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PERSONAL  
RELIGION  
IN EGYPT  
BEFORE  
CHRISTIANITY



BY  
W. M.  
FLINDERS  
PETRIE

D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., F.B.A.



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BY

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*of Personal Religion as distinguished from state religion or ceremonial processes and early formation of state*

## PREFACE

**T**HE Personal Religion here dealt with is that which concerns private beliefs, rather than public acts, and which stands apart from Ceremonialism, and Religion as belonging to the State. The documents considered have to be viewed entire, and therefore some collateral subjects naturally come within our scope, such as creation and the nature of divinity. But yet such were anciently matters of individual belief rather than of general dogma.

The material here worked over is all published already ; but it had not yet received the historical study which it required to place it in its true connection. The new results which justify this re-statement of the documents are: (1) the earlier dating of the Hermetic writings, which lie between 500 and 200 B.C., instead of being some centuries later as hitherto supposed. (2) The consequent tracing out of a gradual development of beliefs and terms which place the documents in their relative order of growth. (3) The historical precision of the life of Apollonios, as an evidence of its genuineness.

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## PREFACE

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Some hesitation may be felt in taking the differences between documents as evidences of different age. But first it should be noted that we do not trust to mere silence or omissions of terms, but that the active use of the same word—such as Logos—in different senses, is the criterion followed. Nor can it well be that such was due to different contemporary schools, as the Hermetic writings are closely connected by style, structure, and ideas. Nor can the differences be due to esoteric and exoteric writing for different degrees, as the divine sense of Logos would not be profaned by a false sense being taught to the lower grades of learners. We have to bridge the gap between Logos as the reason of all men and animals in early writing, and Logos as Divine in later works. To place the intermediate writings in the order of development of this, and of various other terms and ideas, is the only right course until some other modifying reason may be proved.

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# PERSONAL RELIGION IN EGYPT BEFORE CHRISTIANITY

## CHAPTER I

### OUR VIEW OF THE MIND

THE religious literature of the centuries immediately before the establishment of Christianity is a region of thought far too little known in general. The documents, though accessible to scholars, are not familiar to the ordinary reader like the other historical material of that time. This is partly due to their more recent discovery, partly to the difficulty of following their ideas and phraseology, partly to a feeling that they bear an unholy resemblance to the accepted scriptures and must be worthless imitations of such, and partly because the whole spirit of these documents is repellent to the modern idea of exact statement of ascertained facts. Each of these reasons is true of one or other of the religious works of that age, and the whole class has suffered a practical oblivion. Yet as the writers are clearly earlier than the

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apostolic age, their works are among those most needful for an understanding of the modes of thought of that time ; further, in the wider view of the history of religion, no period is more worthy of study than that of the rise of spreading systems of thought, seen in Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Mithraism, Isiism, and Christianity. Even here the interest does not pause, for one of the most remarkable subjects is the mass of variations of Christianity, its interminable sects and heresies which resulted from the spread of a new gospel over all the existing schools of thought and belief, incorporating more or less of all that went before it. In so vast a subject, some kind of classified outline which can serve as key to the scope of it, is much wanted.

Before taking a general view, it is needful to understand what we are to look at, and how to distinguish the parts of the scene and their relation to each other. If we were to study the chemistry or the astronomy of ancient times in Egypt or elsewhere, it would be useless to begin without some scientific knowledge of the subject from a modern point of view. We must know the principal elements and their reactions before we could make any sense of ancient recipes on alchemy, we must understand the real motions of the planets before we can study ancient astronomy or astrology. Similarly it is needful to understand the nature of religious thought and its manifestations, and the



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principles of mental action, before we can rightly grasp or interpret the maze of theo-cosmological ideas and practices which embodied religious thought in the past. Without some preparation for such a subject the modern mind will either turn from it in disgust as tedious word-spinning, or blindly accept it as a beautiful mystery. Fortunately the serious work of analysis of the religious mind has been lately done, in a thorough but reverent and sympathetic manner, by Professor W. James in his Gifford Lectures on *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. In that we have a text-book of the subject by a trained psychologist, who can disentangle the confusion of motive and feeling, and deal with each mental condition with insight and analysis. Such a work needs careful study, and we propose in the next chapter to give a summary of its system as the basis for our review of the various religious writings that we are to consider.

But before starting on this subject of Religious Experience it is necessary to try to acquire some definite ideas about the mind, and to limit our subject to certain issues. Misconceptions are likely to be presupposed which would prevent the matter being understood as it is here written, and would impart entirely wrong premises into the discussions that follow. We need to fence off certain grounds of consideration, and empty our minds of all reference to questions that are not

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necessarily in view. The individual mind is too generally in a chaos of beliefs and half-beliefs, which each have their own domain, and are not allowed to logically interfere with each other; such a condition is probably inevitable in the attempt to grasp by human thought the vast subject of being, which is quite incommensurate with it. So very little can be understood at all, that it is hopeless to trace the boundaries between each of the great and contradictory elements that we clumsily try to harmonize in our dogmatic elaborations. A whole system is the most hopeless end to contemplate; all that we can do is to try to see some portions less mistily than before, and to hold to some definite line of attack and analysis.

In the first place, we must rule out of the discussion here the reality of Volition. It is, of course, open to arid philosophical argument whether every action and thought is not a pure automatism, resultant inevitably and fatalistically from pre-existing states, just as it is equally open to such discussion whether there is anything outside of one phantasmagorical mind—whether that of the speaker or of the hearer is never stated. But every human mind in all time has acted on the reality of Volition, and it is even visible to us in the action of the minds of two animals one on the other. The most fanatical materialist does not practically hesitate to attribute moral wrong where it may be painfully obvious to his own feelings.

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When we once accept that man can act on nature, by selecting the direction of natural forces—which is all he ever can do—we accept mind interfering with the fortuitous nature of things. When such a gigantic conception is inevitable from experience, it is a minor difficulty whether such mind can exist apart from matter, or whether any forms of it can so exist in what we call a spiritual state. We need not stumble at difficulties of Theism or Superhumanism, when the far greater initial difficulty of conceiving Volition is forced through by the inexorable closure of experience.

Accepting here then the fact of Volition, we must leave aside its nature as being outside of the questions which we are here studying. Our business here is not the inexplicable, but the tracing out some portion of the material processes by which the mind may act, so that we may discern its mechanism. These are successive portions of the subject, the bases of each of which are wholly inexplicable. (1) Life itself, with or without perceptible volition—animal or vegetable. Within this, but further inexplicable, is (2) Partition of life, and growth. Within it also is (3) Volition and the nature of mind, and its possibility of action on matter. Where subjects are so closely united, there is a probability that the conditions of one will be organically applicable to the other; or, if not radically on the same lines, that at least so strong an analogy will exist between them that one will

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serve as a type or explanation of the other. Now we can see clearly some physical conditions of life apart from mind, and we are therefore encouraged to apply those to the more complex manifestation of mind based upon life. We may thus hope to understand better the mechanism of mind, without attempting to deal with the entirely inexplicable nature of volition or spirit.

Among the mechanical conditions that we may see in life we can trace that (1) Processes are mainly unconscious, and are only touched by consciousness in the borderland of volition, while still less are they under the actual control of volition. The whole of the internal functions of the body are carried on entirely unconsciously, and it is only where they come in touch with the external world that we have any control.

(2) All functional action is performed by two opposing mechanisms of excitation and inhibition. Recent physiological work has been largely occupied with tracing these opposing mechanisms; and one of the strangest failures of action—that in tetanus—is shown to be due to exchange of control of the mechanisms.

(3) All natural form and function is hereditary, and is determined in different portions of it by different hereditary sources. It is a universal observation how a child will resemble one parent or ancestor in one feature, and other ancestors in others.

Now let us transfer these mechanical conditions

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to the mechanism of the mind, and see how far they serve to explain that ; remembering that as they condition the life in general, so probably the same mechanical conditions are those through which the mind is compelled to act.

(1) Processes of mind are mainly unconscious, and volition is almost the limit of consciousness. As Dr. James says : "Our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different " (p. 388). "The *subconscious self* is nowadays a well-accredited psychological entity. . . . Apart from all religious considerations, there is actually and literally more life in our total soul than we are at any time aware of. The exploration of the transmarginal field has hardly yet been seriously undertaken " (p. 511). The unconsciousness of the great majority of living processes would make us bold to go much further than these statements, and to say that it is only those processes of mind that bring us into contact with the world around, which are conscious and subject to will ; and that the great majority of mental process is unconscious, and merges down to the mere control of physiological action throughout the body.

(2) All mental action is performed by two opposing mechanisms. As Dr. James says : "Our moral and practical attitude, at any given time, is always

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a resultant of two sets of forces within us, impulses pushing us one way and obstructions and inhibitions holding us back" (p. 261). These opposing forces are both needful to all healthy mental action, as they are needful to all physiological action. We may call them impulses and habits, or desire and reflection, or Epicureanism and Stoicism. If either force gain a permanent mastery we have either voluptuousness or fanaticism.

(3) All natural form and function of the mind is hereditary, and descends from various hereditary sources. This is much obscured by education, but the persistence of mental tendencies and tastes is so marked that we cannot doubt that the descent of mind is like that of life in general. The conscious duty should, then, be the cultivation of the best heritages, and the suppression of others, both physically and morally. The objection that acquired qualities cannot be inherited (Weissmanism) is a part of the old view of the mind born as a blank. When we once realise that mind and body are conditioned by a multitude of hereditary tendencies, it seems clear that the cultivation of one existing strain and suppression of another is likely to affect the relative degree of inheritance of those strains. Will does not produce or acquire anything, but it can direct the degree of cultivation of what already exists; and thus it may reasonably be believed to influence the degree of transmission. The inert Merovingians became more effete in every genera-

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tion ; their alert maiordomos became more active, until they culminated in Charlemagne.

Having thus seen that the mechanism of mind is closely similar to, or identical in nature with, the mechanism of life in general in these main outlines, we turn to some details of these general principles.

Of the unconscious mind a very important part is the accumulation of experiences, the details of which have been entirely lost to memory or consciousness, but the effect of which is stored. This is the source of *unconscious anticipation* which performs a large part in our lives, but which has hardly yet been recognised. It forms the unseen framework and guiding lines of our actions ; and we only become aware of it when it is obstructed, and its impetus is spent in mental shock. As an illustration, I was directing a row of groups of workmen, let us call them A, B, C, D, E, with all of which I was equally familiar. I removed group C one day, but forgot to cancel it in my unconscious anticipation. The next day, after seeing B, I thus arrived at D, but was anticipating C. The confusion of thought was so great that, expecting C, I could not recognise D, and it took several minutes of reflection to understand the situation. I was quite as familiar with group D as with group C, yet it seemed wholly strange to me because it was not anticipated in that order. The same effect may be seen on arriving amid familiar streets by a new tube station. All the buildings are well known, but

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because no train of anticipation has led up to seeing them, a considerable effort of observation and examination is needed to fit the consciousness into its bearings with the seen world. Without unconscious anticipation we should spend most of our time in searching memory for connections with what lay before us. It is obvious that the lower animals have strong anticipation, as they remember roads so well, and know their way better than men.

Not only is anticipation thus our unknown guide, but it conditions much of our happiness. It may be that its fulfilment is a main condition of the sense of well-being. Even sudden changes of good fortune may be most injurious by their check of anticipation. And the deadly effects of disappointment in the destruction of anticipations are familiar to us all. The Irishman's saying neatly draws the distinction between conscious hopes and unconscious anticipation in the phrase, "It is not as much as I expected" (consciously) "and I never thought it would be" (unconsciously). It is not too much to say that the contentment of every person depends on correct anticipation. To form this a wide sense of Nature is required, and a correct realisation of personal function in life. A man who is always expecting to occupy a greater position than he can reach, has an abiding rankle in his mind about what he calls his "bad luck." A Tolstoy who wakes up in middle life to his uselessness, has never learned



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to anticipate what should be his function to the world at each age ; and his formula of rectifying life by simplifying it is really the correction of his anticipation of the utility of life. This correction of anticipation late in life is a considerable part of what is classed as Conversion. A mind that begins by forming a true growth of unconscious anticipation, in harmony with Nature and his own capacities, will not be subject to any great shocks or reversals of habit.

The routine of life is another part of anticipation. Each daily event as it arrives prepares us for the next unconsciously ; and much is thus done without calling up will, or even consciousness, to direct our actions. The unconscious mind will perform the whole routine of rising in the morning, of meals, and even of trivial conversation, if the will is otherwise occupied.

The normal condition of the organism, apart from will, is seen in sleep, where the full scope of unconscious mind is carrying on the functions of life unchecked by will. There is no healthier condition, unconscious life is in its fullness, apart from the external stimuli which call will into action. Sleep-walking or sleep-talking is merely the higher and more elaborate action of unconscious mind, and shows how it may be organized by experience to act, without the need of the interference of will. Even the external stimuli of vision and of touch may be called into play on the unconscious mind

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and its memory, in sleep as in waking, yet without the action of will. We thus see that the unconscious mind not only regulates the organism, but may be educated to perform every action which does not depend upon the *variable* contact with external things. It is the perfect home and apparatus for the Will. And in this point of view we see the importance of Dr. James' opinion that it may also be the sphere of action of other Will or Wills. "It contains, for example, such things as all our momentarily inactive memories. . . . Our intuitions, hypotheses, fancies, superstitions, persuasions, convictions, and in general all our non-rational operations, come from it. . . . In it arise whatever mystical experiences we may have. . . . It is also the fountain-head of much that feeds our religion. In persons deep in the religious life, as we have now abundantly seen . . . the door into this region seems unusually wide open" (p. 483). We can thus see the meaning of the general feeling that religious matters are not a subject of argument but of belief. Religion and ethics are the convictions of the unconscious mind, not subject to volition, and only very slowly alterable by any external impulse or arguments. The unconscious mind is not altered by the will; and anything that is permanent and fundamental in it can only be very slowly grown into a new shape under new forces. And it is those classes and populations whose will is least called upon, and whose actions are mostly

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settled by unconscious mind, that are least easy to move in religious beliefs by any appeal to the intellect. Our beliefs and convictions are in the unconscious mind, our intellectual actions alone are the subject of conscious will.

From the purely materialistic point of view the unconscious mind is reflex action or automatism, as distinct from volition. But it is in its higher branches capable of rising to record single impressions, and act upon them in unconscious anticipation : and this implies much more than the reflex of one impulse liberating another by consequence of an organically evolved train of connection. We must either give a new meaning to reflex, quite outside of the usual sense (of actions which become habitual in response to a stimulus, owing to repeated impulses having constructed a nervous connection), or else we must grant that reflexes are but the machinery of the mind of living organism, which only touches consciousness when acted on by volition.

There seems in all this no bar to the Pantheistic view of the unity of all life and mind, apart from volition ; and equally no bar to the Theistic view of Wills, human and superhuman, souls and spirits, occupying the unconscious mind of life, and conferring volition upon it. We are thus dealing with a basis which is common ground to all forms of religious thought, and is not opposed to any beliefs.

We now turn to look at the second proposition,

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that all function is due to opposing forces of excitation and inhibition. Where these two exist in a complete and healthy balance there is no sense of duality. Just as bodily sickness is detrimental to the true use of the body, and does not show the growth of health, so soul sickness—as Dr. James calls it—is detrimental to the true use of the mind, and does not show a normal state of health. The evidences of bodily sickness—such as inflammation and suppuration—may be needful incidents to healing ; so the violence of contrition and of dread may be needful stages in healing a sick soul. We must never lose sight of two sayings, “ I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,” “ There shall be more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance.” The righteous persons, or healthy souls, do not need repentance. It was natural to an age that incessantly treated the body—ill or well—to purgatives and bleeding, to similarly insist on courses of contrition and depletion for the soul—ill or well. As Emerson says, “ Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination, and the like. . . . These are the soul’s mumps, and measles, and whooping-coughs ” (James, p. 167). As the study of sick bodies helps the knowledge of medicine and surgery and of bodily function, so the study of sick souls helps our understanding of mental function. And

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a large part of Dr. James' work is occupied with the aberrations of mental sickness, which give a key to the mechanism of mind. It is the restoration of a balance in each function which is the road to health, both of body and of mind. To atrophy one of the controlling forces is not a healthy state. The voluptuary who allows impulse, desire, and Epicureanism to dominate him is perhaps more repulsive, but not less unhealthy, than the fanatic. The balance of excitation and inhibition is absolutely necessary for healthy function. The picture of St. Michael with his foot on Satan is quoted by Dr. James, with the meaning that "the world is all the richer for having a devil in it, so long as we keep our foot upon his neck" (p. 50).

This existence of a healthy balance, and of the diseased states of excess of either force, enables us to understand much of mental changes. Sudden changes are due to one force, which has hitherto been under the balance, at last balancing, or getting over the balance. Such changes have no needful relation to moral or religious tendencies. They may occur in a revulsion of hatred against a person or subject, in a change from anxiety to peace, in turning from irreligion to religion, or in turning from religion to non-religion (James, 175-81). The moral perception of balance may be coarse or may be delicate; a large preponderance of one or other force may be but slightly, or may be acutely, felt. The "sense of Sin" is a term covering two different

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conditions ; rightly, it is a sense of balance, a more delicate perception of the true equivalence of forces, a giving both impulse and restraint their full value without denying either ; but, in its perverted form, it is applied to all impulse in one direction, and only inhibition is thought right. This leads us at last to such moral monsters as St. Louis of Gonzaga, who "was never tempted, . . . never raised his eyes, . . . did not like to be alone with his own mother," never held a flower, and could not use a sheet of paper without permission of a superior (James, 350-3) ; or the Indian devotee who will sit for years motionless, with his finger nails growing through the palms of his clenched hands.

Lastly we may look at the cautions needful to both types of mind in dealing with such subjects. The Dogmatist must remember that strong convictions of different schools, mutually exclusive one of another, have been more often wrong than right in past history—that the strongest religious feeling is no evidence of truth, or the derwishes of the Mahdi would be saints—that such feeling may lead to the greatest vices such as untruth (in forged scriptures and suppression of facts) and cruelty (in the Holy Office)—that peculiar mental or mystic conditions have no moral meaning necessarily, but may just as well refer to space or size, or any other non-moral subject—and that the study of the mechanical conditions of mind no more materializes the forces that act through them, than the

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study of anatomy explains the forces of life and will.

On the other side the Materialist must remember that Atheism may be as fanatical as Theism may be; "the more fervent opponents of Christian doctrine have often enough shown a temper which, psychologically considered, is indistinguishable from religious zeal" (James, p. 35), as when an ancient village church was lately sold by a Materialist majority in France, on condition that not one stone should be left on another. Also we must "renounce the absurd notion that a thing is exploded away as soon as it is classed with others, or its origin is shown" (James, p. 24). And we must recognise the fact that in some persons there is the entire want of the mental perception of music, or of mathematics, or of the beauty of nature, or of moral excellence, or of religious feeling, without at all discrediting the reality of such perceptions to those who are capable of realising and living in them.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NATURE OF THE RELIGIOUS MIND

AS we have reviewed some parts of the mental structure that are involved in religious developments, we now turn to look at the mental output of various kinds which is seen in modern religion, and which we may therefore expect to find in ancient documents. In tracing this outline, we mainly summarise the standard work of Professor James, only classifying it somewhat more according to the mechanism of life that we have been considering.

The main division is between the minds of those who, on the one hand, are called "righteous persons which need no repentance"—the whole who "have no need of a physician"—the well-balanced consciences whose strength of impulse is always matched by equal power of judgment ; and, on the other hand, the minds of those who are unbalanced, whose impulses may be too strong, or judgment too weak, and who may have many experiences of soul sickness before repentance leads to control of some sort.

In the Religion of Healthy-mindedness the main



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branches are Optimism, Mental Drill, Philosophy, and Dogma. In the Religion of Repentance, or of the Twice-born, the branches are Conversion, Guidance, Saintliness, Mysticism, and Hallucinations. We will notice the characteristics of each of these.

Optimism—the sense that “all’s right with the world”—is born of balanced minds and bodies that have formed correct anticipations of life; and, perhaps in most cases, without too exacting a sense of balance and too vivid a power of anticipation. It should not hide a consciousness of mistakes, as Theodore Parker puts it: “I miss the mark, draw bow, and try again. But I am not conscious of hating God, or man, or right, or love, and I know there is much ‘health in me.’ . . . I am filled with a sense of sweetness and wonder that such little things can make a mortal so exceedingly rich.” Such minds have a perception of beauty rather than of evil; whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely, and of good report they think upon. Evil is hated so really that the thought of it, or anticipation of it, is instinctively avoided. It is felt a first duty to cultivate the good by keeping it ever to the front; and to deliberately, as a matter of policy, ignore all that is wrong, unseemly, or unpleasant. A healthy person keeps out of the way of carrion and blight, and prefers not to be too curious about their appearance. With this may often be found a keen sense of the beauty of Nature, and the inspiring feeling of unity with

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Nature, the being a part of all living things. It is felt that all natural things are very good, and made to be richly enjoyed ; the control or inhibition is strong enough to abolish the fear of giving way to over-enjoyment. And the highest form of life is realised as being the making the utmost of every good that is possible, compatibly with not spoiling the power of enjoying other kinds of good—the getting the maximum out of the whole, and not from any one pleasure to the exclusion of another. The pleasure of duty and of the senses, the pleasure of kindness and of just retribution, the pleasure of independence and of confidence, are grasped to the full, rather trusting to their balancing than distrusting any of them separately.

As drill and exercise are needful to bring out the powers of the body, so also of the mind. Optimism naturally leads to mental drill to strengthen it. The resolution to think honestly, to face difficulties without exaggeration, to learn the utility of the ugliest or most despised things, to do unpleasant duties without thinking of their disagreeableness, to harden the mental skin so as not to be uselessly fretted, all these are parts of a healthy religion. And the learning of control of the unconscious mind is now increasingly seen to be a duty. Not only does such control render unpleasant things easy as a matter of course, and prevent needless irruptions of untrained feelings, but it also largely affects the bodily health as well as the

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mind. How far this control of health or mind-cure is genuine, and how far it reaches into hallucination, is yet undetermined. But that it has a powerful hold on unquestionably sound ground is quite certain.

The higher training of the mind naturally rises into a philosophy of a definite system of thought. The aspiration of religious philosophy, says Dr. James, "is to reclaim from mystery and paradox whatever territory she touches. To find an escape from obscure and wayward personal persuasion, to truth, objectively valid for all thinking men, has ever been the intellect's most cherished ideal. To redeem religion from unwholesome privacy, and to give public status and universal right of way to its deliverances, has been reason's task" (p. 432). The search for definite systems of thought has been an incessant one in all religious history, too often regardless of the elementary fact that every mind will have a system different from any other in some particular, owing to its being a unique combination of hereditary capacities. The general types of mind cluster together into broadly defined systems or denominations, which are mainly hereditary owing to inheritance of mental type, as well as owing to training and inertia. Such religious philosophies, more or less crystallized into creeds or modes of worship, have abounded in all ages of active thought.

The results of such systematizing are naturally

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held as binding on those who accept them, and dogma of some kind is needed to consolidate any school of thought. It is more particularly needed by some types, like the curate described by D'Israeli who adored the Athanasian Creed, or J. H. Newman, to whom "Dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion : I know no other religion ; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion ; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery" (*Apologia*, p. 49). Here the healthy mind speaks firmly as to the support that it needs to form habits of religious thought. Such a mind may not have the pliability of that type to which dogma is a matter of indifference, but it is as compatible with a firm balance of mind. Dogma is, however, perhaps more often used as a splint to set a crippled member of the mind, and to confer artificially that firmness which Nature or disease has denied to the soul.

