

# ce399 | research archive (esoterica)

## Ars Electronica Archive: Timeshift – The World in Twenty Fiv

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 29/08/2010

### L'Espace Temporel

#### Passage between Analog and Digital

Sound is a process carried out over time; music is the design of this process (through sound). Music is a process of time particularly through historically specified aesthetic strategies and principles that are reflected in the respective tonal images and structures. Moreover, sound also communicates perceptual spatial orientation. Psycho-acoustic associations of space, for example, are simulated in dependence on frequency level—high for close proximity, low for distance. Physically speaking, space in the concert hall is linked with its own echo. According to the principle of the echo sounder (sonic depth finder/altimeter), the time between the occurrence of a sound and its echo gives rise to the imagination of a distance. Under the title L'Espace Temporel, spaces and time-windows are also imagined in a way that reflects back sound into graphic images.

The concert evening constitutes a further development of the synesthetic procedure that was presented in the form of visualized concerts entitled Principles of Indeterminism with reference to codes as “non-verbal” realized acoustically and graphically in equal measure. The possibility of taking this initial experiment to a more profound level was fostered by the constellation of Ars Electronica, the Bruckner Orchestra Linz, Dennis Russell Davies, and their shared interest in unconventional, trans-disciplinary performance. This project confronts listeners with tonal spaces and time windows at the nexus of instrumental music, digital synthesis, live electronics and remix. In and around the Brucknerhaus, it will open passages ranging from the entire spectrum of contemporary music and sound art, and establish a linkage with the visual world through time graphics.

#### Passage between Improvisation and Interpretation

##### -10 Live Electronics in a Semi-Public Space

Written and performed by Rupert Huber

As a direct reaction to the setting of the presentation of his work, Austrian composer / musician Rupert Huber interprets the situational entrée of L'Espace Temporel as a state of uncertainty between the time of the beginning and the actual commencement of the evening's program. His material consists of con-

samples whose overwhelmingly melodious nature enters into a multi-voice, realtime-processed (transitional) situation. At the beginning at around 7:30 PM, what has so fluidly formed into a piece already half over, and the second half resounds when the program has already begun. Huber, who operates with a variety of artistic genres and disciplines, has coined the term “dimensional music integration of real, medial and acoustic spaces into the performative process of the composition. of this.

## Les Enfants Terribles

### Phillip Glass

Les Enfants Terribles followed *Orphée* and *La Belle et la Bête* as the third part of a trilogy dedicated to the work of Jean Cocteau that Phillip Glass created between 1993 and 1996. In correspondence to the work *Les Enfants Terribles*—the power of the imagination and creativity—the evocative power endowed with exemplary significance within the framework of *L’Espace Temporel*. Originally written for pianos and solo vocalists (soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor and baritone), parts of the work are being performed by piano duos featuring Maki Namekawa and Dennis Russell Davies.

The visualisation *Rhythm Lens* by Martin Wattenberg is a performance piece that explores the relationship between spatial and temporal repetition. Symmetry is an essential element of all music, but in minimalist music it plays an especially critical role. The *Rhythm Lens* transmutes aural symmetry into visual symmetry.

The base materials for the *Rhythm Lens* are images, ranging from video to scanned texts to abstract textures. The *Rhythm Lens* then uses mathematical transformations to “symmetrize” these images, creating a kaleidoscope that would be impossible with physical materials. As the music creates and breaks too will symmetries be created and broken graphically. Like all of Wattenberg’s video accompaniments, *Rhythm Lens* is a performance instrument, guided by the human hand and never the same twice.

## Different Trains

### Steve Reich

Steve Reich’s 1988 work *Different Trains* for string quartet and tape recorder is the realization of a piece of material for musical instruments from recordings of human voices. In this piece, Reich draws upon memories from a period (1939–42) during his childhood when, due to his divorced parents’ joint child custody, he frequently had to ride the train between their respective residences in New York and Los Angeles. Recollecting these trips that he perceived as “exciting and romantic” at the time, the memories of his childhood are overlain with thoughts about those trains he, as a Jew, would have had to board in Europe at the end of the war.

*Different Trains* is based on recordings of the governess who accompanied Reich on his trips between New York and Los Angeles, a conductor who worked these trains, three survivors of the Holocaust and the s

American and European trains of the '30s and 40s. The intonations of the individuals' voices were certain pitches and translated into notes that can be played by members of the string quartet. The music made by these stringed instruments were, in turn, mixed with the sounds of the trains and sequences.

What Reich created with this approach was also described by the composer himself in a text about "A direction that I expect will lead in the not-too-distant future to a new kind of documentary music."

Temps du Miroir

Ludger Brümmer

In Temps du Miroir the piano sounds are mirrored through live electronic granulation. The granulation samples the piano giving this timbre a new expressive nature, another gestural connotation, a different structure. While the piano is audible from the front, the granulated sounds separate from the piano in which they are constantly moving creating their own sphere.

Despite the fact that this work is created from different descriptions of sound, all of them are of an organic nature. The sounds from the speaker are created with physical models using strings. But not only are they generated with the physical model. Each musical gesture, rhythm and dynamic is generated as a mechanical description. A simple repetition for example can be created with a kind of pendulum where the piano either triggers sounds or to be processed in real time using a granulation technique. This is generated through code algorithms describing all of the parameters used. The composition is created in sections without a separation. Each of these sections performs the dominance of a specific music, one more melodic, another more rhythmic. Despite this static identity, processes are performed to maintain a definite layout of the structure.

It was the idea of this piece to create a rich dense musical structure out of a pre-produced layer, a layer with pre-produced as well as live processed sounds and the performance of the piano player. The pre-produced structures are not fixed together they can be treated dynamically, responding to the interpretation of the performer.

On top of all these layers of sound a video is placed. This video is part of the gestural structure of the piece and is split into various parts. It is not a default, it appears like certain sound and harmonics appear and the movement of the dancer creates a supernotation of the musical structure, another mirroring of the music into a physical environment. The physical Model software "Genesis" was provided by ACROE, Genesis was created at the studios of the Centre for Art and Media in Karlsruhe.

Triangel—Actions for a Creative Drummer and 27 Musicians

Péter Eötvös

In a conversation with Zoltán Rácz (booklet accompanying Péter Eötvös' CD Psalm 151, Psy, Triangel AB BIS CD 948, 1993), Péter Eötvös explained his intentions in Triangel in the following terms: “... sort of concert in which the soloist is accompanied by an orchestra. Here, the soloist is the leader drummer’ of an African type, and the other instruments—nine strings, eight woodwinds, seven brass and percussions and a keyboard—are the ‘chorus’ that reacts and responds. (...) ‘Triangel’ was written for a soloist drummer, which leads to the conclusion that the soloist can select those instruments that are most important in his tonal world. (...) What I refer to as the soloist’s ‘composition’ is actually an exercise in hearing and reacting. This is highly unusual in that the musician has to not only dictate but also react and decide to accommodate a different type of sound once he has heard the answer. (...) The group is assigned tasks to perform and their responses provided determine the soloist’s next step.”

### Passage between Time and Space

In Stanley Kubrick’s 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey* based on a story by Arthur C. Clarke and in the 1972 film version of Stanislaw Lem’s novel *Solaris*, many aspects of the two works may well be interpreted as nascent precursors of issues that were later made theoretically explicit by authors like Marvin Minsky and, more recently, Ray Kurzweil in circles associated with AI research as well as in cyborg and VR discussions. These issues crystallized in works of art. What the two cinematic narratives have in common is, above all, a moment of transition, the confrontation of a technical culture that is still, in many respects, based upon traditional movement with an “informational”—in the broadest possible sense—culture in which the familiar, mechanistically determined fabric of meaning begins to unravel. What Kubrick did at the end of his film in dissolving the linear narrative into a psychedelic puzzle is the way Tarkovsky proceeds at the beginning in which he visualizes the transfer from Earth into a foreign world. Music—György Ligeti’s *Athmische Musik* and Edward Artemiev’s evocative sound tracks for *Solaris*—is an important medium for the representation of the Other, a phenomenon coarsely associated with the future and in the face of which the familiar fabric of meaning because the music underscores narratives played out in the future, but because it transcends an iconic form indicated by a breach with the conventions of the senses by means of that individualized form that emerges from the breach with the conventions of notation and tonal realization.

The musical language of this time—strongly characterized by electronic sound production—is utopian. It were, tonally evoke the future in the present. What the films themselves accomplish only in rudimentary form, namely, to derive forms of narration from their themes (and to set them in a time beyond conventional narration)—has already manifested its initial concrete modes of practice today in music’s new forms of notation and performance.

Edward Artemiev

As one of the pioneers of experimental electro-acoustic music, Edward Artemiev has attained the status of a legend today. Following academic training in Moscow, he became familiar with the synthesizer that Russian mathematician and engineer Yevgeny Murzin had developed in 1960. In going about exploring the possibilities of this new instrument—both its technical-compositional potential as well as its capacity to produce evocative narratives and expressive tonal imagery—Artemiev quickly acquired a reputation as one of the most innovative soundscape composers of his generation. In the West, he is known primarily for the soundtracks he composed for the films of Andrei Tarkovsky's films—*Solaris*, *The Mirror* and *Stalker*.

## György Ligeti

Hungarian-born composer György Ligeti rose to international prominence with the 1960 International Contemporary Music Festival premier of his work *Apparitions*, the first orchestral distillation of a style he had begun to develop upon joining the Electronic Music Studio at Cologne's Westdeutscher Rundfunk. In contrast to the highly structured, pointillistic music to be heard elsewhere, Ligeti's work presented a new world of shifting masses of densely detailed "clouds" of orchestral sound. Beginning with the 1958 electronic work *Artikulation*, 1959's *Apparitions* and his work for organ, *Volumina* (1962,) Ligeti's contribution to a new musical idiom called "micropolyphony" illustrated rich, intense arrangements that eliminated the traditional distinctions between rhythm, melody and harmony. This sound is constructed through the externalization of sustained massive, tightly packed clusters of buzzing, dissonant intervals which evolve over time. The micropolyphony of the individual parts is embodied in a harmonic-musical flow, in which the harmonic elements suddenly, but merge into one another; one clearly discernible interval combination is gradually replaced by this cloudiness it is possible to discern a new interval combination taking shape."

The divergent textures of serial music were further eroded by his subsequent orchestral work, *Atmosphères*. Here the density of the orchestration becomes so great that the perception of distinct pitches and intervals is completely annihilated. The piece established an international reputation for him, and it brought the attention of the general public when Stanley Kubrick used it in his film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). Ligeti's trademark micropolyphony as his starting point, in pieces such as 1962's *Aventures* and the 1962-63 *Nouvelles Aventures*, Ligeti incorporated speech and vocal inflections in his work, exploring the expressive possibilities of these distinct sound sources throughout the rest of the decade. Other notable works from this period are 1963-5's *Requiem*, which won the 1967 Bonn Beethoven Prize, 1966's *Lux Eterna*, and the orchestral piece *Lontano*.

## Passage between Moments

Musik für 18 Musiker

Steve Reich

Music for 18 Musicians is approximately 55 minutes long. The first sketches were made for it in March 1976. Although its steady pulse and rhythmic energy relate to many of my earlier works, its instrumentation, structure and harmony are new.

There is more harmonic movement in the first 5 minutes of Music for 18 Musicians than in any other work of mine to date. Although the movement from chord to chord is often just a re-voicing, involving a minor or major of a previous chord, usually staying within the key signature of three shapes at all times, these limits harmonic movement plays a more important role in this piece than in any other I have written. Rhythmically, there are two basically different kinds of time occurring simultaneously in Music for 18 Musicians. The first is that of a regular rhythmic pulse in the pianos and mallet instruments which continues throughout the piece. The second is the rhythm of the human breath in the voices and instruments.

The structure of Music for 18 Musicians is based on a cycle of eleven chords played at the very beginning of the piece and repeated at the end. All the instruments and voices play or sing the pulsating notes with the same rhythm. Instruments like the strings which do not have to breathe nevertheless follow the rise and fall of the pulse following the breathing patterns of the bass clarinet. Each chord is held for the duration of two breaths. The next chord is gradually introduced, and so on, until all eleven are played and the ensemble returns to the first chord. The first pulsing chord is then maintained by two pianos and two marimbas. While this pulse is held for about five minutes a small piece is constructed on it. When this piece is completed there is a change to the second chord, and a second small piece or section is constructed. This means that a melody which might have taken fifteen or twenty seconds to play in the opening section is then stretched out as a melody for a five minute piece, very much as a single note in a cantus firmus or chant melody of a medieval Organum by Perotin, might be stretched out for several minutes as the harmonic centre for a section of a later Organum. The opening eleven chord cycle of Music for 18 Musicians is a kind of pulsing cantus firmus. On each pulsing chord one or, on the third chord, two small pieces are built. These pieces or sections are constructed either in the form of an arch (ABCDCBA), or in the form of a musical process, like that of substitution, working itself out from beginning to end. Elements appearing in one section will appear in another section by different harmony and instrumentation.

Changes from one section to the next, as well as changes within each section, are cued by the mallet player (vibraphone with no motor) whose patterns are played once only to call for movements to the next section. This is like the Balinese Gamelan pieces, or as a drummer will audibly call for changes of pattern in West African music, in contrast to the visual nods of the head used in earlier pieces of mine to call for changes, and also to the Western practice of having a non performing conductor for large ensembles. Audible cues become a part of the music and allow the musicians to keep listening.

