

The Serapeum in Alexandria
(artist's conception)



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Qabbalistic and Rosierucian
Symbolical Philosophy**

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Secret Teachings concealed within the Rituals, Allegories
and Mysteries of all Ages*

BY
MANLY P. HALL
THE ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOR BY
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The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies

Part Two



HE entire history of Christian and pagan Gnosticism is shrouded in the deepest mystery and obscurity; for, while the Gnostics were undoubtedly prolific writers, little of their literature has survived. They brought down upon themselves the animosity of the early Christian Church, and when this institution reached its position of world power it destroyed all available records of the Gnostic cults.

The name Gnostic means wisdom, or knowledge, and is derived from the Greek *Gnosis*. The members of the order claimed to be familiar with the secret doctrines of early Christianity. They incorporated the Christian Mysteries according to pagan symbolism. Their secret information and philosophic tenets they concealed from the profane and taught to a small group only of especially initiated persons.

Simon Magus, the magician of New Testament fame, is often supposed to have been the founder of Gnosticism. If this be true, the sect was founded during the century after Christ and is probably the first of the many branches which have sprung from the main trunk of Christianity. Boasting with which the enthusiasts of the early Christian Church might not agree they declared to be inspired by the Devil. That Simon Magus had mysterious and supernatural powers is conceded even by his enemies, but they maintained that these powers were lent to him by the evil spirits and fiends which they generated were his evil pre-occupations. Undoubtedly the most interesting legend concerning Simon is that which tells of his theosophic contests with the Apostle Peter while the two were polemicalizing their differing doctrines in Rome. According to the story that the Church Fathers have preserved, Simon was to prove his spiritual superiority by ascending to heaven in a chariot of fire. He was actually picked up and carried many feet into the air by invisible powers. When St. Peter saw this, he cried out in a loud voice, ordering the demons (spirits of the air) to release their hold upon the magician. The evil spirits, when so ordered by the great saint, were forced to obey. Simon fell a great distance and was killed, which indisputably proved the superiority of the Christian powers. This story is undoubtedly manufactured out of whole cloth, as it is only one out of many accounts concerning his death, few of which agree. As more and more evidence is being amassed to the effect that St. Peter was never in Rome, its last possible vestige of authenticity is rapidly being disposed.

That Simon was a philosopher there is no doubt, for wherever his secret words are preserved his mystical and transcending thoughts are invariably expressed. The principles of Gnosticism are well described in the following verbatim statement by him, supposed to have been preserved by Hippolytus: "To you, therefore, I say what I say, and write what I write. And the writing is this. Of the material things (periods, planes, or cycles of creative and created life in substance and space, celestial creatures) there are two sheets, without beginning and end, springing from one Root, which is the power invisible, unapprehensible silence

(Bythos). Of these sheets one is manifested from above, which is the Great Power, the Universal Mind ordering all things, male, and the other, (is manifested) from below, the Great Thought, female, producing all things. Hence pairing with each other, they unite and manifest the Middle Distance, incomprehensible Air, without beginning or end. In this is the Father Who sustains all things, and manifests those things which have a beginning and end." (See *Simon Magus*, by G. R. S. Mead.) By this we are to understand that manifestation is the result of a positive and a negative principle, one acting upon the other, and it takes place in the middle plane, or point of equilibrium, called the *pleroma*. This *pleroma* is a peculiar substance produced out of the blending of the spiritual and material zones. Out of the *pleroma* was individualized the *Deuterotheos*, the immaterial mortal, to whom we are responsible for our physical existence and the suffering we must go through in connection with it. In the Gnostic system, three pairs of opposites, called *Stygies*, emanated from the Eternal One. These, with Hermetism, make the total of seven. The six (three pairs) *Aloes* (loving, divine principles) were described by Simon in the *Philosophumena* in the following manner: The first two were Mind (*Nous*) and Thought (*Ennoia*). Then came Voice (*Phonē*) and its opposite, Noise (*Chōmō*), and lastly, Reason (*Logosmos*) and Experience (*Eirharmōsis*). From these primordial six, united with the Eternal Force, came forth the *Aloes* (*Angels*) who formed the lower worlds through the direction of the *Demourges*. (See the works of H. P. Blavatsky. How this first Gnosticism of Simon Magus and Menander his disciple, was amplified and frequently distorted, by later sects in the cult must now be considered.



THE DEATH OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN
Simon Magus, having called upon the spirits of the air, and the phantoms being picked up by the demon St. Peter drove them away and struck Simon dead and gave the phantoms the command to carry the corpse of Simon Magus to Hell by the way.

The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclined to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syrian cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outgrowth of the philosophical deductions of a clever Egyptian Christian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Apostle Matthew. Like Simon Magus, he was an emanationist, with Neo-Platonic inclinations. In fact, the entire Gnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations as being the logical connection between the irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Substance, which the Gnostics believed to have been coexistent in Eternity. Some assert that Basilides was the true founder of Gnosticism, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magus laid down its fundamental principles in the preceding century.

The Alexandrian Basilides inculcated Egyptian Hermeticism, Oriental occultism, Chaldean astrology, and Persian philosophy in his followers, and in his doctrines sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the ancient pagan Mysteries. To him is attributed the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of *Abrahas*. In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his *Celtic Druids*, has demonstrated that the numerical powers of the letters forming the word *Abrahas* when added together result in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name *Mithras* when treated in a similar manner has the same numerical value. Basilides taught that the

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Simon Magus



Basilides



Valentinus

The Gnostics were divided in their opinions concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower worlds. He established the terrestrial universe with the aid of six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which He formed out of, and yet within, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest creation out of the substance called *pleroma*. One group of the Gnostics was of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by building this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by encasing them in mortal vehicles. The other sect viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, *Jehovah*, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced mediæval Rosicrucianism, which viewed *Jehovah* as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Mythology abounds with the stories of gods who partook of both celestial and terrestrial natures. *Odin*, of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity.

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order claimed to be the only sect to have actual pictures of the Divine Syrian. While these were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing sculpturings and paintings of the pagan sun gods, they were all Christianity had. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of *Nous*, the Divine Mind, and emanated from the higher spiritual *Æons*. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left it again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine *Nous* could not suffer death, but that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the *Nous*, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenæus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

"When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His first-born, *Nous*, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles." (See King's *Gnostics and Their Remains*.)

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher *Æons*.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin*



From *Nous*...
A SYMBOLIC
Labyrinths and mazes were among many ancient cults. They have been found among the Persians, Egyptians, and Greeks. Some of these mazes are merely involved paths, and are literally miles of gloom hollowed from the sides of a mountain, as in the case of the Cretan maze, which was unquestionably a

THE LIGHT

This Gnostic by its serpentine way of the Sun head the exalted orb in the Constellation of Leo

power of the universe was divided into 365 Æons, or spiritual cycles, and the emanation of all these together was the Supreme Father, and in Him he gave the *Qabalistic* or *impulsion* *Abrazas*, as being a symbolical, uncreated, and of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. *Abrazas* was usually symbolized as a composite creature, with the body of a human being, and the head of a serpent, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains*, gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian theologian, St. Irenæus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first sought Boëth (Nous, or Mind), this the Logos Word, this again Phronesis, Intelligence, from Phronesis springing Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength."

In describing *Abrazas*, C. W. King says: "The Gnostics considered the composite image, entitled with the actual name *Abrazas*, to be a Gnostic Father, representing the Supreme Being, with the five emanations symbolized by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, spring the two supporters, *Nous* and *Logos*, expressed in the serpentine symbols of the male snakes, and the questioning understanding, to which according to the Gnostics had made the serpent the attribute of *Phalar*. His head — that of a cock — represents Phronesis, that head being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of *Sophia* and *Dynamis* in the shield of Wisdom and the scepter of Power."

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Sophia, or Wisdom. In the Body of the Savior, parts of which are commonly known as the *Paris Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of *Æons* and their strange initiations. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrine of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Christianity, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshippers), and the Alchemists. After the thirteenth century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to reconstruct the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the essential accuracy was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE ANKH

The identity of the Gnostic-Egyptian Serapis (known to the Greeks as Serapis and the Egyptians as Ankh-Tepi) is shrouded by an impenetrable veil of mystery. While the deities were familiar figures among the symbols of the ancient Egyptian initiatory rites, his unique nature was revealed only to those who had fulfilled the requirements of the Serapis cult. Therefore, in all probability, excepting the initiates of the Egyptian hierarchies, were ignorant of his true character. So far as known, there exists no authentic account of the rites of Serapis, but an analysis of the deity and his accompanying symbols reveals their solemn points. In a work followed by the King of Cyprus, Serapis described himself thus:

"A god I am such as I show to thee,
The Starsy Heavens are my head, my trunk the sea,
Elate forms my feet, mine ears the air supplies,
The Sun's far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes."

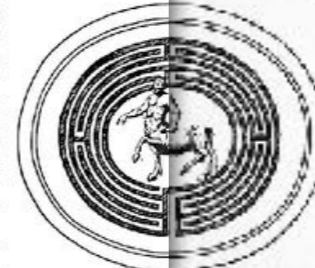
Several unscientific attempts have been made to etymologize the word *Serapis*. Godfrey Higgins notes that *Seres* was the name given by the Egyptians to a snake zodiac, and *Apis* was Osiris incarnate in the sacred bull. These two words combined result in *Sere-Apis* or *Ser-Apis*, "the zodiac of the bull." But it is improbable that the Egyptians would worship a zodiac in the form of a man.

Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that *Serapis* was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about his head. In his *Oration Upon the Sovereign*, Basilian speaks of the deity in these words: "One Jew, one Phoenician, one Sun, is Serapis." In Hebrew, *Serapis* is *Saraph*, meaning "to blaze out" or "to blaze up." For this reason the Jews designated one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, *Seraphim*.

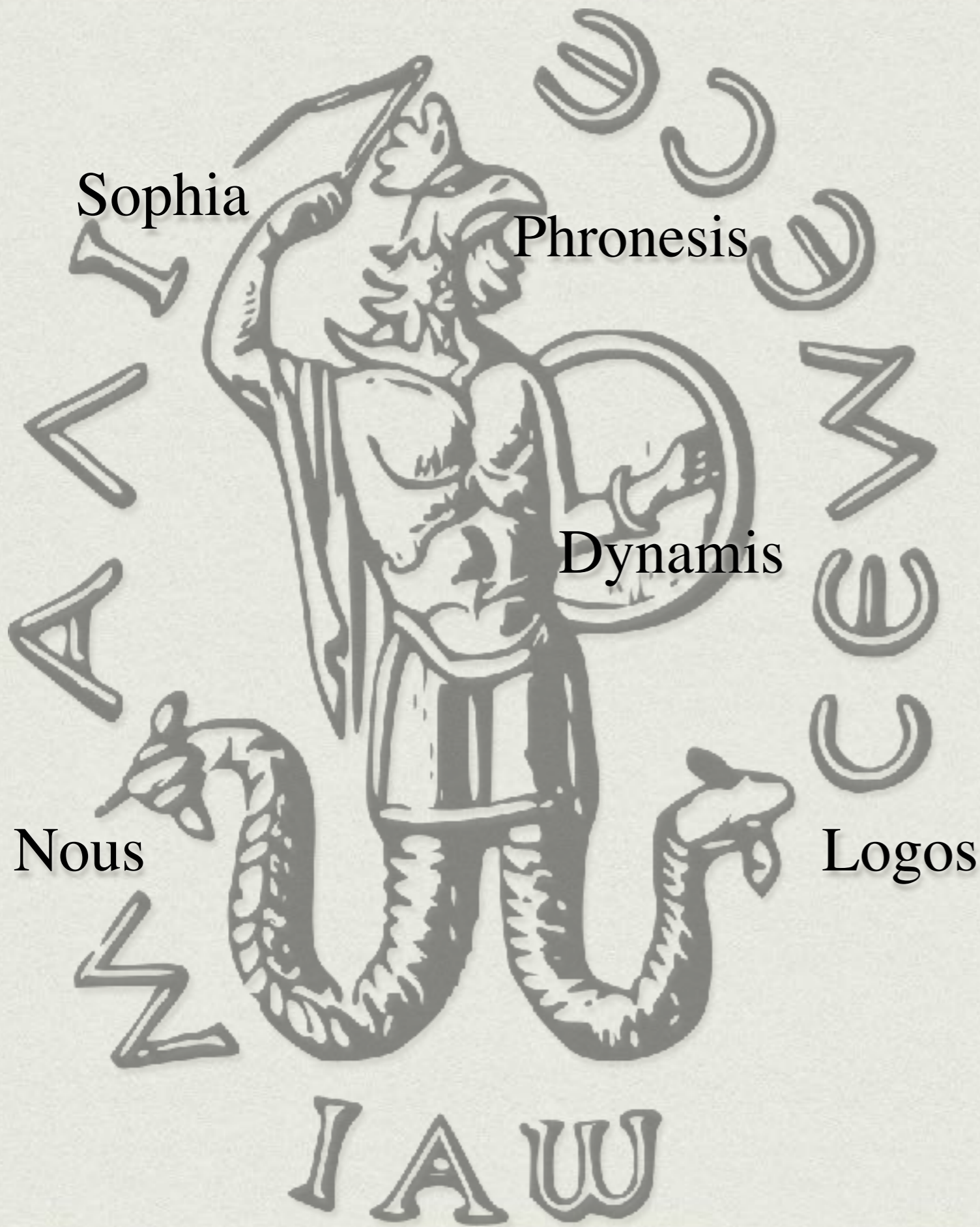
The most common theory, however, regarding the origin of the name *Serapis* is that which traces its derivation from the compound *Osiris-Apis*. At one time the Egyptians believed that the dead were absorbed into the name of Osiris, the god of the dead. While marked similarity exists between Osiris-Apis and Serapis, the theory advanced by Egyptian gnostics that Serapis is merely a name given to the dead *Apis*, or sacred bull of Egypt, is untenable in view of the transcendent wisdom possessed by the Egyptian personality, who, in all probability, used the god as a symbol of the sun of the world (an *ankh* word). The material body of *Nous* was called *Apis*; the soul, which escaped from the body at death, was incarnated with the beam during physical life was designated *Serapis*.

