CHAPTER 6

The Crimes of the Templars

Much has been made of the accusations labeled against the Templars at their trial, and the "confessions" extracted by their prosecutors. Many books have been written in defense of the Templars, and in favor of their "Innocence," dismissing these charges outright. However, not all authors have taken this view and among those Gershon Legman's *The Guilt of the Templars* (1966) really stands out. Legman pours through the historical record and cites numerous books written by scholars who believed they were "guilty" of many of the charges made against them and his book is worthy of anyone trying to understand the potential evidence that the Templars had been infected with some form of Gnostic heresy. Other researchers have also noted this situation: "The French Templars agreed that they denied Christ and defiled the cross, they agreed they worshiped an idol, they agreed to the ... perversion of the sacraments" (Lord, 2013). Certainly this last accusation could be seen as using a replacement for the "sacraments."

Although the general view is that the many admissions to the curious accusations of heresy labeled against the Templars came through torture, as Legman, who studied the court records, confession, and history extensively notes: "Far from these confessions having been wrestled from the Templars only by the tortures that were certainly used, numerous confessions were made, especially as to spitting on the Cross and denying Christ, with obvious willingness and relief, the secret having evidently weighed heavy on the conscience of many. Jaques de Molay in particular, the Grand Master of the order, made the same damaging confessions as the others, and more often repeated"(Legman, 1966). (However others have suggested that fear of torture would have been enough to force a confession, and then once that was given, it directed all further line of questioning and extraction. Later de Molay was said to have been tortured so badly, the skin off his stomach, legs and back had been torn off.)

It is aso important to note that, in a system of graded initiation, at each succeeding grade the initiate was allotted an increasing amount of "sacred knowledge," and privy to

more of the order's secrets. So Templars of lower grades, may not have fully understood what was taking place within the higher grades of the order, and there would have been a definite air of secrecy over all of it. This sort of graded initiation is still standard in Freemasonry and other occult groups, and it is suggested that this is the way the Hashishins worked as well. Some of the more heretical ideas likely would have horrified a brand-new initiate who just arrived to the order with their typical Christian or Muslim world view. If devotees of Scientology, for instance, were presented with the tales of the alien leader Xenu and atomic bombs in volcanos, on their first day, we can imagine it would be a short lived commitment. Possibly through the grades of initiation used by both the Hashishin and Templars, potential initiates were slowly seduced away from their orthodox beliefs, and through a series of initiations these were replaced with expanding cosmological knowledge. By the seventh degree, as M. Bouthoul described in *Le Grand Maitre des Assassins* (1936) "one was already up to Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras, having rejected the laws of revealed religion" (Bouthoul, 1936). As Legman notes of this graded seduction into the rejection of the Islamic faith: "This sounds fantastically close ... to the rejections of Christ and the Cross by the Templars, not to mention the adjuration to homosexuality, which is of course the special (and most venial) sin of the Islamic world" (Legman, 1966).

Among the accusations labeled against the Templars, are that they wore some sort of sacred cord which was consecrated by touching it to a sacred idol, identified as an image of "Baphomet." Then the placement of the three obscene kisses on the lips, navel and the sacral bone, the latter being reminiscent of the alleged *Osculum infame* of the witches. As well they were accused of sodomy and other sexual acts with their brethren. They rejected the sacraments of the Church and the Eucharist. And most notably, of rejecting Christ, along with trampling and spitting on the cross.

After describing the ritual kisses, and denying the cross, a Templar Knight by the name of Huguet de Bure offered the courts the following details in a 1310 confession: "Immediately afterward, Brother P. took a head out of a closet and put it on the altar. He set to work binding it with a small cord, then gave me the cord and enjoined me to wear it underneath my belt."[1] It has been suggested that "The Templars, on the day of their reception, received a string of linen, hemp or wool" (Tchouhadjian, 2005). If hemp were specifically specified, this may lead to some interesting connections, however the act itself may be a remnant of earlier practices.

The reference to sacred cords, referred to specifically in the accusations brought against the Templars, is reminiscent of the use of sacred cords which occurs with both the Zoroastrians and Vedic Indians, who in rituals related

to Soma and Haoma, tied a hemp cord around their waists. After the Islamic conquest, Zoroastrians actually continued to practice the ritual of the kusti cord, secretly wearing it beneath their clothes and outwardly pretending to be Muslims. "In the Sukla Yajurveda (IV.10), mekhala, the girdle, is described as 'tying the knot of Soma.' Is this an implication that the Soma plant had the same fibrous qualities as the hemp plant?" (Merlin, 1972). "In the Avesta it was Haoma for whom Ahuramazda first brought the 'sacred girdle ... woven by the two Spirits'" (Taraporewala, 1926). Also, the following verse has indications of rope in relation to Haoma: "May not Haoma bind you like he bound the villain" (Y.11.7). In *A History of Indian Literature*, the authors write that: "At the consecration of the Soma-sacrifice the sacrifice ties round his girdle a belt made of hemp and reed-grass with the words "You are the power of Angiras [ancient fire and magic priests] soft like wool; lend me power!" Then he binds a knot in his underclothing and says "you are the knot of Soma" (Winternitz & Srinivasa, 1996). The *Satapatha Bramana* specifically identifies hemp (sana) as the fiber to be used. As well as a reference to a "hemp girdle" prepared by the wife of Solomon, appears in the 13th century, *La Queste del Saint Graal*, but this is replaced by a more costly one of silk and the hair of the maiden who wove it.

Accusations of sex rites and sodomy, although interesting in the context of what is known about certain Gnostic Libertine sects, and well worth exploring, are less relevant to this study. Other charges however, could be linked to the initiatory role of cannabis. The most famous is that the Templars spat and trampled on the cross, an accusation that is particularly interesting in relation to the Grail, the Gnostics, the Assassins and the potential use of cannabis-infused wines.

Denial of the Cross

The accusations of the Templars rejection of the cross, ran into the extreme, and not just that they rejected it and spat upon it; it was alleged that "they sometimes piss'd and caus'd others to piss upon the Cross, and they sometimes did this on Good Friday" (Dugdale, 1718). The cross is the pillar of the Catholic religion; without the death and resurrection, there is no forgiveness of Sin in the faith of Jesus, and thus, no religion. This act is about as firm a rejection of the Faith, that could be demonstrated.

Les Templiers. — « Chaque Templier, à sa réception, reniait le Christ; on l'obligeait à cracher sur un crucifix, souvent même à le fouler aux pieds. » (Michelet.)

From - Les Mystères de la Franc-maçonnerie, by Léo Taxil (1886)

However, this is not the first time the cross was rejected by the followers of Jesus. Some ancient Gnostics rejected the concept of Jesus' literal resurrection, which they termed the "faith of the fools." *The Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, (3rd century A.D.) describes this belief as "ludicrous ... an imitation ... a doctrine of a dead man." The Gnostic differences on this are brought to light in *The Apocalypse of Peter* (2nd century A.D.):

> They will cleave to the name of a dead man, thinking that they will become pure. But they will become greatly defiled and they will fall into the name of error and into the hand of an evil, cunning man and a manifold dogma ... there shall be others of those who are outside our number who name themselves bishop and also deacons, as if they have received their authority from God. They bend themselves under the judgment of the leaders. These people are dry canals.

The belief in the Resurrection of Jesus is also rejected in the Islamic world, which teaches that God transformed another man to look identical to Jesus, and he was crucified in his place. A surviving Gnostic sect in the Arabian Peninsula, the Sabians, reject Jesus' divinity outright, and

instead pay homage to John the Baptist. Other groups in the Mid-East claim Jesus survived the cross and lived in the area.

A Sufi\Christian group in Western Afghanistan, the followers of Isa, son of Maryam – Jesus the son of Mary, claim to have secret knowledge concerning the life of Christ after his crucifixion. In an account given in *Among the Dervishes*, by O.M. Burke (1973), the author states that at first he assumed this group, estimated to contain about one-thousand members, were converted to Christianity by early European missionaries, and then goes on to state; "But, from their own accounts and what I could observe, they seem to come from some much older source":

> According to these People, Jesus escaped from the Cross, was hidden by friends, was helped to flee to India, where he had been before during his youth, and settled in Kashmir, where he is revered as an ancient teacher, Yuz Asaf. It is from this period of the supposed life of Jesus that these people claim to have got their message (Burke 1973).

Holger Kersten also referred to this curious and little known tradition of Jesus' life after the cross and points out the title that the Afghani followers placed on the figure they claim is the post-crucifixion Jesus, Yuz Asaf, goes back some centuries. It is referred to "in the *Farang-i-Asafia*, an ancient work recounting the history of Persia, which relates that Jesus (Hazrat Issa) healed some lepers, who were thereafter called Asaf – 'the purified' – having been cured of their complaint. Yuz means 'leader,' so Yuz Asaf can be taken to mean 'leader of the healed,' a common epithet for Jesus" (Kersten 1986).

These Islamic traditions of a wandering Jesus are likely a carryover from Gnostic accounts, like the 2nd century A.D., *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, which describe a wandering and disguised Jesus with an "unguent box" and a "pouch full of medicine."