World Premiere: 24.04.1976, Town Hall, New York, Steve Reich and Musicians

Passage between Sound and Image

Extol/Salvo

Salutations to “Ligeterecki” (a composite) Tributes, Turbulations and remix

L’Espace Temporel is an evening for timeshifted musical travel. From fully fledged orchestras, string quartets, laptop electronics, tape and instrument playback to integrated moving images there is much to see and hear. At the evening’s end there is something to reflect upon. Extol/Salvo explores a few of those options. From the implications of the original works of György Ligeti and Krzysztof Penderecki played, an imaginary arrangement is arranged in the form of new sonic textures derived from the offspring “Ligeterecki.”

This very conjunction is the springboard Christian Fennesz and Naut Humon are utilizing in their renditions. By locating spectral clustered characteristics and re manifesting their kinetic stimuli through digital mimesis, a fitting musical homage is paid to the inspiration of these early sixties compositions.

KkAudio-Interpretationen: Naut Humon und Christian Fennesz

Visuals: Sue Costable und Lillevan

Programmierung der Software-Tools und technische Assistenz: Peter Segerstrom, Louis Dufort, Benjamin Peter Otto und Aloveiz y.j. Heredic

Krzysztof Penderecki

Krzysztof Penderecki stands with György Ligeti as the most significant European composer of his generation working today. Penderecki’s work has always questioned traditional musical notation, emphasizing timbre, sound and experimental techniques of orchestration to create aural collages, scores and deeply evocative and challenging pieces which interrogate the distinction drawn between music and the non-musical. He has forged an absolutely distinct, cinematic compositional style which, for all its disregard for traditional technique, has always been appreciated by broad listening audiences not traditionally interested in avant-garde.

Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima, probably Penderecki’s most famous work, is scored for 52 instruments. The composer evokes from these instruments a wealth of sounds, from the opening scream and the noise of sirens to the panic and chaos that ensues.

Penderecki makes similarly innovative use of tone clusters—notes close together, that are played together—to evoke both the effects and the aftermath of a nuclear bomb explosion. These disjointed sounds coalesce into a veritable firestorm that then fades into the silence of death.

Threnody is a gripping lament on the senselessness of all wars. At the time of its composition, it represented an attempt to apply the sonoristic technique and rigors of specific counterpoint to strings treated unconventionally as to the manner in which the tone was obtained. The expression was received by the audience in terms of solemnity and luridness, thus making its later classification fully justified.

In his so-called “sonoristic” period of the early 1960s—represented by pieces such as Threnody, Polymorphia, and others—Penderecki employed a compositional system whose axiomatic conceals a single sound, but sound matter in its totality.

Christian Fennesz

A composer and improviser of electronic music and the guitar, Austrian-born artist Christian Fennesz in the last decade amassing a collection of recorded works as notable for their musicality as for their design.

However, the expressiveness of Fennesz’s work does not just lie in his ability to “play technology to identifiable ends. There is an equally significant factor of placement, of location in his work that is meaningful from a poetic perspective, as well as providing it with a sense of geographic grounding. Having released two albums oriented around the idea of physical location—1999’s *plus forty-seven minus sixteen degrees 51 ‘08*, named after the grid of his hometown on the Austro-Hungarian border, and 2004’s *Venice*, Fennesz’s output has a particularly autobiographical feel. It makes its invocation of the future (through its technological mediation of emotive and song-oriented sound) more of a physicalization of sound for all of us to listen through. His recordings are released through Mego labels.

FLÜUX://TERMINAL

SKOLTZ\_KOLGEN

FLÜUX://TERMINAL is a bipolar performance that SKOLTZ\_KOLGEN have named “dyptique rétrovisuelle”. In their work, their research here has established a point of contact between sound and image. But FLÜUX://TERMINAL pushes the dialogue between these two elements one step further: Their performance is a dramatic trajectory, fuelled by the panoramic tensions (left/right) between hearing and seeing.

FLÜUX://TERMINAL projects images onto two screens, in a parallel visual body of luminous particles, photographed or filmed images and wire frame displays. As stereophonic visual representations, they are the alter egos of the audio, which is also divided into two. The sound sources (left/right) are directed and propelled into separate channels: the lefthand channel excites the left-hand image; the righthand channel excites the righthand image. The image is distorted, bearing the marks that the sound imprints upon it, and the sound is distorted, bearing the marks that the image imprints upon it.



fossil of the sound.

A bipolar experience is therefore built by catalysing the lines of tension between two independent and visual worlds. Their dissociation in one instance and their synchrony or symmetry in another times that seem to float in weightlessness. These suspended moments are succeeded by fresh changes that are massive and intense.

Noisegate Remix

Adapted from the Installation NoiseGate, by Granular Synthesis remix

Naut Humon / Tim Digulla

NoiseGate Remix is a performance work reconfiguration of a 1998 installation piece by Granular Synthesis, a Vienna-based duo of Kurt Hentschlager and Ulf Langheinrich. In June of 2000, they invited Naut Humon and assistant Tim Digulla from San Francisco to participate in a night of remixes produced by Creative Time in New York City. Inside the Anchorage venue at the base of the Brooklyn Bridge, Granular Synthesis had transformed huge barren concrete walls into video projection surfaces depicting oversized human heads in various states of captivity, amidst a rumbling subsonic sea of ominous, mobile frequencies. As this denaturalized, the human image is repeated in several antechambers, one had the sensation of passing through an industrial maze where the subjects were confined people whose behavior is mechanically altered by the captors' machinery. This was the inspiration of Granular Synthesis's earlier opus MODELL5, and finding a bridge between that architecture of isolation found in Noisegate gave us an open invitation to mesh out a chronically updated dub version. Gone were the mysterious green toned hues of facial tissues so prevalent in the original. The sound was thoroughly replaced as well, except for the occasional breathing effects that Granular Synthesis recorded. Spasms and shifting time stutters of the figures were further agitated and re-framed to evoke bursts of color and light. By degenerating the flaws, we were regenerating a paradox. Machines that were certain were becoming less recognizable. We were not so happy anymore ...

Thanks to: Tim Digulla, Chris Musgrave, & Scott Arford for their technical help in additional AV editing and consolidating film shooting material. Highest appreciation goes out to Granular Synthesis, who formed the foundation of this transconfiguration.

Translated from German by Mel Greenwald

[http://90.146.8.18/en/archives/festival\\_archive/festival\\_catalogs/festival\\_artikel.asp?iProjectID=](http://90.146.8.18/en/archives/festival_archive/festival_catalogs/festival_artikel.asp?iProjectID=)

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## VIII° Perfect Pontiff of the Illuminati – Initiate degrees in the

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 25/08/2010

### Initiation

The structure of O.T.O., like that of Freemasonry and the ancient mystery schools, is based on a series of initiations or degrees. In the rituals of these degrees, O.T.O. seeks to instruct the individual by allowing him or her to participate in the profound mysteries of nature, and thereby to assist each initiate in discovering his or her own true self.

Initiation can be conferred only in a physical ceremony conducted by a properly chartered initiate. For more information on how to apply for initiation, please visit our membership page for information on how to apply for initiation.

Initiate membership is subdivided by degree. There are a total of 21 initiate degrees in O.T.O., including 13 numbered degrees and eight un-numbered, intermediate degrees or sub-degrees. The degrees of O.T.O. are divided into three Grades or “Triads”: the Hermit, the Lover, and the Man of Earth, as follows:

The Third, or Man of Earth, Triad

0° Minerval

I° Man and Brother

Woman and Sister

II° Magician

III° Master Magician

IV° Perfect Magician and companion of the Holy Royal Arch of Enoch

Perfect Initiate, or Prince of Jerusalem

Outside all Triads

Knight of the East and West

The Second, or Lover, Triad

V° Sovereign Prince Rose-Croix, and Knight of the Pelican and Eagle

Knight of the Red Eagle, and Member of the Senate of Knight Hermetic Philosophers

VI° Illustrious Knight (Templar) of the Order of Kadosch, and Companion of the Holy Graal

Grand Inquisitor Commander, and Member of the Grand Tribunal

Prince of the Royal Secret

VII° Theoreticus, and Very Illustrious Sovereign Grand Inspector General

Magus of Light, and Bishop of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica

Grandmaster of Light, and Inspector of Rites and Degrees

The First, or Hermit, Triad

VIII° Perfect Pontiff of the Illuminati

Epopot of the Illuminati

IX° Initiate of the Sanctuary of the Gnosis

X° Rex Summus Sanctissimus

XI° Initiate of the Eleventh Degree (This degree is technical, and has no relation to the general p

XII° Frater Superior, and Outer Head of the Order

The Minerval Degree (0°) is an introductory Initiate degree in which the aspirant is considered an of O.T.O. rather than a full member. The Minerval degree is designed to allow the aspirant to decide to pursue full membership, and to allow potential sponsors the opportunity to decide whether to accept the aspirant's application for full membership. Minervals may begin preliminary novitiate training under the supervision of a Bishop towards ultimate ordination to the Diaconate and/or Priesthood in Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica. Minervals are not eligible for ordination or for service as an officer of a Local Body.

The First Degree (I°) bestows full membership upon the initiate. A First Degree initiate may retire from participation in O.T.O., but the spiritual link forged between the initiate and the Order during the First Degree will remain throughout the initiate's life. An initiate of the Second Degree is eligible for ordination to the diaconate of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica.

Beyond the degree of P I , advancement is by invitation only. Initiates of the intermediate degree of Knight of the East and West (K E W ) are eligible for formal ordination to the Priesthood in Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica. The consecration in Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica is conferred as part of the Seventh Degree. The Tent

held by the National Grand Master General of O.T.O. in a particular country.

The Man of Earth degrees follow a pattern based on the symbolism of the Chakras and the stages and represent, in dramatic form, the Individual's Path in Eternity. In the 0°, the Ego, a wandering to the Solar System. In the I°, the Child experiences Birth. In the II°, the Man or Woman experier represents the Death of the individual, and the IV° represents the world beyond Death, the glorifi Initiate. In the P I Degree, the Initiate symbolically achieves ultimate Perfection (Completion), a is withdrawn into Annihilation.

Of these Events or Stations upon the Path, all but the II° represent single critical experiences. We concerned mostly with the varied experiences of Life. All subsequent degrees are therefore elabor progressive instruction in how to live, since in a single ceremony it is hardly possible to sketch, e outline, the Teaching of Initiates with regard to Life.

The V° – IX° rituals and teachings are therefore instructions to the Initiate in the Mastery of Life; t in Hermetic Philosophy, Qabalah, Magick and Yoga, all aimed at preparing the Initiate for the rev application of one Supreme Secret.

Every man and woman of full age (18 or more years old), free, and of good report, has an indefeasi first three degrees of O.T.O. (but not according to any particular time schedule). These “first three include all the degrees in the Man of Earth Triad (the Minerval is considered a prologue to the Fir Fourth and P I Degrees are considered pendants to the Third Degree).

Progress of the O.T.O. initiate toward the Fourth and P I Degrees is usually a matter of years. A ce time is usually required to allow full maturation of the effects of the O.T.O. initiations, although u circumstances the Minerval and First Degrees may be taken on the same occasion.

### OTO and Masonry

O.T.O. membership does not, of itself, confer any status in Freemasonry. Nearly one hundred yea O.T.O. was established in Germany, it was closely allied to several rites of European Freemasonry 1918, Aleister Crowley determined it appropriate for O.T.O. to assert its own unique identity as ar system. At that time, while retaining the use of certain convenient customs and terminology usec Freemasonry, Crowley revised the O.T.O. rituals, insignia and modes of recognition to avoid infri legitimate privileges of the established and recognized authorities of modern Freemasonry, and a reflect the teachings of Thelema. Crowley's O.T.O. has not claimed to “make Masons” since that revisions along similar lines have been implemented in more recent years.

Despite some similarities between names and titles used within O.T.O. and the names and titles various churches, and other organizations, conferral of any degree, rank, office, or status within C

constitute conferral of any degree, rank, office, or status in any other active organization, Masonic otherwise; any more than status as the captain of a ship equates to status as the captain of a foot

<http://oto-usa.org/init.html>

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## The Golden Ass

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 17/08/2010

### The Golden Ass

madauros ass an ass just outside of Madaura (Algeria)

The Golden Ass, also known by the alternative title, The Metamorphoses, is one of the greatest fables of the world. The latter name, The Metamorphoses, is found in the extant manuscripts, but Augustine, two centuries later at Madauros (as well as at Carthage), says that Apuleius called his work *Asinus Golden Ass*, which name I shall use hereafter (the word ‘golden’ in this context denotes “a quality of admirability” rather than “the sense of being fashioned from gold”). Apuleius informs us that he is the author of the story. This is supposed by many scholars to have been a story possibly by the Greek author Lucius of Patrae. The text is now lost, though *Lucios or the Ass* — thought to be an abridgement of Lucius of Patrae by Lucian, a Greek satirist and near-contemporary of Apuleius, still exists. However, the splendour of the original to Apuleius, as *Lucios or the Ass* lacks all imagination and style; it is nothing but the story of the image of human life like Apuleius’s tale.