We now turn to the various branches of the Religion of Repentance. To most minds this side has been the more prominent in Religious thought, perhaps because the business of religion—like that of medicine—is with the sick as well as with the healthy. We do not, however, conclude that a hypochondriac is right in worrying incessantly about his health, in poring over medical manuals, and in treasuring every symptom that he can trace ; and there is a parallel attention to the morbid mind, which is not in the least justified

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because it is about the soul's health. Repentance may be effected by a gradual change of balance of forces slowly coming into equilibrium. More often the constraint of habit keeps the balance to the same side—usually of impulse—until the strength of inhibition is enough to make a sudden revulsion of Conversion. And this sudden change may result in establishing equipoise between impulse and inhibition ; but more usually it upsets the balance to the other side, and makes a permanent inhibition of some essential qualities. In observing the mental mechanism of the change we are not touching in the least the forces which change the balance ; the Highest Powers may be acting, or, on the other hand, there may be merely coarse degeneration of control.

Such a change of general balance naturally affects many balances of details. There is a strong feeling of change in giving up many things and acquiring much fresh character. The sudden cancelling of so much unconscious anticipation, so long formed in the past, leaves a blank sense that All is Vanity. The new anticipation takes time to form, and an aching void of vain hopes crosses every course. This is not unlike the physical sense of remoteness caused by severe illness ; the entire out-of-the-world feeling as if every material object was out of contact, as if one managed affairs from another dimension of space, as if no possible changes enacted before one's eyes could affect one's

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real self ; the entire separation from the past, as if nothing that had happened mattered in the least to the transformed self. This entirely abnormal mental state is the result of purely physical causes, and may exist while going about and conducting usual business. It is entirely non-moral ; but it helps us to understand how much of the All-is-Vanity mood and weariness of life in moral changes is really due to the mere arrest of mental momentum, and the mechanical changes in the mind that have taken place in Conversion. Purely physically a weariness of life is caused both by overwork and by underwork, and either cause may be strong enough to induce a suicidal state. Conversion is also remarked as being more or less normal to the adolescent mind, "falling usually between fourteen and seventeen" (James). This is to be expected, as the balance of the mind is in course of being established. The more simple sensuous impressions of childhood are being counter-poised by the growing forces of inhibition and control, and a striking of the balance and establishing a new and definite position naturally results. "Conversion is in its essence a normal adolescent phenomenon, incidental to the passage from the child's small universe to the wider intellectual and spiritual life of maturity" (James, p. 199).

The immediate result of a great change of balance is surprise at the new mental position.

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The expansion of ideas, the sense of freedom, and safe poise with which the always balanced soul has grown, and which continues to surprise and gratify the healthy-minded, is so startling a change to the mind that has never enjoyed balance that it is gloried in as a mighty sense of deliverance, which is rightly ascribed to those new forces which have altered the balance of mind. The appreciation of health is the marvellous joy of bodily recovery, and this is equally true of the mind. We find, then, the sense of praise and rejoicing in a new liberty of the soul to be a constant feature of an attainment of balance of function, where the poise of forces has been attained. Where an excessive change has occurred, and the inhibition is far too great and impulse is stifled, a moody brooding over the past and an oppressive sense of the difference may occur. A gloomy fanaticism may then be the product of a change which denies the equipoise of health.

The next branch is the sense of guidance. This was strongly felt by the Stoics, as Epictetus and Aurelius, and is one of the most constant features of Religious feeling. It is not therefore peculiar to the Repentant, though it is more prominent to those who are attending to their spiritual symptoms. The guidance of man is sought habitually in some schools, as by private Confession among Catholics and indirectly by the public relation of experiences among Methodists. The Divine guid-

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ance may be sought either from an attendant spirit, like the *daimon* of Socrates, or from the Deity directly. It may be felt in the general conditions of life as the realisation of the Immanence of God, in an ecstatic consciousness of Divine presence, especially in Nature, and that not only once for all, but more or less realised continuously; and it merges then into the vaguer "religious sentiment" of Emerson. "It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it." At this point the Pantheist joins in such a general glorifying of the sympathy with Nature.

Higher Guidance appears in an inspiration of action, beautifully expressed by Philo: "Sometimes, when I have come to my work empty, I have suddenly become full; ideas being in an invisible manner showered upon me, and implanted in me from on high; so that through the influence of divine inspiration, I have become greatly excited, and have known neither the place in which I was, nor those who were present, nor myself, nor what I was saying, nor what I was writing; further I have been conscious of a richness of interpretation, an enjoyment of light, a most penetrating insight, a most manifest energy in all that was to be done; leaving such effect on my mind as the clearest ocular demonstration would have on the eyes" (James, p. 481). Beyond this comes the specific belief in direct verbal Inspiration, as among the Prophets.



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The Guidance by Dreams has been accepted by most peoples. The distinction between casual and inspired dreams is stated in the Old Testament to be shown by their repetition, either in the same form or in parallel nature. Specially was guidance attributed to dreams in a holy place. Strabo states that there was a professional class of such dreamers in the temple at Jerusalem (Strabo, xvi, 11, 35) : places for the sleep of dreamers are found in Sinai ; and the system was usual in Syria and in Greece (Strabo, xiv, 1, 44), where it still persists to the present day.

The next branch is that of personal Conduct, classed by Dr. James as Saintliness, and divided into Goodwill, Fortitude, Purity of Life and Scrupulosity, Asceticism, Poverty, Devoutness, Fanaticism, and Renunciation. We may clear our view by looking first at those qualities which are compatible with a perfect balance, as Goodwill, Fortitude, Scrupulosity, Obedience, and Devoutness, though such are each capable of being in excess ; while other qualities imply either excess or the restraint of excess, as Asceticism, Poverty, Renunciation, Isolation, and Fanaticism.

The attitude of Goodwill toward all starts from the sense of freedom and expansion of feeling due to a balance of mind. Such an attitude can be falsely attained by obscuring the balance through intoxication, so that the bondage of the impulse is not felt, and blind good-fellowship is reached. The

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elements of the moral state of goodwill are magnanimity, and a freedom and width of life above the selfish interests, the sense of identity with a far greater and higher Power, the friendly continuity of and surrender to the higher Power, and a willingness to harmonize and agree so far as possible with the views and wishes of others. This phase is by no means essentially joined to the other phases of Saintliness: it is often entirely absent in those who may be strongest in Fortitude, Purity, and other virtues, but who may be—like the Covenanters—uncompromisingly harsh. It may, on the other hand, be strongest among latitudinarians who are not deeply touched with other virtues.

Fortitude, or strength of soul, is also seen as Equanimity, Resignation, and Patience. It is partly the result of a balance of mind, partly due to a true view of the pettiness of disturbing causes, and partly to a sense of repose on Divine Power. It was of all virtues the most distinguished in ages of persecution, rising then above all barriers of natural feeling; and it is perhaps most consciously cultivated now among the Society of Friends. It is also a practical result of the Optimism of the balanced mind, ensuring a tranquillity, an ease from anticipating trouble, a restful frame of thought, which is most beneficial to the mental fabric.

Scrupulosity, or Purity of Life, is seen both in

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personal result and in avoidance of contact with evil. It is partly an increased sensitiveness of the balance of impulse and inhibition, and partly an increased control of the balance with a constant leaning to inhibition. Its excess we shall look at as Asceticism and Renunciation. Strict truthfulness in trifles is felt to be needful, as among the early Quakers. The avoidance of all taint of evil of the flesh and of the spirit seems to be imperative, even before the claims of labour and service. But such an ethic must be entirely personal and spontaneous, and when it begins to be imposed from outside it degrades into binding heavy burdens on men's shoulders, and is the most frequent cause of hypocrisy.

Obedience and absence of self-will is essential to the free play of the other virtues. It is the result of a sense of emptying the mind of assertiveness and presumption, a humility of judgment, either in the presence of higher qualities in others or in the realisation of a Divine guidance of events. It becomes transferred in religious communities, such as the Catholic or Buddhist, to the obedience to those who may be in spiritual authority ; and such obedience may obscure the very important meaning of its other values with which it ennobles and gilds the virtues of Conduct. In its more worldly phase it results in a versatile avoidance of the difficulties which arise in our intended path, by adaptation to them, and choosing things to happen

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as they are, as Epictetus expresses the position. This obedience to actualities and events, and absence of repining and useless annoyance, is a great aid to that tranquillity which is the atmosphere of the other virtues. It is moreover a great economy of effort, and a practical director of life.

The last quality of a balanced life is Devoutness. It so often runs to excess, and fanatical aberrations, that its place in the sane system might be overlooked. Yet it is the spirit without which all else lacks fragrance. The reverent mind possesses each quality upon a higher plane than the merely business-like adoption of the virtues. One of the most beautiful examples of the devout attitude to daily life is Herbert's *Church Porch*, and his more purely religious flights cover all the range of devotion expanding to a sane ecstasy.

We now turn to the virtues of the unbalanced mind. And we must remember that they do not exist only on one side, however much moralists may try to make out that there is no good thing on the side of impulse. The savagely harsh father may be further from the spirit of religion than his erring daughter. Generosity and self-sacrifice is often shown best by those who have forfeited the severer virtues. Goodwill, Fortitude, and Obedience may be found among those whose life is marred and unbalanced by impulse and excitation, as well as along with the inhibitions of prudence and control. But this is not our subject; we are

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here concerned with the excesses of the Religious spirit.

Asceticism is a general term covering the various results of an over-balance of the inhibitions. The motives for it are distinguished by Dr. James as (1) Hardihood, to which may be added the conscious training for hardihood. (2) Scrupulosity against excess, to which we may add the saving of waste for the benefit of others. (3) Sacrificial emotion. (4) Pessimism, and an insurance against future suffering. (5) A need of pain to gratify the conscience. (6) Perversion of pain and pleasure. Usually two or more of these motives are associated. In the present day probably the first is the main feeling, combined with a wish to show an example to weaker characters, as in the avoidance of alcohol, tobacco, or other gratifications, in order to help those who are in bondage to such. This is the attitude in the midst of an over-sensuous civilisation. But in harder times the more self-mortifying aims were the commoner. The perverted canons of self-improvement led to mere endurance being prized above more worthy qualities. We can scarcely understand how much the intolerable amount of torment of wire-shirt, "boiling over" with vermin, may have been the cause of the irritability, violent temper, and unforgiving implacability of Thomas à Becket. With a saner idea of the utility of life he might have glorified God and the Church with far greater effect. Asceti-

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cism has, then, been pursued not as a means, but as an end in itself, for which other considerations must be sacrificed.

The same is true of Poverty. Beginning in a revulsion from the bondage of wealth and possessions, it was extended as a positive aim in life, so that it prevented much of the active efficiency of those who adopted it. The sane balance of using means without being hampered by them, of making the most of the opportunities at hand, was lost. The wholesome view that the benefit of having money is to enable the holder not to need to think of it, had been obscured by the gross worship of possessions. The ideal of life, never to do anything for the sake of money that would not be done for its own sake, had been killed by the race for wealth. The balance of life seemed unthinkable to those who saw one excess, and took refuge in the other ; and the beggar's bowl became the ideal of genuine life from India to Ireland. Such appealed to the religious sense of faith and guidance, such appealed to the base wish to avoid labour and forethought and to impose on the energies of others. The only salvation for the ideal of Poverty was to limit it to individual possession, and to allow the community of paupers to hold their common property. The only salvation for the individual was in the systems of active labour for the benefit of the community. And such were but temporary refuges for the principle. The pauper membership of a rich house only

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added the zest of partisanship to the love of lucre. There was no substitute for the healthy balance of a mind that could use this world as not abusing it.

Renunciation in general, not only of wealth, but of house and family and all pleasures, has been an ideal of religious thought as a way to holiness, regardless of any balance of character. Even the Stoics did not lose their equanimity so far ; Epictetus speaking of offices, money, and authority, said : " A man scatters figs and almonds abroad ; children seize them, and fight among themselves. . . . What then ? If thou miss them when he is flinging them about, let it not vex thee. If a fig fall into thy bosom, take and eat it, for so far even a fig is to be valued. . . . And when you kiss your little child, or wife, think *I kiss a mortal* ; and so shall you not be troubled when they die. . . . Now this is what you shall see done by skilful ball-players. None careth for the ball as it were a thing good or bad ; but only about throwing it and catching it. . . . And so should we do also, having the carefulness of the most zealous players, and yet indifference, as were it merely about a ball " (Epictetus, ed. Rolleston, pp. 77, 50, 48). This sense of detachment is the balanced form of renunciation, carried to its extreme in such a form, but yet not flinging away the duties of life like Buddha or Simon Stylites.

Isolation, or the renunciation of all companionship, is more a phase of Egypt and Syria than of the

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extreme east or west. The hermits of the fourth and fifth centuries were its great exemplars. But it may also occur among ourselves, as in the case of Fox and others who have felt the need of going out into the wilderness. The opposite extreme of an incessant bustle of people and affairs, which leaves no space for real thought, is a hopeless bar to depth of feeling or character ; and a quiet time for the working of ideas is essential to mental progress or balance. Hence isolation is a needful condition for a time to the healthy mind ; while the indulgence in it is favoured by intolerance and spiritual pride, and it may become a most unwholesome form of self-intoxication.

All of these forms of the excess of inhibition are made the more unseemly by Fanaticism, just as the excellencies of the balanced mind are rendered the more perfect by Devoutness. Fanaticism may be of a gentlemanly kind, as when the Pharisee thanks God that he is not as other men. It may take over all the pugnacity of tribal feelings, when it is a bond of union of a militant sect, in the streets of Belfast or the desert of Abu Klea. Or it may make the solitary assassin kill the best of men who do not conform to his wild dreams. Its essence is the intolerant spirit of self-rightness, usually produced by ignorance.

We now turn from the effect of Religion on conduct, to its inner results of Mysticism. The properties of this state are classed by Dr. James as



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(1) Ineffability, or the inadequacy of any words or expressions to convey to others the mystic impression on the mind, An extacy by its very passage from a state of *stasis* or ordinary being, transcends expression in terms of our being. It touches and enters a new sphere of emotion, of which those who remain behind must be unconscious. (2) Noetic quality, or insight beyond the ordinary scope of knowledge or intuition. This belief in extraordinary insight is a well-marked phase of mental aberration, which is certainly of a debasing type, either of mental decay or intoxication. (3) Transience, or briefness of the mystic impression, that may, however, recur in successive stages which are felt to be continuously connected. (4) Passivity, or the absence of volition and the eruption of the unconscious mind, which may, however, be also caused by voluntary inhibitions of action.

That links of connection in the mind may be unconsciously formed and held seems certain, and that such may be surprising to the conscious mind when they come forward to recognition, may give a basis for a mechanical mysticism, or surprise at thought which has no known source. Again, any striking word, phrase, or thing which abides in the mind, without defined connection, becomes a subject of unconscious wonder and a centre of mystic thought. Another path to a mystic state is the diminution of volition leading to an unobserved loss of sense of balance ; hence the balance of ex-

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citement and inhibition is supposed to be kept with surprising perfection, and the mind is exhilarated by this success. Such seems to be the first action of intoxicants, and such may be a natural state which appears as a minor mysticism. Thus apart from positive aberration, or influence of external beings, the mental mechanism itself may induce some forms of mystic impression.

The various expressions of states of mysticism all bear toward the consciousness of the unknown or unconsciousness of the visible and known. They may occur as new meanings suddenly felt of familiar things, abstraction of the self from all else, a new sense of being, but most logically perhaps as the Indian *yoga*, or will-produced state of obscuration of sense, to attain *samâdhi*, or the working of the mind objectless and bodiless. The stages of contemplation, or *dhyâna*, are Concentration, Cessation of intellect with satisfaction, Indifference and a new consciousness begins, Perfection of the new consciousness, and sense of absolute negation, the end beyond idea and perception. In terms of our present enquiry this points to atrophy of the will bringing into view stages of the unconscious mind ; and mysticism may perhaps be solely the reaching by consciousness of the mind centres of the physical organism, while the brightness of volition is so much obscured that regions usually quite dark can be dimly perceived. This state obviously leaves the greatest scope for any introduction of influence

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from any superhuman will. The summing up of Dr. James is: "Mystical truth exists for the individual who has the transport, but for no one else (p. 405). . . . Non-mystics are under no obligation to acknowledge in mystical states a superior authority . . . yet . . . the existence of mystical states absolutely overthrows the pretension of non-mystical states to be the sole and ultimate dictators of what we may believe" (p. 427).

The last branch of unbalanced Religious experiences is that of Hallucinations. These are trance states in which the senses are suppressed while the mind wanders in new regions; or else illusions of the senses, which take the form of lights, effulgences or aura, or sensible presences perceived as influences or as bodily forms. These enter so much into the scope of mental disease that it is useless to begin upon the detail of so far-spreading a subject.

In this outline we have followed the textbook of Dr. James, and often used his words without implying that this is a summary of all that he describes. But we have determined the order here followed, and attempted to gain a more physiological basis, together with some expansion of the more English characteristics, so as to gain a firmer grasp of the working of the religious mind, in preparation for the understanding of the documents which we now seek to follow.

## CHAPTER III

### THE DATEABLE HERMETIC WRITINGS

IN looking at the mass of scattered documents and fragments which remain to us of the religious thought of the Graeco-Roman age, the distinction which is most prominent to our minds is between those which underlie Christianity and those which are subject to Christian influence. This is by no means a purely logical distinction, as what we call Christianity was so largely modified by previous influence, that its influence in turn was often only the persistence of older thought. But as it has been the strongest prepossession of students that everything we see in Christianity originated within it, the need of discriminating what is pre-Christian is a first necessity of study. A complication is introduced by the later editing, and the large additions made, in some cases, to the earlier documents. Some critical treatment, therefore, by those qualified to handle such materials is needed before we can use them. The general neglect of the manuscripts has been somewhat removed by the zeal of German editors, and by the recent painstaking translations of an

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English scholar, Mr. G. R. S. Mead,\* besides earlier translations of Philon, the *Life of Apollonius*, etc. We are not here taking into account the remains of western thought, such as the writings of the great Stoics, Epictetus, Seneca, and Aurelius, but only the lines of Oriental thought which came forward at this time, and which are preserved mainly in the Hermetic literature. Of the sources of thought mingled together in this strange confusion we can trace Egyptian, Babylonian, Syrian, Persian, and Indian, probably also northern influences from Asia Minor, beside the immense pervasion of Jewish and Greek thought, which took up the other material, and converted it wholesale to its own usages.

Apparently the earliest of this Hermetic class of writings is the Korē Kosmou or Virgin of the World. It has more connection with the earlier mythology of Egypt than the other works. Isis and Horus are the teacher and taught, Thoth, Imhotep, and Ptah are all named, the mission of Osiris and Isis is recounted, the divine parentage of the kings is described, and Egypt is the happy centre of all the world. As such Egyptian detail is absent from works of the first or second century B.C., it would be reasonable to put this earlier; and the Egyptian forms of the names of the gods imply earlier translation than that of the other

\* *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, 633 pp. ; *Thrice Greatest Hermes*, 481 + 403 + 330 pp. ; *Pistis Sophia*, 394 pp.

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works. What seems to stamp the period is an allusion in sect. 48, where the central land of Egypt is described as "free from trouble, ever it brings forth, adorns and educates, and only with such weapons wars [on men] and wins the victory, and with consummate skill, like a good satrap bestows the fruit of its own victory upon the vanquished." It would seem impossible for the allusion to the government of a satrap to be preferred by an Egyptian, except under the Persian dominion. And such a reference to wise government could not occur in the very troubled years of plunder and confusion, 342 to 332 B.C. We must go back to the days of wise and righteous rule of Persia, 525-405 B.C., to reach a possible comparison with a wise satrap. We know so little of the details of the Persian dealings with Egypt, that the allusion to a generous satrap can hardly be fixed in history. But it is probable that the reference is to the events of the conquest by Cambyses in 525, followed by the enlightened reign of Darius, beginning in 521, soon after which, about 518, the satrap Aryandes attacked Cyrene, and brought back much spoil of captives and plunder into Egypt. Thus within a few years of the conquest of Egypt, a good satrap bestowed the fruits of victory upon the vanquished. This would throw the *Korē Kosmou* back to about 510 B.C.; but in any case we must, by this allusion to a satrap, date it within a century after

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that. Thus it would precede all the Apocryphal Wisdom literature of Alexandria, and indeed there is no trace of Jewish influence in the ideas or language.

The subject of the work is the origin of all things. Beginning with the principle "that every nature which lies underneath should be co-ordered and fulfilled by those that lie above," this is carried out by the divine production of heavenly souls, and next of sacred animals. The souls rebel and are then embodied as men, and the gods form the world for them. The evils of man are righted by the Divine Efflux, Osiris and Isis, and the nature of man is explained. Such is the argument of the work, obscured by magnificent images and phrases. The various beliefs which are stated or implied give a body of ideas, which we can thus date as underlying the rest of the literature. (The numbers here refer to Mead's sections.)

In (1) we read of the divine beauty of the rich majesty of Night, before God was known, and of the ordered motions and hidden influences of the Sun and planets bestowing order on the things below. (2) Beside the Creator there were immortal gods, into whom he breathes love and pours radiance, that they might seek and desire to find and win success. (3) Among the gods were Hermes, Tat his son and heir, afterwards came Asklepios-Imhotep according to the will of Ptah who is Hephaistos. Their enquiry was ordained by Fore-

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knowledge or Providence, queen of all ; thus fate is over the gods. (5) Hermes binds his holy books with spells, until they shall be found by souls. (6) When the Kosmos was to awake, God said, "Nature, arise!" and from His word came a perfectly beautiful feminine principle, at whom the gods marvelled. This seems to be the Kcrē Kosmou or Virgin of the Kosmos, after whom this writing is named. By the help of Toil she made her daughter Invention, who was to rule over all that had been made. These, however, take no further action, but (8) the Breath of God and Conscious Fire blended with unconscious matter is (9) the material for myriads of souls (10) of sixty different degrees. (11) These kept the circulation of Nature in motion, but are threatened if they transgress. (12) God then makes the sacred animals of water and earth, and gives some matter to the souls to make men in their own nature. The souls make birds of the lightest stuff, quadrupeds of the stiffer plasm, then fish, and of the cold and heavy residue creeping things. But the whole of this existence is entirely before and outside of the present world and men.

The second great stage is the rebellion of souls and its results. (15) Proud of their work, the souls armed themselves, and were forever moving; God therefore resolved to embody them as men. (16) The gods are called to promise their gifts to the new world of men. (17) The Sun will shine, the



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Moon give Fear, Silence, Sleep, and Memory, Kronos will give Justice and Necessity, Zeus will give Fortune, Hope, and Peace, Ares gives Struggle, Wrath, and Strife, Aphrodite gives Desire, Bliss, and Laughter, and Hermes gives Prudence, Wisdom, Persuasiveness, and Truth, and will work with Invention. This idea of the gods endowing man is seen in the tale of the creation of the wife of Bata, and is therefore Egyptian, but the details are Greek in origin. It is possible that sect. 17 is a later Greek expansion inserted in the Egyptian text; otherwise we must regard the whole as a Graeco-Egyptian philosophy, for the Egyptian would not admit Greek elements at this date into a religious myth.

(18) Hermes then made the bodies, with too much water added that they should not be powerful. The souls are then en fleshed by God, and wail at their fate. (19) The history of this was confided by Hermes to Kneph, and by him told to Isis, who now tells Horus. (20, 21) The wail of the imprisoned souls is (22) answered by God that if they are sinless they shall dwell in the fields of Heaven (fields of Aalu), if blameable then on earth, if they improve they shall regain Heaven, but if they sin worse then they shall become animals. Here Metempsychosis is fully stated, as in Plato; but it is not in the Egyptian form, and the Indian influence appears already at work. (23) Then all receive breath, and the reward of the final dis-

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solution of the body is a return to the happiness of their first estate. The more righteous, upon the threshold of the divine change, shall be righteous kings, genuine philosophers, founders of states, lawgivers, real seers, true herb-knowers, prophets of the gods, skilful musicians, astronomers, augurs and sacrificers. (24) Others lower shall be eagles, lions, dragons, and dolphins.

