand, be driven off the patrimony, by force if necessary.

You will not relate garrulously.

You will not discourse noisily.

You will not mock,

you will not insult,

you will not deride old people.

You will not be ill-opinioned [you will not suppose ill] of anyone.

You will not make difficult demands (geis).
 You will not turn away anybody.
 You will be obedient to the teaching of the wise.
 Caín-ois. Caín-era. Caín-airlice.
 Grant as it is necessary to do it. Refuse as it is necessary o do it . Advise as it is necessary to do it.
 You will be remembering of the instructions of the old.
 You will be a follower of the rules of your fathers.
 You will not be cold-hearted to friends.
 You will be strong to your foes.
 You will not be stakeholder in the brawls or the quarrels???
 Nírbat scélach athchossánach.
 You will not speak ill of others
 You will extort nothing.
 You will not hoard [like an avaricious];
 Consecha do chúrsachad i n-gnímaib antechtai.
 You will reject and blame unbecoming deeds.
 You will not sacrifice truthfulness to the will of certain men.
 You will not reape ??? (tathboingid) that you be not repentant.
 You will not show hubris in your triumph that you be not obnoxious.
 You will not be lazy, that you be not like dead.
 You will not be too precipitate that you be not vulgar.

Do you consent to follow these words, my son?"

(Serglige conculainn The Wasting Sickness of Cúchulainn and the One Jealousy of Aemer).

It is right to examine here now another matter of a much more reasonable kind (I say this by way of contrast): "They that are healthy need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9, 12, Luke 5, 31).

Christ unravels these things to the multitude about his own coming to earth. But if then it was on account of those who are weak, as he himself says, that he faced sins, were not our forefathers weak in this field, and were not our ancestors yet diseased with sin?

Counter-Lay (comment) No. 66.

What Porphyry wants to say, it is that the Christians are not interested in people who lived before the coming of Jesus. They were doomed to the eternal damnation, it is all! Porphyry therefore underlines here indeed one of the innumerable weak points of the Christian reasoning. Why God, Father, however, of all the men, always intervenes in the human history in a way so selective or limited in time (for certain peoples only, at the time of Abraham of Moses or of Jesus); whereas current Mankind is AT LEAST 100,000 YEARS OLD? Why didn't he also deal with all his other children? Before during or afterwards?

If indeed those who are healthy need not a physician, and he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, so that Paul speaks thus: "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15); if then this is so, and he that has gone astray is called, and he that is diseased is healed, and the unrighteous is called, but the righteous is not, it follows that he who was neither called nor in need of the healing of the Christians would be a righteous man who had not gone astray. Therefore he who has no need of healing is the man who turns away from the word which is among your faithful, and the more he turns away from it, the more righteous and healthy he is, and the less he goes astray.

Let us examine another saying even more baffling than these, when he says, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven."

If it be indeed the case that anyone who is rich is (not brought into the so-called kingdom of heaven though he have kept himself from the sins , such as murder, theft, adultery, cheating, impious oaths,

body-snatching, and the wickedness of sacrilege), of what use is just dealing to righteous men, if they happen to be rich? And what harm is there for poor men in doing every unholy deed of baseness? For it is not virtue that takes a man up to heaven, but lack of possessions. For if his wealth shuts out the rich man from heaven, by way of contrast his poverty brings a poor man into it. And so it becomes lawful, when a man has learned this lesson, to pay no regard to virtue, but without let or hindrance to cling to poverty alone, and the things that are most base. This follows from poverty being able to save the poor man, while riches shut out the rich man from the undefiled abode.

Wherefore it seems to me that these cannot be the words of Christ, if indeed. He handed down the rule of truth, but of some poor men who wished, as a result of such vain talking, to deprive the rich of their substance. At any rate, no longer ago than yesterday, reading these words to women of noble birth: "Sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," they persuaded them to distribute to poor men all the substance and possession which they had, and, themselves entering into a state of want, to gather by begging, turning from a position of freedom to unseemly asking, and from prosperity to a pitiable character, and in the end, being compelled to go to the houses of the rich (which is the first thing, or rather the last thing, in disgrace and misfortune). In short, they lost what belonged to them in the name of "godliness" and they learned, as a result, what is to crave the goods of other people. Accordingly, it seems to me that these are rather the words of some woman in distress.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 67.

Let the readers allow the stupid and malicious racist reactionary old fascist that I am (since not Christian and critical regarding this religion, like all other dominant ideologies besides); to begin by reminding, and this, unlike Porphyry (for once!); that "poverty is not a vice," as it said among us, a wise maxim that even the Christians forgot very quickly according to certain divorce judgments! This camel is due only to a simple mistake of translation, the original Aramaic word meant "cord."

What the remarks ascribed to Jesus want to say only it is that wealth, luxury, and comfort, are direct, or indirect, source, of many defects, whose poor are protected, of course, by definition. The first of them being the lack of (active) compassion towards the difficulties or the problems of others. The one who lives in wealth, luxury or comfort, can quite simply neither understand them nor feel a true compassion towards them.

Porphyry is nevertheless right on a point. To sell or give all one's possessions and to find oneself then dependent of the society is not a solution. The ideal is not to live on the charity of others often hardly richer than yourself, even if it is also what our Hindu and Buddhist friends preach. To distribute or sell from one's possessions all that is superfluous, or not essential, can, certainly, prove to be a good thing; but it is necessary then in this case to be able to live on the results from one's own work, therefore to continue to have the use of what is necessary to the course of a simple and frugal life. In short, living as a beggar, no! As a hermit perhaps! A bit like Suibhne Lailoken or Merlin then? What at least can be credited of being in harmony with nature.

Nauseated by the battle that the chroniclers call "the frivolous battle," because it was fought over, they say "because of a lark's nest," Merlin broke his sword and, refusing to continue to prophesy in a country occupied by the invader or divided; he left and lived in a forest, wandering, with his hair long, with his clothing in shreds, a harp without string, leant on a stick of holly.

It is in reality in this case an eremitism of woodsman similar to that which was practiced by the shamans of the forests; and the Christian monks having collected these traditions have, of course, like in the case of the legends concerning St. Brendan, arranged this account to make it tally with their idea to them of the world. They renamed all that madness, made St Ronan intervene and so on... But the curse of St. Ronan in any case (what the devil, and the god of love in all that?) of course is not the true cause of this lifestyle choice.

As we have found another inconsequent little utterance of this kind spoken by Christ to his disciples, we have decided not to remain silent about this either. It is where he says: "The poor you always have,

but me you have not always." The reason for this statement is as follows: A certain woman brought an alabaster box of perfume and poured it on his head [Matthew 26, 6-8]. But when the followers saw it, and complained of the unreasonableness of the action, he said: "Why do you trouble the woman? She has wrought a good work on me. The poor you always have, but me you have not always." For they raised no small murmuring that the perfume was not rather sold for a great price, and given to the poor for expenditure on their hunger. Apparently as the result of this inopportune conversation, he uttered therefore this nonsensical saying, declaring that he was not always with them, although elsewhere he confidently affirmed and said to them: "I shall be with you until the end of the world" (Matt, XXVIII. 20). But when he was disturbed about the ointment, he denied nevertheless that he was always with them.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 68.

It is difficult to say if the first of these words is genuine ("The poor you always have, but me you have not always").

What is certain, on the other hand, it is that the second of these statements ("I shall be with you until the end of the world"), was added to the initial basic framework by the teams having embroidered on it to compose this historical novel in order to justify their actions.

It is only natural that there is much that is unseemly in all this long-winded talk thus poured out. The words, one might say, provoke a battle of inconsistency against each other.

How would some man in the street be inclined to explain that Gospel saying, which Jesus addresses to Peter when he says: "Get you behind me, Satan, you are an offense unto me, for you mind not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (Matt. XVI. 23), and that which is in another place: "You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven" [Matthew 16, 18-19].

For if he so condemned Peter as to call him Satan, and thought of him as cast behind him, and a living offense, and one who had received no thought of what was divine in his mind; if he so rejected him as having committed mortal sin, that he was not prepared to have him in his sight any more, and thrust him behind him into the throng of the outcast and banished; how is it right to find this sentence of exclusion against the leader and "chief of the disciples?"

At any rate, if anyone who is in his sober senses ruminates over this, and then hears Christ say (as though he had forgotten the words he had uttered against Peter): "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," "To you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven,"—will he not laugh aloud till he nearly bursts his mouth? Will he not open it wide as he might from his seat in the theater? Will he not speak with a sneer and hiss loudly? Will he not cry aloud to those who are near him?

Either when Jesus called Peter Satan He was drunk and overcome with wine, he spoke as though in a fit; or else, when he gave this same disciple the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he was painting dreams, in the imagination of his sleep. For pray how was Peter able to support the foundation of the Church, seeing that thousands of times he was readily shaken from his judgment? What sort of firm reasoning can be detected in him, or where did he show any unshaken mental power, seeing that, though he heard what Jesus had said to him, he was terribly frightened because of a sorry maidservant, and three times forswore himself, although no great necessity was laid upon him? [Mark, 14,69].

We conclude then that, if he was right at the same time in taking him up and calling him Satan, as having failed of the very essence of godliness, he was inconsistent, as though not knowing what He had done, in giving him the authority of leadership [of the church] .

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 69.

Porphyry is perhaps mistaken by thinking that the rejection of Peter (Get thee behind me, Satan and so on... Matthew 16,22-23) was previous to his blessing and his appointment as leader of the disciples (Matthew 16,17-19) whereas in the text, that we know today, it is the reverse. The logion of the Christ making Peter the first of the disciples, in any event, was added thereafter in order to justify the primacy of the bishop of Rome. On this subject, to see also nevertheless below the counter-lay No. 71.

The Christians having proceeded to this addition in the initial framework did not think of the contradiction that it was going to cause with the passage: "Get you behind me, Satan, etc." Or then

that means that the first of the apostles, that the first of the popes, could also be a moment possessed by the Devil? Like Muhammad in the case of satanic verses. In whom to trust really? Even our master to everybody, at least especially for his Pantheisticon, the Gaelic bard John Toland, great destroyer of popes and of caesaropapism before the Lord, would not have dared to write such a thing.

This Peter is also convicted of being a real bastard in other cases also. For in the case of a certain man called Ananias, and his wife Sapphira (Acts v, 1-11), because they did not deposit the whole price of their land, but kept back a little for their own necessary use, Peter put them to death, although they had done no wrong. For how did they do wrong, if they did not wish to make a present of all that was their own? But even if Peter did consider their act to be one of wrongdoing, he ought to have remembered the commands of Jesus, who had taught him to endure as many as four hundred and ninety sins against him [Matthew 18, 21-22]. He would then at least have pardoned one, if indeed what had occurred could really in any sense be called a sin. And there is another thing which Peter ought to have borne in mind in dealing with others—namely, how he himself, by swearing that he did not know Jesus, had then not only told a lie, but had forsworn himself, in contempt of the judgment and resurrection to come.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 70.

If Peter made Ananias and Sapphira die by the only force of his thought (acts V, 1 to 11) it was perhaps also the case for Simon Magus. We have indeed of the end of this great Jewish, or Samaritan if you prefer (we are not racistist, we are non-racistists) philosopher, two different versions. In one of these versions, St. Peter, jealous to see him succeeding in flying, assassinates him by making him with his prayers crush on the ground. We can nevertheless doubt the veracity of this heinous Christian propaganda (the prayer of St. Peter to assassinate out of jealousy a great rival philosopher can with difficulty be equated with love); because many people continued to mull and follow his teaching.

This man who stood first in the band of the disciples, taught as he had been by God to despise death, but escaping when seized by Herod, became a cause of punishment to those who guarded him [Acts 12, 5-11]. For after he had escaped during the night, when the day came there was a stir among the soldiers as to how Peter had got out. Herod, when he had sought for him and failed to find him, examined the guards, and then ordered them to be "led away," that is to say, put to death. So it is astonishing how Jesus gave the keys of heaven to Peter if he were a man such as this; and how to one who was disturbed with such agitation or overcome by such experiences did he say: "Feed my lambs?" [John 21, 15-17]. For I suppose the sheep are the faithful who have advanced to the mystery of perfection, while the lambs stand for the throng of those who are still catechumens, fed so far on the gentle milk of teaching. Nevertheless, Peter is recorded to have been crucified after feeding the aforementioned lambs not even for a few months, although Jesus had said that the gates of Hades should not prevail against him (Matthew 16, 18).

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 71.

Peter disappears from History after having himself escaped this prison.

This passage of Acts [12, 6-19] is not to take literally, because it is obvious that it cannot be here the account of the escape of a man in the flesh. What escapes from this prison, in this case, it is not the body of Peter, but his soul; at the very least therefore a Peter, following the example of Jesus, died and resurrected, appearing then to some believers; before ascending definitively to heaven, as Christ his master (the parallelism of the two stories was desired). Porphyry should have realized it. The initial account, which was to be taken symbolically, was then manipulated, probably by these same who inserted it into this place, to make it the story of an escape, in the flesh, of Peter.

Act XII, 1-19 is the last historical material having some value where Peter is still mentioned, and Luke knows then only Paul and James, the Lord's brother, first true pope of History. In any case obviously the only authority admitted by everyone or almost in the Church of the time, including Paul (act XXI, 18).

Most probable therefore is that Peter died in the jail where Herod had made him be thrown, like John the Baptist a few years before; and that all what people said after is only a legend completed forged at the time of Porphyry or a little before by the early Christians; for the purpose in their hand (the popes and the caesaropapism would have said the first of the free thinkers, the great Irish druid John Toland).

Again, Paul too condemned Peter when he said: "For before certain came from James, he ate with the Gentiles, but when they came he separated himself, fearing those of the circumcision; and many Jews joined with him in his hypocrisy" (Gal. II. 12. It is the famous incident at Antioch). In this likewise there is abundant and important condemnation, that a man who had become an interpreter of the divine word should live in hypocrisy, and behave himself with a view to pleasing men.

Moreover, the same is true of his taking about a wife, for this is what Paul says : " Have we not power to take about a sister/wife, as also the rest of the apostles, and Peter?" (1 Cor. IX. 5). And then he adds (2 Cor. XI. 13), "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers." If then Peter is related to have been involved in so many base things, is it not enough to make one shudder to imagine that he holds the keys of heaven, and looses and binds, although he is fast bound, so to speak, in countless inconsistencies.

If you are really filled with boldness about the questions, and the points of difficulty have become clear to you, tell us how it was that Paul said, "Being free, I made myself the slave of all, in order that I might gain all" (1 Cor. IX. 19), and how, although he called circumcision "mutilation," he himself circumcised a certain Timothy, as we are taught in the Acts of the Apostles (XVI. 3).

Oh, the downright stupidity of it all! It is such a stage as this that the scenes in the theater portray, as a means of raising laughter. Such indeed is the exhibition which jugglers give. For how could the man be free who is a slave of all? And how can the man gain all who apes all?

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 72.

It is obvious that Paul still remained dependent on his original conditioning of Jew; and that what seemed obvious to him or important was so only for him and those who had been the object of the same conditioning, not at all for the rest of Mankind; who besides hastened to forget the convoluted justifications of this saint man, come on late to Christianity. And not after a long philosophical reflection, but following a vision on the road to Damascus where he led, under guard, Christian Jewish deportees members of the new sect.

Ill omen !

There Porphyry points out the dangerous characteristics of the Christian discourse; the abuse of the paradoxes of the kind: to live is to die or vice versa, to die it is the true life, freedom, it is the slavery and so on. Such reasoning, or rather unreasoning, by association of contrary ideas, if it is taken literally, can justify worst excesses. Stakes for witches, autos-da-fe, censorship, prohibitions in any kind, a little like the dual language of the famous novel by Orwell.

For if he is non-Jewish to those who are not Jews, as he himself says, and he went with the Jews as a Jew and with others in like manner, truly he was the slave of manifold baseness, and a stranger to freedom and an alien from it. Truly he is a servant and minister of other people's wrong doings, and a notable zealous for unseemly things, if he spends his time on each occasion in the baseness of those who are not Jews, and appropriates their doings to himself.

These things cannot be the teachings of a sound mind, nor the setting forth of reasoning that is free; the words imply rather someone who is somewhat crippled in mind, and weak in his reasoning.

For if he lives with those who are not Jews, and also in his writings accepts the Jews' religion gladly, having a share in each, he is confused with each, mingling with the falls of those who are base, and subscribing himself as their companion. For he who draws such a line through circumcision as to remove those who wish to fulfill it, but then performs circumcision himself, stands as the weightiest of all accusers of himself when he says: "If I build again those things which I loosed, I establish myself as a transgressor" (Gal. 2 ,18).

This same Paul, who often when he speaks seems to forget his own words, tells the chief captain that he is not a Jew but a Roman, although he had previously said: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the exact teaching of the law of my fathers." But he who said "I am a Jew," and "I am a Roman," is neither thing, although he attaches himself to both. For he who plays the hypocrite and speaks of what he is not, lays the foundation of his deeds in guile. By putting round him a mask of deceit, he cheats the clear issue and steals the truth, laying siege in different ways to the simple soul's understanding, and enslaving by the juggler's art those who are easily influenced.

The man who welcomes in his life such a principle as this, does not differ at all from an implacable and bitter foe, who enslaving by his hypocrisy the minds of those beyond his own borders, and takes them all captive in inhuman fashion.

So if Paul is in pretense at one time a Jew, at another a Roman, at one time a follower of the law of Moses, and at another a Greek, and whenever he wishes is a stranger or an enemy to each one; by stealing into each, robbing each of its scope by his flattery, he has made each useless.

We conclude then that he is a liar and manifestly brought up in an atmosphere of lying. And it is beside the point for him to say: "I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie" (Rom. IX. 1).

For the man who has just now conformed to the Law of Moses, and to-day to the Gospel, is rightly regarded as knavish and hollow both in private and in public life.

That he dissembles the Gospel for the sake of vainglory, and the law of Moses for the sake of covetousness, is plain from his words: "Who ever goes to war at his own charges? Who shepherds the flock and does not eat of the milk of the flock?" (1 Cor. IX. 7). And, in his desire to get hold of these things, he calls in the law as a supporter of his covetousness, saying, "Or does not the law say these things? For in the law of Moses it is written, You shall not muzzle an ox that is treading out the corn " (9. 9. In order that it can eat some from it). Then he adds a statement which is obscure and full of nonsense, by way of cutting off the divine forethought from the beasts, saying, "Does God take care of the oxen, or does he say it on our account? On our account it was written of course" (9, 10).

It seems to me that in saying this he is mocking the wisdom of the Creator, as if it contained no forethought for all the things that had long ago been brought into being. For if God does not take care of oxen, pray, why it is written "He has put all things under his feet, sheep and oxen and beasts and birds and the fishes" (Ps. VIII. 8-9)? If God takes account of fishes, much more of oxen which plow and labor. Wherefore I am amazed at such an imposter, who pays such solemn respect to the law because he is insatiable, for the sake of getting a sufficient contribution from those who are subject to him.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 73.

There is no need to defame a competitor system of beliefs to refute it. The truth about it must be enough. The expression "Mother nature" is untranslatable in Hebrew and its idea of the animal sacrifice (of calves, sheep, etc.) does not have at all as the same meaning that which we find in other civilizations. Hubris to be a member of the people chosen by God + extending to the very whole Mankind of this concept with Christianity = anthropocentrism.

The anthropocentrism of the remark of Paul is the ultimate change of the fantastic Jewish hubris consisting in believing to be a chosen people. But chosen by who?

What can think of it Porphyry, who in fact seems to better know the Holy Scriptures than Paul himself, the God or Demiurge of the Bible was always, it is the least that we can say, far from concerned about ecology.

We are there the polar opposite of the Western philosophies and particularly of the Western Gnostic sages for example, who were ecologists before the word is invented. "They do not regard it lawful to eat the hare, and the cock, and the goose; but however, they breed them for amusement and pleasure "(Caesar. B.G. Book V. 12). Caesar did not understand something, of course, from this authentic ecological poetry of life before the word is invented and reported this idea in the way of the Romans.

By prohibiting to kill these animals, not because of their impurity, of course, because this concept, although dear to the God or Demiurge of the Bible, was completely unfamiliar to the people concerned by the remark of Caesar, but for different other reasons; animals considered as sacred,

having to be used for divinatory ends, love of animals, species having been one moment threatened in Britain, etc.; the high-knowers of the druidiaction (druidecht) were consistent ecologists. According to the Greek historian Arrian (On Hunting. XXXIII) Paul's Galatians offered to Artemis [or more exactly to the goddess-or-demoness, or fairy, hiding behind this name... Andarta? ? ?] yearly sacrifices, but others offered to the goddess-or-demoness, or the fairy in question if this term is preferred, a treasure.

"They institute a kitty for the goddess, into which they pay two obols for every hare that is caught, —a drachma for a fox, (because he is a crafty animal, and destroys hares, for this reason they put in a larger amount, on the grounds that an enemy has been caught) — and four drachmae for a roe deer, in consideration of his size, and greater value as a game.

When the year comes round, on the return of the nativity of Artemis, the treasury is opened, and a victim purchased out of the money collected; either a sheep, or kid, or heifer, according to the amount of the sum: and then, after having sacrificed, and presented the first offerings of their victims to the goddess of the chase, according to their respective rites, they give themselves up, with their hounds, to a festival and recreation, crowning the latter on this day with garlands, as an indication of the festival being celebrated on their account."

This detail testifies to the high regard that the Galatians granted to some of their hounds. But perhaps is it only there a late evolution of the rite? What appears remarkable, on the other hand, it is the obvious significance (since it is expressed on a monetary level) of the sacrifice of a pet.

The sacrifice of the pet is intended to compensate the hunt goddess-or-demoness for the taking away that the man carried out on the herd of the wild animals of which she has the responsibility. In other words - and to take over the words of Caesar which explain the conception of the (in particular human) sacrifice, the sacrifice of a pet must repurchase the death of the wild animals. The Galatians priests kings like Dejotarus* were more attentive than their Mediterranean neighbors to the natural manifestations or to the indigenous worships which they were led to meet. These phenomena of nature were for them only the various manifestations of the same divine great spirit in which they believed [...] They were attentive to the least breath, to the smallest quiver than the universe pass to the physical phenomena: thunder, earthquakes, tidal waves, astral phenomena [...] a form of monotheism which has, of course, nothing to do with that the religions of the Book teach...

For them indeed all had a soul/mind. "The perfumed flowers are our sisters, the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and the man, all belong to the same family. The Earth does not belong to man - man belongs to the Earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family" (Speech of the Indian great chief called Seattle in 1854. Quotation from memory).

This idea common to Dejotarus and Seattle survived until the works of a modern druid as John Toland (see his book entitled Pantheisticon).

The spring, by its murmur, its limpidity, the continual renewal of its water and its beneficial effects, inspired to the man of this time admiration and gratitude which went as far as the worship. At the time of St. Patrick, the Irishmen awarded to the springs divine honors, even made to them offerings. The worship of the springs appears similar among the Picts and the Breton ones. Trees, oak, hazel tree, yew, and ash, and the stones, were also venerated [...] the sun, which regulates the time, which delights and heats the human beings, which ripens the harvests and exceeds in beauty all the other elements, had, of course, to also occupy an important place in this naturalist religion ...

For this true poetry of life, each place had its genie or its mystery: the spirit of the forests, the Lyons genie, the Breton soul... The springs were equated with nymphs, with white Ladies, or with fairies, dancing gracefully in the mist, and each animal race had its guardian angel (Artio for the bears for example).

* King of the little Armenia and of a part of the Pontus (today Turkey), contemporary of Cicero, who wrote for him a plea remained famous.

This fine fellow, sound in mind and understanding, instructed in the accuracy of the law of his fathers, who had so often cleverly recalled Moses to mind, occasionally appears to be soaked with wine or drunkenness; for he makes an assertion which removes the ordinance of the law, saying to the Galatians, "Who bewitched you that you should not obey the truth," that is, the Gospel? (Gal. III. 1). But then, exaggerating, and making it horrible for a man to obey the aforementioned law, he says: "As many as are under the law are under a curse" (Gal. III. 10). The man who writes to the Romans "The law is spiritual" (VII. 14), and again, "The law is holy and the commandment holy and just," places under a curse those who obey that which is holy??Then, completely confusing the nature of the

question, he confounds the whole matter and makes it obscure, so that he who listens to him almost grows dizzy, and dashes against the two things as though in the darkness of the night, stumbling over the law, and knocking against the Gospel in confusion, owing to the ignorance of the man who leads him by the hand.

Then Paul turns like a man who jumps up from sleep scared by a dream, with the cry: "I Paul bear witness that if any man does one thing of the law of Moses, he is a debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. V. 3). This is instead of saying simply that it is not right to give longer heed to those things that are spoken by the law.

For see here, look at this clever fellow's record. After countless utterances which he took from the law in order to get support from it, he made void the judgment of his own words by saying: "For the law entered that the offense might abound" [Rom v, 20] and before these words, "The goad of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. XV. 56). He practically sharpens his own tongue like a sword, and cuts the law to pieces without mercy limb by limb. But this is the man who in many ways inclines to obey the law, and says it is praiseworthy to live according to it. By taking hold of this ignorant opinion, which he does as though by habit, he has overthrown his own judgments on all other occasions.

When he speaks again of the eating of things sacrificed to idols, he simply teaches that these matters are indifferent, telling them not to be inquisitive nor to ask questions, but to eat things even though they be sacrificed to idols, provided only that no one speaks to them in warning. Wherein he is represented as saying: "The things which they sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, but I would not that you should have fellowship with demons" (1 Cor. x. 20).

Thus he speaks and writes but again he writes with indifference about such eating, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, that there is none other God but one" (1 Cor. viii. 4). And a little after this, "Meat will not commend us to God, neither, if we eat, are we the better, neither, if we do not eat, are we the worse" (VIII. 8). Then, after all this prating of quackery, he ruminated, like a man lying in bed, and said: "Eat all that is sold in the shambles, asking no questions for conscience' sake, for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (1 Cor. X. 25-26).

What a stage farce got from no one! Oh, the monstrous inconsistency of his utterance! A saying which destroys itself with its own sword! Oh, novel kind of archery, which turns against him who drew the bow, and strikes him!

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 74.

All these contortions to come to that? An observation of common sense that anybody not-Jew (and not-Muslim today) can express in thirty seconds. So many years of reflection to come to the same conclusion as pagans. "Eat of all that is sold in the meat market without having problems of conscience; because the earth belongs to the Lord, and all that it contains also."

The Holy Spirit is definitely not a quick on the draw!

Let us be clear! Paul was in the right track, that which was opened by Stephen and the Hellenists (total independence regarding the Old Testament part of the Bible) and he was right to do it. But, a prisoner of Judaism, he did not go far enough and quickly enough in this direction, he did not succeed in immediately cutting the umbilical cord still linking him to the Jewish Bible.

As one of our famous philosophers said it, the Christian is a bad pagan converted by a bad Jew. The drama of Christianity is that it never succeeded in breaking the Jewish hubris to which he is the born of adultery heir in order to free himself from it; as advised to it the heirs to Paul, kind Marcion, and that formed therefore the biggest intellectual disaster having ever descended upon Mankind (with Islam); because, by doing this, he denatured and the Judaism and the Greco-Roman paganism; and therefore added their disadvantages instead of adding their advantages.

Christianity was born from a double treason, and the guilt complex of Paul betraying the religion of his forefathers explains the incredible potential of aggressiveness or hatred in reality of this religion of love; who was at the beginning at war against everyone and therefore against Mankind. A heinous poison tackling all that could then exist as religiosity in the Roman Empire of the East, the Jewish religion, but also the various paganisms.

He had at the same time to keep the most of the elements of the Former Covenant not to seem too much to betray it and not to make all its Jewish members flee in one go; while bringing in it the most of opening on the world in order to acculturate its message.

Paul, of course, involved Christianity in an irresistible movement taking it more and more away from Judaism, but it was a little reluctantly and at the cost of a pitiful collapse of his intelligence; because he could not follow the example of the Gnostic people in the East and break completely with his origins; from where the passably tormented and convoluted nature of his theology and the very personal interpretation (a true psychosis) that he makes of the Old Testament; completely against what the (Essenian, Sadducean, Pharisean) Judaism of his time saw in it. This incredible gobbledygook of mentally ill person (psychosis or schizophrenia) is, however, the base of any self-respecting Christian discourse.

The simplest solution had been the following one. To have a speech of the type:

a) The Former Covenant with the people of Israel is to be regarded as null and void. The new one which replaces it, of course, applies to the very whole Mankind!

b) There was in the Law of Moses a certain number of things having always been or having become from now on... harmful. Christ came to abolish them.

Here is the detailed list...

c) There was nevertheless also and for various reasons in the Law of Moses a certain number of good things, which are therefore to be kept, here is also the list...

Paul not having had this intellectual courage: to give up any reference to Judaism like the Gnostic authors in the East did, his theology does not have, of course, the luminous clearness of their positions. And does not have either the subtle nuances of the Western Gnostic sages present on the spot (dikastes in Galatia).

In his epistles we find another saying like these, where he praises virginity, and then turns round and writes: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats" (1 Tim. IV. 1 and 3). And in the Epistle to the Corinthians he says: "But concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. vii. 25). Therefore he that remains single does not do well, nor will he that refrains from marriage as from an evil thing lead the way in obedience, since they do not have a command from Jesus concerning virginity. And how is it possible in this case that certain people boast of their virginity as if it were some great thing, and say that they are filled with the Holy Ghost similarly to her who was the mother of Jesus?

That saying of the Teacher is a far-famed one, which says, "Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no true life in yourselves." Truly this saying is not merely beast-like and absurd, but is more absurd than any absurdity, and more beast-like than any fashion of a beast, that a man should taste human flesh, and drink the blood of members of the same tribe and race, and that by doing this he should have eternal life. For, tell, me, if you do this, what excess of savagery do you introduce into civilization? Rumor does not record—I do not say, this action, but even the mention of this strange and novel deed of impiety. The Furies never revealed this to those who lived in strange ways, nor would the Potidasans have accepted it unless they had been reduced by a savage hunger. Once the banquet of Thyestes became such, owing to a sister's grief, and the Thracian Tereus took his fill of such food unwillingly. Harpagus was deceived by Astyages when he feasted on the flesh of his dearest son, and it was therefore against their desire that all these underwent such pollution.

But no one living in a state of peace prepared such a table in his life; no one learned from a teacher any knowledge so foul. If you look up Scythia in the records, and go through the Macrobian Ethiopians, and if you career through the ocean girdle round about, you will find men who eat, live, and devour roots; you will hear of men who eat reptiles and feed on mice, but, on the other hand, they refrain altogether from human flesh.

Therefore what then does this saying mean? [Even if there is a mystical meaning hidden in it, yet that does not pardon the outward significance, which places men lower than the beasts. Men have made up strange tales, but nothing so pernicious as this, with which to gull the simple.]

Rightly did Homer order the manly Greeks to be silent, as they had been trained: he introduced indeed the declamation of Hector, by addressing the Greeks in measured language, this saying: "Stay, ye Argives; smite not, ye Achaean youths; for Hector of the waving plume is resolved to speak a word." Even so we now all sit in quietness here; for the interpreter of the Christian doctrines promises us or surely affirms that he will unravel the dark passages of the Scriptures.

Tell therefore, my good sir, to us who are following what you have to say, what the Apostle means when he says: "And such were some of you" (plainly something base), "but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 9-11). For we are surprised and truly perplexed in mind at such things; if a man, when once he is washed from so many defilements and pollution, shows himself to be innocent, if by wiping off the stains of so much weakness in his life, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, theft, unnatural vice, poisoning, and countless base and disgusting things; and simply by being baptized and calling on the name of Christ he is quite easily freed from them, and puts off the whole of his guilt just as a snake puts off his old slough.

Who is there who would not, on the strength of these, venture on evil deeds, some mentionable and others not, and do such things as are neither to be uttered in speech nor endured in deeds, in the knowledge that he will receive remission from so many criminal actions only by believing and being baptized, and in the hope that he will after this receive pardon from Him who is about to judge the quick and the dead? These things incline the man who hears them to commit sin, in each particular he is thus taught to practice what is unlawful. These things have the power to set aside the training of the law, and cause righteousness itself to be of no avail against the unrighteous. They introduce into the world a form of society which is without law, and teach men to have no fear of ungodliness; when a man sets aside a pile of countless wrongdoings simply by being baptized.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 75.

Eternal problem of the "justification." Is a man made righteous by the only fact of believing or by the (good) works? Is it necessary to act rightly and to do good deeds to be a just individual or is this only a question of belief?

Not to make depending on works, or so little, the access of one's soul/mind into the parallel other world which is called Heaven, is, of course, a praiseworthy idea; but to affirm that if you don't believe in it, you can in no case reach the aforementioned paradise after death, is an extreme idea. To believe is neither necessary nor sufficient in this field, but nevertheless facilitates the things, well because that inspires to man the courage which it is necessary.

"According to your masters, the shades of dead men seek not the quiet homes of Erebus or death's pale kingdoms;

.... death is only the middle of a long life. Happy the peoples beneath the Great Bear thanks to their error; because they do not know this supreme fear which frightens all others: hence the spirit inclined to throw itself on iron the strength of character able to face death, and this lack of care put to save a life which must be given back to you." (Lucan. *De bello Civili* I, 454-462).

The other testimonies which remained to us in this field are a short declaration, that of Arrian; and the mention of some too rare triads like that which was reported to us by Diogenes Laertius: to reverence the gods, to abstain from wrongdoing, and "andreian askein."

If the verb askein (to practice, to train) offers no difficulty, the Greek word andreian, itself, is a little less clear: bravery, virility, energy, courage? The most usual translation, to train to courage, is perhaps a little restrictive. Perhaps is it better to translate "andreian askein" by the expression "being a man" (implied, a true one). Therefore it would be in this case quite simply the virtues necessary to Man in order to go to the parallel to ours but of heavenly nature, universe, after death.

A dignified and courageous attitude at the time to die could be enough to pass in this other world.

Without necessarily agreeing with all that says Porphyry, who is not always right [particularly in connection with obedience. To serve no Master is as a very interesting sentence in Brennus' way] let us notice nevertheless that paganism was never so lax. The pagan one who did evil, but then really evil, action, always expected to have to pay it one day or the other; on this earth or in the other world parallel to ours that we designate with the name of hereafter.

"There is strengthening of paganism if an ill deed is avenged – Intud i ngeindtleacht gnim olc mad indechur (St. Patrick. *Senchus Mor*. Ancient laws of Ireland I. Pages 4-18).

The word bran designates the residue resulting from the action of superior cleaning that death is, but it also designates, of course, and to begin, quite before this stage as we could see it; psychic consequences of a regrettable act or an absence of acts.

The individual soul/minds (anaon), too loaded with bran, does not go in the other universe parallel to ours which is called Heaven, but goes to the non-world of the andumnon or anderodubnon. It is a state of being in reality, and not a place (or more exactly a state of being used as provisional and by no means eternal, crossing point); for the souls being a little too loaded with karmic bran during their earthly life of before. These soul/minds are again embodied afterwards on earth, into bacuceos. Into bacuceos or seibaros = phantom (Irish siabair/siabhradh) left straightly from the kingdom of Tethra even from that of Donn (Donnotegia). See also all the Welsh folklore surrounding the Anwn, in other words, the kingdom of Arawn and Gwynn. In this case, it is only a partial reincarnation.

But will also escape this sad fate, one day or another, these soul/minds?

The anaon or individual soul/mind not representing a "oneself" with eternal existence, since intended to also merge in the Big Whole at the end of this cycle or earlier; therefore it could not be for it an eternal heaven or hell.

The word BACUCEOS, BACUCEA (again embodied, reincarnated) was quoted in a Latinized form and in the plural accusative by John Cassian (Conlationes, 7,32,2) in the beginning of the 5th century. "Others we find affect the hearts of those whom they have seized with empty hubris (and these are commonly called Bacucei) so that they stretch themselves up beyond their proper height and at one time puff themselves up with arrogance [...] and as they fancy that they are great people and the wonder of everybody, at one time show by bowing their body that they are worshipping higher powers (sublimiores), while at another time they think that they are worshipped by others." The remarks of Cassian are rather vague or more accurately they are very precise, but contradictory; because if we understand them well, the bacuceus, that can be a little anything and everything (nice or full with arrogance, prostrate or excited and gesticulating, worshipping or worshipped, etc.). The bacucei are like the prisoners or the possessed persons of a supra human entity remaining to be defined, inescapable consequence of the time and of the life which distributes, divides, or allocates (the soul/minds?)

The disorders and the behavioral problems described by Cassian are the sign of the adaptation difficulties of the soul/mind to its new body, even fifteen years after (too small or too tall body, etc.). The fact of thinking to be worshipped by the others characterizes perhaps the destiny of a prince of this world, embodied again in a poor wretch, and having difficulty to forget the conditioned reflexes of his hubristic former life. The fact of turning unceasingly to the sky (towards the potestates sublimiores) is the clue of the nostalgia of a soul/mind having very briefly foreseen the heavenly stay of the delicious to attend blessed ones – the Meldoi - but fallen down then on earth at once afterwards. What a fall indeed! The soul/mind has what to be durably traumatized because of that.

The communication with the parallel universe that we call the Hereafter could, of course, be established by such "spiritualist" possessions but it should not be forgotten nevertheless that all this is only the interpretation by John Cassian of a fact of Celtic civilization. On certain subjects, he is certainly mistaken: he thinks for example that the benign tumors are the passage of these soul/minds, in the bodies in question. But, however, it is there an aberration worthy of the worst "witch hunts" of the Middle Ages.

Pseudo-druids as there are so many of them today, alas, being based on this testimony of Cassian (nostalgia of the fall, etc.) affirm that it is possible to remember one's past lives but the isolated cases put forward to support this thesis arouse always the problem of the checking. The word SEIBAROS, SEIBARA (phantom) is a reconstruction starting from the Irish siabair/siabhradh and designates the case of a half-reincarnation or partial reincarnation; the case of the soul/minds escaped from the ices of the fore-heaven (andumno or anwn); abundantly stage by all the folklore relating to the kingdoms of Donn (Donnotegia) and of Tethra in Ireland; or to the kingdoms of Arawn and Gwynn in Wales.

Anyone will feel quite sure that the records are mere fairy tales, if he reads another piece of clap-trap that is written in the Gospel, where Christ says: "Now is the judgment of the world, now the ruler of this world shall be cast outside" (John xii. 31). For tell me, in the name of God, what is this judgment which then takes place, and who is the ruler of the world who is cast outside? If indeed you intend to say it is the Emperor, I answer that there is no sole ruler (for many rule the world), nor was he cast down. But if

you mean someone who is abstract and incorporeal, he cannot be cast outside. For where should he be cast, to whom it fell to be the ruler of the world? If you are going to reply that there exists another world somewhere, into which the ruler will be cast, pray tell us this from a record which can convince us. But if there is not another (and it is impossible that two worlds should exist) where should the ruler be cast, if it be not in that world in which he happens to be already? And how is a man cast down in that world in which he is? Unless it is like the case of an earthenware vessel, which, if it and its contents are broken, a man causes to be cast outside, not into the void, but into another part of air or earth, or perhaps of something else.

If then you mean in like manner, when the world is broken (which is impossible), he that is in it will be cast outside, what sort of place is there outside into which he will be cast? And what is there peculiar in that place in the way of quantity and quality, height and depth, length or breadth? For if it is possessed of these things, then it follows that it is a still our world. And what is the cause of the ruler of the world being cast out, as if he were a stranger? If he be a stranger, how did he rule it? And how is he cast out? By his own will, or against it? Clearly against it. That is plain from the language, for he who is "cast out," is cast out unwillingly. But the wrongdoer is not he that endures force, but he that uses it.

All this obscure nonsense in the Gospels ought to be offered to silly women, not to men. And if we were prepared to investigate such points more closely, we should discover thousands of obscure stories which do not contain a single word worth finding.

We must also mention that saying which Matthew gave us, in the spirit of a slave who is made to bend himself in a mill house, when he said: "And the good news of the coming of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, and then shall the end come." For lo, every quarter of the inhabited world has experience of the Gospel, and all the bounds and ends of the earth possess it complete, and nowhere is there an end, nor will it ever come. So let this saying only be spoken in a corner!

By way of giving plenty of such sayings, let me quote also what was said in the Apocalypse of Peter.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 76

It is an apocryphal writing rejected by the Church a few years after the death of Porphyry. It evokes the judgment of the earth and of the heaven at the time of the end of the world. Porphyry, of course, finds this idea absurd since for him, as a good follower of Plotinus he is, the world is, overall, perfect. Unthinkable thing in many other peoples which considered rather the need for regenerating it periodically, a little as in today Hinduism. " They say that men's souls and also the universe are indestructible, although both fire and water will at some time or other prevail over them." (Strabo Geography IV, 4).