The Golden Ass is simultaneously a blend of erotic adventure, romantic comedy, and religious fable. It is truly seminal works of early European literature, with a distinctly Eastern flavouring and a very modern impact. There are very few works with the pleasurable impact of the Golden Ass. Apuleius’s images retain their vitality almost 2000 years ago, losing nothing of their colour and magic. Indeed, the promise of the closing Prologue: *Lector, intende: laetaberis* – ‘Lend me your ear, reader: you shall enjoy yourself’ are among the most powerful of the centuries, the Golden Ass has brought pleasure and inspiration to generations of readers and writers from Shakespeare to Salman Rushdie. A copy of the Golden Ass was one of the few things T.E. Lawrence carried in his saddle-bags throughout the Arab Revolt.

The charge to the reader: *intende* (lit. ‘be attentive’) — rather like the beginning of the first English version of *Hwaet* (‘listen’) — is a much more demanding commencement than ‘once upon a time...’ It requires the reader to be an active participant in experiencing the tale, not simply a passive listener (Apuleius’s style of

consistent with this notion). The Latin statement, in fact, is a conditional: 'if you are attentive, the pleasure', suggesting that the reader's enjoyment depends upon the degree of attention paid to the text.

The modernity of *The Golden Ass* originates from the timelessness of the text. This is true of the fact that what was found amusing two thousands years ago we still do today—but also of the non-comic aspect of the continual struggle of individuals to come to grips with and function in a largely unintelligible world. The transformation of man into ass provides a well-lit stage for the drama of this struggle to play upon. The ass allows the narrator a unique vantagepoint from which he is able to better gather together the threads of the mundane world to weave his fantastic tale. But the story remains that of man and his place in the world. To say that Apuleius was not a believer in magic—he had been initiated into the mysteries of Isis and had himself performed miracles necessitating the mastery of magic and sorcery.

However, *The Golden Ass* is not a story about magic, the supernatural of the novel is a convenience for the spinning of a story about man and the struggle of life in a world of limited resources. Magic in *The Golden Ass* can change a man too an ass, but it does not transform the Finite into the Infinite:— it does not eliminate slaves, make all of the poor men rich or all the hungry satiated. Magic forms part of Apuleius's natural world in which it is winter during those months in which Ceres's daughter dwells in Hades; a world in which earth is not always bounteous, no matter how much one propitiates the Gods with burnt offerings and sacrifices. Spells and witchcraft do not change these facts.

The Golden Ass frontispiece by Percival Goodman

The Golden Ass – frontispiece illustration by Percival Goodman

Quick-Links & Jumps

[Introduction to the Golden Ass](#)

[On Magic in the Golden Ass](#)

[On Desire in the Golden Ass](#)

[On Labour in the Golden Ass](#)

[The Golden Ass's Influence on later novelists](#)

[On the Tale of 'Cupid & Psyche'](#)

[On Divinity & Platonic Duality in the Golden Ass](#)

[On Isis Myths & the Symbolism of Gold Asses](#)

[The Language of Apuleius](#)

[Concluding Remarks](#)

[\\*ONLINE editions of the Golden Ass here\\*](#)

[\\*Translations, editions & selected passages\\*](#)

If you are unfamiliar with *The Golden Ass*,

I recommended reading my review:

The Best Piece of *Asse*

in Ancient Rome

ass review *Lucius & the lascivious woman* – illustration by Jean de Bosschère

Part of the inherent struggle depicted in *The Golden Ass* is that of arises from man's own inner de

In this we find one of the 'Eastern' elements of Apuleius's work, the journey to escape from the bo

endured by Lucius is similar to the Hindu concept of moksha ("release"), the Bhagavad-Gita dialo

Arjuna and Krishna being an excellent expression of this philosophy. This is not to say that the G

any means a moralistic tale of a libertine who realises the 'ungodliness' of his ways and reforms ir

seat in the heavens. Apuleius celebrates the sensual aspects of life and his vivacious descriptions

illustrate his possession of the 'cavalier-poet' virtue of living life to the fullest, both the pleasurable

Just as there is a Tantric school of Hinduism which does not strive to avoid the sensuous side of e

Apuleius's is a tale of maturation and the attainment of the wisdom needed to survive one's desir

*Ramses Harem Ramsès dans son Harem (1885-86)* – a photogravure from a painting by Lecomte N

ass among men *Lucius among the slaves* – illustration by Percival Goodman

As well as being concerned with the conflicts arising from inside an individual, *The Golden Ass* al

conflicts which occur between individuals, or between an individual and a larger group of person

to Apuleius's society, being the earliest book (at least in the West) to show society as a whole. No

illustrates the heroes, senators and other magnates of Roman power, but also simple shepherds a

cooks and scullions, artesans, slaves and beggars, and the dacoits and thieves of the underworld.

an ass, is forced to work in a flour-mill, Apuleius's pitiless description of the conditions of the slav

comparing the human and animal in a single breath—shows his keen observations of unacceptab

the Empire and is a plea for reform:

'Good Gods! what a tribe of mannikins I saw. Their skin was striped all over with livid scourge-sca

backs were crusted rather than clothed with their patchwork rags; some had no more covering th

apron; and every shirt was so tattered that the body was visible through the rents. Their brows we

heads were half-shaved; irons clanked on their feet; their faces were sallow and ugly; the smoky gl

reeking overheated room had bleared and dulled their smarting eyes; and (like boxers who fight b

dust of the arena) their faces were wanly smeared with the dirtied flour. But how shall I describe t

comrades? What superannuated mules and enervated geldings! They drooped their heads around

they munched the heaps of straw; their necks were frotted with bleeding and putrefying sores; th

continuously and wheezed through their feeble nostrils; their chests were raw from the rubbing o

their sides were split by the ceaseless cudgelling till their rib-bones showed; their hooves were cruel and flat by their never-ending tramp in the mill-round; and their hides were scarified all over with emaciation' (Lindsay trans. 274-275).

Apuleius's novel has inspired many subsequent writers and artists and been one of the greatest in Western literature, including such classic works as Boccaccio's Decameron, Cervantes's Don Quixote, and Gulliver's Travels. In these there obviously exists the same satirical style as in the Golden Ass, the theme of human madness and endeavour.

As well, the bathetic form of the Golden Ass occurs (as well as in the above works) also in Sterne's Sentimental Education (which, along with Richardson's Clarissa, are considered the first modern novels) and Joyce's Finnegans Wake (a sort of 'retelling' the tale of Homer's Odyssey, re-set in 19th century Dublin).

In more modern literature, the little known, but very important work of Anglo-Indian novelist G. H. Hatterr also carries on Apuleius's mad, bathetic style of story-weaving. More well-known is the winning Anglo-Indian author Salman Rushdie too writes very much in the Apuleian style—both in his use of bathos as well as adapting Apuleius's particular manner of interweaving 'mirroring' stories together. In addition to style, an episode in Rushdie's (in)famous novel, The Satanic Verses, displays a thematic similarity to the Golden Ass that it involves a transformation of the protagonist into bestial form and his subsequent attempts to return to human form:—'[the Golden Ass] serving as the central intertext [of Satanic Verses]', in the words of Dr. M. J. Cresswell.

The shape-changing theme also occurs in Kafka's Die Verwandlung (The Metamorphosis). This theme is obviously ubiquitous in human imagination, is unusual in Apuleius in that a first-person narrative is used to tell the metamorphosed man, as in Kafka. Kafka's novel owes something to the Golden Ass in its plot of a person who one day suddenly finds himself in a shape not his own—a repulsive shape; and in the struggle to survive with his humanity intact.

The 'Chinese-box' structure of the Golden Ass (e.g. the stories set within the frame of the primary narrative told by Lucius)—similar to the pattern of One Thousand and One Arabian Nights—is perhaps a remnant of the ancient European epic tradition (and the Greek tradition in particular), which often exhibits the imbedding of sub-stories or myths not structurally part of the main narrative. The majority, if not all, of these interwoven 'mirrored' stories are original to Apuleius; rather, they were well-known tales and anecdotes belonging to the common Miletian tradition. Apuleius's introductory description of his work as 'At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas et auresque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam' ["What I should like to do is to weave together this Milesian mode of story-telling and to stroke your approving ears with some elegant whispers of the Milesian tales are a sort of light entertainment; there existed a large repertoire of such popular myths and anecdotes, though Apuleius—as always—presents them in his unique style.



As E.J. Kenney points out, there exists a paradox in Apuleius's preface. He begins by stating that he has gathered together a number of light tales, but then at the end of the introduction he says 'It is a Grecian story to begin' ('Fabulam Graecanicam incipimus'). Fabulam Graecanicam – a Grecian fable: singular, not obviously refers to the main story of Lucius's transformation adapted from a Greek fable; making the main story primary. One suspects that Apuleius delighted in this seeming discrepancy—though the Golden Ass is both a single fable and a series of tales woven together (a bit like the Christian 'mystery of the trinity/plurality contradictions). Apuleius's abjuration to the reader to lector – 'be attentive' is quite fitting. An attentive reader will be able to resolve the intricate mysteries of the Golden Ass.

Circe Circe transforms Odysseus's men into swine (1889) –  
a photogravure of a painting by L. Chalon

Alchemy & Metamorphoses –  
links between Apuleius's Golden Ass and  
Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses

sphinx  
The Sphinx – painting by Norman Lindsay (Jack Lindsay's father)  
an essay on the use of  
historiographical topoi in the Golden Ass  
by Luca Graverini (negli Italiano)

Venus & Cupid  
The Allegory of Lust (1540-50) [Venus & Cupid]  
painting by Bronzino

Illustrated story of Cupid & Psyche  
Shakespeare's Venus & Adonis accompanied by Venus artwork

Essays, &c. on 'Cupid & Psyche'  
'Psycho-Analytic' criticism – J. Schroeder  
'Psycho-Analytic' criticism – Erich Neumann  
'Psycho-Analytic' criticism – Bruno Bettelheim  
Archetypes in 'Cupid & Psyche'

Thought-provoking questions on 'Cupid & Psyche' 1  
Thought-provoking questions on 'Cupid & Psyche' 2

At the centre of Apuleius's interweaving of tales is that of 'Cupid and Psyche'. This tale—like the one invented by Apuleius either. The framework of the myth of 'Cupid and Psyche' is recurrent throughout

cultures, from Scotland to India. The best known version of it is perhaps the Germanic fairy-story. However, Apuleius's retelling of this myth is an extraordinary feat of artistry—as P.G. Walsh puts it of a Märchen ('folk-tale') into a Kunstmärchen ('Art-Story'). The eminent Victorian aesthetic critic Walter Pater admired this section of the story so much that he included it in its entirety in his book *Epicurean* (a study of the intellectual and spiritual development of a young Roman in the time of Augustus). The episode of 'Cupid and Psyche' is made by Apuleius to illuminate the larger whole of the Golden Ass, by being on the same theme. In this way, Apuleius projects the central thread of the tale of Lucius's transformation onto the plane of mythos. As Lucius indulges his curiosity about Pamphile's witchcraft despite being repeatedly warned against doing so; so Psyche allows her curiosity to get the better of her, in spite of warnings parallel to those given to Lucius. Both are punished by being forced to wander through the world, forsaken by all. Both are redeemed from their misfortune through a series of trials—the labours of Venus in the case of Psyche, the serial stages of initiation into the mysteries of Isis for Lucius.

Both stories seem at first blush to set up a division between 'appropriate' and 'forbidden' knowledge, with punishment afflicting those who dare to open the Pandora's box of the forbidden. However, it is difficult to extract such a moral from either of these tales. Psyche is eventually transported to Heaven and granted immortality; Lucius obtains an intimate relationship with the Goddess Isis. Neither Lucius nor Psyche would have been able to reach the Divine in these parallel ways had they not first transgressed into the realm of illicit knowledge.

Apuleius's Platonic philosophy is particularly evident in this episode, Cupid serving as an allegorization of the restless attempts to reach the Divine (Isis). As well, both tales show the same sort of bifurcation of the soul into a higher and a lower form, as expostulated by Apuleius in his *Apologia* [12]:

'But I will forbear to enlarge upon those deep and holy mysteries of the Platonic philosophy, which are revealed to but few of the pious, are totally unknown to the profane; how, that Venus is a twofold deity, the pair producing a particular passion, and in different kinds of lovers. One of them is the "Vulgar Venus" prompted by the ordinary passion of love, to stimulate not only the human feelings, but even the feelings of wild beasts, to lust, and commit the enslaved bodies of beings thus smitten by her to immoderate embraces. The other is the "Heavenly" Venus, who presides over the purest love, who cares for many of them, and who influences her devotees by no stimulants or allurements to base desire' (Book 11, Chapter 1).

It has been suggested that in this way two 'Cupids' compete for Psyche's love; and that in the same way the 'Heavenly Venus' prevails in the case of Lucius when Fotis is replaced by Isis. It does not seem clear that a relationship with both Isis and Fotis would be impossible for Lucius, however his attitude towards 'love' does seem to shift from the lower Venus to the higher Venus in the course of the novel.