(25) Then a mighty spirit rises from the earth, and as the souls were entering their plasms he protests against making such daring and (26) enquiring beings, and (27) prays that they may have pain, cares, struggles, and illness to keep them down. This conception seems quite un-Egyptian, and much more of the Pandora type. (28) Hermes agrees to impose Fate upon them. (29) God then assembles the gods who are free from all decay and who regulate the mighty Aeon (the only aeonic reference here), to join with Him in making the Heaven, earth, and sun. All previous creations appear to have been pre-sensuous, the visible world only now appearing. (31) Then the Souls cause such impious turmoil, newly shut in prison, that (32) Fire complains that it is turned from sacrificial rites with sweet-smelling vapours, to burn up flesh (this point is strongly Indian, as implying that no flesh was sacrificed, but only spices); (33) Air complains that it is polluted with dead bodies, Water complains that rivers wash the hands of murderers and receive the slain; and (34) Earth

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complains that it is dishonoured by the corruption of their carcasses. (35) God remedies this condition by sending another Efflux of His Nature, (36) Osiris and Isis. They filled life full of life, stopped slaughter, hallowed shrines, gave laws, food and shelter, set up courts of law, filled the world with justice, and introduced the witness of an oath. They also taught embalming, and the doctrine of the soul passing out in a swoon (which might result in death), taught about daimons, and engraved the teaching, were authors of arts, sciences, and laws, established the sacred rites, the grade of prophets, and magic, philosophy, and medicine. This is far earlier than the account of Osiris by Plutarch, and agrees with that. (38) Then Osiris and Isis, having fulfilled their mission, were demanded back by those who dwell in Heaven, and were permitted to return.

(39) Horus demands how royal souls are born. Isis replies that in Heaven the gods dwell with the Architect of all, in the Aether are the stars and sun, in the Air are souls and the moon, and on Earth are men and living things. (40) The king is the last of gods but first of men, divorced from his godship while on earth : his soul descends from a region above that of other souls. (41) Those who have lived a blameless life and are about to be changed into gods, become kings that they may train for godship ; or those souls who are already gods, but have slightly erred, are born as kings. (42) Dis-

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positions of kings depend upon their angels and daimons who attend them. (43) The birth of noble souls is because they descend from a more glorious place (agreeing with the idea of sixty grades of souls). (44) Sex is a thing of bodies not of souls. (46) The inhabited earth is like a human being lying face up, (47) at the south is its head, its feet at the north ; on the right to the east are fighters, on the left to the west men fight with the left hand, those to the north excel in legs and feet. Egypt is the heart, its men gifted with intelligence and filled with wisdom. (48) The Nile flows from the south on breaking of the frost ; east and west is burnt by the rising and setting sun, and the north congealed. Hence Egypt alone is happy. (49, 50) Souls are constrained differently by the four elements.

The most essential notions that we see here are Creation by the Word, the gods acting under the command of a supreme God, the function of created souls to keep nature circulating, the body a prison of the soul, the heavenly types of animals preceding the earthly creation, and the mission of gods on earth. Beside the Egyptian ideas already mentioned, Greek influence is seen in the characters of gods and in the episode of the Earth spirit, and probably Indian influence in the metempsychosis and the fire-sacrifice of spices, as by Apollonios. There is throughout this cosmology a vigorous and eventful chain of thought, entirely different to the maundering of later writers.

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Closely linked with the Korē Kosmou is the Sermon of Isis to Horus. It is slightly less Egyptian, writing of Hephaistos and not Ptah, classing Horus with the mighty gods, and being rather less concrete. It may then be a rather later continuation, as it closely joins on in subject to the close of the Korē Kosmou. The ideas of this Sermon are, that the souls of men and animals are all alike, and metempsychosis is assumed between human and animal bodies : the soul is individual, the work of God's hands and mind : its congress with the body is a concord wrought by God's necessity : at death it returns to its proper region. The region of souls is between the moon and earth, for above the moon are the gods and stars and providence ; the souls pass through air and wind without friction ; their region is divided into the four quarters of earth, higher the eight winds, higher sixteen spaces of subtler air, and highest thirty-two spaces of subtlest air ; these are called zones, firmaments, or strata. The kingly souls occupy the highest, and so in order down to the base souls the lowest. There is a Warder of souls, and a Conductor to and from the bodies. Bodies are a blend of the four elements, each affecting the character.

Another document which must be early is the Definitions of Asklepios to King Ammon (*Corp. Herm.*, xvi). It belongs to the time when Greek was superseding Egyptian for philosophical purposes. It says that the Hermetic books " will be

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still unclearer when afterwards the Greeks will want to turn our tongue into their own . . . for the power of the Egyptian names have in themselves the bringing into act of what is said." The power of the word is here affirmed as in old Egyptian belief. "Keep this our sermon from translation, in order that such mighty mysteries may not come to the Greeks, and the disdainful speech of Greece, with its looseness, and its surface beauty, so to speak, take all the strength out of the solemn and the strong—the energetic speech of Names. The Greeks, O King, have novel words, energetic of argumentation, and thus is the philosophizing of the Greeks—the noise of words. But we do not use words; but we use sounds full-filled with deeds." This is too strenuous and genuine to be a mere archaistic declamation; the hearty belief in the energetic power of Egyptian words would not have survived any long use of Greek. The early Ptolemaic age, when Philadelphos was having Egyptian literature translated for his library, would be the latest time likely for this religious hatred of innovation. It might be earlier, when Greek influence was creeping in; it could not well be later, when Greek was the current language of the educated classes. But further, this is an address to a king, and no idea of addressing a Macedonian ruler could have arisen in the mind of one so hating Greek innovation. It must belong to a time when an Egyptian king was

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before the mind of such a writer. Further, the king is Ammon, and all Egyptian kings were sons of Amen and represented the god. The reign of Nekht-nebef, Nectanebo II, 359-342 B.C., would be the latest time fitting these conditions; and as he was a patron of the old Egyptian art and learning, which he tried to revive, such an address to the king would be probable in this reign.

We now turn to the ideas contained in this document. God is the Universal Maker, who makes all things for His own self, so all are parts of God, and God is All, for the Fullness of things is One. But this God is identified with the Sun (he is Ra). The Sun pours down his essence (rays and energy) and takes matter up (water and air); he is himself divine; he extends through all space down to the Abyss; he drives the Kosmic team, with the reins of Life and Soul and Spirit, Deathlessness and Genesis. The Sun distends the Kosmos, affording birth to all, and when they fail he takes them to his arms again. Around him, but beneath the stars, are the choirs of daimons; they watch over men, and work the will of the gods by storm and earthquake, famine and war. Men's acts of fate or ignorance are not punished, but only their impiety. But the soul's rational part, or reason—logos—is above the lordship of the daimons; and if a ray of God shines through the Sun into it the daimons do not act upon it; all other men are led and driven by the daimons.

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Here we have the universality of Ra, the agency of daimons (leading to the idea of the world "lying in the evil one"), and the salvation of men from their power by receiving a Divine Ray in the soul. This gives an important dating for such ideas, especially in a strongly Egyptian document with hatred of foreign influence.

Another large work, whose date has been much debated, is the Perfect Sermon. It is known in a Latin version; and a few extracts of the original Greek given by Lydus and Stobaeus, and of the Latin by Lactantius and Augustine. From Lactantius it is clear that the work was already known in the time of Constantine. Also the Latin translation is attributed to Appuleius 150 years earlier; and, though that is disputed, yet it is in old African Latin, and therefore some time before Constantine. Apart from the cardinal passage of the description of Egypt, there are allusions which must be of an early date. The worship of sacred animals was in full force, the nomes were ruled by the regulations of animal worship (as to what was sacred and what might be killed) and were named from the animals, and there were wars between the nomes on account of the animal worship, as related by Juvenal in the first century A.D. Now the cult of animals was giving way in the second and third centuries to general Isis and Horus worship. Again, Isis is described as a wrathful as well as beneficent goddess; whereas the later Isis was as solely beneficent as



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the Madonna. Egypt was still regarded as the most important land, the image of heaven and shrine of all the world, as it is the blessed centre in the Korē Kosmou. Again the personalia are the same as in the last-described work, Asklepios and King Ammon, and these names, which were then of interest, would be meaningless in a later age. The minor scattered indications would, then, point to this being of the same group as the documents already described.

We may now consider the celebrated passage, quoting only the parts distinctive of date. "Egypt is the image of the Heaven ; or, what is truer still, the transference, or the descent, of all that are in governance or exercise in Heaven [i.e. the heavenly descent of the kings]. . . . The time will come when Egypt will appear to have in vain served the Divinity . . . and all its holy cult will fall to nothingness. . . . And foreigners shall fill this region and this land ; and there shall be not only the neglect of pious cults, but . . . a penalty shall be decreed against the practice of pious cults and worship of the gods, proscription of them. Then shall this holiest land, seat of our shrines and temples, be choked with tombs and corpses. Oh, Egypt, Egypt, of thy pious cults tales only will remain . . . words only will be left cut on thy stones. . . . And Egypt will be made the home of Scyth or Indian or some one like to them. . . . Oh, holiest river, I tell thee what will be ; with bloody

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torrents shalt thou overflow thy banks. . . . The tale of tombs shall far exceed the living, and the surviving remnant shall be Egyptians in their tongue alone, but in their actions foreigners." The only attempted historic explanation of this has been the triumph of Christianity, and the destruction of temples in the Theodosian age, late in the fourth century A.D. Yet the evidence of Lactantius that the document is earlier, and was well known under Constantine, has been a difficulty. Not only so, but the minor evidences stated above push the date at least back to the second or third century, and even link it with the works of Persian age. We need to look in history for—the cessation of divine governance of kings (which ended with Nekht-nebef),—foreigners newly filling the land (which could not be a novelty after the Macedonian invasion),—neglect of Egyptian cults owing to proscription by invaders (although Ptolemies and Roman Emperors went on founding temples),—Scyth and Indian being named as representative of extreme foreigners,—and a bloody war. No point in the Roman or Ptolemaic periods before the age of Lactantius or Augustine can possibly fit these conditions. The only known solution is the Persian conquest, 342 to 332 B.C. "The miserable land was a prey to their rapacity. Okhos placed an ass in the temple of Ptah and slaughtered the <sup>ḥ</sup>Apis for a banquet, as well as other sacred animals. The temples were utterly looted, the city walls destroyed.

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Egypt lay waste and wrecked" (*Students' Hist. Eg.*, iii, 389). The divine rule of kings ceased, foreigners newly filled the land, the cults were proscribed, and the Scythians and Indians were the extreme western and eastern troops used in the Persian occupation of Egypt.

We are thus led by historical references to the date of 510 B.C. (or 410 at the latest) for *Korē Kosmou*, 350 B.C. for *Asklepios to Ammon*, and 340 B.C. for the *Perfect Sermon*. These works are closely connected in their character and their personalia and imagery, and therefore support each other. And there is nothing incompatible with such a date for Egyptian originals, while the Greek translations may very likely show a later style. This *Perfect Sermon* is too long for an analysis to be given, but we will note the ideas which are involved in it. The style is more wordy and less concrete and factful than that of the *Korē Kosmou*; there are far fewer definite ideas to be obtained from it; and, if our dates hold, we may put this change from definite cosmology to verbal diffuseness at about 400 B.C.

God is stated to be All in One and One in All (as in *Asklepios to Ammon*). There are four elements. ✓ But *Kosmos* is One (a single entity), Soul is One, God is One. All things—gods, daimons, men, and animals—are in genera and species, the genera immortal, the species mortal except the gods. Daimons may be united to gods or to men. Men may

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be joined to gods, to daimons, or to animals. Animals have bodies and souls, and are filled with spirit. In man sense and reason is added, as a fifth part out of the aether (i.e. from God). Some men have won such rapture that they have obtained a share of Divine Sense (in a mystic state). The Lord and Maker of all, rightly called God, from Himself made the Second God, the Visible and Perceptible, whom he loved as His Son. Man was made to contemplate the Son. Man is made of soul and body, to admire heavenly things and to govern earthly. In part he is deathless, in part subject to death while in the body. Many say that God could have abolished Evil ; but Evil is in the world as though it were one of its limbs. God made provision by sense, science, and intelligence given to man, that he should avoid crimes of ill. But Daimons drive men to war, robbery, and deceit. After a general decay, either flood or fire or pestilence shall purify the world, and all good things shall be made new. When the soul leaves the body then the judgment and the weighing of merit pass into its highest daimon's power (the chief guardian-angel is the weigher). If pious it is allowed to rest in fit spots ; if soiled with evil it is driven into the depth, to vortices of Air, Fire, and Water, between heaven and earth, ever racked with ceaseless pains (no metempsychosis). Eternity transcends the bounds of Time, but Time, having no limits, is of the nature of Eternity. The principals are God and

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Aeon (eternity); Kosmos being movable is not a principal (no trace of successive aeons). God is all, and by Him are all things, and all are of His Will. Without Him naught hath been, nor is, nor will be. For all things are from Him, and in Him, and through Him. Our ancestors evoked souls of daimons or angels, and attached them to their sacred images, so that the statues could act. Fate gives birth to the beginning; Necessity compels the end. Order preserves the warp and woof of what Fate and Necessity arrange. Prayers were made toward the sun at rising, and also at setting, after which came the meal. There is also an important reference to the rise of ascetic communities, which we shall notice under that subject.

From considering these four long documents we can now sum up the beliefs of the pre-Alexandrine period in Egypt. Other documents may also belong to this period, and probably do, but they do not contain allusions which show their age, and cannot therefore give a date to the ideas which they contain.

Regarding the Kosmos. The sequence in time is Night, the creation of Kosmos (the Korē Kosmou), heavenly souls and animals, embodiment of souls, creation of the visible world. Creation is by the spoken word of God. The heavenly souls keep up the circulation of nature. Fate, Order, and Necessity rule all, even the gods. Destruction by Flood, Fire, or Pestilence will renew the earth.

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Regarding God. God and Eternity (Aeon) are the principals. God is All, All in One and One in All. In the fourth century we read of the All-maker from Himself making the Visible Second God, whom he loved as His Son, and who is known to men. God summons the gods to act. The choirs of daimons do the will of the gods by using evil.

Regarding Man. Souls are made from the breath of God and conscious fire. Rebellious souls are embodied. At death souls return to their proper region in the sixty spaces. In the sixth to fifth century, metempsychosis allots souls to heaven, kings, men, or animals. In the fourth century, souls are judged and weighed by their chief daimon, the good live in peace, the evil are driven into storm and outer darkness. The guardian angels of men fix their dispositions, apparently acting through them. Daimons bring evil on man, driving him to robbery or deceit. But the Reason or *logos* of man, a fifth part of him derived from the Aether, is above the power of daimons. And if a ray of God enter man it keeps daimons off for ever. Evil is not abolished by God, but is provided against by the sense and intelligence given to man. Troubles were brought on man by a mighty Earth spirit. Mystic rapture was recognised as giving a share of the Divine Sense.

The occurrence of Metempsychosis in the sixth to fifth century and not in the fourth century B.C. is parallel to its being more prominent in Greek

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thought at the earlier than at the later date. If we suppose that it was due to Indian thought (as seems most likely) this would imply that the Indian influence belonged to the sixth century, rather than to later times. This is what is historically likely. India was the richest province of the Persian empire, and it was owing to the wide and peaceful sway of Persia in the sixth century that India had free course in the civilised world, and could reach Egypt and Greece. On the contraction of Persia in the fourth century, Indian connections would be interrupted, and the ideas that came through Persia would be less in favour.

Not only do we gather what the lines of religious thought were in the pre-Alexandrine times, but we may learn much from the silences of these documents. When four works, extending to 150 pages of print, only touch in an unimportant manner some words which are very prominent elsewhere, and which would naturally have taken their place had they been familiar, the argument from silence is very strong. There is only one mention of Aeon as Eternity, and no doctrine of Aeons is hinted at. There is no *logos* except as a name for man's reason. There is no *Sophia* or wisdom. There is no trace of Jewish influence. All of these silences confirm the pre-Alexandrine date of the documents, and show that the absent ideas came later from some other than Egyptian sources, and had not yet been spread into general religious philosophy.

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But of the later religious ideas we already find a second or visible God, loved as a Son, and known to men ; souls receiving light from God which keeps them from power of daimons for ever ; the driving of lost souls into outer darkness for ever ; and the end of the world by water or fire and its renewal. And we see that not only the later Fathers were familiar with such writings, but also St. Paul, as in Romans there is a close parallel to the Perfect Sermon. " For all things are from Him, in Him, and through Him " (xxxiv) appears in the verse—" Of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things " (Rom. xi, 36).



## CHAPTER IV

### THE ASCETICS

THE rise of Asceticism is a subject of great interest in Religious thought, as it has been so powerful an influence. It was of rapid growth in the Mediterranean world, as a few centuries seem to have sufficed to give it a large hold. In Egyptian writings before 600 B.C. there is no trace of the ascetic ideal. In the early times the abundance of good things of the world is always represented as the best wish for the future life. The proverbial literature of the Pyramid ages pictures a strong-minded man, well-balanced, firm but kind, enjoying all rightful pleasures, and not denying himself a fair share of enjoyments or relaxation. The tales of later times never represent self-denial or abnegation as of any value or effect, the idea of it is simply absent. The papyri showing the occupations of the blessed dead, portray the man and wife seated together, receiving all pleasant things, or playing at games. And nowhere do we meet with any virtue beyond the reprobation of evil. It is only the rich noble who boasts that he has given food to the hungry and clothes to the

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needy ; no ordinary man presumes to claim such good works. Nor is any sign of communism seen ; every man has his own possessions, and bargains with the gods to give him more. In Jewish thought we meet the same type. Every man wishes to live under his own vine and under his own fig-tree. He is to be blessed with a fruitful wife and a large family, and the sign of virtue is to be external prosperity. Even with the deepest contrition there is the hope that "the children of thy servants shall continue." Only in extraordinary cases of single votaries or prophets do we meet with any leaning to ascetic life. In the Greek world, apart from the philosophers who claimed foreign guidance, the life was simply sensuous ; and no idea appears that abstaining from any lawful pleasures could be acceptable to the gods. Even in some of the Hermetic writings Asceticism is contradicted. In the dialogue of Hermes to Asklepios (*Corp. Herm.*, ii) we read, "Child-making is a very great and most pious thing in life for them who think aright, and to leave life on earth without a child a very great misfortune and impiety ; and he who hath no child is punished by the daimons after death." And in The Sacred Sermon (*Corp. Herm.*, iii) : "They selected out the births of men for gnosis of the works of God . . . and gnosis of its blessings, that they might increase in increasing and multiply in multitude." So far as this body of thought was uniform at one time, we should place

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these views before 340 B.C., when, in the Perfect Sermon, we find the first hint of an ascetic community. Two passages in the Perfect Sermon seem to refer to the same place on the western desert. In sect. xxvii we read, "They who rule the earth shall be distributed and be gathered in a city at the top (*summo*) of Egypt's entrance (*Aegypti initio*) which shall be founded towards the setting sun . . . they are gathered in a very large city upon the Libyan Hill." And, in sect. xxvii is mentioned "Asklepios . . . to whom there is a temple hallowed on the Libyan Hill near the shore of crocodiles." This hill in the Libyan desert can hardly be other than the high land at the back of the Fayum by the lake of crocodiles, where Dimeh and other towns of the pre-Ptolemaic and Graeco-Roman age are still seen. And the use of this term "shore" (*littus*) in place of lake agrees to the pre-Ptolemaic times, when the shore extended to the towns; whereas later the lake was dried up some miles from the sites. The statement that the city is at the top or highest point of Egypt's entrance agrees to this position by the Fayum. Next after the plain of the Delta, Egypt's entrance was from Memphis to the Fayum, after which come the Heptanomide or Middle Egypt, and the Thebaid or Upper Egypt. Here, in the most out-of-the-way region, yet inhabitable, we read that the righteous were gathered in a city. No fitter place for an ascetic community

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could be found; and it may well be that the fertility of this remote part was due to the reclamations and canalising by a new body which wished to be withdrawn from the ordinary course of life. Similarly in Christian times it was in Nitria that monasticism had its main hold.

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If, then, an ascetic life was already established when the second Persian invasion was overthrowing Egypt, 340 B.C., and it had been entirely foreign to Egypt, Judaea, and Greece, to what source can we look for it? India was the recognised home of gymnosophists in Greek times, Indians served in the Persian army in the great age of prosperity, and India was the richest province of Persia. Figures of Indians have now been found in Memphis, certainly dating from 200 B.C., and probably also earlier. Now the most favourable time for establishing an Indian connection was when Persia ruled supreme from India to Cyrene, about 500 B.C., and the opening would be much less when Persia lost hold of Egypt after 405 B.C. There is, then, a reasonable view that Indian influence had come into Egypt in the fifth century B.C.; and at the break-up of the Egyptian kingdom, the ascetic devout were to be found gathered in the most remote habitable region, the shore at the back of the Fayum.

The next stage is that of the recluses of the Serapeum, of whom we have a glimpse owing to a batch of family papers having been preserved.

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A Greek anchorite, Ptolemy, son of Glaukias, lived there for ten or fifteen years in strict seclusion, as one of the "possessed" or "retained," not leaving his cell even when officially summoned; and if a Greek adopted so un-Hellenic a custom, doubtless Egyptians were similarly devotees. This record dates from about 170 B.C.; but similar recluses were known in A.D. 211, when a Papinius was possessed to the Lord Sarapis, and another man was one of the possessed of the Holy Celestial God (Mahaffy, *Empire of Ptolemies*, 358; *Revue Egyptologique*, i, 160; ii, 143). The class of recluses who were thus retained or possessed in honour of Sarapis were not customary for only a short period, but continued during at least four centuries.

In the midst of this period we have the fullest detail of the ascetic life in the accounts of the Therapeutae of Egypt and the Essenes of Judaea. These communities are of the first importance in the history of thought, of communism, and of the development of Christianity. As the accounts of these bodies are scattered in various passages of Philon and Josephus, it is desirable to combine the statements on each point. The works of Philon on this subject are considered to be his earliest, and may be dated about A.D. 20. Josephus wrote his works A.D. 75-93, but we can hardly doubt that his knowledge of the Essenes was gathered during his three years of ascetic training in the desert,

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about A.D. 54-57. These dates will show that such communities could not have been influenced by Christianity; but many minor points and expressions in the New Testament doubtless reflect the feelings of the pious who were impressed by the Essene life and ideals.

The various heads to be looked at separately are the Places of abode, mode of Recruiting, Renunciation, Marriage, Dwellings, Organization, Habits of life, Books, Worship, Doctrine, and Mysticism. The differences of place—Alexandria and Judaea, and of date—more than half a century, must be observed where differences occur between the systems. Probably Philon knew the Therapeutae close to his native city of Alexandria in his early life, and his statements refer to a date not later than A.D. 10. For ease of reference the accounts of the Egyptian Therapeutae are noted here as A.D. 10, the description of the Jewish Essenes by Philon as 20, and the description by Josephus as 55. The exact words of the different accounts in the present tense are used here as far as possible.