C. W. King believes Serapis to be a deity of the astral extraction, his name being the Liberated form of *Ser-efai* or *Ser-ep*, two Ophite symbols in *Yaseh*, the Hindu god of death. This appears reasonable, especially since it is a legend that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Boötes from India to Egypt. The purity of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory.

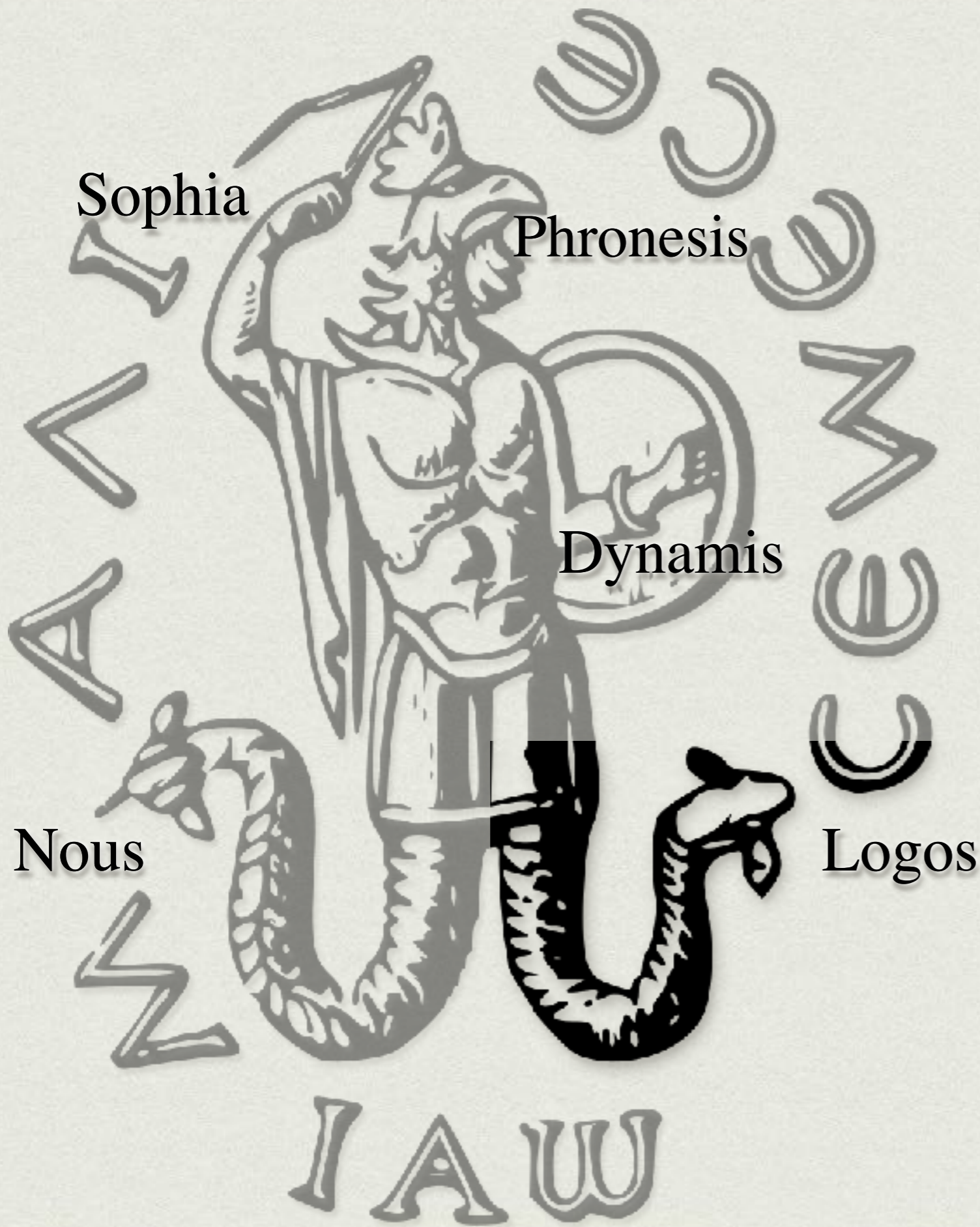
Among other meanings proposed for the word *Serapis* are: "The Sacred Bull," "The Sun in Taurus," "The Soul of Osiris," "The Sacred Serpent," and "The Rotting of the Bull." The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred *Apis* in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years.