The solemn close of the Golden Ass—Lucius's initiation into the sacred rites of Isis and Osiris—may be read by some readers as incongruous with the light-hearted style of the majority of the novel. This comes from

approaching the Golden Ass as purely a comic romance. Apuleius constructs a careful alternation of comic and tragic episodes, between romantic and dramatic. For instance, the comic encounter of Lucius with the host Milo is offset by the tragic drama of the story of Socrates's death; the Lucius's romantic sexual liaison with Fotis is contrasted with the horrifying story of Thelyphron's disfigurement he hears in the second book. Indeed, there are both comic-tragic and comic-romantic sections, as well as both dramatic-tragic and comic-romantic episodes. The Lucius-Fotis episodes, for example, could be termed comic-romantic; the Lucius's transformation from man to ass is comic-tragic; while the Lucius's transformation from ass to man is dramatic-tragic. In fact, the fates of Charite and Tlepolemus, Cupid and Psyche, and Lucius (and the Lucius's transformation from man to ass) are woven together in a complex counterpoint (what has been called the 'Charite-complex', see Schlegel, 1851). For instance, the dramatic-tragic kidnapping of Charite in the fourth book complements Lucius's own kidnapping by the dacoits; the romantic rescue of Charite in the seventh book is parallel to the finale of the 'Cupid & Psyche' in the preceding books, and juxtaposed with Lucius's miserable experiences at the farms, also in the fourth book. Lucius's comic adventures with the priests contrast with Charite's tragic death in the eighth. All this is done by Apuleius alternates between jocular and often 'vulgar' happenings and 'high-brow' dramatic or tragic ones. This is not dissimilar to the technique one observes in, for example, the tragedies of Shakespeare, which, like comic-tragic elements, also contain humorous episodes; and are meant to be enjoyed on more than one level.

Furthermore, there is a philosophic layer of the Golden Ass as well, as mentioned above, in the Platonic contrast between a lower, vulgar 'path' and a higher, heavenly 'path'; for instance, Venus competes for Lucius in her lower form as Fotis and her higher form as Isis (though, again, it is not clear that these two forms are reconciled, that is, that a relationship with Isis prevents Lucius from having a relationship with Fotis, but certainly restricts the form of that relationship). One major theme of the narrative of Lucius in the Golden Ass is reflected in the tale of 'Cupid & Psyche', is this dualism of a debased and a perfected form of the same goddess. Lucius is punished for his prurient curiosity into Pamphile's magic via his sexual liaison with Fotis by his transformation into a foolish ass. In the Apologia as well, Apuleius seeks to define healthy curiosity as that which leads us towards knowledge of true reality by rational, intellectual means, as well as religious experience; and unhealthy curiosity which seeks an illusory reality (Hindu 'maya') by way of left-hand magic ('black magic') and sensuality. As William Adlington said of the Golden Ass during his Introductory Address and Epilogue, delivered from University College, Oxford on 18th September 1566: 'Although the matter therein is full of mirth and merry, yet the effect thereof tendeth to a good and vertuous moral...under the wrap of this tale is taxed the life of mortall men, when as we suffer our mindes so to bee drowned in the sensuall lust of the beastly pleasure thereof...so can we never be restored to the right figure of ourselves except we recover our sweet Rose of reason and vertue, which rather by the mediation of praier we may assuredly attain unto.'

As Robert Graves reports in his introduction, mid-20th century research into the history of magic has revealed that there were Thessalian witches who preserved a pre-Aryan tradition of destructive

magic, associated with the Triple Moon-Goddess in her form of Hecate. The 'right-hand', benevolent, connected to the mysteries of Isis—the Goddess Lucius/Apuleius come to worship. Thus, the Golden Ass can be read as containing a 'Puritan' moral of converting sexual love into love of God, and the abandonment of 'religion'. Sensuality is not inherently vulgar, nor is magic always evil; both can take either a 'left-hand' character or a positive, 'right-hand' form—just as the Moon-Goddess appears both as Isis and as Lucius's form as an ass is also significant in terms of the philosophy of the Golden Ass. Though the title is often thought to mean something like 'The Princes of All Ass-Stories' or 'The Best of Asses', there may be an ambiguity between the sense of aureus as meaning 'best' and its more literal meaning of 'golden'. It has been suggested that the Latin title may translate the Greek "tawny ass" associated with the demoniacal figure of Typhon (Plutarch details in his *De Iside*).

The worship of Isis in the form known to Apuleius and Plutarch actually arose in Greek and Roman Egypt as a precursor Aset (the latter name written with the hieroglyphic for 'throne') having been forgotten for hundreds of years, and there being very few priests left who could even read the hieroglyphs on the temple walls.

To continue, in Plutarch's account, briefly: Typhon (Seth in Egyptian) is the evil brother of the God Osiris. Typhon contrived a plan to usurp his brother whereby he tricked Osiris into stepping into a heavy wooden box fitted exactly to his dimensions. No sooner had Osiris entered the box than Typhon had it nailed shut and sealed with molten lead. He and his conspirators then threw this casket into the river. The pines of the Nile discovered this trick and inform Osiris's sister-wife, Isis. She searches all of the lands for the Osiris's coffin and eventually finds it. She tears off the lid and carresses the dead face of Her beloved brother-husband. Her carresses turn molten. She begins to copulate with the cold body of Osiris (reminiscent of some representations of the Hindu goddess Parvati astride the prostate, lifeless body of Shiva) and conceives a child, Horus. When Typhon learns of the discovery, he chops the body into tiny bits, casting them hither and yon through the lands. Isis recovers all the parts, except for Osiris's male-member (symbolising his virility and strength), which Typhon cannot be eaten by pikes (Egyptians traditionally avoided eating pike for this reason). However, Isis made a statue of it and consecrated it—this event replicated in ceremonies performed by the ancient Egyptians in a form quite similar to the Hindu Shiva-lingam worshippers, particularly prevalent in the south of India. Horus, Osiris's truly post-humous son, overthrows the cruel Typhon.

Because of Typhon's slaying of Her husband, the tawny ass of Typhon is particularly repellent to Lucius: '*...de proximo clementer velut manum sacerdotis osculabundus rosis decerpitis pessimae dudum detestabilis belvae istius corio te protinus exue*' (Apuleius XI.6)—'*...when you have drawn the roses, you intend to kiss the priest's hand, and gently detach the roses; at once then shrug off the skin of the animal, which has long been abominable in my sight*' (Walsh trans. 221—my emphasis). The

shape Pamphile transforms, on the other hand, is a symbol of wisdom, and the owl is thus often associated with Athena/Minerva. Isis's deliverance of Lucius, despite his being incarcerated in the form most hated by Isis, is particularly praiseworthy when viewed against the backdrop of the Egyptian myths associated with Isis.

ramses roses isis

Pharaoh Ramses presents Roses to Isis

crete Crete (1940) –

painting by Norman Lindsay (Jack Lindsay's father)

Classical Isis Worship

Isis faience

Turquoise faience figure, 3rd century BCE of seated Isis,

wearing the horns & sun-disc crown,

with child Horus on her lap

(click photo for close-up)

Island of Philae

(centre of ancient Isis worship)

philae

A timeline of Isis Worship

Modern Isis Worship

The Fellowship of Isis

Foundation Centre:

Clonegal Castle, Enniscorthy, Ireland

Kemet Orthodox Faith

pan & psyche Pan comforts Psyche –

painting by Sir Edward Burne-Jones

Following Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*, Isis represents all that is well-ordered and beautiful in the face of chaos and irrationality. The priest's address to Lucius in the final book: 'Sed utcumque Fortunae oppressimis periculis discruciat, ad religiosam istam beatitudinem improvida produxit malitia' (Apuleius trans. 227). In spite of all, Fortune with her blind eyes, all the while that she was tormenting and cruelly imperiling Lucius, the very exercise of her unforeseeing malignity brought you to this state of beauty and release' (Walsh trans. 227). The lassitudes of irrationally cruel Fortune accidentally bring Lucius into Isis's grasp.

‘Fortune with blind eyes’ is representative of disruptive Typhon, whose actions are unintelligibly to the rational order symbolises by Isis (note: this is a very different opposition from that of Apollo/Dionysian chaos—as discussed in Nietzsche’s *Die Geburt der Tragödie* [‘The Birth of Tragedy’]—where chaos are aligned quite differently, i.e. chaos with the primal, with music, &c. and order with the sculpture, &c.).

The ass in Apuleius’s day therefore represented cruelty and lust; when Charite escapes from the home on Lucius’s back, Apuleius remarks that this is an extra-ordinary sight: ‘virginem asino triumphans’ (Apuleius VII.13). Literally, ‘a virgin triumphantly riding an ass’; figuratively, ‘purity dominating flesh without bit or bridle’. Further, Plutarch records an Egyptian festival in which asses and men Typhon’s colours (tawny gold-red) were pushed over a cliff in ritualistic vengeance for Osiris’s murder. Lucius’s form as an ass may also be significant for another reason: Tertullian in his *Apologeticus* [some Africans believed that Christians worshipped an ass’s head (‘somniastis caput asinum nostrum’). And that a condemned man in the amphitheatre gayed the Christian god by wearing a hoof. Tertullian suggests that this strange notion may have originated from a distortion of Jewish Tacitus’s *Histories*.

If this is evidence of Apuleius’s antagonism towards Christianity (and it is supported by his representation of the cruel wife of the baker in Book 9 as adhering to a faith with a deity whom she proclaimed to be the true god, it is not surprising, given the probable situation of Christian propaganda being spread both in Rome and Africa during Apuleius’s life.

It is probable that Apuleius met with Christians and Christian-missionary texts whilst in Rome, certainly by Marcianus Aristides is a nasty attack on Isiac religion (Isis-worship). And then, his return to Carthage with the burst of Christianity in North Africa—Madauros, his own birthplace, being one of the centres of the witness (Tertullian’s reports are that all of Roman North Africa was in turmoil in the 190s due to the rise of Christianity).

Thus, the Golden Ass—and Apuleius’s rendering of the ‘Cupid & Psyche’ myth in particular—may be contrived as counter-doctrines to those of Christianity which Apuleius saw as threatening both the traditional and Platonic philosophy. Thus his emphasis on the *numen unicum multiformi specie* (Apuleius ‘godhead with manifold forms’ of Isis.

In the middle ages, the Inquisition, not surprising, attempted to destroy all known editions of Apuleius’ *Golden Ass* to its jabs at Christianity and Christians, such as the portrayal of the baker’s wife, one of the wickedest characters in the novel:

‘Tunc spretis atque calcatis divinis numinibus in viceram certae religionis mentita sacrilega praesentibus’

quem praedicaret unicum, confictis observationibus vacuis fallens omnis homines et miserum matutino mero et continuo corpus manciparat' (Apuleius IX.14) ['She scorned and spurned the god and in the place of true religion she professed some fantastic blasphemous creed of a God whom she called One and Only God. But she used her deluded and ridiculous observances chiefly to deceive the credulous middle her wretched husband; for she spent the morning in boozing, and leased out her body in prostitution' (Lindsay trans. 276)

The baker's wife is further described by Apuleius as 'saeva scaeva viriosa ebriosa pervicax pertinax' which provides a good example of Apuleius's rich, musical style of Latin prose—here combining biphonic alliteration. Such phrases illustrate the immense challenge for translators of the novel, if they are to preserve both the meaning and the form of the original to any degree. Some abandon any try at rhythmic phonic-form, reading 'mischievous, malignant, addicted to men and to wine, froward and stubborn' (Lindsay trans. 175), 'crabbed, cruell, lascivious, drunken, obstinate, niggish' (Adlington trans. 209), 'malicious, spiteful, lecherous, drunken, selfish, obstinate' (Graves trans. 203). Other translators use quite a variety of tricks to get at the rhythm of the original, and succeed to varying degrees: 'crabbed and crotchety, bibulous, obdurate and obstinate' (Walsh trans. 170), 'hard-hearted, perverse, man-mad, drunker than the last degree' (Kenney trans. 154), 'lewd and crude, a toper and a groper, a nagging hag of a fool' (Lindsay trans. 276).

Apuleius has a liking for outlandish and bizarre expressions and tangles the archaic with the colloquial in a disorienting mélange. But it is this very exotic elixir of his language which sets the right tone for his drama and comedy, chivalrous love and comic lust. One should not be misled by his apologies for his style: 'Mox in urbe Latia advena studiorum Quiritium indigenam sermonem aerumnabili labore nullo non aggressus excolui. En ecce praefamur veniam, siquid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offensus, equidem ipsa vocis immutatio desultoriae scientiae stilo quem accessimus respondet. Fabulam Graecam incipimus.' (Apuleius I.1)

'Later in Rome, as a stranger to the literary pursuits of the citizens there, I tackled and cultivated the Greek language without the guidance of a teacher, and with excruciating difficulty. So at the outset I beg pardon for any mistakes which I make as a novice in the foreign language in use at the Roman bar. In fact, the metamorphosis suits the style of the writing I have adopted here—the same sort of trick, you might say, employed by a circus-rider who leaps from one horse to another—for the romance on which I am now engaged is adapted from the Greek' (trans. adapted from those of Walsh & Kenney, pp. 1 & 7, resp.)]

Like his circus-rider, Apuleius has pulled a trick here, in switching from the horse of begging apology to insinuating that a Greek might be able to teach the Romans a thing or two about their own tongue. The prose following this prologue is not only unique and wonderful in its content, but also in its linguistic

roman lamp

unusual Roman lamp, circa 100-300CE,  
seemingly showing a scene from  
the Golden Ass or .  
owned/sold by Phoenicia Holyland Antiques

Roman morality: zoophilia  
in the Golden Ass

ibis

Feeding the Sacred Ibis – an engraving of a  
painting by E. J. Poynter

Turning from the flower of Apuleius's style to the Mystical Rose which is the goal of Lucius for me one may note the ubiquity of the rose in Western folk-tale and myth—e.g. in 'Sleeping Beauty', 'Beast', &c. (its place taken by the lotus in Eastern myths)—and its current establishment as a token of passion and love. The expression *sub rosa* or 'under the rose' (meaning something confidential) originates from a Greek/Roman misinterpretation of an Egyptian hieroglyphic (appropriately encoded as Horus as a God (along with Isis and Osiris), the Greeks translated his Egyptian name *her-pa-khrac*). The Egyptian hieroglyphic showed a boy sucking his finger; the Greeks thought the boy had his finger in his mouth, the sign of secrecy. Cupid is said to have given Horus/Harpocrates a rose as a token of gratitude for his close attention to the amorous goings-on of Cupid's Mother, Venus. Thus the rose became doubly confidential through Horus. The ceilings of Roman dining halls were rose-coloured to remind them of anything said there was *sub vino* (under the influence of wine) and also *sub rosa* and not for public consumption.