He thus introduces the statement that the heaven will be judged together with the earth. "The earth shall present all men to God in the day of judgment, itself too being about to be judged, together with the heaven which contains it." No one is so uneducated or so stupid as not to know that the things which have to do with earth are subject to disturbance, and are not naturally such as to preserve their order, but are variable; whereas the things in heaven have an order which remains perpetually alike, always goes on in the same way, never suffers alteration, nor indeed will it ever do so; for it stands as God's most exact piece of workmanship. Wherefore it is impossible that the things should be undone which are worthy of a better fate, as being fixed by a divine ordinance which cannot be touched.

And why will heaven be judged? Will it some day be shown to have committed some sin, though it preserves the order which from the beginning was approved by God, and abides in sameness always? Unless indeed someone will address the Creator, slanderously asserting that heaven is deserving of judgment, as having been allowed by the judge to speak any portents against it which are so wondrous and so great????????????????.

And he [Jesus] makes this statement again, which is full of impiety, saying: "All the might of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heaven shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all the stars shall fall as leaves from a vine, or as leaves fall from a fig tree." And another boast is made in portentous falsehood and monstrous quackery: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away " (Matt. XXIV. 35). For how could anyone say that the words of Jesus would stand if heaven and

earth no longer existed? Moreover, if Christ were to do this and bring heaven down, He would be imitating the most impious of men, even those who destroy their own children. For it is acknowledged by the Son that God is the father of heaven and earth when he says: "Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matt. XI, 25). Even John the Baptist magnifies heaven and declares that the gifts of divine grace are sent from it, when he says: "A man can do nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (John III, 27). And the prophets say that heaven is the holy habitation of God, in the words: "look down from your holy habitation, and bless your people Israel" (Deut. XXVI. 15).

If heaven, which is so great and of such importance in the witness borne to it, shall pass away, what shall be the seat thereafter of Him who rules over it? And if the element of earth perishes, what shall be the footstool of Him who sits there, for he says himself: "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is the footstool of my feet." So much for the passing away of heaven and earth.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 77.

The only solution is, of course, to consider that God does not have as a stay the Heaven, but an indefinite place! A state of being. However since every multiplicity is only relative; this supreme Destiny of the universe (Tokade) can very well, on this level of things, being worshipped under various names (Termagant, Aten, Yahweh, the god of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, Allah, our lord Belin, etc.); since it is on this level (and on this level only) that the Tokad can sometimes be seen as a personal God or Demiurge, equipped with attributes (genitals, male genitals, a beard, a people, etc.). Porphyry makes fun nevertheless with the silly anthropomorphism of the biblical design of the Higher being, to whom Jewish, Christians and Muslims, attribute feet, hands, moods, a throne, and so on. To say that they thought smart to make fun with peoples or corporations like that of the amarcolitanoi druids for example, who, however, had of the higher God or Demiurge thousand times less silly designs.

What does Paul mean by saying that the form of the world passes away? [1 Cor. 7,31]. How is it possible for them that have to be as though they had not, they that rejoice as though they do not rejoice, and how can the other old wives' talk be credible? What is it that passes away, and why does it do so? For if the Creator were to make it pass away one day, he would incur the charge of moving or altering that which was yet securely founded. And even if he were to change the fashion of the world into something better, in this again he stands condemned, as not having realized immediately at the time of creation a fitting and suitable fashion for the world, but having created it incomplete, or lacking the better arrangement. In any case, how is one to know that it is into what is better that the world would change if it came to an end late in time? What benefit is there in the order of phenomena being changed?

If the condition of the visible world is gloomy and a cause for grief, in this, too, the Creator hears the sound of protest, being reduced to silence by the sound of reasonable charges against Him, in that he contrived the parts of the earth in grievous fashion, in violation of the reasonableness of nature, and afterwards repented, therefore decided to change the whole.

Perchance Paul by this saying teaches him that has, to be minded as though he had not, in the sense that the Creator, having the world, makes the fashion of it pass away, as though he had it not. He says that he that rejoices does not rejoice, in the sense that the Creator is not pleased when he looks upon the fair and beautiful thing. He has created, and, as being much grieved over it, he formed therefore the plan of transferring or altering the world. So then let us pass quickly over this trivial saying with mild laughter.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 78.

This saying of Paul looks very Gnostic actually.

It is absurd indeed to support simultaneously the two following ideas.

a) The world was actually created by the higher Being, almighty, who knows all, and who is only Goodness.

b) But it will be destroyed soon by that one himself who created it. Why indeed to destroy it if it were not failed, but on the contrary successful? And why have created it besides?

The explanations of the kind "out love" are in an obvious way anthropomorphist and anthropocentric, considering the answers given on the matter by the Hinduism the Buddhism (or the druidism, the Maya tradition, the Germanic tradition, etc.; let us not be stupidly racist!): a cyclic history and an endless cycle: the world is destroyed only to start again from scratch or almost. See in our small dictionary (notebook No. 27 the entry words setlokenia or erdathe or even apocatastasis in Greek).

According to the Sumerian myth behind this story, the men were created starting from clay statuettes and a from a little blood (like in Islam besides) to serve God or the Demiurge even the god-or-demons.

The point of view of the Eastern Gnostic authors: the world was not successful, it was failed, it is an unfinished chaos, and it cannot thus be the work of the higher Being, who is almighty, omniscient, goodness. It can only be the result of a sorcerer's apprentice (called by them the demiurge).

From where the first variant of this idea. What the higher Being very powerful perfectly good, and who knows all, created, it is not the world we have before our eyes, but the Garden of Eden.

The world that we have before our eyes is, as for it, the work of the demon or of the devil, prince of this world according to the Judeo-Islamic-Christians precisely.

No luck! We know now and with certainty that the Garden of Eden (men created starting from clay figurines mixed with a little blood to serve in it God or the Demiurge or the Elohim, etc.). IS A SUMERIAN MYTH AND THEREFORE NEVER PHYSICALLY EXISTED AS IT IS. God or the Demiurge could not create it as a material reality. See on this subject the counter-lay No. 81.

The only means of leaving this sterile alternative, this intellectual dead end, is to consider, a little like the Western Gnostic sages; that the world is neither overall perfect nor eternal, as Plotinus and Porphyry think, nor imperfect and having to be destroyed as quickly as possible, like the Christians or the Eastern Gnostic writers would like; but in the process of becoming, beyond Good and Evil, and having its own internal regulation; a Law of the Worlds called Tokade, Tynged/Tynghedfen in Welsh, Tonkadur or Tonket in Breton language (or God if you like, by the pantheists like John Toland).

And when comes the final disaster, it will not be because his creator will have decided to precipitate his fall (for what reason?), but because it will be quite simply come at the end of the road. In short the end of a cycle and not the end of a world. "The men's souls and also the universe, are indestructible, although both fire and water will at some time or other prevail over them" (Strabo Geography IV, 4).

Let us consider another wise remark of his, astounding and perverted, wherein he says, "We which are alive and remain, shall not go before them that are asleep unto the coming of the Lord, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in a cloud, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with him" (1 Thess. IV. 15-17).

Here is a thing that indeed rises in the air and shoots up to heaven, an enormous and far-reaching lie. This, when recited to the beasts without understanding, causes even them to bellow and croak out their sounding din in reply, when they hear of men in the flesh flying like birds in the air, or carried on a cloud. For this boast is a mighty piece of quackery, that living things, pressed down by the burden of physical bulk, should receive the nature of birds, and cross the wide air like some sea, using the cloud as a chariot. Even if such a thing is possible, it is monstrous, and apart from all that is suitable. For nature which created all things from the beginning appointed places befitting the things which were brought into being, and ordained that each should have its proper sphere, the sea for the water creatures, the land for those of the dry ground, the air for winged creatures, and the ether for heavenly bodies.

If one of these were moved from its proper abode, it would disappear on arrival in a strange condition and abode. For instance, if you wanted to take a creature of the water and force it to live on the dry land, it is readily destroyed and dies. Again, if you throw a land animal, of a dry kind, into the water, it will be drowned. If you cut off a bird from the air, it will not endure it, and if you remove a heavenly body from the upper atmosphere, it will not stand it.

Neither has the divine and active Word of God [logos] done this, nor ever will do it, although he is able to change the lot of the things that come into being. For he does not do and purpose anything according to his own ability, but according to its suitability he preserves things, and keeps the law of good order. So, even if he is able to do so, he does not make the earth be sailed over, nor again does

he make the sea be plowed or tilled; nor does he use his power in making virtue into wickedness nor wickedness into virtue, nor does he adapt a man to become a winged creature, nor does he place the stars below and the earth above.

Wherefore we may reasonably declare that it is full of twaddle to say that men will ever be caught up into the air.

Paul's lie becomes very plain when he says: "We which are alive." For it is three hundred years since he said this, and no human body has anywhere been caught up, either Paul's or anyone else's. So it is time this saying of Paul became silent, for it is driven away in confusion.

Let us once again discuss the question of the resurrection of the dead. For what is the reason that God should act thus, and upset in this random way the succession of events that has held good until now, whereby he ordained that races should be preserved and not come to an end, though from the beginning he has laid down these laws and framed things thus? The things which have once been determined by God, and preserved through such long ages, ought to be everlasting, and ought not to be condemned by him who wrought them, or destroyed as if they had been made by some mere man, and arranged as mortal things by one who is himself a mortal.

Wherefore it is ridiculous if, when the whole is destroyed, the resurrection shall follow, and if he shall raise—shall we say?—the man who died three years before the resurrection, but along with him Priam and Nestor who died a thousand years before, and others who lived before them from the beginning of the human race. If anyone is prepared to think out about this, he will find that the question of the resurrection is one full of silliness. For many have often perished in the sea, and their bodies have been consumed by fishes, while many have been eaten by wild beasts and birds. How then is it possible for their bodies to rise up? Come then, and let us put to the test this statement which is so lightly made. Let us take an example.

A man was shipwrecked, the mullets devoured his body, next these were caught and eaten by some fishermen, who were killed and devoured by dogs; when the dogs died ravens and vultures feasted on them and entirely consumed them. How then will the body of the shipwrecked man be brought together, seeing that it was absorbed by so many creatures? Again, suppose another body to have been consumed by fire, and another to have come in the end to the worms, how is it possible for it to return to the essence which was there from the beginning?

You will tell me that this is possible with God, but this is not true. For all things are not possible with him; he simply cannot bring it about that Homer should not have become a poet, or that Troy should not be taken. Nor indeed can he make twice two, which make the number four, to be reckoned as a hundred, even though this may seem good to him. Nor can God ever become evil, even though he wishes; nor would he be able to sin, as being good by nature. If then he is unable to sin or to become evil, this does not befall him through his weakness. In the case of those who have a disposition and fitness for a certain thing, and then are prevented from doing it, it is clear that it is by their inability that they are prevented. But God is by nature good, and is not prevented from being evil; nevertheless, even though He is not prevented, he cannot by definition become bad.

And pray consider a further point. How unreasonable it is if the Creator shall stand by and see the heaven melting, though no one ever conceived anything more wonderful than its beauty, and the stars falling, and the earth perishing; and yet he will raise up the rotten and corrupt bodies of men, some of them, it is true, belonging to admirable men, but others without charm or symmetry before they died, and affording a most unpleasant sight. Again, even if he could easily make them rise in a comely form, it would be impossible for the earth to hold all those who had died from the beginning of the world.

Counter-Lay (Commentary) No. 79.

Obviously, Porphyry did not know Allah and the abrogating verses of the Quran. Moreover no one is obliged to share the Neo-Platonist design of God or of the Demiurge which is that of Porphyry. This text of Paul, who echoes certain remarks of the New Testament (Matthew 24.34, Mark 13.30, Luke 21.32: truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have

happened); proves well indeed that the early Christians were convinced of the imminence of all these events (the end of the world, the return of Jesus, the Judgment, the resurrection of the dead). The various Gnostic Schools IN THE WEST developed the idea that every believer, whatever could be his faults, in the final analysis will vanish he also in God or the Demiurge at the end of a certain time. In the final analysis and at the end of a certain time, because before it will be necessary for him to pass by an intermediate metaphysical stage intended to complete the purification of the soul. A kind of purgatory, but of purgatory merry, happy, called Vindomagos. See the Amidism in the Far East, Pure Land being the name of the Vindomagos in this form of Buddhism, a parallel other world of heavenly nature only designed as an ultimate stage of purification of the soul in joy and happiness; before the big universal cleansing through fire and water ("the men's souls and also the universe, are indestructible, although both fire and water will at some time or other prevail over them." Strabo. Book IV, 4 to 6). Lucan, Pharsalia I, 450-458: "According to your masters, the shades of dead men seek not the quiet homes of Erebus or death's pale kingdoms; but the same soul/mind [anaon] governs the limbs in another world and the death is only the middle of a long live; if you know well what you sing. Happy the peoples beneath the Great Bear thanks to their error; because they do not know this supreme fear which frightens all others: hence the spirit inclined to throw itself on iron, the strength of character able to face death, and this lack of care put to save a life which must be given back to you."

Pomponius Mela III, 2: ". Therefore they cremate and bury with the dead things that are suitable for the living. And long ago traders' accounts and debt registers also accompanied the dead, in order to be balanced or honored in the other world and some individuals happily threw themselves onto the pyres of their loved ones as if they were going to live with them!"

The rebirth after death in this universe parallel to ours, beyond ours, called Vindomagus, makes the common man himself able to get ready in peace to the final reintegration in the Universal Big Whole through metamorphic melting with it. In the Far East that produces the Buddhism of Amitabha.

The Barbarians ridiculed by these texts therefore do not believe in a freeing of the Man from his corporeality, but in and with his corporeality. For them the Man finds his completion after death in a changed corporeality, transfigured, but always very concrete. Very bodily. By means of a body let us say stunning, belissamos for the male body, belissama for the female body, thus metamorphosed under the action of the inner light called in Gaelic language luan laith or en gaile, xvarnah in Avestan language,

We are there polar opposite of the Christian design of the Heaven . See the gloomy descriptions of Thomas Aquinas in the Supplementum of his Summa. In this heaven, the men do not drink nor do eat. They are satisfied, in the absence of any flora, of any fauna and even of any metal, with the only vision of God or of the Demiurge and of their own aspect, glorious. The Gnostic solution in the West does not expose itself, of course, to as many criticisms as that of Christian mythology; since for it, if it is indeed the same soul/mind (anaon), nothing proves, on the other hand, that it is still exactly the same body. Lucan. Pharsalia I, 454-458: "the shades of dead men seek not the quiet homes of Erebus or death's pale kingdoms; but the same soul/mind [anaon] governs the limbs in another world and the death is only the middle of a long life. Happy the peoples beneath the Great Bear" etc.

The text of Lucan says well that it is the same soul/mind, but specifies by no means that it is the same body. Because it is obvious that they are, in this design of the destiny of the soul/mind after death, other physical bodies, and not the same bodies. Physical bodies, of course, very close to those which should have been those of the late in their entirety.

"They burn the dead with his servants and his horses and part of his furniture so that he can use them. This is why they go courageously to war and do not spare their life as if they were to recover it in another part of the world. [Qui enim defunctis equos servosque et multam suppellectilem comburant quibus uti possint, inde animosi in proelia exeunt ne vitae suae parcunt, tamquam eandem reperituri in alio naturae secessu] ".Scholia commenting on the Pharsalia of Lucan. Hermann Usener. Scholia in Lucani bellum civile/Commenta Bernensia. Liber I (1869).

But physical bodies differing notably nevertheless, on many points: no longer tiredness, disease, death, etc. In short bodies of god-or-demons! Lucan therefore saw well that the after death life for the Western Gnostic sages is perfectly concrete; and that it has nothing to do with the Greek ideas (Erebus) the Roman conception (the kingdom of Dis) or the Judeo-Christian design of the evanescent forms. The world parallel to ours designated with the name of Hereafter, is concrete for the high-knowers of the druidiaction (druidecht). Nothing comparable with the dark Greco-Roman or Christian

abode : there the landscapes are bathed by the same light, one breathes there the same air, one breed there the same herds, one lives there the same life as in the world of mortals.

The Celtic kingdom of the dead is indeed, in spite of appearances, a land of peace, because the battles there are in reality only all for show could we say today, everyone comes back to life the next day, just like the pigs of the magic feast of Cobannos, that we find again unchanged the next day; a land of eternal youth (Tír Na nÓg,) and happiness therefore, without fear, without suffering without selfishness without passion (that, it is for the contemplative, see the end of the vision of Adamnan) ; where the believers (because it is, of course, at least necessary to believe in it to reach it, the soul/mind which believes, is saved, the soul/mind which does not believe cannot reach it) can complete their purification without obstacles, and released from all Karmic residual bran (baco in old Celtic probably). See also the Buddha Amitabha in the Far East.

The Celtic legends describe usually the joys of this hereafter in the Kingdom of the dead or Vindomagos in psychosomatic terms. The aising or vision of the Grail of the Destiny constitutes there, of course, indeed, the heights of this achievement, but what waits for the believer here is not only a beatific vision. The druidism never shared the Judeo-Christian or (Platonic) Greek dualism opposing the soul with the body or the physical world. In druidism, one does not believe in a separation of the soul from the body in a stricter sense of the term, after the death. The genuine druidism does not believe in a soul completely independent of our body functions, which would be released, with our death, from the prison of the mortal body. The druidism is neither Platonic nor Neo-Platonic like Porphyry. What it affirms only it is that the soul/mind does not die with the body, but that it can live much longer, much longer, in this other world parallel to ours, beyond ours, called Vindomagus. N.B. The mysterious islands for initiates that Plutarch describes to us are perhaps reminiscences that have ceased to be understood of what the wise or contemplative men of the first function dreamed in this respect and are to be considered as a particular domain of this Vindomagos, a sister island situated in the same archipelago.

"Shortly after his arrival there occurred a great tumult in the air, and many portents; violent winds suddenly swept down and lightning flashes darted to earth. When these abated, the people of the island said that the passing of someone of the mightier being. "For," said they, "as a lamp when it is being lighted has no terrors, but when it goes out is distressing to many, so the great souls/minds have a kindling into life that is gentle and inoffensive, but their passing and dissolution often, as at the present moment, fosters tempests and storms, and often infects the air with pestilential properties." (Plutarch. De Defectu oraculorum 18).

This testimony of Plutarch is interesting in more than one way, because it is very revealing of the various designs about the real metaphysical nature of the world parallel to ours which was then designated under the name of hereafter.

The image of the flame of a lamp which dies out was used to render comprehensible that the being mode of the one who through death reached the (final?) release is an unfathomable , elusive, state; even if we may still call it nevertheless *meldus* (delicious to be attended).

See the Brahmanic design of the fire which is not destroyed when it dies out, but which becomes simply imperceptible by going up to the heaven in the form of a smoke.

See also certain passages of the old Amidist canon speaking about the Nirvana; Pure Land being the name of the Vindomagus in this form of Buddhism, a universe parallel to ours of heavenly nature only designed as an ultimate stage of purification of the soul in the joy and happiness; before the universal cleansing through fire and water. ("The men's souls and also the universe, are indestructible, although both fire and water will at some time or other prevail over them" - Strabo. Book IV, 4 to 6 -).

For the Islanders evoked by Plutarch, this hereafter of the death was to be initially designed as a rest of the individual soul/mind (the *anaon*) through an accession to the perfect harmony (of the Vindomagus). It is not, as among certain Buddhists, bleak absence of wishes, mere apathy, but it is radiant joy.

The bliss (*ananda* among Hindus) of the (delicious to be attended) *Meldus* it is the achievement of all one's wishes since it is nothing that the Destiny (the *Tokad*) does not bears in oneself.

The purification of these soul/minds remaining in the Vindomagus not being finished yet; there is keeping of the difference between the individual soul/mind (the *anaon*) and the universal soul; and therefore existence of an infinity of individual soul/minds, independent and conscious, in this state.

The Vindomagus leaves to the soul the time that it is necessary to finish its purification.

This ultimate stage of the travel of the soul/mind makes it possible to eliminate the last obstacles being on its way, i.e., its spirit or menman, and therefore makes salvation accessible to all.

For the Islanders evoked by Plutarch this hereafter of the death was to be also designed finally as a surpassing of the distance between the anamón (individual soul) and the Big Whole (by union or melting with the Grail).

Lastlt, with regard to the third function of producers we can consider that any description of an island on which everything grows by itself, such as Avalon, Hyperborea, is also a part of this archipelago of the Celtic blessed in a way.

I know it's not much. They are a little in the same situation as the women in Allah's paradise. Let's say that we can apply to these NON-WRETCH the well-known saying: HAPPY PEOPLE HAVE NO HISTORY.

CONCLUSION.

There is not in this thought a judgment of the soul/minds after death, strictly speaking, because the history of the soul/mind is its judgment.

If the Germanic Walhalla is especially a heaven for the warrior, the Celtic Kingdom of the Dead, itself (Vindomagus) is a haven of peace, delights and pleasure FOR EVERYBODY; and the soul/minds of one or others, whether they are warriors, but also doctors or craftsmen, etc. enjoys there an almost eternal state of heavenly joy or exhilaration, before their melting in the Big Whole of the end of the world. There are no longer social classes, therefore no longer warriors, except when they play, and naturally no longer druids, since all the inhabitants of this other world reach a very high level of wisdom. In Fact, it is the third function which is glorified or which includes the two others by going over them. There, to take over the expression of the great French-speaking poet that was Baudelaire, there are only luxury calm, and sensuality, because the erotic aspect is far from missing in these evocations of the other universe, parallel to ours which is called heaven. We can add to it abundance. The cauldron of Suqellus = Dagda = Gurgunt i.e., the Grail, is there the container of all the wealth, and the more we draw from it, the more it is full.

P.S. But they are there only attempts at translation of the inexpressible one or at reduction of the infinite to the finite.

What seems more certain, however, is that too much karmic bran (baco) prevents the late one from reaching this state of *meldus* or "delicious to be attended"; but the reincarnation in *bacuceus* is not in fact strictly speaking, a punishment, it is only the auto-experiment of the state where we have put ourselves by our past actions. The reincarnation in *bacuceus* or *seibaros* = phantom (Irish *siabair/siabhradh*) left straightly from the kingdom of Tethra even from that of Donn (Donnotegia). This philosophical Atlantis submerged by Christianization had a name that we can reconstruct thanks to the fragments that the language preserved us, it is the Tokad (Welsh *Tynged/Tynghedfen*, Breton *Tonkadur* or *Tonket*, Irish *Tocade* or *Toicthech*).

We find trace in the former druidism of religious concepts making the Fate straightforwardly the higher God or Demiurge (the archetypal god-or-demon of the druids. "Some say [...] the Celtiberians and their neighbors on the north offer sacrifices to a nameless god" Strabo, Geography III, 4.16).

If this god-or-demon that the Celtiberians worshipped was nameless, therefore it did not have a gender either. It was deprived of precise forms although having thousands of forms (anonymous Deity = myrionymous deity is it often said, because the diversity of the names does nothing but hide the essential identity and each one of these deities had his interest even if they were numerous to have the same attributes).

The higher god-or-demon evoked by Strabo has nothing to do with the role of a judge. Besides there is no God or Demiurge but only the Fate and in the West, and they are perhaps the high-knowers of the druidiaction (*druidecht*) who were its less bad interpreters; because the druidic divination was a profound, but flexible divination safeguarding the essence of the human autonomy.

The Romano-Celtic statuary besides sometimes represented this universal higher Law (Tokade) in a triple form like in the low-relief found in Vertault.

What the goddess-or-demoness, or fairy, in the middle, holds, it is in no way a cloth diaper for the child who has just been born, and that the goddess-or-demoness, or fairy, located at her right hand, holds in her arms, but the ledger of its destiny.

The three goddess-or-demonesses of this stele are the three assistants of the Law of the Worlds (of the fate) known as Norns among the Germanic people, Parcae among the Romans, Keres among the

Greeks; and finally, of course, Matrai (mothers) among the Celts (let us not be stupidly racist and let us not forget the latter).

Another thing. Several of their ideas point out strangely those the Neo-Platonist Porphyry stigmatizes among the Christians some lines lower. We want to speak about certain very known Irish "ordeals." To designate the test, the only word attested in Gaelic is *fir*, true. The concept in question is that of truth and of falsehood, right and unjust one.

The waiting at an altar. It is a proof which was used in this time to distinguish the truth from the falsehood: to go nine times around the altar and then to drink water on which a druid had chanted an incantation. The sign of his fault was clear if he were guilty. But water did not injure him if he were innocent.

Watch out Celtomania or Druidomania nevertheless. The strange matching between these two facts of civilization: to drink poison to prove that you have the force (*su nertio*) with you, prove in no way that the Galileans were some Galatians or Gauls (what a stupidity); nor that Jesus was a druid or (initiated) druidic *comrunos*. Such idiocies dishonor the true still remaining druids (there must be well some of them).

But let us return to our good Porphyry.

Consider in detail that other passage, where he says: "Such signs shall follow them that believe: they shall lay hands upon sick folk, and they shall recover, if they drink any deadly drug, it shall in no wise hurt them." [Mark 16, 17]. So the right thing would be for those selected for the priesthood, and particularly those who lay claim to the episcopate or presidency, would be to make use of this form of test. The deadly drug should be set before them in order that the man who received no harm from the drinking of it might be given precedence of the rest. And if they are not bold enough to accept this sort of test, they ought to confess that they do not believe in the things Jesus said. For if it is a peculiarity of the faith to overcome the evil of a poison and to remove the pain of a sick man, the believer who does not do these things either has not become a genuine believer, or else, though his belief is genuine, the thing that he believes in is not potent but feeble.

We have a similar saying, which is naturally suggested by it: If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, verily I say unto you, you shall say to this mountain: "Be you removed and be you cast into the sea," it shall not be impossible for you." [Matthew 17, 20].

It is obvious therefore that any one who is unable to remove a mountain in accordance with this bidding is not worthy to be reckoned one of the large family of the faithful. So you are plainly refuted, for not only are the rest of Christians not reckoned among the true faithful, but not even are any of your bishops or priests worthy of this saying.

The famous word of Christ: "I came not to bring peace but a sword. I came to separate a son from his father," (Matthew 10, 34) belie the true intentions of the Christians. They seek riches and glory. Far from being friends of the empire, they are renegades waiting for their chance to seize control.

Counter-Lay (commentary) No. 80.

Some Vauvenargues before he is born! Porphyry saw very well that except for rare exceptions (a few thousands of illuminates, the intelligence and stability of whom we can doubt); the Christian priests always sought, throughout History, to play the leading roles in the society (see the example of the apologists like Justin. A sin of hubris unknown by Buddha).

Let us look at what was said to Paul (in a dream, of course, see Acts 18, 9-10). Be not afraid, but speak, for I am with you, and no man shall set on you to hurt you." And yet no sooner was he seized in Rome than this fine fellow, who said that we should judge even angels, had his head cut off. And Peter again, who received authority to feed the lambs, was nailed to a cross and impaled on it. Countless others, who held opinions like theirs, were either burnt, or put to death by receiving some kind of punishment or maltreatment. Yet this is not worthy of the will of God, nor even of a godly man, that a multitude of men should be cruelly punished through their faith in him, while the expected resurrection and his coming remains still unknown.

END OF THE KATA CHRISTIANON. END OF THE KATA CHRISTIANON. END OF THE KATA CHRISTIANON.

Note of Peter DeLaCrau. On the reality of anti-Christian persecutions see our essay on, or more exactly against, Christianity. In the 3rd century, Christianity is still strongly minority and primarily Greek. Licinius and Constantine will precipitate the events by publishing the Edict of Milan (313) which admits the freedom of all the worships in their empire. Consequently, Christianity will not be no longer illegal. Much more, at the end of his reign, paganism will be on the way to be persecuted in turn: as of 330, the emperor breaks all ties with the Greek philosophers Nicagoras, Hermogenes and Sopatros. The latter, victim of a cabal of the court, is executed besides for "sorcery" (quite a convenient pretext which will be much used) and Porphyry's writings condemned to the stakes. Except during the reign of Julian, the power will oscillate from now on, with regard to paganism, between a careful toleration and a systematic repression, particularly with Theodosius. The plunge will be taken with Constantius II, who will persecute the pagans. On February 19th, 356, the pagan worships are prohibited and on December 1st of the same year, he orders the closing of temples. The visit of Constantius in Rome slows down temporarily his zeal, but a law of July 357 will have as serious consequence to authorize the torture on the pagan dignitaries of the court. These "wicked laws " were enforced little, especially in the West, where the pagan temples remain open with the general complicity of the governors. The majority of people do not think indeed that the conversion to Christianity must automatically imply the rejection of other spiritualities. In the 4th century, the pagans are still largely majority even if the emperors are converted. The circle of the teachers, in its great majority, is composed by people remained faithful to the old religions. The intellectuals scorned too much Christianity, for its intolerance towards the Greek paideia and for the mediocrity of the Writings with regard to literature. In these circles, the conversions to Christianity seem to be often dictated only by opportunism and interest. The massive passage to the new religion will be done during the reign of Theodosius and the beginning of the 5th century.

LOVER OF TRUTH. Logoi Philaletheis.

Whereas the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry, while writing between 270 and 280 his great work in two books against the Christians, had kept out politics, it was not the case with one of his disciples, Sossianus Hierocles. Author of an antichristian treatise in two parts entitled the Friend of Truth (Greek Logoi Philaletheis), known by the summary that Lactantius made of it and the answer that Eusebius gives to it.

Who was this Judge of Bithynia, quoted by Lactantius (Divine Institutes, V, III), which does not reveal the name of him?

Judex is equivalent to the word "governor," so that our judge, governor of the province of Bithynia, held in the reign of Diocletian the position that Pliny the younger had held in the reign of Trajan. This anonymous character is equated today by modern review with Sossianus Hierocles known by an inscription of Palmyra engraved between 293 and 305 ("vir perfectissimus, praeses provincie" CIL 2,6661), by a mention of Lactantius (De mortibus persecutorum. 16-4) as by Eusebius who quotes him in the De martyribus Palaestinae (5-3) and wrote against him a refutation entitled "Against Hierocles." Hierocles was then governor of Egypt circa 309-311; he was therefore a senior official having held very important positions.

This Hierocles composed two opuscles addressed "to the Christians" whose Lactantius underlines the precise and frightening documentation (divine Institutes, V, II, 13). These works are called elsewhere speeches (logoi) friend of truth (philaletheis), a title which strangely reminds of that of the work by Celsus: "logos alethes," the true word.

We can have only a limited idea of the work of Hierocles, only known by , of course, partial analyzes of the two Christian authors who refuted him. He affirmed there plainly, according to Lactantius, that Christ himself driven out by the Jews, had gathered a troop of nine hundred men to engage in the armed robbery (latrocinia fecisse) (V, III, 4).

Hierocles regards the apostles as "propagators of lies, coarse people and ignoramuses."

This work noticed many contradictions of the Holy Scriptures and pointed out that as regards the miracles or the morals the Greek philosopher named Apollonios of Tyana was clearly above Jesus. Besides Hierocles accused straightforwardly the Christians of plagiarizing the life and the work of Apollonios. It is true that nobody precisely knows what Hierocles wrote, because Eusebius, who gave himself for a task to refute the testimony of Hierocles, took great care to make all the specimens of the work of his frightening opponent destroyed.

The thesis of Hierocles, as much as we can imagine it through its refutation, seems to have been the following one. You proclaim Jesus God because of some wonders reported by the evangelists; but there exist writers more educated than yours and more concerned with truth, who do not make him a god and regard him only as a man favored by the gods.

The argumentation of this Speech, we see it, follows that of Celsus closely; and Eusebius confirms it to us by explaining to us that "apart from the parallel this author has drawn between the man of Tyana and our own Savior and teacher, the rest of the contents of the Philalethes is not his own, but has been pilfered in the most shameless manner, not only in respect of their ideas, but even of their words and syllables, from other authors"(Eusebius, Contra Hieroclen, I). And Eusebius quotes as the source of this work... Celsus! The similarity of the titles therefore is not occurred by chance, it is wanted.

It is practically all that Eusebius reports to us in connection with the work of Hierocles published with the title of "Philalethes" in 303 before our era that is to say a year before the death of Porphyry and which presumably contributed to convincing the emperor Diocletian to unleash the second (and last) true official anti-Christian persecution in the entire history of the Roman Empire in 303 (Hierocles was indeed among the amici of the consilium principis).

N.B. As regards the persecution of Diocletian we will return to it in our notebooks 30 and 31.

FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS JULIANUS (331 - 363).

Born in 331 Julian is a nephew of the emperor Constantine (306-337). When the latter died, he attended therefore the massacre of his family, killed on order of Constantius II. Only survivors of this dynastic carnage with his half-brother Gallus, he is brought up in the Christian religion, which consequently he will know from the inside.

After eighteen years of captivity, or of narrowly supervised freedom, Julian was called from Athens to Milan to be made there Caesar; i.e., a close collaborator to the emperor Constantius (355) responsible for the defense of the country, devastated by the Franks and Alamans. The Germanic peoples were Masters of all the left bank of the Rhine; they occupied all the regions between the river and the Vosges, all the massif of what is called today Hunsrück, Eiffel and Ardennes. The rich plains of the upper Moselle, the upper Meuse, even the Belgium, had been devastated and were only a huge desert. In four campaigns, Julian brought back the empire to its borders, restored the prestige of the Roman armies, and overcame the Germanic people into Germania itself. Ammianus Marcellinus tells these Great Wars admirably. But how much more admirable still is the simple and modest account that Julian left us about his quarters in the country!

"I happened to be in winter quarters at my beloved Lutetia - for that is how the Celts call the capital of the Parisii. It is a small island lying in the river; a wall entirely surrounds it, and wooden bridges lead to it on both sides. The river seldom rises and falls, but is usually the same depth in the winter as in the summer, and it provides water which is very clear to the eye and very pleasant for one who wishes to drink. For since the inhabitants live on an island, they have to draw their water chiefly from the river. The winter too is rather mild there, perhaps from the warmth of the ocean, which is not more than nine hundred stades distant, and it may be that a slight breeze from the water is wafted so far; for sea water seems to be warmer than fresh. Whether from this or from some other cause obscure to me, the fact is as I say that those who live in that place have a warmer winter. And a good kind of vine grows thereabouts, and some persons have even managed to make fig trees grow by covering them in winter with a sort of garment of wheat straw and with things of that sort, such as are used to protect trees from the harm that is done them by the cold wind."

In 360, in the palace of the Thermal baths in Lutetia, Julian is proclaimed emperor. The account of the revolt of the legions against Constantius is too long to be transcribed here. It is in the letter sent to the Senate and to the people of Athens. Here are only some excerpts.

"And suddenly the palace was surrounded by the soldiers and they all began to shout aloud, while I was still considering what I ought to do and feeling by no means confident. My wife was still alive and it happened that in order to rest alone, I had gone to the upper room near hers. Then from there through an opening in the wall I prayed to Zeus. And when the shouting grew still louder and all was in a tumult in the palace, I entreated the god to give me a sign and thereupon he showed me a sign and bade me yield and not oppose myself to the will of the army. ...somewhere about the third hour some soldier or another gave me the collar [perhaps a torc] and I put it on my head and returned to the palace, as the gods know groaning in my heart...the friends of Constantius thought they would seize the occasion to contrive a plot against me without delay, and they distributed money to the soldiers....a certain officer belonging to those who commanded my wife's escort perceived that this was being secretly contrived...he became frantic, and like one possessed he began to cry aloud before the people in the market place, "Fellow soldiers, strangers, and citizens, do not abandon the Emperor!" Then the soldiers were inspired by a frenzy of rage and they all rushed to the palace under arms. And when they found me alive, in their delight, like men who meet friends whom they had not hoped to see again, they pressed round me on this side and on that, and embraced me and carried me on their shoulders."

The providential death of Constantius II avoids to Julian the test of the civil war and leaves him only Master of the Empire. One of its first measures was to proclaim the religious liberty for all: Christians, but also pagans or heretics. No persecution of the Christians therefore, but those become again citizens like the others: obligation is made to them to respect the law and order. Julian undertakes, moreover, to reform the court with eastern orientation of his predecessors to return to the liberal principate of the Antonines, his models being Trajan and Marcus-Aurelius. The advent of Julian marks an authentic intellectual and moral reform as well as a new effort of civilization in a difficult century.

The emperor, taking as a starting point the philosopher king of Plato, evolved to a form of pagan theocracy with his clergy arranged hierarchically and his dogmas (immortality of the soul related to the

God-or-demons, eternity of the world, humanism). He seems the mixture of a despot, enlightened nevertheless, and of a Neoplatonic theocrat.

In the month of March 363, blinded by the Eastern mirage, he starts his great expedition against the Persia of Shapur, a worshipper of the Sun God-or-demon and, irony of History... also a determined opponent to Christianity. He will never return from there.

June 26th of year 363 can be regarded as a key date in the history of the Roman Empire. On that day, the emperor Julian is mortally wounded at the time of a skirmish between Romans and Persians, by a "stray" spear ...stray but not for everybody!

According to Edward Gibbon in his work on the fall of the Roman Empire. "He reproved the grief of his friends; and conjured them not to disgrace, by unmanly tears, the fate of a prince, who in a few moments would be united with heaven, and with the stars..... Such was the end of that extraordinary man, in the thirty-second year of his age."

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JULIAN.

The event appeared very quickly as having serious consequences. This assassination deprived the ancient world of its last great captain and Rome of its greatest victory since Hannibal: the fall of the Persian empire, its only serious competitor.

According to Libanius and Zosimus, this war was hitherto a true triumph for the Roman legions, and it is true that Ammianus Marcellinus, soldier in the army of Julian, described an almost uninterrupted series of successful sieges. It is, however, at the time of a retreat, at the moment when the rearguard repels a Persian attack, that Julian, perhaps exposing himself too much to the danger, is fatally reached. The Romans, soldiers and citizens, measured almost at once the catastrophic implications of the death of their chief.

And first of all, the army. Then commanded by Jovian, his successor, receives from the Persians a peace felt as shameful: the Romans are indeed obliged by treaty, for the first time in their history, to yield ground to their adversaries. The most significant consequence is perhaps the victory, final and irrevocable this time, of Christianity, over the open and positive secularity preached by Julian. The enthusiasm of the Christians broke without shame. In the whole Empire, the close relations of Julian were expelled from the power, were pursued, constrained to the exile.

WHO PROFITED FROM THIS (CUI BONO?)

The stakes of the Persian campaign the implication of the Julian politics and the immediate consequences of the disappearance of the emperor could make emerge, almost in a natural way, the question which is still asked today: Did Julian die "accidentally?" The police investigation claimed by Libanius probably never took place. However, the ancient authors provide us clues which could have justified it. Pagan and Christian indeed let hear that Julian was deliberately killed by the latter.

Let us say it immediately: among the Modern ones, the thesis of the assassination has had as many partisans as adversaries, and we should not hope to solve the enigma today. However, certain clues and arguments deserve to be underlined, because they highlight a certain Christian policy.

SOURCES. AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS ROMAN HISTORY. LIBANIUS ORATION 18 (Funeral oration for Julian) ORATION 24 (Upon avenging Julian).

Ammianus Marcellinus, the most moderated in the debate, is initially satisfied to say that the fatal spear came "incertum unde: no one knows whence" (XXV, 3,6). This uncertainty is not entirely innocent. One of the causes of it is reported a little further. "On seeing this, the enemy from the wooded heights assailed us with weapons of all kinds and with insulting language, as traitors and murderers of an excellent prince. For they had also heard from the mouths of deserters, in consequence of an unfounded rumor, that Julian had been killed by a Roman weapon" (XXV, 6,6).

Let us come to Libanius, the friend of Julian. People often took his spite, his major disappointment, as the reason which would explain his gratuitous charges against an imaginary murderer. But Libanius was not a superficial man, and his charges do not seem to us not made lightly. In his funeral oration (oration XVIII), Libanius informs his audience: certain rumors are false : "It is indeed necessary I should speak out, and put an end to the false reports current concerning his end " (§ 267). Further, the question is addressed head-on: "Who was the one that killed him, does anyone desire to hear? His name I know not, but that he who killed him was not an enemy there is a clear proof, namely, that none of the opposite side received rewards for the fatal blow, although the Persian king summoned by public proclamation the slayer to come forward and receive his reward, and it was in his power if he did come forward to gain great things. And yet no one from desire of the rewards boasted of the deed; and, truly, we ought to be very thankful to the enemy that they did not arrogate to themselves the glory of things they had not done, but gave it to us to look for the murderer among ourselves. For those persons to whom his being in life was no advantage (these were they who did not live according to the laws) had previously plotted against him, and then, profiting by the occasion, effected their purpose; their natural wickedness compelling them to it, which had no liberty to exert itself under his government; and, above all , the fact that the gods were receiving due honor, the very opposite thing to what they strove for " (§§ 274-275).