*Places.* In A.D. 10 the Ascetics are found in many parts of the world, both Greek and non-Greek. In Egypt there are crowds of them in every nome, and specially round Alexandria. The most highly advanced come as to a Therapeutic fatherland to a spot which is on a fairly high terrace of the desert hills overlooking Lake Mareotis immediately south of Alexandria . . . security is en-

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sured by the belt of homesteads and villages. They make their abodes outside of the walls of towns, in woods or enclosed lands. In 20 they were in many cities of Judaea, and many villages, and great and populous communities, estimated as over 4000. Or they lived in villages, avoiding all cities, but sufficiently near unbelievers to receive wages. Also the country they occupied was invaded by treacherous and hypocritical chiefs who persecuted them. But in 55 many of them dwell in every city, and the number is still reckoned at 4000. It seems, therefore, that they were at first partly isolated, and arose in Egypt where bodily wants were few ; but that the converts later did not withdraw so much from cities, but were more like a derwish order, a brotherhood living in the world, but organized as a community.

*Recruits.* In A.D. 10 they leave their possessions to their sons and daughters, or to their companions and friends, and flee to the desert ; they are people well-born and well-bred and students of philosophy. In 20 there are no children or youths among the Essenes, but they are all full-grown. Old men had their own sons in the community, who in such case nursed them. In 55 they were Jews by birth ; they neglect marriage, but choose out other persons' children and form them according to their own manners. A candidate was not immediately admitted, but was under probation for a year. After that he was given a hatchet, a girdle, and a white

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garment. After proving that he approaches nearer to their way of living, he is made a partaker of the waters of purification. After two more years he is admitted to their society. After that they are parted into four classes, so separate that if the seniors are touched by the juniors, they must wash themselves, as if they had intermixed themselves with the company of a foreigner.

*Renunciation.* In A.D. 10 they hurry on without once turning back, leaving behind them their brethren, children, wives, parents, the multitudinous ties of relationship and bonds of friendship, their native places in which they were born and reared. In 20 no one ventures to acquire any property, neither house, nor slave, nor farm, nor flocks and herds. In 55 those who come to them must let what they have be common to the whole order. Nor is there any one who hath more than another. Thus the abandonment of everything, and future dependence on daily work of the early Egyptian bodies, had become later a system like mediaeval monasticism, where any property was given up to the community, and administered by the stewards, as we see below.

*Marriage.* In A.D. 10 celibacy is rather assumed than stated : there were no children among them ; the general sanctuary consists of two enclosures ; one separated off for men and the other for women ; at the seven weeks' festival there is a division made between them in their places at table, the men



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being apart on the right, and the women on the left ; and in the religious exercises afterwards they first of all separate into two bands, men in one and women in the other. Though marriage was avoided as a part of the general renunciation of life, yet there is no sign of the violent anti-feminism of the later monasticism. In 20 in Judaea, perceiving with more than ordinary acuteness and accuracy what is above all things calculated to dissolve such associations, they repudiate marriage and practise continence in an eminent degree. There was no hereditary or family connection ; but if old men had children in the community they were tended by them. By 55 a less stern view was taken ; they do not marry, but also do not absolutely deny the fitness of marriage. And there were also other Essenes who differ from them in the point of marriage, as thinking that by not marrying they cut off the principal part of human life . . . they demonstrate that they marry not out of regard to pleasure, but for the sake of posterity. It is possible that supply and demand entered into the question, and that a diminution of converts led to the natural increase of the community being tolerated.

*Dwellings.* In A.D. 10 the settlements were as slight as might be in the Egyptian climate, the dwellings of the community were very simple, and put together anyhow. In each dwelling is a sacred place called a shrine or a monasterion, in which in solitude they perform the mysteries

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of the holy life, taking into it neither drink nor food, but only the laws and inspired sayings of prophets and hymns. Having this one place for entire solitude in each dwelling, points to the dwellings being only for individuals and not for a group. Probably the dwellings were screens of palm sticks and mud, with a half roof, like the present field shelters; and a portion enclosed and more weather-proof at the end held the religious books and served for uninterrupted devotion. These huts are not crowded as in a town, nor are they far apart, because of the intercourse which is so dear to them, and also for mutual help in case of attack by robbers.

In Judaea, A.D. 20, they all dwell together in companies, and the house is open to all those of the same notions, who come to them from other quarters. This implies buildings occupied by many persons, more substantial than the Egyptian shanties. And in 55, if any of their sect come from other places, what they have lies open to them. Large buildings for public worship were used in all the periods.

*Clothing* was just to protect them from cold and heat, in winter a thick cloak, in summer a sleeveless robe of fine linen in Egypt, and much the same in Judaea.

*Organization.* There is no hint of a system in the Egyptian camps, each person probably supported themselves by flocks or agriculture, much

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like a Bedawy encampment on the edge of the desert in the present time. In Judaea there was always more system. At 20 they dwell in the same place, forming clubs and societies and combinations and unions; whatever belongs to one belongs to all, there is one magazine among them all, their expenses are all in common, their garments belong to them all in common, their food is common, since they all eat in messes. They worked for unbelievers and took pay, but wages were given up to one person, who is appointed as the universal steward and general manager and goes and purchases what is necessary. By 55 this was more organized. They do nothing but according to the injunctions of their curators, every one of them is sent away at sunrise by their curators to exercise some of the arts, and they have to take an oath to show fidelity to all men and especially to those in authority. Their stewards receive the income of their revenues and the fruits of the ground, they are good men and priests who get their food ready for them. One is appointed particularly to take care of strangers, and to provide garments and other necessaries for them. Here the free communism of the earlier stages was already being organized into the monastic form, with strict obedience, and the cessation of the earlier freedom.

*Life.* The means of life are not even hinted at among the Egyptians at A.D. 10. Their hands are

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pure of gain, unstained by any pretence of money-making affairs. For six days every one remains apart in solitude with himself in his monasterion engaged in study. But they had cattle who were rested on the seventh day, and hence they must have been agricultural as well as pastoral. But part of the system was the rigorous reduction of bodily wants ; none of them would think of taking food or drink before sundown ; a number of them remind themselves of their food but once in three days, while a few even after six days barely take a mouthful of the most necessary food. This extreme *ascesis* proves that no physical work was done, but that the higher life consisted in motionless contemplation, like the Indian type. The Judæan bodies were far more active. In 20 the different members have different employments, and labour without cessation. Before the sun rises they go to daily work, and do not quit it till after sunset. Some are agricultural, others shepherds, cowherds, bee-keepers, artisans, and handicraftsmen. But they are ignorant of all traffic, and of all commercial dealings, and all navigation, and they repudiate and keep aloof from everything which can possibly afford any inducement to covetousness. They make no weapons, and no one attended to any employment whatever connected with war. By 55, though more organization had grown up, they have all things in common and keep no servants ; they are supported entirely by hus-

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bandry, and labour from sunrise to the fifth hour, and after the noon meal they labour till the evening. They do not buy or sell anything one to another, for they are allowed to take what they want; and they are permitted to bestow food, but cannot give anything to their kindred without consent of the curators. When they travel . . . they take their weapons with them for fear of thieves, showing that the refusal to use weapons, and entire poverty, were both less essential. After the morning work they assemble themselves together again into one place, and when they have clothed themselves with white veils then they bathe their bodies in cold water. And after this purification is over, they every one meet together in an apartment of their own, into which it is not permitted to any of another sect to enter, while they go after a pure manner into the dining-room; . . . the baker lays their loaves in order; the cook also brings a single plate of one sort of food, and sets it before every one of them; a priest says grace before meat, and it is unlawful for any one to taste of the food before grace be said. The same priest, when he hath dined, says grace again after meat. . . . They return home to supper after the same manner . . . they give every one leave to speak in their turn, which silence thus kept in their house appears to foreigners like some tremendous mystery. Swearing is avoided by them. They do not allow of the change of garments

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or shoes until they be . . . entirely worn out. They enquire after such roots and medicinal stones as may cure their distempers. The court for judgment was of not fewer than a hundred, and its decisions were unalterable.

*Books.* In A.D. 10 each dwelling contained in its shrine the laws, and inspired sayings of prophets, and hymns. Taking the sacred writings they spend their time in study, and they have also works of ancient authors who were once heads of their school, and hymns of the ancient poets; for they have left behind them many metres and tunes in tri-metric epics, processional hymns, libation odes, altar-chants, stationary choruses, and dance songs admirably measured off in diverse strains. And they compose songs and hymns to God in all sorts of metres and melodies. In the public assemblies, A.D. 20, one takes up the holy volume and reads it, and another explains what is not very intelligible . . . and thus the people are taught piety . . . and the science of regulating the state, and the knowledge of such things as are naturally good or bad or indifferent. In 55 they take great pains in studying the writings of the ancients; and in their oath on admission they swear to preserve the books belonging to their sect.

*Worship.* In A.D. 10 twice a day, at dawn and even, they are accustomed to offer up prayers as the sun rises, praying for the real sunshine that

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their minds may be filled with heavenly light, and as it sets praying that their soul may withdraw to its own council-chamber, there to track out the truth. The whole interval from dawn to sunset they devote to their exercises. Taking the sacred writings they spend their time in study; they remain apart in solitude, never setting foot out of door or even looking out of window. In 55, before sunrise they put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers, as if they made a supplication for its rising.

Every seventh day, in A.D. 10, they come together to a general assembly, and take seats in order according to their age of membership, in the prescribed attitude, with their hands, palms downwards, the right between the breast and chin, the left by the side. The elder most skilled in the doctrines comes forth and discourses . . . explaining the precise meaning which does not merely light on the tips of the ears, but pierces the ear and reaches the soul. The rest all listen in silence. This general sanctuary consists of two enclosures, one for men, the other for women. The division is only partly built up, some three or four cubits from the floor. After paying due attention to the soul they anoint the body . . . they partake of no dainty fare, but plain bread with salt for seasoning, and some an extra relish of hyssop.

In 20 the seventh day is accounted sacred, on which they abstain from all other employments,

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and frequent the sacred places called synagogues, and there they sit according to their age in classes, the younger under the elder. Then one takes the holy volume and reads it, and another of the greatest experience comes forward and explains. They do not sacrifice animals. In 55 they are stricter than other Jews in resting on the seventh day ; they prepare their food the day before, and will not light a fire or move any vessel out of its place. They are excluded from the court of the temple, because they do not offer sacrifices as usual, but only more pure lustrations of their own.

Only in the account of the Egyptians, A.D. 10, is described the festival at the end of every seventh week or fifty days. Assembled together, clad in white robes, with joyous looks and with the greatest solemnity, at a sign from one of the Ephemereuts for the day . . . standing one beside the other in rows in a certain order, and raising eyes and hands to heaven . . . they offer prayer to God that their feast may be pleasing and acceptable. After prayers the elders sit down to table after the order of their election, and women also share in the feast . . . the men being apart on the right and the women on the left. They recline on nothing but papyrus mattresses and the plainest possible rugs, for they then somewhat relax their Spartan rigour of life. Nor are they waited on by slaves . . . but by the juniors of the order. Nor is wine brought in but clearest water . . . warmed for



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those of the older men whose tastes are delicate. The table, moreover, contains nothing that has blood in it, for the food is bread with salt for seasoning, to which hyssop is added as an extra relish. After the guests have taken their place . . . the president searches out some passages in the Sacred Scriptures, or solves some difficulty proposed by one of the members. . . . When he seems to have discoursed long enough . . . there is a burst of applause . . . restricted to three claps of the hands. Then the president, rising, chants a hymn . . . and after him the others also in bands in proper order, while the rest listen in deep silence, except when they have to join in the burden and refrains, for they all, both men and women, join in. When the hymns are over the juniors bring in the table . . . after the banquet they keep the holy all-night festival. They all stand up in a body, and about the middle of the entertainment they first of all separate into two bands, men in one and women in the other ; and a leader is chosen for each. Then they chant hymns made in God's honour, in many metres and melodies, sometimes singing in chorus, sometimes one band beating time to the answering chant of the other, dancing to its music, inspiring it, at one time in processional hymns, at another in standing songs, turning and returning in the dance . . . then they join together and one chorus is formed of the two bands. . . . Thus drunken unto morning's

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light with this fair drunkenness . . . they take their stand at dawn, when, catching sight of the rising sun, they raise their hands to heaven praying ; . . . and after this each returns to his own sanctuary to his accustomed traffic in philosophy and labour in its fields.

*Doctrine.* In A.D. 10 there is only the statement that the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures is based upon the under-meanings in the allegorical narratives ; for these men look upon the whole of their law-code as being like to a living thing, having for body the spoken commands, and for soul the unseen thought stored up in the words. Such allegorizing is fully shown in the greater part of the works of Philon, and was taken over into Christianity specially by Origen, as well as being the principle of the Neo-Platonists. In 20 it is said that leaving the logical part of philosophy to word-catchers, as in no respect necessary for the acquisition of virtue, and the natural part as being too sublime for human nature to master . . . they devote all their attention to the moral part of philosophy.

The fullest account dates from 55, when they are contrasted with the other sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees. They taught that all things are best attributed to God ; but also that Fate governs all things, and nothing befalls man except by it. They believed in the immortality of souls, which come out of the most subtle air, and are united to their bodies as in prisons, . . . and when they are set

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free . . . they mount upward. They are bettered in their conduct of life by the hope they have of reward after death, and by the fear . . . that they should suffer immortal punishment after death. The rewards of righteousness are to be striven for. They reject pleasures as an evil, but esteem continence. Oil is a defilement, and if any one be anointed without his own approbation it is wiped off. To sweat is good, and to be clothed in white garments. An elder was also defiled if touched by a junior or a foreigner. The ideas about the soul are those of the Hermetic books ; the prison of the body (Korē Kosmou), and the soul being made of aether, and liable to eternal punishment, also the rule of Fate, and the sunrise and sunset prayers before the meal (Perfect Sermon).

*Mysticism.* In A.D. 10 they are carried away with heavenly love, like those initiated in the Bacchic and Corybantic Mysteries, they are a-fire with God until they behold the object of their love. After dancing and singing all night, thus drunken unto morning's light with this fair drunkenness, with no head-heaviness or drowsiness, but with eyes and body even fresher than when they came to the banquet, they take their stand at dawn. Many of them give out the rhythmic doctrines of the sacred wisdom, which they have obtained in the vision of dream life. In 55 they foretell things to come by reading the holy books and using several sorts of purifications. Also they expound dreams.

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We have now a fairly full view of these ascetic communities : so much is common to all the accounts, that they obviously are all of one system and origin, with a few local variations due to climate and different developments. We may briefly note in passing how they show a great communistic system and its limitations and conditions. It was frankly recognised that such communism could only be attained by celibacy, that the interests of the family would necessitate private property and work for the future of children, and not only for the present of the worker : that they could therefore only be recruited by drawing off those who had been reared and educated by the outer world, and removing them from doing their share of the world's work. In short it was recognised that the system was parasitic, and must have an outer world to draw on, which must not accept the system. It was not for the salvation of the world, but for the pietist interests of the individual. Even thus such a system of public sharing was found to need direction and control of the workers ; and it became under the curators and stewards a system of monastic dictation and absolute subjection, like the Peruvian communism. Such is a necessary working condition of communism, a slavery to the public, or to those who dominate in the public name.

From the historical point of view we see little here of dogma which was not familiar earlier. God the originator, Fate governing all, the Soul made of

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aether, immortal, but imprisoned in the body, liable to future weal or woe—all these doctrines are found in the pre-Alexandrine time. The allegorizing system is the innovation; but it was mainly needed and devised by the Jews who wished to extract all they could from a sacred deposit of detail that seemed otherwise of little value. There is not here a word about the Wisdom, or Logos, or Aeons; of course, we have but a meagre statement, but as these ideas were familiar to Philon and Josephus they would be likely to allude to them had they been as prominent to the Therapeutae and Essenes as they were to their contemporaries. The explanation of these silences may well be that the writings so often mentioned as being treated with the greatest respect, were earlier than the rise of the ideas of the Wisdom and Logos. This is quite likely; Wisdom, though often named as a quality, is not personified in Ecclesiastes, about 250 B.C.; it is personified in Sirach, Ecclesiasticus, about 180 B.C., and in the book of Wisdom, perhaps 100 B.C. Hence the scriptures of the ascetics may be dated from before 200 B.C., as they did not refer to it. As we have seen that the ascetic community was already started at the back of the Fayum by 340 B.C., and that all their dogmas stated in later times were already familiar then in the Hermetic works, these points all agree well together. The Hermetic works are in fact the scriptures of the Ascetics.

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We may now estimate the position of the Ascetics in view of the terms of modern religious thought. Optimism and Mental Drill were scarcely to be looked for among people who fled from the world rather than make the best they could of it, and learn to benefit by its discipline. Their philosophy deliberately neglected all but the moral side. But dogma it is probable that they had well developed, as they drew as much as they possibly could from their venerated scriptures.

The Religion of Repentance was their principal interest. Though conversion is not described, it must have been a strong feature to make the converts abandon all their ties, and devote themselves to saving nothing but their own souls. Guidance is not mentioned, except as developed into direction by a holy man in daily life. Goodwill was treated as a main virtue ; the communism requires it to be entirely dominant, the peace of the life depended upon it, and the kindness and mutual helpfulness of the ascetics is remarked as their main distinction. Fortitude was also essential in adopting such a life, though after becoming accustomed to it the routine would favour equanimity and resignation. Scrupulosity was elevated to a principle. Not only was private possession impossible, in order to avoid the temptation of wealth, but the most rigid detail about the Sabbath and about contact with lower orders was imposed upon the life. Obedience was a canon of the oath of initiation, and no private

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doings or will would be tolerated. Devoutness was the aim of the whole day throughout.

The Asceticism which made the separation from the world, was almost entirely due to Scrupulosity against excess ; some amount of hardihood and of sacrificial emotion there may have been. But there does not appear to have been the idea of saving waste, or of Pessimism and an insurance against future suffering, or the need of pain to satisfy the conscience. There were no flagellations, no dolours of present and future miseries, and no sense of doing all they could in the world. The ideal was contemplation, and the reduction of everything else to a minimum in order to favour it. Poverty was not so much the principle as communism ; they do not aim so much at not procuring, as at not keeping. Renunciation was the starting-point, and that not in the sane Stoic manner, but either abandonment of everything at first, or making over everything to the community afterwards. Isolation was only sought as an aid to Contemplation, and cheerful gatherings at meals and worship were not avoided.

Of Mysticism there was a tendency to rapture ; and the excitement of dances and singing like a modern zikr were usual. Also a growth of revelations from dreams, and a belief in the interpretations of dreams, seem to result from the old Semitic dream system. We have now translated the religious life of these people into modern terms and comparison, and we can better appreciate it and understand its nature.

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The large questions remain of what went before and after this ascetic development; which we have traced through four centuries, from 350 B.C. to A.D. 50. The absence of any sufficient basis for it in the earlier thought of the West makes it legitimate to look farther to the east for a connection. Such a link is historically probable. The great world-peace of the Persian empire extended from India to Egypt and the Black Sea; and under its rule the Indians—as we have already noticed—were brought into the west. When, after looking in vain for a precedent for the ascetic system in Egypt, Syria, or Greece, we turn to the Indian asceticism, in that there appears the ideal of contemplative life, the celibate community, recruited by converts, the great renunciation of family and possessions, the rejection of wealth, and living only by agriculture, the adoration toward the sun, the priestly preparation of food, the abolition of bloodshed and substitution of sacrifices of spices, and the future of the immortal soul in bliss or in a tempest of punishment. The only distinctively Jewish element is the Sabbath; circumcision was already the Egyptian custom as well as Jewish; and the lawgiver, though often named, is never stated to be Moses, and the sayings may have been from various sources.

It is useless to look to Pythagoras as a source of this ascetic system; he borrowed the same ideas in part, but only a minor part. So far as this system can be traced—disregarding its later develop-



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ments—we can see the probation, silence, a fraternity (but not withdrawn from the world) exercising fortitude and serenity, with common meals, music, and gymnastics, and discouraging animal food. Much or most of this belongs to the existing Dorian life in Greece, emphasized in Sparta. But we see no trace of the celibate community, the renunciation of family and wealth, the absorption in contemplation, the adoration toward the Sun, and the tartarean punishment of the evil soul. The doctrine of metempsychosis, which is Pythagorean, and appears in the earliest Hermetic books, was not held by the Egyptian or Jewish ascetics. All the more distinctive features of the ascetic system thus cannot have been of Greek origin, whereas practically the whole system of life was that of Indian asceticism, planted as an ethical system, as it was preached later by Asoka, and not therefore excluding the use of existing religious books or of the Sabbath. How far this whole system existed in the earlier communities at the back of the Fayum in 340 B.C. we do not know. There may have been at that time only an idea of withdrawal of the scrupulous from the world, due to the Indian influence under the Persian empire; and the fuller adoption of the Indian form of contemplative life may be due to the great Buddhist mission under Asoka in 260 B.C., which would easily account for all we read of at A.D. 10 and later. This is a subject for further research and discovery.

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Much has been written about the connection of the ascetic system with early Christianity ; but the remarkable point is how little of it passed into Christianity before the third century. We should have expected that so developed a system of piety, antagonistic to the Pharisees and Sadducees, would have coalesced with the rising and persecuted Christianity ; but the whole tone of Christian teaching was that of calling sinners and not the righteous, of overcoming the evil of the world and not fleeing from it. It was a religion of the market-place and the marriage feast, and not of the hermit dreading the touch of his fellow-men. Some casual details of Christian life are those of the religious thought and habit of the time—the company of the devout having meals in common and a steward bearing the bag—the varying injunction to take no sword, or to take a sword—the forsaking of such possessions as were a bondage to the soul—these were no doubt in the minds of most earnest men in that age. The communism of the Church at Jerusalem was only a temporary stage of a body under the stress of persecution ; but it was not compulsory, and it lasted for a very short time. It is not till as late as A.D. 150 that *ascesis* became a virtuous road to merit ; not till A.D. 250 that single ascetics fled to the desert as hermits, probably owing to persecution ; and not till A.D. 350 that orthodox Christianity took over the monastic system that had flourished for centuries before.

## CHAPTER V

### THE UNDATED HERMETIC WRITINGS

WE now proceed to a class of Hermetic documents which have no direct indication of age. They may, however, be discriminated by their contents, as some of them do not contain the elevation of the Logos, and therefore are probably before others, (such as the treatise "About the Universal Mind"), which contains an early stage of Logos doctrine. Yet as that treatise is probably pre-Alexandrine, by a date indication, it would put the non-Logos documents also before Alexander. These documents are numbered in the *Corpus Hermeticum* as III, IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX, XI; and we now give a summary of their views, after which we shall look at the development of the Logos doctrine in other documents.

"The dialogue of Hermes and Asclepios" (*Corp. Herm.*, iii) touches on several modern scientific definitions, and in order to be clear we here use the modern terms of such discussions; for instance, the term "things-that-are," is matter; and in things moved "one against the other . . . this contrariety turneth the resistance of their

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motion into rest," which is (in our terms) that the resultant of two opposing movements is stationary. The essential ideas put before us are the following. Kosmos must be moved by something greater and more powerful. Space must be far larger than Kosmos and bodiless or immaterial. If immaterial it is of a god-like nature, and is uncreatable because it is outside of the nature of creation. But yet it is not to be thought of as God, because it has extension like matter. And God is not space, but energy.

All motion implies a stationary point of comparison. The movement of two bodies, regarded alone, is in opposition one to another; and the resultant of both motions is stationary. (That is, action and reaction are equal and opposite.) The circular motion of the heavens seems to be an exception, as it is all in one direction; but it is like a man swimming who has a counter-resistance to his hands and feet. (Our conception of the movement being that of a solid earth, and the opposite motion being that of the other side of the sphere, was not imagined; so the theory of an aethereal thrust exerted by moving matter was adopted.)

The motion of the Kosmos, being in all parts balanced by opposing motions, must be caused by external forces, soul, spirit, or other immaterial entities. The soul therefore has the burden of moving not only itself, but matter also. There is no void, as air fills all things. Space is bodiless, and is Mind and Logos, unsensible and intangible.