This place 'under the rose' is the place where mothers tell their children that they were found, in universally substituting the more pedestrian and innocuous cabbage for the velvety flower, which its flesh-coloured labial petals is much too close to the 'genital' reality the cabbage is meant to spare. Lindsay says in his introduction, 'the effort of Lucius to shed his ass's skin can therefore be compared to the effort to transfigure the cabbage of experience into the beautified rose....it is from...this effort that the story proceed[s]; but without that complex struggle to sublimate experience there would be no human drama' (viii).

This seems a key to understanding the Golden Ass, that it is a representation of a man's effort to transcend his interpretation of his experience—the universal human struggle to discover a meaning behind the blind fortune's irrational, indiscriminate cruelty. Apuleius's *Asinus aureus* or *Metamorphoses* is a fettered soul seeking to know its own action that is the true centre of the work; it is a radiant hymn introduced to counterbalance the image of man's life as that of a galled beast-of-burden' (Lindsay



beast of burthen Lucius toiling – illustration by Jean de Bosschère

lucius as a beast of burthen

Lucius as a beast of burden – illustration by Jean de Bosschère

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## The Genetic Bomb: Paul Virilio and Sylvère Lotringer

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 06/08/2010

The Genetic Bomb: Paul Virilio and Sylvère Lotringer . 2002 from the Psychomilitary issue

Sylvère Lotringer: More than twenty years ago you warned against the militarization of knowledge mobilized to protect humanity, science is now in the process of destroying it.

Paul Virilio: For fifty years now – but those of our generation know it well – we have been witnessing the militarization of knowledge. Not simply with Nobel prize-winning scientists involved in the Vietnam War, but in all research we've seen it. The fruit of this is the three bombs: the atomic bomb, the cyber bomb – the internet comes from – and now finally the genetic bomb which is in the works: they are all the result of the militarization of science. That's why I was able to speak of the 'politics of the worst'\* today with reference to cybernetics.

SL: It all follows logically from what we had developed in Pure War.\*

PV: Yes, unfortunately. Still I recall that this desire goes back to the Futurists and thus to fascism. I should reread Marinetti. We must not in any case forget what he says about bodies: he says that the body is not only nourished on energy, nourished on technology, etc. Marinetti is a prophet of fascism, not only of Benito Mussolini but also the eugenic fascism of Mengele. And he foresaw it. Futurism foresaw internal prostheses, the revolution of transplants, technology inserted on the inside of the body, this sort

man which causes him to feed himself on implants such as the pacemaker, all the way to additional microchips, and incorporated telephones.

SL: That is the first offensive. The other offensive is not to penetrate a body that is already there, but to create one.

PV: The other aspect is genesis, the possibility of the industrialization of the living being, the industrialization of the species itself. It will no longer be a question of the eugenics of relative performance, Galton's artificial selection, or Mengele's for that matter. It will be a question of informational selection. It will go right to a total, an absolute eugenics, a eugenics of the perfecting of creation itself.

SL: It is no longer a modification of the body according to selection criteria we label 'positive' and 'negative', eliminating the handicapped or reinforcing the carriers of good genes – but a programming, pure programming, to produce a new human object from nothing.

PV: In that case, it is the program that would be the essential and not the culture. In my opinion, genetic and informational selection cannot be separated because I believe that both are quite simply absolute. Behind them, there is obviously the idea of an improved humanity, not to mention a post-humanity. You are no longer the human species in the singular, but human species in the plural.

SL: By altering the map of the human genome, you could create highperformance men, but also highperformance women.

PV: Behind the idea of the super-man, Galton's idea that was taken up by Mengele, there is inevitably the idea of the under-man.

SL: The idea of the under-man did not have to wait for the genetic revolution. It's the history of colonialism.

PV: But this world misfortune was not programmed in a factory. Whereas, in this case, with genetic engineering, it would be an industrial program as in Terminator. The whole question of the control of the living being is the contraception of the human species.

SL: And that raises again the question of racism...

PV: Or rather of super-racism. The biggest racist knows that there exists a unity of the species. Even the inferior are degraded within the unity of the species. He says 'inferior,' but it is a man or a woman. Through its massacres, its horrors, racism remains within the unity of the human species. It is relative to the unity. However, through transgenetic research, through chimeras or hybridization, through eugenics, through genetic engineering, the question of multiplying human kinds. The racist was yet preserved from his excess by the fact that there was only one human kind, and different races – blacks, whites, etc. But I am saying that the genetic engineering is exploding this unity for the multiplicity of the human kind, and then racism will become exponential.

SL: It would be a transhuman racism.

PV: This is transhuman racism, whereas the other was endo-human.

SL: The heterogeneity of races will make the old racism impossible...

PV: ...whereas heterogeneity will be a racism beyond the human kind. And that is the unthinkable.

SL: In a sense, that's what the Nazis had tried to do.

PV: In my view, we cannot advance in the genetic question today without positing the fatal dilemma. As soon as you create the idea of the super-man, you discredit, you downgrade, you degrade a kind of racism you would find all over again the foundations both of colonialism and of racism and of xenophobia. At a cosmic level I would say – hence the idea that the extra-human is the future of the extra-terrestrial. The search for little green men was not at all science fiction, but the forerunner of the search for a superman. Since nobody dared to be part of Nazi eugenics, we went to outer-space and opted for little green men.

SL: William Burroughs saw in genetic engineering the possibility of bringing about a final ecological space. Science fiction pioneers, too.

PV: It opens something, which has more to do with the human than the extra-human. The plurality of humankind is an unthinkable thing. In other words, it will be necessary to think that is, make the jump beyond ethics. And we know that they made this jump at Auschwitz.

SL: The Nazi doctors made genetic research something that no longer had anything to do with knowledge.

PV: We can indeed ask ourselves whether genetics is still a science, or whether it is an art. If you accept it as an art, then we entertain the possibility of creating kinds, or styles. The human kind becomes the product. But this time, it is no longer the creator who is the cause. It's Monsanto, or Novartis, that does the genetic programming...

SL: If it's art, it's a mutant art...

PV: Exactly. There is an esthetic dimension to the camps, which was voluntary, which was part of the thinking of the Viennese Actionists, or certain forms of art today like the 'Sensation' exhibition in the Museum of Work in Mannheim, where he presented plastic cadavers of living beings sculpted in a surrealist manner, etc.

SL: In both cases, in the camps as in the galleries, the border between art and science disappears.

PV: It's the same logic. Genetics would become an art, a genetic art, an expressionist art, which would create a multiplicity of humankind. The idea that in laboratories one would create – I'm exaggerating – in

beings, or pointillist, or cubist, etc., all the way to genetic operas. In other words, something from is becoming a living phenomenon, and we know that fashion goes out of fashion. Here we are to mutation of humankind.

SL: It will no longer be esthetic surgery, since they will no longer conform to a predetermined mo genetic esthetics. They will create new species the way they present a new collection.

PV: Right, there will be chimeras, and then there will be hybrids, which we have already seen in t cow ova, that is, the centaur or minotaur research.

SL: Science will give birth to monsters, and they will be works of art.

PV: Yes. In my opinion, if you look at what is happening in contemporary art, they are at the poi genetics and cloning to be an art form. That is, a form of the liberty of expression. Or does the libe stop in the domain of the sciences? If it doesn't stop, Mengele will be a prophet... We're at the lir delirium. This delirium is comparable to the frenzy of atomic research. The third bomb is the sea bomb.

SL: The phrase is Einstein's, I believe.

PV: Yes. Einstein recognized three bombs: the atomic bomb, the cyber bomb, and the genetic bo are faced with delirium. The atomic bomb has been a delirium, which we have not been able to le they set off the second frenzy, the cyber bomb, the bomb of information. And now the third bom beginning, the third delirium, Einstein called it the demographic bomb, but it goes without sayin demographic bomb is tied to the genetic bomb. It is possible to think that this research is in fact l counter demographics, that is, to introduce an under-species and a super-species.

SL: What does this have to say about the function of art in relation to science?

PV: Art is initiatory. Pointillism is already an analysis of light. The Impressionists did cloning too. The art of these periods, it's prophetic somehow. I don't know if it is still the case today, but certa Romanticism, since the 18th and 19th centuries in any case, the arts have been, in the profane se prophetic of political mutations. One can say that in some way the arts had a role comparable to philosophy, but the role of art was not to put on trial the way philosophy and religion did; the rol announce prophetically what was happening. I think Romanticism as well as Surrealism annour recall that Surrealism is born after WWI and is sort of the child of the war, whereas Futurism strad 1910, so just before. But between Futurism and Surrealism, the prophecy of modern times, the pe about, passes through Kafka, who is the profane prophet par excellence, the prophet of extermin somehow it is the question of extermination which is raised. Extermination has been undertaken

since the 19th century. There was the extermination of the concentration camps, Auschwitz; the atomic extermination, Hiroshima. And now with the genetic bomb there is once again the possible type of extermination in the works.

SL: Presented as a positive thing.

PV: Yes, presented as positive. We would have not only control over birth, or contraception, but also control over the living being.

SL: But it's not all negative. As people have proposed, it's possible that an 'improved' agriculture could prevent famines in the Third World, that we could replace coal and oil by renewable resources produced by genetically modified organisms and plants...

PV: This is always the case. Good and evil cannot be separated. That's why Aesop's phrase is still relevant. When people ask me what I think of computer science and the cyber bomb and cybernetics and cyberspace, I answer with the same phrase that Aesop did: What is the best of things? Computer science. What is the worst of things? Computer science. Today we are faced with a kind of slack-jawed optimism with respect to new technologies, which is for me perhaps the latest conformism. Good and evil tend to be replaced by optimism. Conformism and pessimism is evil. It's an academic form of ethics. It is thus academic and media-friendly, I would say. A philosopher cannot be an optimist. That's why I said a minute ago that genetics is the best and the worst. The possibilities of control over the book of life, of decoding the human genome, can promote tremendous progress for the sick. But we know very well that those techniques invented for the treatment of the sick are quickly used for the treatment of those in perfect health [laughter]. We know that. For example, you can see it happen with Viagra. Viagra is for the impotent. Do you really think that those who are taking it are impotent? Conformism and optimism is a stimulant. So we have the same thing every time we invent a technology. Its aspects are always presented in a positive light, an optimistic light, but they mask the negative dimensions. But you can't mask it! It's a double bind. Technology is a double bind. There is no progress without progress of the catastrophe. Every time we begin to invent a new technology, and at the end, well, we render natural seeds sterile to make sure that the catastrophe begins.

SL: You think we're heading for catastrophe?

PV: I think the genetic bomb has an apocalyptic dimension to it. The three bombs, moreover, together have an apocalyptic dimension. Not the end of the world, but extermination in the broad sense. You know what people think of me, I am not a thinker of the excess. I try to be a kind of periscope of probable future. What I believe is that these three bombs are developing in parallel. This catastrophic triptych is part of a universal accident, a total accident whose dimension we cannot even imagine. Each time we invent a new technology, whether electronic or biogenetic, we program a catastrophe and an accident that we cannot imagine. When we invented electricity, we didn't imagine Chernobyl. So, in the research on the living being, on the

cannot imagine the nature of the catastrophe. We can imagine a monster, OK, but artists have been since Breughel and Bosch. Since Bosch, the search and programming for monsters has already taken to my part, believe that the total catastrophe, which these three bombs are programming, is the accident. It is no longer science that programs the accidents; it is science that is going to have a permanent accident to see? The accident of science is that science is going to destroy itself. I believe that just as there was a catastrophe in politics, so to speak, in the 20th century – and what an accident, otherwise we will understand not Auschwitz and the Shoah – so at this very moment an accident of science and knowledge, whose nature we cannot imagine, is being programmed. The cyber bomb and the genetic bomb are ripe, as they say, for two of them, with a scientific catastrophe which we cannot imagine because it is perhaps the catastrophe of science itself.

SL: The genetic manipulation of the human is the accident of science.

PV: In a certain way, the accident of science is an accident that has not yet taken place, even if we have the labs – I mean the labs, not extermination, not the gas chambers – the labs at Auschwitz-Birkenau are a prefiguration of this accident. Auschwitz was not only a crime against humanity; it is the beginning of the accident of science. But that brings in the question of art.

SL: What you call the Nazi aesthetic, it is not the grandiose one that they have shown in museums and monuments; it is the one that they practised in secret in the labs.

PV: Yes, that is what I call, citing Camus, a pitiless art.

SL: To sum up, what we don't realize is that everyone is in the process of becoming Nazi in a new way.

PV: Auschwitz-Birkenau – and you have to say Auschwitz-Birkenau – was the prefiguration of what is happening today with transgenetics. The extermination camps – not the concentration camps, they had the same function as the indigenous peoples – have been the biggest genetic laboratories of the period. The whole thing is a prefiguration of pharmaceutical labs and enriched science itself. And it is not by accident that 'twin birth' was at the center of the research.