The previous assassination attempts are indeed sufficiently attested. The argument quoted by Libanius can seem weak: wouldn't the murder of Julian have left, he also, his life in the adventure? But the speaker was satisfied, higher, to express his suspicions without insisting. He will try to justify them later; years later.

In 379, he sends a pathetic and moving speech (oration XXIV) to the emperor Theodosius, asking him to launch an investigation and to avenge the memory of the sovereign died for sixteen years.

The reason for his request has what to astonish our modern and "enlightened" minds. If the Empire, in spite of the quality of its legions, succeeds no longer in resisting the barbarian hordes which break on its territory, the cause of that is, according to the speaker, the anger of the gods. They are angry because the murder of their favorite child, Julian, is remained unpunished. Libanius begs Theodosius to make at least the experiment of his remarks: let he open a formal investigation, and he will see Julian himself assisting his research as well as the gods reviving the shaken Empire. Language of a fanatic or of a man really inspired? What is certain, it is that the Empire succumbed.

Libanius repeats that the Persians, in spite of their military hubris, never rewarded nor even claimed the death of Julian as a being the feat of one of theirs, whoever he was. During the peace talks, the king of the Persians even went as far as asking the Romans if they were not ashamed of leaving this death unavenged. How to imagine finally, asks the speaker that a Persian soldier could enter alone the Roman lines without being killed? However, there was no other dead, neither Persian nor Roman this day, only Julian.

Perhaps it will be said that if there had been real doubts about the accident, an investigation would have been immediately launched. But Jovian, the (Christian) successor of Julian "decided that this was superfluous and pointless" (§ 8), to the jeers « of those who had contrived such a crime" (ibid.); and "in spite it was the current story that the murderer was from our side, and that it was a scandal" (§11).

"It follows that the murderer was one of our people, who did themselves or somebody else a good turn by assassinating him so that the religion of the gods should fall into dishonor, for they almost burst with rage at the honor in which it was held" (§ 21).

Libanius is in the inability to produce evidence. But certain passages of his speech show that he knows perhaps more things than he says. We have personally some difficulty to believe that he invents all the details. There is first the very account of the event: "Our renowned Julian received that blow in the side as he strove to unite part of his line that had broken, spurring his towards them, cheering and threatening. The assailant who inflicted the wound was a Taiene [Arabe], acting in obedience to their leader's command. This action indeed would probably secure for the chief a reward from the people who were keen to have him killed. So he made the most of the opportunity offered by the prevailing confusion and the winds and swirling dust to strike him and retire" (§ 6).

But how, do you will wonder, Libanius knows all that? How can he affirm that Julian was killed "following a wicked cabal from some foul tent of dire conspiracy" (§ 29)? Apparently, he had informers. In front of Theodosius, he evokes "those who were reluctant to produce proof though able to do so" (§ 22). These are these that it is necessary to question, reassure, encourage and, if necessary, to threaten.

"Just show that you will be glad to have the fellows arrested, and people will appear to hand the beasts over to you, once you rid them of fear that they may suffer some harm in consequence for the wealth the murderers have amassed from their positions of office. The fact is, without a word of exaggeration, that though they ought to be punished for a murder like this, they have reaped the fruits of this office, as if it were the Persian king they had murdered" (§ 27).

In 386, almost a quarter-century after the event, Libanius, in another speech in front of Theodosius (oration XXX), stands by: "Julian would have overthrown the Persian Empire, if treason had not prevented the realization of the project..." (§ 40).

The case becomes astonishing, and really worrying, when it is known that the Christians themselves claimed this murder. The Christian taliban or parabolanus Gregory (of Nazianzus, contemporary and even former schoolfellow of Julian, claims it with joy. Sozomen, author of an ecclesiastical History, considers the Christian culpability probable. The Christian legend will finally ascribe, to Julian, on his deathbed, these ultimate words: "You, Galileans have conquered! (You, Christians, have conquered!)"

The fact that Christians, instead of refuting these charges (that they have besides perhaps themselves caused), openly proclaimed themselves murderers of Julian, and proud to be so; says a lot in any case on the mentality of the Christians of the 4th century. This relentlessness of the Christians against Julian betrays a retrospective great fear. Gregory of Nazianzus had not experimented the anguish of the persecutions [once again, on the reality of the anti-Christian persecutions, see our essay on, or more exactly against, Christianity]; but for the young Christian

intellectuals of his generation, in an empire which for a long time protected officially the Church, Julian had seemed to call everything into question.

QUESTION.

I am a she-student and I currently work on the emperor Julian within my course about the religions of the ancient West. If he had lived longer, would Julian have been likely to succeed?

ANSWER.

Your question is very interesting; but not of the simplest ones. You wonder whether Julian could have concluded his undertaking of renovation and restoration of the old "pagan" worships?

It is, of course, very subjective! The admirers of Julian will answer yes while the Christian historians will show the vanity of the efforts of the "Apostate!"

Two facts appear undeniable to me: the sincerity of Julian and the terror that he inspired to his Christian subjects.

But let us try to examine that in the order.

When Julian seized definitively the Empire (in 361), he estimated to owe his throne only to the protection of the god-or-demons. It was thanks to them that he had escaped the general massacre of his family. It was them who had protected him from the jealousy of Constantius, of the plots of his courtiers, and who had supported him when he had repelled, at the cost of hard fights, the Barbarians beyond the Rhine. It is the "Genie of Empire" himself who had convinced him to don the purple coat and to act as a rival of his cousin. And finally, the providential and unexpected death of Constantius, just before the decisive confrontation of the two pretenders to the throne, wasn't it the manifest sign of this protection?

However, if he were protected by the god-or-demons (of the Sun, by Mithra, etc.), was it not because he was himself only, and not another mortal, who was to restore the greatness of the Rome of the philosopher emperor Marcus-Aurelius, his model and to restore the worship of the deities who had supported the blossoming of the Greco-Roman civilization?

Julian believed himself to be intended to achieve this task of restoration of the society, and he tackled it with all the enthusiasm of the idealist militant he was...

But this society in the process of Christianization resisted the change. Julian had seriously underestimated the opposition with which, himself and his projects of structural as much as religious, renovation, were going to be confronted very quickly. The pagan elites supported reluctantly his administrative, tax or legal, initiatives, while the Christians, themselves, sabotaged his religious policy systematically.

The Christian Church seems to have dreaded the measures of Julian almost more than an "old fashioned" persecution. It should be said that at that time, the Christians did not form yet the majority of the population, far from there! Christianity was, certainly, prevalent in certain cities or areas in the East, but was still largely unknown in the Western or Northern areas of the Empire.

It was not yet exactly the "State religion" of the Roman Empire - for that, it will be necessary to await the reign of Theodosius and the general and final prohibition of the pagan worships (Edict of Constantinople of November 8th, 392). Constantine and his sons had been satisfied "to support," sometimes outrageously it is true, their co-religionists (often heretics besides) and to scorn the pagan worships, but without to impose by force their personal religion.

With the advent of Julian, the Church was not yet all-powerful, and the steps that had taken the one it called heinously "the Apostate," were likely to seriously compromise this final triumph it believed so near. It had indeed excluded the Christians from teaching for the following reason: "By commenting on the texts of the Ancients who honored the gods, the Christians teach the opposite of what they believe" and are therefore, either hypocrite, or bad professors. That is saying that if the reign of Julian had lasted, the Christians, marginalized in a kind of intellectual ghetto, reduced to the rank of second-class citizens, marginalized in all the sectors of the society; would have been likely to become smaller cohorts in a dramatic way.

But it is undeniable also that, when he left Antioch to go into action against Persians, Julian had already lost many of his illusions. We were far from the young blazing "Caesar" who had crushed the Barbarians on the bank of the Rhine! Julian was a turned sour man, disappointed by the ingratitude of his subjects, doubting from now on the favor of the gods, and very conscious of playing his last card in this hazardous war against the Persian hereditary enemy.

These premises being posed, we can now come precisely to your question: Was Julian likely to succeed?

My answer is yes if he had come back victorious from his expedition against Persians.

"Why that ?" will you tell me.

And well here!

We do not know precisely the goals of the military campaign of Julian; but it seems well that it was not only a simple punitive expedition intended to teach - once again - a lesson to these Persians who, since always, challenged with Rome the supremacy over the civilized world. Julian had divided his army into two columns, one, under the direction of Procopius, having to enter the enemy territory by the North-East, and the other, under his command, having to invade it by the South-west. We may therefore suppose that he planned to make a pincer attack on the Persian army, to crush it beneath the walls of Ctesiphon (south of Baghdad), the capital of the Sassanid kings; then to rush towards the east (towards the "Spring of the Sun") in order to carry out the dream of all the great Roman conquerors; to restore the empire of Alexander the Great and to finally control the trade route which tapped fabulous wealth from the Far East towards the Mediterranean Sea.

If such were well the objectives of Julian (unrealistic, of course, but the emperor was an idealist and a mystic, let us not forget it); it is useless to specify that in the event of success, he would have returned from this war haloed with prestige greater than any other emperor before him. These amazing victories would have shown once and for all in the "atheistic Galileans" that his gods, those who had placed him on the throne of the Caesars, those in the name of whom he had fought, were the only "true ones," the only "effective ones."

And especially, the integral control of the commercial main roads known as "silk roads" would have enabled him to put an end to the chronic deficit of Roman finances, to bail out the State Treasury... and to finance his expensive domestic policy. A policy, that is to be financed, and the rallying, they are to be bought... The restoration of the Roman greatness that he considered was to be based indeed on an active support for the cities which were to find again their role of driving force of the civilization. It was necessary to reduce the fiscal pressure (what Julian had already done when he was only the "Caesar" of Constantius); in order to encourage the euergetism of elites and to do so that the citizen nomination to the urban magistracies becomes again an honor, no longer a curse. It was also necessary to rebuild the temples, to pay the priests, to give back to the worships of gods all their luster of former times... By undertaking his expedition against Persians, Julian, far from making the "madness" of which his Christian detractors accused him, revived with the policy of conquests which had founded the greatness and the prosperity of the Rome of the Antonines...

Ah if only Julian had had a little more time... and much more money....

But the undertaking of Julian was supported by a team deprived of true cohesion. Some theurgists and sophists, in favor of extreme solutions, intellectuals attached at least as much to an ideal of culture than to religious traditions, worried with preparing the future by the balance of the forces; and finally some politicians become new supporters by calculation or conviction. The pagan restoration in the big cities, in Constantinople, in Antioch, did not mobilize crowd and caused on the contrary a strong resistance from the Christians. The geography of these conflicts (of the pagan or Christian riots) does not go beyond the East, the area that Julian controls directly. The West, apart from the initiative of some zealous administrators, is affected little and seems hardly to be moved by the policy of Julian.

This one, on the other hand, ran up against many interests. Particularly those of the officialism and of the palace aristocracy which had been constituted around the Constantinian dynasty and which recruited largely in the Christian circles. We do not know, of course, official defections among the Christian generals, but, in the administration of the provinces, Julian had to take into account the inertia opposed by many bureaucrats; and therefore to consider the progressive exclusion of the Christians from any public office, whether it was political, administrative or legal, and even from the army.

As for the senatorial aristocracy of Rome, in which the pagans are the majority, with some exceptions; it is hardly got drawn, it seems, in accepting the whole of the imperial policy gladly, for the only reason that this one also brings the restoration of paganism. The monetary policy of the prince, based on the bimetallism, his defense of the curiae against the tax exemptions (which all the aristocrats escaping the municipal senate enjoyed) could allure the elites of the cities; not the powerful characters of a senatorial order favored since one half-century by the Constantinians. In the Greek East, even the support of the curiales * (a group besides filled with Christian influences) remains fragile, because

Julian cannot put forward in the eyes of these local public figures the benefit of measures which could bear fruits only in the long run. So the emperor did not manage to establish his religious policy on broad social bases. This ultimate attempt at a pagan restoration will reveal therefore especially the vast progress made by Christianity since one half-century. Perfectly aware of this, Julian wanted to put at the service of the revived paganism of which he dreamed, what made the success of the new faith, a very centralized organization. But time ran out on him. And above all he overestimated the role of the imperial intervention, its capacity to go against the tide of an irreversible evolution.

* Also known as decurions, in the meaning of well-to-do or wealthy citizens, upper-middle-class persons Marx would have said.

IN SHORT MAIN IDEAS OF JULIAN.

The Hebraic doctrines are not only absurd, they are also incomplete and vague. The Jewish design of the divinity is blasphemous. Their God is jealous and petty. It is besides only a subordinate god, a small ethnic god, a chief of tribe God. This god was not very useful for the Hebrews since most of the time they were enslaved and are still so.

The Jewish culture is limited to little: it is primitive. No science is Jewish. In all the fields, the superiority of the Hellenes is crushing. Julian underlines this superiority and even is ironical: the Hellenes are not the chosen people, did not beget prophets, did not receive oiling, and yet...

The Galilaeans (the Christians therefore. Editor's note) have in fact apostatized doubly, because Christianity is only a heresy of Judaism.

Christianity indeed has no longer something in common with Judaism, as opposed to what its sectarians claim and the latter, apostates of paganism and Judaism, are not even faithful to their own apostles (*Vox populi vox dei*. The mail of the website of Roman Emperors).

THE "AGAINST THE GALILEANS."

AGAIN DUE TO CHRISTIAN CENSORSHIP THE TEXT COULD NOT REACH US, BUT IT WAS PATIENTLY RECONSTRUCTED BY THE GERMAN HISTORIAN CARL JOHANNES NEUMANN IN 1880, ON THE BASIS OF THE REFUTATION OF THE TEXT BY THE PATRIARCH CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA (374-444).

EXTRACTS (it is not the complete text).

—Now that the human race possesses its knowledge of God by nature and not from teaching is proved to us by the yearning for the divinity that is in all men whether private persons, whether considered as individuals or as races.

—All of us, without being taught, have attained to a belief in some sort of divinity, though it is not easy for all men to know the precise truth about it, nor is it possible for those who do know it to tell it to all men...

Counter-lay No. 81 .

So Christians have actually played in the hands of atheistic materialism by fighting in our souls / minds the innate notion of the divinity, this gift of the god or demons to mortals, a notion of the divine one which was unspeakable and universal.

—Summary 49 C, D, and E. The Galileans claim that their God created the world ex nihilo, but it is false, it is enough to read thirty seconds their own sacred texts.

Counter-Lay No. 82.

The God or Demiurge in question [a plural god-or-demon besides, the Elohim. Editor's note] was only the transformer or the organizer of a preexistent matter. On this question rose a discussion between the rabbi Gamaliel and a philosopher. This one said: "Your God is a great craftsman, but he had at his disposal good materials like the tohu, and the bohu, darkness, the wind, the waters and the depths, which helped him in his work"... All these terms are found indeed in the first verses of the Genesis: at the beginning the earth was unformedness and emptiness (tohu and bohu) and the wind of the Elohim was hovering above the surface of the waters. These Elohim beside have nothing to do with the telluric god-or-demon of the sacred mountain of the priest-king in Midian, Jethro (the father-in-law of Moses). The god-or-demon of the Sinai is called indeed Yahweh, not, "Elohim."

—The Jewish doctrine: the garden [of Eden] was planted by God and Adam was fashioned by him, next, for Adam, a woman came to be. For God said: "It is not good that the man should be alone. Let us make him a help meet like him. (Genesis 2, 18.) Yet so far was she from helping him at all that she deceived him, and was in part the cause of his and her own fall from their paradisiacal life in the garden.

This is wholly fabulous. For is it probable that God did not know that the being he was creating as a help meet would prove to be not so much a blessing as a misfortune to Adam? Again, what sort of language are we to say that the serpent used when he talked with Eve? Was it the language of human beings? In what do such legends as these differ from the myths that were invented by the Hellenes?

—Moreover, is it not excessively strange that God should deny to the human beings whom he had fashioned the power to distinguish between good and evil? What could be more foolish than a being unable to distinguish good from bad? For it is evident in that case that he would not avoid the latter, I mean things evil, nor would he strive after the former, I mean things good. And then, in short, God refused to let man taste of wisdom, than which there could be nothing of more value for man. For that the power to distinguish between good and less good is the property of wisdom.

—So the serpent was a benefactor rather than a destroyer of the human race. Furthermore, their God must be called envious. For when he saw that man had attained to a share of wisdom, that he might not taste of the tree of life, God cast him out of the garden, saying : "Behold, Adam has become as

one of us, because he knows good from bad; and now let him not put forth his hand and also take of the tree of life and eat and thus live forever."(Genesis, 3, 22).

-Accordingly, unless every one of these legends is a myth that involves some secret interpretation, as I indeed believe, they are filled with many blasphemous sayings about God. For in the first place to be ignorant that she who was created as a help meet for Adam would be the cause of his fall; secondly, to refuse the knowledge of good and bad, which knowledge alone seems to give coherence to the mind of man; and lastly to be jealous lest man should take of the tree of life and from mortal become immortal, this is to be grudging and envious overmuch.

Counter-Lay No. 83.

It is therefore here one the most severe judgments against the God or of the Demiurge of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, by Julian. This god-or-demon is envious and jealous. Moreover, he acknowledges it himself.

This god-or-demon refuses understanding and wisdom to man, but why is he jealous, to the extent of punishing the children for the sin of the parents (cf. Exodus 20.5)?

How God, who is righteous by definition, could promise to punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation?

Such an injustice can only encourage the fathers to sin since the punishment of their crimes will not fall down (directly) on them.

The idea of a higher God or Demiurge jealous and resentful is unacceptable.

Julian explains the jealousy of the God-or-Demon of Israel by his powerlessness. He could not prevent that other God-or-demons are also worshipped. This god-or-demon is bad-tempered, irritable and indecisive (allusion to Numbers 25 .11). He shows a rare cruelty for pointless reasons and deals only with the only chosen people, he would have given nothing to the Hellenes. Why in these conditions would they honor him?

This wild and jealous God or Demiurge is only a subordinate god-or-demon, a chief-of-tribe-God-or-demon. As there is by definition harmony between the nations and the nature of their guardian god, it results from it inevitably that the laws of the Jews are also very harsh and that their situation is not very brilliant; because they worship a subordinate and imperfect god-or-demon, therefore they imitate his faults: anger, fury and wild jealousy.

In short.

-The story of the sacrifice of Cain displeasing to God whereas that of Abel is pleasant for him.

(Genesis 4.3 to 7.) Editor's note. Would God be anti-vegetarian? This story is aberrant, because if it is not the nature of the offering which is in question, but the way with which Cain offered it, no bishop is able to say in what the division operated by Cain could be blameworthy. What had then in his heart, Cain? Nobody is able to tell us. It is only after this injustice from God that he became malicious.

-That Moses calls the angels "gods" you may hear from his own words: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair and they took them wives of all which they chose." (Genesis 6, 3) A little further on: "And also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became the giants who were of old, the men of renown (Genesis 6, 4).

-Now it is true that the Hellenes invented about the gods, incredible and monstrous stories (the myths). For they said that Kronos swallowed his children and then vomited them forth; they even told of lawless unions, how Zeus had intercourse with his mother, and after having a child by her, married his own daughter, or rather did not even marry her, but simply had intercourse with her and then handed her over to another. Then too there is the legend that Dionysus was rent asunder and his limbs joined together again.

REGARDING THE STORY OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

-Of the dissimilarity of language Moses has given a wholly fabulous explanation. For he said that the sons of men came together intending to build a city, and a great tower therein, and that God said that he must go down and confound their languages.

-You demand that we should believe this account, while you yourselves disbelieve Homer's narrative of the Aloadae, namely that they planned to set three mountains one on another (Od. Xi, 316), "that so the heavens might be scaled." This tale is almost as fabulous as the other. But if you accept the former, why in the name of the gods do you discredit Homer's fable?

-Moses and the prophets who came after him and Jesus the Nazarene, and Paul also, who surpassed all the magicians and charlatans of every place and every time, assert that God is the God of Israel alone and of Judaea, and that the Jews are his chosen people.

- That from the beginning God cared only for the Jews and that he chose them out as his portion, has been clearly asserted not only by Moses and Jesus but by Paul as well; though in Paul's case, this is strange. For according to circumstances he keeps changing his views about God, as the polypus changes its colors to match the rocks, and now he insists that the Jews alone are God's portion, and then again, when he is trying to persuade the Hellenes to take sides with him (Romans 3, 29, and Galatians 3,28) he says: "Do not think that he is the God of Jews only, but also of Gentiles: yea of Gentiles also." Therefore it is fair to ask of Paul why God, if he was not the God of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles, sent the blessed gift of prophecy to the Jews in abundance and gave them Moses, the oil of anointing, the prophets the law and the incredible and monstrous elements in their myths. Finally, God sent unto them Jesus also, but unto us no prophet, no oil of anointing, no teacher, no herald to announce his love for man which should one day, though late, reach even unto us also.

-Wherefore it is natural to think that the God of the Hebrews was not the begetter of the whole universe with lordship over the whole, but rather, as I said before, that he is confined within limits, and that since his empire has bounds we must conceive of him as only one of the crowd of other gods.

Counter-Lay No. 84.

Porphyry showed in his "Against the Christians" that the famous prophecy, of the book of Daniel is, a post eventum prophecy, made up not at the time of the captivity in Babylon, but afterwards. Fact confirmed by the criticism of the 19th century.

-Are we to pay further heed to you because you or one of your stock imagined in his way the God of the universe, though in any case you attained only to a bare conception of Him?

-If the immediate creator of the universe be he who is proclaimed by Moses, then we hold nobler beliefs concerning him, inasmuch as we consider him to be the master of all things in general, but that there are besides national gods who are subordinate to him or are like viceroys of a king, each administering separately his own province; moreover, we do not make him the sectional rival of the gods whose station is subordinate to his.

-Their "wisest" man Solomon [.....] served our gods also, deluded by his wife, as they assert what great virtue! What wealth of wisdom! He could not rise superior to pleasure, and the arguments of a woman led him astray! Then if he was deluded by a woman, do not call this man a wise. But if you are convinced that he was wise, do not believe that he was deluded by a woman, but that, trusting to his own judgment and intelligence as well as the teaching that he received from the God who had been revealed to him, he served the other gods also in full knowledge of the facts. For envy and jealousy do not come even near the most virtuous men, much more are they remote from angels and gods.

-But consider whether God has not given to us also gods and kindly guardians of whom you have no knowledge, gods in no way inferior to him who from the beginning has been held in honor among the Hebrews of Judaea, the only land that he chose to take thought for, as Moses declared and those who came after him, down to our own time. But even if he who is honored among the Hebrews really was the immediate creator of the universe, our beliefs about him are higher than theirs, and he has bestowed on us greater blessings than on them, with respect both to the soul and to externals. Of

these, however, I shall speak a little later. Moreover, he sent to us also lawgivers not inferior to Moses, if indeed many of them were not far superior.

-Even the most wicked and most brutal of the generals behaved more mildly to their greatest offenders than Moses did to those who had done no wrong.

Moses invented scapegoats.

-And of the second goat Moses says: "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people before the Lord, and bring his blood behind the veil, and shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar step and shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins?" (Lev. 16,15). Editor's note: Moses, come to remove sins, has in fact, on the contrary, increased much their number, according to St. Paul himself. "As for the Law of Moses, it was brought in so that the trespass might increase" (Epistle to the Romans, 5.20)].

-Moses utters a terrible libel upon God when he specifies: "For I am a jealous God".

-If a man is jealous and envious you think him blameworthy, whereas if God is called jealous you think it a divine quality?

-How is it reasonable to speak falsely of God in a matter that is so evident? For if he is indeed jealous, then against his will are all other gods worshipped, and also against his will do all the remaining nations worship their own gods.

Then how is it that he did not himself restrain them, if he is so jealous and does not wish that the others should be worshipped, but only himself? Can it be that he was not able to do so, or did he not wish even from the beginning to prevent the other gods also from being worshipped? The first explanation is impious, to say, I mean, that he was unable but the second is in accordance with what we do ourselves. Therefore lay aside this nonsense and do not draw down on yourselves such terrible blasphemy. For if it is God's will that none other should be worshipped, why you worship this spurious son of his whom he has never yet recognized....

-In all other respects you and the Jews have nothing in common. Nay, it is from the new-fangled teaching of the Hebrews that you have seized upon this blasphemy of the gods who are honored among us.

-Now since the Galileans say that, though they are different from the Jews, they are still, precisely speaking, true Israelites in accordance with their prophets, and that they obey Moses above all and the prophets who in Judaea succeeded him, let us see in what respect they chiefly agree with those prophets.

-They assert that God, after the earlier law, appointed the second. For, say they, the former arose with a view to a certain occasion and was circumscribed by definite periods of time, and this later law was revealed because the law of Moses was circumscribed by time and place. That they say this falsely.

-But you are so misguided that you have not even remained faithful to the teachings that were handed down to you by the apostles. And these have also been altered.

-Like leeches you have sucked the worst blood from that source and left the purer.

-For from both sides you have- drawn what is by no means their best but their inferior teaching, and so have made for yourselves a border of wickedness.

-They have not accepted a single admirable and important doctrine of those that are held either by us Hellenes or by the Hebrews (who derived them from Moses); but from both doctrines they have gathered what has been engrafted like powers of evil, as it were, on these nations : atheism from the Jewish levity, and a sordid and slovenly way of living from our indolence and vulgarity and they desire that this should be called the noblest religion.

-Matthew and Luke are refuted by the fact that they disagree concerning Jesus's genealogy. (Matt. I, 1-17 and Luke 3,23 -28). [All that to lead in any event... to Joseph, WHO IS NOT THE BIOLOGICAL FATHER OF THE LITTLE JESUS. Editor's note].

-The fabrication of the Galileans is a fiction of men composed by wickedness. Though it has in it nothing divine, by making full use of that part of the soul which loves fables and is childish or foolish, it has induced men to believe that the monstrous tale is truth.

-Jesus, who won over the least worthy of you, has been known by name for but little more than three hundred years: and during his lifetime he accomplished nothing worth hearing of, unless anyone thinks that to heal crooked and blind men or to exorcise those who were possessed by evil demons in the villages of Bethsaida and Bethany can be classed as a mighty achievement.

-Though there is still preserved among us that weapon which flew down from heaven, which mighty Zeus or Ares sent down to give us a warrant, and not in word but in deed, that he will forever hold his shield before our city, you have ceased to adore or reverence it, but you adore the wood of the cross draw its likeness on your foreheads and engrave it on your house fronts.

-As for purity of life you emulate the rages and the bitterness of the Jews, overturning temples and altars, and you slaughtered not only those of us who remained true to the teachings of their fathers, but also men who were as much astray as yourselves, heretics, because they did not wail over the corpse [of Jesus] in the same fashion. But these are rather your own doings; for nowhere did either Jesus or Paul hand down to you such commands. The reason for this is that they never even hoped that you would one day attain to such power as you have; for they were content if they could delude maidservants and slaves, and through them the women, and men like Cornelius [the centurion Cornelius?] or Sergius.

Counter-Lay No. 85.

Hatred and intolerance of the Christians therefore!

In the reign of Constantius II our good Christians even sometimes cut the throat of those whom they described as heretics (allusion to the excesses made against the Novatians).

"Thus at Cyzicus, and at Samosata, in Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and in many other provinces, towns and villages were laid waste, and utterly destroyed." Description of Gibbon in conformity with reality as testifies to it Ammianus Marcellinus (cf. XXII, 5.4): "There are no wild beasts are such enemies to mankind as are most of the Christians in their deadly hatred of one another."

The reproach is already in Celsus (being thus separated through their numbers, they confute one another, still having, so to speak, one name in common, if indeed they still retain it).

Editor's note. The Christians, as Porphyry saw it well, therefore do only worship a dead and an empty sepulcher since resurrection was never proved.

- Yet you are so misguided or foolish that you regard those chronicles of yours as divinely inspired, though by their help no man could ever become wiser braver or better than he was before; while, on the other hand, writings by whose aid men can acquire courage, wisdom and justice, these you ascribe to Satan and to those who serve Satan!

-"The circumcision shall be of thy flesh," says Moses (Genesis 17,13). But the Galileans do not heed him, and they say: "We circumcise our hearts." By all means. For there is among you no evildoer, no sinner; so thoroughly do you circumcise your hearts.

-But the following are the very words that Paul wrote concerning those who had heard his teaching, and were addressed to the men themselves: "Be not deceived: neither idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And of this you are not ignorant, brethren, that such were you also; but you washed yourselves, but you were sanctified in the name of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6, 9-11).

Counter-Lay No. 86.

The expression "effeminate or abusers of themselves with men" is a fine euphemism for pederasts, sodomites...

The picture described by Paul, of these first converts, is hardly edifying indeed. And the doctrines of the baptism redeeming all the faults are not without arousing some issues. Voltaire will remember it in his study on the baptism, intended for the Encyclopedia, but it was not the first to say it. Augustine reports that the pagans found the idea of a so easy forgiveness of the sins,... unthinkable. On this subject, to see what we said in our commentary of Porphyry (counter-lay No. 75).

ISOLATED FRAGMENTS.

-Jesus prays in such language as would be used by a pitiful wretch who cannot bear misfortune with serenity, and though he is a god is reassured by an angel (Gethsemane. Luke 22, 42-47). And who told you, Luke, the story of the angel, if indeed this ever happened? For those who were there when he prayed could not see the angel; for they were asleep. Indeed when Jesus came from his prayer he found them all fallen asleep and he said: "Why do ye sleep? Arise and pray," and so forth. That is why John did not write about the angel, for neither did he see it.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FACT THAT CERTAIN WORKS OF ANTIQUITY HAVE NOT COME UP TO US.

AND THUS ON THE METHODS OF INCIPIENT CHRISTIANITY (SOME PREMATURE STALINISM)!

The recognition of Christianity as being one of the official religions in the Empire, by Constantine, in 313, and especially starting from 391 saw an era of religious intolerance without precedent to fall down on the ancient world. The temples, considered as "temples of the error," were closed, then closed down and often destroyed. Only the buildings changed into churches were safeguarded (the Parthenon in Athens, the Temple of Concordia at Agrigento, the Pantheon in Rome...). The statues of the gods and of the goddesses, considered as "nests of demons," were mutilated, or were used for the supply of the lime kilns.

The ousting of buildings symbolizing a religion by the belief which succeeds to it is a constant of History. But with the triumph of Christianity, jointly with the disappearance of the abodes of the former gods; were also laid by the emperors Theodosius II in the East, Valentinian III in the West, around 450, the legal bases generating of the measures having deprived us of the almost totality of the ancient authors. They indicated among the hard elements of the Christians a state of mind bordering on the intolerance which will be therefore the cause of a pitiless censorship applied by the monks on the manuscripts during more than thousand years. The manuscripts of the historians had to cross to arrive to us, a double stopping: a legal barrier doubled with a pitiless ecclesiastical censorship.

The compared analysis of the texts which reached us shows that the censorship was not applied uniformly and according to an organized plan, but only with a common intention; that to eliminate all that went against post-Constantinian orthodoxy. So the action of the censors was exerted in an unequal way according to the scriptoria where the ancient authors were recopied, and flaws can be detected in it, likely to be as many historical reminders.

Taking into account the politico-religious climate which developed during the Early Middle Ages, a paramount problem then arises, that of the entirety of the handing down of the original texts. Up to what point were those changed, interpolated or expurgated? Taking into account all the considerations which are previous, the historian of the origins of Christianity is confronted with specific problems of his discipline; he can approach the analysis of each historical work only according to the answers given to the three following questions.

1°) Are the manuscripts in our possession later than the beginning of the Early Middle Ages, date of the influence of the Church on the manuscripts (decrees of Theodosius , etc.)? [Possibility of interception, in time].

2°) If we have several manuscripts of the same work, those do they come from a single archetype, having made possible, by the concentration of the documents in the same monastery, potential adaptations? [Possibility of interception, in space].

3°) The material conditions in time and space being joined together, the clerics, having had during several centuries the possibility of intercepting the writings of the historians from Antiquity, did they "purify" them effectively? Do the manuscripts which reached us reveal the trace of reworking as for the Christian fact, making it possible to conclude that the ecclesiastical scribes passed from the capacity to the act? (Truncated or interpolated passages, gaps detectable by foreign quotations, differences in the wording of various manuscripts from the same author, comparison of the remarks of various historians as for the same circumstances.) [Effective Interception and reworking].

The treatises of the ancient authors having openly argued over the origins of the Christian religion were eliminated, and it is through certain refutations carried out by ecclesiastical celebrities that we can still approach them. Very well, it can be understood! Their version of the events, even denatured remains rich to exploit on the condition of remaining critical with regard to these texts. We can nevertheless only be astonished by the fact that the Christians could not preserve to us also the works of their first historians. What would have taught to us for instance the writings from Papias, Julius Africanus, Hegesippus and many others, all vanished? If they have not all disappeared, the few bits of their works which reached us were handed down to us by later authors won over to the new orthodoxy.

Fortified by our observations relating to the censorship of the texts relating to the history of primitive Christianity; we are in right to wonder whether the extracts of the True Word quoted by Origen were accurately reported, or reflect the original sense of the work from which they are extracted, well. We strongly doubt it. Origen has to do as it is daily done in politics by parceling out the work of which he was to give an account to restore it in another order that the plan initially followed by its author, by

caricaturing the remarks, by truncating the quotations, in applying to them the well-known rule of the "double standard," by mocking the mote in the eye of Celsus but while carefully avoiding to signal the beams in the eyes of his co-religionists, etc.

Another thing now. If the work of Celsus was unnoticed at the time of its publication - that which we can doubt - how to explain in these conditions that Origen believed to have to draw the attention to his True Discourse; by taking the trouble to answer it in eight large volumes?

It is therefore necessary that the distribution of the work of Celsus - written about 160 - lasted and was spread in broad spheres of the society so that, in the Christian circles, people measured tardily, the impact of it; and that they thought right to have to refute its argumentation, circa 248, that is to say at the end of ninety years; thus letting pass almost four generations, during which Celsus was allowed to argue over the person of Jesus.

This - late - refutation is one of the last works written by Origen since the eunuch of God died three years afterwards. Not being able to conclude anything about Celsus, nor to try to judge the value of his work without referring us to what his opponent can teach us; we are forced to focus our research around the single piece we have, the *Contra Celsum*.

The Greek text of the *AGAINST CELSUS* reached us by several means.

a) By the channel of eight manuscripts, which all derive from a single original, the *Vaticanus graecus* 386 A, that the writing makes it possible to date from the 13th century (direct tradition).

b) By an indirect tradition of, "selected" pieces extracted from the first seven books of the *Against Celsus*, gathered at the end of the 4th century by Basil, archbishop of Caesarea, in collaboration with Gregory of Nazianzus in an apologetic intention. This anthology, the *Philocalia* of Origen, was handed down to us by several manuscripts, of which oldest are the *Patmius* 270 of the 10th century and the *Venetus Marcianus* 47 B of the 11th century; which depend on an archetype of the 7th century, itself dependent on a copy of the 6th century.

c) In 1941, in full war, the papyrus of Tura (pap. 88747 of the Museum in Cairo) was discovered. It was found in a gallery of old stone quarries of the Memphite area that the British authorities intended to be used as warehouses for ammunition. Workmen thus by chance laid hand on bundles of papyrus which lay there, deposited on the bare ground without any protection. It was not of a hiding place, but a clandestine deposit done hastily.

The manuscript, dated - according to the writing - from the 7th century, reproduced a little more of two thirds of the Book I, and approximately 1/3 of Book II of the *Contra Celsum*. According to Scherer who published it in 1956, the copyist monk "retains and eliminates what he likes, shortens, truncates, and even sometimes reworks." Thus he did not reproduce the passage disappeared, but quoted by Origen, of the book XVIII of the *Antiquities* by Josephus; where the author, "although not believing in Jesus as the Christ, seeks after the cause of the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple"; and affirms that "these disasters happened to the Jews as a punishment for the death of James the Just, who was a brother of Jesus (called Christ)" (*Contra Celsum*, I, 47 and *Commentary on the Gospel* according to Matthew X and XI).

The *Vaticanus*, the manuscripts of the *Philocalia*, the papyrus of Tura, depend all on an archetype later than the 4th century, therefore than the Constantinian era. It is important to notice that the text remained constant, neither between the edition of the 4th century and the papyrus, nor between the papyrus and the *Vaticanus* (13th). The text of the *Vaticanus*, in its primitive content and before undergoing the final amendments of the first hand, is already a changed text.

Arrived at this point of our study about the methods of incipient Christianity, it should be wondered again whether the original *Contra Celsum* reported the essence of what Celsus has claimed, well? If the *Contra Celsum* reported the argumentation of Celsus accurately? If the refutation of Origen itself spanned centuries to us without undergoing major manipulations?

That the *AGAINST CELSUS* does not contain a full version of the True Discourse of Celsus, is obvious. Origen pruned much, certain passages are obviously truncated and summarized. The part where Celsus notices the numerous plagiarisms whose Christians are guilty with regard to the Hellenic philosophers is one of the most mutilated of the True Word. It is enough to read the second part of the "Against Celsus" to be convinced about that.

At the end of the *prosopopeia* of the Jewish rabbi which finishes the second book, Origen declares: "But as this Jew..... has somewhere here ended his discourse, with a mention of other matters not worthy of remembrance, I too shall here terminate this second book of my answer to his treatise" (*C.C.* II, 79).

In the chapter 64 of the book III, Celsus, according to the testimony of Origen, asked various questions. Origen reports only the first and stays quiet on the others that he confines himself to call "of similar nature" (C.C. III, 64).

In the book IV, most considerable of the eight books of Origen, many are the truncated quotations (chapters 20,43,45,46,47); in several places the thought of Celsus is simply summarized (chapters 10,71) and between the chapters 74 and 75, there is a considerable gap...

In 1940, the German philologist Bader, whose book can be regarded as the basic works for the study of the text and the thought of Celsus; added to the file a series of extracts where Origen acknowledges omissions, then a second series of fragments of which the incomplete nature, even allusive, nature, makes us see deletions or foresee gaps and the author declares that the loss of the work (the True Discourse) cannot be offset by these massive quotations from Origen. The Contra Celsum does not report a full version of the treatise of Celsus; that is beyond doubt.

Notwithstanding that, some critics reckon nevertheless that we have, however, approximately seven tenths in word by word of the True Discourse.

Historical value of the Against Celsus.

Since the Jew of Celsus affirms that "countless individuals will convict Jesus of falsehood, alleging that those predictions which were spoken of him were intended to them," he was certainly to give examples. The Contra Celsum therefore filtered the text of the True Word, and denatured the facts by stating "We are not aware, indeed, whether Celsus knew of any who, after coming into this world, and having desired to act as Jesus did, declared themselves to be also the sons of God, or the power of God " apart from Theudas who rose among the Jews before the birth of Jesus and Dositheus." [Editor's note. With regard to Theudas, there was a voluntary anachronism from Origen besides].

THE CONCLUSION WHICH IS NECESSARY TO STATE IS THEREFORE CLEAR.

We have only a part, impossible to estimate, of the True Word. And the information made available by Origen is questionable; an apologetic intention presided over the choice of the quotations.

The true discourse closes the book of accounts of the dying ancient thought and none of the heirs to whom it was destined will be able to make good use of it in order to enlighten his choices. After it, the Man, while entering the life, will have, as said Renan, only the choice of the superstition, and, after the triumph of Christianity in the West, during centuries, he will have it even no longer .It will be necessary to await for the 7th century to find men being able to show a certain freedom of thought towards this dominant ideology, particularly with the Irishman called Mongan.

See the way in which he makes fun with the bishop Tibraide in the story in Gaelic language entitled "Compert Mongain ocus sercDuibe Lacha do Mongan."

REMINDER.

Thomas Aikenhead (March 28, 1676, January 8, 1697). Scottish student of Edinburgh was the last person to be hanged for blasphemy in Great Britain. In France, it was the knight François-J. Lefebvre de La Barre some ninety years later as we will see it.

Thomas Aikenhead was accused in December 1696 under the following count of indictment (in short)...

The defendant maintained on several occasions in various conversations, that theology was a rhapsody of ill-invented nonsense, patched up partly of the moral doctrines of philosophers, and partly of poetical fictions and extravagant chimeras: he ridiculed the holy scriptures, calling the Old Testament Ezra's fables, in profane allusion to Aesop's Fables; he railed on Christ, saying, he had learned magic in Egypt, which enabled him to perform those pranks which were called miracles later. He called the New Testament the history of the imposter Christ; he said Moses was the better artist and the better politician; and he preferred Muhammad to Christ: moreover that the Holy Scriptures were stuffed with such madness, nonsense, and contradictions, that he admired the stupidity of the world in being so long deluded by them: That he rejected the mystery of the Trinity as unworthy of refutation; and scoffed at the incarnation of Christ. He has also assured that Christianity would have completely disappeared in 1800.