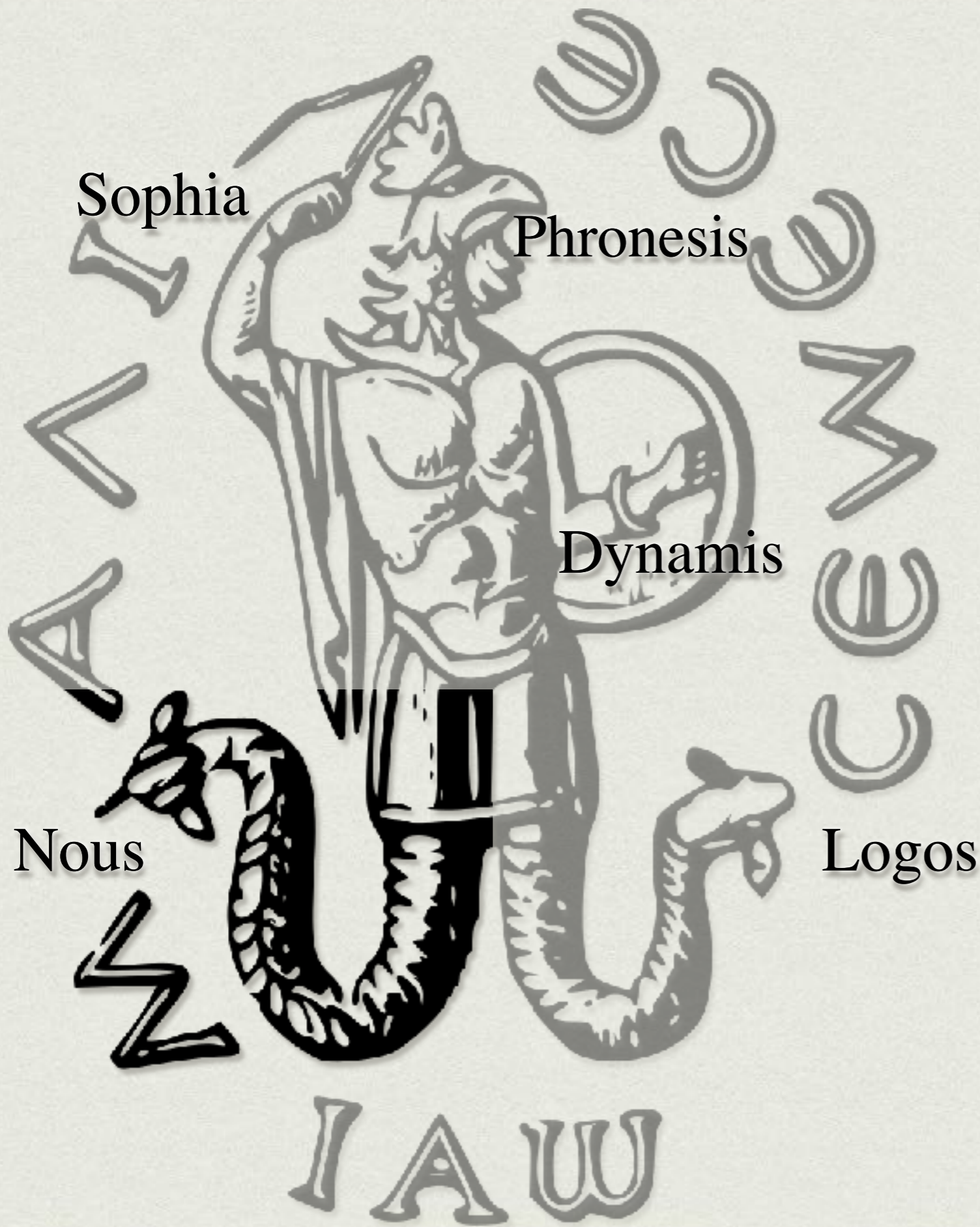
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A SYMBOLIC
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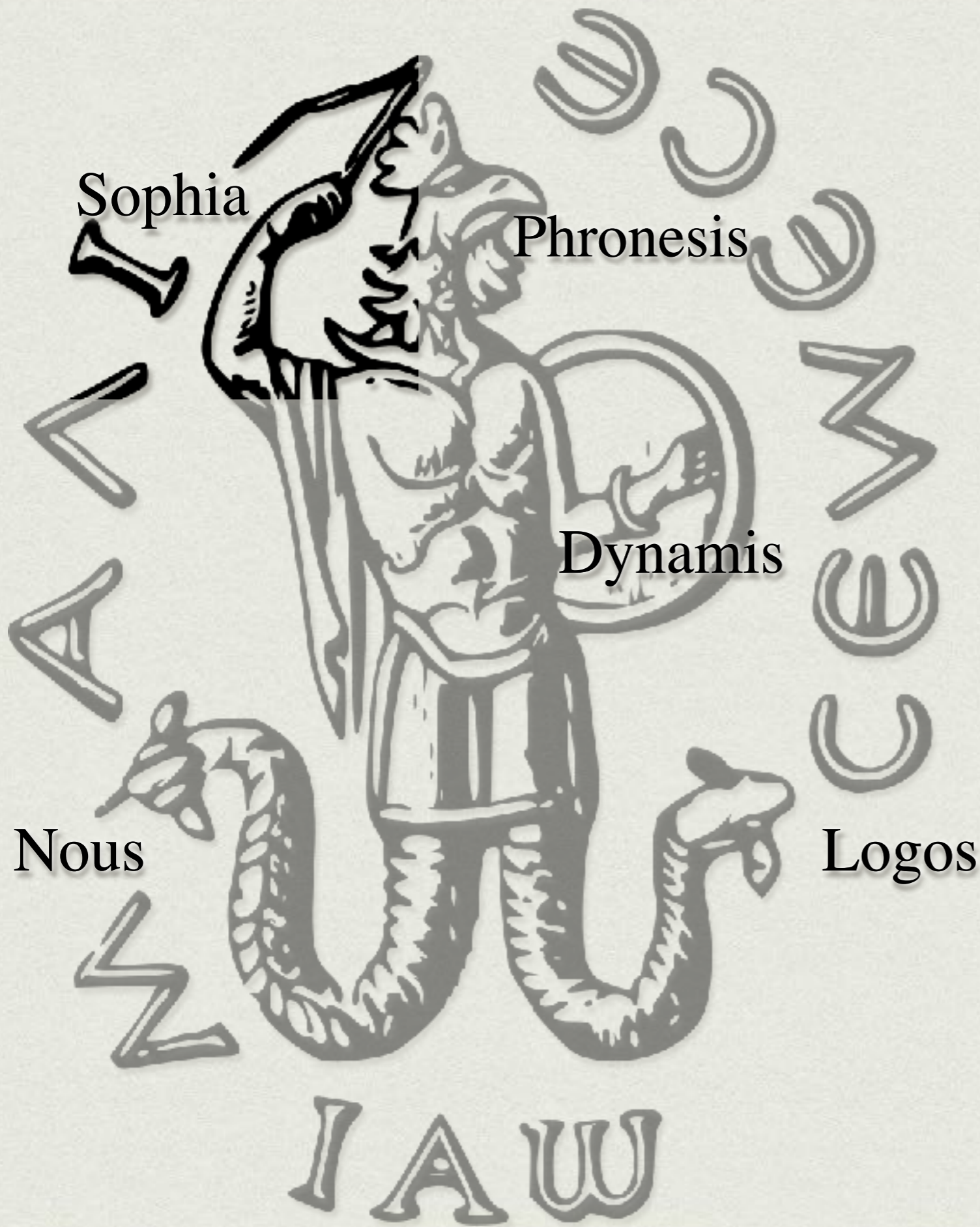
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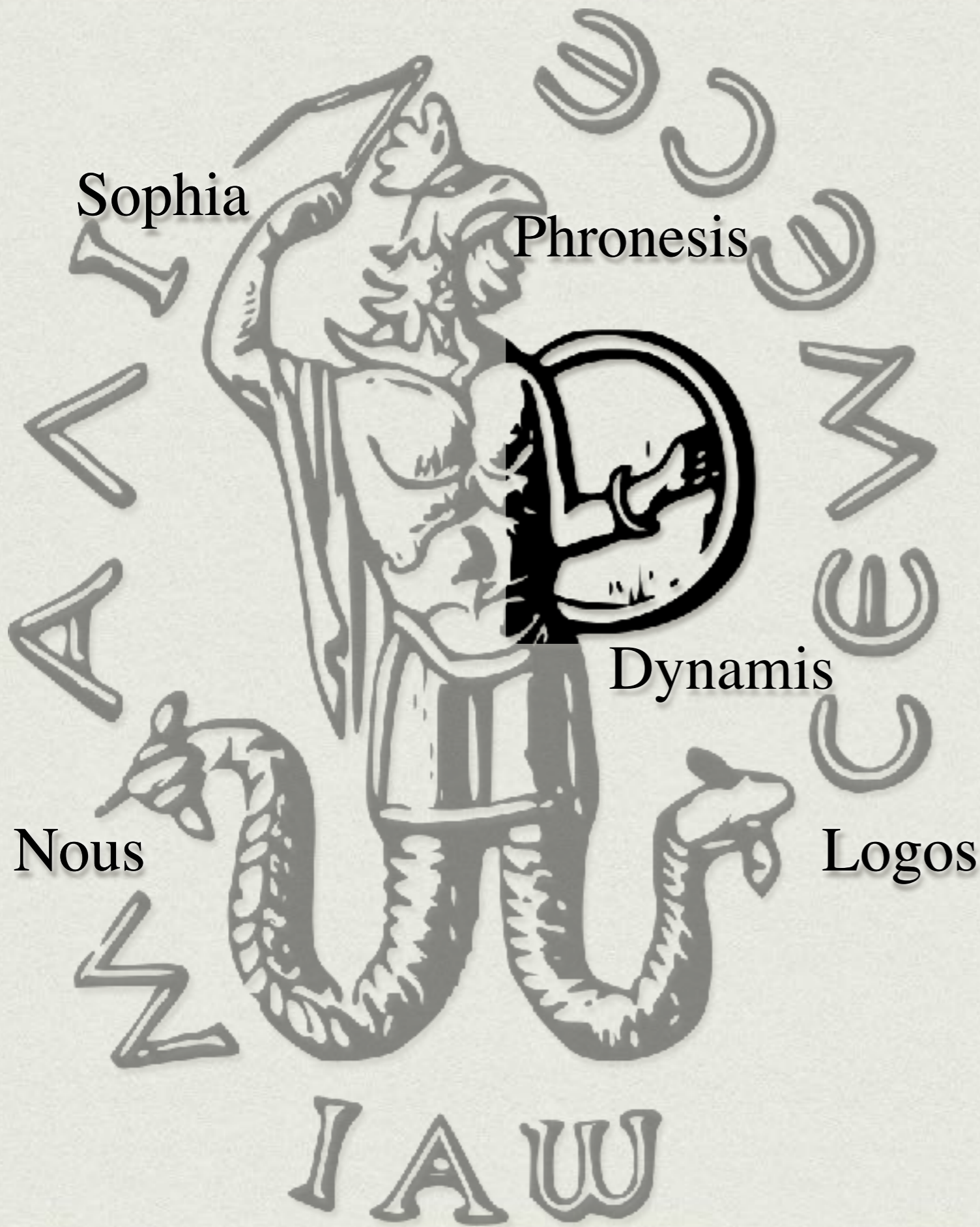
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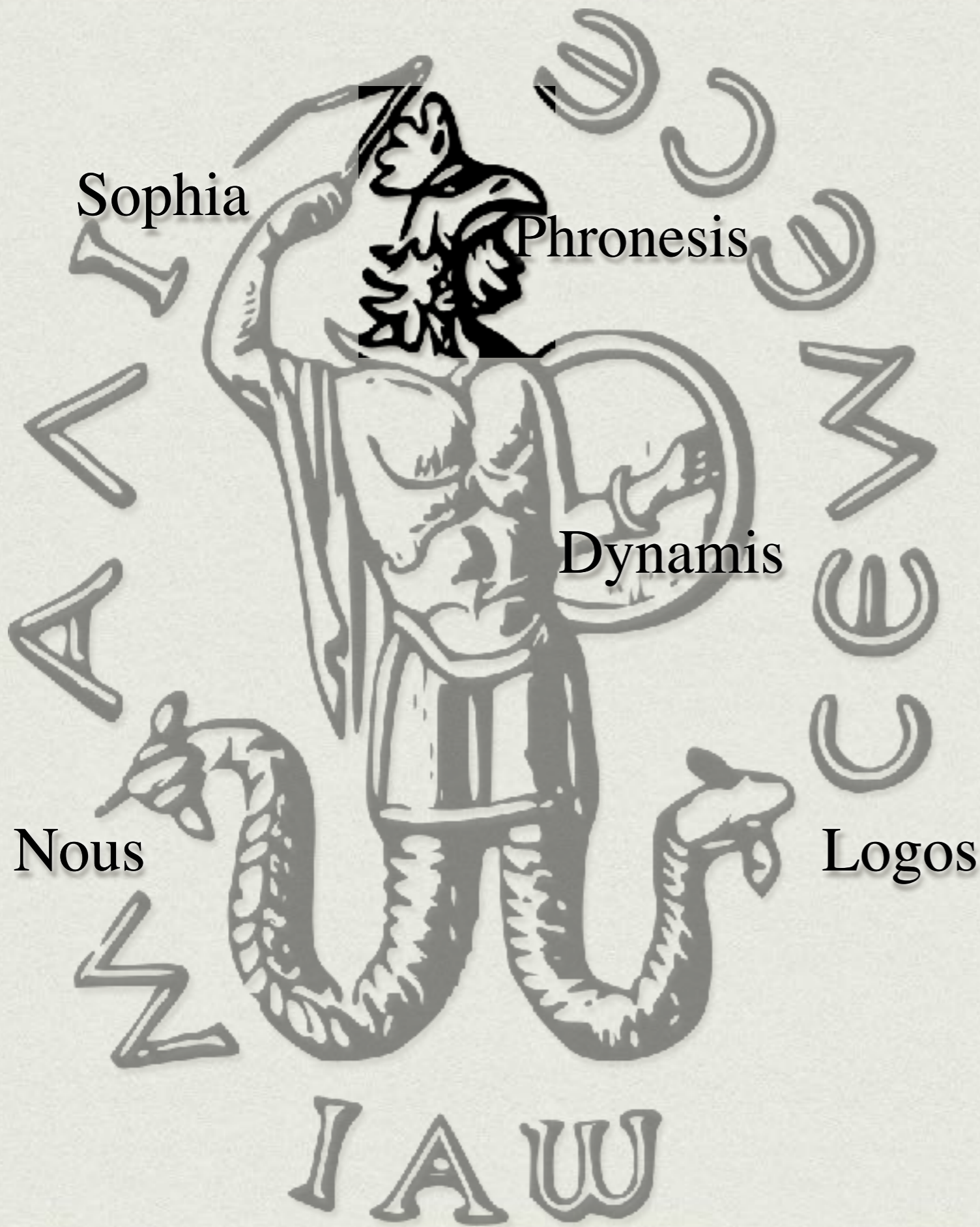
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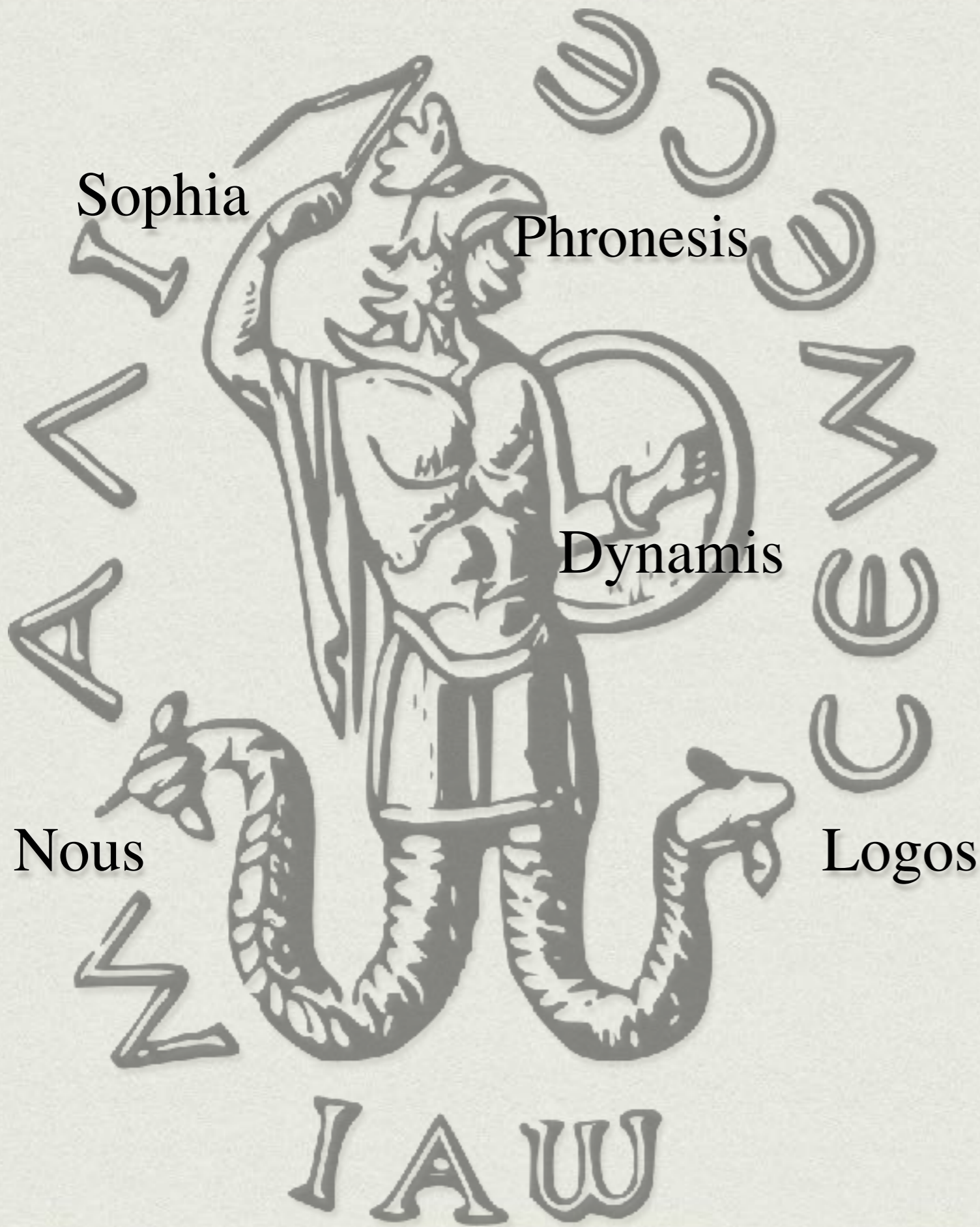
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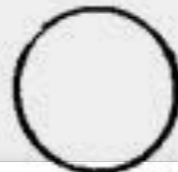




DIAGRAM OF THE SIMONIAN ÆONOLOGY.

FIRE.

The Universal Principle.



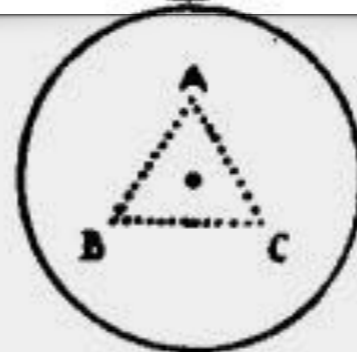
The Perfect Intellectual.

The Boundless Power.
The Universal Root.



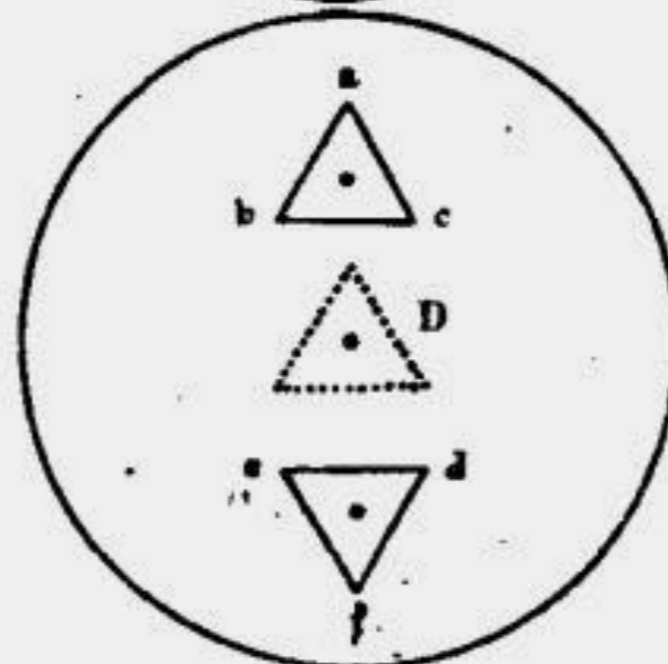
Invisible, Inapprehensible
Silence.

He who has stood, stands,
and will stand.



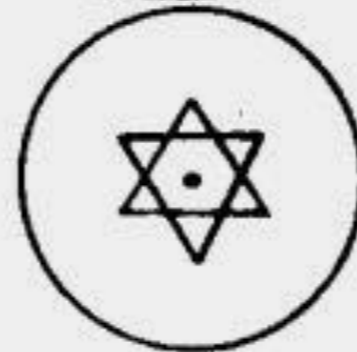
A. Incorruptible Form.
B. Universal Mind.
C. Great Thought.

The Middle Distance,
Incomprehensible Air,
Without beginning or end,
Generated by
The Spirit (The Seventh
Power) moving on the
Waters.