SL: The Shoah would thus be not an event that separates from what went before, but the contrary, the beginning of what follows...

PV: It's a prefiguration. The Shoah is not an end but the beginning. A book by Ernst Klee which justifies the role of doctors in the development of pharmaceutical complexes today, shows to what extent the research on man today leads no longer to experiments on man, to human experimentation, as in the case of the Mengele twins, but to man-experiments. No longer experiments on man, but man-experiments, the experiment of expression to produce a man, to create him, no longer to procreate him. We see there the religious



the divinization of the scientist: the demiurge. I believe that we are leaving biology behind to enter teratology, that is, the creation of monsters.

SL: Monsters that would be men.

PV: Monsters that would be men, that would be living beings. And there, teratology becomes an expression of art, an expressionist form of science as art, of genetic science as art.

SL: They have already grafted a human ear on the back of a mouse, produced 'Arnold Schwarzenegger' with chicken genes... If this kind of experimentation is possible, we are already in the process of doing it in a certain way.

PV: I'm convinced of it. Who would dare claim that hybrids and human cloning have not begun? What America has done – I say America, but I could just as well say France – when they radiated them to test the atomic bomb, forty years later now let's not think that none of this can happen.

Translated by Mike Taormina

\* Pure War, by Paul Virilio & Sylvère Lotringer, was published in 1983 by Semiotext(e), Inc. in New York and of the Very Worst in 1998.

This is an excerpt from *Crepuscular Dawn* (New York: Semiotext(e)/The MIT Press, 2002), a book edited between Paul Virilio & Sylvère Lotringer.

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## Forget Foucault by Jean Baudrillard (Introduction)

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 05/08/2010

# FORGET FOUCAULT

Jean Baudrillard



## Sleeping With The Enemy

This was a major shift in political theory. Actually and contrary to all appearances, it wasn't unlike what Deleuze and Felix Guattari advocated in *Anti-Oedipus* [*Capitalism and Schizophrenia*], or Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punishment*, in the wake of May '68.

...

Marxist rhetoric in politics had bottomed out. The student rebellion had proved at least one thing: the Communist Party, trade-unions and the working class—the entire institutional left—had ceased to be revolutionary.

...

No wonder French post-'68 thinkers, Baudrillard included, looked somewhere else for revolution: the West. Failing to enlist their allies, they resolved to sleep with the enemy.

...

All of the 'children of May,' revolutionaries bereft of a revolution, turned to capitalism, eager to exchange their energy they no longer found in traditional class struggles. Updating the theory of power and the field of subjectivity to the erratic shifts of the semiotic code, they assumed that they could redirect its flow. In their wake new "deterritorialized" figures—psychotic creativity, desire, nomadism, becoming revolutionary in spite of the abrupt "reterritorializations" that the system was bound to impose in order to insure its stability. (Deterritorializations result from the absolute decodification of capital.)

Baudrillard didn't disagree with them on the nature of the beast, only on the extent of the damage. In fact, he maintained that their willful distinctions between various "regimes of madness," or between

and gradients of intensity (necessary to identify the direction and consistency of the flows) could anymore. Libidinal distinctions would prove powerless to stem the flow. He saw them as doomed to reintroduce a modicum of human agency in a process that had become both irreversible (linear, cold) and inhuman. Energetic and intense, capital was gradually gnawing away at every singularity. Simulations they had been engulfed by it. Revolution had come and gone; they arrived too late, one day after the arrival of Kafka's Messiah. Boldly going beyond Marx, they had simply lost their moorings. "Theoretical production, " Baudrillard wrote, "loses its determinacy and begins to turn around itself, spiraling toward a reality that cannot be found. This is where we are today: indeterminacy, the era of floating signifiers, much as floating money..." (Symbolic Exchange, p.44). All the efforts to enlist capitalism on their terms were bound to fail. The only way out of the morass was a radical leap of faith, a flight into the unknown. Only the deterritorialization of theory itself could meet the absolute challenge of capital.

This is what Baudrillard meant by a *total* revolution: a strategy geared to escalate the system and reach its breaking point. Then, giving up on every pretence of rationality, it would start *revolving* and achieve a circularity of its own:" We know the potential of tautology when it reinforces the system's claim to totality (sphericity (Ubu Roi's belly)" (SE, p.4). Coming back full circle to his early pataphysical roots, Baudrillard was taunting capital to emulate Jarry's absurdism—and share in Ubu's grotesque fate. After all, wasn't the pataphysical proposition? It was endlessly cutting the branch on which it sits, devastating the planet and endangering the human species while claiming to improve its lot. Capital didn't care a fig for the real. The real wasn't its business. It had cancelled the *principle* of reality and substituted a codification of a hyper-reality that made the real obsolete. Its dirge-like flows were self-referential, leaving every trace of self-induced simulation. The flows of capital were posthumous, post-human. In their nihilistic march they carried the seeds of their own destruction. Only Ubu, Jarry's truculent hero, the coward king cannot be entourage, and himself in the process, could account for such a bullish cynicism. The society of the real was turning into a soft version of the theater of cruelty, a burlesque of death with the globe as its stage and the real exchanged for nothing, for a handful of glittering toys, work absorbed time like a sponge and left no trace. Baudrillard wasn't the exterminator, *but the system itself*. Yet no one was paying attention.

In his Bastille days, De Sade challenged French regicides to draw revolution out of it to its most extreme conclusions: "Fellow compatriots, a last-ditch effort is required if you really want to earn the name of revolution. Already spinning himself silly with the system like an autistic child, Baudrillard was ready to make himself. He would be the fool of capital and wave its Good News all around like a lantern: "Every system that reaches perfect operativity simultaneously approaches its downfall...it approaches absolute power and totality, is, immediate and probable subversion. A gentle push in the right place is enough to bring it crashing down." (p.4). Beware of gentle pataphysicians with a big hammer.

Baudrillard, Jean

## Forget Foucault

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Introduction: Exterminating Angel by Sylvere Lotringer, Pgs 10-13

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# Pataphysics: Jean Baudrillard

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Ubu, the caricatural and gaseous state, the lower intestine and the splendor of the void. Because, stucco and fake... even a tree made of wood — and this intense bluff that facilitates the rising of the phenomenon — nothing prevents that this catabase towards the stucco and the fake and the bluff before the form that so-called true objects have taken today... and that everything, before being born cancerous and imaginary state — can only be born at the cancerous and imaginary state — which things from being less false than we think — that is to say...

Pataphysics is the highest temptation of the spirit. The horror of ridicule and necessity lead to an infatuation, the enormous flatulence of Ubu.

The pataphysical spirit is the nail in the tire — the world, a wolf's mouth (lupo vesce). La gidouille balloon, a nebulous or even a perfect sphere of knowledge — the intestinal sphere of the sun. The take away from death. Does a tire die? It renders its tire soul. Flatulence is at the origin of the breath.

The idea is to turn it back on itself, it is in this fashion that reality is demolished. In the opinionated will, importance, faith, all the things that are carried to paroxysm where we perceive quite natural made up of breaths from our flatulence, from meat which we make the candles and ashes, from blood we make false ivory and false universes. It is not ridicule. It's an inflation, the brusque passage into which is the thought of no one, cause there is not pataphysical thought, there is only pataphysics sours and embaums like milk, swollen like a drowning victim et deflagrer like a greenish-blue truth Palotin. Pataphysics: philosophy of the gaseous state. It can only be defined in a new undiscovered because too obvious: tautology. Better: it can only define itself by its own term, thus: it doesn't exist and around and rehashes the same half-assed incongruence, smiling stupidly, from girolles and d

The rules of the pataphysical game are far more dastardly than any other. It is a narcissism of death eccentricity. The world is an inane protuberance, an empty jack-off, a delirium of stucco and caricature.

who thinks as such, thinks that from this brandished sex of nothingness can one day spring forth only from a caricatural existence can a theatre of cruelty surge forth, that is to say, a real virulence Pataphysics, however, does not believe in the sexual organ, or the theatre. There is facade and no ventroloquicity of the bladder and lanterns is absolute. All things are infatuated, imaginary, an ed une nenie. There is not even a means to be born or to die. This is reserved for the rock, meat, blood has weight. Now, for Pataphysics, all phenomena are absolutely gaseous. Even the recognition of the knowledge of farting and purity, and coitus, because nothing is serious... and the conscience etc. Without goal, without soul, without sentences, and itself being imaginary, but nonetheless a pataphysical paradox is to die, quite simply. If, Artaud pushed to the edge by the renewed void in him, did not kill himself, it is because he believed in an incarnation somewhere, in a birth, in a drama. The whole on a trestle of cruelty, since reality could not receive it there was a gamble, and immense. The confines of the bladder had an odor of a Chinese lantern. Ubu, himself, blew out a fart with his big fart. And what's more, he was convincing. He convinced every one of nothingness around him. He proves that we are an intestinal complication of the lord and of the limbs, that when he has farted for yourself, it shall be resolved, everything will be in order. We are nothing else, but at the perpetual the notion of reality is given to us by a certain abdominal concentration of the wind which has not been released. The gods and mornings that sing are issued from this obscene gas, accumulated since the beginning and since the pyramidal Ubu digests us before expulsing us pataphysically into the void, obscuring the re-cooled fart, which would be the end of the world and of all possible worlds.

The humor of this story is crueler than that of Artaud who is but a mere idealist. Above all, he is in fact who proves the impossible of thinking pataphysically without killing yourself. He is, if you will, the ray of light in a spherical gidouille whose only limits are the imbecility of the sphere, but who becomes infinite light when he explodes. From this explosion of the Palotins comes humor, from their naive and fawning manner and nature under the form of farts, which believe themselves to be quite conscientious beings, and not that they give the spark to an incommensurable humor that will shine until the end of the world — that is Ubu himself. Thus pataphysics is impossible. Must one kill oneself to prove it? Indeed, since it is exactly this which is its seriousness. Finally, to exalt Pataphysics is to be a pataphysician without a shadow of doubt which is what we are all. Because humor wants humor in regards to humor, etc. Pataphysics is science. Artaud is the perfect contrast. Artaud wants the revalorisation of creation and wants to put it into practice away like Soutine from his rotten beef, an image, no longer an idea. He believes that by piercing the earth with sorcery there will spill a lot of puss, but good god, real blood, and when the entire world will be peopled like Soutine's cow, the dramaturge will be able to continue, from our bones, prepare a serious feast which we will no longer be spectators. On the contrary, Pataphysics is ex-sanguine and doesn't get itself wet, evolving in a parody, being the reabsorption itself of the spirit, without a trace of blood. And, moreover, all Pataphysics is a

procedures are a vicious circle where, maddening forms, without believing in each other, devour crabs at the edge of a cliff, digesting themselves like stucco buddhas and renders nothing in all its the fecal sound of a pumice rock and dried ennui.

This is because Pataphysics has reached such a perfection of the game and because it accords little everything that it finally has little of. In themselves, all solennal nullity, all figures of nullites come themselves before the gorgonal eye of Ubu. In it all things become artificial, venomous, and lead by the angels of pink stucco whose limbs rejoin in a curbed mirror. Loyola — may the world be av that I reign over it. If a soul doesn't resist the emprise of volute, of spirals of imprinted vertigo, fixe of paroxystical tartufferie, when it is delivered to the sumptuous Ubu, whose smile renders every sulfurous inutility and the freshness of latrines...

Such is the unique imaginary solution to the absence of problems.

### Acknowledgments and Credits

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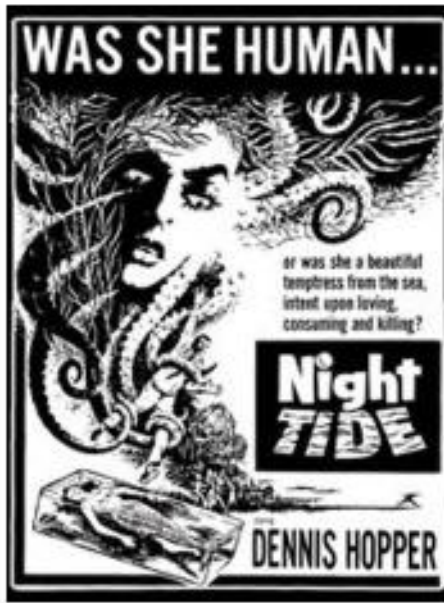
Jean Baudrillard is an internationally acclaimed theorist whose writings trace the rise and fall of s in the contemporary century. In addition to a wide range of highly influential books from *Seductio Exchange and Death*, Baudrillard's most recent publications include: *The Vital Illusion*, *The Spir The Singular Objects of Architecture*, *Passwords*, *The Conspiracy of Art: Manifestos, Texts, Interv 2005*) and *The Intelligence of Evil or the Lucidity Pact* (November 2005). He is a member of the ed CTheory.

Drew Burk studied philosophy, religion and political anthropology at L'Institut D'Etudes Politiqu Provence. He has spent the last 8 years on a nomadic path, living in diverse cultural backdrops su France, and Senegal. His current projects involve constructing a theoretical media hauntology co translation, collage, theoretical cut-up eclectic voice phenomenology as well as a Pataphysical ex state beyond theory. Drew Burk is a student at the European Graduate School.