Aikenhead was also accused of having declared one day: "I wish I were in that place Ezra calls hell so I could warm myself ." This statement from him was made while passing in front of the church of Tron Kirk, whereas he was returning from a night of drinking session with classmates.

The prosecutor was James Stewart (the grandfather of the future Jacobite great economist James Denham-Steuart) who called for capital punishment in order to be used as an example for those who would be tempted to express similar opinions in the future. Aikenhead recanted during the audience and beseeched the leniency of the court but in vain, and he was sentenced to death by hanging. On the morning of January 8, 1697, Thomas wrote to his friends: "it is a principle innate and co-natural to every man to have an insatiable inclination to the truth, and to seek for it as for hid treasure...." On the scaffold he also reiterated his conviction that the moral laws had a human and not divine origin.

Thomas Babington Macaulay said on the day of Aikenhead's death that "on that day the preachers who were the poor boy's murderers crowded round him at the gallows, certainly insulted heaven with prayers more blasphemous than anything he had uttered."

REMINDER.

François-J. Lefebvre de La Barre (September 12, 1746, July 1, 1766).

The knight François-Jean Lefebvre de La Barre, born on September 12, 1746, in the castle of Ferolles-en-Brie, executed in Abbeville on July 1, 1766, is as well as the Scot Thomas Aikenhead in 1697, a victim of the religious intolerance in the Age of Enlightenment in a case where the philosophers of Enlightenments will throw themselves in the name of the religious tolerance.

The affair begins following the degradation, discovered on August 9, 1765, of the statue of Christ erected on the new bridge of Abbeville. This statue had been slashed at several places by "a cutting instrument" which, as the usher of the king wrote it, thus caused on the right leg "three cuts more than one inch long, each one, and four lines deep" and "two cuts beside the stomach." The emotion in the Picardy City is enormous, because, according to the Catholic church, through this gesture, it is God, and not only his symbol, who is struck. Thus, sign of the seriousness of this blasphemy, the bishop of Amiens himself, his grace Louis-François-Gabriel d'Orleans de La Motte leads, barefoot, the ceremony of "reparation" in order to pay for this sacrilege, in the presence of all the dignitaries of the area.

Who made this blasphemy? The rumors go strong, but, for lack of evidence, it is necessary to resort to a very thorough investigation in order to punish such a blasphemy. The priests incited even denouncement at the time of the Sunday masses. Finally, the investigation is led by Duval de Soicour, lieutenant of police in Abbeville, who gets involved with doggedness, not hesitating to provide false charges and false witnesses, and by the lieutenant of the local court Belleval, who is a personal enemy of the knight de La Barre, since his aunt, the abbess of Willancourt, rejected his advances.

Intimidated, the questioned people accuse the knight de La Barre and two "accomplices," Gaillard d'Etallonde and Moisel, to have sung two libertine songs disrespectful with regard to religion and not to have removed their hats when a Corpus Christi procession went by. Worse, the three men through a challenge, refuse to kneel at the time of the passage of this same procession. After denunciation, a search carried out to the residence of La Barre led to the discovery of three prohibited books (of which the philosophical Dictionary of Voltaire and erotic books) which complete to discredit him in spite of a strong alibi. By misfortune for de La Barre, the bishop of Amiens and the local public figures (encouraged by influential excessively pious people attached to tradition) wished to make this case a true example.

Thinking of being found innocent thanks to the acquaintances of his family, the knight de La Barre does not prepare his escape and he is arrested on October 1, 1765, in the abbey of Longvillers, in spite of the remarkable plea of the journalist and lawyer Linguet as well as the defense of the friends of the abbess of Willancourt before the Parliament in Paris, the sentence to the galleys got in the lower court (in the court of the concerned election) is commuted to a death sentence. The king of France himself is asked, but little convinced by the arguments of the defenders of the knight, he refuses his pardon to him in spite of the intervention of the bishop of Amiens.

The knight de La Barre is therefore sentenced, to undergo ordinary and extraordinary torture so that he denounces his accomplices, to have his fist and his tongue cut, to be beheaded and burnt with the specimen of the philosophical dictionary nailed on his chest. This sentence for blasphemy is carried out on July 1, 1766, in Abbeville by five executioners especially sent from Paris (of whom the executioner Sanson who will cut his head). "I did not believe that it was possible to make a gentleman die for such a little thing" would have been his last words.

Thereafter, it was established that the degradation of the crucifix at the origin of the case of the knight de La Barre would have been caused by the accident of a cart loaded with wood. The knight de La Barre was in his room during the night of the degradation of the crucifix. This judgment was in any event deprived from legal bases even in the France of the time; the Declaration of July 30, 1666, on the blasphemy, not envisaging the death penalty.

REMINDER.

John Toland (1670 - 1722).

Our attention was formerly drawn (in 1978??) and whereas we were still quite young ,freshly landed in Paris, by a certain number of works of English philosophers, discovered at the second-hand books sellers through the baron Paul Heinrich Dietrich von Holbach, a German philosopher of the 18th century.

The ax laid to the root of Christian priestcraft in four discourses by a layman. 1742.

Coups de hache sur les racines de l'imposture sacerdotale chez les chrétiens par un laïc.

Les prêtres démasqués ou Des iniquités du clergé chrétien. 1768.

Letters to Serena. The origin and force of prejudices, the history of the soul's immortality among the heathens, the origin of idolatry and reasons of heathenism.

A discourse on the grounds and reasons of the Christian religion; and finally the "Nazarenus, or Jewish, Gentile and Mahometan Christianity. From the "Englisc" John Toland. We will speak again about him.

What also enabled us to discover, one thing leading to another, the translation in vernacular language, due to another author of the Latin text of his Pantheisticon and of his diatribes.

And to finish his Christianity not mysterious evoked by Jean-Pierre Nicéron in 1730 (memories to be used for the history of the famous men).

Here what we can say of John Toland according to these....

MEMOIRS TO BE USED FOR THE HISTORY OF ILLUSTRIOUS MEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS WITH A REASONED CATALOG OF THEIR WORKS.

The volume X indeed contains interesting additions or corrections to the notice already published about him.

We will summarize them somewhat because Father Jean-Pierre Nicéron is, of course, very severe with Toland. But as all is not false in what he writes...

Toland was born on November 30, 1670. He received the name of Janus Junius at the time of his baptism; but as the children with whom he studied at the school made fun with him because of that name, the Master wanted them to give him that of John, and he kept it since.

His family is not too much known. Some people reproached him for being a bastard; but the author of his biography opposes to this reproach a certificate from three Franciscan Irishmen, made at Prague in Bohemia, and which I will report here.

Infra scripti testamur Dom. Joannem Tolandum ortum esse ex honesta, nobili et antiquissima Familia, qua per plures centenos annos , ut Regni Historia et continua monstrant memoria, in Peninsula Hiberniae Enis-Oen dicta, prope urbem Londino-Deriensem in Ultonia, perduravit . In cujus rei firmiorem fidem, nos ex eadem patria oriundi propriis manibus subscripsimus . Praga in Bohemia hac die 2 Januarii 1708. Joannes O' Neill, Superior Collegi Hibernorum. Franciscus O'Deulin S. Theologiae Professor. Rudolphus O'Neill S. Theologiae Lector.

The undersigned have attested that Mr. John Toland is resulting from an honorable, noble, and very old family, which for several centuries as well as the history of this kingdom and continual mentions of the family establish it undoubtedly, live in the Irish peninsula called Enis-Owen, close to the city of Londonderry in Ulster. In order to certify it, we, natives of the same country, wrote this with our own hand in Prague in Bohemia on January 2, 1708.

But so that this certificate is evidence it would be necessary to be sure that these Irishmen had known the family of Toland by themselves and not only by what he had told them. That of which we are by no means sure.

On June 30, 1690, the University of Edinburgh conferred a master's degree on him , and the certificate of it was given to him on July 22nd.

He passed then into England, from where he left for Leyden in order to continue his studies there. He was there when Daniel Williams, English minister, published a book entitled : Gospel truth stated and vindicated . London 1692.

Toland sent this book to Mr. LeClerc, so that he gave an extract from it in his Universal Library, and wrote to him at the same time a rather long letter, where he made him the history of it. This letter is in the twenty-third volume of this Library, p. 505, at the top of the extract of Mr. Le Clerc, who gives him the status of a student in Theology.

After a stay of approximately two years in Leyden, Toland came back into England, and went to live in Oxford, where he had the opportunity of conversing with several scientists, and to find the books he wished in the famous Library of this University.

He then began to make known his taste for the paradoxes and the innovations, even to tackle the vulgar and commonly received opinions. He wrote for that some pieces; among others an Essay, where he proves that what is said about the tragic death of Regulus is only a novel. This Essay, which is dated Oxford on August 6, 1694, is among his Posthumous Works, volume 2. p. 28. Toland recognizes that he held this opinion from Paumier de Grentemesnil, who had claimed the same thing in his observations on the Greek authors.

He put forward more dangerous propositions [from the point of view of the reverend Jean-Pierre Nicéron of course] in his Book Christianity not mysterious , that he started therefore in Oxford, but that he went to finish, and that he published in 1696, in London.

Toland having been obliged to leave Ireland after the judgment of his book about Christianity not mysterious, he withdrew in England, where he published first an Apology. It is entitled: Apology for M.Toland, in a letter from himself to a member of the House of Commons in Ireland, the day before the day when his book was sentenced to fire, with a Foreword which explains the subject which made him write it.

Little time after, the Lower House of Convocation of the Church of England having appointed commissioners to make the report of the impious works which were spread in the Kingdom, Christianity not mysterious, and Amyntor, were comprised in it.

Toland wrote then two letters to Dr. Hooper, prolocutor of the Lower House, in order to try to stop the procedures that they were about to initiate against his works, or to make so that they listened to him at least in his defenses before banning them but they had no regard towards his requests. The commissioners drew from the two books of which I have just spoken, five positions, which tended towards the destruction of the Christian Religion, and on their report the Lower House presented to the Bishops a statement of the case in order to require their opinion, and to request them to join them to remove these books and its similar ones. The aspect that this case took deserves to be reported.

On the remonstrance of the Lower House, the Upper one also appointed its commissioners, who examined the books of Toland, and found in it various dangerous positions, among others one which appeared to them the foundation of all the rest, though the Lower House had not noticed it. With that both houses agreed unanimously to proceed against the author and his works, as far as legally they could do. It was therefore decided to consult on that the most skillful jurists; and the bishops, who were in charge of this task, reported to the House that having asked them their opinion about the impious, heretical and contrary to common decency, books, and particularly about the books submitted by the Lower House, they had answered that it did not appear possible to them without a license from the King (which they did not have yet) to proceed legally against any such books; that they were persuaded on the contrary that the two Houses of convocation while proceeding against them might incur the penalties of the statute of the 25th year of King Henry VIII. They added that the jurists, they had consulted, had thus answered on the two questions that they had asked them.

1° Whether the Convocation's giving an opinion concerning a book that is heretical, impious and immoral, is contrary to any law? Yes.

2°. Whether the positions they had extracted out of Christianity not mysterious were such an opinion as is contrary to any law ?No!.

Nor did they content themselves with this advice, but they inquired besides what had been formerly done in such cases, and found that on a complaint being exhibited against some books by the lower to

the upper house, in the year 1689, the learned in both the laws were of opinion they could not proceed judicially in such matters...

Toland published in 1704 an English translation of life of Esop by M. de Meziriac.

The following year was published written by him Socinianism* truly stated *, being an example of fair dealing in all theological controversy...

From Vienna he passed to Prague in Bohemia, where the Irish Franciscans gave him the certificate which I reported above. As then money began to be missing for him, he hastened to return into Holland, where he remained until 1710. There he made himself known by the prince Eugene of Savoy, whose largesse was not useless for him, and he published various works there.

Adeisadaemon, about which I spoke.

A second edition of the Philippic oration of the cardinal of Sion that he made published in Amsterdam in 1709 while adding to it invective against the author of the Gallant Mercury under this title: Gallus Aretalogus, odium Urbis et ludibrium, sive Gallantis Mercurii gallantissimus scriptor Vapulans.

Letter from an Englishman to a Hollander, about Dr. Sacheverell, « présentement en arrêt par ordre des Communes de la Grande-Bretagne, et accusé de hauts crimes et malversations à la Barre des Seigneurs .»

The largesse of Mr. Harley, who was then High Treasurer, gave him the means of having a country house in Epsom village of the Province of Surrey, and of receiving his friends there.

In 1712 was published from him :

Letter against popery: particularly against admitting the authority of fathers or councils in controversies of religion. By Sophia Charlotte the late queen of Prussia being an answer to a letter written to her majesty by Father Vota, an Italian Jesuit, translated into English with a foreword of the translator, where we see what the occasion of this letter was, and an Apology for the Church of England.

These works of politics did not prevent Toland from forming other literary intentions. He distributed himself to his friends the plan of a new edition of Cicero, which he intended to make printed by the means of a subscription. This plan, which is in the form of an Essay, is entitled: Cicero illustratus , Dissertatio Philologio-Critica : sive Consilium de toto edendo Cicerone, alia plane methodo quam hactenus unquam factum. It is dated from the month of September 1712.

It was reprinted in the first volume of the posthumous Works of Toland p. 231.

In the year 1713 people saw published by Toland the following books...

An appeal to honest people against wicked priests: or the very heathen laity's declarations for civil obedience and liberty of conscience, contrary to the rebellious and persecuting principles of some of the old Christian clergy; with an application to the corrupt part of the Priests of this present Time, publish'd on Occasion of Dr. Sacheverell's last Sermon.

Toland, who worked only to earn money, was always careful to give to his works titles which were imposing , even which got sales to them; he is easily recognized through those.

He published in 1714:

The art of restoring or the piety and probity of General Monk in bringing about the last restoration evidenced from with his own authentic letters. Ten editions of this work were made in three months.

A Collection of Letters written by his Excellency General George Monk, relating to the Restoration of the Royal Family. With an introduction, proving by incontestable evidence that Monk had projected that Restoration in Scotland; against the cavils of those who would rob him of the merit of this action.

The funeral eulogy and character, of Her Royal Highness, the late Princess Sophia: with the explication of her consecration medal. Written originally in Latin [by Mr. Cramer], translated into English by Mr. Toland.

I had said that the State Anatomy of Great Britain was not from him; but since the last author of his biography considers it as being one of his works, without forming the slightest doubt on this subject, it is therefore right to give it back to him.

It is entitled: The state anatomy of Great Britain , containing a particular account of its several interests and parties, their bent and genius, and what each of them, with all the rest of Europe may hope or fear from the reign and family of King George, being a memorial sent by an intimate friend to a foreign minister lately nominated to come for the court of England. In 1717.

Daniel Defoe, a venal writer like him, and the Doctor Fiddes chaplain of the Earl of Oxford, having separately made some Answers to this writing, Toland answered them jointly in a second part of the Anatomy. These two booklets were found rather strange, and the sale of them was very large.

During the year 1718, he made printed with explanations in his way the alleged prophecy of St. Malachy, archbishop of Armagh, from where he concluded, and through prediction, and through reasoning, that the fall of the empire of the Pope was not distant. His work has as a title: The Destiny of Rome: or, the probability of the speedy and final destruction of the Pope. Concluded partly, from natural reasons, and political observations, and partly on occasion of the famous prophecy of St. Malachy, archbishop of Armagh, in the 13th century. With curious piece containing emblematical characters of all the popes, from his own time to the utter extirpation of them.

People saw him in 1720 interfering in arguments of a higher order. The House of Lords in the Parliament of England having made to pass a Bill, where it was said that one could appeal to it the decisions of that of the Parliament of Ireland, it was published in Dublin, for this one, some small pieces that Toland made reprinted in London, and he wrote himself on this occasion a booklet entitled: Reasons offered to the House of Commons, why the Bill sent down to them from the House of Lords, should not pass into a law.

The last work which he gave to the public is a collection of letters of the count of Shaftesbury to Mr. Molesworth, with a long foreword in his way. All focuses in these letters on the love of the homeland, and the choice of a wife.

FOR MORE INFORMATION STILL see the "Nouveau dictionnaire historique et critique" by Jacques Georges de Chauffepié, volume IV, Amsterdam 1756.

TOLAND (Jean) [A] naquit le 30 novembre 1670 (a) dans la Péninsule la plus septentrionale de l'Irlande & dans l'isthme où est Londonderry (b) ; il étoit d'une bonne famille [B]. Ses parents étoient Catholiques-Romains car....and so on.... Ses œuvres posthumes ont été imprimées à Londres en 1726 en deux volumes in -8°.

One published after his death a Collection of several pieces of Mr. John Toland published for the first time from the manuscripts of the author, with some historical characteristics concerning his life and writings. Two volumes. London 1726.

*Socinianism is the name given to the anti trinitarianism or Unitarianism. It comes from that of Socinius, one of the great thinkers of the Reformation, at the same time rejected by the Catholics and the Reformists.

Most of his major works were published in Poland at Rakow. God is a person, the Father, and not three persons in one. Jesus was not God, he was only a man, who was raised to the rank of God only after his death and his resurrection, etc.

MAJOR WORKS.

As we could see it, John Toland was a very prolific author. Of his very many publications, we will retain the Jewish Gentile and Mahometan Christianity (1710), the Pantheisticon, the history of the Celtic religion and finally the Christianity not mysterious.

- Concerning the Jewish Gentile and Mahometan Christianity, containing the history of the ancient Gospel of Barnabas and the modern Gospel of the Mahometans.

It is the search of John Toland about an Irish manuscript written in Armagh in 1138 by a Culdee monk named Mael Brigte (Harleian Library 1802) and published in 1710 in the various dissertations that he dedicated to the Prince Eugene of Savoy under the pseudonym of Tolandus.

The manuscript had been preserved at Paris as a Latin text containing notes written in Anglo-Saxon; but as Toland knew very well the Gaelic language and for good reasons, he realized that it was not some Anglo-Saxon, but some notes in old Irish due to a Culdee monk.

The French version of 1710 addressed to the prince Eugene of Savoy is clearer and more direct than the English translation which was given of it in 1718 under the title of Nazarenus, it is therefore this variant that we advise. It appears in the Nazarenus published in 1999 in Oxford by the publisher Justin Champion on behalf of the foundation Voltaire. In the series Deism and free thought.

-The Pantheisticon is of 1720 and not of 1710 as it was put. The Pantheisticon is a Latin work primarily devoted to the liturgy practiced by certain pantheist or freemasonic circles of his time. The pantheism of this book is inspired by that of Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) whose works had been translated by Toland and not by that of Spinoza. It is signed with the name of Janus Junius Eoganesius Cosmopoli. Eoganesius meaning "from Inishowen" in Church Latin, in accordance with the Gaelic habit as regards the designation of individuals, and Cosmopoli "citizen of the world." Margaret Jacob recently proved that Toland was indeed the cause of the heterodox Masonic lodge founded at The Hague in the beginning of the eighteenth century; and that the ritual described in the Pantheisticon was undoubtedly much less whimsical than specialists had thought.

Toland was therefore the first to use or coin the word "pantheist" ("pantheist" and not "pantheism," because the -isms don't sound like him). He had probably found the idea of in the work of Giordano Bruno. The word "pantheism" itself, on the other hand, was launched after his death by some of his spiritual heirs.

For Toland this pantheism "before the word is invented" was not atheistic materialism. He believed in an immanent higher Being, transcending the matter, but not in the way of a Regulator of the Universe like in the deism.

In the part form of celebrating the Socratic sodalite (society), Toland wrote paradoxically...

- We must not be bigoted to anyone's opinion.

-Not even to that of Socrates himself. And let us detest all dogmas.

-We must always wish that there should be a sound mind in a sound body.

-Mirth is the characteristic of a freeman, sadness that of a slave.

-It is better to rule over none than to be any man's slave.

-One may live honorably without a servant but there is no honorable living at any rate with a master.

(Translation with reservations, although having been good in version, my seven years of Latin are far.)

In political matters pantheism implies the direct democracy. If the universe does not need a Regulator, the society does not need a bad king.

As my old Master Pierre Lance said it very well one day, who, himself, knew how to use perfectly French language, what is not my case; "If two persons agree entirely about something, then it is that there is only one of the two who reflects."

For John Toland the truth is always plural, and it is not possible that two persons using their reason equally can entirely and at 100% reach agreement on everything.

We are all different from each other, we are not all similar, we are not all identical, and each one goes on his way in life.

It is useless therefore to seek the perfect consensus on questions as important as God or what a government must do. The debates have only one utility: to lead each one to clarify his positions.

- History of the Celtic religion. Published "in a jumble" with various other parts (two volumes) in 1726 by Pierre Des Maizeaux. French Huguenot exiled in London.

In the form of three letters addressed to the Viscount Molesworth. Followed by the answers made by his friend Jones to the 12 questions on this subject asked by a certain Mr. Tate?
With a very short glossary of some Celtic or of Celtic origin, words, as an appendix.

But when Toland evokes the history of the high-knowers of the druidiaction (*druidecht*), it is not only to do as a historian, it is also to do as a polemicist. This history will not be picturesque, but emblematic: "The history of the druids, in short, is the complete history of the priesthood."

Through the example of the high-knowers of the druidiaction (*druidecht*), Toland aims at illustrating the operating process of any clergy and primarily of the Catholic clergy. That it is there the sought-after goal, he writes it in a manner one cannot do more explicit.

However and in an apparently contradictory way, it is to these same high-knowers of the druidiaction (*druidecht*) that he ascribes pantheistic doctrines which are not without pointing out his own. He describes their two grand doctrines, of the eternity and incorruptibility of the universe, and the incessant revolution of all beings and forms, which, according to him, point out Pythagoras, what was not completely exact besides. But by making this comparison, Toland innovated in nothing, since he limited himself in taking over the opinion of the classical authorities, like Diodorus of Sicily or Strabo, to whom he refers abundantly.

IT IS KNOWN TODAY THAT IT IS ONLY A FORTUITOUS RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN DOCTRINES IN REALITY VERY DIFFERENT.

As much as in the religion of the high-knowers of the druidiaction (*druidecht*), Toland is interested in Celtic Christianity, such as it was practiced in Ireland before the submission to Rome consecrated definitively by the synod of Kells in 1153.

The rejection of the auricular confession, the design of the Eucharist as a ritual of commemoration, the practice of the communion under both kinds for the meal of commensality "*devogdonion*," are as many additional signs of this link with the reformist religion. The Irish monks earned their living by working with their hands, contrary to the begging brothers against whom Toland inveighs in terms identical to those that the puritan preachers of the end of the sixteenth century used.

More Erasmian than Presbyterian, Toland does not want a Church which interferes unduly in the civil matters. He hardly hesitates to define these Irish Christians, at the cost of an anachronism as deliberated as revealing on his own evolution, as West Latitudinarians. The Latitudinarians were Anglican thinkers of the 17th century seeking to reconcile faith and reason. Since indeed Celtic Christianity is a proto-reformation, his own conversion is no longer a renunciation; it becomes rather a return to his roots. But it is well necessary for us to come to a question: in what, what Toland has written is important for the history of the Irish antiquities or of the medieval Ireland?

What did we notice up to now? Frequent references to Greco-Roman sources, not always reliable; the recourse to the history as justification, as well of the personal destiny of the author, as of his thought; more generally the use of the Celtic antiquities as metaphorical means to evoke contemporary questions, because Toland works on two different registers at the same time, that of the historical study and that of the polemical use of the results of this study. The relationship between the past and the present impose themselves naturally on the mind, in virtue of an analogical relation as much less astonishing than the human history is governed by laws not less immutable than those which control the course of the stars.

If he bases himself on classic authors of whom exactitude is not the principal characteristic, they are not here, however, his only sources. He also resorts to Irish texts of which we would like to know the detail. He evokes indeed in this work. "But the knowledge of the ancient Irish, which I learned from my childhood, and of the other Celtic dialects, in all which I have printed books or manuscripts (not to speak of their vulgar traditions), is absolutely necessary, these having preserved numberless monuments concerning the druids, that never hitherto have come to the hands of the learned."

He is well aware of work of recent scholars, even contemporary, like Boxhorn, Edward, Lwhyd, Camden, Aubrey (whom he personally knew in Oxford as we saw). Far from limiting himself to always follow his sources, he is able to take with respect to them a critical distance; as when he rejects, rightly, the identification of the Celts and of the Germanic ones, although this theory is defended by many authors since Antiquity. Expressed initially by Herodotus, the assumption is validated by Diodorus of Sicily, taken over and formalized by Cluver in the beginning of the 17th century, in his *Germaniae antiquae libri* of 1616.

Against this tradition Toland affirms indeed that the Celtic language and the Gothic language, which were often taken for each other, are as different as Latin and Arabic.

That many things, in what Toland writes, are questionable, therefore does not have to involve too hasty judgments against him. Let us not forget that the work that he planned to write was never completed, nor that historical science was still in its early stages.

The interest of his writings lies in the new attitude which he endeavors to promote and to formalize with respect to what he calls the ancient British world.

We pointed out in the beginning of this article that one of the principles of the thought of John Toland is that of the equivalence of all the points of the sphere, and therefore of all the nations. However this principle can extend in two distinct, and opposed, directions, like are the tails and the heads of the same medal. This homogenization of the space means at the same time that all the places are also indifferent, but also that they are similarly worthy of interest. What can appear as a reducing postulate makes it possible on contrary to raise to an equal dignity peoples and cultures traditionally underprivileged compared to others. From this point of view, the antiquities of the British, and specifically Irish, world, are less worthy of interest than the classical antiquity.

AND IT IS THERE A REVOLUTIONARY STRUCTURING PRINCIPLE WITH MULTIPLE REPERCUSSIONS IN A PSYCHE. A VERITABLE SHOCK WAVE.

Any man is equal to any man, and the Celts are well equal to the Greeks and the Romans, or the Jews, as suggest us these lines that a quivering of indignation resembling extremely a reaction of wounded self-esteem traverses. Dr. Kennedy writes – Dissertation about the family of the Stuarts, prefaces p. 29 - that Patrick burnt 300 “volumes” stuffed with the fables and superstitions of heathen idolatry; unfit, adds he, to be transmitted to posterity. But pray, how ? Why are Celtic or Irish superstitions more unfit to be transmitted to posterity than those of Greeks and Romans? As regards superstition, classical Antiquity is neither more nor less worth than Celtic Antiquity!

To say of all the points of space that they are equivalent, it is to say them commensurable; amounts saying that there is no longer places so eminent that they become incommensurable with every other. The Cosmos, and the world of men have no longer a center, and such is well the condition of the assumption of all to an equal dignity.

THIS IS JOHN TOLAND'S FUNDAMENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO OUR CAUSE, ITS CREED, ITS REASON FOR BEING, ITS GUIDING PRINCIPLE.

However, Toland writes in a time of crisis and of crisis potentially mortal for the Irish culture and the transmission of its memory. The end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth mark the beginning of the end of a certain Ireland. Of course, at that time, the majority of the inhabitants of the island speak still Irish; it is often their only language. But the institutions which support the Gaelic culture survive more than they live; it is a whole world which tumbles already. There remain bards, schools of poetry, but this ancient heritage is in the process of accelerated disintegration. John Toland is at this joint of the History when a civilization is threatened to sink into oblivion. When he tackles, and how vehemently, St Patrick, man guilty of the destruction of innumerable testimonies of the ancient culture of the Celts; it may be possible that he also alludes to what takes place at the time when he writes down the following remark. “What an irreparable destruction of history, what a deplorable extinction of arts and inventions, what an unspeakable detriment to learning, what dishonor upon human understanding, has the cowardly proceeding of the ignorant, or rather of the interested, against unarmed monuments at all times occasioned!”

John Toland keeps a secret affection for his native island, where it is difficult to take into consideration remorse and nostalgia. In his youth, he had broken with Ireland, more still than he had left it; in his middle age, he wanted to be the guard of his history and of his memory: the approach is paradoxical only if we forget that he was named, also Janus Junius Eoganenius (Latin equivalent of Sean Owen).

A SPECIMEN OF THE CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE CELTIC RELIGION AND LEARNING

Containing an Account of the Druids, or the Priests and Judges, of the Vates, or the Diviners and Physicians, and of the Bards, or the Poets and Heralds, of the Ancient Celts, Britons, Irish, and Scots. With the History of Abaris the Hyperborean, Priest of the sun.
In three letters to the right honorable the lord viscount Molesworth.

.....It is from this consideration alone (abstracted, My Lord, from all that you have already done, or may hereafter deserve from your country, by an unshaken love of liberty) that I presume to acquaint your Lordship with a design, which I formed several years ago at Oxford, and which I have ever since kept in view; collecting, as occasion presented, whatever might any way tend to the advantage or perfection of it. It is to write the History of the Druids, containing an account of the ancient Celtic Religion and Literature and concerning which I beg your patience for a little while. Though this be a subject that will be naturally entertaining to the curious in every place; yet it does more particularly concern the inhabitants of ancient Gaul (now France, Flanders, the Alpine regions, and Lombardy) and of all the British Islands, whose antiquities are here partly explained and illustrated, partly vindicated and restored. It will sound somewhat oddly, at first hearing, that a man born in the most Northern Peninsula of Ireland, should undertake to set the antiquities of Gaul in a clearer light than anyone has hitherto done. But when it is considered, that, over and above what he knows in common, relating to the druids, with the learned of the French nation (whose works he constantly reads with uncommon esteem) he also has certain other advantages, which none of those writers have ever had: when this, I say, is considered, then all the wonder about this affair will instantly cease [...].

Among those institutions which are thought to be irrecoverably lost, one is that of the Druids; of which the learned have hitherto known nothing, but by some fragments concerning them out of the Greek and Roman authors. Nor are such fragments always Intelligible, because never explained by any of those, who were skilled in the Celtic dialects, which are now principally six; namely Welsh or the insular British, Cornish almost extinct, Armorican or French British, Irish the least corrupted, Manks or the language of the Isle of Man; and Earse or Highland Irish, also spoken in all the western islands of Scotland.

These, having severally their own dialects, are, with respect to each other and the old Celtic of Gaul, as the several dialects of the German language and Low Dutch, the Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic; which are all descendants of their common mother, the Gothic. Not that ever such a thing as a pure Gothic or Celtic language either did or could exist in any considerable region without dialects, no more than pure elements: but by such an original language is meant the common root and trunk, the primitive words, and especially the peculiar construction that runs through all the branches; whereby they are intelligible to each other, or may easily become so, but different from all kinds of speech besides. Thus the Celtic and the Gothic, which have often been taken for each other, are as different as Latin and Arabic. In like manner we conceive of the several idioms of the Greek language formerly, in Greece itself properly so-called, in Macedonia, in Crete and the islands of the Archipelago, in Asia, Rhodes, part of Italy, in Sicily, and Marseilles; and at this time of the Slavonian language, whose dialects not only prevail in Russia, Poland, Bohemia, Carinthia, and Serbia, but in a great many other places, too tedious to recite.

But of this subject we shall treat professedly in a Dissertation, to be annexed to the work, whereof I am giving your lordship an account. Neither shall I in this Specimen dwell on some things, whereof I shall principally and largely treat in the designed History; I mean the Philosophy of the Druids concerning the Gods, human Souls, Nature in general, and in particular the heavenly Bodies, their magnitudes, motions, distances, and duration; whereof CESAR, DIODORUS SICULUS, STRABO, POMPONIUS MELA, and AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS write more specially than others. These subjects, I say, will be copiously handled and commented in my History. In the meantime, I do assure you, My Lord, from all authors, that no Heathen Priesthood ever came up to the perfection of the Druidical, which was far more exquisite than any other such system; as having been much better calculated to beget

ignorance, and an implicit disposition in the people, no less than to procure power and profit to the priests, which is one grand difference between the true worship and the false.

This Western Priesthood did infinitely exceed that of ZOROASTER and all the Eastern sacred policy : so that, the History of the Druids, in short, is, the complete History of Priest craft, with all its reasons and resorts ; which to distinguish accurately from right religion is not only the interest of all wise princes and states, but likewise does especially concern the tranquility and happiness of every private person. I have used the word Priest craft here on purpose, not merely as being the best expression for the abuse, and reverse of religion (for superstition is only religion misunderstood) but also because the coining of the very word was occasioned by the DRUIDS : since the Anglo-Saxons having learned the word Dry from the Irish and Britons for a magician, did very appositely call Magic or Inchantment Drycraft ; as being nothing else but trick and illusion, the fourbery of Priests and their confederates.

Now, this institution of the Druids I think myself, without any consciousness of vanity, much abler to retrieve (as having infinitely better helps in many respects, of which, before I have done) than Dr. HYDE was to restore the knowledge of the ancient Persian Literature and Religion; which yet he left imperfect for want of due encouragement, as I have shown in the first chapter of Nazarenus. From undoubted Celtic monuments, joined to the Greek and Roman remains, I can display the order of their hierarchy, from the ARCH-DRUID down to the meanest of their four orders of priests.

Of these degrees, the ARCH-DRUID excepted, there is little to be found in the Classic authors, that treat of the Druids: but very much and very particularly, in the Celtic writings and monuments. For many reasons their History is most interesting and entertaining: I mean, as, on the one hand, we consider them seducing their followers, and as, on the other hand, we learn not to be so deceived.

They dexterously led the people blindfold, by committing no part of their Theology or Philosophy to writing, though great writers in other respects ; but their dictates were only hereditarily conveyed from masters to disciples by traditionary Poems, interpretable (consequently) and alterable as they should see convenient :which is a much more effectual way, than locking up a book from the Laity, that, one way or other, is sure to come first or last to their knowledge, and easy perhaps to be turned against the Priests. The Druids, as may be seen in the 6th book of CAESAR'S Commentaries...

Cf. the first volume of our own dissertation on the matter and in particular on the true meaning of the reluctance of the druids to write down their own religious teaching ...

.....
Me govezo an guiryonez: I shall know the truth.

DIVINE NAMES.

Taramis.
Hesus.
Teutates.
Belenus, vel Abellio.
Onvana. Anara, Hib.
Hogmius,
Adraste. Andate.

HIGHEST MAGISTRATE.
Vergobretus, Fergobrethr, Hib.

NAMES OF RELIGIOUS MINISTERS.

Paterae
Caenae
Bardi, Bard, Baird, H.
Druidae, Droï, Druidhe, Hib.

Eubages, corrupte pro Vates.

MILITARY VOCABULARY.

Alauda
Caterva.

NAMES OF WARRIORS.

Gaelatae. Gaiscioghach, Hib.
Vargi.
Crupellarii.
Bagaudae. Bagadai.
Galearii.

NAMES OF WEAPONS.

Spatha.
Gessum.
Lancea.
Cateia.
Matara.
Thyrus. Tarei, Hib.
Cetra.
Carnon. Carnan, videas, quaeras.

WAR MACHINES.

Mangae. Diminut. Meanghan.
Mangana.
Mangonalia.

NAMES OF CARS.

Benna.
Petoriturum.
Carrus.
Covinum.
Essedum.
Rheda.

NAMES OF CLOTHES.

Rheno.
Sagus.
Linna.
Gaunacum.
Bardiacus, pro Bardis.
Bardocucullus, etiam pro Bardis.
Braccae, pro omnibus. Breaccan.
Maniaci.

ANIMAL NAMES.

Marc, Equus.
Raphius, Lupus Cervinus.
Abrana, Simia.
Barracaceae, Pellium, &c.
Lug, Cornix. Mus.
Clupea. Piscis species.

CHRISTIANITY NOT MYSTERIOUS.

Fulcran VIGOUROUX (1837-1915) first secretary of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, in his work entitled "The Holy Books and Rationalist Criticism » published in 1890, points out in the chapter II of his first volume, entirely devoted to John Toland that his "Christianity not mysterious" produced such a scandal that in 1760 at least 54 refutations of it had already been published and that Toland withdrew it from the market after the publication of the second edition.

Therefore it is still worth being read. In spite of an obvious subordination to the dominant ideology of his time as regards the essence: the deism (roughly speaking: John Toland does not call into question the Gospels, but only the Jews and the Church Fathers - or the Catholics - and his book would be therefore a best-seller among Christians or intellectuals of the media-journalistic circles of today).

THE MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERY OF JEAN TOLAND THEREFORE REMAINS THE EQUATION WHICH UNDERLIES HIS HISTORY OF THE DRUIDS, NAMELY NOT THAT THERE ARE NO LONGER EITHER JEWS OR GREEKS AS SAINT PAUL WROTE IN HIS EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS (THE THIRD PART OF HIS REASONING PERHAPS?) BUT THAT THERE ARE NO LONGER EITHER BARBARIANS, EITHER GOYIM OR PAGANS IN THE RACIST MEANING OF THE WORD AND THAT THE GALATIANS ARE EQUAL TO THE JEWS, THE GREEKS OR THE ROMANS, IN SHORT THAT ANY MAN IS EQUAL TO ANY MAN.

Toland was probably influenced by the Ramism (of the name of the philosopher Pierre LaRamee known as Ramus, who considered much the questions of semantics, language and communication). The conclusion that Toland draws from him is that there is no mystery in itself in Christianity. If there are mysteries in Christianity, it is only because of the incapacity of our language or our tongue to expound, as it is needed, the question. They are at each time imaginary problems.

Stigmatized as atheistic Toland was in reality during his whole life obsessed by religious questions. Accused of being a Jesuit disguised in a Reformist, he attended various Rosicrucian, Latitudinarian (some broad-minded anti-puritan Neopelagians with regard to morals, from where their name); pantheistic (he translated for example the mystical doctrines of Giordano Bruno); and finally druidic, movements.

For John Toland the true religion therefore never had something to do with any fable, even invented well, nor with the power, the domination or the ceremony; because it lies only in the spirituality and the truth, in the simplicity of manners and in the practice of the social virtues, in a deep and filial respect towards the Divinity. Especially not in the fear and the servile terror of the deity.

Locke launched the expression "freethinker" in order to speak about this characteristic of John Toland. According to Leibniz, he was a witty man and a man of knowledge. He was translated into French by the baron d'Holbach and the materialism of Diderot was influenced by his work.

Idealistic cosmopolitan John Toland never disowned his Irish roots completely. He perhaps took part in the translation in English by Dermot O'Connor of the History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating (Foras Feasa ar Eirinn) and he undoubtedly knew O'Flaherty. What is sure in any case, it is that he was aware of his book entitled Ogygia. Toland will also consider still, but wrongly, that the Christianity of the Culdees, proved to be the purest form of Christianity. He will devote several years of studies to the Celtic-druidic tradition in all its forms.

John Toland was therefore a precursor, at the point to have been the first to deserve the noble name of freethinker. But his beginnings were very hard very shy and still deists, not calling into question the essence of Christianity. His successor and translator the German philosopher Paul Heinrich Dietrich von Holbach, known as Baron d'Holbach, went, himself, much further in this field. His Christianity unveiled or examination of the principles and effects of the Christian religion goes much further than that of John Toland but 60 years later. And his sacred Contagion too!

Christianity not Mysterious:
Or,
A Treatise
Showing,
That there is nothing in the
Gospel
Contrary to
REASON,
Nor Above it:
And that no Christian Doctrine
can be properly called
A MYSTERY.

London, Printed in the year 1696.

THE PREFACE.

I believe all men will readily allow that none should speak with more Freedom and Assurance than he that defends or illustrates the Truth. But if we credit the history of former times, or duly consider what passes in the present, we shall find none more backward to speak their minds in public than such as have right on their side. Indeed the goodness of their cause and design should fortify them, one would think, against the attacks of their enemies: nor are there wanting frequent examples of persons who with unshaken constancy suffered the most disgraceful and violent things for love of the Truth. — Yet if we make a just computation, and take in the primitive martyrs with the prophets and apostles themselves, the professed defenders of Truth, only for Truth's sake, will be found to be a small handful with respect to the numerous partisans of Error. And such is the deplorable condition of our age that a man dares not openly and directly own what he thinks of Divine Matters, though it be never so true and beneficial, if it but very slightly differs from what is received by any party, or that is established by Law; but he is either forced to keep perpetual silence, or to propose his sentiments to the world, by way of a paradox, under a borrowed or fictitious name. To mention the least part of the inconveniences they expose themselves [.....]

But wonderful! That the sacred name of Religion which sounds nothing but sanctity, peace, and integrity, should be so universally abused to patronize ambition, impiety, and contention! And that what is our highest interest perfectly to understand should (for reasons afterwards to be laid open) both be maintained to be obscure, and very industriously made so!