Idries Shah refers to a dervish tale, *The Four Treasures*, which involves a magic mirror, magic cup, magic staff and magic cloak, and sacred medicines which some have seen as a "disguised reference to the claim that Jesus did not die on the cross" (Shah, 1967). Elsewhere Shah refers to "the dervish practice of ceremonially rejecting a cross with the words, 'You may have the Cross, but we have the meaning of the Cross,' which is still in use. This, incidentally, could be the origin of the Templar habit, alleged by witnesses, that the Knights 'trod on the Cross'" (Shah, 1964).

The Cruci-Fiction?

Half a century ago Dr. Hugh Schonfield shocked the theological world with his sensational book *The Passover Plot*, which suggested that Jesus may have feigned death on the cross through a soporific potion – a hypothesis which if suggested only a few centuries earlier, would have seen the author burned at the stake, or worse. Suggesting that Jesus' cry from the cross, "I am thirsty," could have been a signal to receive a specially prepared potion, Schonfield speculated that the "plan may ... have been suggested to Jesus by the prophetic words, 'They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.'" With precision scholarship, Dr. Schonfield noted that if what Jesus "received had been the normal wine diluted with water the effect would have been stimulating. In this case it was exactly the opposite. Jesus lapsed quickly into complete unconsciousness. His body sagged. His head lolled on his breast, and to all intents and purposes he was a dead man.... Directly it was seen that the drug had worked..." (Schonfield 1965).

Deeply influenced by Schonfield's research, the authors of the sensational international best-seller, *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, expanded more fully on this theme in the early 1980s.

> In the Fourth Gospel Jesus, hanging on the cross, declares that he thirsts. In reply to this complaint he is proffered a sponge allegedly soaked in vinegar – an incident that also occurs in the other Gospels. This sponge is generally interpreted as another act of sadistic derision. But was it really? Vinegar – or soured wine – is a temporary stimulant, with effects not unlike smelling salts.... And yet in Jesus' case the effect is just the contrary. No sooner does he inhale or taste the sponge then he pronounces his final words and "gives up the ghost." Such a reaction to vinegar is physiologically inexplicable. On the other hand such a reaction would be perfectly compatible with a sponge soaked ... in some type of soporific drug – a compound of opium and or belladonna, for instance, commonly employed in the Middle East at the time. But why proffer a soporific drug? Unless the act of doing so, along with all the other components of the Crucifixion, were elements of a complex and ingenious stratagem – a stratagem designed to produce a semblance of death when the victim, in fact, was still alive (Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln, 1982).

That preparations that could have induced a death like state were known in the ancient world, seems likely. In later times the alchemist Paracelsus created opium-based "pills which he called laudanum and which had forms like mice excrements, but he used them only in cases of extreme emergency. He boasted that with these pills he

could wake up the dead, and indeed he proved that patients who seemed to be dead suddenly arose" (Ball, 2006). As Dr. Fielding Garrison noted in his classic work *An Introduction to the History of Medicine*:

> The use of a soporific potion as a substitute for anesthesia goes back to remote antiquity, as symbolized in the twenty-first verse of the second chapter of Genesis: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof." From the soothing Egyptian nepenthe of the Odyssey, which Helen casts into the wine for Ulysses, to the "samme de shinta" of the Talmud, the "bhang" of the Arabian Nights, or the "drowsy syrups" of Shakespeare's time, the soporific virtues of opium, Indian hemp (Cannabis indica), the mandrake (Atropa mandragora), henbane (Hyoscyamus), dewtry (Datura stramonium); hemlock (Conium), and lettuce (Lacttucarium), appear to have been well known to the Orientals and the Greeks; and, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a mixture of some of these ingredients ("oleum de lateribus") was formally recommended for surgical anesthesia by the medieval masters, Hugh of Lucca and his son Theodoric... (Garrison, 1917).

Preparations of mandrake were well known in the ancient world and could conceivably been used to induce a deathlike stupor.

> Theophrastus and Dioscorides were the first to mention the aphrodisiac and soporific properties of Atropa mandragora. It is not clear whether the mandrakes which Rachel sought of Leah (Genesis xxx, 14-16) were for the former purpose or to ease the pangs of childbirth. Dioscorides was the first to speak of the employment of mandragora wine for surgical anesthesia, and his recipe was tried out with success by Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson (Brit, and For. Med .-Chir. Rev., Lond., 1874, liii). The mandrake is also mentioned by Celsus, Pliny, Apuleius, Paul of AEgina, and Avicenna...
>
> ...Through the Middle Ages, mandragora was the soporific par excellence, preferable to opium and hemlock... (Garrison, 1917).

Indicating that it could have suited as a candidate for such needs as we have suggested, Garrison also notes a line from Christopher Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, "I drank of poppy and cold mandrake juice/and being asleep, belike they thought me dead" (Marlowe, 1590). Thomas Cisteriensis (d. 1190 A.D.) wrote of the mandrake "The mandragora is a plant which effects such a deep sleep that one can cut a person and he feels not the pain. For the mandragora symbolizes striving in contemplation. Its reverie

allows a person to fall into a sleep of such delicious sweetness that he no longer feels any of the cutting which his earthly enemies inflict upon him, and he no longer cares about any earthly thing. For his soul has now closed off its senses from all that is external – it lies in the benevolent sleep of the eternal."[2]

According to Thomas Wright, the Templars revered mandrake for its association with all aspects of fertility,[3] and this followed the mythology of the root into European culture:

> The Templars were accused of worshiping the mandrake, or mandragora, which became an object of great celebrity in France during the reigns of the weak monarchs Charles VI and Charles VII. In 1429 one Friar Richard, of the order of the Cordeliers, preached a fierce sermon against the use of this amulet, the temporary effect of which was so great, that a certain number of his congregation delivered up their "mandragoires" to the preacher to be burnt (Wright, 1865).

Interestingly, these substances, as we have seen, often appeared in combinations, and we see cannabis and opium used with mandrake in this regard.

> A quotation from Avicenna reads: "A patient who wants to have an amputation of one of his organs must have a drink prepared from a mixture of mandagora and other sleeping drugs."... Other plants used for the same purpose were: Indian cannabis (Hashish), opium poppies ... hemlock ... and hyocyamus.
>
> The Moslem scientists can also be credited with the introduction of inhalation anaesthesia by using the "anaesthetic sponge" ... (Atkinson & Boulton, 1989).

As noted, cannabis was considered a "sleeping drug" by Avicenna, and the "Arabs introduced hashish as a sedative ... as early as 700 A.D." (Wechsler, 1963). Al Zahrawi (936-1013) "used opium and hashish as anesthetics" to surgically remove laryngeal tumours and perform tonsillectomies, (Chokroverty & Billard, 2015). Franz Rosenthal, in *The Herb: Hashish vs Medieval Society* mentions an Ismai'ilian cannabis-infused delicacy 'uqdah, that "consisted of hashish mixed with honey and a number of desiccating ingredients such as mandrake root ... and the like. It had to be sold ... clandestinely" (Rosenthal, 1971).

> ...Drugging with Indian hemp or henbane ("tabannuj") was common among the ancient Hindus and the later Arabs, and Sir Richard Burton adds: "These have been used in surgery throughout the East for centuries before ether and chloroform became the fashion in the civilized West." (Arabian Nights. Denver edition, vol. iv, footnote to p. 71.)

> Hua, a Chinese physician, is said to have used hashish in surgery about 200 B.C. (Garrison, 1917).

In China over 2,000 years ago Hua T'o is reputed to have performed such complicated operations after giving the patient cannabis infused wine known as ma-yo, such as "organ grafts, resectioning of intestines, laparotomies (incisions into the loin), and thoracotomies (incisions into the chest)" (Abel 1980). An excerpt from his biography gives us a descriptive account of how this ancient medical sage utilized cannabis in these procedures;

> ...he administered a preparation of hemp [ma-yo] and, in the course of several minutes, an insensibility developed as if one had been plunged into drunkenness or deprived of life. Then, according to the case, he performed the opening, the incision or amputation and relieved the cause of the malady; then he apposed the tissues by sutures and applied liniments. After a certain number of days the patient finds he has recovered without having experienced the slightest pain during the operation.

Such use of cannabis may go back even further. An article in the *Siberian Times* suggested that ancient anesthetics may have been in use in Russia, around 3,000 years ago. Cannabis-infused wines have been used as anaesthetic for almost 2 millennia, referring to a number of plants – "the 'most obvious,' however, was probably cannabis" (Liesowska, 2016). In relation to this, it is important to note that one of the effects attributed to bhanga/mang (cannabis) in the Zoroastrian accounts is that it "brought about a condition outwardly resembling sleep (stard) in which targeted visions of what is believed to be a spirit existence were seen" (Flattery & Schwartz, 1989). The literal meaning of the term "stard" is "spread out, sprawled." From the descriptions given this state could last for days.

Although it is little known in the modern day, in extremely high doses, and through powerful extracts cannabis has been reported to put its imbibers into a state similar to animal "hibernation." In some accounts, this state was combined with a rigormortis like physical condition known as catalepsy. "Catalepsy is a mysterious condition, characterized by immobility of the muscles which can sometimes be mistaken for death. The limbs have a 'waxy flexibility' and can be molded into bizarre positions where they remain indefinitely" (Wilkins 1992). This is similar to claims made about the potion used by the Old Man of the Mountain, when he drugged prospective Hashishins, who themselves were allegedly put into such a state of unconsciousness that themselves and others thought they had temporarily died and gone to heaven, and as noted earlier, this likely represented a method passed down from the earlier Zoroastrian tradition.