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# Necrolog: Curtis Harrington (Fortean Times 8/2007)

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 05/08/2010



Actor and photographer Lisa Jane Persky pays tribute to legendary B-movie director, avant-gardist Curtis Harrington, and reports from a very strange memorial service.

He had barely started when he was interrupted by Anger, who shouted juicy 'corrections' to Lisa Jane. Curtis Harrington, director of famed weird B-movies such as *Night Tide* (1961), *Games* (1967), *What's the Matter With Helen?* (1971) and *What's the Matter With Helen?* (1971) was one of very few avant-garde directors to make the transition into commercial filmmaking. He passed away at the age of 80 in Hollywood from complications related to a stroke he had suffered in 2005.

"HIDEOUS BEYOND BELIEF... with an IN HUMAN CRAVING!" was the tagline for Harrington's classic, *Queen of Blood* (1966); strangely, it could have been applied to his fellow avant-gardist and contemporary Kenneth Anger when he made an appearance at Harrington's burial service last month.

I met Harrington in 2006, at an opening for Dennis Hopper's photographs and paintings. We were joined by Gregory Poe, a friend with an apt last name. Harrington was a life-long fan of Edgar Allan Poe and ended his career with different versions of 'The Fall of the House of Usher'. Gregory told me that he had the urns and that Curtis had already ordered his. A year later, at the Forever Hollywood Cemetery in Paramount Studios, Harrington was ready to put Mr Poe's handy work to use.

Harrington's memorial service was an open-casket affair held in the cemetery's small chapel. It was Kenneth Anger, who arrived with a camera man in tow. Best known for his films *Fireworks*

The Pleasure Dome (in which Harrington appeared, alongside Anaïs Nin) and Lucifer Rising, author of two compendia of trashy Hollywood scandals, Hollywood Babylon and Hollywood Babylon. His name is often linked to those of Satanist Anton LaVey and the notorious Aleister Crowley.

According to Harrington's executor, screenwriter Robert Mundy, Harrington and Anger had been friends in childhood but had carried on a life-long feud, during which Anger had repeatedly been cruel to him. Because of this, as well as the attendant cameraman, Mundy asked Anger to leave. Anger informed Mundy that he would have to call the police to get him off the property. Eventually, they reached a compromise and Anger turned off the camera. But this didn't prevent him from kissing the embalmed face of Harrington seated in the front row. Anger, who is also 80, looks hardy and sports the intense, bullet-headed look of Aleister Crowley in his later years.

Actor Jack Larson (Jimmy Olson in the 1950s Superman television series), who was to be the only one in service, described the Hollywood milieu that he and Curtis entered in the 1940s. He had barely begun when he was interrupted by Anger, who shouted juicy 'corrections' to Larson's speech. Larson persisted and continued to provide a running commentary in a we-of-the-theatre tone. Larson referred to a mutant from Pasadena, who ran a 'coven' which attracted many people, including Harrington and himself. Anger shouted "NO! NO! It was an order of the Ordo Templi Orientis and it was of as high a degree as you could be. I am a 33rd-degree member through Crowley." Previous to this, Larson had already mentioned that Anger had corrected his pronunciation: "Crow as in Crow. Then Lee."

Larson mentioned that 'Paul' had supposedly created a homunculus. Anger agreed – "OH HE I SAW IT! HE HELD MY HAND. ITS LITTLE HAND, LIKE A TENTACLE, WRAPPED ITSELF AROUND MY FINGER. THERE WERE 33 OTHERS LIKE THIS ONE NOT IN FULL-FRUITION LIKE THIS ONE" – suggesting that degrees of Masonry and homunculi litter Hollywood are common. A number of actresses were involved in the "coven", one of whom reportedly saw the homunculus. Anger informed the guests that whoever sees a homunculus is henceforth responsible for its disappearance. This, he suggested, may be why she ultimately became a recluse.

Larson recounted that 'Paul' supposedly had a tail. Anger concurred. "I SAW IT!" he shouted. "I SAW IT! I SAW IT! KINSEY AND HE SAID THAT WASN'T SO UNUSUAL – ONE MAN IN 50,000 HAS ONE." In the 1950s, the sexologist Kinsey became interested in Anger and his films, and in 1955 the two visited the site of Crowley's 'Abbeville' in Cefalu, Sicily.

According to Larson, 'Paul's' home burned to the ground. Anger explained why. "HOWARD DILLON CLAIMED. "HOWARD HUGHES, WHO WAS CRAZY BECAUSE HE HAD SYPHILIS OF THE BRAIN." For once no one was laughing, though this did produce some uncomfortable laughter.

Toward the end of Larson's speech, Anger announced that he and Harrington had both been dis-



cancer (al though Harrington didn't die of this) and that he had told Harrington that he would then informed every one that his own memorial would be here, in the same place. He turned to and said "Oh yes, It's been confirmed. I know the date of my death. On Halloween 2008. My memorial HERE! HALLOWEEN 2008!" Then, as an after thought, he added, "INVITATION ONLY! Sorry."

Across from Anger's seat was a huge floral bouquet. The card read: "For my old pal Kurtiz (sic) from Kenneth Anger". The note, which usually bears the name of the deceased, read "Dr. Kenneth Anger". It looked as though it was Anger's funeral in stead, well ahead of schedule. One of the themes Harrington's Queen of Blood and other films is that of beings who feed off others. With this in mind, one assumes you won't starve to death.

A second memorial service sans Anger was held at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Vine Street. Speakers there included scream queen Barbara Steele, directors Peter Medak (The Exorcist), John Condon (Dream girls), and Dennis Hopper, who appeared in Harrington's early work Night Tide. It featured Marjorie Cameron, the widow of Jack Parsons, the scientist at Pasadena's Jet Propulsion Laboratory who was also a follower of Aleister Crowley. Cameron appeared in Anger's Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome and was part of the occult bohemia depicted in John Carter's Sex and Rockets: The Occult World. It was quite possible that Parsons was the 'Paul' that Superman's pal and Crowley's devotee killed at the previous service. Parsons blew himself and his house up in an 'accident', although there may have been suicide. Then too, they may have been speaking of Paul Mathison, the art director who played Pan in Inauguration of The Pleasure Dome.

In a short documentary screened at the Anger-free event, Harrington had the last word: "There are the occult and the esoteric... That's what I'm interested in. The esoteric. What goes on beneath." He also had a touch of humour. "Did you know," the husband asks his wife in Games, "that Aimee Semple McPherson was on the telephone?" "Why?" "Just in case," a nod, to be sure, to Poe's "The Premature Burial." Harrington was buried in a tomb at Hollywood Forever in an urn made by another Poe, in which, sadly, there is no room for a coffin. The obituary in Variety claimed Harrington had no survivors, but this isn't true. He has Anger, who wants him or not, along with a coterie of friends and admirers. Most importantly, he is survived by his films, which have been willed to The Motion Picture Academy.

Curtis Harrington, director and occultist, born 26 Sept 1927; died Hollywood 6 May 2007, aged 80.

[http://www.forteanimes.com/strangedays/obituaries/645/curtis\\_harrington.html](http://www.forteanimes.com/strangedays/obituaries/645/curtis_harrington.html)

# The 2010 Annual Ritual Abuse, Secretive Organizations and Mind Control Conference

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 02/08/2010

**August 6 – 8, 2010**

**DoubleTree near**

**Bradley International Airport**

**16 Ella Grasso Turnpike**

**Windsor Locks, CT**

*Internet conference information:*

<http://ritualabuse.us/smart-conference/>



## **Conference Goals**

- To help stop future occurrences of ritual abuse*
- To help survivors of ritual abuse*
- To name the groups that have participated in alleged illegal activities*
- To unite those working to stop ritual abuse*

## **Conference Schedule**

There will be a small get together, deli dinner, dessert and early registration for pre-registered attendees on August 6, Friday evening. The conference will be all day on Saturday August 7 and Sunday August 8. Please visit our conference home page for the latest conference schedule information. Some presentations will be recorded.

## **Speakers and Biographies**

Please note: Listing of these speakers does not necessarily constitute our endorsement of them. The conference is for educational value only and some may be heavy for survivors. Listening to the conference may or may not help your recovery process, so use caution when listening to any speaker. Please do not use any resource mentioned in this brochure. These descriptions may be heavy for survivors to read.

Neil Brick is a survivor of Masonic based Ritual Abuse and MK-ULTRA. He is the editor of S.M.A.R.T. Abuse Newsletter. His topics are: *Fighting the Spin : The Truth about Child Abuse Cases* and *The Myth of the Victim to Blame the Helper*.

Nick Bryant's writing has recurrently focused on the plight of disadvantaged children in the United States.

been published in numerous national journals, including the *Journal of Professional Ethics, Journal of Developmental Psychology, Journal of Social Distress and Homelessness, Journal of Health Care for Underserved*, and *Journal of School Health*. He is the co-author of *America's Children: Triumph and Lessons learned from Franklin*.

Carmen Yana Holiday is a survivor of extreme domestic violence, human trafficking, child pornography, abuse-torture and mind control. She has been an advocate for other survivors since 2001, developing and facilitating trauma recovery workshops and presenting as a survivor of RA-MC for several organizations. Her topic is: *Survivors of Extreme Abuse: The Awful Rowing Toward Social Emancipation*

Lynn Schirmer is an artist and survivor of ritual abuse-torture and trauma based mind control. She exhibits where she engages audiences about the reality of extreme abuse and tax funded exploitation of children and adults. Her work has been exhibited in the US and France. Her topic is: *Art & Activism: Finding the Truth*

Mary Keats RN BA wife, mother, grandmother, working in social services, is a survivor of Ritual Abuse. She is a spiritual person who enjoys life to the fullest. Her energy and enthusiasm are infectious. She is a survivor of ritual abuse, decided early on in her recovery to break the silence, so others could be helped. Her topic is: *Breaking the Silence: The Darkness*

Wanda Karriker, Ph.D. is a retired psychologist who spent a career working with survivors of extreme abuse. She is the author of the novel, "Morning, Come Quickly," co-developer of the Extreme Abuse Survey Project and co-author of *Survivorship*. Her topic is: *The Ritual Abuse Controversy: A Personal Perspective*.

Julaine has spent over 21 years on this journey. As the daughter of a career military man, working in the military, she was turned over for government experimentation prior to the formal designations like Artichoke. A former polyfragmented woman, she has employed many approaches and therapies to heal, and now she talks about things she learned as she walked this journey. Her topic is: *Looking Back: Lessons from My Journey*.

Suzie Burke, R.N., Ph.D. is the pen name of a real woman who is a registered nurse and licensed professional counselor with a doctorate in psychology. Suzie is the author of "Wholeness, my healing journey from ritual abuse." Her 10-year path to recovery was a result of a savvy counselor, her own determination not to let herself be "won," plus a family that never wavered. Suzie Burke is now thriving. Info on her and her book is at <http://www.suzieburke.com> Her topic is: *Wholeness: My healing journey from ritual abuse, and how to learn from it*.

Dr. Lacter is a clinical psychologist in San Diego, California, USA, for 24 years and specializes in treating survivors of ritual abuse.

dissociative disorders and ritual abuse and mind control trauma in both children and adults. She published chapters in edited books on the subjects of ritual abuse and mind control. Her website <http://www.endritualabuse.org/>

## **S.M.A.R.T. 2010 Conference Schedule**

(Please note : this schedule may be subject to change. Please write us for the latest schedule.)

### **Friday**

7 – 9:00 PM – Deli Dinner and Dessert Buffet for Prepaid Registered Attendees

### **Saturday**

9 – 10 AM – Neil Brick – “ Fighting the Spin : The Truth about Child Abuse Cases .”

10:30 – 11:30 AM – Nick Bryant – “Lessons learned from Franklin”

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 2:00 PM – Carmen Yana Holiday – “Survivors of Extreme Abuse: The Awful Rowing Toward Emancipation.”

2:30 – 3:30 PM – Suzie Burke, R.N., Ph.D. – “Wholeness: My healing journey from ritual abuse, and learn from it.”

4:00 – 5:00 PM – Wanda Karriker, Ph.D. – ““The Ritual Abuse Controversy: A Personal Perspective.”

7:30 – Ellen Lacter presents the video of Trish Fotheringham

8:00 – Ellen Lacter “A Coloring Book of Healing Images for Child Abuse Survivors”

### **Sunday**

9:00 – 10:00 AM – Mary Keats RN BA – “Hope after the Darkness.”

10:30 – 11:30 AM – Neil Brick “The Move from Blame the Victim to Blame the Helper.”