But of such depressing considerations enough! Notwithstanding which, I have ventured to publish this discourse, designing thereby to rectify, as much as I'm able, the narrow bigoted tenets of the one, and the most impious maxims of the other.

No atheist or infidel of any kind can justly be angry with me for measuring swords with them, and attacking them only with the weapons they prescribe me. The true Christian can no more be offended, when he finds me employ Reason, not to enervate or perplex, but to confirm and elucidate Revelation; unless he is apprehensive I should render it too clear to myself, or too familiar to others, which are absurdities nobody will own. I hope to make it appear that the use of Reason is so dangerous in Religion as it is commonly represented, and that too by such as mightily extol it, when it seems to favor them, yet vouchsafe it not a hearing when it makes against them, but oppose its own authority to itself. These are high privileges indeed, and the surest means of always having the better of the dispute that could possibly be devised [...].

Being educated, from my cradle, in the grossest superstition and idolatry, God was pleased to make my own Reason, and such as made use of theirs, the happy instruments of my conversion. Thus I have been very early accustomed to examination and inquiry, and taught not to captivate my understanding, no more than my senses to any man or society whatsoever [.....] And when others are but prayed to explain their terms, which commonly signify nothing, or what they must be ashamed to own that would never be thought in an error, they are uneasy, as an extravagant merchant to examine his accounts; and 'tis well if they can refrain their passions. Not only a few men, but oftentimes whole societies, whilst they consider things but very superficially, set such a value upon certain sounds, as if they were the real essence of all Religion.

To question or reject any of these, though never so false and inconvenient, is dangerous heterodoxy: and yet, as I hinted now, they either signify nothing, or have been invented by some leading men to make plain things obscure, and not seldom to cover their own ignorance. What is unpardonable, the holy Scripture is put to the torture to countenance this scholastic jargon, and all the metaphysical chimeras of its authors. But the weakness of the greatest part of these prejudices is so notorious that to mention them is sufficient confutation.

It is come to this, that Truth meets nowhere with stronger opposition than from many of those that raise the loudest cry about it, and would be taken for no less than the only dispensers of the favors and oracles of Heaven. If any has the firmness to touch the minutest thing that brings them gain or

credit, he's presently pursued with the hue and cry of heresy: and, if he values their censures, compelled to make honorable amends; or if he proves contumacious, he falls a sacrifice, at least in his reputation, to their implacable hatred.

Religion is always the same, like God its Author, with whom there is no Variableness, nor Shadow of changing. If any should ask me whether I have so good an opinion of my own abilities, as to imagine that I can prove a rational account may be given of all those jarring doctrines, ambiguous terms, and puzzling distinctions which have for so many centuries sufficiently exercised the learned of all sorts: I answer, that I don't pretend (as the Title Page can testify) that we are able to explain the terms or doctrines of this or that Age, Council, or Nation (most of which are impervious mysteries with a witness) but the terms and doctrines of the Gospel. They are not the Articles of the East or West, Orthodox or Arian, Protestant or Papist, considered as such, that I trouble myself about, but those of Jesus Christ and his Apostles [...]. Since Religion is calculated for reasonable creatures, it is the conviction and not the authority that should bear weight with them.

A wise and good man will judge of the merits of a cause considered only in itself, without any regard to times, places, or persons. No numbers, no examples, no interests can ever bias his solid judgment, or corrupt his integrity. He knows no difference between Popish Infallibility, and being obliged blindly to acquiesce in the decisions of fallible Protestants [...]

Laymen pay for the books and maintenance of churchmen for this very end: but I'm afraid some of the latter will no more believe this than that magistrates too are made for the people.

And why may not the vulgar likewise be judges of the true sense of things, though they understand nothing of the tongues from when they are translated for their use? Truth is always and everywhere the same; and an unintelligible or absurd proposition is to be never the more respected for being ancient or strange, for being originally written in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. Besides, a Divinity only intelligible to such as live by it, is, in human language, a Trade; [...]. For the Rabbis, divided at that time into Stoic, Platonic, and Pythagorean Sects, &c. did by a mad liberty of allegory, accommodate the scriptures to the wild speculations of their several masters. They made the people, who comprehended nothing of their Cabalistic observations, believe them to be all profound mysteries and so taught them subjection to heathenish rites, whilst they set the law of God at nought by their traditions. No wonder then if the disinterested common sort, and the more ingenuous among the rulers, did reject these nonsensical superstitions, though impudently fathered upon Moses, for a Religion suited to the capacities of all, delineated, and foretold by their own prophets.

I wish no application of this could be made, in the following discourse, to the case of any Christians; much less to the purer and better sort. Whoever considers with what eagerness and rigor some men press obedience to their own constitutions and discipline (conniving in the meanwhile at all nonconformity to the Divine Law) how strictly they enjoin the observation of unreasonable, unscriptural ceremonies, and the belief of those unfathomable explanations of what they stiffly hold themselves to be incomprehensible; I say, who considers all this, is vehemently tempted to suspect they drive a more selfish design than that of instructing the ignorant, or converting the sinner.

That any should be hated, despised, and molested; nay, sometimes be charitably burned and damned, for rejecting those fooleries superadded, and in many cases substituted to the most blessed, pure, and practicable Religion that men could wish or enjoy, is a matter of astonishment and grief to such as prefer the precepts of God to the inventions of men, the plain paths of Reason to the insuperable labyrinths of the Church Fathers, and true Christian liberty to diabolical and Antichristian Tyranny.

But the common method of teaching and supporting this mystery of iniquity is still more intolerable. How many voluminous systems, infinitely more difficult than the holy Scripture, must be read with great attention by him that would be master of the present theology? What a prodigious number of barbarous words (mysterious no doubt) what tedious and immethodical directions, what ridiculous and discrepant interpretations must you patiently learn and observe, before you can begin to understand a professor of that faculty?

The last and easiest part of your labor will be, to find his sentiments in the Bible, though the holy penmen never thought of them, and you never read that sacred book since you were a schoolboy. But a distrust of your own Reason, a blind veneration for those that lived before you, and a firm resolution of adhering to all the expositions of your party, will do anything.

Believe only, as a sure foundation for all your allegories, that the words of scripture, though never so equivocal and ambiguous without the context, may signify everywhere whatever they can signify: and, if this be not enough, believe that every Truth is a true sense of every passage of scripture; that is, that anything may be made of everything: and you'll not only find all the New Testament in the Old, and all the Old in the New; but, I promise you, there's no explication, though never so violent, though never so contradictory or perplexed, but you may as easily establish as admit. Yet the true religion must necessarily be reasonable and intelligible.

HE STATE OF THE QUESTION.

1. There is nothing that men make a greater noise about, in our time especially, than what they generally profess least of all to understand. I mean the Mysteries of the Christian Religion.

The Divines, whose peculiar province it is to explain them to others, almost unanimously own their ignorance concerning them. They gravely tell us, we must adore what we cannot comprehend: And yet some of them press their dubious comments upon the rest of mankind with more assurance and heat than could be tolerably justified, though we should grant them to be absolutely infallible. The worst of it is they are not all of a mind. If you be Orthodox to those, you are a Heretic to these. He that sides with a Party is adjudged to Hell by the rest; and if he declares for none, he receives no milder sentence from all.

2. Some of them say the Mysteries of the Gospel are to be understood only in the sense of the Ancient Fathers (of the Church). But that is so multifarious, and inconsistent with itself, as to make it impossible for anybody to believe so many contradictions at once. They themselves did caution their readers from leaning upon their authority, without the evidence of Reason: and thought as little of becoming a Rule of Faith to their posterity, as we do to ours. Moreover, as all the Fathers were not authors, so we cannot properly be said to have their genuine sense. The works of those that have written are wonderfully corrupted and adulterated, or not entirely extant: and if they were, their meaning is much more obscure, and subject to controversy, than that of the Scripture.

3. Others tell us we must be of the mind of some particular Doctors, pronounced Orthodox by the authority of the Church. But as we are not a whit satisfied with any authority of that nature, so we see these same particular Doctors could no more agree than the whole herd of the Church Fathers; but tragically declaimed against one another's practices and errors: that they were as injudicious, violent, and factious as other men: that they were for the greatest part very credulous and superstitious in Religion, as well as pitifully ignorant and superficial in the minutest punctilios of literature. In a word, that they were of the same nature and make with ourselves; and that we know of no privilege above us bestowed upon them by Heaven, except priority of birth, if that be one [...]

4. Some give a decisive voice in the unraveling of mysteries, and the interpretation of Scripture, to a General Council; and others to one Man whom they hold to be the Head of the Church Universal upon Earth, and the infallible judge of all controversies. But we do not think such Councils possible, nor (if they were) to be of more weight than the Fathers of the Church themselves [...]

We read nowhere in the Bible of such delegate Judges appointed by Christ to supply his Office: and Reason manifestly proclaims them frontless usurpers [.....]

5. They come nearest the thing who affirm that we are to keep to what the Scriptures determine about these matters: and there is nothing more true, if rightly understood [....]

6. Some will have us always believe what the literal sense imports, with little or no consideration for Reason, which they reject as not fit to be employed about the revealed part of Religion. Others assert that we may use Reason as the instrument, but not the Rule of our Belief.

7. On the contrary, we hold that Reason is the only foundation of all certitude; and that nothing revealed whether as to its manner or existence is more exempted from its disquisitions than the ordinary phenomena of nature.

SECTION I. OF REASON.

CHAP. I. WHAT REASON IS NOT.

2. It appears to me very odd that men should need definitions and explanations of that whereby they define and explain all other things: or that they cannot agree about what they all pretend, in some measure at least, to possess; and is the only privilege they claim over brutes and inanimates. But we find by experience that the word Reason is become as equivocal and ambiguous as any other.

CHAP. II. WHEREIN REASON CONSISTS.

6. When the mind, without the assistance of any other idea, immediately perceives the agreement or disagreement of two or more ideas, as that Two and Two is Four, that Red is not Blue; it cannot be called Reason, though it be the highest degree of evidence: For here's no need of discourse or probation, self-evidence excluding all manner of doubt and darkness. Propositions so clear of themselves as to want no proofs, their terms being once understood, are commonly known by the names of axioms and maxims. And it is visible that their number is indefinite, and not confined only to two or three abstracted propositions made (as all axioms are) from the observation of particular instances; as that "the Whole is greater than any Part," that "Nothing can have no properties."

7. But when the Mind cannot immediately perceive the agreement or disagreement of any ideas, because they cannot be brought near enough together, and so compared, it applies one or more intermediate ideas to discover it: as, when by the successive application of a line to two distant houses, I find how far they agree or disagree in length, which I could not effect with my eye.

Thus from the force of the air, and the room it takes up, I know it has solidity and extension; and that therefore it is as much a body (though I cannot see it) as wood, or stone, with which it agrees in the said properties.

This method of knowledge is properly called Reason or demonstration (as the former Self-evidence or intuition); and it may be defined that faculty of the Soul which discovers the certainty of anything dubious or obscure, by comparing it with something evidently known.

8. From this definition it is plain that the intermediate idea can be no proof where its agreement with both the ideas of the question is not evident; and that if more than one idea be necessary to make it appear, the same evidence is required in each of them. For if the connection of all the parts of a demonstration were not indubitable, we could never be certain of the inference or conclusion whereby we join the two extremes.

CHAP. III. OF THE MEANS OF INFORMATION.

9. The means of information I call those ways whereby anything comes barely to our knowledge, without necessarily commanding our assent. By the ground of persuasion, I understand that rule by which we judge of all Truth, and which irresistibly convinces the mind. The means of information are experience and authority [...]

10. Authority, abusively so-called, as if all its informations were to be received without examine, is either human or divine: human authority is also called moral certitude; as when I believe an intelligible relation made by my friend, because I have no reason to suspect his veracity, nor he any interest to deceive me [...].

11. The authority of God, or divine revelation, is the manifestation of Truth by Truth itself, to whom it is impossible to lie: whereof at large in Ch. 2. of the following Section.
Nothing in nature can come to our knowledge but by some of these four means, viz. the experience of the senses, the experience of the mind, human and divine revelation.

CHAP. IV. OF THE GROUND OF PERSUASION.

12. Now, as we are extremely subject to deception, we may, without some infallible rule, often take a questionable proposition for an axiom, old wives' fables for moral certitude, and human impostures for divine revelation. This infallible rule, or ground of all right persuasion, is evidence; and it consists in the exact conformity of our ideas or thoughts with their objects, or the things we think upon [...].

15. But God... has also endued us with the power of suspending our judgments about whatever is uncertain, and of never assenting but to clear perceptions.We must necessarily believe that it is impossible the same thing should be and not be at once: nor can all the world persuade us to doubt of it. But we need not admit that there's no void in nature, or that the earth absolves an annual course about the sun, till we get demonstrations to that effect.

16. Let us confess our destruction to be of ourselves; and cheerfully thank our kind Disposer, who has put us under a law of bowing before the light and majesty of evidence. And truly if we might doubt of anything that is clear, or be deceived by distinct conceptions, there could be nothing certain: neither conscience, nor God himself, should be regarded: no society or government could subsist.

17. If it should be asked, why assent is denied to true propositions, since evidence necessarily requires it? I answer, it is because they are not made evident: for perspicuity and obscurity are relative terms, and what is either to me may be the quite contrary to another.

If things be delivered in words not understood by the hearer, nor demonstrated to agree with other Truths already very clear, or now so made to him, he cannot conceive them. Likewise if the order of nature and due simplicity be not observed, he cannot see them evidently true or false; and so suspends his judgment (if no affection sways him) where another, it may be, receives perfect satisfaction.

Hence it is that we frequently, with indignation and wonder, attribute that to the stupidity and obstinacy of others, which is the fruit of our own confused ratiocination, for want of having thoroughly digested our thoughts; or by affecting ambiguous expressions, and using such as the other has no ideas to at all, or different ones from ours.

As you will have been able to see it, our high druid is by no means atheistic like the baron d'Holbach his translator (for the Nazarene) but Christian, Protestant leanings, and tackles especially Catholicism without calling into question the very bases of the Jewish or Christian religions
As for the Nazarene let us point out that the English version was bowdlerized by Toland himself, to the great disappointment of d'Holbach perhaps.

Counter-Lay No. 88.

The limits of the human language, at the very least of the Greek language, which is everything but mathematics, were highlighted by the Eleatic School (Parmenides, Zeno).

The unconditional admirers of the Irishman Fenius Farsaid will object nevertheless that with him the Celtic language became a language divinely logical.

SECT. II.

THAT THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL ARE NOT CONTRARY TO REASON.

1. After having said so much of Reason, I need not operosely show what it is to be contrary to it; for I take it to be very intelligible from the precedent Section, that what is evidently repugnant to clear and distinct ideas, or to our common notions, is contrary to Reason: I go on therefore to prove that the doctrines of the Gospel, if it be the Word of God, cannot be so.

But if it be objected, that very few maintain they are: I reply that no Christian I know of now (for we shall not disturb the ashes of the dead) expressly says Reason and the Gospel are contrary to one another. But, which returns to the same, very many affirm, that though the doctrines of the latter Testament cannot in themselves be contradictory to the principles of the former one, as proceeding both from God; yet, that according to our conceptions of them, THEY MAY SEEM directly to clash: and that though we cannot reconcile them by reason of our corrupt and limited understandings; yet that from the authority of divine revelation, we are bound to believe and acquiesce in them; or, as the Church Fathers taught them to speak, to adore what we cannot comprehend.

CHAP. I. THE ABSURDITY AND EFFECTS OF ADMITTING ANY REAL OR SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS IN RELIGION.

2. This famous and admirable doctrine is the undoubted source of all the absurdities that ever were seriously vented among Christians. Without the pretense of it, we should never hear of the transubstantiation, and other ridiculous fables of the Church of Rome; nor of any of the Eastern ordures, almost all received into this Western sink: nor should we be ever bantered with the Lutheran impanation, or the ubiquity it has produced, as one monster ordinarily begets another. And though the Socinians disown this practice, I am mistaken if either they or the Arians can make their notions of "a dignified and creature-God capable of Divine Worship," appear more reasonable than the extravagances of other sects touching the article of the Trinity.

3. In short, this doctrine is the known refuge of some men, when they are at a loss in explaining any passage of the Word of God. Lest they should appear to others less knowing than they would be thought, they do nothing of fathering that upon the secret counsels of the Almighty, or the nature of the thing, which is, it may be, the effect of inaccurate Reasoning, unskillfulness in the tongues, or ignorance of history.

But more commonly it is the consequence of early impressions, which they seldom dare afterwards correct by more free and riper thoughts: So desiring to be teachers of the Law, and understanding neither what they say, nor those things which they affirm, they obtrude upon us for doctrines the commandments of men. And truly well they may; for if we once admit this principle, I do not know what we can deny that is told us in the name of the Lord.

[...] But, overlooking all observations proper for this place, let us enter upon the immediate examen of the opinion itself.

4. The first thing I shall insist upon is that if any Doctrine of the New Testament be contrary to Reason, we have no manner of an idea of it. To say, for instance, that a ball is white and black at once, is to say just nothing; for these colors are so incompatible in the same subject, as to exclude all possibility of a real positive idea or conception. So to say, as the Papists, that children dying before baptism are damned without pain, signifies nothing at all: For if they be intelligent creatures in the other world, to be eternally excluded God's Presence, and the Society of the Blessed, must prove ineffable torment to them:

But if they think they have no understanding, then they are not capable of Damnation in their sense; and so they should not say they are in Limbo-Dungeon, but that either they had no souls, or were annihilated; which (had it been true, as they can never show) would be reasonable enough, and easily conceived.

Now if we have no Ideas of a thing, it is certainly but lost labor for us to trouble ourselves about it: For what I don't conceive, can no more give me right notions of God, or influence my Actions, than a Prayer delivered in an unknown tongue can excite my devotion: if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? And except words easy to be understood be uttered, how shall it be known what is spoken?

Syllables, though never so well put together, if they have not Ideas fixed to them, are but words spoken in the air; and cannot be the ground of a reasonable service, or Worship.

5. If any should think to evade the difficulty by saying that the ideas of certain doctrines may be contrary indeed to common notions, yet consistent with themselves, and I know not what supra-intellectual truths, he's but just where he was. But supposing a little that the thing were so; it still follows that none can understand these doctrines except their perceptions be communicated to him in an extraordinary manner, as by new powers and organs. And then too, others cannot be edified by what is discoursed of them unless they enjoy the same favor. So that if I would go preach the Gospel to the wild Indians, I must expect the ideas of my words should be, I know not how, infused into their souls in order to apprehend me: and according to this hypothesis, they could no more, without a miracle, understand my speech than the chirping of birds; and if they did not know the meaning of my voice, I should even to them be a barbarian notwithstanding I spoke mysteries in the Spirit. But what do they mean by consisting with themselves, yet not with our common notions? Four may be called Five in Heaven; but so the name only is changed, the thing remains still the same.

And since we cannot in this world know anything but by our common notions, how shall we be sure of this pretended consistency between our present seeming contradictions, and the theology of the world to come? For as it is by Reason we arrive at the certainty of God's own existence, so we cannot otherwise discern his revelations but by their conformity with our natural notices of him, which is in so many words, to agree with our common notions.

6. The next thing I shall remark is, that those, who stick not to say they would believe a downright contradiction to Reason, did they find it contained to the Scripture, do justify all absurdities whatsoever; and, by opposing one light to another, undeniably make God the author of all incertitude. The very supposition, that Reason might authorize one thing, and the Spirit of God another, throws us into inevitable skepticism; for we shall be at a perpetual uncertainty which to obey: nay, we can never be sure which is which.

For the proof of the divinity of Scripture depending upon Reason, if the clear light of the one might be any way contradicted, how shall we be convinced of the infallibility of the other? Reason may err in this point as well as in anything else; and we have no particular promise it shall not, no more than the Papists that their senses may not deceive them in every thing as well as in transubstantiation.

To say it bears witness to itself, is equally to establish the Alcoran or the Poran[Puranas: Sacred Sriptures of Hinduism. Editor's note].

And it were a notable argument to tell a Heathen, that the Church has declared it, when all societies will say as much for themselves, if we take their word for it. Besides, it may be, he would ask whence the Church had authority to decide this matter? And if it should be answered from the Scripture, a thousand to one but he would divert himself with this circle. You must believe that the Scripture is divine, because the Church has so determined it, but the Church has this deciding authority from the Scripture.

It is doubted if this power of the Church can be proved from the passages alleged to that purpose; but the Church itself (a party concerned) affirms it. Heyday! are not these eternal rounds very exquisite inventions to giddy and entangle the unthinking and the weak?

7. But if we believe the Scripture be divine, not upon its own bare assertion, but from a real testimony consisting in the evidence of the things contained therein; from undoubted effects, and not from words and letters; what is this but to prove it by Reason?

It has in itself, I grant, the greatest characters of divinity. But it is Reason finds them out, examines them, and by its principles approves and pronounces them sufficient; which orderly begets in us an acquiescence of Faith or persuasion.

Now if particulars be thus severely sifted; if not only the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles be considered, but also their lives, predictions, miracles, and deaths; surely all this labor would be in vain, might we upon any account dispense with contradictions. O! blessed and commodious system, which discharges at one stroke those troublesome remarks about history, language, figurative and literal senses, scope of the writer, circumstances, and other helps of interpretation! We judge of a man's wisdom and learning by his actions, and his discourses; but God, who we are assured has not left himself without a witness, must have no privileges above the maddest enthusiast, or the Devil himself, at this rate.

8. But a veneration for the very words of God will be pretended: this we are pleased with; for we know that God is not a man that he should lie. But the question is not about the words, but their sense, which must be ever worthy of their Author, and therefore according to the genius of all speech, figuratively interpreted, when occasion requires it.

Otherwise, under pretense of Faith in the Word of God, the highest follies and blasphemies may be deduced from the letter of Scripture; as that God is subject to passions, is the author of sin, that Christ is a Rock, was actually guilty of and defiled with our transgressions, that we are worms or sheep, and no men.

And if a figure be admitted in these passages, why not, I pray, in all expressions of the like nature, when there appears an equal necessity for it?

9. [...] A man may give his verbal assent to he knows not what, out of fear, superstition, indifference, interest, and the like feeble and unfair motives: but as long as he does not conceive what he believes, he cannot sincerely acquiesce in it, and remains deprived of all solid satisfaction. He is constantly perplexed with scruples not to be removed by his implicit Faith; and so is ready to be shaken, and carried away with every wind of doctrine.

I will believe because I will believe, that is, because I am in the humor so to do, is the top of Apology.

Such are unreasonable men, walking after the vanity of their minds, having their understandings darkened, being strangers to the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts. But he that comprehends a thing is as sure of it as if he were himself the author. He can never be brought to suspect his profession; and, if he be honest, will always render a pertinent account of it to others.

10. The natural result of what has been said is, that to believe in the divinity of Scripture, or the sense of any passage thereof, without rational proofs, and an evident consistency, is a blameable credulity, and a temerarious opinion, ordinarily grounded upon an ignorant and willful disposition, but more generally maintained out of a gainful prospect.

For we frequently embrace certain doctrines not from any convincing evidence in them, but because they serve our designs better than the Truth, and because other contradictions we are not willing to quit, are better defended by their means.

CHAP. II. OF THE AUTHORITY OF REVELATION, AS IT REGARDS THIS CONTROVERSY.

11. Against all that we have been establishing in this Section, the Authority of Revelation will be alleged with a great show, as if without a right of silencing or extinguishing Reason, it were altogether useless and impertinent. But if the distinction I made in the precedent Section, No. 9. be well considered, the weakness of the present objection will quickly appear, and this controversy be better understood hereafter. There I said revelation was not a necessitating motive of assent, but a mean of information. We should not confound the way whereby we come to the knowledge of a thing, with the grounds we have to believe it. A man may inform me concerning a thousand matters I never heard of before, and of which I should not as much as think if I were not told; yet I believe nothing purely upon his word without evidence in the things themselves. Not his bare authority that speaks, but the clear conception I form of what he says, is the ground of my persuasion.

12. If the sincerest person on earth should assure me, he saw a cane without two ends, I neither should nor could believe him; because this relation plainly contradicts the idea of cane. But if he told me he saw a staff that, being by chance laid in the earth, did after some time put forth sprigs and branches, I could easily rely upon his veracity; because this no way contradicts the idea of a staff, nor transcends possibility.

13. I say possibility; for omnipotence itself can do no more. They impose upon themselves and others, who require assent to things contradictory, because God, say they, can do all things, and it were limiting of his power to affirm the contrary. Very good! we heartily believe God can do all things: but that mere nothing should be the object of his power, the very omnipotence alleged will not permit us to conceive.

And that every contradiction, which is a synonym for impossibility, is pure nothing, we have already sufficiently demonstrated. To say, for example, that a thing is extended and not extended, is round and square at once, is to say nothing; for these ideas destroy one another, and cannot subsist together in the same subject.

But when we clearly perceive a perfect agreement and connection between the terms of any proposition, we then conclude it possible because intelligible: so I understand God may render immediately solid, what has been hitherto fluid; make present beings cease to exist or change their forms; and call those things that are not, as though they were. When we say then that nothing is impossible with God, or that he can do all things, we mean whatever is possible in itself, however, far above the power of creatures to effect.

15... [...] But as secret things belong unto the Lord; so those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children. Yet, as we discoursed before, we do not receive them only because they are revealed: For besides the infallible testimony of the revelation from all requisite circumstances, we must see in its subject the indisputable characters of divine wisdom and sound reason; which are the only marks we have to distinguish the oracles and will of God, from the impostures and traditions of men.

16. Whoever reveals anything, that is, whoever tells us something we did not know before, his words must be intelligible, and the matter possible [Cf. Porphyry. Editor's note]. This rule holds good, let God or man be the revealer. If we count that person a fool who requires our assent to what is manifestly incredible, how dare we blasphemously attribute to the most perfect being, what is an acknowledged defect in one of ourselves? As for unintelligible relations, we can no more believe them from the revelation of God, than from that of man; for the conceived ideas of things are the only subjects of believing, denying, approving, and

every other act of the understanding: therefore all matters revealed by God or man, must be equally intelligible and possible; so far both revelations agree.

But in this they differ, that though the revelation of man should be thus qualified, yet he may impose upon me as to the truth of the thing; whereas what God is pleased to discover to me is not only clear to my reason, (without which his revelation could make me no wiser) but likewise it is always true.

A man, for example, acquaints me that he has found a treasure: this is plain and possible, but he may easily deceive me. God assures me, that he has formed man of earth: This is not only possible to God, and to me very intelligible; but the thing is also most certain, God not being capable of deceiving me, as man is. We are then to expect the same degree of perspicuity from God as from man, though more of certitude from the first than the last.

17. This Reason persuades, and the Scriptures expressly speak it. Those prophets or dreamers were to be stoned to death that should go about to seduce the people from the worship of one God to polytheism (the service of many Gods), though they should confirm their doctrine by signs and wonders.

And though a prophet spoke in the name of the Lord, yet if the thing prophesied did not come to pass, it was to be a rational sign he spoke presumptuously of himself, and not of God.

It was revealed to the prophet Jeremy in prison that his uncle's son would sell his field to him, but he did not conclude it to be the word of the Lord till his kinsman actually came to strike the bargain with him.

The Virgin MARY, though of that sex that's least proof against flattery and superstition, did not implicitly believe she should bear a child that was to be called the son of the Most High, and of whose kingdom there should be no end, till the angel gave her a satisfactory answer to the strongest objection that could be made: nor did she then conclude (so unlike was she to her present worshippers) it should unavoidably come to pass; but humbly acknowledging the possibility, and her own unworthiness, she quietly wished and expected the event.

18. In how many places are we exhorted to beware of false prophets and teachers, seducers and deceivers?

We are not only to prove or try all things, and to hold fast that which is best, but also to try the spirits whether they be of God. But how shall we try? how shall we discern?

Not as the horse and mule which have no understanding, but as circumspect and wise men, judging what is said.

In a word, it was from clear and weighty reasons, both as to fact and matter, and not by a blind obedience, that the men of God of old embraced his revelations, which on the like account we are willing to receive of their hands.

I am not ignorant how some boast they are strongly persuaded by the illuminating and efficacious operation of the Holy Spirit, and that they neither have nor approve other reasons of their faith: but we shall endeavor in its proper place to undeceive them; for no adversary, how absurd or trifling soever, ought to be superciliously disregarded by an unfeigned lover of men and truth.

So far of REVELATION; only in making it a mean of information, I follow Paul himself, who tells the Corinthians, that he cannot profit them except he speaks to them by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine.

CHAP. III. THAT CHRISTIANITY WAS INTENDED A RATIONAL AND INTELLIGIBLE RELIGION; PROVED FROM THE MIRACLES, METHOD AND STYLE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

19. What we discoursed of Reason before, and Revelation now, being duly weighed, all the doctrines and precepts of the New Testament (if it be indeed divine) must consequently agree with Natural Reason, and our own ordinary ideas [...]

And though the evidence of Christ's doctrine might claim the approbation of the Gentiles, and its conformity with the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, with all the marks of the Messiah concurring in his person, might justly challenge the assent of his countrymen; yet to leave no room for

doubt, he proves his authority and gospel by such works, and miracles as the stiff-necked Jews themselves could not deny to be divine. Nicodemus says to him, No man can do these miracles which thou dost, except God be with him. Some of the Pharisees acknowledged no sinner could do such things. And others, that they exceeded the power of the devil.

21..... Now to what purpose served all these miracles, all these appeals, if no regard was to be had of men's understandings? if the doctrines of Christ were incomprehensible, contradictory; or were we obliged to believe revealed nonsense? Now if these miracles be true, Christianity must consequently be intelligible; and if false (which our adversaries will not grant) they can be then no arguments against us.

22. But to insist no longer upon such passages, all men will own the verity I defend if they read the sacred writings with that equity and attention that is due to mere human works: nor is there any different rule to be followed in the interpretation of Scripture from what is common to all other books.

Whatever unprejudiced person shall use those means will find them notorious deceivers, or much deceived themselves, who maintain the New Testament is written without any order or certain rule, but just as matters came into the apostles' heads, whether transported with enthusiastic fits (as some would have it) or, according to others, for lack of good sense and a liberal education.[.....]

24. If any object, that the Gospel is penned with little or no ornament, that there are no choice of words, nor studied expressions in it; the accusation is true, and the Apostles themselves acknowledge it: nor is there a more palpable demonstration of their having designed to be understood by all.

I came not to you, says Paul with excellency of speech, or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of human wisdom, but in demonstration, or conviction of the spirit or mind, and in power or efficacy.

This he speaks in reference to the philosophers and orators of those times, whose elocution, it is confessed, was curious, and periods elaborate, apt to excite the admiration of the hearers, but not to satisfy their Reasons; charming indeed their senses whilst in the Theater, or the Temple, but making them neither the better at home, nor the wiser abroad.

25. These men, as well as many of their modern successors, were fond enough of their own ridiculous systems, to count the things of God foolishness, because they did not agree with their precarious and sensual notions; because every sentence was not wrapped up in mystery, and garnished with a figure: not considering that only false or trivial matters need the assistance of alluring harangues to perplex or amuse.

But they were enemies and strangers to the simplicity of Truth.

All their studies, as we took notice, lay in tickling the passions of the people at their pleasure with bombast eloquence and apish gesticulations. They boasted their talent of persuading for or against anything. And as he was esteemed the best orator that made the worst cause appear the most equitable before the judges, so he was the best philosopher that could get the wildest paradox to pass for a demonstration. They were only concerned about their own glory and gain, which they could not otherwise support, but (according to an artifice that never fails, and therefore ever practiced) by imposing upon the people with their authority and sophistry, and under pretense of instructing, dexterously detaining them in the grossest ignorance.

26. But the scope of the apostles was very different: piety towards God, and the peace of mankind, was their gain, and Christ and his Gospel their glory; they came not magnifying nor exalting themselves; not imposing but declaring their doctrine: they did not confound and mislead, but convince the mind; they were employed to dispel ignorance, to eradicate superstition, to propagate Truth, and reformation of manners; to preach deliverance to captives, i.e., the enjoyment of Christian liberty to the slaves of the Levitical, and pagan priesthoods and to declare salvation to repenting sinners.

27.The New Testament is so full of this language, and its contents are everywhere so conformable to it, that I shall refer the reader to the particular discussion of the whole in the second discourse. But I must remark, in the meantime, that not a syllable of this language is true if any contradictions seeming or real be admitted in Scripture. As much may be said of Mysteries, but we shall talk of that by and by.

CHAP. IV. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED, DRAWN FROM THE PRAVITY OF HUMAN REASON.

28. There remains one objection yet, upon which some lay a mighty stress, though it's like to do them little service. Granting, say they, the gospel to be as reasonable as you pretend, yet corrupt and depraved Reason can neither discern nor receive divine verities. Ay, but that does not prove divine verities to be contrary to sound Reason. But they maintain that no man's Reason is sound. Wherefore I hope so to state this question, as to cut off all occasions of dispute from judicious and peaceable men [...]

31. Supposing a natural impotency to reason well, we could no more be liable to condemnation for not keeping the commands of God, than those to whom the Gospel was never revealed for not believing in Christ: For how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?

Counter-Lay No. 89.

Our high druid, Janus Junius Eoganesius (Sean Eoghain ui Tuathallain) considering the time and the place, preferred, it is obvious, to make many concessions and to be very careful or very moderate in the expression of his thought. He did not want to run up directly against the dominant ideology of his time and the Christians of his country and thus showed himself much less radical than a Mongan or a d'Holbach or a Diderot dealing with the recht aicnid (the natural religion).

Let us not forget that a year after the publication of this book, a man was again hanged at Edinburgh in Scotland for blasphemy against the Holy Trinity or the authority of the Scriptures (Christian sharia). Cf. the tragic history of the young person Thomas Aikenhead.

It is the only case where a certain esotericism even some taqiya, in the expression of the ideas, can be justified.

It is no longer possible any more in certain countries to tell the truth in connection with the religions which go from Judaism to Islam and to fight (with a simple combat of ideas) in order to extricate from them the most of our human brothers. The highly significant, alarming, declaration, of Mouloud Aounit, president of the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Between Peoples), against the blasphemy (on France 3 on January 13, 2005) is in this respect unequivocal. And when it is not the anti-racist laws which condemn you to silence that can be a fatwa (like in the case of Salman Rushdie); even quite simply a good old political assassination in the Medinan way (case of the Dutch movie maker Theo van Gogh); because as regards Islam every danger is far from being warded off considering the behavior of our political, journalistic, religious, or others, elites, about it.

The frightening and terrifying rumor whose an ophthalmologist in the South of France was the victim on October 8, 2010, is the proof of it. Below for example what says the website 24hoursactu.com.

Racist or not the inhabitant of Aix ophthalmologist who was at odds with one of his customers of Moroccan origin? According to the media which delighted with this sensationalist news in brief, it is yes. If the Prosecutor of Aix-en-Provence is listened to, it is rather not... The media like so much to beat the breast to the detriment of the "French" that they are ready to reproduce any rumor where a white French shows racism towards a fellow citizen of another origin (or a foreigner).

All the editorial boards therefore rushed on this sordid news in brief, told on a loop on all the media by the "victim." According to this thirty-five-year-old engineer, the doctor would have said extremely violent (and racist) remarks in connection with him,

"Damned Arab, clear off, you get dirty my office!" the ophthalmologist would have particularly declared. Except that instead of checking their sources as the journalistic deontology would require it, the whole of the French press resumed the story by transcribing again only the point of view of the so-called victim.

What a surprise to hear a few hours later the same doctor denying entirely the accusation of racism and specifying that if there were well dispute between the two men, it is after "the victim" returned twice in his office while he was with other patients [in fact, the own daughter of the man in question that he was examining].

Besides the prosecutor of Aix-en-Provence, contacted by LePost, seems to think that the version of the ophthalmologist is more credible than that of the engineer and that "the reported facts seem unfounded."

Racism or not, the investigation will tell us. But the speed with which the whole of the French media took up the cause of the victim without ensuring the facts in question... is disconcerting ([HTTP://24hoursactu.com](http://24hoursactu.com). Written by Lateigne on October 9, 2010).

In a few hours, including a long time after the factual truth had started to rear its head (an article on hundred: Here TF1 at 13:01), the French intellectuals and journalists therefore made a torrent or a tidal wave of articles taking over without sufficient precautions the accusations of anti-Arab racism or of Islamophobia made against him, including for some people by going as far as giving his name, break on the web, and we could therefore see in the comments or the reactions of the Net surfers, an unprecedented outburst ; not only of crass idiocy, quite thick, and dismaying (it is always the case on the web where prevail much little intelligence, critical general knowledge, and reflection, from the journalists or the regulators, outside the generally accepted ideas of the dominant ideology of the moment of course) but also of racism against the French of non-Maghrebian non-Moroccan non-Arab non-Muslim origin. Hours and hours were needed so that the intellectuals or the French journalists of the Net begin to really realize the inconsistencies of this defamation really incentive to the racial hate towards the French of non-Moroccan , non-Maghrebian, non-Arab, non-Muslim, origin. Along others this one at least. If this doctor did not want really not to look after "nasty Arabs," therefore why had he nevertheless accepted an appointment with such a patient? The great nation that was France is really sick with racism, ill with racism to an extent that is become terrifying.

To teach historical truth even during a course, becomes perilous. A professor of history and geography lived it. To speak about the plundering of Muhammad in a course of history on September 30, 2003, in Courbevoie brought to him an official warning on the disciplinary level (February 2, 2004) and criminal proceedings in justice. But it is mentioned by it in many hadiths even in several verses of the Quran, a sura besides being devoted to this subject, the sura number 8 known as "the spoils of war."

We wonder in what a professor would be blameworthy while speaking about these plundering and carnages. Before warning officially this professor, the French Minister for Education should have read the Quran. He would have known that the taught facts were confirmed by Muslim texts, Quran or hadiths, which leave no doubt remain.

Will have the professor of history who speaks about Christianity to conceal the Inquisition with its stakes, the tortures, the confiscation of the goods of the heretics, the excommunications; and the thousands of books which were burnt? He will have no longer in this case but to teach the catechism instead of the history of Christianity.

The writer Michel Houellebecq, for having said that "the stupidest religion, it is nevertheless Islam" was almost the object of criminal proceedings in justice. To prohibit having a very negative opinion of a religion, it is quite simply to remove the freedom of conscience, thought, and speech. Why a religious ideology could not be considered to less good than another? Or more alienating, dangerous and criminogenic (the number of mental ills killing other human beings to obey their visions is properly terrifying). Why couldn't one consider that all the religions are foolish, stupid or stupider the one than the other? Diderot himself considers well that the natural religion is less stupid than the others.

It is an appreciation which is part of our basic rights, if not the religions will be protected from every criticism, whatever the danger of the ideas that they convey.

But the time having changed as regards Christianity, we can now speak for John Toland; and to add that the Gospels themselves are only a plea in the way of Cicero (see his famous pro Fonteio), a historical novel, a fiction in the way of Shakespeare (of Racine or Corneille in France); and especially not a report or some memories.

As for Peter and Paul, let us admit (sorry John) that there is more truth on their subject in the writings of Porphyry than in this writing of the great Janus Junius Erganesius.

Fortunately that Sean Eoghain ui Tuathallain, like the wine, got better by growing old, but in this work John Toland just like Ramus his famous predecessor, showed himself still very respectful...

- Of the ideas of God that you may have after many centuries of Judeo-Christianity even of Hellenic - Christianity.

- Of Jesus Christ himself.

- Of the apostles.
- Of the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles and of letters or epistles completing the New Testament.

He applied his dry wit ...

- Only against those who were previous to them (the Jews, Moses, the Old Testament).
- Or against those who followed them: the Fathers of the Church, the popes.

So several books and several essays were needed to him so that he becomes truly a "druid" worthy of this name.

On the other hand, we entirely agree with him on a point. The Greek thought is not unsurpassable, the ideas of Plato about God or the Demiurge also leave a lot to be desired (his ideas on the soul are more tempting). Their entry in the Judeo-Christianity become thus Hellenic-Christianity, did not improve the things.

SECT. III THAT THERE IS NOTHING MYSTERIOUS, OR ABOVE REASON IN THE GOSPEL.

CHAP. I. THE HISTORY AND SIGNIFICATION OF MYSTERY IN THE WRITINGS OF THE GENTILES.

4. Credible authors report that the [pagan] priests confessed to the initiated how these mystic representations were instituted at first in commemoration of some remarkable accidents, or to the honor of some great persons that obliged the world by their virtues and useful inventions to pay them such acknowledgments. But let this be as it will, Myein in their systems signified to initiate: Myesis, initiation: Mystes, a name afterwards given the priests, denoted the person to be initiated, who was called an Epopt when admitted; and Mystery the doctrine in which he was initiated.