In the 19th century researcher Dr. James Braid wrote a monograph "Trance and Human Hibernations," which suggested that in India cannabis was used by Fakir's in order to induce just such a state. Some excerpts of Braid's research appeared in the 1855 classic *Plant Intoxicants*, by Baron Ernst von Bibra in a chapter on hashish. Braid discussed a number of eye-witness accounts of Indian Fakirs who had allowed themselves to be buried alive, and were later disinterred and found still alive. Amongst these accounts are recorded the words of Sir Claude Wade (1774-1861), who was present at the court of Runjeet Singh when one such Fakir was buried in a specially prepared room that was "completely sealed off from the access of atmospheric air" and then disinterred weeks later! Wade described the end of the allotted time period when he joined Runjeet Singh and the Fakir's servant and broke the seal of the specially prepared room:

> Provided with light, we descended about three feet below the floor of the room, into a sort of cell. This cell too, was locked and sealed, and it contained a wooden box, about four feet long by three feet broad, with a sloping cover, placed upright.
>
> Opening the box we saw a figure enclosed in a white bag. The Fakeer's servant took this figure out of the box and placed it upright against the door. When he took off the bag, the legs and arms of the body were shrivelled and stiff, and the head reclined, corpse-like, on the shoulders. No pulse in the heart, the temples, or the arms could be discovered.
>
> The servant then sprinkled warm water on the body, while we forcefully rubbed its arms and legs. During this time the servant placed a hot wheat cake on the head, a process which he twice or thrice renewed. He then pulled out of the nostrils and ears the cotton and wax contained in them; and after great exertion opened the Fakeer's mouth by inserting the point of a knife between his teeth and drew his tongue forward, which, however, flew back several times to its former position. He then rubbed the Fakeer's eyelid with ghee, or clarified butter, for some seconds, until he succeeded in opening them, when the eyes appeared quite motionless and glazed. After he applied the cake for a third time to the head, the body was violently convulsed, the nostrils became inflated, and the limbs became pliable and began to assume a natural fullness. The servant then put some of the ghee on the Fakeer's tongue and made him swallow it. A few minutes later, the pupils became dilated and the eyes recovered their natural appearance, and the Fakeer said, in a low, sepulchral tone, scarcely audible, "Do you believe me now?" From the opening of the box to the recovery of the Fakeer's voice, not more than half an hour could have

elapsed, and in another half hour the Fakeer talked with us, although with a feeble voice (Sir Claude Wade).


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ILLUSTRÉ

LE RÉVEIL DU FAKIR

Other such cases were reported by reliable eyewitnesses and like Wade's description, when the Fakir's bodies were disinterred they "were found stiff and rigid like a corpse, but on application of the aforesaid treatment they were restored to life.... It is possible that some of the fakirs possess a hemp preparation that enables them to undergo the described experiments. This is especially supported by the catalepsy that sets in after hemp resin has been taken" (von Bibra 1855). In reference to "catalepsy," von Bibra is referring to the research on the effects of cannabis extracts that had been conducted in India during the first half of the 19th century by a Dr. W.B. O'Shaughnessy, who reported the following account of a patient that had been given "one grain of the resin of hemp ... administered in a solution." Worried by the effects the drug was apparently having on the patient some hours after it had been

administered, a nurse summoned Dr. O'Shaughnessy to the hospital, where he was alarmed to find the patient "lying on his cot quite insensible":

> ...I chanced to lift up the patient's arm. The professional reader will judge of my astonishment, when I found that it remained in the posture in which I placed it. It required but a very brief examination of the limbs to find that the patient had, by the influence of this narcotic, been thrown into that strange and most extraordinary of all nervous conditions, into that state what so few have seen and the existence of which so many still discredit – the genuine catalepsy of the nosologist.... We raised [the patient] ... to a sitting position, and placed his arms and limbs in every imaginable attitude. A waxen figure could not be more pliant, or more stationery in each position, no matter how contrary to the natural influence of gravity on the part (O'Shaughnessy 1839).

Due to such effects Braid wrote that: "Some imagine that it is through the influence of a large dose of hachisch that the Fakeers accomplish the above-recorded feats of suffering themselves to be reduced to a dormant state for various periods of duration..." (Braid, 1865). Braid felt that there was more involved in this, and he felt that "a state of self-induced trance, or human hybernation producible at will by artificial contrivance [yogic techniques, breathing etc.]... is a far more rational solution to the phenomena" (Braid, 1865). However, elsewhere he acknowledged: "The peculiar conditions... induced by Bangue, Hachisch, and Dawamesc,[4] in the East, all tend to illustrate certain conditions producible by artificial contrivances" (Braid, 1865). Thus a combination of techniques in the Fakir's magic can in no way be ruled out, and it seems plausible that plants were used in combination with yogic techniques in the case of the resurrected Fakirs.

Although extremely rare, there have been accounts of people being presumed dead, while in just such a state of extreme cannabis intoxication. The turn of the century occult author L.W. De Laurence reported the following tragic case of a cannabis overdose:

> A case of living internment which came under this author's notice in India was that of a young Hindu of low caste, about thirty years of age, who took an Indian drug called Cannabis Indica or Indian Cannabis (made from the plant Cannabis Sativa), with suicidal intent. He was to all appearances dead when found by relatives. An English physician was called and after making the usual examination and tests in such cases, pronounced the young man dead. His funeral services were held three days later; the coffin containing the supposed corpse being placed in a receiving cave. At the expiration of the ten days, the time

> set for burial, the coffin was opened by the attendant in order that the relatives might have a look at their dead. A horrible site met their gaze – a sight that filled their hearts with horror and unutterable grief. The young man had turned half over on his left side, while in his right hand, clenched in death's agony, was found fragments of hair which had been torn from his head. The cloth around his neck also showed evidence of his attempt to tear it during the struggle he had made against death (De Laurence, 1905).

In the 19th century, James Simpson and co-authors, likely referring to the work of Dr. Braid and other sources regarding the Fakirs apparent ability for extended periods of "hibernation," noted that the "wonderful power of endurance of the Hindu Suttee appears to have been sometimes procured by the influence of this powerful drug [i.e. cannabis]" (Simpson, et al., 1856). Even more interesting, in this regard, is the following suggestion from this same group:

> Some high Biblical commentaries maintain that the gall and vinegar or myrrhed wine offered to our Saviour immediately before his crucifixion was a preparation, in all probability, of hemp, which was in these, as well as in later times, occasionally given to criminals before punishment or execution – while 700 years previously it is possibly spoken of, according to the same authorities, by the prophet Amos as the "wine of the condemned" (Simpson, et al., 1856).

In Chapter 2 we identified the potential use of cannabis infused wine by Ezra, Jesus and later Gnostic figures, so the idea that such preparations may have been available seems likely. Shortly after the above account from Simpson was written, in an 1860 meeting between the Ohio State Medical Society and a group of Biblical Scholars, the group concurred that "the gall and vinegar or myrrhed wine" taken by Jesus on the cross "was a preparation of Indian Hemp."

Historically, we know that the Talmud refers to a similar practice: "The one on his way to execution was given a piece of incense in a cup of wine, to help him fall asleep" (Sanh. 43a). "...[A]n illustration is furnished by the soldiers giving Jesus 'wine mingled with myrrh,' or, which is the same, 'vinegar' = sour wine; 'mingled with gall' = a bitter drug, without specifying the kind (Mark. xv. 23; Matt. xxvii. 34)" (Lawrence, 1871).

In the discussion of Hebrew and Christian use of such substances, it was suggested that this practice was likely adopted from the Persians, who as we have noted, were put into a death-like trance known as "stard," in which state they saw their visions, after the consumption of a cannabis-infused wine.

Interestingly, the same wine that was given to those about to be executed was being taken by unruly priests, and "quaffed in the house of their gods"[5] – indicating a likely entheogenic effect, alongside the stated pain numbing properties! In relation to myrrh, when I interviewed Dr. David Hillman, an expert on the role of drugs in the ancient world, in 2012, he explicitly stated that cannabis resins were often doctored and added to myrrh, before the ancient spice went to market. The English editor of Salverte's *The Occult Sciences*, Dr. Anthony Thompson believed that such preparations had filtered into magic and certain sects of Islam, suggesting something similar had been used by the Old Man of the Mountain and his Hashishin.

> But is it likely that the Thaumaturgists would be unacquainted with a secret known to all antiquity, and especially in Palestine? The Rabbins inform us, that a drink of wine and strong liquors was given to the unhappy ones condemned to death and powders were mixed in the liquor, in order to render it stronger, and to deaden the senses.
>
> In the second century of our era, it is related by Apuleius, that a man fortified himself against the violence of blows by a potion containing myrrh. If, as we think, myrrh could only be drunk in the form of a tincture, the effect of the alcohol must have increased the efficacy of the stupifying drug. We observe everywhere, that this property attributed to the myrrh, is not among those for which it is employed in the present day as a medicine. The name of myrrh, however, might serve to disguise a preparation, the ingredients of which were intended to be kept secret. But in either case, the Old Man of the Mountain could not certainly have been ignorant of a secret which had for so long a time prevailed in Palestine, and which he might also have borrowed from Egypt (Thomson, 1847).