12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch

1:00 – 2:00 PM – Julaine – “Looking Back: Lessons from the Healing Journey”

2:30 – 3:30 PM – Lynn Schirmer – “Art & Activism: Finding Effective Ways to Tell”

4:00 – 5:00 PM speaker panel discussion and closing

<http://www.antifascistencyclopedia.com/allposts/connecticut-the-2010-annual-ritual-abuse-se>

1 comment

## Backmasking OPRAH:HARPO(CRATES):SET ARC

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 01/08/2010



Ms. Winfrey's production company, Harpo, is named after the Greek/Egyptian god Harpocrates. literature Harpocrates arguably identifies with Baphomet or The Sabbatic Goat, also known as the

In Kenneth Grant's Typhonian manifestation (or current) of the OTO (Ordo Templi Orientis), Harpo is the God of Silence, is associated with the child god Horus and his violent homo-erotic counterpart Set. One aspect of Set is Typhon. The Egyptian god Set-Typhon, according to "retired" US Army psychology expert (see his From Psyop to Mind War: the Psychology of Victory paper available online), former member and Temple of Set founder Lt. Col Michael Aquino, is the closest correspondence to the

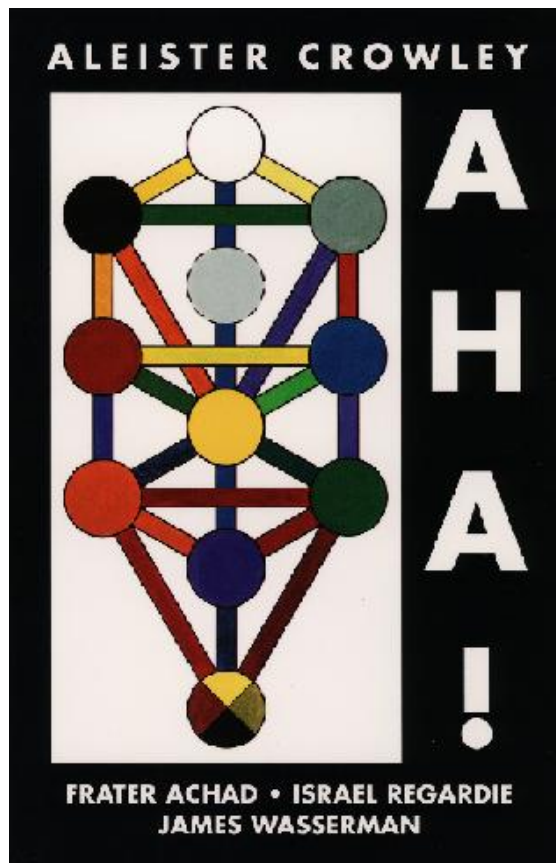
The story of Horus-Set is also an obvious metaphor or archetype for pedophilia and sexual abuse.

**MK-OPRAH: "Sun Will Set" on ABC's Winfrey Show 9/9/11**

Silence

OTO The Sign of Hor-US: Silence aka [The State Secrets Privilege](#)

**Oprah Winfrey is giving network television one of her trademark aha moments.**



THE Sevenfold Mystery of THE Ineffable Love; THE Coming of THE Lord IN THE AIR AS King ANI

CORRUPTED World; WHEREIN UNDER THE FORM OF A DISCOURSE BETWEEN MARSYAS AND OLYMPAS HIS PUPIL THE WHOLE SECRET OF THE WAY OF INITIATION IS LAID OPEN FROM BEGINNING TO THE END; FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THE LITTLE CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT THE TREMBLING AND HUMILITY FOR THE BRETHERN OF THE A . ' . A . ' . BY THEIR VERY DUTY AN ASPIRANT TO THEIR SUBLIME ORDER, ALEISTER CROWLEY DEDICATED TO URSULA G

Ms. Winfrey, the billionaire queen of daytime television, is planning to announce on Friday that she will step down from her daily pulpit, "The Oprah Winfrey Show," in two years in order to concentrate on the forthcoming cable channel that will bear her name.

"The **sun will set** on the Oprah show as its 25th season draws to a close on Sept. 9, 2011," Tim Beaman, president of Ms. Winfrey's production company, Harpo, said in a letter to her 214 local TV stations last evening. She will appear on her cable channel, called OWN: the Oprah Winfrey Network, in some form. "The Oprah Winfrey Show" will no longer be.

“



*In Greek mythology, [Harpocrates](#) is the god of silence. Harpocrates is the Greek name for the Egyptian child god Horus. To the ancient Egyptians, Horus represented the new-born Sun, rising each day at dawn. When the Greeks came to Egypt under Alexander the Great, they transformed the Egyptian Horus into a Hellenistic god known as Harpocrates, a rendering from Egyptian Heru-pa-khered (meaning "Har, the Child").*

The list of repercussions of her decision is long. For CBS, the owner of her rights to her show, it means the loss of its signature program and millions of dollars every year in revenue.

For ABC stations, where her show was largely seen, it means the loss of the most popular program, a generator of giant audiences leading into evening news programs.

Larry Gerbrandt, an analyst for the firm Media Valuation Partners, said "any show that ABC come to replace her will not draw anything near the ratings guarantee they could count on with Oprah. At the end of the year, ABC is going to take a serious hit."

More widely, her departure will surely be interpreted as an endorsement of the cable TV business over the fortunes of broadcast television. Discovery Communications, which will co-own the new channel with the creation of OWN 20 months ago. Now Discovery will parlay Ms. Winfrey's anticipated exit from broadcast into higher per-subscriber fees and will also seek more lucrative commitments from advertisers.

For Ms. Winfrey herself, the move represents an enormous bet — that her popularity and golden programming can sustain an entire cable channel and that she'll remain a central cultural figure in

mass exposure of broadcast television every day.

Far and away the most popular daytime talk show host, Ms. Winfrey has spent two decades spinning into a vast media empire, including her own show, a popular magazine, a book club and several more. She is one of the most successful daytime producers in television, with longtime talk shows like “Dr. Phil” and “The Dr. Oz Show,” this season’s syndicated success story.

Her talk show regularly draws seven million viewers, nearly twice as many as the next biggest talk show. **Her endorsement of Barack Obama is widely credited with helping elect him president in 2008. She also to own the trademark on the phrase “Aha moment.”**

...

It remains unclear what on-camera role Ms. Winfrey will have at OWN, which is a 50-50 joint venture with Discovery. The management team at OWN has been busy creating a programming plan but has remained silent about the lineup in deference to Ms. Winfrey and her decision-making process. Discovery executives are expected to comment on Thursday evening. The OWN channel will have its premiere in January 2011, according to sources with knowledge of Ms. Winfrey’s decision who insisted on anonymity.

...

Ms. Winfrey was believed to be in renewal talks this fall with CBS Television Distribution and another network, Sony, which distributes her most recent spinoff, “Dr. Oz.” At the same time, she considered ending her relationship altogether. In recent days television executives said they sensed that Ms. Winfrey was leaning toward CBS. CBS seemed eager to keep its door propped open for Ms. Winfrey, saying in a statement that, “We’re working with her for the next several years, and hopefully afterwards as well.” Acknowledging OWN’s success, “We know that anything she turns her hand to will be a great success.”

OWN is expected to replace the Discovery Health Channel, which is currently available in more than 100 million homes. Her cable plans, however, have been fraught with delays. OWN was announced in January 2009, originally expected to make its debut this winter, but those plans were scuttled because of management changes and a turbulent advertising climate.

...

During her decades of daytime TV, she had a number of highlights, including a show in 1988 when she, after losing 67 pounds, **a show in 2005 when the actor Tom Cruise declared his love for the actress by leaping all over Ms. Winfrey’s couch**, and another show that year when she sent her audience into a screaming frenzy by giving them all free cars.



“



*Levi also incorrectly identified Baphomet with The Goat of Mendes, Egyptian god whose name should more properly be translated as “[Harpocrates](#), the Ram sheep-god who was the Creator and tutelary deity of his region (the city of Mendes). Harpocrates, granter of fertility, but he was not associated with debauch or lust — and, most important standpoint of this investigation into mythography, in animal-form, he was a ram, not a*

Ms. Winfrey’s show was at the height of its popularity when she conducted what was at the time the most-watched interview of all time with the singer Michael Jackson. That prime-time special in 1993 was watched by over 100 million people in the United States and almost 100 million people worldwide.

Robert Thompson, a professor of television at Syracuse, said Ms. Winfrey’s impact on the medium of television has “always been characterized by hyperbole: the biggest this, the most-viewed that.”

**He added, “We have come to use the term ‘Oprahfication’ in almost same way we use a term like ‘Hellenization.’ And it’s not completely inappropriate. She was able to colonize cultural territory that Alexander was able to colonize physical territory.”**

As recently as Monday, Ms. Winfrey showed that she can command the country’s attention. Having just finished a TV interview in months with the former Alaska governor Sarah Palin, Ms. Winfrey asked her guest, who was worried about competition, “because I heard you’re going to get your own talk show.”

Ms. Palin smiled and answered: “Oprah, you’re the queen of talk shows.”

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/20/business/media/20oprah.html?\\_r=1&sq=A%20Daytime%20Network%20Franchise%20Bets%20on%20Her%20Future%20with%20](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/20/business/media/20oprah.html?_r=1&sq=A%20Daytime%20Network%20Franchise%20Bets%20on%20Her%20Future%20with%20)

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## Sopdet, Goddess of Sirius, New Year and Inundation..

Posted in **Uncategorized** by ce399 on 31/07/2010



### Sopdet, Goddess of Sirius, New Year and Inundation...

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Sopdet (Sepdet, Sothis) personified the 'dog star' Sirius. This star was the most important of the stars to the ancient Egyptians, and the heliacal rising of this star came at the time of inundation and the start of the Egyptian New Year. As a goddess of the inundation, she was a goddess of fertility. She was linked to the pharaoh and his journey in the afterlife.

She was represented as a woman with a star on top of her [headdress](#), or as a seated cow with a plant between her horns (just as [Seshat's hieroglyph](#) might have been a flower or a star) as depicted on an ivory tablet of King Djer. The plant may have been symbolic of the year, and thus linking her to the

Sirius and the New Year. She was very occasionally depicted as a large dog, or in Roman times, as Sopdet, she was shown riding side-saddle on a large dog.

Sirius was both the most important star of ancient Egyptian astronomy, and one of the Decans (stars which the night sky was divided, with each group appearing for ten days annually). The heliacal rising (the first night that Sirius is seen, just before dawn) was noticed every year during July, and the Egyptians used this to mark the start of the New Year (*wprnpt*, 'The Opening of the Year'). It was celebrated with a festival known as the 'Coming of Sopdet'.

The time period between Sothic risings is called the Sothic Cycle and it is one of the tools that Egyptianologists use to create a chronology of Egyptian history.

— *Sopdet*, April McDevitt

Even as early as the 1st Dynasty, she was known as 'the bringer of the new year and the Nile flood'. When Sirius appeared in the sky each year, the Nile generally started to flood and bring fertility to the land. The ancient Egyptians connected the two events, and so Sopdet took on the aspects of a goddess of not only the star and of the inundation, but of the fertility that came to the land of Egypt with the flood. The flood and the rising of Sirius also marked the ancient Egyptian New Year, and she was thought of as a goddess of the New Year.



Her aspect of being a fertility goddess was not just linked to the Nile. By the Middle Kingdom, she was believed to be a mother goddess, and a nurse goddess, from a goddess of agriculture to a goddess of motherhood. This probably explains her strong connection with the mother-goddess [Isis](#).

Not just a goddess of the waters of the inundation, Sopdet had another link to the Nile: she was believed to cleanse the pharaoh in the afterlife. It is interesting to note that the embalming of the dead took seventy days – the same amount of time that Sirius was seen in the sky, before its yearly rising. She was a goddess of fertility to bring life to the dead.

In the Pyramid Texts, she is the goddess who prepares yearly sustenance for the pharaoh, 'in this Year'. She is also thought to be a guide in the afterlife for the pharaoh, letting him fly into the sky and showing him 'goodly roads' in the Field of Reeds and helping him become one of the imperishable gods, thought to be living on the horizon, encircled by the Duat.

In the Pyramid texts, parallelling the story of Osiris and Isis, the pharaoh was believed to have had a child with Sopdet:

Your sister [Isis](#) comes to you rejoicing for love of you. You have placed her on your phallus and your seed issues into her, she being ready as Sopdet, and Horus-Soped has come forth from you as Horus who is in Sopdet.

— *Sopdet in the Pyramid Texts*

Sopdet was believed to be wife of Sah (the star Orion) and the mother of Soped (Sopdu). She was also thought to give birth to the Morning Star (Venus), the pharaoh being described as the father in the Pyramid Texts. She was linked closely with [Isis](#), just as Sah and Soped were linked with Osiris and Horus. In 'The Lamentations of [Isis](#) and [Nephthys](#) for Osiris', Isis calls herself Sopdet and she will follow Osiris in the heaven. Sopdet was also connected to the goddess [Satet](#) at Abu (Elephantine).

Sirius happens to travel the sky just ahead of the large constellation of Orion. (His belt of three stars is an easy pointer towards Sirius, the unmistakable bright star that is one of the few visible even in city skies). Orion was identified with the dying-and-resurrected god Osiris, in Egyptian mythology, who was one of the well-known gods of the pantheon. His wife and sister Isis was Lady of Magic, who brought her husband back to life, and the bright star his constellation followed naturally came to be associated with her.

— *Inventing the Solar System: Early Greek Scientists Struggle to Explain How the Heavens Move*, E. J. Kelly

She was also given a masculine aspect, and linked with Horus as Sopdet-Horus during the Middle Kingdom. She was also linked with [Anubis](#) during Greek Times as Sopdet-[Anubis](#), probably because of the iconography of her as a god, or riding on the back of a dog. She was also linked with other goddesses such as [Hathor](#), [Bast](#) and [Anqet](#).

She was venerated in Per-Soped (Saft al Hinna), in the 20th Nome of Lower Egypt. She was the goddess who helped the pharaoh reach the realm of the gods, who heralded the innundation, and the goddess of the ancient Egyptian new year. She was the personification of the most important star of ancient Egypt, so important was she that her worship continued in Egyptian history, from [predynastic](#) times, through to the Graeco-Roman period.

<http://www.thekeep.org/~kunoichi/kunoichi/themestream/sopdet.html>

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