As there were several degrees , so there were different sorts of mysteries. The most famous were the Samothracian, the Eleusinian, the Egyptian, and those of Bacchus, commonly known by the name of Orgies

5. From what has been said it is clear that they understood by mystery in those days a thing intelligible of itself, but so veiled by others, that it could not be known without special revelation. I need not add, that in all the Greek and Roman authors it is constantly put as a very vulgar expression, for anything sacred or profane that is designedly kept secret, or accidentally obscure. And this is the common acceptation of it still [...].

But many not denying what is so plain, yet being strongly inclined out of ignorance or passion to maintain what was first introduced by the craft or superstition of their forefathers, will have some Christian doctrines to be still mysterious in the second sense of the word, that is, inconceivable in themselves, however, clearly revealed. [...]

6. But if I can demonstrate that in the New Testament mystery is always used in the first sense of the word, or that of the Gentiles, viz. for things naturally very intelligible, but so covered by figurative words or rites, that Reason could not discover them without special revelation; and that the veil is actually taken away; then it will manifestly follow that the doctrines so revealed cannot now be properly called mysteries.

7. This is what I hope to perform in the sequel of this section, to the entire satisfaction of those sincere Christians more concerned for the Truth than the old or gainful opinion.

CHAP. II. THAT NOTHING OUGHT TO BE CALLED A MYSTERY, BECAUSE WE DO NOT HAVE AN ADEQUATE IDEA OF ALL ITS PROPERTIES, NOR ANY AT ALL OF ITS ESSENCE.

20. As for GOD, we comprehend nothing better than his attributes. We do not know, it's true, the nature of that eternal subject or essence wherein infinite goodness, love, knowledge, power and wisdom co-exist but we are not better acquainted with the real essence of any of his creatures.

CHAP. III. THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE WORD MYSTERY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND THE WRITINGS OF THE MOST ANCIENT CHRISTIANS.

30. Mystery is read for the Gospel or Christianity in general in the following passages: Rom. 16. 25, 26. The preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the MYSTERY which was kept secret since the world began; but now is made manifest, and by the writings of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of Faith. Now, in what sense could this mystery be said to be revealed, this secret to be made manifest, to be made known to all nations by the preaching of the Apostles, if it remained still incomprehensible? A mighty favor indeed! to bless the world with a parcel of unintelligible notions or expressions, when it was already overstocked with the acroamatic discourses of Aristotle, with the Esoteric doctrines of Pythagoras, and the mysterious jargon of the other sects of philosophers; for they all made high pretenses to some rare and wonderful secrets not communicable to every one of the learned, and never to any of the vulgar.

By this means the obsequious disciples apologized for all that was found contradictory, incoherent, dubious, or incomprehensible in the works of their several masters. To any that complained of inconsistency or obscurity, they presently answered, O, Sir, the philosopher said it, and you ought therefore to believe it: he knew his own meaning well enough, though he did not care, it may be, that all others should do it too: so the occasions of your scruples, Sir, are only seeming, and not real. [.....]

The eighth and last passage relating to this head is in 1 Tim. 3.16. And without controversy great is the MYSTERY of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory. I will not now insist upon the various readings of these words, nor critically determine which is spurious or genuine. All parties (how much soever they differ about their sense) agree that the gradations of the verse are Gospel-Revelations [.....]

31. We design in the second place to show that certain matters occasionally revealed by the Apostles were only mysterious before that revelation. The Jews, who scarce allowed other nations to be men, thought of nothing less than that the time should ever come wherein those nations might be reconciled to God, and be made coheirs and partakers with them of the same privileges. This was nevertheless resolved upon in the divine decree, and to the Jews was a mystery, but ceases so to continue after the revelation of it to Paul, who, in his Epistles, has openly declared it to all the world. The first passage we shall allege to that purpose is in Eph. 5.1-6,9.

If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward, how that by revelation he made known unto me the MYSTERY (as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the MYSTERY of Christ), which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto us, his holy apostles and prophets, by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel — and to make all men see what the fellowship of the MYSTERY is, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God.

34. I appeal now to all equitable persons, whether it be not evident to any that can read that Mystery in the whole New Testament is never put for anything inconceivable in itself, or not to be judged of by our ordinary notions and faculties, however, clearly revealed: And whether, on the contrary, it does not always signify some things naturally intelligible enough; but either so veiled by figurative words and rites, or so lodged in God's sole knowledge and decree, that they could not be discovered without special revelation. [....]

37. The mention of Scutcheons naturally puts me in mind of those who are little moved with any Reasons, when the judgment of the Primitive Church comes in competition.

The Fathers of the Church (as they love to speak) are to them the best interpreters of the words of Scripture; "And what those honest men," says a very ingenious person, "could not make good themselves by sufficient Reasons, is now proved by their sole authority. If the Fathers of the Church foresaw this," adds the same author, "they were not to be blamed for sparing themselves the labor of reasoning more exactly than we find they commonly did." That truth and falsehood should be determined by a majority of voices, or certain periods of time, seems to me to be the most ridiculous of all follies.

38... But if antiquity can in good earnest add any worth to an opinion, I think I need not fear to stand to its decision: "For if we consider the duration of the world," (says another celebrated writer) "as we do that of man's life, consisting of Infancy, Youth, Manhood, and old Age; then certainly such as lived before us were the Children or the Youth, and we are the true Ancients of the World.

And if experience" (continues he) "be the most considerable advantage which grown persons have over the younger sort, then, questionless, the experience of such as come last into the world must be incomparably greater than of those that were born long before them: for the last comers enjoy not only all the stock of their predecessors, but to it have likewise added their own observations." These thoughts are no less ingenious than they are just and solid. But if antiquity be understood in the vulgar sense, I have no Reason to despair, however; for my assertion too will become ancient to posterity, and so be in a condition to support itself by this commodious privilege of the prescription.

39. Yet seeing I am not likely to live till that time, it cannot be amiss to make it appear that these same Fathers, who have the good luck to be at once both the Young and the Old of the World, are on my side. It is not out of any deference to their judgments, I confess, that I take these pains. I have freely declared what value I set upon their authority in the beginning of this book: but my design is to show the disingenuity of those, who pretending the highest veneration for the writings of the Fathers of the Church, never fail to decline their sentence when it does not suit with their humor or interest.

40. Clemens Alexandrinus has everywhere the same notion of mystery that I have, that the Gentiles had, and which I have proved to be that of the Gospel. In the 5th Book of his Stromates, which merits the perusal of all that are curious to understand the nature of the Jewish and Heathen Mysteries; in that Book, I say, he puts the matter out of all doubt, [....]

41. Everyone knows how the Primitive Christians, in a ridiculous imitation of the Jews, turned all the Scripture into Allegory; accommodating the properties of those animals mentioned in the Old Testament to events that happened under the New. They took the same liberty principally with men, where they could discover the least resemblance between their names, actions, or state of life; and carried this fancy at length to numbers, letters, places, and what not. That which in the Old Testament therefore did, according to them, represent anything in the New, they called the type or mystery of it.

Thus type, symbol, parable, shadow, figure, sign and mystery, signify all the same thing in Justin Martyr. This Father of the Church in his Dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, that the name of Joshua was a mystery representing the name of Jesus; and that the holding up of Moses's hands during the battle with the Amalekites in Rephidim was a type or mystery of Christ's cross, whereby he overcame death, as the Israelites there did their enemies [....]

43. Origen makes the encampments of the Israelites in their journey to the promised land to be symbols or mysteries describing the way to such as shall travel towards Heaven or heavenly things. I need not add what he says of the writings of the prophets, of the vision of Ezekiel, or the Apocalypse in particular: for he is universally confessed to have brought this mystic or allegorical method of

interpreting Scripture to its perfection, and to have furnished matter to all that trod the same path after him [.....]

44. The other Fathers of the first three centuries have exactly the same notions of mystery: And should they in this matter happen to contradict in one place what they established in another (as they ordinarily do in most things) it would only serve to exclude them from being a true rule to others that were none to themselves. But what no small prejudice in our favor is, seeing we have to do with men so apt to forget, they keep very constant to this point: so that I may justly hope by this time the cause of incomprehensible and inconceivable mysteries in Religion should be readily given up by all that sincerely respect Fathers of the Church, Scripture, or Reason.

Counter-Lay No. 90.

Let us fly to the assistance over the centuries, of our friend John Toland, by insisting with him on the fact that the persons guilty of all this cacophony and of this true imbroglio are the Fathers of the Church; who have thought right to translate the Greek word *mysterion* or more exactly to make a double translation of it ; sacrament on a side, but also, as our high druid saw it well :

"Incomprehensible or contrary to the Reason, thing." The Greek word *mysterion* comes from the verb *myo* whose meaning is "to cover, to hide." The Fathers of the Church took this term in every sense. The Greek word was translated into Latin by two terms: *mysterium* and *sacramentum* (mystery, sacraments). The word *sacramentum* expressing more the visible sign (ritual) of the hidden reality, indicated by the word *mysterium*.

In any event the basic problem of Judeo-Christianity and worse still of Islam, the main point of friction, their initial defect , it is that they result in the beginning from revelations peculiar to certain peoples and not from the start intended for all Mankind.

We are far indeed with these three religions from the God of the philosophers. Let us repeat once again they are not reflections drawn from innumerable revelations all over the world and therefore inevitably universal but from the somewhat forced expansion of a single revelation intended at the beginning to one people and not for all men. From where all these contortions of our apostle of the Celtic Christianity in Ireland! D'Holbach had well understood it!

CHAP .IV. OBJECTIONS BROUGHT FROM PARTICULAR TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE,AND FROM THE NATURE OF FAITH ANSWERED.

45. Some men are so fond of mysteries, and it seems they find their account in it, that they are ready to hazard anything sooner than part with them. In the meantime, whether they know it or not, they lay nothing less than their Religion at stake by this conduct; for it is an ugly sign when people profess that what they believe is above the examination of Reason, and will suffer it by no means to come into question: It argues in themselves a distrust of their cause and others conclude, that what dares not abide the trial of Reason, must needs itself be unreasonable at bottom.

46. Notwithstanding these consequences are so obvious, they harden themselves against them, and are not ashamed to bring even Scripture to countenance their assertion. You shall hear nothing more frequently in their mouths than these words of the Apostle, Beware lest any man spoil you by PHILOSOPHY and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Counter-Lay No. 91.

See Paul's epistle to the Colossians, 2.8.

Let us be more tolandian than Toland himself. Let us be ultra-tolandian! Let us be straightforwardly monganian! It is true that in 1697 in Edinburgh the young and unfortunate Thomas Aikenhead was still hanged for blasphemy towards the Trinity and the authority of the Scriptures; but by no means we share the (diplomatic?) leniency or *taqiya* of our high druid towards Saint Paul; who seems to us there to rise up once again purely and simply against any form of philosophy, whatever it is. And philosophies God knows that there was of them and that there will be some of them.

"Since also from these some have presumed to introduce Schools of thought; but" (St Hippolytus of Rome, a theologian still quoted by the today catechisms. Philosophumena, or the refutation of all heresies, 1,2,17 and 1,25,12).

On the other hand, we agree with Toland not to fall on our knees in front of the Greek philosophy. The ideas of Plato (sorry Celsus, forgive us Porphyry) about God or the Demiurge, are also, every now and then, extremely contestable. The Indians Buddha and Shankara did better. But let us return to Toland.

By philosophy is not here understood sound Reason, (as all interpreters agree) but the systems of Plato, of Aristotle, of Epicurus, of the Academics, &c. many of whose principles are directly repugnant to common sense and good morals. Sophistry was never more in vogue than in the days of Paul; and several out of these sects embracing Christianity, found the way to mix with it their old opinions, which they were loath to quit for good and all. The Apostle therefore had weighty grounds to warn his converts not to confound the inventions of men with the doctrine of God.

It appears nevertheless that this good advice was to little purpose, for you'll find the grossest mistakes and whimsies of the Fathers of the Church to have been occasioned by the several systems of philosophy they read before their conversion, and which they afterwards foolishly endeavored to reconcile with Christianity, to the entire ruin almost of the latter, as we shall show in the following chapter [....].

47... When some have advanced the metaphysical nonsense of doting philosophers into articles of faith, they raise a loud clamor against Reason, before whose evidence and light their empty shadows must disappear.

For as in philosophy so in Religion every sect has its peculiar extravagances, and the INCOMPREHENSIBLE MYSTERIES of the latter do perfectly answer the OCCULT QUALITIES of the former. They were both calculated at first for the same ends, viz. to stop the mouths of such as demand a Reason where none can be given, and to keep as many in ignorance as interest shall think convenient. But God forbid that I should impute the like nefarious designs to all that contend for mysteries now, thousands whereof I know to be the best meaning men in the universe. This sophistical or corrupt philosophy is elsewhere in the New Testament styled the wisdom of this world, to which the Greeks were as much bigoted, as the Jews were infatuated with a fancy that nothing could be true but what was miraculously proved so: The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom. But this boasted Wisdom was then foolishness with God, and so it is now with considering men.

48. A passage out of the epistle to the Romans is cited likewise to prove Human Reason not a capable judge of what is divinely revealed. The words are, the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But if these words bespoken of Reason, there can be nothing more false; because Reason does and ought to subject itself to the Divine Law: yet this submission argues no imperfection in Reason, as our obedience to just laws cannot be said to destroy our liberty [.....]

53.It was reckoned no crime not to believe in Christ before he was revealed; for how could they believe in him of whom they had not heard? But with what better Reason could any be condemned for not believing what he said, if they might not understand it? For, as far as I can see, these cases are parallel. Faith is likewise said to come by hearing; but without understanding 'tis plain this hearing would signify nothing, words and their ideas being reciprocal in all languages.

54. The Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not define FAITH a prejudice, opinion, or conjecture, but conviction or demonstration: Faith, says he, is the confident expectation of things hoped for, and the demonstration of things not seen. These last words, things not seen, signify not (as some would have it) things incomprehensible or unintelligible, but past or future matters of fact, as the creation of the world, and the resurrection of the dead, or the belief of some things invisible to our corporeal eyes, though intelligible enough to the eyes of our understanding. This appears by all the examples subjoined to that definition. [...]

59. My next observation is that the Subject of Faith must be intelligible to all, since the belief thereof is commanded under no less a penalty than damnation: He that does not believe, shall be damned. But shall any be damned for the non-performance of impossibilities? Obligations to believe do therefore suppose a possibility to understand. I showed before that contradiction and nothing were convertible terms; and I may now say as much of Mystery in the theological sense: for, to speak freely, contradiction and Mystery are but two emphatic ways of saying nothing. Contradiction expresses Nothing by a couple of ideas that destroy one another, and Mystery expresses nothing by words that have no ideas at all. Contradiction expresses Nothing by a couple of ideas that destroy one another, and Mystery expresses nothing by words that have no ideas at all. [.....]

61. The fourth observation is, that except Faith signifies an intelligible persuasion, we cannot give others a Reason of our hope, as Peter directs us. To say that what we believe is the Word of God, will be to no end, except we prove it to be so by Reason; and I need not add, that if we may not examine and understand our Faith, every man will be obliged implicitly to continue of that Religion wherein he is first educated.

Suppose a Siamese Talapoin should tell a Christian Preacher that Sommonocodom forbade the goodness of his Religion to be tried the light of Reason; how could the Christian confute him if he likewise should maintain that certain points of Christianity were above Reason? The question would not be then, whether Mysteries might be allowed in the true Religion, but who had more right to institute them, Christ or Sommonocodom?

62. My last observation shall be, that either the Apostles could not write more intelligibly of the reputed Mysteries, or they would not. If they would not, then it is no longer our fault if we neither understand nor believe them, for nothing cannot be the object of belief: and if they could not write themselves more clearly (which our adversaries will not suppose) they were so much the less to expect credit from others.

63. But it is affirmed that GOD has a right to require the assent of his creatures to what they cannot comprehend: and questionless, he may command whatever is just and reasonable, for to act tyrannically does only become the Devil. But I demand to what end should God require us to believe what we cannot understand? To exercise, some say, our diligence.

But this at first sight looks ridiculous, as if the plain duties of the Gospel, and our necessary occupations, were not sufficient to employ all our time. But how exercise our diligence? Is it possible for us to understand those Mysteries at last, or not?

If it be, then all I contend for is gained; for I never pretended that the Gospel could be understood without due pains and application, no more than any other Book.

But if it be impossible after all to understand them, this is such a piece of folly and impertinence as no sober man would be guilty of, to puzzle people's heads with what they could never conceive, to exhort to, and command the study of them; and all this to keep them from idleness, when they can scarcely find leisure enough for what is on all hands granted to be intelligible.

64. Others say that GOD has enjoined the belief of MYSTERIES to make us more humble. But how? By letting us see the small extent of our knowledge ? [...] It had been a much better answer that God would thus abridge our speculations, to gain us the more time for the practice of what we understand.

But many cover a multitude of sins by their noise and heat on the behalf of such foolish, and unprofitable speculations.

65. From all these observations, and what went before, it evidently follows that Faith is so far from being an implicit assent to anything above Reason, that this notion directly contradicts the ends of Religion, the nature of man, and the goodness and wisdom of God. But at this rate, some will be apt to say, Faith is no longer faith but knowledge. I answer that if knowledge be taken for a present and immediate view of things, I have nowhere affirmed anything like it, but: the contrary in many places.

But if by knowledge be meant understanding what is believed, then I stand by it that Faith is knowledge [...]

66..... I assert that what is once revealed we must as well understand as any other matter in the world, revelation being only of use to inform us whilst the evidence of its subject persuades us. Then, reply they, Reason is of more Dignity than Revelation.

I answer, just as much as a Greek Grammar is superior to the New Testament; for we make use of Grammar to understand the language, and of Reason to comprehend the sense of that Book. But in a word, I see no need for comparisons in this case, for Reason is not less from God than Revelation; it is the candle, the guide, the judge he has lodged within every man that comes into this world.

67. Lastly, it may be objected, that the poor and illiterate cannot have such a Faith as I maintain [...] But the vulgar are more obliged to Christ, who had a better opinion of them than these men; for he preached his Gospel to them in a special manner; and they, on the other hand, heard him gladly, because, no doubt, they understood his instructions better than the mysterious lectures of their priests and scribes. The uncorrupted doctrines of Christianity are not above their reach or comprehension, but the gibberish of your divinity schools they do not understand. [...] no wonder that it has such little effects now upon men's lives, after it is so miserably deformed and almost ruined by those unintelligible and extravagant terms, notions, and rites of Pagan or Jewish original.

69. When all other shifts prove ineffectual, the partisans of MYSTERY fly to MIRACLES as their last refuge: but this is too weak a place to make any long resistance, and we doubt not of beating them quickly thence with ease and safety. But seeing, for the most part, the state of this controversy is never distinctly laid, I shall first endeavor to give a clear notion of the nature of Miracles and then leave it to be considered whether I have much reason to apprehend any danger from this objection. A MIRACLE then is some action exceeding all human power, and which the Laws of NATURE cannot perform by their ordinary operations.

70. Now whatever is contrary to reason can be no miracle, for it has been sufficiently proved already, that contradiction is only another word for impossible or nothing. The miraculous action therefore must be something in itself intelligible and possible, though the manner of doing it be extraordinary. So for a man to walk safe in the midst of fire is conceivable, and possible too, should anything capable of repelling the heat and flames surround him: but when such a security is not provided by art or chance, but is the immediate effect of supernatural power, then it makes a miracle [.....]

71. No miracle then is contrary to reason, for the action must be intelligible, and the performance of it appears most easy to the author of nature, who may command all its principles at his pleasure.

Therefore all those miracles are fictitious, wherein there occur any contradictions, as that Christ was born without opening any passage out of the Virgin's body; that a head spoke some days after it was severed from the body, and the tongue cut out; with multitudes of this kind that may be met with among the Papists, the Jews, the Bramins, the Mahometans, and in all places where the credulity of the people makes them a merchandise for their priests [...]

74. After what has been already observed, I need not add that all miracles secretly performed, or among that party only to whose profit and advantage the belief of them turns, must be rejected as counterfeit and false; for as such cannot bear the test of moral certitude, so they contradict the very design of miracles, which are always wrought in favor of the unbelieving. But the Papists alone must be witnesses of their own miracles, and never the heretics they would convert by them: nor is their practice less ridiculous in confirming one miracle by

another, as that of Transubstantiation by several millions of other prodigies which may be read in their legends.

CHAP. VI. WHEN, WHY, AND BY WHOM WERE MYSTERIES BROUGHT INTO CHRISTIANITY.

77. [...] The converted Jews, who continued mighty fond of their Levitical rites and feasts, would willingly retain them, and be Christians too. Thus what at the beginning was but only tolerated in weaker brethren, became afterwards a part of Christianity of itself, under the pretense of apostolic prescription or tradition.

78. But this was nothing compared to the injury done to Religion by the Gentiles; who, as they were proselyted in greater numbers than the Jews, so the abuses they introduced were of more dangerous and universal influence. They were not a little scandalized at the plain dress of the Gospel, with the wonderful facility of the doctrines it contained, having been accustomed all their lives to the pompous worship and secret mysteries of deities without number.

The Christians, on the other hand, were careful to remove all obstacles lying in the way of the Gentiles. They thought the most effectual way of gaining them over to their side was by compounding the matter, which led them to unwarrantable compliances, till at length they likewise set up for mysteries.

Yet not having the least precedent for any ceremonies from the Gospel, excepting Baptism and the Supper, they strangely disguised and transformed these by adding to them the Pagan Mystic Rites. They administered them with the strictest secrecy; and, to be inferior to their adversaries in no circumstance, they permitted none to assist at them, but such as were antecedently prepared or initiated.

And to inspire their catechumens with most ardent desires of participation, they gave out that what was so industriously hid were tremendous and unutterable mysteries.

79. Thus lest simplicity, the noblest ornament of the Truth, should expose it to the contempt of unbelievers, Christianity was put upon an equal level with the Mysteries of Ceres, or the Orgies of Bacchus. Foolish and mistaken care! as if the most impious superstitions could be sanctified by the name of Christ. But such is always the fruit of prudential and condescending terms of conversion in RELIGION, whereby the number and not the sincerity of professors is mainly intended.

80. When once the philosophers thought it their interest to turn Christians, matters grew every day worse and worse; for they not only retained the air, the genius, and sometimes the garb of their several sects, but most of their erroneous opinions too. And while they pretended to employ their philosophy in defense of Christianity, they so confounded them together that what before was plain to everyone, did now become intelligible only to the learned, who made it still less evident by their litigious disputes and vain subtleties.

We must not forget that the philosophers were for making no meaner a figure among the Christians than they did formerly among the heathens; but this was what they could not possibly effect, without rendering everything abstruse by terms or otherwise, and so making themselves sole masters of the interpretation.

81. These abuses became almost incurable when the supreme magistrate did openly countenance the Christian Religion. Multitudes then professed themselves of the Emperor's persuasion, only to make their court, and mend their fortunes by it, or to preserve those places and preferments whereof they were already possessed. These continued pagans in their hearts; and it may be easily imagined that they carried all their old prejudices along with them into a Religion which they purely embraced out of politic considerations: and so it constantly happens, when the conscience is forced and not persuaded, which was a while after the case of these heathens.

82. The zealous Emperors erected stately Churches, and converted the Heathen Temples, Sanctuaries, Fanes or Chapels, to the use of Christians, after a previous expiation, and placing the sign of the cross in them to assure their possession to Christ. All their endowments, with the benefices

of the priests, Flamens, Augurs, and the whole sacred tribe, were appropriated to the Christian Clergy. Nay, their very habits, as white linen stoles, miters, and the like, were retained to bring those, as was pretended, to an imperceptible change, who could not be reconciled to the Christian simplicity and poverty. But indeed the design at bottom was to introduce the riches, pomp, and dignities of the clergy which immediately succeeded.

83. Things being in this condition, and the rites of Baptism and the Supper being very sensibly augmented, it will not be amiss before I pass further to lay down a short parallel of the ancient Heathen and new-coined Christian Mysteries. And I shall endeavor so to do it, as to make it evident they were one in nature, however different in their subjects.

84. First their terms were exactly the same without any alteration: they both made use of the words initiating and perfecting. They both called their MYSTERIES myeseis, teleioseis, teleiotika, epopteiai, etc. They both looked upon initiation as a kind of deifying. And they both styled their priests mystagogue, mystes, hierotelestes, etc.

85. Secondly, the preparatives to their initiations were the same. The Gentiles used several washings and lustrations; they fasted, and abstained from women before initiation; though the wiser sort did laugh at those who thought such actions could expiate sin, or appease heaven. But the Fathers of the Church, the admired Fathers, imitated them in all these things; and this was the origin of abstinence from certain kinds of meat, of your mock anniversary fasts, and the clerical celibacy.

86. Thirdly, the Christians kept their Mysteries as secret as the Heathens did theirs. Chrysostom says, "We shut the doors when we celebrate our Mysteries, and exclude the uninitiated. Basil of Cesarea assures us that the esteem of mysteries is preserved only by silence. And Synesius says that the Gentile Mysteries were performed by night, because their veneration proceeds from men's ignorance about them. But why should that deserve blame in others, good Synesius, which you allow in your own party? Or is it that the Christians have a better right to Mysteries than the Gentiles?"

87. Fourthly, the Fathers of the Church were extremely cautious not to speak intelligibly of their Mysteries before unbelievers or the catechumens; whence you frequently meet in their writings with these or the like expressions, The Initiated know, the Initiated understand what I say. And as the Heathens did by proclamation drive away all the profane from their mysteries, so the deacons of the primitive Church cried aloud before the celebration of Baptism, but chiefly of the Supper: "Go out all you Catechumens, walk out all that are not initiated," or something to this effect, for they often varied the form.

Cyril of Jerusalem has a very singular passage to our purpose: Now when catechizing is rehearsed if a catechumen should ask you what the teachers said; tell it by no means to any that is not initiated: for we entrust you with a Mystery, and the hope of the Life to come. Keep this Mystery then to him that rewards: and if any should say unto you, "What harm is it, if I also learn?" Answer him, that so sick persons desire wine: but if it be given to any unseasonably, it makes him frantic, and so two evils happen; both the sick man is destroyed, and the physician is disparaged. Thus if a catechumen hears of those things from any of the faithful, he grows likewise frantic; for not understanding what he heard, he argues against the thing, and laughs at what is said: so the Believer that told it him is condemned as a betrayer of secrets.

Now you being one of us, see that you blab out nothing: not that what we say are not worthy to be spoken, but that others are not worthy to hear them. When you were a catechumen yourself, we never told you what was proposed. But when you have learned by experience the sublimity of those things which are taught, you will then be convinced that the catechumens are unworthy to hear them.

88. Fifthly, the steps and degrees in both their Initiations are the same. The Heathens had five degrees necessary to perfection.
First, common Purgation.
Secondly, more private Purgation.

Thirdly, a liberty of standing among the Initiated.
Fourthly, Initiation.
And, lastly, the right of seeing everything, or being Epopts.

Among the Christians likewise there were five steps by which their penitents were re-admitted to communion.

First they were obliged to remain some years separate from the congregation lamenting their sins, whence this step was called proclausis.

Secondly, they were removed nearer the people, where for three years they might hear the priests, though not see them: this step was therefore called acroasis.

Thirdly, for three years more they might hear and see, but not mix with the congregation: this period was called hypoptosis.

Fourthly, they might stand with the people, but not receive the sacraments: this was their systasis. And, fifthly, they were admitted to communion, which was called methexis.

Counter-Lay No. 92.

This astonishing passage of Cyril of Jerusalem is drawn from his protocatechesis, more precisely from the twelfth of his prologues to the catechetical lectures.

And the penitent ones mentioned by John Toland they are the Lapsi or Christians having failed during certain persecutions (the vast majority, of course, don't be mistaken about this subject, especially that there were all kinds of means of satisfying the requests of the authorities without really abjuring formally (the simplest one being to make the requested sacrifice carried out by a relative remained pagan and to keep the certificate from him: libellus).

On the reality of the persecutions undergone by the most fanatic Christians and on the fate reserved for those who had given up during a while this Christian sharia, the Lapsi, see our essay on, or let us say more exactly, against, Christianity (the notebooks number 30,31,32)..

The new converts likewise, under preparation to participate of the mysteries, were styled catechumens; then competents; and, lastly, Epopts, perfect, or believers: which are the very degrees in name and quality, to which Pythagoras obliged his disciples.

89. I could, draw out this parallel much larger, but here's enough to show how Christianity became mysterious, and how so divine an institution did, through the craft and ambition of priests and philosophers, degenerate into mere paganism.

90. Mystery prevailed very little in the first hundred or century of years after Christ; but in the second and third it began to establish itself by ceremonies.

To baptism were then added the tasting of milk and honey, anointing, the sign of the cross, a white garment, etc. [...] Next were added injection of salt and wine into the mouths of the baptized, and a second unction, with the imposition of hands. But in later times there was no end of lights, exorcisms, exsufflations, and many other extravagances of Jewish, or Heathen original.

From this source sprang not only the belief of omens, presages, apparitions, the custom of burying with three shovels fulls of earth, with other vulgar observations among Christians; but also lights, feasts or Holy-days, consecrations, images, worshipping towards the east, altars, music, dedications of churches, and in them distinct places for the LAITY (as they speak) and the CLERGY: for there is nothing like these in the writings of the Apostles, but they are all plainly contained in the Books of the Gentiles, and was the Substance of their Worship.

91. All the rites of the Supper, too tedious to particularize, were introduced by degrees after the same manner. So by endeavoring to make the plainest things in the world appear mysterious, their very nature and use were absolutely perverted and destroyed, and are not yet fully restored by the purest Reformations in Christendom. But we must not forget how Tertullian himself has acknowledged that for their frequent crossings and other Baptismal rites, for their scrupling to let any of the bread and wine fall to the ground, or to receive them from any hand but the priest's, with the like ceremonies, they had no color of authority from the Scriptures, but only from custom and tradition.

92. Now their own advantage being the motive that put the primitive clergy upon reviving mystery, they quickly erected themselves by its assistance into a separate and politic body, though not so soon into their various orders and degrees.

For in the first two centuries we meet with no subdeacons, readers, or the like; much less with the names or dignities of Popes, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Metropolitans, Archbishops, Primates, Suffragans, Archdeacons, Deans, Chancellors, Vicars, or their numerous dependents and retinue. But in small-time mystery made way for those, and several other usurpations upon mankind, under pretense of laborers in the Lord's vineyard.

93. The decrees or constitutions concerning ceremonies and discipline, to increase the splendor of this new State, did strangely affect, stupefy, and amaze the minds of the ignorant people; and made them believe they were in good earnest mediators between God and men, that could fix sanctity to certain times, places, persons, or actions. By this means the clergy were able to do anything; they engrossed at length the sole right of interpreting Scripture, and with it claimed infallibility, to their body.

94. This is the true origin and progress of the Christian mysteries and we may observe how great a share of their establishment is owing to ceremonies. These never fail to take off the mind from the substance of Religion, and lead men into dangerous mistakes: for ceremonies being easily observed, everyone thinks himself religious enough that exactly performs them. But there is nothing so naturally opposite as CEREMONY and CHRISTIANITY. The latter discovers Religion naked to all the world, and the former delivers it under mystical representations of a merely arbitrary signification.

95. It is visible then that ceremonies perplex instead of explaining; but supposing they made things easier, then that would be the best Religion which had most of them, for they are generally, and may all be made, equally significative. A candle put into the hands of the baptized, to denote the light of the Gospel, is every whit as good a ceremony as to make the sign of the cross upon their foreheads, in token of owning Christ for their master and Savior. Wine, milk and honey signify spiritual nourishment, strength, and gladness; as well as standing at the Gospel betokens our readiness to hear or profess it.

96. In short, there's no degree of enthusiasm higher than placing Religion in such fooleries; nor anything so base as by their fraudulent arts to make the Gospel of no effect, unless as far as it serves a party. But I shall have a better occasion of exhausting the subject of ceremonies elsewhere, I treat of them here only as they made up the Gentile Mysteries, and were afterwards brought in to constitute those of the Christians. But as the vast multitudes of the latter quickly rendered all secret rites almost impossible, so to preserve the Mystery, things were purposely made downright unintelligible, or very perplexed.

In this point our pretended Christians outdid all the Mysteries of Heathens; for the honor of these might be destroyed by discovery, or the babbling tongue of any initiated person but the new mysteries were thus securely placed above the reach of all sense and Reason.

THE CONCLUSION.

Thus I have endeavored to show others, what I'm fully convinced of myself, that there is no MYSTERY in CHRISTIANITY, or the most perfect Religion; and that by consequence nothing contradictory or inconceivable, however made an Article of Faith, can be contained in the Gospel, if it be really the Word of God: for I have hitherto argued only upon this supposition.

Notwithstanding all pretenses that may be made to the contrary, it is evident that no particular instances or doctrines of any sort can serve for a proper answer to this DISCOURSE; for, as long as the reasons of it, hold good, whatever instance can be alleged must either be found not mysterious, or, if it proves a MYSTERY, not divinely revealed. There is no middle way, that I can see.

[...] My next task therefore is (God willing) to prove the doctrines of the New Testament perspicuous, possible, and most worthy of God, as well as all calculated for the highest benefits of man. Some will not thank me, it's probable, for so useful an undertaking and others will make me a Heretic in grain for what I have performed already.

But as it is duty, and no body's applause, which is the rule of my actions; so, God knows, I no more value this cheap and ridiculous nickname of a Heretic than Paul did before me: for I acknowledge no ORTHODOXY but the TRUTH; and, I'm sure, wherever the TRUTH is, there must also be the CHURCH, of God I mean, and not any human faction or policy.

Besides, the imputation of heterodoxy being now as liberal upon the slightest occasions, out of ignorance, passion, or malice, as in the days of Irenaeus and Epiphanius, it is many times instead of a reproach the greatest honor imaginable.

Some good men may be apt to say that, supposing my opinion never so true, it may notwithstanding occasion much harm; because when people find themselves imposed upon in any part of Religion, they are ready to call the whole in question.

This offense is plainly taken, not given; and my design is nothing the less good, if ill-disposed persons abuse it, as they frequently do learning, reason, scripture, and the best things in the world. But it is visible to everyone that they are the contradictions and mysteries unjustly charged upon Religion, which occasion so many to become Deists and Atheists.

And it should be considered likewise that when any, not acquainted with it, are dazzled by the sudden splendor of the Truth, their number is not comparable to theirs who see clearly by its light.

Because several turned Libertines and Atheists when PRIEST-CRAFT was laid so open at the Reformation, were Luther, Calvin, or Zwinglius to be blamed for it? Or which should weigh most with them, these few prejudiced skeptics, or those thousands they converted from the superstitions of Rome?

I'm therefore for giving no quarter to ERROR under any pretense; and will be sure, wherever I have ability or opportunity, to expose it in its true colors, without rendering my labor ineffectual, by weakly mincing or softening of anything.

FINIS.

Counter-Lay No. 93.

It is, however, well what he did. See counter-lay No. 89. Where John Toland has been great is when he points out how much the Greek Mysteries have influenced the practices of nascent Christianity. The situation is simple, one can assume that everything in Christianity that is not certainly of Jewish origin is of pagan origin. We say "certainly" because if we believe the sycophants of this religion since the end of Marcionism, more Verus Israel than them you die (humor)! According to them, even the way they sit on a throne is in line with ancient Jewish practices. Let us be serious! The basic element of Christian Christianity and not Judeo-Christianity, namely the god-man cannot be of Jewish origin, and could only be admitted by minds raised in paganism. We can even add in the Eastern paganism of the time, at Antioch in Syria around 50 of our era for example (see the incident at Antioch opposing within the community of those who follow the way claiming to be in line with the teaching of Jesus, at Antioch in the middle of the first century, those of Jewish origin and still following the law of Moses concerning food, circumcision or the company of goyim; and those from other cultural backgrounds, therefore of pagan origin by definition).

A compromise was painfully worked out between Paul Peter and the first pope of Jerusalem, James (the brother of the Lord). The brothers of the community who are not of Jewish origin are not required to be circumcised, but they must, on the other hand, follow the so-called Noahide laws. But this compromise will not last long because there will soon be a compromise with the compromise: the members of the community of pagan origin will be authorized by Saint Paul to eat anything as long as

it suits them, including idolothye meat. They will only be asked in doing so not to offend Christians of Jewish origin, concretely therefore to abstain from this kind of food when were at the table Christians of Jewish origin who were attached to these food prohibitions (First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 8).

And if it was not Antioch it twill be in cities like Edessa, Ephesus, Laodicea...or Corinth.

On the other hand, as for the rest, our friend Janus Junius Eoganesius Cosmopoli is less convincing. His Christianity not mysterious could very well be a big hit in some Christian circles today who see their church a little especially as a charitable NGO. Charitable therefore politic as a last, or first, resort.

One prefers the John Toland of the Pantheisticon, even if, there too, he is at times disappointing: too much "tolerance" towards Error, or towards "errors" (for if the truth proves to be One, Error is multiple). In short, the most interesting John Toland is perhaps the John Toland of the History of the Druids, given its implicit content, which today would correspond to the state of mind of the so-called Indigenist or cultural decolonization sensibilities.

It is some cultural decolonization but applied to white European peoples.

The unworthy words of Edmund Spenser expounded in his pamphlet entitled "A View of the Present State of Ireland" about the language the customs and the religion of this country (he even contemplates the use of violence to eradicate them), although published a generation later in 1633, are indicative of a mind-boggling state of mind and may well have been the basis of England's colonialist doctrine in the centuries that followed.

Professor Edward Wadie Said, one of the founders of postcolonialism, believed about Ireland that these New English, by demonizing the Old English (Seanghaill) and other such barbarians of this kind, and by constructing by contrast their own identities as "civilized" people, were the precursors of the stereotypes that would be applied to non-European peoples in the nineteenth century.

One cannot go so far as to say that all civilizations or cultures are equal, that the human sacrifice of innocent children is a practice like any other (cultural relativism), but having said that, we can only remind here with strength of the position that can be read between the lines of the History...with an account of the druids by John Toland, perhaps linked to his origins. .

Any man is equal to any man and the Celts are well equal to the Greeks and the Romans, or the Jews...But pray how why are Celtic or Irish superstitions more unfit to be transmitted to posterity than those of Greeks and Romans? As regards superstition classical antiquity is neither more nor less worth than Celtic antiquity...The cosmos and the world of men have no longer a center, and such is well the condition of the assumption of all to an equal dignity.

LAST-MINUTE NEWS.

It is pointed out from everywhere since the publication of our first essays that the personality of John Toland was at least as complex as the destiny of the Irishmen of his time.

John Toland would have been successively even at the same time, Irish, English, Catholic in the Ireland of his youth and in the Prague of his adulthood, Presbyterian in Scotland, a free thinker in Holland, republican and lastly Williamite monarchist in England.

He was often radical with regard to the politics but also republican reactionary and sectarian conservative as regards religion.

Virulent spokesperson of the republican virtues, editor of Cicero, Milton, Harrington, and of the regicide Edmond Ludlow, he was also at the same time an intimate of the royal court in Hanover. He was even accused of being a secret agent of the Prussian monarchy and the lover of the Elector Sophia, who received him one day during several hours, alone and privately, in her living room.

A defender of the English freedoms threatened by the Jacobite plots, Toland was, however, also accused of being a Jesuit disguised in Reformist and of being a traitor.

At the same time established and cosmopolitan, Irishman and not Irishman, Gaelic-speaking and English-speaking, Catholic by birth and Pantheist by choice, a sworn enemy of the religious orthodoxies, but impassioned by their origins, obsessed by the former druidic religion and a champion

of the Reason of the Enlightenment Age; in John Toland the opposites coincide, but don't remove themselves.

Duly noted!

By intellectual honesty towards our faithful readers, we therefore also bring to their attention this fact, but that changes nothing to the respect that we owe to the intellectual who started again the free thought lost since Mongan, and the modern druidism, in 1717.

That proves quite simply that he didn't recognize himself either in Catholicism or in the Reformist religion neither in the monarchism nor in the democracy in the bad sense of the term (demagoguery). And what is sure also it is that if there is a field where he never varied, it is that of his passion for the Celtic and Druidic antiquities. He was always interested there from the beginning of his life until the end.

As for the interest to bring to the esotericism compared to the exotericism (see the Clidophorus part of his famous Tetradymus and some passages of the Pantheisticon), our position to us was always extremely clear. Let us point out it! As a good lawyer of the religions without superstition, we are against any culture of secrecy. The secrecy can be justified only for safety, even of life and death, reasons. In 1697 in Edinburgh for example, the unfortunate Thomas Aikenhead was still hanged for blasphemy towards the Trinity and the authority of the Scriptures.