Independently, the German researcher Holger Kersten has also suggested that cannabis may have been among the ingredients in the drink which put Jesus into a deathlike stupor, here connecting it with the traditions of Soma and Haoma (Kersten 1986).

> How did Jesus come (apparently) to die immediately after he had taken the bitter drink? Was it really vinegar that he was given? ... Perhaps the supposed drink of vinegar instead contained the active ingredients of the sacred drink of the Indians and Persians, Soma and Haoma (respectively)...
>
> Soma, the sacred drink of India, enabled an adept to enter a deathlike state for several days, and to awaken afterwards in an elated state that lasted a few days more. In this state of ecstasy, a "higher

consciousness" spoke through the adept and he had visionary powers. In addition to Asclepias acida, the Soma might also have contained Indian hemp (Cannabis indica) – tradition has it that it featured in the drink of Zarathustra (Kersten 1986).

Dana Beal and Paul De Rienzo put forth a similar hypothesis about Haoma and cannabis, suggesting this deathlike stupor on the cross included the potent MAOI[6] drug plant Peganum harmala, or Syrian rue.[7] Syrian rue may also be a candidate for the mysterious wine additive dādhi (see Chapter 3). One of the nicknames for dādhi was "Judas tree" (Rosenthal, 1972). Rosenthal did not see this substance as cannabis and related that it did not cause intoxication by itself, "but only in connection with something else"(Rosenthal, 1972). In this respect it is interesting that among Nawal Nasrallah's various descriptions for dādhi, is one that claimed "the leaves looked like those of rue" with seeds that "looked like barley" and were called jau-ijadu "the magic barley" (Nasrallah, 2007). A description which does bring to mind Syrian rue seeds, which is a potent MAOI, and can be used to bring out the effects of DMT and other substances that might otherwise take little to no effect upon ingestion.

> ...the key ingredient of the lost Soma of the Vedas was the very same "vinegar and gall" administered to Jesus on a sponge at the moment of his crucifixion, according to the Book of John. We know this because of the telltale action of harmaline at the antistroke (NMDA) receptor, and because the body's own version of harmaline is implicated in the mechanism of a kind of naturally occurring deathlike suspended animation, discovered at the coronary unit of Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. This is big news for the Jesus Seminar. Not only does it go a long way in explaining the takeover of Mithras, the orthodox religions of late Roman times, by the Christ cult (whence comes the wine and wafer), it explains the actual relationship of cannabis to the Zaotar cup (Grail), since the preparation of an active Soma mixture involved cannabis in virtually every recipe, according to [German researcher] Hans-Georg Behr (Beal & De Rienzo, 1997).

It is also worth noting that one of the first accounts in European literature, which is generally assumed to be a reference to "hashish," although it is not named directly, occurs in the classic work the *The Decameron* (1353), by Giovanni Boccaccio, identifies exactly the sort of use we have been discussing. This reference appears in a story of an Abbot who drugged a man named Ferondo, to the point of fooling both the victim and witnesses that he had died:

> ...he [the Abbot] sought out a powder of marvellous

virtue, which he had gotten in the parts of the Levant of a great prince who avouched it to be that which was wont to be used of the Old Man of the Mountain, whenas he would fain send any one, sleeping, into his paradise or bring him forth thereof, and that, according as more or less thereof was given, without doing any hurt, it made him who took it sleep more or less [time] on such wise that, whilst its virtue lasted, none would say he had life in him. Of this he took as much as might suffice to make a man sleep three days and putting it in a beaker of wine, that was not yet well cleared, gave it to Ferondo to drink in his cell, without the latter suspecting aught; after which he carried him into the cloister and there with some of his monks fell to making sport of him and his dunceries; nor was it long before, the powder working, Ferondo was taken with so sudden and overpowering a drowsiness, that he slumbered as yet he stood afoot and presently fell down fast asleep.

The abbot made a show of being concerned at this accident and letting untruss him, caused fetch cold water and cast it in his face and essay many other remedies of his fashion, as if lie would recall the strayed life and senses from [the oppression of] some fumosity of the stomach or what not like affection that had usurped them. The monks, seeing that for all this he came not to himself and feeling his pulse, but finding no sign of life in him, all held it for certain that he was dead. Accordingly, they sent to tell his wife and his kinsfolk, who all came thither forthright, and the lady having bewept him awhile with her kinswomen, the abbot caused lay him, clad as he was, in a tomb; whilst the lady returned to her house and giving out that she meant never to part from a little son, whom she had had by her husband, abode at home and occupied herself with the governance of the child and of the wealth which had been Ferondo's. Meanwhile, the abbot arose stealthily in the night and with the aid of a Bolognese monk, in whom he much trusted and who was that day come thither from Bologna, took up Ferondo out of the tomb and carried him into a vault, in which there was no light to be seen and which had been made for prison of such of the monks as should make default in aught. There they pulled off his garments and clothing him monk-fashion, laid him on a truss of straw and there left him against he should recover his senses, whilst the Bolognese monk, having been instructed by the abbot of that which he had to do, without any else-knowing aught thereof, proceeded to await his coming to himself.[8]

As a footnote to the 19th-century translation of *The Decameron*, from which this quote came, notes of this

preparation:

> The well-known chief of the Assassins (properly Hes-hashin, i.e. hashish or hemp eaters). The powder in question is apparently a preparation of hashish or hemp. Boccaccio seems to have taken his idea of the Old Man of the Mountain from Marco Polo, whose travels, published in the early part of the fourteenth century, give a most romantic account of that chief-tain and his followers.[9]

Another well-known example of a drug-induced death-like state occurs in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. As we shall discuss later, Shakespeare had some awareness of cannabis, and two South African professors have suggested he used the herb. In *Romeo and Juliet*, a Christian monk, Father Laurence, gives Juliet a philtre that will put her into a death-like state for almost two days:

Take thou this vial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off;
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour, for no pulse
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease:
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall,
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
Each part, deprived of supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.

Romeo and Juliet: Act 4 Scene 1

Closer to our own time, Robert Anton Wilson referred to tests sponsored by the U.S. Army in the 1950's, where "THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) ... put dogs into 'hibernation' or deep sleep for eight days, after which they were awakened and showed no ill effects" (Wilson 1973). Unfortunately, as with a lot of his writings, Wilson failed to provide any source for this claim, and I have been unable to track down any reference to this test.

Clearly some of the above substances, considered magical sacraments in the ancient and medieval world, are so powerful that they can put the people who ingest them in requisite amounts into a deathlike coma that could conceivably have made other ancient onlookers think that they had actually died. Cannabis figures prominently and is certainly the safest among such preparations. Further, going back more than 150 years to the present, numbers of independent researcher have concluded that Jesus was given some sort of cannabis extract, along with potentially other potent ingredients, as he hung from the cross. As well, in later Persian Islamic times hashish preparations were used

for similar effects by the Gnostic-influenced Hashishin for their own romanticized near-death experience initiations and knowledge of this penetrated Europe during the time of the Templars and the Grail mythology.

In relation to the other Biblical resurrection, that of Lazarus, it is important to note that Professor Morton Smith has suggested that Lazarus did not suffer death, but went through an intense initiation into the "mystery of the kingdom of God" (Mark 4:11) (Smith, 1978). It was after the demonstration of Lazarus' death and resurrection, which Jesus foretold in the Biblical narrative, that Jesus' popularity began to soar, and it has been suggested this apparent act of magic was a ruse. Indications of such shamanic initiations can be found throughout the ancient Gnostic texts, as well as in the Catholic Church's condemnations of the Gnostics (Bennett & McQueen, 2001). Thus, as we have also seen in Chapter 2 the idea that Jesus and his early followers may have had access to powerful cannabis extracts and other substances used in death and rebirth ceremonies, such as those used by the earlier Zoroastrians and later Hashishins, is not at all farfetched.

If Christ arranged to receive such a cannabis extract on the day of the Crucifixion, the resulting cataleptic state of hibernation induced by a cannabis extract, and likely other ingredients, could easily have been mistaken for death by the Romans who stood guard over him, along with the Jewish crowd who had come out to watch another claimant to the title of "Messiah" meet their typical fate. As the powerful preparation took effect, the limbs would begin stiffening, the heartbeat slowing down to an occasional thud, the breath dropping off to a faint whisper of a still body that more and more resembled a corpse...

John 19 tells of the night of the "cruci-fiction" in detail that fits in completely with this hypothesis:

> Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scriptures would be fulfilled, Jesus said "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
>
> Now ... the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man that was crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs (John19:33).

Death, in the case of a crucifixion, came through suffocation; as the arms and legs gave out from exhaustion and stress, the lung cavity contracted, and in some cases this

took days. By lessening these supports considerably, the breaking of the legs hastened this process. John has it that because Jesus is already dead, the soldiers do not break his legs, but instead pierce Christ's side with a spear. There is even a witness to this, one unnamed bystander: "The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe" (John 19:35). (The man doth protest too much!) Schonfield suggested that the story of the spear thrust into Jesus' side "may have been introduced to historicise certain Old Testament testimonies" (Schonfield 1965).

This brings us to the pivotal point of the Biblical narrative, where, to all outsiders, including Jesus' own apostles, all seems to be over for the charismatic leader that they had believed was going to lead them into a new age of glory.