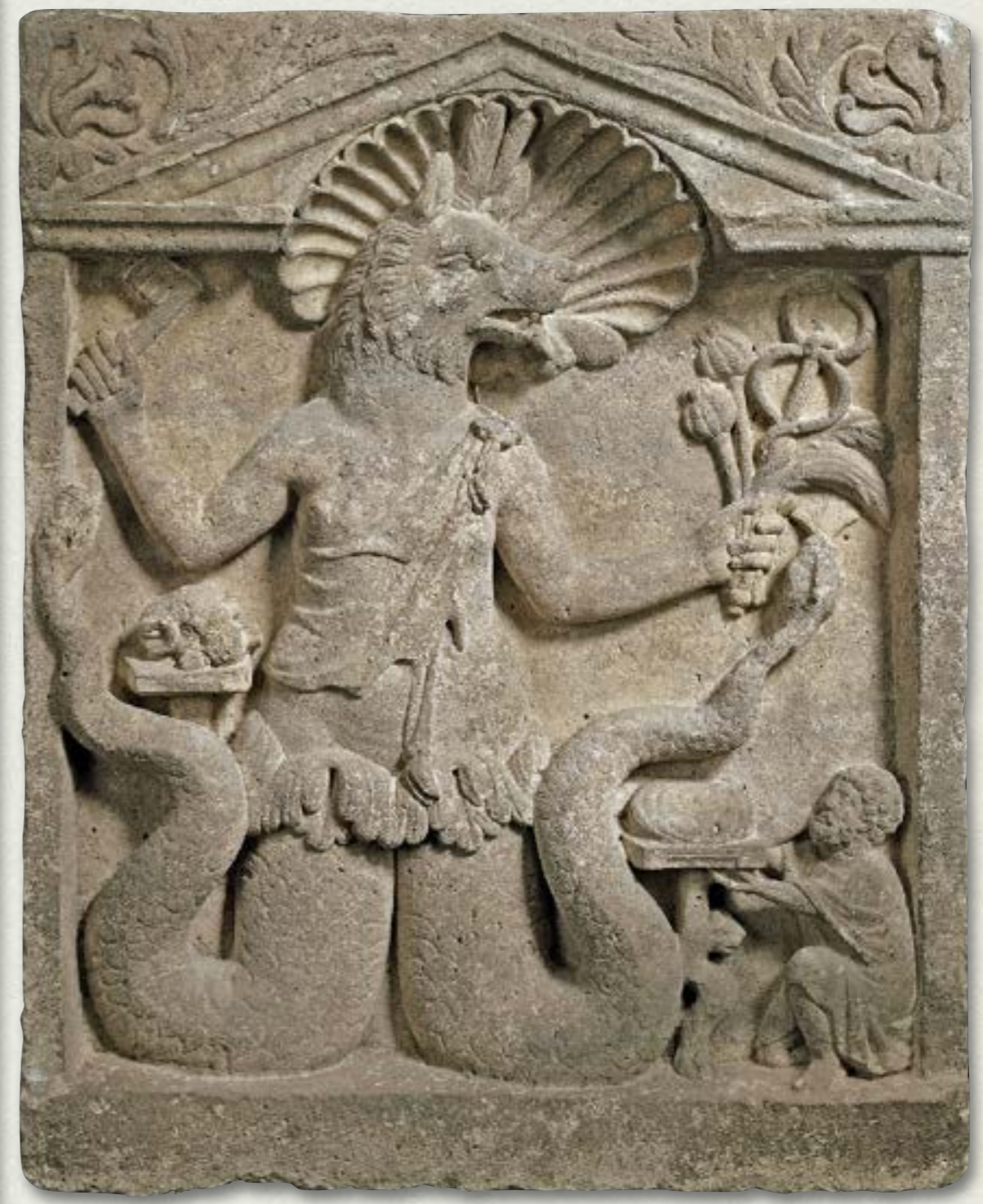


a. Mind (Heaven).
b. Voice (Sun).
c. Reason (Air).
D. The Image from the
Incorruptible Form,
alone ordering all
things.
d. Reflection (Water).
e. Name (Moon).
f. Thought (Earth).

The Lower Regions or World
made by the Angels and



Powers, who were generated
by Thought.¹





The Abraxas-god, as he is usually represented, with shield and whip to scare away all evil spirits. The reverse exhibits the Agathodæmon Serpent, surrounded by triplets of the sacred animals of Egypt, all paying him adoration. The legend in the field EVIA, is Syriac for "Serpent," the rest remains unexplained. Drawn to the actual size, from a red jasper, discovered at Bombay, to which place it had probably been carried by the Persian refugees of the seventh century. –The Gnostics and Their Remains:55

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies– Part Two

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FIRE

Masculine

Mind (Heaven) *Nous*

Voice (Sun) *Phone*

Reason (Air) *Logismos*

Feminine

Thought (Water) *Epinoia*

Name (Moon) *Onoma*

Reflection (Earth) *Enthumesis*

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The reader is asked to turn to Stanza IV. of Book I. and its fourth commentary to find that the 3, 4 — (7), and the thrice seven, or 1065, the number of Jehovah, is the number of the 21 Prajâpati mentioned in the Mahabhârata, or the three *Sephrim* (words in cipher or figures). And this comparison between the Creative Powers of Archaic philosophy and the anthropomorphic Creator of *exoteric* Judaism (since their esotericism shows its identity with the Secret Doctrine) will lead the student to perceive and discover that, in truth, Jehovah is but a *lunar* and "generation" god. SD2:40-1

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Loki

Returning once more to the most important subject in the archaic Cosmogony, it may be said that even in the Norse legends, in the Sacred Scrolls of the goddess Saga, we find Loki, the brother by blood of Odin (as Typhon, Ahriman, and others are brothers of Osiris and Ormazd), becoming evil only later, when he has mixed too long with humanity. Like all other fire or light gods — fire burning and destroying as well as warming and giving life — he ended by being accepted in the destructive sense of "fire." The name Loki, we learn ("Asgard and the Gods," p. 250), has been derived from the old word "liechan," to enlighten. It has, therefore, the same origin as the Latin "lux, light." Hence Loki is identical with Lucifer (light-bringer). This title, given to the Prince of Darkness, is very suggestive and is a vindication in itself against theological slander. But Loki is still more closely related to Prometheus, as he is shown chained to a sharp rock, while Lucifer, identified with Satan, was chained down in hell; a circumstance, however, which prevented neither of them from acting in all freedom on Earth, if we accept the theological paradox in its fulness. Loki is a beneficent, generous and powerful god in the beginning of times, and the principle of good, not of evil, in early Scandinavian theogony. —SD2:283



Odin

The Ases create the earth, the seas, the sky and the clouds, the whole visible world, from the remains of the slain giant Ymir; but they do not create MAN, but only his form from the *Ask* or ash-tree. It is Odin who endows him with life and soul, after Lodur had given him blood and bones, and finally it is Honir who furnishes him with his intellect (*manas*) and with his conscious senses. -SD2:97

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies– Part Two

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order claimed to be the only sect to have actual pictures of the Divine Syrian. While these were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing sculpturings and paintings of the pagan sun gods, they were all Christianity had. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of *Nous*, the Divine Mind, and emanated from the higher spiritual Æons. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left it again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine *Nous* could not suffer death, but that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the *Nous*, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenæus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

"When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His firstborn, *Nous*, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles." (See King's *Gnostics and Their Remains*.)

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher Æons.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin Sophia*, or Wisdom. In the *Books of the Savior*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Æons and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshipers), and the Adamites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to resurrect the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism. –STOAA:25-6

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The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher Æons.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin Sophia*, or Wisdom. In the *Books of the Savior*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Æons and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshipers), and the Adamites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to resurrect the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism. —STOAA:25-6



"And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross." –Matthew 27:32

For my death, which they think happened, happened to them in their error and blindness, since they nailed their man unto their death... It was another, their father, who drank the gall and the vinegar; it was not I. They struck me with the reed; it was another, Simon, who bore the cross on his shoulder. It was another upon Whom they placed the crown of thorns... And I was laughing at their ignorance. –from “Second Treatise of the Great Seth”

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies– Part Two

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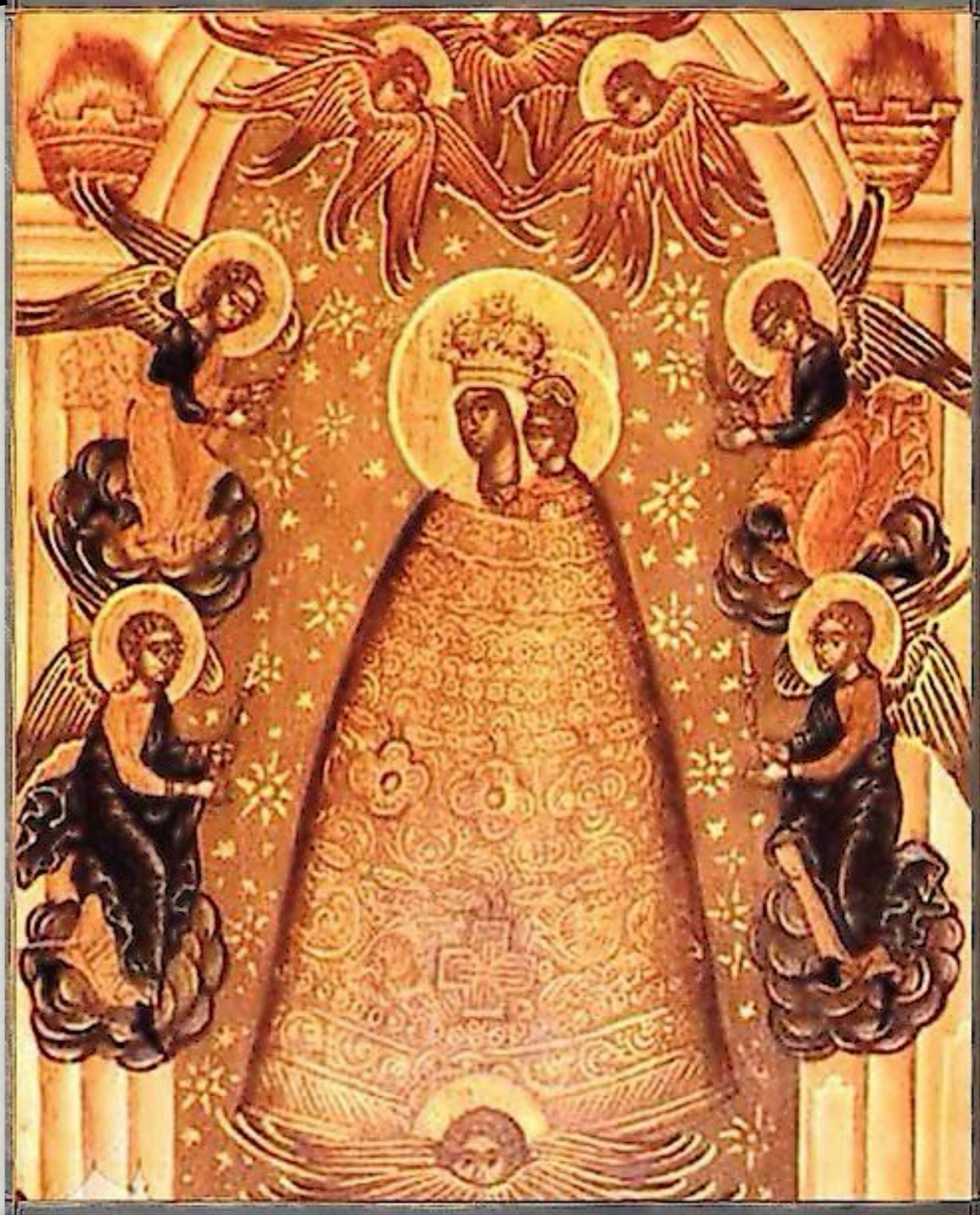
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Parchment
Books



PISTIS SOPHIA

TRANSLATED BY
G. R. S. MEAD



FIRE

Masculine

Mind (Heaven) *Nous*

Voice (Sun) *Phone*

Reason (Air) *Logismos*

Feminine

Thought (Water) *Epinoia*

Name (Moon) *Onoma*

Reflection (Earth) *Enthumesis*





Pistis

Sophia



1. Through alignment and subsequent contact, the intuition is evoked, awakened and used. This is the great dispelling agency, and pours down from the plane of the intuition (the plane of buddhi) through the soul and the brain to the heart of the disciple.

2. Through alignment and subsequent contact, the energy of the soul is evoked, awakened and used. This is the great dissipating agency, and pours down from soul levels (the higher levels of the mental plane) through the mind to the brain of the disciple carrying illumination to the astral plane.

3. These two types of spiritual energy work differently upon the forces of the personality, and their purpose and activity have to be realised in the brain consciousness of the disciple as he works upon the physical plane.

–Glamour A World Problem:43



In the text [of Sophia Pistis], after Jesus returns from the height “shining most exceedingly,” the disciples ask him to “withdraw his light-glory” and then ask, “Rabbi, where didst thou go?” Jesus replies, “Rejoice and exult from this hour on, for I have gone to the regions from whence I came forth.”