And in the country of Voltaire still in 1766 the knight of La Barre was tortured for the same reasons.

NB. The charge of blasphemy was replaced today in France by that of incitement to racial hatred.

That certain things are difficult to understand is not a reason to make them still more complicated or obscure; nor to cultivate hypocrisy, by considering the simple members or the interested sympathizers for some half-wits; in order to better deceive them while allocating to oneself, I do not know what mysterious powers or knowledge.

We are besides actually on this point in total adequacy with the John Toland of "For Christianity not mysterious."

As regards the things difficult to understand, it is to us to find the formulation, as Ramus invited us to do it, which will make it possible to put them finally within the reach of the larger possible number of people without running up against their reason.

Everyone cannot understand the theories of Einstein, myself first, who is allergic to figures from my young age; but we must place them at the disposal of everyone and then, eh well, come what may by the grace of God (humor!) If it is not you who will be able to understand them, then it will be your daughter, her husband, the housekeeper or the son of the shepherd in the mountains of your holidays.

Signed: a (generally. We share by no means his admiration for St. Paul for example) always faithful disciple of Janus Junius Eoganisius Cosmopoli: Peter DeLaCrau, druid Hesunertus Cosmopoli.

CONCLUSION: FOR CHRISTIANITY NOT MYSTERIOUS, BUT ALSO FOR JUDAISM NOT MYSTERIOUS, FOR ISLAM NOT MYSTERIOUS, FOR HINDUISM NOT MYSTERIOUS, FOR JAINISM NOT MYSTERIOUS, PURE LAND BUDDHISM NOT MYSTERIOUS... FOR I DON'T KNOW WHAT ISM NOT MYSTERIOUS, AND EVEN FOR DRUIDISM NOT MYSTERIOUS IF IT IS NEEDED (sorry guy!)

APPENDICES.

Christianity unveiled, being an examination of the principles and effects of the Christian religion (New-York 1835).

By Paul-Henri Thiry Baron d'Holbach (German philosopher 1723-1789).

INTRODUCTION.

Of the necessity of an inquiry regarding Religion and the obstacles which are met in pursuing this inquiry.

A reasonable being ought in all his actions to aim at his own happiness and that of his fellow- creature. Religion which is held up as an object most important to our temporal and eternal felicity can be advantageous to us only so far as it renders our existence happy in this world, or we are assured that it will fulfill the flattering promises which it makes us respect another. Our duty towards God, whom we look upon as the ruler of our destinies, can be founded, it is said, only on the evils which we fear on his part. It is then necessary that man

should examine the grounds of his fears. He ought, for this purpose, to consult experience and reason, which are the only guides to truth. By the benefits which he derives from religion in the visible world which he inhabits, he may judge of the reality of those blessings for which it leads him to hope in that invisible world, to which it commands him to turn his views.

Mankind, for the most part, hold to their religion through habit. They have never seriously examined the reasons why they are attached to it, the motives of their conduct, or the foundations of their opinions. Thus, what has ever been considered as most important to all, has been of all things, least subjected to scrutiny.

Men blindly follow on in the paths which their fathers trod ; they believe, because in infancy they were told they must believe ; they hope because their progenitors hoped, and they tremble because they trembled. Scarcely have ever they deigned to give an account of the motives of their belief. Very few men have leisure to examine, or fortitude to analyze, the objects of their habitual veneration, their blind attachment, or their traditional fears. Nations are carried away in the torrent of habits, examples and prejudices. Education habituated the mind to opinions the most monstrous, as it accustoms the body to attitudes the most uneasy.

All that has long existed appears sacred to the eyes of man ; they think it sacrilege to examine things stamped with the seal of antiquity. Prepossessed in favor of the wisdom of their fathers, they do not have the presumption to investigate what has received their sanction. They do not see that man has ever been the dupe of his prejudices, his hopes, and his fears ; and that the same reasons have almost always rendered this inquiry equally impracticable.

The vulgar, busied in the labors necessary to their subsistence, place a blind confidence in those who pretend to guide them, give up to them the right of thinking and submit without murmuring to all they prescribe. They believe they shall offend God if they doubt for a moment, the veracity of those who speak to them in his name. The great, the rich, the men of the world, even when they are more enlightened than the vulgar, have found it their interest to conform to received prejudices, and even to maintain them ; or swallowed up in dissipation, pleasure, and effeminacy, they have no time to bestow on a religion, which they easily accommodate to their passions, propensities, and fondness for amusement. In childhood, we receive all the impressions others wish to make upon us ; we have neither the capacity, experience, or courage, necessary to examine what is taught us by those, on whom our weakness renders us dependent. In youth, the ardor of our passions, and the continual ebriety of our senses, prevent our thinking seriously of a religion, too austere and gloomy to please ; if by chance a young man examines it, he does it with partiality, or without perseverance ; he is often disgusted with a single glance of the eye on an object so disgusting. In riper age, new passions and cares, ideas of ambition, greatness, power, the desire of riches, and the hurry of business, absorb the whole attention of man, or leave him but few moments to think of religion, which he never has the leisure to scrutinize. In old age, the faculties are blunted, habits become incorporated with the machine, and the senses are debilitated by time and infirmity and we are no longer able to penetrate back to the source of our opinions ; besides, the fear of death then renders an examination, over which terror commonly presides, very liable to suspicion.

Thus religious opinions, once received, maintain their ground, through a long succession of ages ; thus nations transmit from generation to generation, ideas which they have never examined ; they imagine their welfare to be attached to institutions in which were the truth known, they would behold

the source of the greater part of their misfortunes. Civil authority also flies to the support of the prejudices of mankind, compels them to ignorance by forbidding inquiry, and hold itself in continual readiness to punish all who attempt to undeceive themselves.

Let us not be surprised then if we see error almost inextricably interwoven with human nature. All things seem to concur to perpetuate our blindness, and hide the truth from us. Tyrants detest and oppress truth, because it dares to dispute their unjust and chimerical titles ; it is opposed by the Priesthood because it annihilates their superstitions. Ignorance, indolence, and passion render the great part of mankind accomplices of those who strive to deceive them, in order to keep their necks beneath the yoke, and profit by their miseries. Hence nations groan under hereditary evils, thoughtless of a remedy ; being either Ignorant of the cause, or so long accustomed to disease, that they have lost even the desire of health.

If religion be the object most important to mankind ; if it extends its influences not only over our conduct in this life, but over our eternal happiness, nothing can demand from us a more serious examination. Yet it is of all things, that, respecting which, mankind exercise the most implicit credulity.

The same man who examines

with scrupulous nicety things of little moment to his welfare, wholly neglects inquiry concerning the motives which determine him to believe and perform things, on which, according to his own confession, depend both his temporal and eternal felicity.— He blindly abandons himself to those whom chance has given him for guides ; he confides to them the care of thinking for him, and even makes a merit of his own indolence and credulity. In matters of religion, infancy and barbarity seem to be the boast of the greater part of the human race.

Nevertheless, men have in all ages appeared, who, shaking off the prejudices of their fellows, have dared to lift before their eyes the light of truth. But what could their feeble voice effect against errors imbibed at the breast, confirmed by habit, authorized by example, and fortified by a policy which often became the accomplice

of its own ruin ? The stentorian clamors of imposture, soon overwhelm the calm exhortations of the advocates of reason. In vain shall the philosopher endeavor to inspire mankind with courage, so long as they tremble beneath the rod of priests and kings.

The surest means of deceiving mankind and perpetuating their errors is to deceive them in infancy. Among many nations at the present day, education seems designed only to form fanatics, devotees and monks ; that is to say, men either useless or injurious to society. Few are the places in which it is calculated to form good citizens. Princes, to whom a large part of the earth is at present unhappily subjected, are commonly the victims of a superstitious education, and remain all their lives in the profoundest ignorance of their own duties, and the true interests of the states which they govern. Religion seems to have been invented only to render both kings and the people equally the slaves of the priesthood. The latter is continually busied in raising obstacles to the felicity of nations. Wherever this reigns, other governments have but a precarious power ; and citizens become indolent, ignorant, destitute of greatness of soul, and in short, of every quality necessary to the happiness of society.

If, in a state where the Christian religion is professed, we find some activity, some science, and an approach to social manners, it is because nature, whenever it is in her power, restores mankind to reason, and obliges them to labor for their own felicity. Were all Christian nations exactly conformed to their principles, they must be plunged into the most profound inactivity. Our countries would be inhabited by a small number of pious savages, who would meet only to destroy each other. For, why should a man mingle with the affairs of a world, which his religion informs him is only a place of passage ? What can be the industry of that people, who believe themselves commanded by their God, to live in continual fear, to pray, to groan, and afflict themselves incessantly ? How can a society exist which is composed of men who are convinced that, in their zeal for religion they ought to hate and destroy all whose opinions differ from their own? How can we expect to find humanity, justice, or any virtue among a horde of fanatics, who copy in their conduct a cruel dissembling, and dishonest God ? A God who delights in the tears of his unhappy creatures, who sets for them the ambush, and then punishes them for having fallen into it ! A God, who himself ordains robbery, persecution and carnage !

Such, however, are the traits with which the Christian religion represents the God which it has inherited from the Jews. This God was a sultan, a despot, a tyrant, to whom all things were lawful. Yet he is held up to us as a model of perfection. Crimes at which human nature revolts have been committed in his name ; and the greatest villainies have been justified by the pretense of their being

committed, either by his command, or to merit his favor. Thus the Christian religion, which boasts of being the only true support of morality, and of furnishing mankind with the strongest motives for the practice of virtue, has proved to them a source of division, oppression, and the blackest crimes.

Under the pretext of bringing peace on earth, it has overwhelmed it with hate, discord and war. It furnishes the human race with a thousand ingenious means of tormenting themselves, and scatters among them scourges unknown before. The Christian, possessed of common sense, must bitterly regret the tranquil ignorance of his idolatrous ancestors.

If the manners of nations have gained nothing by the Christian religion, government?, of which it has pretended to be the support, have drawn from it advantages equally small. It establishes to itself in every state, a separate power, and becomes the tyrant or the enemy of every other power. Kings were always the slaves of priests ; or if they refused to bow the knee, they were proscribed, stripped of their privileges, and exterminated either by subjects whom religion had excited to revolt, or assassins whose hands she had armed with her sacred knife. Before the introduction of the Christian religion, those who governed the state commonly governed the priesthood ; since that period, sovereigns have dwindled into the first slaves of the priesthood, the mere executor of its vengeance and its decrees.

Let us then conclude that the Christian religion has no right to boast of procuring Advantages either to policy or morality. Let us tear aside the veil with which it envelopes itself.

Let us penetrate hack to its source. Let us pursue it in its course, we shall find that founded on imposture, ignorance and credulity, it can never be useful but to men who wish to deceive their fellow creatures. We shall find that it will never cease to generate the greatest evils among mankind, and that instead of producing

the felicity it promises, it is formed to cover the earth with outrages, and deluge it in blood ; that it will plunge the human race in delirium and vice, and blind their eyes to their truest interest and their plainest duties.

REVEALED RELIGION AND NATURAL RELIGION BY DIDEROT (1746).

If in Ireland the law prior to the Christian law (recht litre) is considered to be the natural law or law of nature (recht aicnid), then in Ireland still the religion prior to Christianity should be considered as being the natural religion. Geintlidheacht aicnid could be said in a way, but on condition that we do not misunderstand the meaning to be given to this term, as the great philosopher Diderot saw it, who devoted a whole study to defining the opposition between natural religion and revealed religion, whereas our friend Janus Junius Eoganesius Cosmopoli had merely glossed over the notion of revealed religion. Diderot's essay was published in 1746 under the title "On the sufficiency of natural religion. Let us not forget, however, that the opposition recht aicnid/recht litre in Ireland is false since before Judeo-Christian law there was in Ireland a very elaborate law which was no longer the natural ethology of the first men.

NATURAL RELIGION AND REVEALED RELIGION.

1. Natural religion is the work either of God or of men. Of men, you cannot say, since it is the foundation of revealed religion. If it is the work of God, I ask for what purpose God has given it.

The purpose of a religion originating with God cannot be anything other than the knowledge of essential truths, and the practice of important duties. A religion will be unworthy of God and man if it sets up some other goal. Then, either God has not given men a religion that satisfied the purpose that He should propose, which would be absurd, for that would presuppose either powerlessness or wickedness in Him or man has obtained that which he had need of from Him. Thus, he had no need of other kinds of knowledge than those which he had received from nature. In so far as the means of carrying out duties, it would be absurd that he had refused them; for, of these three things: the knowledge of dogmas, the practice of duties and the power needed to act and believe, the first being lacking, renders the others useless. It is in vain that I am instructed in dogma if I ignore duty. It is in vain that I should know duty if I languish in error or in ignorance of essential truths. It is in vain that the knowledge of truths and duties is given to me if the grace of believing and practicing is refused to me.

2. If natural religion had been insufficient, this would have been, either in itself, or relative to a man's condition. Yet, neither the one nor the other can be said. Its insufficiency in itself will become a fault of God's. Its insufficiency, relative to the person's condition, will suppose that God had been able to render natural religion sufficient, and consequently making revealed religion superfluous, in changing the condition of man; which revealed religion will not allow to say. Moreover, a deficient religion, relative to man's condition, will be insufficient in itself; for religion is made for man; and every religion which does not place man in a state of paying God what God has a right to demand will be defective in itself. And so that no-one will say, God owes nothing to man, it has been able, without injustice, given him that which he desired to take note then that the gift of God will be without a purpose and fruitless; two flaws that we could not pardon in man, and that we should have no need to reproach in God.

Without purpose, because God would not be able to propose to himself to obtain from us, by this means, that which this means cannot produce by itself.

Fruitless, since it is maintained that the means is inadequate to produce any fruit that would be legitimate.

3. Natural religion being adequate if God could not demand of me more than this law did not prescribe; yet God could not demand of me more than this law prescribed, since this law was His own, and that it was only up to him to add or subtract any of the precepts. Natural religion was enough, as much for those who live under this law to be saved, as the Law of Moses to the Jews, and the law of Christianity for the Christians. This is the law that makes up our obligations and we cannot be obligated beyond his commandments. Thus, when natural law had been perfected, it was also as apt for the first men, as the same law improved for their descendants.

4. But, if the natural law were susceptible perfected by the Law of Moses, and this, by the Christian one, why could the Christian law not be equally perfected by another that it has not yet pleased God to share with humanity?

5. If the natural law had been perfected, that is, either by truths that have been revealed to us, or by some virtues about which people were ignorant. Yet, neither the one nor the other can be said. The revealed law contains no moral precept that I don't also find recommended and practiced under the law of nature; thus it has taught us nothing new about morality. The revealed law has not brought us any new truth; for, what is a truth, if not a proposition relative to an object, conceived in terms that present me with clear ideas, and of which I conceive the link? Yet revealed religion has not brought us any such propositions. That which it adds to natural law is five or six propositions that are not more intelligible for me, more than as if they had been expounded in ancient Carthaginian, since the ideas represented by the terms, and the link between these ideas, completely elude me. The ideas represented by the terms and their linkages escape me; for, without these two conditions, the revealed propositions either cease to be mysteries, or will be obviously absurd. Be it, for example, this revealed proposition: the sons of Adam have all been guilty, since birth, of the fault of their first father.

A proof that the ideas attached to the terms and their linkage escape me in this proposition, it is that if I substitute for the name of Adam that of Peter, or of Paul, and that I say: children of Paul have all been guilty, since birth, of the fall of their father, the proposition becomes an absurdity agreed as such by everyone. From there it follows, and from that which precedes it, that revealed religion has taught us nothing about morality; and that which we have of it regarding dogma is reduced to five or six unintelligible propositions, and which, by consequently, cannot [asser] for truths by relation to us. For, if you have taught a peasant, who knows no Latin, and less... still of logic, the verse *Asserit a, negat e, verum generaliter ambae*, would you believe you brought him a new truth? Is it not from nature of all truth to be clear and to have a clarifying power? Two qualities that revealed propositions cannot have. It can't be said that they are clear; either it is clear that they contain a truth, but they are obscure; from which it follows that all that which is inferred therefrom shall share in this same obscurity; for the consequence can never be more luminous than the starting point.

6. That religion is best, which best agrees with the goodness of God. Yet, natural religion agrees with the goodness of God; for one of the traits of the goodness of God, is to be no acceptor of persons. And the natural law is therefore among all the laws that which tallies best with this characteristic.

7. That religion is best, which best agrees with the justice of God. Yet natural religion or law, of all religions, is that which best agrees with justice. Men, presented at God's judgment bar, will be judged by some law; yet, if God judges men by the natural law, it will be no injustice to any of them, since they are born all together with her. But, by some other law by which it judges them, this law not being in any way universally known like the natural law, there will be among men those with whom it will deal unjustly. From which it follows, either that it will judge each man according to the law that he will have sincerely admitted, or which, if he judges them all by the same law, which cannot be except by natural law, which, known equally by all, has equally obligated them all.

8. I said, moreover: there are men whose lights are so restricted that the universality of sentiments is the sole proof that is brought to them; from which it follows that the Christian religion is not made for such men, since it does not have this evidence for them, and consequently they are, either dispensed of following any religion, either forced of casting himself into natural religion, of which all men confess their goodness.

9. Chinese, what religion would be the best if it were not yours? The natural religion! Muslims, what worship would you embrace if you abjure Muhammad? Naturalism! Christians, which is the true religion if it is not the Christian one? The religion of Jews! And you Jews, which is the true religion if Judaism is false? Naturalism! However those, Cicero and the author of the *Thoughts* continue, to whom is unanimously granted the second place, but who themselves don't concede for as much the first to somebody, deserve this one incontestably. Deserve incontestably the first place.

10. The most sensible religion of the very opinion of the reasonable beings is that which treats them most as reasonable beings, since it proposes to them nothing to be believed which is above their reason or which is not in conformity with it.

11. The religion which must be embraced preferably with every other, is that which offers the most numerous divine characteristics; however the natural religion is, among all the religions, that which offers the most numerous divine characteristics; since there is no divine characteristic in the other worships which is not recognized in the natural religion, and it has some that the other religions do not have, the immutability as well as the universality.

12. What is a sufficient universal grace? That which is granted to all the men, with which they can fulfill their duties and sometimes therefore fulfill really. What can be in these conditions a sufficient religion, if not the natural religion, the religion which is given to all the men, and with which they can always fulfill their duties, and sometimes therefore fulfill them really? From where it ensues that not only the natural religion is not insufficient, but that strictly speaking it is the only religion which is sufficient; and that it would be infinitely more absurd to deny the need for a sufficient universal religion than that of a universal sufficient grace. However, we cannot deny the need for a universal sufficient grace without throwing ourselves in insurmountable difficulties, nor consequently that of a sufficient universal religion. The natural religion is the only one which has this characteristic.

13. If the natural religion is insufficient in some way that it can be, then it will ensue automatically one of two things ; either then that it was never observed accurately by somebody who did not know another one; or that men who would have observed accurately the only law which was known by them will have been punished; or will have been rewarded. If they were rewarded, that means therefore that their religion was sufficient, and since it had the same effect that the Christian religion, it would be then absurd that they were punished. It would be to contain every probity in a little piece of land, or to punish very honest people.

14. Among all the religions, that should be preferred, whose truth has more proofs for it, and least objections. Yet, natural religion is in this case, for no objection can be raised against it, and all the religionists agree in showing this truth.

15. How can its inadequacy be proven?

1) Because this inadequacy has been recognized by all other religionists;

2) because the knowledge of the truth and the practice of the good have been lacking in the wisest naturalists.

False proofs !

As for the first part, if all the religionists are agreed upon the point of its inadequacy, apparently the naturalists are not members of them. And in this case, the naturalism is simply in the situation of the religions which are considered as being the best by those who profess them and not by the others.

As for the second part, moreover, it is constant that since the revealed religion, we don't know better because of that neither God nor our duties.

- God, because all his intelligible attributes were already discovered, and that the unintelligible ones do not add something to our enlightenments.

- Ourselves, since the knowledge of ourselves referring all to our nature and our duties, our duties all are already expounded in the writings of the pagan philosophers.

- And our nature is always unintelligible, since what they claim to teach us more than philosophy is contained in propositions either unintelligible, or absurd when they are heard , and that nothing is concluded anything against the naturalism from the behavior the naturalists. It is as easy to say that the natural religion is good and that its precepts were badly observed, as it is to say that the Christian religion is true, though there is an infinity of bad Christians.

16. If God owed to men no sufficient means to fulfill their duties, at least it was not allowed to him by his nature to provide them a bad one. However an insufficient means is a bad means; and the first distinctive characteristic of a good means, it is to be sufficient. But if the natural religion was absolutely sufficient, with the universal grace or enlightenment, to support a man in the way of the probity, who will ensure me that never happened? The revealed religion is besides there only for best; it is not absolutely necessary and if it happened sometimes for a naturalist to persist in the good, he will have

deserved his salvation infinitely better than the Christian, since they will have done one and the other the same thing, but the naturalist with infinitely less help.

17. I ask that it will be sincerely said to me, which of the two religions is easiest to follow, the natural religion or the Christian religion? If it is the natural religion, as I believe nobody can have doubts about that, Christianity is therefore only a burden added on, and is no more a grace; it is only a very difficult to means do what we could do easily before. If it is answered that it is the Christian law, here how I argue. A law is all the more difficult to follow that its precepts are more and more inflexible. But, it will be said, the helps to follow them are also stronger compared with the helps of the natural law, and the precepts of these two laws therefore differ only by their number and their difficulty. But, will I answer, who made this calculation and this compensation? And do not answer me that it is Jesus Christ and his Church; because this answer is good only for a Christian and I am not yet so: the challenge is to make me such. And it will not be through solutions which suppose me such. Therefore seek for others.

18. All that began will have an end, and all that did not have a beginning will not end. However Christianity began; however Judaism began; however there is not one religion on the earth whose date is not known, except the natural religion, therefore only it will not end whereas all the others will pass.

19. Among two religions that one must be preferred which is most obviously from God and the least obviously from men. However the natural law is obviously from God, and it is infinitely more obviously from God than it is obvious that the other religions are from men; because there is no objection against its divinity, and it does not need evidence; instead that thousand objections are made against the divinity of the others and that they need an infinity of evidence in order to be admitted.

20. The preferable religion is that which is most similar to the nature of God; however the natural law is most similar to the nature of God. It is in the nature of God to be stable; however stability is better appropriate for the natural law than to any other; because the precepts of the other laws are written in books prone to all the events of the human things, to abolition, to misinterpretation, to obscurity, etc. But the religion written in the heart is safe from all the vicissitudes; and if it has to fear some revolution from prejudices and passions, these disadvantages are common with the other worships; who besides are exposed to sources of changes existing only in them.

21. Either natural religion is good, or it is evil. If it is good, that is enough; I don't ask any more. If it is evil, your own sins by its foundations.

22. If there were some reason to prefer the Christian religion to the natural religion, it is that one would offer to us on the nature of God and Man enlightenment which we would be missing in this one. However that's not the case because Christianity, instead of clearing up, gives rise to an infinite multitude of darkness and difficulties. If it is asked to the naturalist: why Man suffers in this world? He will answer: I do not know. If the same question is asked to a Christian, he will answer by an enigma or nonsense. Which of both, of ignorance or mystery, is the best, or rather isn't the answer of both the same one? Why Man suffers in this world, it is a mystery, the Christian says, it is a mystery, says the naturalist: because notice that the answer of the Christian equates to this ultimately. If he says: Man suffers because his ancestor sinned, and that you would insist: and why the nephew faces the stupidity of his ancestor? He adds: it is a mystery. Eh! I would I retort to the Christian, why did you not say like me initially: if Man suffers in this world without it appears that he has deserved it, it is a mystery? Don't you see that you explain this phenomenon like the Chinese explain the floating of the world in the airs? "Chinese, what supports the world? - A big elephant. - And the elephant, which supports it? - A tortoise. - And the tortoise? - I do not know. - Eh, my friend, leave there the elephant and the tortoise and confesses initially your ignorance."

23. That religion is preferable to all, which can only do good and never evil. Yet, such is the natural law engraven on the heart of all men. They will find all in themselves the disposition of confessing such, in place of the other religions, founded on principles foreign to humanity and, consequently, necessarily obscure for the greater part among them, cannot fail to stimulate dissension. Moreover, that which

experience confirms ought to be admitted. Yet, it is from experience that the religions claimed to be revealed have caused a thousand misfortunes, armed mankind one against another, and tainted all countries with blood. Yet natural religion has never brought even a tear from mankind.

24. It is necessary to reject a system which spreads doubts about the universal benevolence and the constant equality of God. However the system which calls the natural religion insufficient throws doubts about the universal benevolence and the constant equality of God. I see only in him a being filled with limited affections and changeable in his intentions; restricting his benefits to a small number of creatures, and disapproving in a time what he ordered in another one. Because if men cannot be saved without the Christian religion, God becomes towards those to whom he refuses it a father as hard as a mother who would deprive of her milk a part of her children. If on the contrary the natural religion is enough, all returns to normal, and I am forced to conceive the ideas more the sublimes of the benevolence and the equality of God.

25. Could it not be said that all the religions of the world are simply branches of natural religion, and that the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims, and even the Pagans are only heretical and schismatic naturalists?

26. Couldn't one claim consequently that the natural religion is the one really remaining? Because take a religionist whoever he is, question him, and soon you will realize that in the dogmas of his religion, there are some of them either that he believes less than the others or even that he denies; without counting a multitude, or that he does not understand or that he interprets in his way. Speak with a second sectarian of the same religion, reiterate on him your test, and you will find him exactly in the same situation as his neighbor; with this difference only that what this one does not doubt at all and that he admits, it is precisely what the other denies or suspect; that what he does not understand, it is what the other believes to understand very clearly; that what troubles him is it that about which the other does not have the least difficulty; and that they do not agree more on what they judge deserving or not an interpretation. However, all these men gather at the foot of the same altars; you would believe them to agree about everything, and they agree almost about nothing. So that if all sacrificed reciprocally the propositions about which they disagree, they would be almost naturalists, and transported from their temples in those of the deist.

27. The truth of the natural religion is to the truth of the other religions, what the witness that I make to myself is to the witness that I collect from others; what I feel to what is said to me; what I find written in myself by the hand of God, to what vain, superstitious and lying men, engraved on the sheet or the marble; what I bear in me and meet similarly everywhere and what is out of me and changes with the climates; what neither time nor men didn't abolish and will never abolish and what passes like a shade; what brings closer the civilized man and the barbarian, the Christian, the infidel and the pagan one; the worshipper of Jehovah, Jupiter and God; the philosopher and the people, the scientist and the ignoramus, the old man and the child, the wise and the foolish one; and what moves away the father from the son, arms the man against the man, exposes the scientist and the wise one to the hatred and the persecution from the ignoramus or from the fanatic; from time to time waters the earth with the blood of all of them; what is considered as holy, majestic and sacred by all the peoples on earth, and what is cursed by all the peoples on earth, excepted one; what made the anthem, praise and canticle rise towards the heaven of all the areas in the world, and what gave birth to anathema, impiety, execrations and blasphemy; what depicts to me the universe as one and immense family whose God is the first father; and what represents me the men divided by handful or possessed by a crowd of savage and harmful demons; who put the dagger in their right hand and the torch in their left hand, and who incite them to murders, devastation and destruction.

The centuries to come will continue to embellish one of these pictures with the most beautiful colors, whereas the other continues to be darkened by the blackest shadows. Whereas the human worships continue to be dishonored in the mind of men by their extravagances and their crimes; the natural religion, itself, will be crowned with a new glare. It will fix perhaps finally the eyes of all the men and will bring back them therefore to its feet. Then, they will form only one society, they will banish away from them these odd laws which seem to be imagined only to make them malicious and guilty; they will listen to nothing any more but the call of nature and they will begin again finally to be virtuous.

O mortals! How did you manage to make you as unhappy as you are?
Vauvenargues. London. 1770.

Editor's note. It goes without saying that what Diderot writes to us there about Christianity is also valid *mutatis mutandis* for the Islam which is not more a religion of love than the Christianity or the Judaism of which this author paints to us a vitriolic portrait. As for the natural religion or ethology of great apes, we should not overestimate either the intrinsic kindness.

APPENDIX No. 3.

ESOTERICISM AND INTELLECTUAL SWINDLE.

Reflection in connection with the two-fold philosophy of the pantheists according to John Toland: the one external or popular, adjusted to a certain extent to the prejudices of the people including its pseudo-elites, the other Internal or philosophical, altogether conformable to the nature of things, and therefore to Truth itself.

The historian of esotericism, probably more than every other, is confronted with counterfeits of all kinds. The reason for being of this is obvious for any researcher who leads his work sufficiently far, to the extent that that we can even wonder whether such is not the goal of the aforementioned historian (to reveal certain embezzlements).

Such a state of things is rather easily understood. The implicit thesis of esotericism is the assertion of the aptitude of Man to transcend the splits and barriers, in time as in space. To support such ambitions, the esotericist is brought to forge documents likely to show that one can despise such limitations; but these documents are generally counterfeited or consist of comments, concerned with an interpretation or a gloss, leading to doubtful conclusions.

It would be appropriate, moreover, that the researcher specialist in esotericism is not himself victim of an approach consisting in establishing, gradually, by means of an extremely vague and redundant criteriology, links between very different knowledge; thus leading to a shallow esoteric complex web, object of picturesque anthologies or very heterogeneous reviews.

As in any canon, a certain syncretism reigns, joining together disparate documents and which removed themselves mutually in the beginning, but ending up resembling and resorting to the same terminology.

A critical approach of this canon therefore could be by no means an apologetic consisting in showing the cogency of them. It is never desirable that the historians make themselves the accomplices of those who gathered in their own way various documents. Why not found a "esoteric criticism" as there exists a biblical criticism? Aren't the very word of esotericism or that of occultism, precisely used to found - if not to mask - such a "canonical" project?

It is derisory in the specialists of Nostradamus, still in the 21st century, to seek invariants in such a heterogeneous and heterogenous set; which is by no means the work of one man and of one time, even less only of one political-religious camp. To seek for the common denominator succeeds, in this case, only to bowdlerize the discourses of the ones and others to reduce them to a matter disconnected from the social-political stakes which divide the societies.

In this sense, the plural "esoteric currents" seems infinitely preferable, but why in this case publish works entitled "esotericism" or "... on the esotericism" in the singular?

One is still less excusable when the set considered is obviously heterogenous, what the case is of what is presented, precisely, with the name - in the singular - of esotericism, and which includes besides, among others, the aforementioned corpus. In this case, indeed, any attempt of seeking for invariants in such a set appears chimerical. One can, of course, mention such attempts coming from certain circles to confer to them some unity under the name of occultism or of esotericism. But the researcher specialist in esotericism, if he may describe this play does not have to be a dupe of it. Just like the historian must be able, facing a corpus, to detect the genuine one and the forgery, the fabricated, the pseudo-, he must also be able to detect what possibly concerns an esoteric distortion. Let us say that the forgery relates to the signifier while the esotericism deals with the signified; and sometimes they cohabit as in the case of the prophecy of St. Malachy about the popes where there are simultaneously production of counterfeits with regard to the basic text but also esotericism on the level of its interpretation; because the prophetic speech is more in the commentators (cf Father Alfonso Chacon or Ciacconius 1530-1599) than in the text itself. Sorry John! In fact, sometimes, the esoteric one is to produce the text that it will have to interpret, just like it constitutes treatises which explain how one changes the exoteric one into esoteric one; what is singularly the case for the astrological literature where is taught how to transmute an astronomical observation into a divinatory approach.

APPENDIX No. 4.

GREEK MYTHOLOGY: ATLANTIS.

One of the main clues (in the absence of evidence) of the existence of an advanced civilization (on the technological and scientific level) in "prehistory"; is the mention in the Hindu sacred texts of flying machines (called "vimana") and of wars, making think of cases of use of means of mass destruction (weapons of the nuclear type for example).

Mahabharata.

Book 8 (the book of Karna).

Section 34. Seeing the energies of the entire universe united together in one place. O sire, the gods wondered [...] Then he called Nila Rohita (Blue and Red or smoke)- that terrible deity robed in skins - looking like 10,000 Suns, and shrouded by the fire of superabundant energy, blazed up with splendor. [...] The illustrious deity, that Lord of the universe, then drawing that celestial bow, sped that shaft which represented the might of the whole universe, at the triple city.

Book VII (the book of Drona).

Section 1. It was an unknown weapon, and iron thunderbolt, a gigantic messenger of death, which reduced to ashes the entire race of the Vrishnis and Andhakas.

Submerged kingdom, Eden forever lost, imposing civilization that the gods decided to destroy, is Atlantis a legend or a reality? For thousands years, the myth of Atlantis holds a strange fascination on the minds of men. Innumerable scientific or pseudo-scientific theories located Atlantis a little everywhere on the sphere. It is in its manner the mirror of our dreams of progress and of our fears, that of the destruction by excess of science and technology.

Plato. Timaeus 24. Solon. "For it is related in our records how once upon a time Athens stayed the course of a mighty host, which, starting from a distant point in the Atlantic Ocean, was insolently advancing to attack the whole of Europe, and Asia to boot. For the ocean there was at that time navigable; for in front of the mouth which you Greeks call, as you say, 'the pillars of Heracles,' (Strait of Gibraltar) there lay an island which was larger than Libya and Asia together." Such is the beginning of the story of Plato concerning Atlantis. It appears in the remarks reported by one of the 4 interlocutors of this famous Dialogue, a man named Critias, who attributes the main information to the famous Athenian intellectual and statesman Solon, who himself would have learned it in Egypt. The name Atlantis was mentioned only by Plato.

Plato who tells us more in another of his dialogues, the Critias, in which we find besides the same four interlocutors.

"Poseidon, receiving for his lot the island of Atlantis, begat children by a mortal woman, and settled them in a part of the island, which I will describe.

Looking towards the sea, but in the center of the whole island, there was a plain which is said to have been the fairest of all plains and very fertile. Near the plain again, and also in the center of the island at a distance of about fifty stadia, there was a mountain not very high on any side.

In this mountain there dwelt one of the earth-born primeval men of that country, whose name was Evenor, and he had a wife named Leucippe, and they had an only daughter who was called Cleito. The maiden had already reached womanhood, when her father and mother died; Poseidon fell in love with her and had intercourse with her, and breaking the ground, inclosed the hill in which she dwelt all round, making alternate zones of sea and land larger and smaller, encircling one another.....And so on."

Since the 16th century the delirium and mystifications attached to this fantastic disappeared continent, sunk in the flood, abound. And there is indeed matter to dream! Statues out of gold and ivory, buildings covered with gold, silver, tin, copper and orichalcum, with concentric channels dug to isolate the capital from the sea, and a whole system of irrigation canals, bridges and tunnels. A spring of warm water and another of cool water feed this marvelous country which the Atlanteans share with exotic animals like the elephants. This idyllic picture that Plato provides to us represents a fabulous

country for us, but even more fantastic for a Greek of the 5th century before our era. The temples are those of the classical time, with in more "a strange barbaric appearance" and gigantic internal statues covered with precious substances. In this splendid country of Atlantis, the temples were all as marvelous and splendid. To discover these treasures, many pseudo-archeologists sought and seek still Atlantis. One can in fact find it only through a good knowledge of Plato and of his familiar universe. There is no doubt indeed that Atlantis comes from the imagination of a Greek of the 4th century before our era who describes a world made up of elements borrowed from the Greek civilization and others from the barbarian universe. Only, as it is an imaginary and marvelous continent which is to mark the minds, all is there magnified, exaggerated, and the water, matter eminently invaluable for a Greek, is there as abundant as gold, the silver or the orichalchum. Besides we find in this myth the recollections of another legend drawn this time from a quite real history, that of the Cretan civilization.

With the strange account of Plato, the posterity inherited an enigma. Since then, innumerable theories located Atlantis a little everywhere on the sphere. In the middle of the Atlantic, in the Azores, in Iceland, in the Caucasus, in Palestine, in Sweden, in Spain, in Great Britain, in Flanders, the English Channel, in North Africa, in the Benin, etc. This ferment is in fact rather late, the Platonic exegesis having been started again in Italy in the 15th century.

The assumptions relating to the site of the catastrophe are multiplied during the period which ranges from the 16th to the 18th century. We pass from the Atlantis in the Azores to that in the Spitsbergen (Baillly mayor of Paris), while a nationalist vision of the myth authorizes many scientists to appropriate again the lost island. We realize that the ideological and philosophical concerns condition largely the allegedly "scientific" reading of the scholars.

In the 19th century, the spreading of the myth extends to America, where it causes a real passion. In 1882, Ignatius Donnelly publishes "Atlantis, the Antediluvian world." The first book with large circulation on the subject, this work becomes to some extent the "Bible of Atlantis." Donnelly is the first to defend the theory according to which Atlantis would have been the center of our current civilization, presenting the idea that the Atlanteans were the creators of our arts and of our sciences. Donnelly underlines the resemblance between the civilizations of the New world and of the Old one, to conclude that civilization was born in Atlantis. After having studied the legends of the Flood common to the cultures of all the people, Donnelly denies categorically the possibility of resemblance due to chance. Such a universal tradition offers only one possible explanation: a single origin: Atlantis. Diffusionism was born, causing a new wave of overall, uninterrupted Atlantomania since then. Atlantology develops, parallel to other sciences, known as "new," and under the impulse of the archeological discoveries. Various scientists, whether they are archeologists, botanists, geologists, paleontologists, zoologists or speleologists, insert their specialty - or project their unconscious passion - on the mysteries of Atlantis. In one century, the needle of the Atlantean compass loses its head; it moved from the west towards the east. Let us wager that from now to a few decades, the needle of the compass will move once again towards new shores, following some new theory. All that in the name of science. Science and pseudo-science often intersected were sometimes superimposed, even confused.

APPENDIX No. 5.

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW ABOUT ATLANTIS.

“Zeus, the god of gods, who rules according to law, and is able to see into such things, perceiving that an honorable race was in a woeful plight, and wanting to inflict punishment on them, that they might be chastened and improve, collected all the gods into their most holy habitation, which, being placed in the center of the world, beholds all created things. And when he had called them together, he spoke as follows...” Unfortunately for us the rest of the *Dialogues of Critias* has been lost.

Atlantis did not mark the contemporaries of Plato, for the simple reason that they knew that it was an imaginary continent. In Antiquity, the mythical island par excellence was rather the *Panchaia* of Euhemerus (Greek author of the end of the 4th century) which contained the truth on the identity of the god-or-demons. Mentioned by the pagan and Christian authors, *Panchaia* sinks then into the oblivion to be replaced, in the Westerner imagination, by Atlantis. Then (and undoubtedly for the reason) that the texts of Plato were very little known, even of those who flattered themselves to be scholars, the passage of the *Timaeus* relating to Atlantis left its mark in the minds. Since beautiful works of science fiction were created starting from this text by Plato. The myth lived an autonomous existence and slowly derived towards the territories of imagination or heroic fantasy; in the works of some great writers, but more especially, alas, in that of “fakirs of archeology,” pseudo-archeologist graduate of the great international university of the occult and weird sciences.

Atlantis was mentioned only by Plato.

Aristotle (*On the heavens*, 11,14) and Strabo (*Geography* II, 3,6) only refer to it to stress that it is a myth. But many of our contemporaries do not have the virtues of the critical mind and of prudence, and prefer to be lost in the depths of their imagination or phantasms. The orichalcum medal comes down undoubtedly to the very British James Churchward, colonel by profession, who, in 1931, brought out his tablets another disappeared continent. Mu was thus offered to the stunned world which discovered that Atlantis was not the only disappeared continent to haunt the minds of the professors Nimbus. From now on, it was possible to add all the possible insertions in this story to form more than one continent, a true entity with infinite ramifications. The war between Atlantis and Mu, with nuclear machines, is, of course, responsible for the disappearance of these two civilizations. Sometimes the survivors, buried in some dark mysterious cave, cease meditating about human miseries in order to spy us thanks to their supersonic machines that we name vulgarly, ignorant poor devils that we are, flying saucers.

The total of the knowledge ascribed to the Atlanteans is to match to the astronomical quantity of buffooneries written on their subject. The colonels, especially those who are retired, did much for true and real science, that which does not need evidence to assert itself in all its colossal magnificence. The baloneys of these sorcerer's apprentices always give rise to smiling if it is not that sometimes their very spiced sauce turns sour. The stories attached to Atlantis and Mu are often used as a pretext for moral considerations on the decline of Mankind. Worse, they can be used as a framework, with many details as erudite as invented, to give a scientific endorsement to the whole, to hyper nationalist, even racist, theories. In 1940, the Atlanteans appear as some blue-eyed Scandinavians, with a athletic tall body, who had lit the world with their enlightenment so much more brilliant than that of the other peoples or races. Since Atlantis derives from an ethnocentric madness to another. Thus, in the 1980s, a pseudo-archeologist affirmed, with supporting scientific evidence, that the European standing stones and dolmens are the remains of this splendid civilization, Atlantis; which extended from Great Britain to the Isle of Malta and was quite higher than Egyptian civilization, poor Eastern reflection of the great Europe.