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(Space is idea only, and not material.) God is none of these, because He made them. Matter cannot be annihilated, nor can space produce matter of itself. God is not Mind or Spirit or Light, but is the cause of Mind, Spirit, and Light. No other so-called gods or daimons can be in any measure Good, but God only can be Good, as He is the same as Good. God also is the universal Father as Creator. Hence "child-making is a very great and a most pious thing in life for them who think aright," and ascetic celibacy is not approved. This discourse is "an introduction to the gnosis of the nature of things," and is really an advanced piece of physical reasoning.

In "The Sacred Sermon" (*Corp. Herm.*, iv) there is a general account of creation, which was probably influenced from Babylonia or Judaea. In this, God is the universal Source. He is Mind, Nature, Matter, Wisdom, Energy, Necessity, End, and Renewal. (This appears to run into unthinking Pantheism). Chaos by the power of God contained Darkness, Water, and intelligent Breath. Holy Light arose, and the earth was parted from the water. Heaven was in seven circles, or spheres, which revolved by the Breath of God. The gods were seen as stars. (Touching here on Sabaism.) And they created animals and plants; and also "selected out the births of men . . . for lordship over all beneath Heaven and gnosis of its blessings, that they might increase in increasing and multiply

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in multitude . . . for every birth of flesh ensouled, and of the fruit of seed, and every handiwork, though it decay shall of necessity renew itself, both by the renovation of the gods and by the turning round of Nature's rhythmic wheel." Here there is the same repulse of ascetic celibacy as in the previous document, pointing to a date earlier than the middle of the fourth century B.C.

The sermon "Though Unmanifest, God is most manifest" (*Corp. Herm.*, vi) opens with the idea that God never can be personally manifest, because He created Nature by thinking Nature into manifestation (a higher form of creation by the Word), and therefore He is essentially not manifest, but only manifests Himself through His works. Pray therefore to catch a single ray of thought of the Unmanifest, by contemplating the ordering of Nature, inanimate and animate. Number, place, and measure must result from intelligence.

"Who then may sing Thee praise of Thee or to Thee? Whither again am I to turn my eyes to sing Thy praise; above, below, within, without? There is no way, no place, about Thee, nor any other thing of things that are. All are in Thee; all are from Thee; oh Thou who givest all and takest naught, for Thou hast all and naught is there Thou hast not. And when, oh Father, shall I hymn Thee? For none can seize Thy hour or time. (An Egyptian idea of 'he who seizes his hour.') . . . For Thou art all, and there is nothing

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else which Thou art not. Thou art all that which doth exist, and Thou art what doth not exist—Mind when Thou thinkest, and Father when Thou makest, and God when Thou dost energize, and Good, and Maker of all things.” Here the extreme of immaterialism results in the widest Pantheism as the only possible realisation of God.

The treatise “that God alone is Good” (*Corp. Herm.*, vii) is more a matter of verbal discrimination. God alone is Good eternally. Therefore He cannot be pained or have any passions, as such are a part of evil. Everything subject to genesis abounds in passions; but where there is Good there is no passion. Good therefore can only be in the ingenerated. Kosmos as making things is of the Good, but as being itself made it is not Good. Therefore all things are of a mixed nature of Good and Evil. The world is a fullness (*pleroma*) of Evil, as God is of Good.

This position assumes that all created things must partake of evil, a proposition of the utmost difficulty when the Creator is stated to be the perfect Good; but there seems no perception of the dilemma. The statement of the fullness of evil in the world is the root of asceticism, which first appears here.

A short and turgid admonition (*Corp. Herm.*, viii) declares that men are drunken with the ignorance and corruption that is in the world, which must be removed in order to gaze on the Light and Truth.

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The treatise on "Deathlessness" (*Corp. Herm.*, ix) states that there is no real death, because nothing in the Kosmos can be destroyed. (This is the position of Apollonios, but it is a verbal question, applying destruction only to the annihilation of matter.) Kosmos is the Second God, after His image, that cannot die ; and man is the chief part of Kosmos. Though everliving it is not eternal, because it was created by the Eternal. Increase and decrease, which is called death, is a part of the chaotic nature of matter which clings to it. Death restores the body to indestructible matter, and is thus a privation of sense, but not a loss of matter.

As Kosmos is the Second God, so Man is the third living thing after the image of the Kosmos. He has feelings with the Second God, and a conception of the First God. Kosmos is by God and in God. Man is by Kosmos and in Kosmos.

This is a curious position, placing man and thought as being below and inferior to mere matter. It results from a wish for logical sequence, and a dependence on verbal terms.

Another treatise of this group is "The Key" (*Corp. Herm.*, xi). This continues the ideas of the Good, reached in No. VII. God, Father, and Good are the same. God's energy is Will. Gnosis of the Good is holy silence, and a giving holiday to every sense (like the Indian *yoga*). Kosmos is beautiful, but it is not Good because it is changeable and movable ; nor yet is it evil because it is immortal.



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Kosmos, or the Sun, is father to those that share in it ; but it is the Good that creates. Metempsychosis changes and elevates beings through the stages of insects, fish, quadrupeds, birds, men, and daimons, or degrades in the reverse order. God contains Kosmos, and Kosmos contains Man. Mind cannot be in direct contact with flesh, but takes the Soul as a covering ; and when mind withdraws from the body it puts on its robe of fire. Pious souls are somewhat daimonic and divine. Impious souls suffer the evils of their impiety. Man on earth is God subject to death ; God in heaven is man free from death.

In none of these treatises is there an essential difference of outlook from those which we noticed before. They seem mostly to attempt solutions of existence by fixing on particular principles and explaining ideas in accord with those. The subjects of motion, of the immateriality of God, of the properties of the abstract Good, and of the Kosmos as intermediary between God and man, are dealt with in attempting to find a process of thought which would lead the mind to a further stage. In none of these is Logos personified, nor Wisdom mentioned. And the mention of metempsychosis in the " Key " suggests a connection with the fifth century. It seems probable that such works belong to 450-350 B.C., as they have none of the marks of later thought.

We now enter on the next stage, in the *Corp.*

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*Herm.*, xiii, v, xiv, and i, where these writings introduce the personification of the Divine Logos, but not that of the Divine Wisdom. Thus it appears that the Logos literature precedes the Wisdom literature, in which the Logos is also found. We will first notice the development of doctrine in these works, and then turn back to state the general views found in them.

One of the earliest of this class must be "About the Universal Mind" (*Corp. Herm.*, xiii), as in that is the passage (sect. 13) "Speech is one and is interpreted, and it is found the same in Egypt, and in Persia, and in Greece." This mention of the main divisions of the civilised world could not occur after the fall of the Persian empire, it must be earlier than 332 B.C. In this work we find the rule of Fate—Agatho-daimon the First-born god—life owing to Energy, Power, and Aeon—and Logos often used, but only for human Reason, the strongest phrase being in the last sentence, "Unto this Logos, son, thy adoration and thy worship pay."

The Logos also begins to appear in "The Cup" or rather "Font" (*Corp. Herm.*, v). "With Logos (reason) not with hands did the Dēmiourgos make the universal Kosmos," "Man did excel by reason of the Logos," "Logos indeed among all men He hath distributed." In this we find the idea of conversion prominent; "They who do not understand the tidings, these, since they possess Logos only and not Mind, are ignorant wherefor they have come

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into being and whereby." The Logos then was viewed as animal reason, and the Mind was a spiritual gift, acquired by immersion in the great Font or Crater of Mind; "Baptize thyself with this Font's baptism . . . thou that hast faith thou canst ascend to Him who hath sent down the Font . . . as many as understood the tidings and immersed themselves in Mind became partakers in the Gnosis." This image of the acquirement of divine mind by immersion in it, as in a cauldron of water, in order to obtain the Gnosis, doubtless led to the initiation of the ascetics by being "made a partaker of the waters of purification." At first sight some would claim that this doctrine of baptism in the divine mind must be later than the baptism of John; but the evidence of the historic references and the growth of ideas in these works shows that this belongs to about 300 B.C., before the development of the Logos and wisdom ideas.

"The Secret Sermon" (*Corp. Herm.*, xiv) seems to be of the same date, or rather later. The Logos is a higher principle apparently, as we read "Rejoice, O Son, for by the Powers of God thou art being purified for the articulation of the Logos. Gnosis of God hath come to us." "Thy Logos sings through me Thy praises." "Send thou oblation . . . acceptable to God . . . but add my son too 'through the Logos.'" The Logos seems in this Sermon to be the divine principle. Here we find a development of the doctrine of Conversion; it is

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no longer being baptized in the Divine Mind, but it is "the tradition of Re-birth"; "Whenever I see within myself the sincere vision brought to birth out of God's mercy, I have passed through myself into a body that can never die. And now I am not what I was before, but I am born in Mind." "Who is the author of Re-birth? The Son of God, the One Man, by God's Will." "The natural body which our sense perceives is far removed from this essential birth. The first must be dissolved, the last can never be. The first must die, the last death cannot touch. Dost thou not know thou hast been born a God, son of the One?" At first sight this might be put down as certainly Christian in source; but we have already seen in the Perfect Sermon, which can only be put to 340 B.C. "The Lord and Maker of all . . . from himself made the Second God, the Visible . . . whom he loved as his Son," and the Logos doctrine is far less developed than in Philon. As we cannot at all say how early the doctrine of Re-birth (so familiar in India) became current in the West, we cannot resolve on a Christian origin for this document. Sophia is already mentioned as the womb of the re-birth. We read also here: "The Mind that plays the Shepherd to Thy Reason or Logos." And, "The Shepherd, Mind of all masterhood, hath not passed on to me more than hath been writ down."

These allusions naturally bring next to this the "Shepherd of Men" or Poimandres, the best known

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Hermetic work (*Corp. Herm.*, i). In that the Logos doctrine is further developed. In the Creation "a Holy Logos descended on that Nature, and upward to the Light from the Moist, Nature leaped forth pure Fire"; "Earth and water no one could discern, yet were they moved to hear by reason of the Logos pervading them"; "The Logos that appeared from Mind is Son of God"; "From the downward elements Nature brought forth lives reason-less; for He did not extend the Logos to them." Here the Logos holds the place afterwards taken by Wisdom or the Spirit. "Holy art Thou who didst by Logos make to consist the things that are."

Advanced as these statements may be, they scarcely reach the level of Philon, in such terms as the Son of God, the One Man, the Logos; and as Philon thus decisively cuts them off from being necessarily of a Christian origin, we need not hesitate at their being two or three centuries earlier. As we further see that the Wisdom doctrine is not developed, though Sophia is already appearing, it is probable that these documents are all earlier than the Wisdom literature.

Having now traced the growth of doctrine in these post-Alexandrine documents, we will turn back to summarise the general ideas and beliefs which we find in them, before proceeding to later developments.

The treatise on "The Universal Mind" (*Corp.*

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*Herm.*, xiii) deals with several problems, which we here divide into separate paragraphs.

*Mind* is an essential part of God, as light is of the sun. The Mind in men is God ; and hence some men are gods, and their humanity is nigh to divinity. As Heracleitus says (500 B.C.) gods are immortal men, and men are mortal gods (see the same idea in "The Key"). Mind inworks in men to counteract the evil due to the embodiment of the soul ; and it shows its own light by being a check on their prepossessions. But souls without mind share the lot of souls of irrational lives (animals).

*Fate* determines all deeds and all punishments for wrong. But it is possible for one who has the Mind to free himself from vice. The first-born God Agatho-daimon, has said Life is from God's energizing Power and Aeon : and Mind, being soul of God, and Ruler of all, can do what it will, and it rules over Fate, Law, and all else.

*Logos* is only used by Man, animals have mere voice. Logos is in Mind, and Mind is in God ; Mind also is in Soul, Soul in Form, and Form in Body. The other series of cosmic nature is God, in Mind, in Soul, in Air, in Matter. Kosmos continues for ever, and therefore it must needs be a God ; it is filled full of Life, and is a Mighty God, image of the mightier God.

*Death* is only dissolution of a compound of soul and matter. Life and Death are only sensation and forgetfulness, and not creation and destruction.

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*Matter* is not God because it has dimension, yet it contains God, but it is inert unless energized by God. Neither size, nor space, nor quality, nor form, nor time, surround God ; for He is All, surrounds all, and permeates all.

The next treatise, that of " The Cup " or mixing *crater*, is better rendered as " The Font," as man is baptized in it (*Corp. Herm.*, v). The ideas are rather more developed than in the previous document. Concerning God we read that the Demiourgos is everywhere and ever in being ; He made the universe with Logos. He is intangible, invisible, inextensible. The Good has not form or figure, and cannot be seen ; but it is hard to turn away from appearances. Source must be source of all things, therefore it is the same as oneness. All created things are imperfect ; their increase is from the One Source, their failure is due to imperfection. The Kosmos was sent down from God.

Man excels the Kosmos by his Logos and by Mind. Logos belongs to all men ; but Mind only belongs to those who bathe themselves in the Font of Mind (see previous summary on this). Men without Mind are irrational and sensual, but those who receive Mind have won release from Death's bonds, and look upon the Good and speed their way to that One. Asceticism begins to appear, as before baptism in Mind " thou first shalt hate thy Body," and choose between the Body and the Bodiless.

The " Secret Sermon " (*Corp. Herm.*, xiv) deals

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entirely with re-birth, and touches closely on Indian thought. No man can be saved before re-birth ; he must first become a stranger to the illusion of the world. Wisdom (Sophia) is the matrix in which the True Good is sown by the Will of God, or Son of God, as the Sower. Those re-born in Mind have passed through Self into an undying body. The True is unmoved, undefined, colourless, formless, and unlimitable. To reach re-birth throw out of work the bodily senses, and withdraw into thyself ; will it, and the Divinity shall come to birth. (This purely introspective and mystic change by faith is balanced by the following needed change of works.) The inner torments are twelve, Ignorance, Grief, Intemperance, Concupiscence, Unrighteousness, Avarice, Error, Envy, Guile, Anger, Rashness, and Malice ; and they are driven out by their antitheses, and depart gradually, and this constitutes re-birth. (The opposite to Avarice is Community or Liberality, pointing to the rise of the ascetic communism.) The natural body is dissolved by death, the essential birth death cannot touch.

The Hymn of Re-birth is to be said in open air, facing south-west at sunset, and facing east at sunrise. The earth is called on to open, every bolt of the abyss to be drawn (the Egyptian view of the twelve gates of the underworld) and Heaven is to open. The praise of the Creator is to be sung by man, by nature, and by all the inner powers of man.



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The Logos sings through man and cries for God's indwelling. God's Mind shepherds the Logos in Man. The doctrine of the re-birth is to be kept secret or esoteric.

The most prominent of all these works is Poimandres, the Shepherd of Men (*Corp. Herm.*, i). It is of a different type to all the other Hermetic documents, there is no dialogue of Egyptian gods—Hermes-Thoth, Asklepios-Imhotep, and others—but a mystical Shepherd instructs the writer. The style is nearest to the last treatise we have noticed, as in that God's Mind is called the Shepherd, and both works lead up to a final hymn. The Logos doctrine is even more advanced than we have seen it before. It seems then to be the last of the longer writings of this class, and may be regarded as the crown and sum of the earlier teaching, developed by contact with various other sources of thought.

It is a vision. The Seer's senses were subdued, and his mind soared; he then saw a Being vast beyond bounds, who is the shepherd of Men, and is later called Mind (22). (This sense of vastness or minuteness is a well-known mental state in modern minds.) The Shepherd knows the Seer's desires, and is always present with him. The Seer then desires to know the inner meaning of things. And he has a vision of light, then of darkness, of chaos, and of the Logos descending upon the chaos. (This again is a known mental state, of an impression of immense confusion in gloom, which sud-

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denly becomes reduced to a perfect form.) The elements of Nature come from the Will of God ; who also gives the reason or Logos, by which Nature copies the ideal world in the form of a cosmos.

God the Mind—being light and fire, male and female—brought forth another Mind, God formed of fire and Spirit. The Second God formed seven rulers of the Kosmos, whose rule is Fate. Then the Logos returned to God (it is therefore personified), and left Nature Reasonless ; while the Logos began to revolve Nature, and Nature made all lives of animals without Logos.

God the Mind then brought forth heavenly Man, coequal with Himself, and thus parallel to the Second God. God loved Man and gave him all his qualities. Man then saw the creations of his Brother the Second God, and they loved Man. Then Man, possessed of all the beauty of God and of the seven rulers, looked down on Nature and they loved each the other. Thus Man became twofold on earth, immortal and mortal. Man, being of God's Life and Light (often repeated later), changed these into Soul and Mind. Then by God's will both animals and men were separated into male and female natures, and He commanded them to increase.

Senseless men pass into darkness, and even during life the avenging daimon sharpens the fire and adds torments to them ; their minds naturally return to primitive chaos.

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To the good, the Shepherd Mind is present, giving Gnosis and Religion, and enabling them to turn away from the world before death, and therefore never to die like others in parting from the world. Habits are surrendered, passions cease, and man rises to Harmony through the seven spheres of Energy of Growth (moon), Device of Evil (Mercury), Guile of Desires (Venus), Arrogance (Sun), Rashness (Mars), Covetousness (Jupiter), and Falsehood (Saturn). He thus reaches the eighth sphere, where they praise the Father. Above that are the Powers (ninth) and the Father (tenth). The good end of those who have gained Gnosis is to be one with God.

The Shepherd then vanishes; and the Seer preaches repentance to those who are drunken with the world. Some jest, others turn, and he leads them with wisdom, and they drink of the deathless water. At sunset they all give thanks. A hymn is sung, of nine attributes of God, each with the address "Holy art Thou"; and it ends with a prayer for receiving Gnosis and power to give Light.

The ideas here differ somewhat from all the earlier documents. The Supreme God has three emanations: (1) the Logos, which helps Nature to copy the ideal as a Kosmos, and then returns; (2) the Second God, who forms the Kosmos spirits, who are Fate; (3) heavenly Man who, loving Nature, becomes earthly man. Evil men deteri-

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orate in life to chaotic death. Good men rise by subduing their natures to gain the Gnosis and to be united to God. This seems connected with the Indian absorption. The sunset thanksgiving and the hymn belong to the type of the ascetic worship.

The Hermetic books as a whole seem to hang together, and to belong to one general period, 500-200 B.C., while the Logos only begins to appear in the later of them, and Wisdom never appears. We must look to a different group to reach the era of the Wisdom idea. For this we turn to the Apocrypha, and though the dates of the books of the Apocrypha are very variously estimated, yet some conclusions can be drawn. The fixed point is the date of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus. The prologue dates the Greek translation to 130 B.C., and the genealogical statements fix the original to 190-170 B.C. In this there is a general agreement of critics. Here Wisdom is personified in chapter i, and more fully in chapter xxiv : " I came out of the mouth of the most High, and covered the earth as a cloud. I dwelt in high places, and my throne is a cloudy pillar. I alone compassed the circuit of heaven, and walked in the bottom of the deep. In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I got a possession." Distinctly earlier than this is the canonical book of Ecclesiastes, in which there is not any trace of the personification of Wisdom, and the strongest ex-

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pression is, "Wisdom is good with an inheritance . . . for wisdom is a defence and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is that wisdom giveth life to them that have it" (vii, 11, 12). Here there is attention directed to wisdom as a quality, it is coming into prominence, but it is not yet personified. The earliest date allowed for this book is the Persian period, and more probably after 300 B.C. We must then date the rise of the Wisdom literature between 300 and 200 B.C.; and thus place before 200 B.C. the earlier works in which it is absent. The post-Alexandrine Hermetic books must therefore fall between 330 and 200 B.C.

In the book of Wisdom the personification is continued: "Wisdom was with Thee, which knoweth thy works, and was present when thou madest the world . . . and thy counsel who hath known except Thou give Wisdom and send Thy Holy Spirit from above? . . . She preserved the first formed father of the world that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall. . . . She delivered the righteous people and blameless seed from the nation that oppressed them." This is not more emphatic than Sirach, though it is generally dated two or three generations later.

We now come to the attitude of Philon, which was by no means a product of his own mind, when he wrote about A.D. 40, but was the statement of a body of thought that had been growing up ever since the mixture of Greek and Jewish

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ideas. His views were necessarily based upon his national scriptures ; but, as far as he could, he accepted Greek philosophy. His attitude is best seen by the fact that some of his writings were for Jews who accepted their scriptures, and other writings for Greeks who ignored the Jewish scriptures. His position was that of the Egypto-Greek theo-cosmo-sophy adopted so far as was practicable compatibly with the Jewish scriptures. His view was that God was incomprehensible, and that man can only recognise his existence, but not know of his personal being. That matter, eternal, passive and lifeless, containing the four elements, was before all things, and that all evil arises from matter—thus escaping from the difficulties of Dualism. That Deity fills the void of space by extending his boundless fullness everywhere,—thus adopting the One is All and All is One of the pre-Alexandrine works. That Deity also is like light pervading all space, and each ray being a Divine portion,—agreeing to the Divine ray of the Definitions of Asklepios. That the totality of spiritual form constitutes a spiritual world, which is the pattern of the visible world ; in this we see the old Egyptian idea of a heavenly world duplicate of the earthly, and also the Korē Kosmou view of the creation of souls and sacred animals before the material world and animals. Man was regarded as partly divine ; and, by virtue of his likeness to God, he can participate in the im-

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mediate manifestations of Him. The discrepancy of natures between an unchanging and infinitely perfect Deity, and an imperfect and changing world, made it impossible that there should be direct contact. "It was not possible that anything subject to death should be imaged after the supremest God who is Father of the universes, but rather after the Second God who is His Logos." "The Logos is God's likeness by whom the whole Kosmos was fashioned." "The passive principle (matter) is of itself soulless and motionless; but when it is set in motion and enformed and ensouled by the Mind, it is transformed into the most perfect of all works—namely this Kosmos." "The Logos is called Dominion, and Name of God, and Reason, and Man-after-his-Likeness, and Seeing Israel." "God as Shepherd and King leads with law and justice the nature of the heavens . . . deputing His own Logos, His first-born Son to take charge of the sacred flock, as though he were the Great King's viceroy. . . . His eldest Son whom elsewhere He hath called His first-born and who . . . contemplating His archetypal patterns, fashions the species." And the Logos is inherent in man even when he is not worthy to be called a son of God. Men are "Sons of one and the same Father . . . the Man of God who, being the Logos of the Eternal, is of necessity himself eternal." There was also a strong sense of natural religion, and absence of Jewish exclusiveness. Philon stated that who-

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ever follows the laws of the Creator, adapts himself to the course of Nature, and he quotes the patriarchs before the Law as showing the unwritten laws by the living canons of a blameless life. Thus far was the way prepared for the later developments of doctrine and idea in Christianity.

(Regarding the above references to Philon, it need hardly be said that Mr. Conybeare's demonstration of the unity of the Philonic writings has set aside the previous theories about a supposed pseudo-Philo.)



## CHAPTER VI

### PLUTARCH'S ANALYSIS OF RELIGION

**I**N the long treatise by Plutarch on the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris we have an invaluable outline of the various aspects and personal views about Egyptian religion, as it was understood in the first century A.D. This treatise is, moreover, by an initiate who knew the current theology well, who was of a very enquiring and unbiassed frame of mind, who had an Egyptian tutor, and visited the country, and who did not stint his work when he wrote what fills a hundred octavo pages. The best version is that by Mr. Mead in *Thrice Greatest Hermes*, vol. i, 255-368. Though his writing was late in the first century, we must date his information to the middle of that century. He studied under a travelling tutor, an Egyptian named Ammonios, in A.D. 66; and the ideas of Ammonios would be those of ten or twenty years before, at which time Christianity would only appear as a phase of "Jewish superstition," and have no effect whatever on Egyptian thought. There is but one reference to "Judaic matters," in an allusion to Set-Typhon being said to have had

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sons, Hierosolymos and Iudaios, and this is repelled as an absurd intrusion. Plutarch therefore may be accepted as giving the forms of late Egyptian thought entirely free from Christian ideas, and apparently keeping clear of Jewish influence. We are here only dealing with his Egyptian writings, as we are considering thought in Egypt.