Jesus then recounts his entire journey, from region to region, starting from the moment that he saw Mary, his mother “according to the material body” and then going through the Firmament, the Sphere, the Providence, and the Twelve Aeons. He narrates that all the archons and the powers therein were agitated and afraid because of his exceeding light. And he went on bringing order into their regions until he came to the Thirteenth Aeon. At that point he finds Pistis Sophia alone, below her place of origin, and he describes how the Pistis Sophia worked her way out of chaos with his help.

—from the Fall 2011 issue of Quest magazine

The Cosmology of the Pistis Sophia

—from theosophical.org

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Melchizedek

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Five Trees

Three Amens

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REGION OF THE LEFT

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Psychic Plane or Mixture (Lower Manas)

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Twin Saviors (Child of the Child)

REGION OF THE LEFT

Twelve Saviors with Twelve Powers

Psychic Plane or Mixture (Lower Manas)

REGION OF THE RIGHT

Sabaoth, the Good

Five Planetary Regents with 360 Powers

REGION OF THE MIDDLE

Virgin of Light

REGION OF THE LEFT, REGION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

REGION OF THE THIRTEENTH AEON

The Great Invisible Forefather and his consort Barbelo

The Two Great Triple Powers

Twenty-Four Invisibles (including Pistis Sophia and her consort)

The Third Great Triple Power, The Self-Centered One

Hylic (Astral) Plane

The Twelve Aeons

The First Six Sons or Emanations of the Self-Centered One

Sabaoth-Adamas (The Great Tyrant, Ialdabaoth, the Lion-Faced Power)

The Second Group of Six Sons, the Archons of the Inferior Aeons

Providence (Heimarmene)

The Sphere

Material (Physical) Plane

Firmament (Ethereic)

World of Men (Cosmos)

Underworld: Amente, Chaos, and Outer Darkness

The Cosmology of the Pistis Sophia

—from theosophical.org

The Ineffable (Unmanifest)

The Interior of the Interiors (Adi and Anupadaka)

The Mysteries of the Ineffable (Divine Plane)

The Mystery of the Ineffable (Logos)

First Space of the First Mystery (Atma), First Mystery

Looking Within

Second Space of the First Mystery (Buddhi), or the First

Mystery Looking Without

The First Statute

The Great Light of Lights

Treasury of the Light, Pleroma (Higher Manas)

REGION OF THE RIGHT

Jeu, Supervisor of the Light, the First Man

Melchizedek

Seven Amens or Voices

Five Trees

Three Amens

REGION OF THE MIDDLE

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REGION OF THE LEFT

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The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies– Part Two

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order claimed to be the only sect to have actual pictures of the Divine Syrian. While these were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing sculpturings and paintings of the pagan sun gods, they were all Christianity had. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of *Nous*, the Divine Mind, and emanated from the higher spiritual *Æons*. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left it again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine *Nous* could not suffer death, but that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the *Nous*, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenæus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

"When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His firstborn, *Nous*, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles." (See King's *Gnostics and Their Remains*.)

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher *Æons*.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin Sophia*, or Wisdom. In the *Books of the Savior*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of *Æons* and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshipers), and the Adamites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to resurrect the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism. –STOAA:25-6

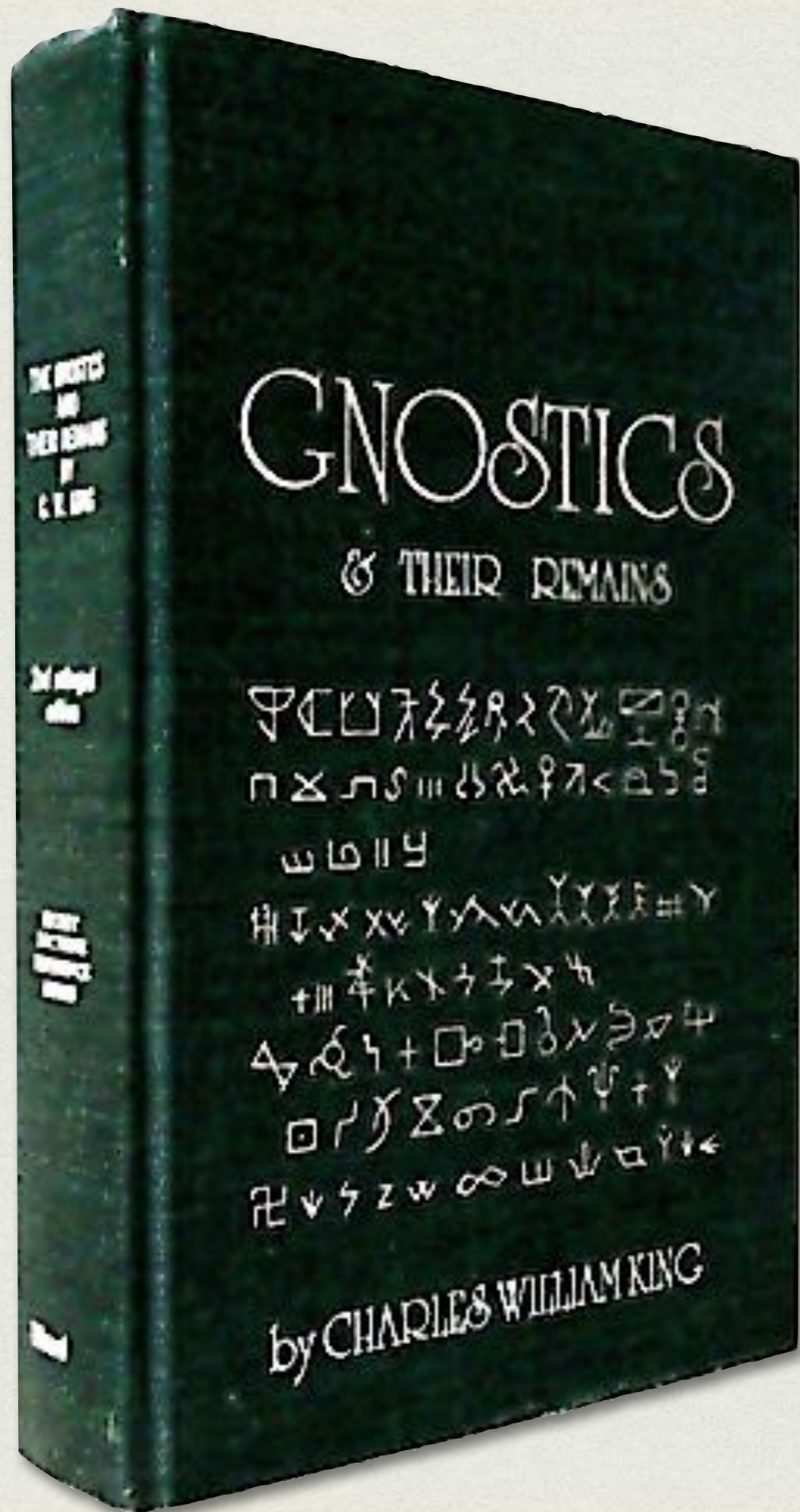
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But indeed, Gnosticism, in its primitive form, had almost supplanted, by spiritualizing it, the beautiful materialism of the early Greek and Latin mythologies. Catholicism, through its unity and greater simplicity, in the end triumphed over the conflicting Gnostic philosophies, which became extinct as a professed religion in the sixth century, so far as Europe was concerned, and whose relics in Asia were at the same moment covered over with impenetrable obscurity by the sudden deluge of the Mahomedan conquest. Nevertheless, even in the first-named scene of its domination, it was not to be eradicated without leaving behind it deep traces in the writings and symbolisms of the magicians, astrologers, and seekers after the grand arcanum throughout the whole course of the Middle Ages. —The Gnostics and Their Remains:22-3

powers of the universe were divided into 365 spheres, or spiritual cycles, and the core of all these spheres was the Supreme Father, and so forth in the Qabalistic appellations. Always, as being symbolical, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. The main symbol of the Gnostics was composite nature, with the body of a human being and the head of a serpent, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Revelations*, gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr, St. Irenaeus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind, into the Logos. Whose, in again Phronesis, had brought forth Phronesis giving Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength."

In describing Abraham, C. W. King says: "Basilides considered the composite being, described with the actual name Abraham, to be a Gnostic Father, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Firmaments marked out by appropriate symbols. From his human body, the main firmament descended to the Deity, springing the twin serpents, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quickening understanding on which account the Gnostics held him to be the true father of Pallas. His head — that of a cock — represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis, the virgins of Wisdom and the virgin Power."

The Gnostics were divided in their opinion concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower world. He established the material universe with the aid of six stars, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which he formed out of, and personified, himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest emanation of the substance called *phlogis*. One group of the Gnostics was of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by building this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by causing them to dwell within it. The other group viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, Jehovah, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced medieval Rosicrucianism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. The heresy is much like the stories of gods who personify both celestial and terrestrial nature. Odin of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity.

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This center is to be the only son to have actual presence of the Divine Spirit. While those were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing scriptures and pictures of the pagan sun-gods, they were all Christianity.

To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of Nous, the Divine Mind, and descended from the higher spiritual *Ploma*. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and lithe again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine Nous could not suffer death. In that Simon, the Cyrenian, witnessed his life instead and that the Nones, by means of his power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenaeus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

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THE LION-FACED LIGHT-POWER.



FROM MONTFAUCON'S ANTIQUITIES. A SYMBOLIC LABYRINTH.

Sophia, or Wisdom. In the *Book of the Secrets*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Book of Secrets*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Gnostics and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning astrological subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent-worshippers), and the Acemites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophical world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to preserve the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of the records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear either names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism.

Several misanthropic attempts have been made to mystologize the word *Serpent*. Coedje Higgins notes that *Serap* was the name given by the Egyptians to a stone coffin, and *Apis* was Osetis, incarnate in the sacred bull. These two words combined form the *Serap-Apis* or *Apis* "the mouth of the bull." But it is improbable that the Egyptians would worship a coffin in the form of a man.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE SERPENT, ASAR-HAPI

The identity of the Green-Egyptian Serapis (known to the Greeks as *Serapis* and the Egyptians as *Asar-Hapi*) is shrouded by an impenetrable level of mystery. While this deity was familiar to the masses, the symbols of the secret Egyptian initiatory rites, his arcane nature was revealed only to those who had fulfilled the requirements of the *Serapeion* cultus. Therefore, in all probability, accepting the traditional practice, the Egyptians themselves were ignorant of his true character. So far as known, there exists no authentic account of the rites of Serapis, but an analysis of the deity and his accompanying symbols reveals their solemn meaning. In a tradition believed to be the King of Egypt, Serapis does indeed himself state:

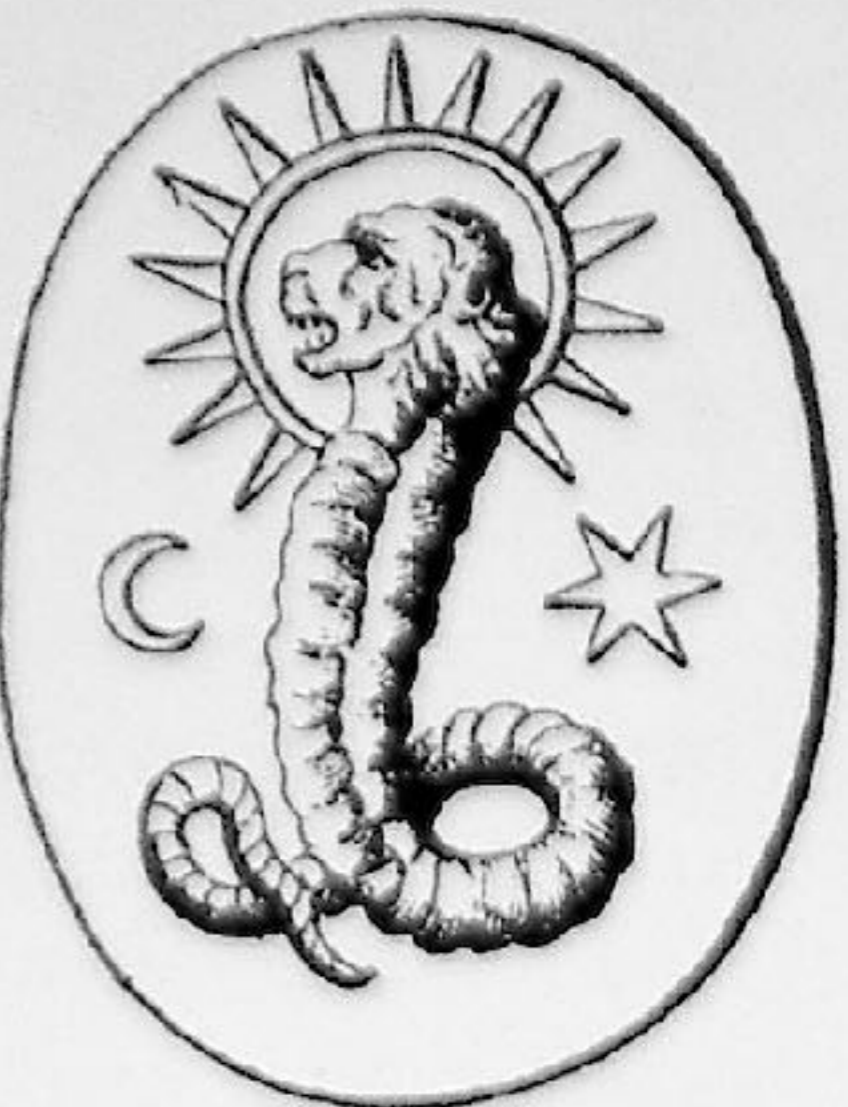
"A god I am such as I show to thee.
The Stars Heavens are my head, my trunk the sea,
Earth forms my feet, the air the air supplies,
The Sun's far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes."