APPENDIX No. 4.

THE FAKE OF THE PERENNIAL TRADITION.

“ HERE AND HEREAFTER FIRST PART -BELIEFS AND UNBELIEFS- RELIGION AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE.

All the great religions had two sides: the one hidden, the other apparent; the one revealing the spirit, the other exhibiting its form or letter. But beneath their material symbolism there lurks a profound meaning.....

At the heart of these myths and dogmas one must seek the generating principle which lent them force and life. And there lies the unique, the superior, the immutable doctrine of which human creeds are but the imperfect and transitory presentment, contrived to fit epoch and circumstance.

The great reformers, founders of religions and indefatigable tillers of the mind: Krishna, Zoroaster, Hermes, Moses, Pythagoras, Plato, Jesus, all who have aimed at bringing the sublime truths to which they owed their own elevation, within the comprehension of the people. Disciples, however, have not always been able to preserve intact their master's heritage. The masters gone, their teachings have been marred and rendered almost unrecognizable by successive alterations. The average man is little apt to perceive the things of the spirit, and thus religions soon lost their primitive purity and simplicity. The truths they bring were veiled under the details of a gross and material interpretation....

But it will be a resurrection of that same secret doctrine which was known of yore, but with this difference: it will now be broader and within the reach of all....

Superior, final and universal shall be this religion of the future: all ephemeral and conflicting creeds, but too long a source of strife and division, will flow into its broad bosom as rivers lose themselves in the sea.” Leon Denis 1) “Here and hereafter.”

What this author states are doctrines common to esotericism, occultism and even spiritism, to which Leon Denis is attached. The basic reasoning is the following one: the differences even the oppositions, between the religions, result from deviances compared to the teaching of an enlightened founder, who has, himself, drawn immediately from the source of any wisdom.

Another argument is added: the distinction between the esoteric teaching – reserved to an elite of comrunos or initiates, and which would be the same one in all the religions -; and the exoteric teaching - suggested to the mass of ignoramuses, and which would be different according to the religions. Many authors do not fail to add that this distinction is subtly maintained by the clergy, which thus keeps the peoples in their power by depriving them of the true liberating knowledge.

1. Editor's note. However all is not so absurd in what this author wrote and whose language is admirable, poetic, animated by a deep breath, and in this perfectly comparable to the Renan of the Prayer on the Acropolis, though in a more mystical way, but whom we knew better inspired (see some of his many works).

In the program of many neo-druids of today nevertheless there is still the rediscovery of this hypothetical Perennial Tradition. Of which there exist no serious historical evidence except a certain number of coincidences due to OUR COMMON HUMAN NATURE. Such an assumption is an absolute fake, although it still fills the contemporary bookstores. This nonsense was definitively buried by Mircea Eliade. What the study of the myths and the legends proves it is, not the existence of a perennial tradition, but the existence of a common thought (or having many comparable important points) generated by the specificity of the human nature.

The work of the French traditionalist John Hani (born in 1917) can be the subject of the same remarks. Hani constantly refers to the “Tradition,” but without specifying more the notion of it. Without ever outlining the definition of it! While pretending to leave to comrunos or initiates the possibility of foreseeing what it is necessary to understand with this imposing word; which seems to express the concept of a transcendent essence impenetrable to the mind and singularly to the European and Western mind; definitively bogged down, according to him, in the ruts of the exoterism and the miserable stains of realism; involved as to its own ruin in the search and the preoccupation for an objectivity which, because it could never be but relative, makes the followers of the “Great Tradition” feel ashamed and appears to them worthy of contempt and even of reprobation.

However, if we may justifiably consider to be admissible, significant and adequate, the notions of "Tradition" and "traditional society"; it can be only after having recognized in the tradition a continuity of the mental attitudes, of the ways of viewing the world and the great symbolic representations in which such or such human community, such or such culture, such or such civilization, do not cease perceiving, through the metamorphoses and the renewals of its historical evolution, the figures and the forms of its being and of its destiny; or, if you prefer, the components and inalienable characteristics of its identity.

It is then natural that the components of this Tradition are attached to the sacredness, at least in their majority if not in their totality.

But is the way in which they are attached to it, the same one in all the civilizations? Is the connection established everywhere according to the same mode of integration of the elements, to the whole? Can the vision of the world which underlies the structure of the latter be identical to itself everywhere? It is acceptable to doubt it. Because, if we can reasonably admit that there exists in each civilization a sacred Tradition, it is by no means obvious that it is universal. The "sociology of the long term," that precisely whose results show the existence of mental continuities, could not lead indifferently on all the cultural areas to the same phenomenological descriptions. In other words, we don't find everywhere the same schemas of thought. We have then good reason to speak of the Chinese Tradition; of the Indo-European Tradition and of the Indo-European Traditions (Celtic, Indian, Germanic, Greek, etc.), of the Egyptian Tradition, of the Tradition of Israel, of the various African Traditions, of the respective Traditions of the Indian civilizations in America; without forgetting the Japanese Tradition nor all others, less known; and to prefer thus the phenomenon to the noumenon and the substance to the idea; in order to establish the bases of an operational methodology of the social sciences.

On the other hand, within the same culture, we are inevitably led to note, in spite of important historical changes, even of apparently fundamental upheavals; the remanence of mental schemas peculiar to this culture, and that, at times extremely distant from each other. The continuity of the most various manifestations of the Indo-European trifunctional thought provides the so to speak typical example of it, continuity today highlighted well by the medievalists and other historians disciples of Dumezil.

Moreover, even when certain traits of mentality or certain cultural bases remain comparable from a civilization to another and let themselves be gathered in a common typology; some differences can still emerge between them according to the civilization in which they come to be integrated, so much in their internal structure than because of the role and of the place which are respectively conceded to them. In a word, if it is really present and alive, the Tradition is not universal. So is it to fear that the concept with which John Hani proceeds results from a Platonic analysis and apprehension, favorable to the abusive and fallacious generalizations.

We would be in return tempted to support the contrary thesis: the more traditional a fact is and the less it is likely to be universal.

The presupposition of the perennial tradition was also taken over by the French Rene Guenon: the religions represent only the exoteric form, adapted to the local conditions, of an immutable and universal metaphysical core. This single substrate, more intellectual, would be accessible only to the comrunos (initiated) alone. The people would need only a kind of elementary book made of images, of gestures and of a minimal catechism. For the elite alone, the contemplation of the principles would be appropriate. Such a position has the advantage of shrugging off without examination all the doctrinal divergences which become simple contingent dressings. What Rene Guenon presents to us as the supra-religious core in question is in reality only the monism professed by one of the tendencies of the Vedanta. This Hindus monism is, of course, a remarkable philosophy, but the reality is that it diverges on many points as well from the explicit Buddhist teaching as from the Jewish, Muslim and Christian theologies; which, at the cutting edge of their speculations and not only in the popular rites, admit a personal God or Demiurge transcending his creation. Except assuming that all the high clergies of the planet were in reality manipulators abandoning the people to his "external" devotions and keeping for themselves the Truth in the name of superior interests (which ones?), such a picking up assimilation is hardly maintainable.

An attentive examination of the whole of the historically known religions, far from bringing back to a single core, detects several of them. We will leave on one side the crowd of pantheons which, even among the animistic hunters-gatherers, are always soul/minds of the bush secondary compared to the higher God-or-demon; either they are called later angels, gods or aspects of the deity, they are still intermediate entities. Even in the gardens of Findhorn (hippies or ecologist community settled in

Scotland since 1962) people don't mix up the "garden pea deity" with the Source of the universe. But by focusing on the irreducible cores, we find in fact at least four different metaphysics.

- The monism with "conscious" substrate, where the impersonal Being is spiritual energy (Plato, Upanishad, Plotinus, Taoism).
- The monism with "unconscious" substrate where the impersonal Being is a material or proto-material energy (Buddhism, materialism).
- The personal God or Demiurge, with his variants (the monotheism of the God-or-demon sensed as male, monotheism of the Goddess-or-demoness, divine Couple, Christian Trinity).
- The two antagonistic Principles (spirit/matter, light/darkness, good/evil).

Let us admit that all the monisms can merge as Guenon affirms it, whether they are local variants or levels of understanding ; there would remain still the opposition between this impersonal substrate of the universe and the personal God-or-demon, as with the dualistic tension, impossible to reduce to monism without denaturing them completely.

If there existed a "perennial tradition" behind all the religions and all the metaphysics, it could be only in the coexistence of these three cores of blossoming; i.e., once more, in the universal possibilities of the Man but it should also be admitted that no "path" presents them together as a horizon of our awareness. The debate on their hierarchization lasts and continues since the construction of the great civilizations, without winner nor overcome, except locally - and the overcome reform here, elsewhere, otherwise...

The dualistic gnoses which were the big losers in the history of the religions, having never been able to resist effectively the expansion of Buddhism , of Christianity then of Islam, according to the cultural areas; always reappeared as minority movements, either protesting like the Armenian Paulicianism or the Catharism, or elitist and erudite, as in certain branches of the German Naturphilosophie during the 19th century.

It is striking to note that these three types of awareness also match the three fundamental time experiments. The monist experience requires timeless time, the dualism underlies or is underlain by the cyclic alternation of light and darkness, the free relation with the personal God-or-demon generates linear historicity.

We are in the presence of a fundamental anthropological data, of a triple relation to the world which seems fallen deep within human nature/culture; and which, however, could not be lived in a triadic way, but would be lived collectively in an exclusive and contentious way. Each one of these cores thus tending towards rejecting the others and to impose itself by absolutizing itself.

If these three lived cores are irreducible, but intrinsically form part of the spiritual potential of Man, isn't the mistake to seek to hierarchize them? Beyond the conscious or unconscious, practices and the choices, of each School, could it exist an including theology able to bear them together? But the metaphysical oppositions of transcendence and immanence, being and becoming, personal and impersonal God or Demiurge; male and female, one and multiple, impassibility and compassion or anger (given) revelation and search for the sense (conquered on uncertainty); will not be able to be solved by a choice between the polarities, but by their setting in prospect. In this sense, the including theology such as we have just specified it, still remains at the horizon of a research who would not be, let us repeat it, a syncretism mixing the remains of the past; but a subtle answer to the questionings renewed in our time, by the confrontation of the metaphysical cores or of experience . In short, the "perennial tradition" is a hope rather than a legacy.

Handwritten notes found by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau.

First note. In connection with Rene Guenon. In any event, we can only question the degree of real intelligence of whoever converts, SINCERELY AND FREELY, to Islam (we do not speak here about out the case of Napoleon in Egypt).

Second note. We may wonder whether the "personalist" design (God or the Demiurge is a person) is not ultimately only some ANTHROPOMORPHIZED monism (God or the Demiurge is an impersonal being).

God or the Demiurge is an impersonal being, but personally felt, and as a person precisely, by some people.

APPENDIX No. 7

REMINDER ABOUT THE TRUE PERENNIAL TRADITION.

Jung left, in the psychoanalysis, an original step and erudite approach of the study of the psyche, more open than the Freudian theories centered on sexuality. In particular, he will contribute his entire life to a representation of the human psyche in its complexity, in other words, in its relations to society, myths, archetypes, but also spirituality. For Jung, the unconscious consists of all that is not conscious. He falls therefore in line with the School of Peter Janet.

The conceptual model created by Janet integrates about all the data of the normal and pathological psychology, child psychology, ethnology and animal psychology. There is, so to speak, no psychological phenomenon which does not find its place there and is not enlightened there in a way or another. Perception, emotions, memory, language, belief, personality, everything receive a new interpretation, particularly the psychopathology of delirium and hallucinations. The principal pieces of this immense synthesis are expounded in a series of works: *The Mental State of Hystericals: A Study of Mental Stigmata and Mental Accidents*; *Psychological Healing*; *From anxiety to ecstasy*...without speaking about many important articles.

The initial work of Janet, that of the psychological automatism, of the analysis and theory of the neuroses, is on the verge of all modern dynamic psychiatry. The theory of the schizophrenia of Bleuler is a development of the theory of the neuroses by Janet. Bleuler himself declared that "the term autism, designates in a positive way what Janet calls the loss of the sense of reality." Jung, who took the classes of Janet in Paris in 1902-1903, gave the name of "complex" to what Janet called "subconscious fixed idea," and he introduced this word of "complex" into the psychoanalysis with the success that we know. Adler, with a praiseworthy sincerity, declared that his theory of the "inferiority complex" was a development of what Janet called "feeling of inadequacy."

Within the unconscious, Jung distinguishes the personal unconscious, which intersects about, what, at the beginning of the 20th century, Freud understood by the unconscious one (Freud, then some Freudians, have, since, significantly made this concept evolve); and the collective unconscious, or impersonal unconscious, which is the a priori data of the human soul/mind, its share of objective reality. It is consisted of archetypes.

In *Totem and taboo*, Freud proposed an assumption: the permanence of the unconscious structures, in the various cultures of mankind suggests that there exists a level of suprapersonal unconscious, the collective unconscious.

Jung takes over this assumption and develops it considerably, to the extent besides that his name is invariably associated with the theory of the collective unconscious. Not only we would be then justifiably in a situation of speaking about a personal unconscious, by which the trace of our past lasts, but it is all the past of Mankind which is also in a certain way still in us. For Jung, we are born already endowed with a collective unconscious linked with the transmission of heredity from a generation to the other. The unconscious, such as it is expressed in the dream, is not only a production relating to the personal history of the subject, it is also linked to an antiquated memory which remains in us. At the bottom of our memory ancestral figures sleep which were deposited by the psychic experience of the Mankind which was previous to us. Thus, the werewolf, the witches, the fairies, etc. are what Jung calls the archetypes of the collective unconscious. In the collective imagination of the myths, legends, and traditional tales, we constantly find these archetypes. For Jung, they really do not result from an acquisition, but are present in an innate way in the unconscious, on a supra-personal level. They are primordial emanations from the soul which reappear in the imagination.

The starting point of Jung was, as in what regards his design of the personal unconscious, pragmatic. He came to the assumption of the collective unconscious following the study of certain "non-Freudian" dreams "in which was staged a symbolic system which overflowed obviously the personal history of the one who had lived the dream.

If these dreams had been made by a wizard in a tribe of primitive men; we could reasonably suppose that they represent variations of the philosophical topics of death, resurrection or final restoration, on the origin of the world, the creation of man or the relativity of values. But it is not the case. They are the dreams of an eight-year-old child who has only very little culture. The interpretation of these

dreams is extremely complicated if we want by force to bring back them to a personal level. They indisputably contain collective images, similar to a certain extent to the doctrines taught to young people, in the primitive tribes, at the time of their initiation. It is not a question for all that, to deny entirely the elements of the personal unconscious of the little girl; simply, what Jung wants to show, it is that the oneiric images are drawn from an innermost depth which goes quite beyond the personal unconscious. The theory of the collective unconscious has at least three main interests.

1. It shows us that the psychic distinction between the individual and the collective is illusory. It would be vain to seek to apply to the psyche the structure of the individualistic ego, cut off from the others and cut off from Mankind. The more one goes down in the unconscious, the more one moves away from the individual to join the universal one. Nothing exists separately.

2. It also tends towards showing that there exists an antiquated memory of the vital one, on which the mindset of the Man is built. It seems that the contemporary studies of neurophysiology confirm largely the views of Jung, while they disconfirm the assumptions of Freud on sexuality.

3. The theory of the collective unconscious makes it possible to bridge the psychology and the study of mythologies. Without going as far as to rule in favor of the soil goy "of the Norman wooded countryside" Michel Onfray (the twilight of an idol...); the fact is that the unconscious is nevertheless a catch-all concept, it is in reality a name which is put on experiments, disparate and complex structures that it would be necessary to distinguish and name separately. What is essential, it is that the interpretation of the unconscious phenomena cannot be reduced to one reading (that of Freud). The complexity of the psyche is such as there is always a place for several interpretations. It is all the same astonishing that this opening given by Jung to the psychoanalysis did not receive a more important reception to the University. Why put Freud in the canonical list of the authors of the program of philosophy and not Jung? Jung has a philosophical culture richer than that of Freud and his views deserve to be studied seriously. It is aberrant that the concept of unconscious is publicly reduced to what Freud could say about it. It is quite as aberrant to reduce psychology to the only Freudian psychoanalysis. According to the media, and the university intelligentsia, we have too often the impression that outside the Freudian psychoanalysis, there is no salvation for psychology. On the contrary we will say: it is when we have buried the devotion for Freud that we discover the great richness of the psychology and particularly, of the modern psychology.

Lastly, what should never be forgotten, it is that the ground on which the psychologist works, remains that of the awareness. Jung says it clearly, psychology is not a black magic, it is a science. That of the conscience and its data, it is also the science of unconscious, but secondly only, because the unconscious, is not directly accessible, precisely because it is unconscious.

Always following concrete experiments, Jung was led to reconsider the concept of unconscious in an original direction. If the events are dependent each other in Nature, it is possible that there exists, on a fundamental level, a non-separation of the events. An infinite correlation of the events. If, in the wakefulness experiment, the ego feels cut off from the rest of the universe (duality), irremediably separated from the others and from the world; the soul, itself, can remain very well in relation with all that is (unity), and even be subtly informed of an event which emerges within Nature, through mind. Jung was led to this assumption by a whole series of dreams, either his own, or those which were told to him by his patients.

The merit of Jung was not to throw all that in the large bag of the paranormal in order to get rid of it and to try rationally to give an account of it starting from a theory of the unconscious.

We already saw higher that the dream, even personal, is not necessarily turned towards the past, but can very well bear an intention turned towards the future. Here the problem is more delicate, because it is no longer only an intention turned towards a future, but a line of events in Nature. Jung supposes that in the sleep, in the dream, the individual borders are dissolved. In the sleep, I am All, because there is no longer a "self" which separates from the whole. The unity awareness is only present, without the duality of the day before. It is possible then that the infinite correlation of the events comes to resound in the unconscious of the dreamer to give rise to an oneiric production; either to inform the subject in dream on what takes place while he sleeps, or to give a premonition of a possible direction of the future. The subject which leaves the dream returns in the duality of the day before, in the separation, but if he has to remember the dream, he notes the resonance of the unity of Nature. He is placed in a comprehension of Nature where the chance is excluded, where the coincidence is a natural law, because Nature is one. Thus, what we arrange, in this register, in the nebulous category of the paranormal, would become here a natural phenomenon and there would be in the theory of the unconscious a possibility of rationally giving an account of things which are usually considered to be occult. It is a clear difference of behavior between Freud and Jung. Freud hated the paranormal, it is one of the reasons why he had given up hypnosis. Jung is very open-minded who does not fear to

venture in what the traditional scientific representation regards as irrational. He makes it as a scientist, besotted by explanation who intends not to deny records from the start, even if that raises important difficulties. He is concerned by taking seriously a possible experiment, but rather not very common it is true, for the majority among us. Today, the views of Jung interest much the physicists who work on the quantum mechanics. Indeed, the quantum mechanics postulate the existence of a unified field from where the elementary particles would emerge and on the level of the unified field, it seems necessary to postulate that the infinite correlation of the events is present. The assumption which emerges then is that the unified field of the physicists and the supra-personal unconscious of the psychologists are perhaps two ways of representing the same reality, the pure Intelligence which is subjacent in any phenomenality.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A reader dissatisfied by the fact that we have based ourselves on Freud for a radical criticism of the Judeo-Christian neurosis (the future of an illusion, totem and taboo, what a paradox!) forwarded to us the following text about this author.

Jacques Benesteau, *Freudian Lies*, history of a traditional misinformation, Mardaga Editions, Belgium. Do not expect from me an even allusive, summary of this work that you must read, as a matter of urgency, but some subjective remarks, I who thought for a long time: go for Lacan, but Freud... a solid value to be venerated like Spinoza. For a long time no longer much to learn on the carnival-like and humorous buffooneries, impostures and dishonesty of Lacan and of the horde of his followers But who goes beyond this minimal knowledge too often presented as a vulgate? Who wonders profoundly about the circumstances in which the basic contents of the psychoanalysis were discovered, imagined, created, fantasized or shown, by Freud and his disciples? What did it really occur in the years constituent of the psychoanalysis, starting from what real experiments it resulted ?

I affirm that, even as regards psychoanalysis, the right to think, to criticize and to philosophize by oneself and for oneself, belongs to every honest man and a fortiori to whoever scientific claims. Who is neither psychoanalyst, neither psychotherapist, neither psychoanalyzed, nor doctor, has the right, in connection with the psychoanalysis, that the Reformists claimed for the reading of the sacred texts: the right of examination and the freedom of interpretation. Our country has no reason to scorn this right. I exempt myself to quote the mine of information placed at the disposal of the reader, such as this "grotesque and serious story of the letters to Fliess," the passing through hypnosis, suggestions, cocaine or occultism; of which only some specialists are able to appreciate the consequences. Let us take the discovery of the Oedipus complex. For Freud, this repressed memory proved to be the key of all the neuroses; and corner stone of the psychoanalytical thought. It was postulated on the base of data acquired during his period of self-analysis. The crucial data (note the use of the singular in this case) was his memory of a long voyage by train with his mother, whereas he was two years old; during which, according to the different reports that he gives of that it, he saw her naked either in dreams or in reality, following what he developed a sexual desire towards her. A few weeks after the recovering of this almost memory, he concluded that the male sexual love towards the mother was a universal event of the first childhood. This enormous leap was thereafter confirmed, Freud claimed, by direct observations on children, particularly during analyzes. The data, however, are absent. With a simple fragment of misty memory, he had created a true smoke screen. His rare stories of case it is possible to assess are disconfirmed, obviously, by wanderings of method. Esterson shows how, on several occasions, Freud got mixed up his own assumptions about what occurred in the unconscious of his patients with the later report of their memories; and how, in the long run, he came from there to represent a version espousing his. It is consequently little surprising that, as a first-year student of medicine or a hypochondriac establishing his diagnoses, Freud noted that all of which he remembered about his consultations, could confirm his theories. This circularity, by which the theory created facts validating the theory automatically, should have been obvious for whoever read his publications, but a very few noticed it.

In his innovative study, Thornton showed how, in the time of his fundamental discoveries, Freud had moved away from the science of his time. His theories were in a decisive way influenced by the German Naturphilosophie; it is particularly obvious in his *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (Entwurf einer Psychologie) pseudo-scientist and obsolete; by the insane numerology concepts and mystical imaginations of Wilhelm Fliess, that Freud described in turn such "Kepler of biology" or as his Messiah, and from which he drew the idea of the childhood sexuality; and by his own cocaine addiction. The Fliessian roots of the Freudian thought were removed a long time by the keepers of the tomb controlling the records and the continual recycling of a handful of alleged standard cases created the illusion of an enormous clinical database.

Few psychoanalysts are as openly psychopaths as Lacan, the most eminent French disciple of Freud, but several do not hesitate to manipulate the affections and the faith of their clients to resort, still, to their lucrative snake oils. The formerly single capacity of Freud to suggest to his patients the facts that he required to support and carry out his whimsical theories, strengthened by his aura of wisdom; is

now spread among hundreds of thousands of followers who are perhaps not psychoanalysts, but who drew from his theories the belief in the central importance of certain types of repressed memories. The study of Richard Webster gives us the culture of a century when Sigmund Freud can be located, and a point of view in order to understand him. Webster shows how, in spite of his biological rhetoric, Freud, steeped in a puritan Judeo-Christian asceticism which gets rid of the body, belongs resolutely to a Gnostic and Manichaean structure. Freud does not sexualize so much the kingdom of the intellect that he intellectualizes the kingdom of sexuality; by reducing it to abstract categories and by thus separating the clean spirit from the dirty body, then by raising the Man above Nature, by supporting the abstraction compared to the incarnation.

Since I refrain from summarizing this work which reveals many surprises; I will evoke in detail one of his analyzes to make the mouth of my reader water and to make him feel the stakes of the book by the means of an example. We heard all the story of some famous patients of Freud, who were presented to us as an illustration at the same time of the Freudian theory and of his relevance. A theory which explains psyche and proves to be an effective therapy: what to ask, moreover? You know all these heroes, I think neither of Oedipus, nor of Blue Beard but of Dora, Little Hans, the president Schreber, Rat Man, and the Wolf Man: Sergei Pankejeff. It was followed for seventy years, by ten psychoanalysts who took turns until his death in 1979, at the venerable age of 92 years.

It was a very wealthy Russian aristocrat suffering with complicated depressive disorders. He therefore saw, since 1905, psychiatric celebrities in Berlin, Saint Petersburg, Munich and again Berlin. After having vainly tried to analyze him in 1909, Leonid Droznes, doctor in Odessa, sent the illustrious and unfortunate patient in Vienna, 19 Berggasse, in February 1910 (at Freud). The founder of the psychoanalysis, by personal deontology, I dare to hope for him, but also to develop his new therapy, was to give a special attention to the cure of such a powerful and famous patient.

The first analysis took place February 1910 in July 1914, six days per week, for four years and a half, i.e. during more than 700 hours. A few days after the attack in Sarajevo, Freud declared him cured. But two successive relapses will require another session during the winter 1919-1920. To take again the wolf man on the couch, Freud, who ran out of space, put an end brutally to the analysis of Helene Deutsch, sent her back, and this one then will have a breakdown for the first time of her life.

Freud could fortunately cure his patient again. But some time later the psychological state of Pankejeff was found worse than at the beginning. The Professor then entrusted his patient to Ruth Mack-Brunswick, younger, more disturbed than him and still in analysis at this time with Freud. Mack-Brunswick, after having noted that the wolf man had been twice cured from his neurosis, considered that he had become psychotic and paranoiac, of what Freud would have been unaware! The third intensive analysis will cure him in several months, from 1926 to 1927. But the relapses were not long in coming and Ruth Mack-Brunswick again had to intervene until 1938. After the Second World War, several analysts still will follow each other unceasingly. One among them, Kurt Eissler, psychoanalyzed the wolf man during several weeks, daily, each summer of 1956 until the death of the patient in 1979, and recorded his account conscientiously.

The brilliant wolf man, literally prisoner, "analyzing" to whom the word was prohibited, and that they analyzed freely; slipped away from his guard dogs, when he was 87 years old, and confided, after six months of hard negotiations, in an Austrian journalist, Karin Obholzer. From where it is emphasized that the wolf man was never cured.

Poor wolf man ! And poor Dora, Little Hans, Rat man, and President Schreber, like all the others, all more ill after psychoanalysis than before. As for Marie Bonaparte, read yourself, it is saucy! The Freudian therapy appears to be a medical imposture: nobody ever got cure, nor tangible and undeniable improvement with this type of cure.

Not only is the psychoanalysis without any value, but we must also awake ourselves and leave there. Professor Robert Wilcocks pronounced a conference entitled "the biggest scam of the century" in Edmonton, on February 13, 2003, in order to make share his enthusiasm for the book of Benesteau. In his final chapter, he quotes the admirable conclusion of Frederick Crews. "[Thus] step by step, we learn that Freud was the most overestimated character of all the history of sciences and medicine; the one who caused immense damage by the propagation of false etiologies, erroneous diagnoses and sterile methods of study." Once closed, this book belongs to those which continue to work in the head of the reader. It revives the paradox of the psychoanalysis: as therapy, it never produced the least

proof of its effectiveness, as psychic and anthropological theory, it is conspicuously inconsistent. And, however, it remains in the middle of the artistic, philosophical and human history of the 20th century. Therefore let us forget the Freud doctor, he is dangerous, the Freud psychologist, he fantasizes, and the Freud scientist, he does home improvement , without the least result.

F. AUBRAL.

AFTERWORD IN THE WAY OF JOHN TOLAND.

Pseudo-druids with fabulous initiatory derivation (the famous and indescribable or hilarious perennial tradition) having multiplied since some time; it appeared us necessary to put at the disposal of each and everyone, these few notes, hastily written, one evening of November, in order to give our readers the desire to know more about true druidism.

This work claims to be honest but in no way neutral. It was given itself for an aim to defend or clear the cluto (fame) of this admirable ancient religion.

Nothing replaces personal meditation, including about obscure or incomprehensible lays strewing these books, and which have been inserted intentionally, in order to force you to reflect, to find your own way. These books are not dogmas to be followed blindly and literally. As you know, we must beware as it was the plague, of the letter. The letter kills, only spirit vivifies.

Nothing replaces either personal experience, and it's by following the way that we find the way. Therefore rely only on your own strength in this Search for the Grail. What matters is the attitude to be adopted in life and not the details of the dogma. Druidism is less important than druidiaction (John-P. MARTIN).

These few leaves scribbled in a hurry are nevertheless in no way THE BOOKS TO READ ON THIS MATTER, they are only a faint gleam of them.

The only druidic library worthy of the name is not in fact composed of only 12 (or 27) books, but of several hundred books.

The few booklets forming this mini-library are not themselves an increase of knowledge on the subject, and are only some handbooks intended for the schoolchildren of druidism.

These simplified summaries intended for the elementary courses of druidism will be replaced by courses of a somewhat higher level, for those who really want to study it in a more relevant way.

This small library is consequently a first attempt to adapt (intended for young adults) the various reflections about the druidic knowledge and truth, to which the last results of the new secularism, positive and open-minded, worldwide, being established, have led.

Unlike Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which swarm, concerning the higher Being, with childish anthropomorphism taken literally (fundamentalism known as integrism in the Catholic world); our druidism too, on the other hand, will use only very little of them, and will stick in this field, to the absolute minimum.

But in order to talk about God or the Devil we shall be quite also obliged to use a basic language, and therefore a more or less important amount of this anthropomorphism. Or then it would be necessary to completely give up discussing it.

This first shelf of our future library consecrated to the subject, aims to show precisely the harmonious authenticity of the neo-druidic will and knowledge. To show at which point its current major theses have deep roots because the reflection about Mythologies, it's our Bible to us. The adaptations of this brief talk required by the differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, social status, etc. will be to do with the concerned druids (veledae and others?)

Note, however. Important! What these few notes, hastily thrown on paper during a too short life, are not (higgledy-piggledy).

A divine revelation. A (still also divine) law. A (non-religious or secular) law. A (scientific) law. A dogma. An order.

What I search most to share is a state of mind, nothing more. As our old master had very well said one day : "OUR CIVILIZATION HAS NO CHOICE: IT WILL BE CELTISM OR IT WILL BE DEATH" (Peter Lance).

What these few notes, hastily thrown on paper during a too short life, are.

Some dream. An adventure. A journey. An escape. A revolt cry against the moral and physical ugliness of this society. An attempt to reach the universal by starting from the individual. A challenge. An obstacle fecund to overcome . An incentive to think. A guide for action. A map. A plan. A compass. A pole star or morning star up there in the mountain. A fire overnight in a glade?

What the man who had collected the core of this library, Peter DeLaCrau, is not.

- A god.
- A half god.
- A quarter of God.
- A saint.
- A philosopher (recognized, official, and authorized or licensed, as those who talk a lot in television. Except, of course, by taking the word in its original meaning, which is that of amateur searching wisdom and knowledge.

What he is: a man, and nothing of what is human therefore is unknown to him. Peter DeLaCrau has no superhuman or exceptional power. Nothing of what he said wrote or did could have timeless value. At the best he hopes that his extreme clearness about our society and its dominant ideology (see its official philosophers, its journalists, its mass media and the politically correct of its right-thinking people, at least about what is considered to be the main thing); as well his non-conformism, and his outspokenness, combined with a solid contrariness (which also earned to him for that matter a lot of troubles or affronts); can be useful.

The present small library for beginners “contains the dose of humanity required by the current state of civilization” (Henry Lizeray). However it’s only a gathering of materials waiting for the ad hoc architect or mason.

A whole series of booklets increasing our knowledge of these basic elements will be published soon. This different presentation of the druidic knowledge will preserve nevertheless the unity as well as the harmony which can exist between these various statements of the same philosophical and well-considered paganism : spirituality worthy of our day, spirituality for our days.

Case of translations into foreign languages (Spanish, German, Italian, Polish, etc.)

The misspellings, the grammatical mistakes, the inadequacies of style, as well as in the writing of the proper nouns perhaps and, of course, the Gallicisms due to forty years of life in France, may be corrected. Any other improvement of the text may also be brought if necessary (by adding, deleting, or changing, details); Peter DeLaCrau having always regretted not being able to reach perfection in this field.

But on condition that neither alteration nor betrayal, in a way or another, is brought to the thought of the author of this reasoned compilation. Every illustration without a caption can be changed. New illustrations can be brought.

But illustrations having a caption must be only improved (by the substitution of a good photograph to a bad sketch, for example?)

It goes without saying that the coordinator of this rapid and summary reasoned compilation , Peter DeLaCrau, does not maintain to have invented (or discovered) himself, all what is previous; that he does not claim in any way that it is the result of his personal researches (on the ground or in libraries). What s previous is indeed essentially resulting from the excellent works or websites referenced in bibliography and whose direct consultation is strongly recommended.

We will never insist enough on our will not be the men of one book (the Book), but from at least twelve, like Ireland’s Fenians, for obvious reasons of open-mindedness, truth being our only religion.

Once again, let us repeat; the coordinator of the writing down of these few notes hastily thrown on paper, by no means claims to have spent his life in the dust of libraries; or in the field, in the mud of the rescue archaeology excavations; in order to unearth unpublished pieces of evidence about the past of Ireland (or of Wales or of East Indies or of China).

THEREFORE PETER DELACRAU DOES NOT WANT TO BE CONSIDERED, IN ANY WAY, AS THE AUTHOR OF THE FOREGOING TEXTS.

HE TRIES BY NO MEANS TO ASCRIBE HIMSELF THE CREDIT OF THEM. He is only the editor or the compiler of them. They are, for the most part, documents broadcast on the web, with a few exceptions.

ON THE OTHER HAND, HE DEMANDS ALL THEIR FAULTS AND ALL THEIR INSUFFICIENCIES. Peter DeLaCrau claims only one thing, the mistakes, errors, or various imperfections, of this book. He alone is to be blamed in this case. But he trusts his contemporaries (human nature being what it is) for vigorously pointing out to him.

Note found by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau and inserted by them into this place.

I immediately confess in order to make the work of my judges easier that men like me were Christian in Rome under Nero, pagan in Jerusalem, sorcerers in Salem, English heretics, Irish Catholics, and today racist, sexist, homophobic, Islamophobic, person, while waiting to be tomorrow kufar or again Christian the beastliest antichrist of all the apocalypses, etc. In short as you will have understood it, I am for nothingness death disease suffering

By respect for Mankind , in order to save time, and not to make it waste time, I will make easier the work of those who make absolutely a point of being on the right side of the fence while fighting (heroically of course) in order to save the world of my claws (my ideas or my inclinations, my tendencies).

To these courageous and implacable detractors, of whom the profundity of reflection worthy of that of a marquis of Vauvenargues equals only the extent of the general knowledge, worthy of Pico della Mirandola I say...

Now take a sheet of paper, a word processing if you prefer, put by order of importance 20 characteristics which seem to you most serious, most odious, most hateful, in the history of Mankind, since the prehistoric men and Nebuchadnezzar, according to you....AND CONSIDER THAT I AM THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF YOU BECAUSE I HAVE THEM ALL!

Scapegoats are always needed! A heretic in the Middle Ages, a witch in Salem in the 17th century, a racist in the 20th century, an alien lizard in the 21st century, I am the man you will like to hate in order to feel a better person (a smart and nice person).

I am, as you will and in the order of importance you want: an atheist, a satanist, a stupid person, with Down's syndrome, brutish, homosexual, deviant, homophobic, communist, Nazi, sexist, a philatelist, a pathological liar, robber, smug, psychopath, a falsely modest monster of hubris, and what do I still know, it is up to you to see according to the current fashion.

Here, I cannot better do (in helping you to save the world).

[Unlike my despisers who are all good persons, the salt of the earth, i.e., young or modern and dynamic, courageous, positive, kind, intelligent, educated, or at least who know; showing much hindsight in their thoroughgoing meditation on the trends of History; and on the moral or ethical level: generous, altruistic, but poor of course (it is their only vice) because giving all to others; moreover deeply respectful of the will of God and of the Constitution ...

As for me I am a stiff old reactionary, sheepish, disconnected from his time, paranoid, schizophrenic, incoherent, capricious, never satisfied, a villain, stupid, having never studied or at least being unaware of everything about the subject in question; accustomed to rash judgments based on prejudices without any reflection; selfish and wealthy; a fiend of the Devil, inherently Nazi-Bolshevist or Stalinist-Hitlerian. Hitlerian Trotskyist they said when I was young. In short a psychopathic murderer as soon as the breakfast... what enables me therefore to think what I want, my critics also besides, and to try to make everybody know it even no-one in particular].

Signed: the coordinator of the works, Peter DeLaCrau known as Hesunertus, a researcher in druidism. A man to whom nothing human was foreign. An unemployed worker, post office worker, divorcee, homeless person, vagrant, taxpayer, citizen, and a cuckolded elector... In short one of the 9 billion human beings having been in transit aboard this spaceship therefore. Born on planet Earth, January 13, 1952.

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11. From Fenians to Culdees or "The Great Science which enlightens" volume 3.
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28. From the ancient philosophers to the Irish druid.
29. Judaism Christianity and Islam: first part.
30. Judaism Christianity and Islam : second part volume 1.
31. Judaism Christianity and Islam : second part volume 2.
32. Judaism Christianity and Islam : second part volume 3.
33. Third part volume 1: what is Islam? Short historical review of the set QUR.HAD.SIR. and SHAR.FIQ.MAD.
34. Third part volume 2: What is Islam? First approaches to the set QUR.HAD.SIR. and SHAR.FIQ.MAD.
35. Third part volume 3: What is Islam? The true 5 pillars of the set QUR.HAD.SIR. and SHAR.FIQ.MAD.
36. Third part volume 4: What is Islam? Sounding the set QUR.HAD.SIR. and SHAR.FIQ.MAD.
37. Couiro anmenion or small dictionary of druidic theology volume 2.

Peter DeLaCrau. Born on January 13rd, 1952, in St. Louis (Missouri) from a family of woodsmen or Canadian trappers who had left Prairie du Rocher (or Fort de Chartres in Illinois) in 1765. Peter DeLaCrau is thus born the same year as the Howard Hawks film entitled "the Big Sky". Consequently father of French origin, mother of Irish origin: half Irish half French. Married to Mary-Helen ROBERTS on March 12th, 1988, in Paris-Aubervilliers (French department of Seine-Saint-Denis). Hence 3 children. John Wolf born May 11th, 1989. Alex born April 10th, 1990. Millicent born August 31st, 1993. Deceased on September 28th, 2012, in La Rochelle (France).

Peter DELACRAU is not a philosopher by profession, except taking this term in its original meaning of amateur searching wisdom and knowledge. And he is neither a god neither a demigod nor the messenger of any god or demigod (and of course not a messiah).

But he has become in a few years one of the most lucid and of the most critical observers of the French neo-druidic or neo-pagan world.

He was also some time assistant-treasurer of a rather traditionalist French druidic group of which he could get archives and texts or publications.

But his constant criticism both domestic and foreign French policy, and his political positions (on the end of his life he had become an admirer of Howard Zinn Paul Krugman Bernie Sanders and Michael Moore); had earned him moreover some vexations on behalf of the French authorities which did everything, including in his professional or private life, in the last years of his life, to silence him. Peter DeLaCrau has apparently completely missed the return to the home country of his distant ancestors.

It is true unfortunately that France today is no longer the France of Louis XIV or of Lafayette or even of Napoleon (which has really been a great nation in those days).

Peter DeLaCrau having spent most of his life (the last one) in France, of which he became one of the best specialists,

even one of the rare thoroughgoing observers of the contemporary French society quite simply; his three children, John-Wolf, Alex and Millicent (of Cuers: French Riviera) pray his readers to excuse the countless misspellings or grammatical errors that pepper his writings. At the end of his life, Peter DeLaCrau mixed a little both languages (English but also French).

Those were therefore the notes found on the hard disk of the computer of our father, or in his papers. Our father has of course left us a considerable work, nobody will say otherwise, but some of the words frequently coming from his pen, now and then are not always very clear. After many consultations between us, at any rate, above what we have been able to understand of them.

Signed: the three children of Peter DeLaCrau: John-Wolf, Alex and Millicent. Of Cuers.