His information must be taken as that of the official priesthoods and state religion, rather than that of the more speculative and eclectic sects. As an initiate of the Osirian and Dionysiac mysteries, and in high office in the Apollo ritual at Delphi, he resembles a philosophic clergyman of an Established Church, with a great regard for his own knowledge and beliefs, rather than a theological free-lance trying to build up a new system or to discredit old faiths. Accordingly we find that his position regarding the Logos doctrine is not more developed than in "The Font." There "Logos indeed among all men he hath distributed," and Plutarch writes: "Of all man's natural possessions nothing is more godlike than logos" (Ixviii, 6). To both writers logos is indwelling reason, common to all rational men. The later stages of its divinity and personification, found in the Secret Sermon, Poimandres and Philon, are ignored by Plutarch, who takes a position which was reached some three centuries before his time. Yet he recognised reason or logos as being also a divine attribute,

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“ for we think that by one common reason (logos) the gods have been ordained ” ; he also writes “ of the logos that orders all things,” and that “ we taking with us logos as our mystic guide out of philosophy, meditate upon each of the things said and done . . . for that all must be referred to the logos we may learn from themselves . . . for of all man’s natural possessions nothing is more godlike than logos, and especially that concerning the gods ” (lxiv, 3 ; lxvii, 2 ; lxxviii, 1, 2, 6). And further, he says : “ And if Osiris is really Logos, I think that the object of our enquiry is found in the case of these animals that are admitted to have common honours with him . . . not even has the crocodile had honour paid it without some show of credible cause, for it alone is tongueless. For the Divine Logos stands not in need of voice ” (lxxiii, 5 ; lxxv, 1). It is clear then that to Plutarch the Logos was Reason common to both gods and men ; but was strictly a principle, and was not personified nor identified with the Second God.

Yet that the idea of a Second God, visible and acting, was accepted—or rather perhaps the idea of many second gods—is shown where he says that the crocodile’s eyes are so formed “ that they see without being seen, an attribute of the First God ” (lxxv, 2).

Fate, which was prominent in the pre-Alexandrine writings, never appears here, as it would be too atheistic ; though it was raised above all the gods in the next century by Lucian.

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There is a leaning to abstract ideas which may be rather due to the Greek than to the Egyptian mind. He defines (i, 4) the value of aeonian—or eternal—life to the God, as being conditioned by the divine knowledge ; because, when knowledge and wisdom is removed, then freedom from death becomes merely time or existence, and is not really life. Without knowledge and rational powers true life cannot be said to exist ; a statement to be pondered by those who look at present on a multiplication of thoughtless existences as worth more than those who think. Another such line of thought is his protest against the myths and names being supposed to really belong to the gods, instead of being mere outward expressions. “ When thou hearest the myth sayings . . . thou shouldest remember what has been said above, and think none of these things spoken as they are, really to be in state and action. For they do not call Hermes ‘ Dog ’ as a proper name, but they associate the watching and waking from sleep . . . nor do they think the sun rises as a new-born babe from a lotus. . . . Then just as we say that one who buys Plato’s book ‘ buys Plato,’ and that one who presents the creations of Menander ‘ acts Menander,’ so did they not hesitate to call the gifts and creations of the gods by the names of the gods. . . . But those who came after . . . ignorantly misapplying the feelings of the fruits to the gods themselves . . . filled their heads with absurd,

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indecent, and confused opinions" (xi, 1-3; lxx, 3, 4). This defence of repulsive myths, for the sake of their intended meaning, was natural to a mind which adopted allegorizing as the solvent for difficulties, a system of thought peculiar to that age, as we shall notice presently.

The nature of gods was considered to vary greatly. "Of all the gods who are not ingenerable and indestructible, the bodies lie buried with the priests when they have done their work, and have service rendered them, while their souls shine in heaven as stars; the soul of Isis is called Kuōn (Dog star) by the Greeks, but Sothis by the Egyptians, that of Horus is Ōriōn, and that of Typhon (Set) Arktos (the Great Bear). . . . But those alone who inhabit the Thebaid . . . believe that no God is subject to death, and that he whom they themselves call Knēf is ingenerable and immortal" (xxi, 2, 3). The same idea appears in Lucian (*Jup. Trag.*) where the tomb of Zeus in Crete is instanced as showing that even he died. The grade of gods thus subject to death is that which has been definitely created, and may therefore perish, not being eternal. And this was connected with the older theory of daimons, and souls being transformed from them into men or gods; for "Isis and Osiris being changed through virtue from good daimons into gods (as afterwards were Herakles and Dionysos) possess the dignity of gods and daimons at one and the same time" (xxvii, 3).

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This agency of daimons appears in the Definitions of Asklepios about 350 B.C., though they are evil rather than good at that time. But the daimonic source of Isis and Osiris was not the earlier view, as in the Korē Kosmou they are an efflux of Divine nature, and when their mission was ended they were demanded back by those who dwell in heaven.

Underlying all the mental method of Plutarch is what seems to us a strange fallacy or a superstition—the importance of words. This was inherited from both of his mental ancestries. The Egyptian had always believed in creation by the word or fiat, and supposed that things only fully existed when they had their names; he treated physical nature much as an East-European government treats human nature, assuming that without his papers of identity a man has no civil state or being; so, without its name, an object could not be regarded as being entirely real. The other source of this belief about words lay in Greek thought. An elementary deficiency of the Greek was the incapacity to see that a word had not all the extent and quality of the thing for which it was employed, the incapacity to realise the very imperfect scope of the language-labels which he used. He thought that his word for purposes of reasoning was equal to the object; he buttressed this position by the invention of archetypes which were defined by his terms, and then threw the faults of his language upon the supposed imperfect realisation of his verbal arche-

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type in actual life. This incapacity to think in objects, owing to the paralysing effect of words, held back Greek and Roman science more than anything else. The hopeless mental tangles which were induced by trusting to the complete equivalence of words for ideas or physical realities, is the distracting and repellent side of Greek thought to the modern physical mind.

This inexperience in dealing with words, and the old idea of the powerful effect of words, led the allegorizing mind of Plutarch's age into wild comparisons of everything that had a similarity in sound. The name of the goddess Isis was connected with every convenient word that had *is-*, *eis-*, *iesthai*, *eid-*, or *os-* in it; the name Osiris had not only two meanings given from Egyptian, but was connected with *ho-seirios* and *osios hieros*; Sarapis, beside the correct source of *asar-hapi*, was derived from *sousthai* and *sairei*, and *oron apidos*—the coffin of Apis. Plutarch was above accepting all of these absurdities, but he clung to many of them, and evidently believed in a mystical connection where an alliteration could be produced. This frame of mind at the present day delights in finding coincidences of quantities and numbers with equal disregard of the possibility of more than one of them being intentional, even if the true connection has been found. It is a frame of thought which may recur to any mind when judgment and intellect are asleep.

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The personal opinion about the gods, apart from the subject of their public worship, was the main interest of theology to Plutarch. He discusses eight theories on the origin and nature of the gods, which we may briefly name as the

Heroic	(xxiii-iv)
Daimonic	(xxv-xxxi)
Physical	(xxxii-xl)
Cosmic	(xli-iv)
Dualist	(xlv-viii)
Allegorical	(liii-lxiv)
Seasonal	(lxv-lxxi) and
Animal	(lxxii-lxxvi)

Of these he favours the allegorical, in accordance with the prevailing fashion of thought in his day.

The Heroic theory was formulated, about the time of Alexander, by " Euhemerus the Messenian, who of himself composing the counter-pleas of a baseless science of myths unworthy of any credit, flooded the civilised world with sheer atheism, listing off level all those who are looked on as gods, into names of generals and admirals and kings, who existed in bygone days." The argument stated against this view is that the kings and conquerors historically known were not made into gods, instancing Semiramis, Sesostris, Manes of Phrygia, Cyrus, and Alexander. And even if some of such rulers were flattered by divinisation in their lives, yet now like runaway slaves they can be torn from



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the sanctuary of the temple and allowed nothing but a tomb.

The Daimonic theory is preferred by Plutarch, though it is akin to the previous view. It is that the myths "are passions neither of gods nor of men, but of mighty daimons who have been born more manful than men, far surpassing us in the strength of their nature, yet not having the divine unmixed and pure, but proportioned with the nature of soul and sense of body, susceptible of pleasure and pain and all the passions." He quotes Homer writing of good men as godlike, while good and bad alike are called daimonian. And Hesiod calls the beneficent holy daimons and guardians of men. Thus both the evil of Typhon and the good of Isis are compatible with their being daimons. This view then adopts the heroic theory, with the proviso that the deified heroes were incarnations of daimons; and is in accord with the theory of souls, and their descent as men or ascent as gods, which we have seen in the *Korē Kosmou*.

The Physical theory is familiar in modern discussions. "Just as the Greeks allegorize time as Kronos and air as Hera, and the changes of air into fire as the generation of Hephaistos, so with the Egyptians Osiris uniting with Isis is Neilos (moistening earth), and Typhon is the sea into which Neilos falling vanishes and is dispersed, except such part as the earth takes up and receives, and so becomes endowed with productiveness by

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him. . . . But the more wise of the priests call not only the Nile Osiris and the sea Typhon, but without exception every source and power that moistens Osiris, and Typhon everything that is dry and fiery." " And they call the extremities of the land, both on the borders and where touching the sea, Nephthys, . . . and say she lives with Typhon. And when the Nile exceeds its bounds, and overflows more than usual, and consorts with the extreme districts, they call it the union of Osiris with Nephthys ; . . . they record that when Nephthys was married to Typhon she was at first barren, and . . . refer to the utterly unproductive nature of the land owing to sterility." The power of Typhon was the drought mastering the moisture of the Nile, helped by the Ethiopian queen or southern winds. The death of Osiris was in Athyr when the Nile sinks. Typhon conquering Osiris was the sea invading the Nile valley, shown by the shells and salt left there ; and Horus subduing Typhon was strong rain swelling the river, and " the Nile driving out the sea made the plain reappear by filling it up again with its deposits." Here Plutarch successfully touches on the Quaternary period.

The Cosmic theory has been much before us in " solar-myths," which certainly were a rationalisation adopted in India, and more or less thought of elsewhere. It was an outcome of the Physical theory, as it adopted Osiris as the moist, and

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Typhon as the fiery principle. Hence the sun became Typhon, and the moon Osiris. The twenty-eight years of the life or reign of Osiris were the days of the month; the burial of Osiris in a coffin hewn out of a tree-trunk was in a crescent-shaped coffin; the tearing him into fourteen parts referred to the days of the waning moon; the number of cubits' rise of the Nile is 28 at the Cataract, 14 at Memphis, 6 in the Delta, referring to the month, half, and quarter. Apis the living image of Osiris is conceived by a moonbeam. Osiris consorting with Isis is the moon above the earth, and with Nephthys is the moon below the earth. This view depended mainly on the importance of numbers, due to the rise of geometrical theories. These led the Pythagoreans to call "the monad Apollo, the dyad Artemis, the hebdomad Athena, and the first cube (8) Poseidon . . . and again they say that the power of the equilateral triangle is that of Hades (Pluto) and Dionysos and Ares; that of the square is that of Rhea and Aphrodite and Demeter and Hestia (that is Hera); that of the dodecagon that of Zeus; and that of the fifty-six angled that of Typhon." This importance of numbers seems to be Greek rather than Egyptian, and probably the number-connections of the Osiris myths with the moon are of late origin. The fourteen parts of Osiris probably corresponded to the number of the nomes where his relics were worshipped.

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After describing these four theories Plutarch concludes that all of them collectively may be the truth, though no one alone can explain the myths. "For neither drought nor wind nor sea nor darkness is the essential of Typhon, but the whole hurtful and destructive element which is in nature." He then proceeds to adopt the Persian Dualism, as the best general expression. "From two opposite principles, and two antagonistic powers—the one leading to the right and on the straight, the other upsetting and undoing—both life has been made mixed, and this Kosmos irregular and variable and susceptible of changes of every kind. For if nothing has been naturally brought into existence without a cause, and Good cannot furnish cause of Bad, the nature of Bad as well as Good must have a genesis. . . . Zoroaster, then, called the one Oromazes and the other Areimanios, and further announced that the one resembled light . . . and the other darkness and ignorance, while that between the two was Mithrēs; wherefore the Persians call Mithrēs the Mediator." The Greeks ascribed good to Olympian Zeus, and that which has to be averted to Hades. The Pythagoreans have categories of the Good and the Bad. So "that which is ordered and appointed and in health is the efflux of Osiris, . . . but Typhon is the passionate and titanic and reasonless and impulsive." And "there are those who say that Osiris is the Sun . . . and who declare Isis to be no other than the

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Moon, whence also the horned ones of her statues are representations of her crescent."

We now reach the allegorizing system which Plutarch prefers to all others. "For Isis is the feminine part of Nature and that which is capable of receiving the whole of genesis; in virtue of which she has been called 'Nurse' and 'All-receiving' by Plato, and by the multitude, 'She of myriad names,' through her being transformed by logos, and receiving all forms and ideas. . . . Hence not unreasonably do they say in the myth that while the Soul of Osiris is eternal and indestructible, Typhon often tears his Body in pieces and makes it disappear, and that Isis seeks it wandering, and puts it together again. For the Real, and Conceivable-by-the-mind-alone, and Good, is superior to destruction and change; but the images which the sensible and corporeal imitates from it . . . are seized upon by the disorderly and turbulent, expelled hither from the field above, and fight against the Horus, which Isis brings forth as the sensible image of that Kosmos which mind alone can conceive. . . . But this Horus is their (Isis' and Osiris') son, horized and perfect, who has not destroyed Typhon utterly, but has brought over to his side his efficacy and strength. . . . Moreover they have a myth that Hermes (Thoth) cut out the sinews of Typhon and used them for lyre strings—teaching how logos brought the universe into harmony, and made it

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concordant out of discordant elements. . . . And they say that Typhon at one time strikes the Eye of Horus, and at another time takes it out and swallows it. By striking it they refer enigmatically to the monthly diminution of the moon, and by blinding it, to the eclipse." Such are the main bases of this allegorizing ; but it is mixed with symbolism of numbers, Osiris being three, Isis four, and Horus the hypotenuse five, in the right-angled triangle. Many wild comparisons of names and words, and vague generalisings about cosmos, matter, and mind, fill up some pages without any fresh base of thought. The system is merely a mass of introspective ideas of the vaguest kind, without any probability that such thoughts had ever induced mankind to believe in and worship such gods.

The Seasonal theory and vegetative theory in their crude forms were contemned by Plutarch. " We shall also get our hands on the dull crowd, who take pleasure in associating the ideas about these gods either with changes of the atmosphere according to the seasons, or with the generation of corn and sowings and ploughings, and in saying that Osiris is buried when the sown corn is hidden by the earth, and comes to life and shows himself again when it begins to sprout. For which cause also they say that Isis on feeling she is pregnant ties an amulet around her on the sixth of Paophi, and that Harpocrates is brought forth about the

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winter solstice, imperfect and infant in the things that sprout too early. For which cause they offer him first-fruits of growing lentils, and they keep the days of thanks for safe delivery after the spring equinox. For they love to hear these things and believe them, drawing conviction from things immediately at hand and customary." Here, in spite of Plutarch's dislike, he gives what is to our minds the better analogy to the myths, and one which has the support of the festivals of sowing, sprouting, and reaping. Of course, in all reference to Egyptian seasons the dates must not be taken as in a colder climate. Sowing in Upper Egypt is late in October or in November, and reaping in April and May.

Plutarch, however, will not object if such things are only used as analogies without losing sight of the divinities. " Still there is nothing to complain of, if in the first place they cherish the gods in common with ourselves, and do not make them peculiar to Egyptians, either by characterizing Nile, and only the land that Nile waters, by these names ; or, by speaking of marshes and lotuses and god-making, take the Great Gods from the rest of mankind who have no Nile or Buto or Memphis. Indeed all men have Isis and know her and the Gods of her company ; for though they learned, not long ago, to call some of them by names known to the Egyptians, still they knew and honoured the power of each of them from the beginning.

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In the second place—and what is more important—they should take very good heed and be apprehensive lest unwittingly they write off the sacred mysteries, and dissolve them into winds and streams, and sowing and ploughings, and passions of earth and changes of seasons. As those who say that Dionysos is wine, and Hephaistos flame, and Persephone . . . the wind that drives through the crops and is killed, and . . . of the reapers of corn, ‘Then when they, lusty, cut Demeter’s limbs.’ For these in nothing differ from those who regard a pilot as being only sails and rope and anchor, and a weaver as being yarns and threads, and a physician as being potions and honey-brew and barley-water. . . . For it is not possible to consider such things in themselves as Gods.” He then develops the view that all the names of gods refer to the same essence. “Not different Gods for different peoples, not Barbarian and Greek, not southern and northern ; but just as sun and moon and earth and sea are common to all, though they are called by different names among different peoples, so to the logos that orders all things, and to one Providence that also directs powers ordained to serve under her for all purposes, have different honours and titles been given according to their laws by different nations. And there are consecrated symbols, some obscure ones and others more plain, guiding the intelligence toward the mysteries of the Gods. Not without risk, for some



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going entirely astray have stepped into superstitions, while others, shunning superstition as a quagmire, have unwittingly fallen into atheism as down a precipice." Here we see the frame of mind of the best Stoics, and such a passage might well have been written by Epictetus.

Lastly the Animal theory comes under discussion. (1) First the view "that the gods out of fear of Typhon changed themselves into these animals," which he laughs at, saying that it "beats any juggling or story-telling." (2) Next the view "that all the souls of the dead that persist have their rebirth into these animals only," which he says "is equally incredible." (3) Next the view "that Osiris in his great campaign divided his force into many divisions . . . and gave them all ensigns of animal figures, and that each of these became sacred and venerated by the clan of those banded together under it." (4) Next the idea that the kings, "in order to strike terror into their foes, used to appear dressed in wild beasts' heads of gold and silver." (5) Another idea was that for the sake of disuniting the people, kings had ordered different animals to be venerated by different clans, so that each protecting its own animal should be brought into a state of warfare with the others. (6) Others said "that the soul of Typhon himself was parted among the animals," hinting "that every irrational and brutal nature is born from a part of the evil daimon, and that to appease and

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soothe him they pay cult and service to them.” (7) Lastly there are the utilitarian and symbolical reasons. The ox and sheep and ichneumon are honoured for utility; “the asp and weasel and scarab because they discerned in them certain faint likenesses of the power of the gods,” and various reasons are assigned for the veneration of the crocodile, dog, and ibis. He then instances symbolism of animals, of things, and of geometry among the Greeks. His summing up is: “If then the most approved of the philosophers when they perceived in soul-less and bodiless things a riddle of the Divine, did not think it right to neglect anything or treat it with disrespect, still more liking, I think, we should then have for the peculiarities in natures that are endowed with sense, and possess soul and feeling and character, not paying honour to these, but through them to the Divine; . . . for the Divine is not less well pourtrayed in these animals, than by means of works of art in bronze and stone, which while equally susceptible of decay and mutilations, are in their nature destitute of all feeling and understanding. With regard to the honours paid to animals, then, I approve this view more highly than any other that has been mentioned.” Here Plutarch at last arrives at a kind of Pantheism, much like that still found in Syria, where a beautiful horse was lately looked on daily with veneration as an adorable example of creative beneficence.

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Having now been shown all the various personal views that were taken regarding the nature and adoration of the gods, we will turn to see what light Plutarch gives on the view which most commends itself to the modern historical sense. According to this we cannot trace any tribe originally worshipping more than one god in Egypt; wherever two or more gods are worshipped at the same centre, they are either emanations one from another, deduced from logical reasons, or they are due to different tribes or centres being associated together. Each tribe had therefore its own sacred animal or its own deity. When tribes fought, their deities fought for them, and one conquered another. When tribes were allied or amalgamated their deities married or were affiliated; or they united and received a joint name, such as Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, each from a different source. Hence the mythology is a record of tribal history. Now four out of the seven views stated concerning animal worship are in accord with this historical view. In (7) the rise of devotion to, or of association with, an animal is due to utility or symbolism, like the various totems of tribes in modern times. In (4) the animal head-dresses were used to strike terror, as we see the ox-skins worn on the head by the enemies of Narmer, and as it is considered that the gods when acting were figured by the priests bearing the head of the God as a mask; this put the wearer

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under the direct protection of unity with his totem, and associated the sacred animal with the tribe in the view of their neighbours. In (3) there is a tribal use of the animal as a standard of the clan in fighting, especially where several clans were associated in one league or kingdom, as we see on all the early records on slate palettes. And it is very probable, as in (5), that this separation of interests was kept up and favoured by rulers who wished to avoid combinations against their government. As regards the animal worship we therefore can accept the reasons which seemed most probable to Plutarch, who actually studied the worship as a living system.

The essential facts which can have an historical significance in the Osiris myth, as stated by Plutarch, are the following. Rhea (Nut, the heaven) had five children, born on the five days of the year after 360, the "epagomenal" days, as they were called. Hermes (Thoth) had won these days as a seventieth of the whole year, in playing at draughts with Selene (the moon). Helios (Ra) was father of Osiris and Aroueris the elder Horus, born on the first and second days. Kronos (Seb) was father of Typhon (Set) and Nephthys, born on the third and fifth days. Hermes (Thoth) was father of Isis, born on the fourth day. Osiris and Isis were married, Typhon and Nephthys were married, Horus the elder had proceeded from Osiris and Isis. Osiris civilised the Egyptians,

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and went over the whole earth charming all with persuasion and reason. On his return, Set, with seventy-two men, and an Ethiopian queen Asō, persuaded Osiris to enter a chest, which was fastened down and floated to sea by the Tanitic mouth of the Nile. The Pans and Satyrs round Khemmis first knew of this, and then Isis at Koptos. She wandered until she found the chest at Byblos, probably in the Delta, though afterwards supposed to be Byblos in Syria. A heather bush or tamarisk (*erica*) had grown around the chest. The king of Byblos had used this tree as a pillar in his house. Isis was taken in as nurse to the king's son. Every night she burnt away the mortal elements of his body, and fluttered round the pillar as a swallow. She then revealed herself, claimed the pillar, removed the coffin, and sailed away with it. The child followed her, and died by her glance. He was called Manerōs, or Palaistinos, or Pelousios. Isis took the coffin to Buto, where Horus lived. Set found the coffin, cut the body of Osiris in fourteen pieces, and scattered them over the country. Hence there are many tombs of Osiris in Egypt, as Isis buried each piece separately. Osiris then appeared to Horus, and appointed him as avenger of his father. Horus fought Set, and conquered him; he delivered him bound to Isis, who then let him go. In revenge Horus uncrowned Isis, or cut her head off; and Thoth crowned her with cow-horns, or put a cow's

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head upon her. Other scattered references are that Zeus (Amen) could not walk owing to his legs being united (as Min), and Isis separated them, thus making him into the Amen form (lxii, 4); that Apophis (Apapi) brother of the Sun (Ra) made war on Zeus (Amen), Osiris helped Zeus who adopted him as his son (xxxvi, 6); that only the Apis and a few other animals are sacred to Osiris, the majority of animals belonging to Set (lxxiii, 4); and that after Set fled from Egypt he begat Hierosolymos and Iudaios (xxxix, 6).