> It is the moment before sundown in Jerusalem. On the hill of Golgotha three bodies are suspended on crosses. Two – the thieves – are dead. The third appears so. This is the drugged body of Jesus of Nazareth, the man who planned his own crucifixion, who contrived to be given a soporific potion to put him into a deathlike trance. Now Joseph of Arimathea, bearing clean linen and spices, approaches and recovers the still form of Jesus. All seems to be proceeding according to plan (Schonfield 1965).

The aloes and spices brought by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea to Jesus' tomb to supposedly embalm their now dead leader pose a particularly curious question, as embalming was not a practice of the Jews of the time. Perhaps these lotions served some other purpose? It has been suggested that "in reality there were efforts behind the scenes to 'bring Jesus back to life' in the privacy of the tomb cavern, under the direction of Joseph and Nicodemus" (Kersten 1986).

> Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who had earlier visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen.[10] This was in accordance with the Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no-one had ever been laid (John 19:38-41).

It does not take an overly active imagination to picture Jesus' "secret" servants Joseph and Nicodemus rubbing

the stiffened joints of Jesus' body with large quantities of healing herbs and spices which they had brought in preparation, and slowly waking their master from his death-like cataleptic state which had been induced by the substance delivered to him on the cross. A scenario that is reminiscent of the role played by the fakir's helper in the account discussed earlier, along with the "Story of the Abbot and Monk," reviving poor Ferondo after his drug induced "death." Such a scenario, although sounding somewhat fanciful, is far more believable than that of the alternative, held to be true by literally millions of Christians – that a man died, decomposed for three days and three nights, then arose from the dead!

The claim that Jesus' death on the cross was a hoax would have been the most loaded threat that the medieval Catholic Church could ever have faced. The whole concept of the religion itself, is based on the "Original Sin, and Redemption by Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross," and the only way to receive Christ's Redemption, was through the Church. This was the "doctrine of a dead man" ridiculed by the Gnostics as a "doctrine to fear and slavery" (*The Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, 3rd Century A.D.). As Elaine Pagels so eloquently noted, the doctrine of the crucifixion "legitimized a hierarchy of persons through whose authority all others must approach God. Gnostic teaching ... was potentially subversive of this order: it claimed to offer to every initiate direct access to God of which the priests and bishops themselves might be ignorant" (Pagels 1979).

> [T]he doctrine of the resurrection ... serves an essential political function: it legitimizes the authority of certain men who claim to exercise exclusive leadership over the churches as successors of the apostle Peter. From the second century, the doctrine has served to validate the apostolic succession of bishops, the basis of papal authority to this day. Gnostic Christians who interpret resurrection in other ways have a lesser claim to authority: when they claim priority over the orthodox, they are denounced as heretics (Pagels 1979).

The Gnostic sect the Mandeans, who have survived down to the present day, and were around at the time of the Templars, taught that Jesus revealing of the formerly hidden secret spiritual Gnosis to the unknowing masses angered many and may have led to his eventual betrayal by what had been one of his most trusted allies. It was for such a reason that the Mandeans felt their own Messiah, John the Baptist, had made a mistake in initiating Jesus, whom they saw as a false-messiah, responsible for perverting the Gnosis and desecrating the "Keys to Heaven" by teaching these religious secrets to the unworthy. Similar sentiments could be found amongst the Ophite subsect, the Cainites. The Cainites were known not only for

their reversal of Old Testament villains into heroes, such as their namesake Cain, the Serpent and the Sodomites, but also for the reverence they paid the New Testament's supreme villain – Judas. "This is especially brought out in their ideas of New Testament history, which, in spite of their strangeness, may nevertheless contain a small trace of the true tradition of the cause of Jesus' death" (Mead 1900). The Cainites viewed Judas as one who had attained a very high degree of Gnosis, and attributed a revered work that they circulated, *The Gospel of Judas*, to his name.

The Cainite historical tradition was "that Jesus, after becoming the Christ and teaching the higher doctrine ... fell away and endeavored to overset the law, and corrupt the holy doctrine, and therefore Judas had him handed over to the authorities ... his too open preaching to the people was a divulging of the Mysteries, and so finally brought about his condemnation for blasphemy by the orthodox Jewish authorities" (Mead 1900). Irenaeus wrote that the Cainites "declare that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with ... [their secrets] and that he alone, knowing the truth as no others did, accomplished the mystery of the betrayal."

A more mystical tradition preserved by the Cainites recorded that both Jesus and Judas had acted in accordance with the divine plan: For if Christ had not been betrayed to the cross, the mystic "salvation of the cross" would not have been consummated – Jesus would never have been crucified and resurrected, thus fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. That Judas could have worked so intimately and secretly in conjunction with Jesus is quite possible, as the oldest of the New Testament Gospels, Mark, records a Judas among Jesus' own brothers (Mark 6:3).

Clearly, throughout the New Testament Gospels, Jesus himself is depicted as knowing of his eventual fate of crucifixion, even having foreknowledge of Judas' betrayal, of which he makes reference to before his arrest, (Matthew 12:21-25; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:21; John 13:18-30). Despite the foreknowledge of Judas' actions, neither Jesus, nor any of the disciples ever take actions against Judas to prevent him from accomplishing his heinous deed. Indeed, Jesus statement to Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly"(John 13:27), could even be interpreted as encouragement. According to Jesus himself, his betrayal by Judas was done in order "to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted his heel against me'"(John 13:18).

Numerous times the Gospels depict Jesus as paying attention to details in order to fulfill Old Testament prophecies related to the Messiah. Notable among such acts was Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, a bold statement directed to his claim of divine kingship through the fulfillment of the prophecies of Zachariah: "Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as is written, 'Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is

coming, seated on a donkey's colt'"(John 12:14). Indeed, such was the way Solomon entered into Jerusalem on his own coronation day.

The fact that Jesus was paying such close attention to messianic prophecies during his short ministry brings into question whether Jesus was consciously, and with great effort, bringing about certain events in order to fulfill them, and thereby meet the requirements of messianic expectations. A number of researchers have commented on this, and have taken it even further suggesting that Jesus staged his own death in order to fulfill such prophecies, acts that could conceivably have been directed at gaining the support of the Jewish populace. A concept that is rife with elements of religious and political intrigue...

Not surprisingly, I am not the first to mix Schonefield's theory with the account of the Templars. In *A to Z of the Knights Templar: A Guide to Their History and Legacy* we read, "When Jesus was crucified his closest disciples supposedly supplied him a drug so that he would appear to have died, intending afterwards to be revived by his followers" (Napier, 2011). *The Templar Revelation*: "Hugh Schonfield's *The Passover Plot* elegantly and persuasively explains how this happened..." (Picknett & Prince, 2004). A connection first made in the conspiracy classic *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* (1982) as noted. If the Templars had become aware of ancient Gnostic knowledge in the Holy Land, and the use of cannabis and possibly other substances to induce a deathlike coma, through the Hashishin or possibly other esoteric Islamic/Gnostic sources, it would certainly address their alleged rejection of the Cross as well as the desire of the Church and religious authorities to make sure this secret was never released; thus explaining the mass arrests and executions of the Templar Knights, and all the obscurity and rumors around their history.

I suspect Dr. Schonefield himself may have made a connection between his theory on the crucifixion and the Templars rejection of the cross. He certainly had an interest in the Templars. Schonfield felt that he had found corroboration for the claimed association between the Templars' Baphomet and the Gnostic Goddess Sophia through the "Atbash cipher," a method by which words were written out in Hebrew letters, and then repeated below in reverse order, and this was used to find hidden relations between words. "Setting down Baphomet in Hebrew characters ... by Atbash converted immediately into (Sophia) the Greek word for Wisdom..." (Schonfield, 1984). Unfortunately, Schonfield fails to offer evidence of the Templar awareness of this alleged Essene cipher, or, more importantly, discuss the Templars rejection of the cross, as it relates to his own work on the matter. However he did state that it "would seem that the Templars ... had access to Gnostic mythology which in turn had derived from extremely ancient cosmological interpretations"

(Schonfield, 1984).

Joseph of Arimathea, Jesus' "secret disciple" (John 19:38), is an interesting figure, as in Christianized versions of the "Grail story ... the treasure that must be sought for is thought to be the vessel in which Joseph of Arimathea received the blood of Christ at the Descent from the Cross" (Jung & von Franz, 1960/1970). In other versions, Nicodemus, described as another "secret disciple," scrapes the dried blood of Jesus in a leaden vessel. In both accounts there is a clear connection to the Eucharists of the "Last Supper" with "wine" being the "blood" of their Lord. In this respect, it is worth remembering that in the account of the Gnostic Marcus discussed in Chapter 2, "blood" is clearly used as a euphemism for a drug-infused wine. Professor Morton Smith has commented that the scene of the Last Supper, and particularly the Eucharist, have strong elements of Mystery Cult practices in general. "The rite is a familiar type of magical ceremony in which the magician identifies himself with a deity, and identifies wine and/or food with the blood and/or body of this deity and of himself. The wine and/or food is then given to a recipient who by consuming it is united with him and filled with love for him. This rite is attributed to Jesus by the earliest and most reliable sources" (Smith 1978). The ritual itself seems to be an adoption of earlier Persian accounts of Haoma. Jean-Marc Vivenza suggested that "Haoma, is in close relationship with the Grail, [and] since it is considered to contain the blood of Christ that, in reality, is also a Beverage of Immortality" (Vivenza, 1998).