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Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that Serapis was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about his head. In his *Octavo* upon the Sovereign Sun, Julian speaks of the deity in these words: "One Jew, one Flave, our Sun is Serapis." In Hebrew, *Serapis* is *Seraph*, meaning "to blaze out" or "to blaze up." For this reason the Jews organized one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, *Seraphim*.

The most common theory, however, regarding the origin of the name *Serapis* is that which traces its derivation from the compound *Chris-Apis*. At one time the Egyptians believed that the dead were absorbed into the nature of Osetis, the god of the dead. While marked similarity exists between Osetis-Apis and Serapis, the theory advanced by Egyptologists that Serapis is merely a name given to the dead Apis, or sacred bull of Egypt, is untenable in view of the transcendent wisdom possessed by the Egyptian pharaohs, who, in all probability, used the god to symbolize the soul of the world (in two worlds). The material body of Nature was Osetis-Apis; the soul, which escaped from the body at death, was carried off with the form during physical life was designated Serapis.

C. W. King believes Serapis to be a compound of two words, his name being the Gnostic form of *Seraphim* or *Seraph*, from which is derived the Hindu god of death. This appears reasonable, especially since there is a legend to the effect that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Brahmas from India to Egypt. The priority of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory. Among other meanings suggested for the word *Serapis* are: "The Sacred Bull," "The Sun in Tauros," "The Soul of Osiris," "The Sacred Serpent," and "The Rotting of the Bull." The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred Apis in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years.



From Montfaucon's Antiquities.

THE LION-FACED LIGHT-POWER.

This Gnostic gem represents by its serpentine body the pathway of the Sun and by its lion head the exaltation of the solar orb in the Constellation of Leo.

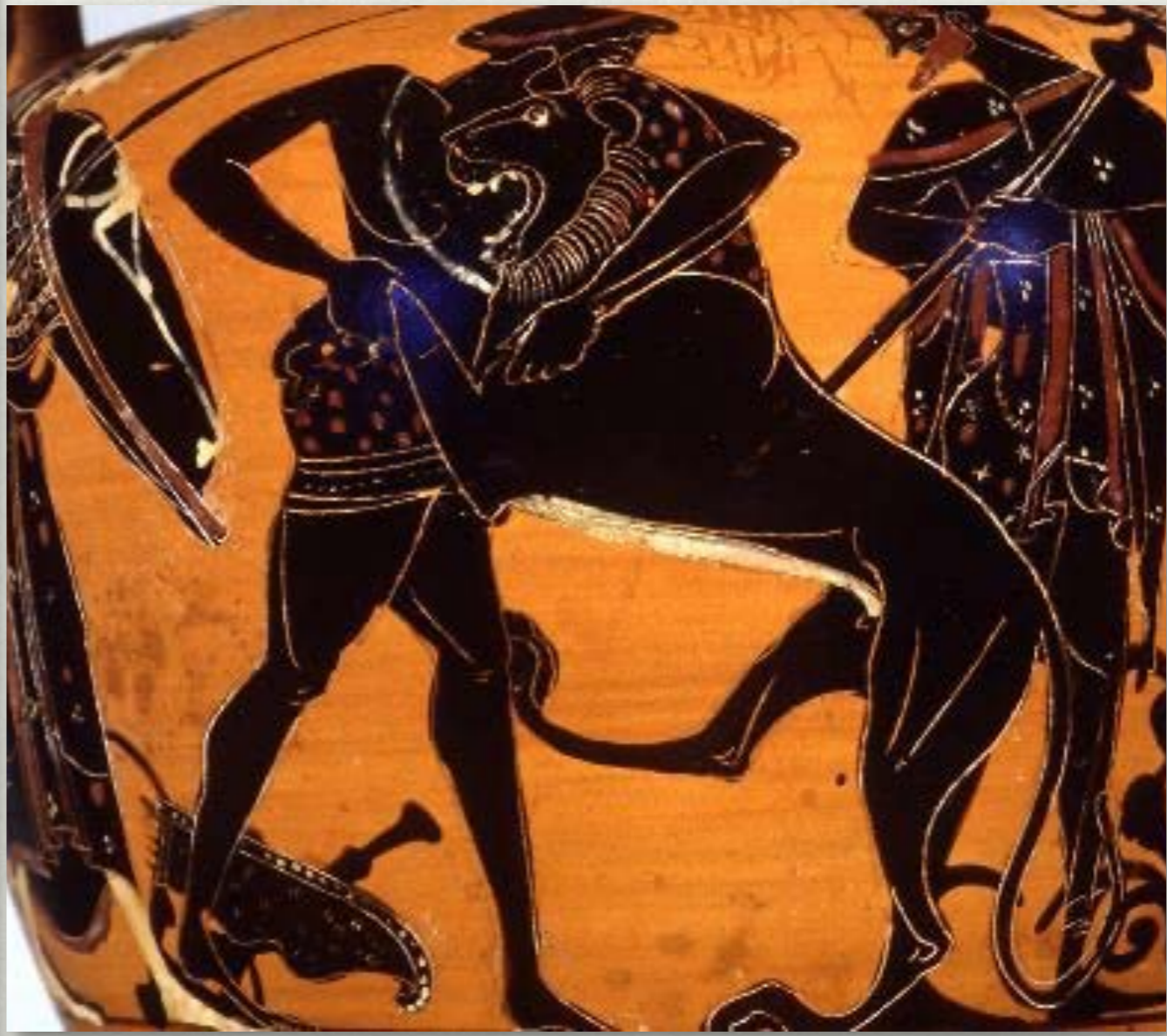
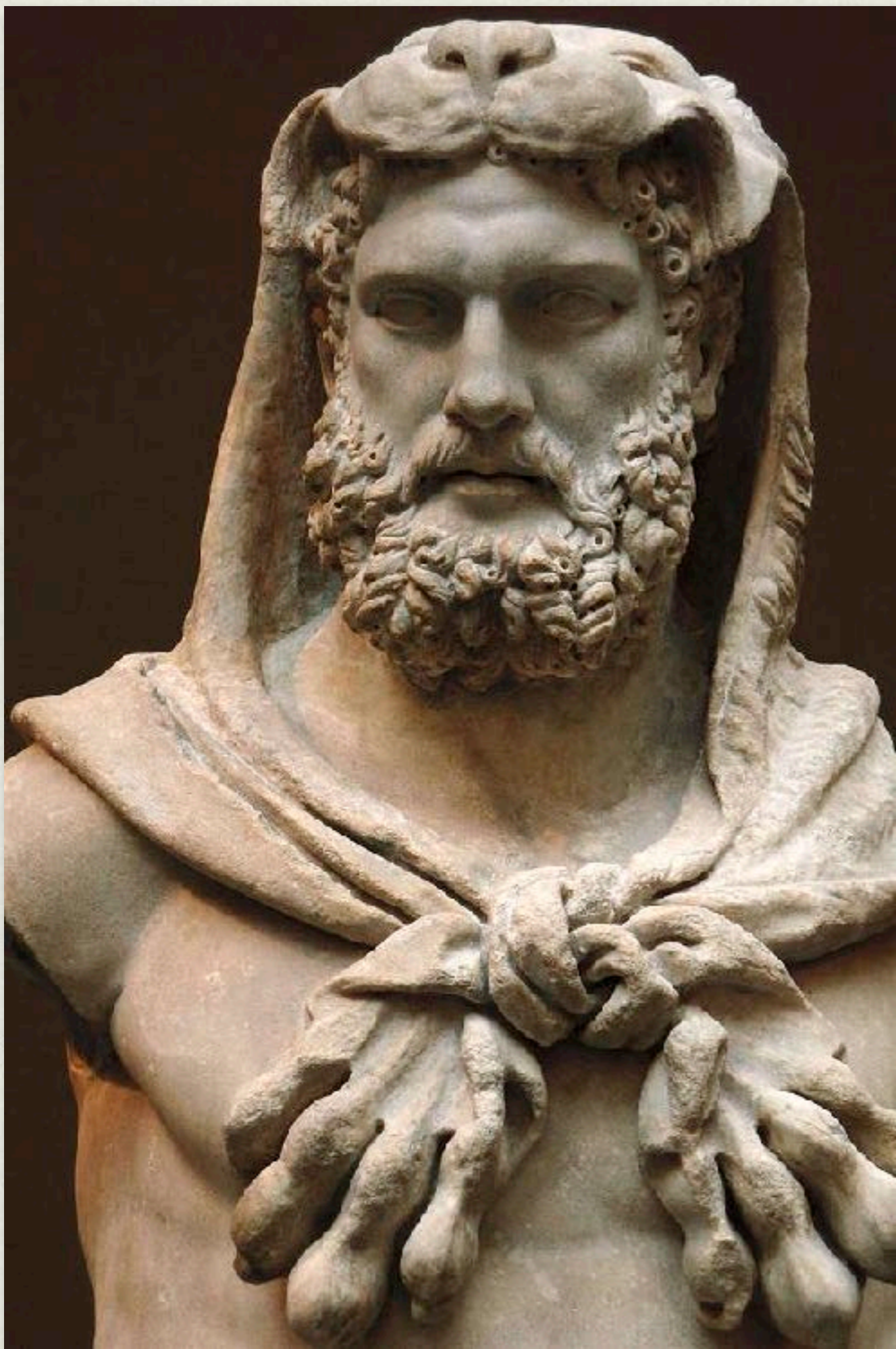