We will now endeavour to trace what political changes among the different tribes would account for the various successes and defeats of the gods here described. Before the Osiride gods appear there was already the worship of the animal gods, of Seb and Nut (earth and heaven) and of Ra (sun), probably also of Min; all these underlie the growth of the Osiride myths. So far as we can see, the civilising introduced by Osiris is that of the early prehistoric age (sequence date 30). With the Osiride gods came in a revised calendar of 365 in place of 360 days, and the extra five days were sacred to the new gods. The tribes who worshipped Osiris and Horus associated with the Ra worshippers, those who worshipped Set and Nebhat associated with the Seb and cosmic worship, the Isis tribe were with the Thoth worshippers. The Osiris and Isis tribes were leagued, and led the new civilisation of the land. The Osiris tribe were

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centred about Ekhmim, as there the war on Osiris was first known. The Isis tribe were around Koptos. There they had changed the older worship of Min into the form of Amen. The serpent tribe of Apapi who were kin to the Ra worshippers, attacked the Amen tribe, but were defeated by the help of the Osiris tribe.

The tribe worshipping Set now attacked the Osiris tribe, about Ekhmim. This may be connected with the change which comes over the prehistoric civilisation, probably due to an incursion from the eastern desert at about 40 sequence date. The Osiris tribe were defeated, and driven down into the tamarisk thickets of the Delta, where the defunct tribe lay hidden. They were probably near Sais, as the name of the queen who received them was Athenais in Greek, connected with Neit. They also extended to the eastern side, as the queen's child who died on the recovery of Osiris was Palaistinos or Pelousios, a people on the Pelusiac frontier. The Isis tribe followed down to the Delta, and recovered the Osiris tribe, removing them to refuge with the Horus tribe at Buto. There the Set tribe followed them, and fiercely scattered them.

Apparently at the close of the prehistoric time, the Horus tribe of Edfu began a northward movement, and swept down the Nile valley driving the Set tribe before them, as described in the fight of Horus and Set. The Isis tribe befriended the Set

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worshippers, and were therefore deprived of their headship by the Horus tribe. The Harpekhroti tribe were all that was left of the Osiris tribe, who had in their scattered state united with the Isis tribe. The Set tribe were finally driven out, and took refuge in Judaea, founding the hill-city of Jerusalem. And we know that Set was the Syrian god in historic times. So far we cannot find any point in this historical sketch of the myths which seems at all improbable ; and the later stages of it actually survived as tribal history into historic times.

The question of the reliability of Plutarch's knowledge is favourably answered by the minor statements that we can check. Thus he says that "the proper name of Zeus with the Egyptians is Amoun (which we by a slight change call Ammōn), Manetho the Sebennyte considers it his hidden name, and that his hiding is made plain by the articulation of the sound. Hekataios of Abdera, however, says that the Egyptians use this word to one another also when they call one to them, for that its sound has got the power of calling to." These two meanings are those of *Amen*, "hidden," and *Amou*, "to come," plural *Amoini*.

Of the burial places of Osiris he states: "They say both that Diokhitē is called Polichnē because it alone has the true one, and that it is at Abydos that the wealthy and powerful of the Egyptians are mostly buried—their ambition being to have a



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common place of burial with the body of Osiris ; and again that it is at Memphis that the Apis is reared as the image of the Soul of Osiris, because there also his body lies." Here the Polichnē or " little city " of Abydos is called Diokhitē. And remembering that Abydos is *Ab du* " the hill of the head " of Osiris, it seems that Diokhitē is *Du-Khati*, the hill of the *khati*, a form of Osiris, connected with *khat*, a corpse.

Further, he continues : " As for the city (Memphis) some interpret it as ' Harbour of good things ' " ; that is, *Men nofer*, as is well known, though lately it has been suggested that the name is derived from that of the pyramid of Pepy I. As Memphis must have had names long before that pyramid, it is unlikely that they would be supplanted ; and it may well be that the pyramid was so called as a punning loan-word from the name of the city.

The names of the queen in the Delta city where the body of Osiris rested are also recognisable. She is stated to be Athenais, probably showing that Sais the city of Neit was the place. The name Athenais is a derivative of *a-thenē*, one who does not suckle, and that is stated to be equivalent to Nemanous or Neimanoë, which is clearly *ne mena*, " not suckling." Other names were Astarte, that is Hat-hor, who was worshipped in most cities, and Saosis, apparently *sa-as*, " dwelling in Sais." The name of the king Malkander is probably a Greek

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introduction of Alalkomeneus the husband of Athenais in Boeotian myth; ΑΛΑΑΚ being blundered as ΜΑΑΚ by a copyist.

Amenthē is stated to be the home of souls after death, but the derivation of the name is given as "that which takes and gives," apparently some play upon words. Perhaps it was read as *am, anti*, "that which is within and returns." Osiris is stated to be written with the eye and sceptre, *uas-iri*, or to be interpreted as "many-eyed," "since in the Egyptian tongue *os* means many and *iri* eye": *ash*, "numerous," seems to be the word here quoted. Of the names of Isis, Muth is correctly said to be Mother, and Athyri (Hat-hor) the Cosmic House of Horus. The name Methuer is evidently Mehturt, and is stated to mean "Full" and "Cause"; the first is obviously *meh*, full, the second word is not clear. It has long been a difficulty how the Egyptians could suppose a heath bush, *erica*, to "enfold and grow round and hide entirely within itself" the coffin of Osiris. Not even the tamarisk, which may be supposed to be the *erica* intended, could enclose a large coffin in its trunk, so that the stem might be trimmed into a pillar without showing it. Perhaps the Egyptian had described it as "an enveloping tree," and *ārk*, to "envelope," was taken as the proper name of the tree, which being unknown was transliterated as *erica*. In Exodus similarly the word "bolled" was transcribed from Hebrew, as it was not under-

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stood. It is correctly said that they frequently write "God" with a hawk. Thus the meanings of words stated by Plutarch seem to be quite compatible with derivations that the Egyptians may well have used or imagined at that time.

There are also references to subjects which agree with what we already know. The pieces of Osiris were handed by Isis "to those perfected in the art of making divine," that is of mummifying with the *neter* or natron salt (ii, 2). Wine is said to be "the blood of those who fought against the Gods," reminding us of the blood of the enemies of Ra flowing over the land when Sekhmet trampled on them (vi, 4). The sun and moon are said to "sail round in boats," as the solar and lunar barks which are familiar in cosmological scenes.

There are many allusions which are of interest in the general religious ideas. Taurt is the concubine of Set, with whom we know the hippopotamus was connected (xix, 5). Harpocrates was born of Isis after the death of Osiris, and was "weak in his limbs from below upwards," suggesting that the so-called Ptah-Sokar dwarf figures were really of Harpekhroti. The sacrificial seal had the figure of a bound captive with a sword sticking in the throat (xxxix, 3). The doors of the temples had lions' heads, with open mouths upon them, as ornaments (xxxviii, 1). Moon-shaped images, moulded of mud mixed with spices and incense, were made and afterwards dressed up

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(xxxix, 6). Hor-ur is associated with Ra, as Tahuti is with the moon (xli, 4), and was lame when in the dark (liv, 6) apart from Ra. The sistrum was used to drive off Set (lxiii, 2). Harpocrates is brought forth about the winter solstice, and they keep the days of thanks for safe delivery after the spring equinox (lxv, 2, 3), a close parallelism to the times of Christmas and Easter. In a drought or pestilence the sacred animals were led away at dark in silence by the priests, who tried to scare the first one away, and if it stayed by them they sacrificed it. And in Eleithyia they used to burn living men to ashes, which they scattered (lxxiii, 2, 3). These stray facts should be brought into touch with various points of the archaeology and folk-lore.

The references to festivals should be noticed, as we have only the ceremonial temple feasts recorded on monuments.

Thoth 9. " Their priests upon the other hand abstain from all fish ; and on the ninth of the first month, when every one of the rest of the Egyptians eats a broiled fish before his front door, the priests do not taste it, but burn their fishes to ashes before the doors " (vii, 2).

Thoth 19. " On the nineteenth of the first month, when they keep a feast to **Hermes**, they eat honey and figs, saying when doing so, ' truth is sweet ' " (lxviii, 2).

Paophi. For feasts of offerings they made

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round cakes, with the figure of a bound ass (xxx, 3).

Paophi 6. "Isis on feeling she is pregnant ties an amulet round her on the sixth day of the first half of the month Phaophi" (lxv, 2).

Paophi 23. "On the eighth of the waning of Paophi they keep the birthday of the Sun's staff, after the autumnal equinox" (lii, 2). This shows that the Alexandrian year was used, in which Paophi began 28 September; in the sacred year Paophi was over before the Equinox.

Athyr 17-20. The slaying of Osiris was "done on the seventeenth of the month Athyr in which the Sun passes through the Scorpion" (xiii, 8). "The priests . . . covering a cow, made entirely of gold, with a black coat of fine linen as a mask of mourning for the goddess Isis, exhibit it for four days from the seventeenth consecutively. . . . And on the nineteenth at night they go down to the sea, and the keepers and priests carry out the sacred chest, having within it a small golden vessel, into which they pour fresh water; and shouts are raised by the assistants as though Osiris were found." Also the moon-shaped images of mud mixed with spices, are made (xxxix, 3-6).

Khoiak. "Harpocrates is brought forth about the winter solstice" (lxv, 2).

Tybi. "Just after the winter solstice they carry the Cow round the shrine" (lii, 3).

Tybi 7. "When they make offerings on the

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seventh of the month Tybi—which they call ‘Arrival of Isis from Phoenicia,’ they mould on the cakes a bound hippopotamus” (l, 3), this being the animal of Set.

Pharmuthi. “They keep the days of thanksgiving for the safe delivery (of Harpocrates) after the spring equinox” (lxv, 3).

Pauni. For feasts of offerings round cakes were made with the figure of a bound ass (xxx, 3).

Epiphi 13. “They keep with feast the birthday of the eye of Horus, when moon and sun are in the same straight line” (lii, 1). This proves that the month was counted from the visible new moon, if the full moon were on the 13th fixedly.

Mesore. “In the month of Mesore they make offerings of pulse” (lxviii, 4).

In another statement about the calendar (lxix, 4) “the month for sowing when the Pleiades rise, the Egyptians call Athyr, Greeks Pyanepsion, and Boeotians Damatrios.” Pyanepsion was normally 18 September to 17 October, or might be three weeks earlier. Athyr in the Sacred year began 18 September, but in the Alexandrian year 28 October; hence the Sacred year (of Sothis rising) seems to be here followed.

There is a curious historical statement (viii, 6, 7) that Tafnekht father of Bakenranf when marching against the Arabs embraced frugality owing to his baggage being delayed; and afterwards set up a stele at Thebes on which he execrated Menes

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“ who first changed the Egyptians from simple heedless living, without wealth or goods.” It is possible that the Libyan conqueror may have had a tribal feeling against the South Egyptian, who had subdued the Delta and founded the monarchy.

Altogether the work of Plutarch is of the first importance for the modes of religious thought in Egypt, and for the details of the myths and observances ; and it should be carefully studied in view of our present knowledge of Egypt and of comparative religion.

## CHAPTER VII

### APOLLONIOS, OR THE REVIVALIST

OF Apollonios of Tyana in Cappadocia there have been very different estimates in modern times. Some would see in him an arrant impostor, while others would take him as one of the great seers and teachers of the world. For our present enquiry there are two aspects of the record of this teacher—the religious position which he illustrates, and his visits to the Indian and the Egyptian sages whom he venerated. But before entering on the account of his life, we should first consider its general credibility. Written as it was more than a century after his death, and containing many marvels, it has often been regarded as a romance rather than as a history, more or less embellished. Philostratos, who wrote the life about A.D. 220, collected his material under the imperial patronage of Julia Domna—the Catharine of Roman history—and was thus able to acquire all that could be gathered. He had the contemporary record of Damis, a disciple and constant companion of Apollonios, the Boswell who wrote an intricate chronicle of his hero with affectionate



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plainness ; he had also another life by Moiragenes, which Philostratos considered inadequate, and which Origen states to have classed Apollonios as a magician ; and for the period of his education at Aegae there was the work of Maximos of Aegae, which also quoted his will. There were, besides, the letters of Apollonios, which were preserved by Hadrian in his villa at Antium, and some of these have come down to us.

How far any history is to be credited is judged differently by different generations. Some incredible marvels stated by Philostratos were enough, a century ago, to discredit his whole work as fabulous. We know rather more of mind at present ; and, recognising how easily the marvellous is accreted to any striking character, we place our faith more on the internal evidence of historical congruity. As the historical detail about Apollonios has never yet been fully stated, we shall here deal with it, first, as a basis for our acceptance of the authenticity of the narrative. I follow here the only English version, that by Berwick, 1809

The date of his birth is indicated by the statement that between the ages of 16 and 19 (i, 7 ; i, 13) occurred the accusation against Archelaos of Cappadocia (i, 12). This king was accused in A.D. 14 ; and, continuing under suspicion, died in A.D. 17. As the event seems to have been when Apollonios was 18 or 19 rather than younger,

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and the charge against Archelaos was probably pressed mostly in the provinces at A.D. 15, this gives 4 or 5 B.C. for his birth. The extreme limits possible are 6 B.C. and A.D. 1. We shall here adopt 4 B.C. as correct within a year or two. At the age of 14, in A.D. 11, he was taken to Tarsos, the capital of the province (i, 7), and put under Euthydemos the Phoenician. But he soon disliked the gaiety of the provincials, and was allowed to move with his tutor to Aegae, where a quiet country temple of Asklepios gave him a congenial place for study.

There at 16 he became a devout Pythagorean. After he came of age at 21, he passed five years' discipline of silence, which lasted therefore till he was 26 (i, 14). During this time he travelled in Pamphylia and Cilicia; and by his mere presence, and the strangeness of his mute actions, he influenced many peoples, and was regarded with awe. At the close of his silence, in A.D. 23, he went to Antioch, and apparently stayed there for about twenty years. Thence he determined on his Indian travels.

The next part of his life is very exactly fixed historically, by various references. To follow these we must work back from the fixed point of the great earthquake, and rising of the island at Thera, in A.D. 46. The confusion about the date of this in Pliny (see *Smith's Dict. Geog.*, ii, 1159) is evidently due to two consuls being named M. Junius Silanus, one in A.D. 19 with L. Norbanus Balbus, the other

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in A.D. 46 with Valerius Asiaticus. Pliny has mistaken the first Silanus consulship for the second, as Seneca and others state the appearance of the island to have been in A.D. 46. This earthquake and great sea-wave on 8 July, 46, fixes the visit of Apollonios to Crete (iv, 34). He had gone there from Sparta, where he is said to have stayed for some time after the Olympic games (iv, 24, 34), which were at midsummer, A.D. 45, the 206th Olympiad. Before that he was at Corinth, at various temples, and at Athens, where he certainly was at the Dionysiac festival in January, A.D. 45 (iv, 21). He had arrived in Athens on the Epidaurian festival (iv, 18), which was normally on 9 September, A.D. 44. And he had travelled there through Asia Minor, from Babylon, spending some time in Ephesos. He arrived in Babylon from the Indus by sea with propitious gales (iii, 52), that is with the north-east monsoon, which blows between October and April. As the land journey from Babylon to the Aegean would be about two months, and we have to allow for a stay in Ephesos and elsewhere, his arrival in Babylon may well have been in April, and his departure from India about February or March, A.D. 44. He had travelled to his ship in ten days (iii, 50) and he had stayed four months (iii, 50) with the Indian sages. He therefore arrived at the sages about October, A.D. 43, thus spending the cool season in India. He had travelled perhaps two weeks from the

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Indian king Phraotes, and probably ten weeks from Babylon before that, so the departure from Babylon was about July, A.D. 43. He had resided a year and eight months in Babylon (i, 40), and therefore arrived there in November, A.D. 41. Now when he reached Babylon the king Bardanes, Arsakes XXI, had reigned two years and two months (i, 28), and had therefore come to the throne in September, A.D. 39.

So far we have been allowing the shortest reasonable time for the journeys, because we now reach a near limit. Artabanos, Arsakes XIX, on submitting to the Roman troops on the Euphrates, had sacrificed to the statue of Caligula. That emperor succeeded in March, A.D. 37, and transit of the news of his succession, and the time to erect his statue, would put this submission of Artabanos in May, A.D. 37, or later. There thus remains at the most two years and four months (May, 37, to September, 39) for the expulsion of Artabanos by an insurrection, his later restoration, and his reign till his death, the civil war between Gotarzes, Arsakes XX, and Bardanes, and the accession of Bardanes, Arsakes XXI. It is clearly only a question of months, how these events could occupy but little over two years ; so there is certainly not a year of doubt as to the dates at which we have arrived. We thus find :—

- Submission of Artabanos May, A.D. 37, or later.

Death of Artabanos 38 or 39.

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Accession of Bardanes Sept., 39, or earlier.

Apollonios leaves Antioch	Sept., 41
reaches Babylon	Nov., 41
leaves Babylon	July, 43
reaches the sages	Oct., 43
takes ship	Feb., 44
reaches Babylon	April, 44
reaches Athens	9 Sept., 44
at Athens	Jan., 45
at Olympic games	July, 45
in Crete	8 July, 46

In agreement with this we read that he found Bardanes (iii, 58) still reigning happily when he returned to Babylon in 44; and it was not till A.D. 47 that the king was assassinated owing to his unpopularity. Also while he was at Sparta in the summer of 45 a decree arrived from Claudius, who reigned A.D. 41-54 (iv, 33).

There is then a blank in the history until we find that Apollonios was at the Isthmus of Corinth in A.D. 60. This visit is stated to have been seven years before Nero attempted to cut the isthmus in A.D. 67; and Apollonios is said to have remarked that it might be cut through. Some years later Apollonios went to Rome, when Telesinus was consul, in A.D. 66 (iv, 40). In the autumn of 66 Nero banished philosophers from Rome (iv, 47), and Apollonios therefore went to Spain, thence to Africa, and to Sicily, where near Messana he heard of the death of Nero (v, 11), which took place on

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11 June, 68. From Sicily he started for Greece in September, 68 (v, 18). He then wintered in Athens, and left in the spring of 69 for Egypt (v, 20). He stayed in Alexandria till Vespasian arrived (v, 27), and the Emperor (proclaimed 1 July, 69) stayed the winter of 69-70 in Egypt waiting for spring weather to sail for Rome.

Apollonios then visited Upper Egypt, spent a long time in the Delta, and went on to Phoenicia, Cilicia, Ionia, and Achaia. He passed over then to Antioch, where there was an earthquake. He was in Ionia (vi, 42) early in the reign of Domitian (81-96 A.D.) when the edict against vines was issued (*Suet., Dom.* 7). And he was at Ephesos (vii, 5, 6) when the three vestals were executed in A.D. 83.

His trial by Domitian took place at the end of March, as the Attis-Adonis festival was in course (vii, 32). He boasted that for 38 years he had never frequented Emperors nor complimented Kings (viii, 7, sect. 11). Now he never saw Nero in Rome, and the last king he visited was Bardanes in A.D. 44. Hence this would date his trial to A.D. 82. But, as against so early a date, it is evident that Domitian had already entered the suspicious stage, and the succession of Nerva was already contemplated. Ten years later, in A.D. 92, would be a far more likely date, and it could not be later by the reference to Olympia. It may be that the writing of 48 was misread as 38, *μγ μγ* in

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cursive Greek : but, however likely a change, this is only a conjecture. After this Apollonios was apparently at the Olympic games, probably in Ol. 218, A.D. 93 (viii, 18, 19) ; then two years in Greece (viii, 24) to A.D. 95. Passing to Ephesos at the age of 99 he proclaimed the moment of the assassination of Domitian on 18 September, A.D. 96 (viii, 26, 27). Lastly he wrote a letter in reply to one from his old friend Nerva (viii, 27, 28), and soon after disappeared. This dates his death to A.D. 97 or 98, when he must have been 100 or 101 years old.

Now we can look at the whole, and see that in all this mass of allusions to contemporary history and details of journeys there is not a single misplacement or confusion. And the only difficulty—that of 38 for 48 years—is an error very likely to arise in the cursive Greek. We must therefore grant that, according to the test of minute connection of separate detail, we have here a genuine history correctly transmitted.

There remains the frequent objection that miraculous acts are attributed to Apollonios and others. A man lamed by accident was healed, a blind man recovered his sight, and one who had lost the use of his hand had it restored (iii, 39) by the Indian sages. By Apollonios a demon was expelled (iv, 20) ; a *lamia* was detected (the basis of Keats' poem) (iv, 25) ; and a girl was raised up from her funeral bier (iv. 45). Whether these reported acts are attributed to faith-healing or

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other causes, or whether they are disbelieved, in neither case do they necessarily impair the historical narrative. For a parallel to this we only need to read, in this last year, that Father Ignatius already during his lifetime was believed to have raised from the dead a labourer who was killed by an accident, to have revived a dying woman to full health, to have brought to life a girl who had died of typhoid fever, and was said to have taken deadly poison himself with impunity. Now we do not need to argue about these physical facts ; it is enough that the account of these beliefs does not discredit any of the descriptions of the normal life of Father Ignatius. And if these miracles were believed during a man's lifetime, why should not similar things be believed about Apollonios a century after his death ? The description of the modern ascetic, " a man of great personal piety and magnetic personality," is much what was said of Apollonios by his contemporaries.

Having now dealt with the historic accuracy of the life, we may picture to ourselves the appearance of Apollonios, before passing to his teaching. We read that before he was 14 " the eyes of all were attracted by his beauty " (i, 7) ; and this was commonly remarked in his youth (i, 12), and after his Indian journey, aged 47 (iii, 1) ; later at Alexandria at the age of 72 " a beauty shone in his face " (v, 25) ; and in Rome, probably when aged 95, " the admiration which his whole appearance



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excited bordered on something divine" (vii, 31). Lastly, when 100, "his wrinkles had something pleasing in them which added a brilliancy to his looks" (viii, 29). While thus attracting his followers, he yet had a penetrating glance which terrified bad consciences. The satrap in Babylonia and Domitian in his palace both cried out that Apollonios was a daimon when they first saw him. From the age of 16 he went barefoot and let his hair grow, apparently unchecked (i, 8); he refers to it when 44 (i, 32), it was cut off by Domitian, and is discussed in his defence at 95 (viii, 7); it was imitated by his followers, as he told Damis in a time of danger to cut his hair (vii, 15). He never wore wool or leather, but only vegetable produce. Shoes of bark were used when travelling (vi, 11). A linen garment is often mentioned, of a peculiar appearance (i, 36; iv, 1, 40; vii, 31; viii, 7 [5]); "its fashion was religious, and unlike that worn by common quacks." It was imitated by his followers (iv, 39; vii, 15); and they all carried writings in their hands when going up the Nile (vi, 3).

Of his personal habits there are many details. At 16 he became a strict vegetarian, and he avoided wine as disturbing the mind (i, 8). And this diet was continued during his life (i, 36; ii, 7, 35; vi, 10, 11). He always preferred the simplest kind of life; and when Bardanes wished to entertain him at the Babylonian court, he replied, "The truth is that were I to live in a house above my

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condition of life I should not be comfortable. All kind of excess is irksome to the wise, as the want of it is to you who are of the great ones of the earth, and for this reason I prefer living with some private individual, whose fortune does not exceed my own . . . he lodged at the house of a Babylonian who was a man of good family and character ” (i, 33). And in his last years he said, “ As my way of life has been hitherto without preparation, it shall remain so to the end ” (vii, 30). At the same time he never practised the ascetic abandonment of all property. He shared in his paternal estate with his brother ; and later gave half his share to this spendthrift brother when reformed (i, 13). His sayings were, “ Oh Gods ! grant me few possessions and no wants ” (i, 34) ; and, “ Grant, O ye Gods, all that is convenient for me ” (iv, 40). As to his manner, we read that he used a plain style of speaking, neither turgid nor over-refined : “ he made use of no fastidious nicety in the division of his discourses nor any fine-spun sentences ; nor was he ever known to adopt an ironical manner, nor any kind of apostrophizing with his hearers. He spoke, as it were, an oracle, as ‘ I know,’ and ‘ It seems to me,’ and ‘ To what purpose is this,’ and ‘ You must know.’ His sentences were short and adamantine, his words authoritative and adapted to the sense, and the bare utterance of them conveyed a sound as if they were sanctioned by the sceptre of royalty ” (i, 17). He thus had

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none of the Socratic humour ; and from boyhood he seems to have had a taste for reproving others which implied a pragmatic certainty of his own judgment.