Interestingly, as will be discussed at length in Chapter 13, a little more than a century after the Templars received their Catholic roasting, a French monk and bachelor of medicine, with an interest in the esoteric, Francois Rabelais, would write a comedic parody of the Grail myth, in his wonderful book *The Life of Gargantua and of Pantagruel*, portraying cannabis, veiled as the herb *pantagruelion*, as "the symbol of social discipline and human industrial activity, a sort of active talisman of Holy Grail caliber, and one which he sets over against the myths contained in the old romances" (Moland, 1929).[11] As we shall see, this connection between cannabis and the Grail seems to be a reccurring theme of the Occult World.

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[1] From an excerpt in (Legman, 1966).

[2] As quoted in (Rätsch 1997)

[3] This association goes back to Biblical references (Genesis 30:14-16; Songs 7:13). I am not clear as to what Wright based his assertion on.

[4] Aka "Medicine of Immortality" known to have been a hashish concoction that was popular with 19th century French occultists and the American Seer P.B. Randolph.

[5] (Lawrence, 1871)

[6] Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitor.

[7] Dana Beal and Paul De Rienzo also suggest Syrian rue

was a Gnostic sacrament, referring to its continued use by the surviving Gnostic sect, the Mandeans, as well as joining the speculations of Flattery and Schwartz (Haoma & Harmaline, 1989), that Syrian rue was the main ingredient in the Persian Haoma.

[8] The Decameron of Giovanni Boccacci, Villon Society, (1886).

[9] Ibid.

[10] In earlier times "among the Hebrews is the religious requirement that the dead be buried in 'kaneh' shirts. Centuries later, linen was substituted for hemp" (Benet, 1975).

[11] As quoted in (Putnam, 1929).

Chapter 7

THE *PORTFOLIO OF VILLARD DE HONNECOURT*

In

Histoire de France, Henri Martin saw the Grail mythos as a connecting factor between the Templars and Freemasons:

> The Knighthood of the Grail ... becomes the Massenie, that is to say an ascetic Freemasonry, whose members called themes the Templists; and we can grasp here the intention of linking up to a common centre, represented by this ideal temple, the Order of the Templars and the numerous fraternities of builders which at that time were renewing the architecture of the Middle Ages. We catch here a glimpse of many openings on what could be called the subterranean history of those times, which are far more complex than is generally believed.... What is rather curious, and what can hardly be doubted, is that modern Freemasonry goes back step by step to the Massenie of the Holy Grail (Martin, 1856).[1]

Today, the connection to Templars and Masons is generally regarded as later speculation from 18th-19th century Masons' trying to decipher their own roots, and has not been fully established. Modern research indicates the first references to the term "Freemason" occur in 1375, and among working stonemason guilds. However, Villard de Honnecourt, a working Mason, appears a century prior to this, and he was a member, if not leader of a stonemason's lodge, and some have seen an early Masonic connection here. With its images of Knights, Saracen tombs, depiction of the crucifixion, and its curious inclusion of a recipe for a cannabis-infused wine, Honnecourt's famous portfolio does mark an interesting potential transference point of Templar knowledge into the Masonic.

Honnecourt's portfolio with its various designs for cathedrals, obviously the work of a practical mason, has been considered a "lodge book" and Honnecourt himself a "master of the lodge" (Frisch, 1987). Villard's *Legacy: Studies in Medieval Technology, Science*, points out numerous connections between Villard's portfolio and Freemason rituals and texts, "several aspects of [Villard's] folio ... itself could also be found in the literature of Freemasonry" (Bechmann, 2017).

Villard's depiction of a Saracean Tomb has been described as representing a "masonic tracing board presented to a Freemason at his initiation. The enthroned 'Saracean' figure would be a master Mason" (Lillich, 2011). Described by Honnecourt as "the tomb of a heathen which I once saw," this particular reference also brings to mind the Tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz in the Rosicrucian mythos. Renaud Beffeyte has suggested that Honnecourt's drawings were deliberately simplistic and abstracted to serve as coded mnemonic devices for architects who were

initiated into the relevant oral tradition, at a time prior to Mason's keeping written records of their craft (Beffeyte, 2004). Thus, the idea that Freemasonry had its earlier incarnations, contradicting the general view as a 16th-century phenomenon are not completely without merit or unfounded.

Depiction of Honnecourt's Saracean Tomb, which has been discussed for its potential Masonic symbolism, and the sacred geometry used in its composition. Illustration by Roland Bechmann, note the Grail-like chalice at the bottom of the image.

In *Villard de Honnecourt and the Grail*, Lynette Muir describes one of the drawings from the *Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt*, (1230) the work of a French artist and architect, depicting the relationship with Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, the Crucifixion and the Grail.

> One of the sketches in the Album of the thirteenth-century architect, Villard de Honnecourt, depicts the Deposition from the Cross with a man kneeling at the foot of the Cross, holding a cup; this figure has been identified by Lassus as Joseph of Arimathea with "un calice, le Saint-Graal à la légende fabuleuse." Representations of the Grail are rare in medieval art, so that it seems worth considering this unusual scene in some detail. For the most part, the group is conventional: Our Lady, on the left, holds the right hand of the Crucified, whose weight is being taken by Nicodemus, a shroud in his hands. One man, on the left, is extracting the nail from the feet, while another, on the right, mounted on a ladder propped up against the cross, withdraws the nail from the left hand. A little apart, also on the right, stands St John in an attitude of grief. In the narrow angle formed by the ladder and the pincers of the man bending over

Christ's feet, crouches Joseph, gazing up at the feet, under which he holds a simple, open, unadorned drinking-cup. Two points in the representation call for special comment: the position of Joseph and the form of the Grail. All the written texts agree in making Joseph collect the blood after the body of Christ has been taken down...

...in his drawing he presents the widespread concept that the Grail was the cup of the Last Supper in which Joseph of Arimathea caught the blood of Christ on the Cross... (Muir, 1971).

Villard de Honnecourt's deposition from the Cross

What is particularly interesting about this reference to the 13th century *Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt* is that although this manuscript is mostly a compilation of drawings, it has some written text as well, and the only text-alone page, which appears at the end of the manuscript, contains a recipe for cannabis-infused wine!

> Take leaves of red cabbage, and of avens – this is an herb which one calls "bastard cannabis." Take a herb which one calls tansy and hemp – this is the seeds of cannabis. Crush these four herbs so that there is nothing more of the one than of the other. Afterwards you take madder two times more than any one of the four herbs, then you crush it, then you put these five herbs in a pot. And you put white wine to infuse it, the best that you are able to have, being somewhat with care that the potions not be too thick, and that one is able to drink them (de Honnecourt, 1230).

I am unclear as to the reference of "bastard cannabis" designating actual cannabis, as it may be a Latinized reference to "bastard hemp" another plant altogether, and the distinction between it and the "hemp" in this passage is unclear as well. The possibility of a form of unpollinated cannabis might be suggested, but only cautiously. As we have seen elsewhere, references to seeds often included

the female tops and psychoactive chaff which surrounded the seeds. This reference is contemporary to the time of Templar activity, however, little beyond the *Portfolio* is known of the French figure, de Honnecourt, so it is unclear as to where he acquired this recipe for cannabis-infused wine or in regard to his intentions in including it. Honnecourt's notebook indicates he had spent time among the Saraceans, so he could well have become aware of the cannabis-infused wines that were known to have been used there at that time, and brought back this recipe with him.

Image of a woman holding the Grail, from de Honnecourt

The *Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt* also contains many images of the "Green Man" of Celtic mythology and a figure that has some connection to the "Green One" Khidr, the Islamic Patron Saint of Cannabis. Could these images indicate one who is under the effects of the cannabis-infused wine? As has been suggested elsewhere, "When the Templars left the Middle East it is conjectured that they brought their hashish cult of the Green Man with them into Europe" (Pinkham, 2004). This connection was also explored in one of my earlier works (Bennett, et. al., 1995).

One of dozens of Green Men in the alleged Templar church Rosslyn Chapel, in Scotland.

Through the curious inclusion of a hemp-infused wine by Honnecourt, cannabis could be seen as part of this speculative history of Masonic origins, as is the figure of Honnecourt himself. This connection is so great that the French Grand Lodge has dedicated their Masonic journal *Les Cahiers de la R.L. Villard de Honnecourt* to him.

[1] As translated in (Guénon, 1925/2005).

CHAPTER 8

The Cup of the Anointing

Another account that has been compared to the Grail involves Jesus secret disciple, Nicodemus, (who accompanied Joseph of Arimathea to Jesus' tomb) and can be found in *The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Life*. Seth also appears in the Gnostic texts, as noted earlier, in regard to the rejection of the crucifixion and resurrection. As well, Seth figures in some Christianized back-stories concerning the Grail. "The resemblance between Seth's journey for the oil of mercy and Galahad's search for the grail is scarcely to be attributed to coincidence" (Quinn, 1965).

> The first known instance of a Christian adoption of the Seth legend is the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus.... We read here that Seth told the patriarchs and prophets of his journey to Paradise; he then announced that Christ would bring the promised oil of mercy... (Quinn, 1962).