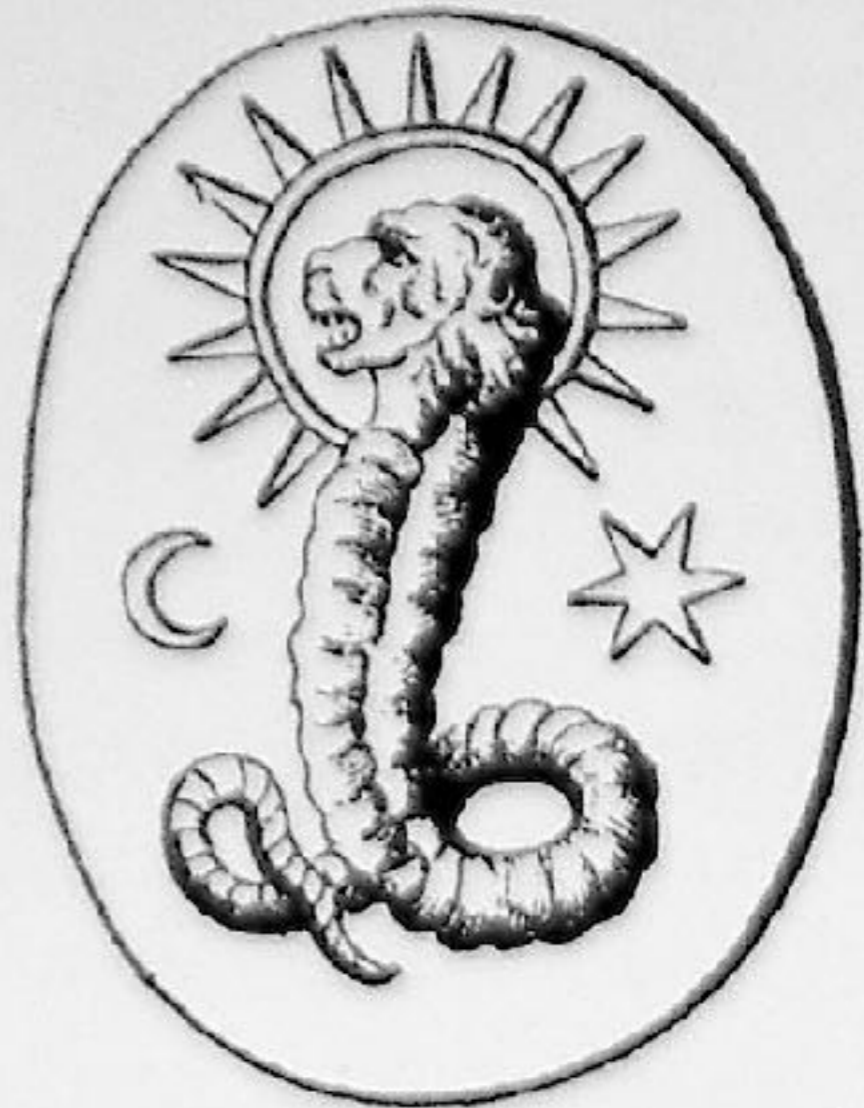
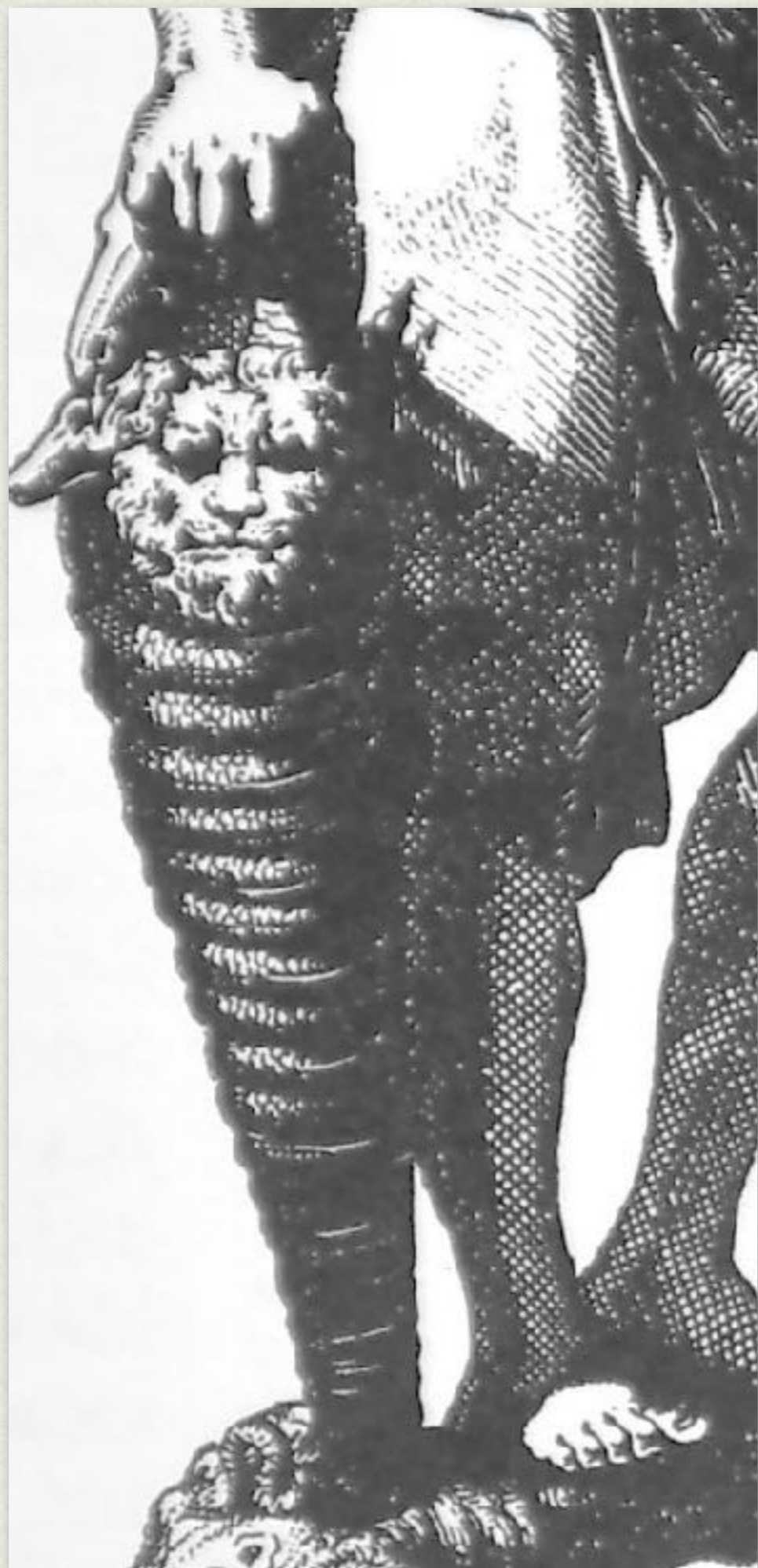
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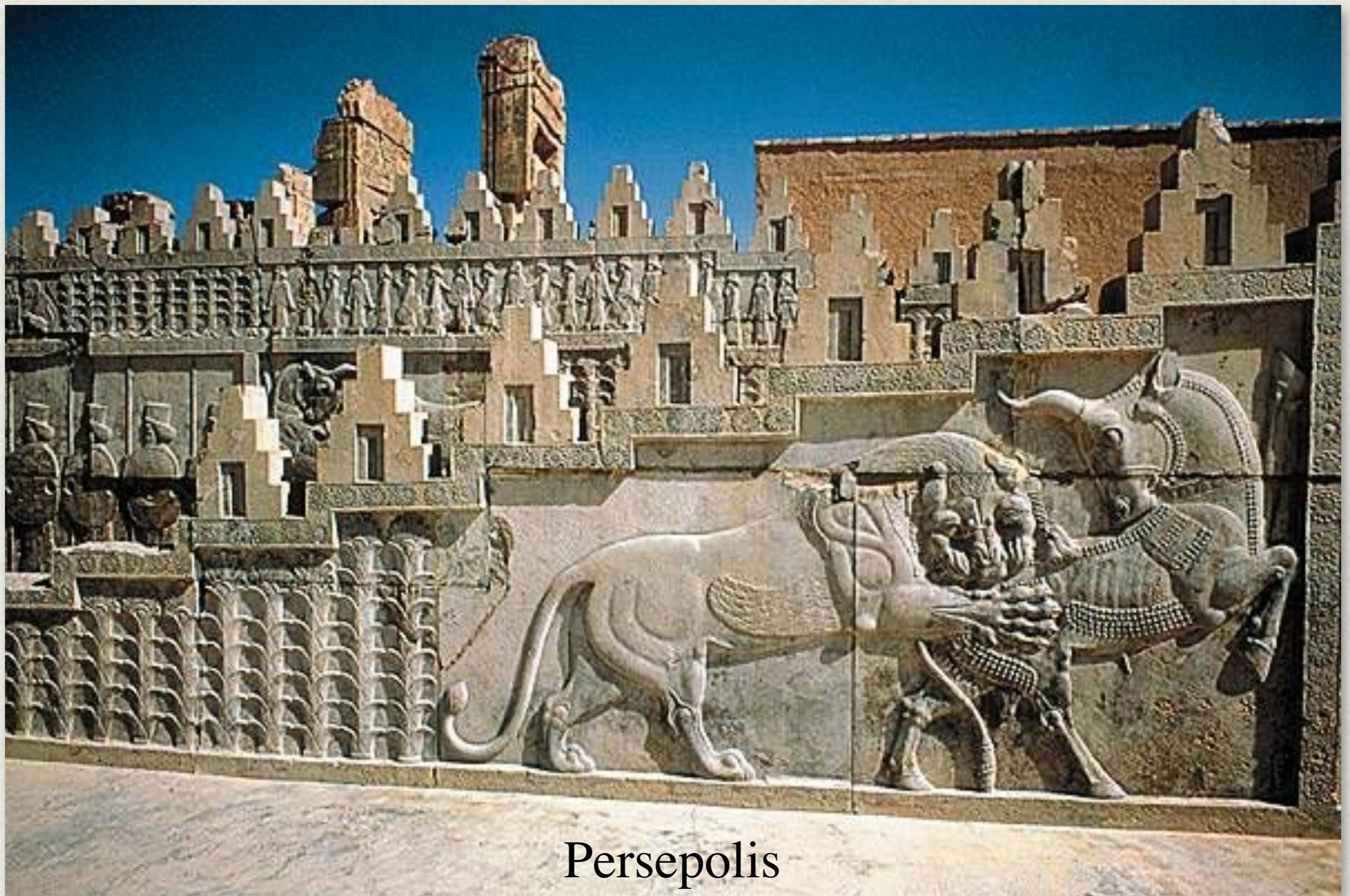




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Persepolis

To come now to the actual types setting forth these ideas; prominent amongst them is the figure of the Lion (he being in astrological parlance the "House of the Sun"), usually surrounded with stars, and carrying in his jaws a bull's head, emblem of earth subjected to his power. Sometimes he tramples on the serpent, which in this connection no longer typifies wisdom, but the Principle of Evil. –The Gnostics and Their Remains:142

powers of the universe were divided into 365 Abodes, or spiritual cycles, and the sum of all these energies was the Supreme Father, and so forth in the Cyclic or Cyclic system. As a symbol, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations... Abraham is a symbolically composite creature, with the body of a human being and the head of a serpent, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Revelations*, gives the following composite description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr St. Irenaeus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind, into the Logos, Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis springing Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength."

In describing Abraham, C. W. King says: "Basilides considers the composite image, (ascribed with the actual name Abraham, to be a Gnostic Father, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Elements and marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the small form centered to the Deity, spring the two serpents, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quivering understanding on which account the Gnostics had made themselves the attribute of Phyllos. His head — that of a cock — represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of insight and vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis in the world of Wisdom and the world of Power."

The Gnostics were divided in their opinion concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower world. He established the material universe with the aid of six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which he formed of, and perceived, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest emanation of the substance called phlogon. One group of the Gnostics were of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by selling this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by causing them to materialize. The other saw the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the desires of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, Jehovah, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced medieval Romanism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Much to be noted with the series of gods who personify both celestial and material nature. Odin of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity who is not material, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity.

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order of ideas may be the only one to have actual precedents of the Divine Nature. While those who, in all probability, believed in the conception of the Savior based upon existing scriptural and pictorial of the pagan gods, they viewed Christianity as a perversion of the Christ was the personification of Nous, the Divine Mind and emanated from the higher spiritual Aeons. He descended into the body of Jesus as the baptism and life began before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine Nous could not suffer death. In that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered himself in its stead and that the Noyas, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenaeus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

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From Montfaucon's Antiquities.

THE LION-FACED LIGHT-FACED POWER.

The Gnostic symbol represents the body of the deity, the lion and the light, and the path of the soul, leading to the illumination of the soul.

THE MYSTERIES OF ASAR-HAPI

The identity of the Greco-Egyptian Serapis (known to the Greeks as Serapis and the Egyptians as Asar-Hapi) is shrouded by an impenetrable veil of mystery. While this deity was familiar to many among the symbols of the secret Egyptian initiatory rites, his arcane nature was revealed only to those who had fulfilled the requirements of the Serapic cultus. Therefore, in all probability, excepting the initiate priests, the Egyptians themselves were ignorant of his true character. So far as known, there exists no authentic account of the rites of Serapis, but an analysis of the deity and his accompanying symbols reveals their salient points. In an oracle delivered to the King of Cyprus, Serapis described himself thus:

"A god I am such as I show to thee,
The Starry Heavens are my head, my trunk the sea,
Earth forms my feet, mine ears the air supplies,
The Sun's far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes."

Several unsatisfactory attempts have been made to etymologize the word Serapis. Godfrey Higgins notes that Soros was the name given by the Egyptians to a stone coffin, and Apis was Osiris incarnate in the sacred bull. These two words combined result in Soros-Apis or Sor-Apis, "the tomb of the bull." But it is improbable that the Egyptians would worship a coffin in the form of a man. Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that Serapis was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about its head. In his *Oration Upon the Sovereign Sun*, Julian speaks of the deity in these words: "One Jove, one Pluto, one Sun is Serapis." In Hebrew, Serapis is Saraph, meaning "to blaze out" or "to blaze up." For this reason the Jews designated one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, Seraphim.

The most common theory, however, regarding the origin of the name Serapis is that which traces its derivation from the compound Osiris-Apis. At one time the Egyptians believed that the dead were absorbed into the nature of Osiris, the god of the dead. While marked similarity exists between Osiris-Apis and Serapis, the theory advanced by Egyptologists that Serapis is merely a name given to the dead Apis, or sacred bull of Egypt, is untenable in view of the transcendent wisdom possessed by the Egyptian priestcraft, who, in all probability, used the god to symbolize the soul of the world (anima mundi). The material body of Nature was called Apis; the soul which escaped from the body at death was combined with the form during physical life was designated Serapis.

C. W. King believes Serapis to be a deity of Brahmanic extraction, his name being the Grecianized form of Ser-adah or Sri-pa, two titles ascribed to Yama, the Hindu god of death. This appears reasonable, especially since there is a legend to the effect that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Bacchus from India to Egypt. The priority of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory.

Among other meanings suggested for the word Serapis are: "The Sacred Bull," "The Sun in Taurus," "The Soul of Osiris," "The Sacred Serpent," and "The Retiring of the Bull." The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred Apis in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years.



From Montfaucon's Antiquities.

A SYMBOLIC LABYRINTH.

Laberius and other authors have placed of various mazes, or labyrinths, in the temple of Serapis, in the city of Memphis, Egypt, and in other places. Some of these mazes were made of stone, others of wood, and some of metal. The most famous labyrinth was that of the city of Knossos, in Crete, which was made of stone and was 140 feet in diameter. It was a maze of 140 paths, and was a place of initiation into the Gnostic Mysteries.



Montfaucon's Antiquities.

ON-FACED POWER.

Some represent the body of the deity, the lion and the light, and the path of the soul, leading to the illumination of the soul.

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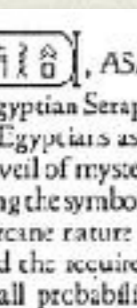
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Montfaucon's Antiquities.

ON-FACED POWER.

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Asar-Häpi (Sorapis).

Osor-Apis is depicted as a man with the head of a bull, and carrying the ensigns by which we usually recognize Osiris. The god of Alexandria therefore differs in form as widely as in origin from the original patron of Thebes, with whom he has no other affinity than in name, and *that* rests only on the arbitrary interpretation of the Egyptian priests, so successful in persuading the Greeks that the mythology of the whole world was but a plagiarism from their own. –The Gnostics and Their Remains:171-2

–from Budge's 'Gods of the Egyptians'

One other Master may here be briefly mentioned, the Master Serapis, frequently called the Egyptian. He is the Master upon the fourth ray, and the great art movements of the world, the evolution of music, and that of painting and drama, receive from Him an energising impulse. At present He is giving most of His time and attention to the work of the deva, or angel evolution, until their agency helps to make possible the great revelation in the world of music and painting which lies immediately ahead. More about Him cannot be given out, nor can His dwelling place be revealed.