He entirely refused to sacrifice animals (v, 25), or to be present at a sacrifice, and similarly he declined to join in any hunting (i, 38). His offerings were of frankincense (i, 31), or a model bull compounded of various spices (v, 25).

Of his worship we read that at sunrise he did ceremonies which were only communicated to those who had passed through the four years' training of silence (i, 16) ; and at other times his morning adoration of the sun is mentioned (ii, 38 ; vi, 10, 18 ; vii, 31). He also, on retiring to sleep, paid his vows to Apollo and the Sun (viii, 13). One prayer of his is preserved ; when he offered frankincense he said, " O Sun ! conduct me to whatever part of the world it may seem good to you and me ; and grant me only to know the virtuous ; but as to the wicked, I wish neither to know them, nor to be known by them." Thus it seems that his position was that of the ascetics, solely the improvement of his own and kindred souls, but no reformation or conversion of the world. He came to call the righteous, and ignored the repentance of sinners. We shall notice his teaching below.

He had many followers or disciples. When he was but a lad, the Cilicians and others came and visited him (i, 8). When he lived at Antioch he had

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seven companions (i, 18) ; but they would none of them face the Indian journey, so he only took two of his own domestic scribes, one for shorthand, the other for fair copying. At Nineveh he met Damis, a Babylonian, who became his constant companion for 66 years, and wrote his biography (i, 19). Others joined him, as he referred when in Babylon to " those men who are with Damis " (i, 41). But the whole party travelled on only four camels, beside one for the guide (ii, 40). After his return, in Greece, " he was now followed by the Dioscoridae and Phoedimi and several others " (iv, 11).

In A.D. 45 he embarked for Crete with " his whole community, which consisted of his companions and their domestics " (iv, 34). Thus it is clear that they did not repudiate personal service, like the ascetics. On his way to Rome to face Nero, his thirty-four companions declined the risk, and turned back from Aricia, only eight going on with him, among whom were Menippos of Corinth, Dioscorides the Egyptian, and Damis the Ninevite (iv, 36-8). Many joined him later ; and of these twenty remained with Menippos at Alexandria, and ten, including Damis, went to Upper Egypt with him when he was 73. At the age of 96 he had many followers whom the Greeks call Apollonians (viii, 21) ; and a couple of years later he sailed into Ionia with his whole company (viii, 24). He seems therefore to have almost always been surrounded by a school of disciples and less permanent admirers.

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His favourite abode was in the temples. The colonnades and temenos enclosures gave a grateful shelter to religious students. When a lad he retired from Tarsos, and spent most of his time in a country temple of Asklepios, as a quiet and healthy place (i, 8). In his earlier life before going to India "he made his abode in whatever temples he found open" (i, 16). At Ephesos he discoursed in the porch of the temple (iv, 2). When 69 years old at Rome the Pontifex Maximus said, "Be it lawful for you to enter all the temples; I will write to the priests to receive you, and submit to your superior orders"; to which Apollonios replied that he preferred to dwell "in temples which are not so vigilantly guarded. None of the Gods reject me, and all give me the protection of their roof." "After this Apollonios took up his abode in the temples, and in none he dwelt without making some reformation. In this way he passed from temple to temple" (iv, 40). In Spain he and his companions were sitting in the temple of Herakles, during a conversation that is recorded (v, 7). A strange story of his last days shows his old habit. In Crete he used to enter the temple of Dictynna (Artemis) at unseasonable hours of the night. The temple treasures were guarded by fierce dogs, who fawned upon him. The priests charged him with magic against the dogs, and bound him. At midnight he freed himself, called the priests to witness, and ran into the temple,

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whose gates shut after him. "And the temple resounded with the singing of many virgins, the burden of whose song was 'Leave the earth, come to heaven, come, come.'" And so Apollonios vanished.

The remains that we have of the teaching of Apollonios may be classed under different heads. His views about the temples are shown by his reply to Telesinus at Rome, that his wisdom consisted in "a divine instinct which teaches what prayers and sacrifices are most proper to be made to the Gods" (iv, 40). At Antioch in his earlier days, "whenever he visited a city of Greek origin, which was in possession of an established code of religious worship, he called together the priests, and discoursed to them concerning the nature of their Gods; and if he found they had departed from their usual forms, he always set them right. But when he came to a city whose religious rites and customs were barbarous, and different from others, he enquired by whom they were established, and for what they were intended; and afterward in what manner they were observed, at the same time suggesting whatever occurred to him as better and more becoming" (i, 16). After his return from India he visited all the temples of Greece. "In visiting and reforming the temples, he was attended by the priests and his familiar friends" (iv, 24). "When he perceived the people of Athens were much given to religious worship,

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he made sacrifices the subject of his discourse, wherein he specified the kind of offering best suited to each God, and the precise hour of day and night when they should sacrifice, or pray, or offer libations. And there is still extant a treatise of his in which these things are explained in his native tongue" (iv, 19). At Alexandria likewise he was teaching philosophy in the temple (v, 27).

His scope of teaching was restricted to the educated in his earlier years. "He avoided all promiscuous multitudes and places of much resort, saying that it was not the company of illiterate rustics which he sought, but that of men. In consequence of this determination he frequented places more retired, and made his abode in whatever temples he found open" (i, 16). Later he went to at least two of the Olympic festivals (iv, 24, 34; viii, 18, 19). In 66 at Rome he instructed persons in the temples, and the people were more attentive to the public worship; and the temples he frequented were most crowded (iv, 41). Even in connection with his earlier life at Antioch we read that "he addressed the multitude, with whom he always discoursed in the evening, but never before noon" (i, 16). It seems rather out of place to name such addresses so early in his life, after saying that he kept to retired places. It looks rather as if this popular preaching belonged to later years, when, after his trial by Domitian, "all Greece flocked to hear him with

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more eagerness than they ever did to the Olympic games " (viii, 15), and " people went in crowds to hear the philosophy of Apollonios " (viii, 21).

His general teaching began at a tender age, for at 16 he wrote a public letter to the people of Tarsos, rebuking them for loving to sit along the banks of the Kydnos—a rather needless interference (i, 7). He failed to start a revival among the Ephesians, in view of the plague being imminent, so he went on through Ionia, " redressing everywhere what was wrong, and always speaking on those topics most useful to his hearers " (iv, 4). He reproached the Ionians for placing on their Panionian register two Romans named Lucullus and Fabricius (iv, 5). He reproved the Smyrniotes for their idle disputings and divisions (iv, 8), and kept them in the greatest harmony (9). He severely reproved the Athenians for the savagery of having gladiatorial combats in the great theatre of Dionysos (iv, 22) ; and rebuked the effeminate dances which they performed at the Dionysiac festival (iv, 21). He advised the Spartans to worship the gods as masters, and the heroes as fathers (iv, 31). At Alexandria Vespasian was told that Apollonios " was doing all he could to make men better " (v, 27). When Bardanes was ill, " Apollonios attended and spoke with so much eloquence on the nature of the soul, that he revived, and told those about him that Apollonios had not only made him despise his kingdom, but



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even death itself " (i, 38). And at the last, " many of the Greeks had conversed with him before, who were all again anxious to acquire a new stock of knowledge, being satisfied they had heard a greater number of extraordinary things from him than from any other person " (viii, 15).

Of his more ethical teaching some sayings remain. " At Olympia his conversation turned chiefly on the topics most useful to mankind ; namely, fortitude, wisdom, temperance, and, in short, all the virtues (iv, 31). To a young man who had suddenly inherited a fortune, and was lavishing it on a great house, he said, " Whom do you think the best guardian of riches, he who is well educated or he who is not ? . . . Sir, you do not so much possess this house, as you are possessed by it. For when I enter a temple, no matter how small, I have greater pleasure in seeing a statue of ivory and gold, than I have in seeing in a spacious temple one rudely formed of earth and clay " (v, 22). To Bardanes, who displayed his riches to him, he replied, " I look on it as so much straw " (i, 39). Apollonios also said that a wise man ought always to be on his guard ; if overcome by some excess he may perhaps be pardoned, but if he subject himself to the love of money he never will ; for he will be hated as one who is the slave of every other vice (i, 35). He refused all presents of gold from the kings of Babylon and India (i, 41 ; ii, 40) : and

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he expelled some sorcerers who were collecting money for a great propitiatory sacrifice (vi, 41). When he himself required help, he went to the temple of Zeus at Olympia, and asked for a thousand drachmas, which the priest readily gave him from the treasury (viii, 17). He had a strong feeling about the deadening effect of legal practice, and "when some people reproached him for not suffering his followers to accept of magisterial offices . . . he answered, 'I do it for fear of the wolves,' " meaning that legal repute was gained through the contests of mankind, and he wished to keep the young men out of such society (viii, 22). His love of political freedom led to his breaking with Vespasian, in consequence of the abolition of Greek autonomy (v, 41); and he usually freed his own slaves, but did not consider such a course essential; his two secretaries were probably slaves (i, 18); and at the end of his life, his freed men having all died before him, he had two slave girls to wait on him, one of whom he freed, and bequeathed the other to her (viii, 30). Regarding death, his views are preserved in a letter of condolence to Valerius Asiaticus, about A.D. 70, whose friendship he had probably made while in Rome, A.D. 66. He says that there is neither birth nor death, but only becoming visible and invisible. In place of mourning death, we should honour and reverence it. If there be a law in things (and there is one, and it is God who has appointed it),

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then the righteous man will have no wish to try to change good things, for such a wish is selfishness and is counter to the law, but he will think that all that comes to pass is good. And, in a fragment of his treatise on sacrifice, he says, "We men should ask the best of things, through the best thing in us, for what is good—I mean by the use of mind, for mind needs no material things to make its prayer" (Mead, *Apollonius*, pp. 149-54). And the summary of his own prayers is, "I pray that justice may prevail, that the laws may not be broken, that the wise may be poor, and the rest of mankind rich, but not by fraud" (iv, 40).

Some conversations with Damis are recorded by him. On seeing an Indian boy riding an elephant, Damis wondered at so small a child controlling it, but Apollonios rightly showed that the elephant governed himself and accepted the boy's management (ii, 11). Later he pointed out the intelligence and affection of the elephant (ii, 14-16). In a conversation about painting, the mental quality of it, as distinct from mere imitation, is enforced by the effect of an outline drawing without any colour (ii, 22). And a discourse on the nature of sleep, and the value of temperance, was held with the Indian king (ii, 35-37).

We now turn to the accounts of the sages of India and Egypt. The route of Apollonios was through Bactria, and down the Cabul river to its junction with the Indus at Taxila, now Shah Dheri,

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not far from Attok at the foot of the Cashmere mountains. There he saw King Phraotes, who helped him forward to the sages. They dwelt in a hill-fortress 4 days' journey beyond the Sutlej, in the district about two hundred miles wide between the Sutlej and Ganges. The place of crossing the Sutlej may have been as far south as Bahawulpur, for the plain was 15 days' journey across from river to river, but only 18 days' journey down to the sea. The sages were a celibate community, recruited from outside. There were only 18 living with their elder ; but two generations before there had been as many as 87, which points to a decline in such communities. They were recruited by youths of the age of 18 ; such were examined as to the characters of their ancestors, their personal character, memory (the thing most honoured), self-restraint, obedience, and physiognomy. Only a few of the whole people devoted themselves thus to philosophy. They wore their hair long, like the Spartans, with white mitres on the head, and short tunics of cotton. They spent much time in religious exercises. Of the sunrise there is no mention, but there can be no doubt that this was one period of worship. At midday they anointed and bathed ; and then went to the temple wearing garlands and singing hymns. In the temple they formed an organized chorus led by the elder. They struck the ground with their staves, so that it rocked, and they rose by levitation two cubits from

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the earth, while they continued singing a hymn. At sunset they doubtless had service ; and at midnight was another service. The sunrise and sunset services may be inferred as likely in themselves, and certainly practised by their imitator Apollonios. A service of some sort seems to have lasted till the morning, when the sacrifices were finished.

They bore a ring and a wand, which had a virtue of great force, and were both of high repute for discovering secrets. This suggests the emblems of the wheel and trisula. They extracted fire from the sun's rays, probably by a burning glass. Greek was commonly spoken by the sages ; but the king of their district did not know it, and had some contempt for the Greeks. The images of Greek gods made by Indians, and mixed with the Indian gods, much astonished Damis ; but we know now that this eclectic mixture was common in north India at that time, as seen especially on the coinage, and this point is good evidence of the truth of the account.

The place is described as an impregnable castle, and it was well furnished, as Iarchas, the elder, sat on a throne of black bronze inlaid with gold figures, and the rest of the sages on other bronze thrones, ranged in regular order. The throne of King Phraotes of Taxila was brought out for Apollonios. The local king was only allowed to stay one day at the castle, when he came to consult the sages.

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As to their doctrines, they prayed to the sun, and worshipped fire. They thought themselves gods because they were good men. They reckoned five elements, aether being a fifth; this is like the statement of aether being the fifth portion of man, in the Perfect Sermon. The Cosmos is male and female united, and it has a mind which excites it to action. The underworld is dark and gloomy, and does not form part of the orderly Cosmos. They thought of the soul like Pythagoras, and Iarchas claimed himself to have been King Ganges, Apollonios claimed to have been a pilot, and a youth to have been Palamedes. Thus the transmigration was entirely human, and does not extend apparently higher or lower. They believed in foreknowledge and divination, as most divine and useful to mankind. They repudiated choice by lot as senseless, chance being blind; this shows that Fate was not a prominent idea. Also they object to the negative idea of justice and excellence consisting in not being unjust and evil, and say that positive virtue is required, and not merely the negation of wrong. The local king was by no means a disciple, but he avoided eating anything having life, as being unlawful. He came as a suppliant to the sages, though with great pomp, but they did not rise to receive him. So the religious arrogance of an old-established community was well developed. There are many interesting descriptions of the monuments and condition of

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the country, but they are beyond our present scope. References are not given separately for the above statements, as they are all between ii, 30 and iii, 45.

The account of the Egyptian sages is not so full, but is of much interest to us. The place of the company which seems to have solely attracted the attention of Apollonios was south of Thebes. After seeing the colossi of Memnon (Amenhotep III) at Thebes, Apollonios went on the same day till sunset. This would probably mean that he went on nine miles, about four hours' camel-journey, to Erment and put up there. Next day at sunrise he started, and at midday reached the sages, who lived on a "rising ground not far from the banks of the Nile," with "many chapels on different parts of the hill, constructed with that care which is peculiar to the Egyptians." This was clearly a rock-cemetery with tomb chapels, which served for the community. And as Gebelēn is 14 miles from Erment, about five hours' camel-journey, and there are rock tombs and caves there, probably that place must have been the residence of the sages. "They had no general place of meeting for public worship, like the Indians. . . . They live in the open air and consequently have neither cottage nor house. They have built a kind of caravansery for the use of strangers, in shape like the small porticos which you meet with at Elis" (vi, 6). There was a small grove of trees, where the sages usually assembled. They wore a dress like the

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Athenians (6), but as it was but slight (8) it is probably compared to the chlamys. They had no strict rules of order, but seated themselves as chance directed. They performed rites at midday, probably the bathing common to the Indians and the Essenes.

The head of the community was named Thespision. He claimed that the Egyptians were more orthodox than the Indians because they had no luxuries or pleasant food or riches, "nor does the air support us at a distance from the surface of the earth," implying that Indian levitation was believed in. "It is enough for a wise man that he is pure in whatever he eats, that he touches nothing which has had life, that he subdues all those irregular desires which make their approaches through the eyes, that he remove far from him envy, the mistress of injustice, which carries both hands and mind to the commission of all wrong. Truth requires no wonderful things to be performed, nor the use of any magic arts." "The wisdom we have learned says, We must lie on the ground, prostrate ourselves in the dust, go naked, and live as we do at present in the midst of toil and hardships, and must account nothing pleasant or agreeable which does not proceed from labour." "We are humble people; we live on the earth, and partake of whatever it supplies us with of its own free will, without toil or labour, unaided by any magic influence." All of their life Thespision con-



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## APOLLONIOS, OR THE REVIVALIST

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trusted with the splendour and magic of the Indians. He adds, "In hearing me you have heard all," implying the obedience of the others.

The claim of poverty to be superior to wealth, Apollonios met by contrasting the Pythian oracle with an old woman doing incantations with a sieve; and compared the Egyptians to the old woman, and the Indians to the Pythian prophetess. The Egyptians were not only given to exalting themselves over the Indians, but to the Indians they said, "that all the rites and ceremonies of religion, which are in esteem among the Greeks, were discovered by them; and, they add, that the Greeks are destitute of all real knowledge, that they are insolent, factious, and turbulent; liars also, and fond of the marvellous, and pitiful traders who make a display of their poverty as a pretence to excuse their piratical disposition" (iii, 32). This accords with the Egyptian antipathy to the Greeks in the "Definitions of Asklepios," and such qualities are certainly obvious in history.

After distrusting Apollonios (owing to the intrigues of the rival philosopher Euphrates) the Egyptians at last forgave him, but Apollonios asked who was to restore them to his favour after their contempt of him, for he who is attacked by lies has reason to be angry. "I grant it, but let us philosophize and make friends" was the reply. This is truly Egyptian, to pass over doing an injury with the remark, "No matter."

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## PERSONAL RELIGION IN EGYPT

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The conversations reported do not show much of their views. Apollonios asked why the figures of the gods were so absurd, and said that the animals were ludicrous; the reply was that they only figure the gods by symbols with an occult meaning; to this Apollonios rejoins that to have no figures would be better than animal gods. Thespesion then asked for the reason for flogging the Spartan boys at the altar; for this Apollonios accounts as being a substitute for human sacrifice; whereon Thespesion wisely remarks, "Were we to maliciously search into all institutions whose origin cannot be ascertained, and to blame the gods as if giving them their approbation, we should run into many absurd opinions." Thespesion discourses on justice, and holds (like the Indians) that the mere absence of injustice or evil should not be a distinction, but that only the exercise of active virtues should be honoured. The Egyptians agreed that the Ethiopian sages "were a colony from India, who trod almost, as it were, in the wise steps of their forefathers, and adhered strictly to domestic discipline."

Apollonios left the sages, and went south on the western bank, with the Nile on his left. He came to a hill abounding in trees, the leaves, bark, and gum of which were collected, probably the *sont* acacia. He saw Ethiopian nomads dwelling in wagons, a custom which has entirely ceased. And he reached the cataracts, of which there were three, two a couple of miles apart and one farther up. The

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## APOLLONIOS, OR THE REVIVALIST

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account of their noise seems to us exaggerated, but it is not more than Bruce describes ; and any new thing—such as the first ascent of a mountain—is naturally looked on with heightened feelings.

The general view of these Egyptian sages or ascetics shows that they were of the same class as the Therapeutae, but more crabbed and suspicious, according to the Egyptian character. They seem to have been somewhat ignorant and fanatical, like the later monks, and no books or sacred writings are named.

There are many matters of interest in the life of Apollonios, concerning both man and nature, but they are outside of our present scope of the religious ideas.

How then should we regard Apollonios ? Certainly not as an originator of any new gospel or beliefs, but as a revivalist whose power lay in exhortation and moral rebuke ; without much sense of humour, to save him from being over-didactic ; but with a purity of motive and disinterestedness which gave him a great power over communities sunk in effeminacy and selfishness. He never professed to help the world in general, or to improve the sinners, but only to raise those who were already reasonable and religious. The Pharisee was strong in him throughout, and was only balanced by a patient kindness which endeared him to those who were willing listeners. A preacher but not an apostle, a saint but not a prophet, must be our appreciation of Apollonios of Tyana.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY

IT may be well to conclude by focussing together the conclusions regarding the historical development of ideas and doctrines. Here we place all the Hermetic documents that we have described in their probable order, judging by their ideas and use of definite terms. The first occurrence of each term is in capitals.

At 500 B.C. we find the belief in a supreme God, many subordinate gods, guardian angels, and men. A strongly physical cosmology is followed, and Indian influence appears in **METEMPSYCHOSIS** and sacrifice of spices. There is no mention of daimons, of logos, or of conversion (*Korē Kosmou*).

Next we note the eternal cyclic renovation, and the blessing on multiplication. No mention of daimons (*C. H.*, iv). Later it is said that some men are **DAIMONIC** and divine. Metempsychosis of animals and men is named; and God, Kosmos, and Man are the three divisions of being (*C. H.*, xi).

At 350 B.C., or earlier, Daimons act as ministers of wrath. Man is not punished for fate, but only for bad acts of free will. **LOGOS** is the rational part of the soul, and above the daimons. Man is **CON-**

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## SUMMARY

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VERTED by a divine ray (*C. H.*, xvi). Along with this is the pantheism, and the seeking a divine ray (*C. H.*, vi); and Kosmos the SECOND GOD (*C. H.*, ix).

At 340 B.C. we next touch the idea of the world being evil (*C. H.*, vii) and the rise of ASCETICISM. Daimons are evil, and are between gods and men. Animals have body, soul, and spirit. Man has also sense and reason. God made the Second God the beloved SON OF GOD. Souls are judged by their guardian angel, and if evil go to TARTAREAN punishment. Before 332 B.C. we find that Logos is human reason, and Agatho-daimon is the FIRST-BORN OF GOD (Perfect Sermon).

Next Logos is reason used in making the Kosmos, and is in man. Conversion is the BAPTISM in Mind, and so partaking of the Gnosis (*C. H.*, v).

Then Logos is a divine principle. Conversion is REBIRTH, born in Mind by the Son of God, the One Man. Mind is the SHEPHERD. WISDOM is first named (*C. H.*, xiv).

The Hermetic series closes with the Shepherd of Man. Holy LOGOS is MIND, THE SON OF GOD, which is extended also to man (*C. H.*, i).

At 180 B.C. Wisdom is personified and is in heaven, and in the deep, and in all the earth and every people (Sirach).

By A.D. 40 the Second God the Logos is said to make the whole Kosmos; He is God's First-born Son who as a viceroy leads the flock. But Logos is inherent in man even when not a Son of God (Philon).

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## PERSONAL RELIGION IN EGYPT

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We are now in a position to gauge what ideas were already a part of the general religious thought and phraseology of serious persons in the first century ; and thus to understand what were the other terms and ideas in Christianity which were new to mankind. The current literature of the time was as naturally taken for granted by Christians as were the books of the Old Testament and Apocrypha which were also familiar to them. For us to pass from the Old Testament straight to the New Testament, ignoring all the development of ideas and terms between the two, is as deceptive as it would be to pass from Thomas Aquinas to modern Nonconformity without any regard for the changes between those periods. And as we should certainly be wrong in attributing to teachers of our own day all the change from the mediaeval position, so we are equally wrong if we ascribe to Christianity every fresh thought that is not to be found in the prophets. The separation of the new ideas in the teaching of Christ and of the Apostles from amid the general terms of religion at the time, is the only road to understanding what Christianity meant to those who actually heard the teaching of the Way.

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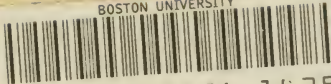
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