Esther Casier Quinn compares this oil to earlier ancient Sumerian accounts of oil used medicinally and to install a sense of well-being, and she also connects it with the traditional use of Holy Oil in the Bible and in later Gnostic texts. "References both to the use of oil in healing and to the anointing with holy oil as a sign of God's favour appear frequently in the Old Testament" (Quinn, 1962). This use of holy oil continued on into the Christian period, and flowed into Gnosticism, and as Quinn notes, particularly with Gnostic sects like the Ophites:

> [T]here was an ancient and familiar tradition of a tree of life, which produced oil – whether, cedar, olive, or any other.
>
> [T]his type of tree also played a particularly prominent role in the rituals of the Gnostics, the Ophitic sect in particular. In Origen's Against Celsus there s a reference to anointing "white ointment from the tree of life. The Gnostic Recognitions of Clement refers to God's anointing Christ with the oil from the tree of life (Quinn, 1962).

As I have noted elsewhere, the imagery of "the tree of life" can be seen to have associations with cannabis, as well as both Soma and Haoma, in both its origins and concept (Bennett & McQueen, 2001; Bennett, 2010). "The concept of the tree of life is found among many ancient people.... In the Zoroastrian religion of the Persians the sacred tree was called 'Haoma,' which grew in a garden from which all the waters of the earth flowed (cf. Gen. 2:10)" (Gray, 1969). This has been a longstanding view: "The records about the 'Tree of Life' are the sublimest proofs of the unity and continuity of tradition, and of its Eastern tradition. The earliest records of the most ancient Oriental tradition refer to a 'Tree of Life', which was guarded by spirits. The juice of the sacred tree, like the tree itself, was called Soma in Sanskrit, and Haoma in Zend; it was revered as the life preserving essence" (Bunsen 1867). As also noted in *The Legends of the Old Testament* by Thomas Lumisden Strange:

> The tree of life is traceable to the Persian Paradise. "The Haoma is the first of the trees planted by Ahura Mazda in the fountain of life. He who drinks its juice never dies" (Muir, Sansk. Texts,II...) ... The original is the Soma of the Hindus, early deified by them, the sap of which was the beverage of the gods, and when drank by mortals made them act like gods immortal.... The Hebrews have exactly adopted the idea: "And Jahveh Elohim said, 'Behold the man has become one of us to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore Javeh Elohim sent him forth from the garden of Eden ... and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life"... (Strange, 1874).

We can see elements of this fertility symbolism in the Grail, which was described as both "root and branch" by von Esenbach, and this symbolism continues with the sacred oil of Seth's similar quest:

> ...[A]ll these lines converged: oil used for anointing and healing, the figurative use of oil, oil which flows from the tree of life, the belief the leaves and fruit of

the tree of life are for healing, and the concept of the dew of resurrection and its being compared to oil... (Quinn, 1962).

In *The Quest of Seth, Solomon's Ship and the Grail*, (1965) Quinn refers to spindles made from sacred trees that were attached to a bed on Solomon's ship, at the order of his wife. Weaving with the spindles is associated with the prophetic tradition, and Quinn has noted in reference to spindles "the spinning woman who knew the future because she spun the web of fate" (Quinn, 1962). We have already seen the reference to the weaving of hemp in the 4th century text, *The Testament of Solomon*. In Sir Thomas Malory's *Tale of the Sankgreal*, (1470) "Perceval's sister ... gives an account of a crown and sword which Solomon's wife ... had placed on the bed" (Quinn, 1965). This brings to mind the "hemp girdle" prepared by the wife of Solomon, woven to carry a sacred sword, that appeared in the 13th century, *La Queste del Saint Graal*.

Quinn states that myths of Seth were widely known in the Middle Ages, and were popular in 12th-15th century England and Europe. Considering the connection to Nicodemus, it is also worth noting that some accounts record that at "the death of Christ the Holy Grail was Transported to Great Britain by Joseph d'Arimathea & Nicodemus, and it's from this moment that the famous epic tale of the Knights of the Round Table starts" (Vivenza, 1998). When we consider the use of Holy Oil in this context, along with what has been suggested about the kaneh-bosm-infused holy oils of the Jewish and later Christian Gnostic sects in Chapter 2, it is interesting to find there may have been some continued awareness and use of similar preparations into early medieval and later renaissance times, in England.

The 10th to 11th century collection of old English medical texts, known as *The Lacnunga*[1] (*Remedies*), contains a recipe for a "holy salve," which included among its various ingredients "Betony and bennet ("blessed herb"), and "hind health" and hemp [Haenap]." Interestingly, according to "Professors Graeme Whittington and Jack Jarvis of the University of Saint Andrews in Fife, Scotland, hemp was grown agriculturally in tenth century Scotland. Sediment from Kilconquhar Lock, near Fife, contained cannabis pollen. Cannabis from around the same time has been found in East Anglia, Wales.... The hemp was found to have been grown in areas occupied by religious groups of the time. Jarvis commented in an *Omni* interview, 'the decline of these ecclesiastical establishments may have coincided with a decline in the growing of hemp'" (Bennett, *et al.*, 1995).

In reference to this "holy salve" it has been noted that "The stance of reverence bordering on worship implied in the early medieval treatment of plants sometimes gave reformers and clergy cause for concern" (Dendle &

Touwaide, 2015). These issues became more prominent with the development of witches' ointments, and recipes for topical preparations found in various magical grimoires, where we will also find references to cannabis ointments. Although concerned with medical applications rather than what would be considered magical operations, (although there are charms and invocations) *The Lacnunga* does contain references to a number of plants used in sorcery and witchcraft, such as an infusion of henbane and hemlock, for a "sleeping drink, and a henbane ointment for "when a man cannot sleep."[2]

A blessing from *The Lacnunga* for this hemp containing "holy salve" states: "God, almighty father, and Jesus Christ, son of god, I ask you will stoop to send your blessing and heavenly medicine and godly protection over this ointment so that it may produce health and cure against all the bodies' disease..."[3] And this does bring to mind the traditions of healing with Holy Oil in the New Testament period. However, as cannabis appears at the beginning of a list of about fifty other herbs in the "holy salve" recipe, it is hard to argue a specific inclusion of one herb over the other, and a desire for its specific effects would be hard to argue in a recipe that called for such a plethora of herbs. Another topical application of cannabis can be found from the same period in an 11th century Old English *Herbarium* ... "haenep, or hemp is recommended for sore breasts. This was translated as follows ... 'Rub [the herb] with fat, lay it to the breast, it will disperse the swelling; it there is a gathering of diseased matter it will purge it'" (Russo, et. al. 2002).

The

Old English Herbarium Manuscript V (12th century)

The 11th century manuscript, *The Herbarium*, is said to be a copy of a much older text, attributed to the 4th century Roman medical writer Pseudo-Apuleius, and also contained a topical recipe for frostbite that "cannabis fruit be ground up with nettle and mixed with sour wine. The entry in this particular manuscript ends with an interesting remark: miraberis effectum bonum 'you will be surprised at its good effect'" (Sumler, 2018).

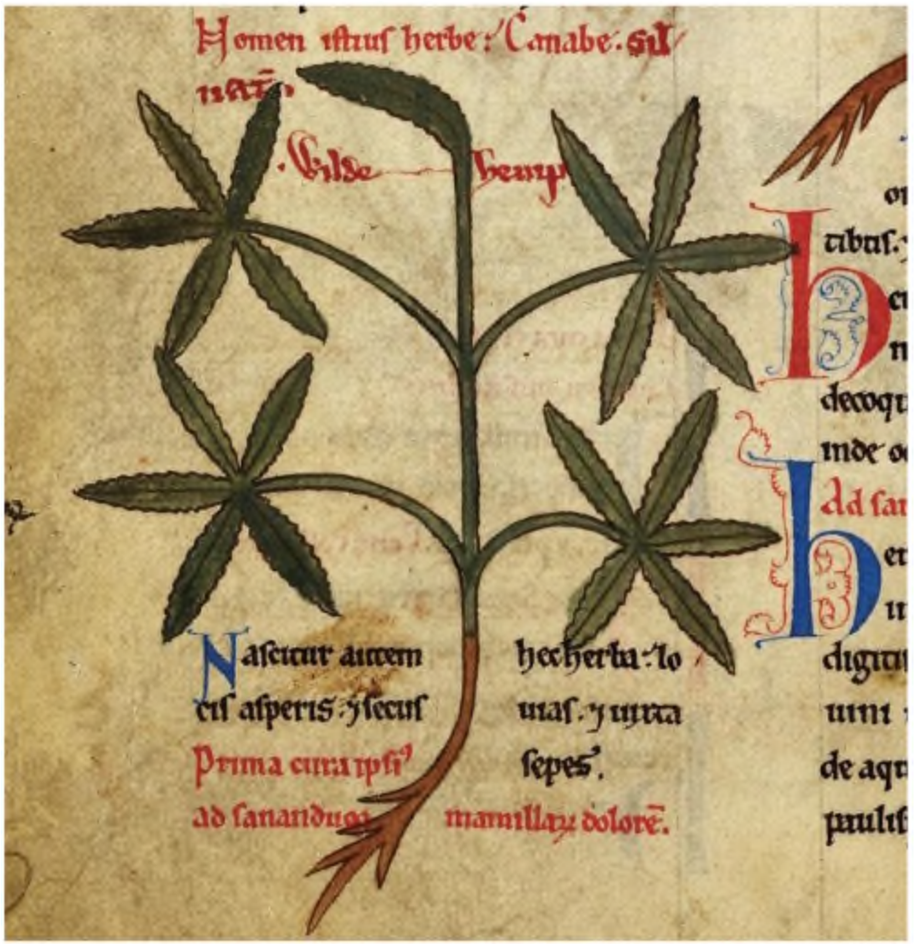

Illustration from the 11th century Latin manuscript, The Herbarium. (MS. Ashmole 1462).