-IHS:60

An illustration of this is to be found in the history of the League of Nations. Before He took up special work, the Master Serapis sought to bring through some constructive idea for the helping of humanity. He conceived of a world unity in the realm of politics which would work out as an intelligent banding of the nations for the preservation of international peace. He presented it to the adepts in conclave and it was felt that something could be done. The Master Jesus undertook to present it to His group of disciples as He was working in the occident. One of these disciples on the inner planes, seized upon the suggestion and passed it on (or rather stepped it down) until it registered in the brain of Colonel House. He, not recording the source (of which he was totally unaware), passed it on in turn to that sixth ray aspirant, called Woodrow Wilson. Then, fed by the wealth of analogous ideas in the minds of many, it was presented to the world. It should be borne in mind that the function of a disciple is to focus a stream of energy of some special kind upon the physical plane where it can become an attractive centre of force and draw to itself similar types of ideas and thought currents which are not strong enough to live by themselves or to make a sufficiently strong impact upon the human consciousness. –Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle:4-5

But these are far too abstruse, elaborate and far-reaching in their theme, and can be studied and considered only when humanity has reached such a stage of intuitive development that men can "**appreciate causes and effects as whole processes and can see both the beginning and the end in one flash of time in space.**" In these words the Master Serapis once summed up the matter when endeavouring to train a group of initiated disciples in this mode of approaching vast subjects. –Esoteric Healing:293

powers of the universe were divided into 365 Aeons, or spiritual cycles, and the sum of all these energies was the Supreme Father, and so forth in the Coptic hieroglyphic appellations. Aeons, as being symbolical, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. Aeonism is a symbolical and composite doctrine, with the body of a human being and the head of a serpent, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Revelations*, gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr, St. Irenaeus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind; this the Logos; Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis spring Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength."

In describing Aeons, C. W. King says: "Basilides considers the composite being, inscribed with the actual name Aeonas, to be a Gnostic Parabios, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five First aions marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assumed by the Deity, spring the two serpents, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quivering understanding on which account the Gnostics held the serpent the attribute of Phylas. His head — that of a cock — represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of insight and vigilance. His wings are the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis in the world of Wisdom and the world of Power."

The Gnostics were divided in their opinion concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower world. He established the material universe with the aid of six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which he formed of, and perceived, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest emanation of the substance called phlogon. One group of the Gnostics were of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by sending this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by causing them to mortal believe. The other sect viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, Jehovah, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced medieval Romanism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Mythology abounds with the stories of gods who possess of both celestial and carnal natures. Odin of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity.

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This entity is said to be the only son to have actual presence of the Divine Spirit. While those who, in all probability, believed in corporeity of the Savior based upon existing scriptures and writings of the pagan sages, they viewed Christianity as a heresy. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of Nous, the Divine Mind and emanated from the higher spiritual Aeons. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine Zeus could not suffer death. In that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the Naves, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenaeus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

"When the uncreated, uncreated Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His first-born, Nous, from the world, into the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus and wrought miracles." (See King's *Gnostics and Their Revelations*.)

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as we have seen, worshiped only the visible Name (those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus, and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped Nous (Christ) and the true spiritual light of the higher Aeons.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the Virgin

Sophia, or Wisdom. In the *Book of the Secrets*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Aeons and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says: "These doctrines, strange as they were, and a wide influence in the Christian Church." Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning spiritism, subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshippers), and the Basilides. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. A revival was made during the Middle Ages to retrace the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of the records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their origin is more suspected. Many of the Gnostic legends have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are clearly along the lines of Gnostic transmission.



THE LION-FACED LIGHT-POWER. The Gnostic symbol representing the composite body of the deity, with the head of a cock, the wings of the serpent, and the tail of the serpent.

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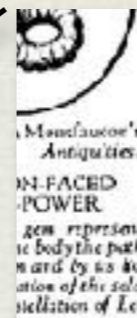
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MONO-FACED ANTIQUITIES. LION-FACED POWER. Lion represents the body the pathward by its illumination of the solar radiation of Leo.



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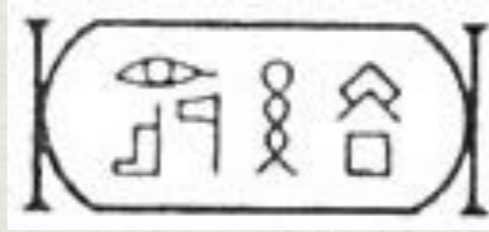
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The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies– Part Two



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The City of Alexandria pays an almost frantic worship to Serapis and Isis, nevertheless they show that all this veneration is merely offered to the Sun under that name, both by their placing the corn-measure upon his head, and by accompanying his statue with the figure of an animal having three heads; of these heads, the middle and the largest one is a lion's, that which rises on the right is a dog's in a peaceable and fawning attitude; whilst the left part of the neck terminates in that of a ravening wolf. All these bestial forms are connected together by the wreathed body of a serpent, which raises its head up towards the god's right hand... –The Gnostics and Their Remains:167-8



Pendant bearing
Serapis' likeness



Remains of the Serapeum of Alexandria



Bronze Votive Tablet
inscribed to Serapis (2nd century)

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies– Part Two



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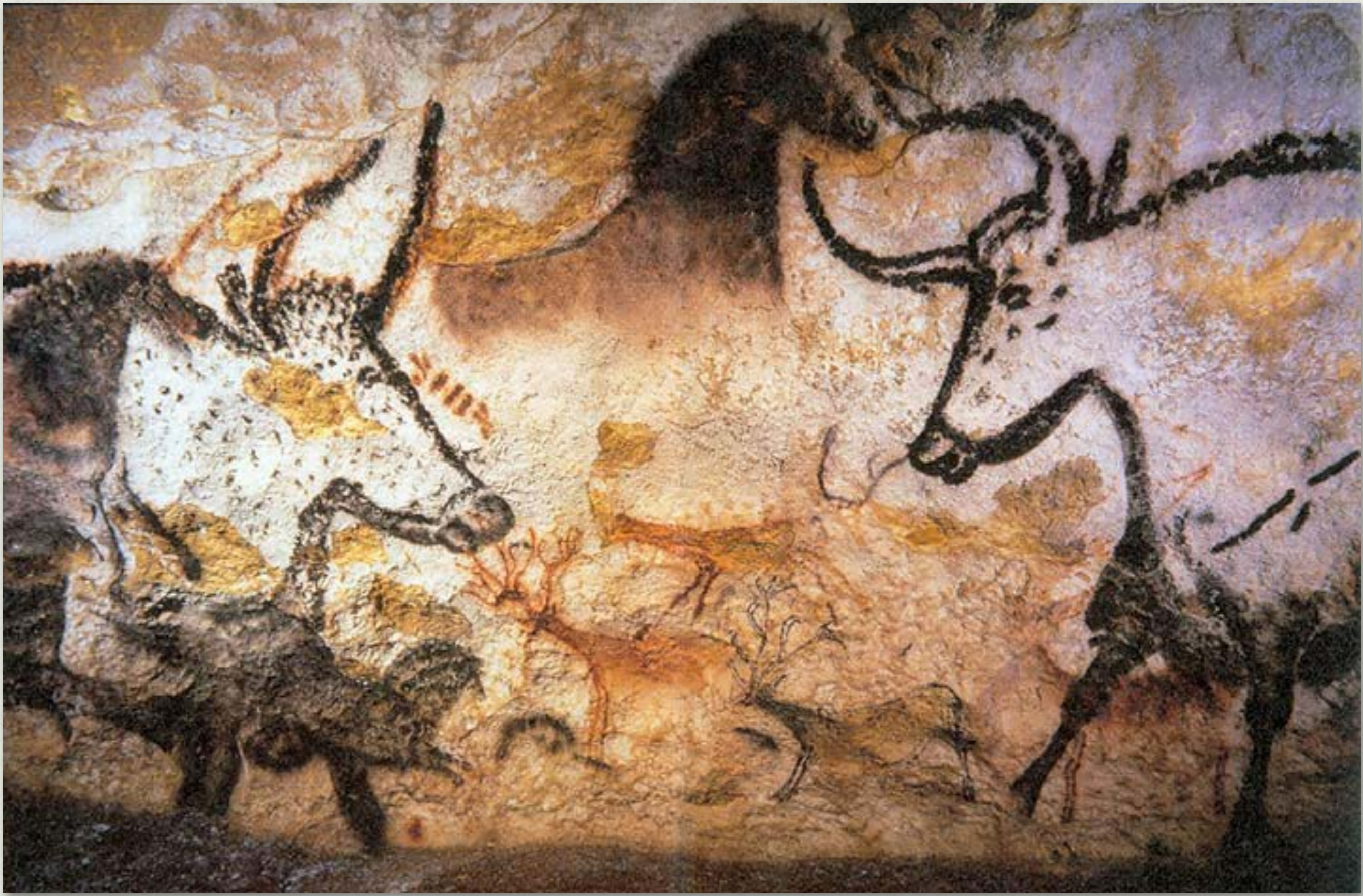
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“...the descriptive formula on Egyptian tablets dedicated to Osiris, and to some other deities, is so worded as to leave no doubt respecting the nature of the most important Egyptian sacrifices; in which we find oxen and geese, with cakes and wine, incense and libation, invariably mentioned; flowers and herbs being presented as a separate oblation.

The sanction given for sacrificing a bull was by a papyrus band tie by the priest round the horns, which he stamped with his signet on sealing-clay. Documents sealed with fine clay and impressed with a signet are very common; but the exact symbols impressed on it by the priest on this occasion are not known. Castor says they consisted of a man kneeling, with his hands tied behind him, and a sword pointed to his throat which were probably the annexed, though they have not been found on a seal. –Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians:457-8

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies— Part Two



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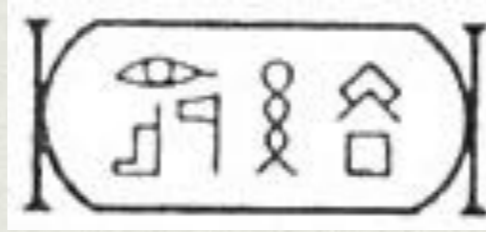
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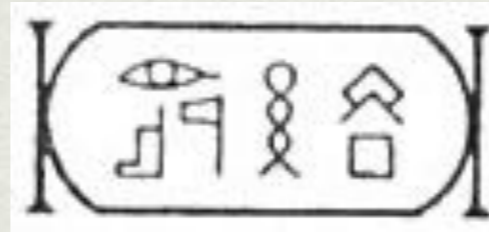
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The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies— Part Two



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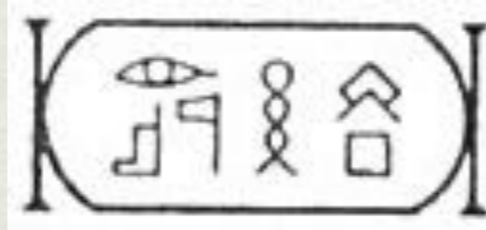
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Osiris



Apis



+

=



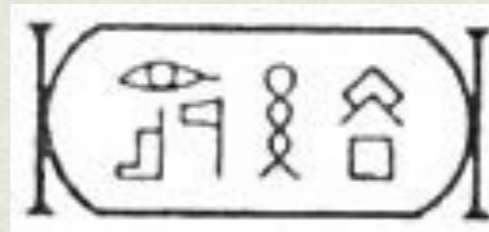
Serapis
(Egyptian version)



Serapis
(Greek version)



The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies— Part Two



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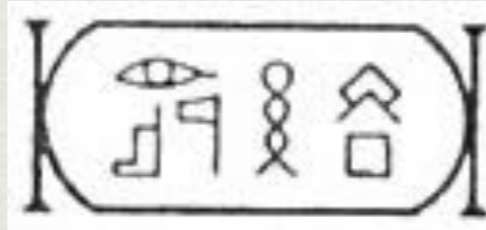
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Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that Serapis was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about its head. In his *Oration Upon the Sovereign Sun*, Julian speaks of the deity in these words: "One Jove, one Pluto, one Sun is Serapis." In Hebrew, Serapis is *Saraph*, meaning "to blaze out" or "to blaze up." For this reason the Jews designated one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, *Seraphim*.

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C. W. King believes Serapis to be a deity of Brahmanic extraction, his name being the Grecianized form of ***Ser-adah* or *Sri-pa***, **two titles ascribed to *Yama*, the Hindu god of death**. This appears reasonable, especially since there is a legend to the effect that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Bacchus from India to Egypt. The priority of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory.

Among other meanings suggested for the word *Serapis* are: "The Sacred Bull," "The Sun in Taurus," "The Soul of Osiris," "The Sacred Serpent," and "The Retiring of the Bull." The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred Apis in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years. —STOAA:26



It is evident that upon his first introduction into Egypt, Serapis was regarded by the Alexandrians as identical with Aïdoneus, or Dis, the Lord of the Lower World. Now, all his attributes suggest him to have been of Indian origin, and no other than Yama, "Lord of Hell," attended by his dog "Çarbara," the spotted, who has the epithet "Triçira," three-headed, and by his serpent "Çesha," called "Regent of Hades;" in fact, some have discovered in the name Serapis but the Grecian form of Yama's epithet, "Sraddha-deva," Lord of the obsequies, that is, of the funeral sacrifices offered to the Pitris or Manes. Yama also is styled "Lord of souls," and "Judge of the dead;" another office assimilating him to Serapis in the character under which the latter came to be specially regarded... -The Gnostics and Their Remains:172

SERAPIS

SOLETTI.