Anointing rituals might also be indicated on the curious "Templar" relics from von Hammer-Purgstall. The image on the right identifying the worship of Baphomet, and the reverence of the generative powers, could conceivably have been adopted from Gnostic sources. Ophite Gnostics were known for the anointing rituals. "Celsus reports of the Ophite Gnostics that they possessed a 'seal' the recipient of which was made a 'son' of the 'Father'; his response was: 'I have been anointed with the ointment from the tree of life'.... In some [Gnostic] texts like the *Pistis Sophia* and the *Books of Jeu* [Ieou] the 'spiritual ointment' is a prerequisite for entry into the pleroma, by which the highest 'mystery' is meant" (Rudolph 1987). Likewise the Naasenes, another Gnostic sect that referred the serpent, "claimed to be the true Christians because they were anointed with the 'ineffable chrism,' poured out by the serpentine 'horn of plenty'" (Mead 1900).

Much more interesting for this study, and thoroughly documentable in regard to topical preparations of cannabis, are the references in the 16th century *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salmonis*, and other grimoires. *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salmonis* represents the continuation of the magical traditions around Solomon, and contains a recipe for a cannabis ointment used for the purpose of scrying, which shall be explored in Chapter 15.

The Grail mythos describes how the sacred cup was finally taken up into the sky, or in some accounts delivered into hiding, signifying its physical withdrawal from humanity, which seems to be part of its reccurring cycle. Perhaps it appears again now, when humanity needs it most, as global warming threatens to turn the whole earth into the wasteland that initiated its search in medieval legends, and the spiritual world of man cries out for renewal. When one considers the many gifts of the cannabis plant, how we can make fuel, plastic, paper, cloth and other goods with it in a more environmentally friendly way than what we have been doing, along with the miraculous medical benefits we

are rediscovering in its leaves and flowers, and its unveiled history as a sacrament of ancient religions, healing the earth, body and spirit of man, its hard not to make the connection.

In regard to the the Holy Grail, cannabis can answer to many elements of the elixir of immortality that it contained: its ritual use in Celtic times, as well as evidence of prehistoric European use, and suggestion as a popular beverage via corded ware, can be fitted with the earliest suggested European influences; the ritual use of cannabis as Haoma by the Scythians can account for alleged connections with the Cups of the Narts; Its associations with the Graha of Soma and Haoma are obvious, and the Persian traditions of the Jam I Jam, and Cup of Khusraw are clear carry-overs from earlier Persian times when cannabis was consumed with wine. As well, the connections with the Knights Templar seems self evident, and as shown this may account, in part, for their collective persecution. That cannabis-infused wines became known in Europe at the time of the Templars via the Templar ally Pope John XXI, and the *Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt*, nor that it was listed amongst seized items, and the Templars had Saracens growing it for them, cannot be denied.

Though the Grail mythos and the Templars as an avenue of cultural transference of cannabis use into Europe remains somewhat speculative, confirmation of the Templar use of cannabis-infused wines as the elixir of Jerusalem, would go a long way in shoring up the case. A more certain avenue of the transference of Middle Eastern esoteric knowledge of cannabis came through the 11th century Islamic magical grimoire, *The Ghayat AlHakim* which, when translated into Latin in the 13th century by Alfonso X, became known as *The Picatrix*, one of the foundational documents of the Western magical tradition.

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[1] This name does not appear in the manuscript itself, but was given to it by the 19th century editor Oswald Cockayne.

[2] As noted in (Hatsis, 2016).

[3] As quoted in (Hatsis, 2015).

Chapter 9

The *Ghayat AlHakim* and *The Picatrix*

Arabic Magic

Magic in the Islamic world, was a carry-over from antiquity and like alchemy and the myths of the Grail, as these traditions filtered into Europe through the Crusades, they came with a tinge of Oriental flavour. Cannabis and other psychoactive plants had a profound role in Islamic magic, and numbers of references to their use can be found up until the modern day in this context. As well, often those who used cannabis and other psychoactive substances suffered a similar fate to later witches who also used such substances, in Europe, and were thoroughly demonized.

The medieval Islamic scholar al-Badri (1443-1489), seems to have been particularly incensed against the use of cannabis and its by-products. Among the alleged quotations he collected demonizing the drug, we find the following apocryphal statement attributed to Muhammad's friend and ally, Hudhayfah b. al-Yaman:

> I went together with the Prophet into the countryside. He saw a tree and shook his head. I asked him why he was shaking his head, and he replied: "A time will come upon my nation when they will eat from the leaves of this tree and get intoxicated. They are the worst of the worst. They are the bira of my nation, as God has nothing to do with them."[1]

Ibn Wahshiya's 10th century work, the *Book of Poisons*, describes an interesting ritual where as part of the preparation of cannabis, (which was made potentially toxic with the addition of the narcissus flower) it was buried in a "casket" as a sort of symbolic death, and then dug up and resurrected and prepared with various aromatics.

> Hashish which grows on the borders of the country of Bajarma is taken. In Nabatean, it is called shartatha. Description: It grows in austere places where here is neither water nor moisture. Its leaf is like the leaf of the caper tree; its stem is round and has yellowness in it. The tallest of them is a cubit. Its characteristic is that it always seems to be in motion even if there is not a breeze in the air. If the wind blows, it is set into a continuous motion. If there be no wind, it is in a slight motion and swings, little by little. Its odor is like that of the caper and often lighter than it. Some of it is taken, pulverized, and then water drawn from a very deep well is sprinkled on it. Its liquid is then squeezed out and it is very well exhausted. Then a slice of the green bulb of the narcissus is well dried in the sun, pulverized, and moistened with the extract obtained from the hashish. Indeed, a curious thing arises when they are mixed.
>
> It is that they become a lethal poison whereas, as simples, they have no effect. The moistening is continued, then dried, so that three times its amount

must be absorbed of the hashish extract. Then it is buried in a black lead vessel which is in the shape of a casket with its cover. It remains in its stink for fourteen days; the moon must be with Mars when it is buried. It is then taken out. It must be moist with the extract which you admixed when it was buried. After it is taken out, it is dried well in the sun in the lead vessel. When its drying is completed, it must be pulverized together with the bones of any dead animal in the lead vessel so that it becomes a dust. This is made possible by pulverizing little by little, continuously, and softening very well. Then this is mixed with musk, ambergris, camphor, any kind of odoriferous substance, or any aromatics; these are sprinkled on it because it soon sticks to everything, especially to that which has even a little moisture. It may also be mixed with any oil; it may be used with a mixture of these. If it reaches the nose, a violent tickle occurs in the nose of this man, then in his face. His face and eyes are affected by an extreme and intensive burning; he does not see anything and cannot say what he wishes. He swoons, then recovers, swoons [again], and recovers [again]. He goes on in this way until he dies. A violent anxiety and fainting goes on until he succumbs, after a day, a day and a half, or more. If it is protracted, it may take two days. For these aromatics, there is no remedy. But if God wills to save him, he may be spared from death by the continuance of vomiting or by another natural reaction.[2]

Like the taboos around witch drugs and their devilish associations, the Islamic detractors of cannabis portrayed the herb as a "devil's weed." In opposition to the praise of the drug by a segment of Sufis and Dervishes, in the mind of some medieval Islamic clergy, the seductive powers of hashish, garnered the name "the huntress" by "Satan and his cohorts," and to use it was keeping company with the devil. Moreover "it was food for the devil, as wine was the devil's drink" and that to prohibit hashish and wine was to deny "Iblis" (Satan), "of his water and his fodder" (Rosenthal, 1971). As the medieval Islamic theologian Ibn Taymiyah, (1263-1328) recorded in the *Siyassah*: "By God, Iblis [Satan] has never had any joy like the one he has from hashish because he made it appear nice to vile souls so that they considered it lawful and permissible."[3]

In the 19th century, Sir Richard Burton noted of the Mid-Eastern use of hashish, in relation to the medieval tales of *The Arabian Nights:* "This intoxicant was much used by magicians to produce ecstasy and thus to 'deify themselves and receive the homage of the genii and nature spirits'" (Burton, 1885). As Robert Lebling notes, in *Legends of the Fire Spirits: Jinn and Genies from Arabia to Zanzibar*, hashish was associated with Jinn magic well into

the 19th century, if not likely in some areas to the present day. Lebling refers to accounts recorded by Abd al-Rahman Isma'il, a "sceptic and rationalist that ... believed the Jinn manifestations he described were illusions caused by hashish" (Lebling, 2010). Isma'il referred to a drug known as Shabhaba, used by an Islamic witch, Sheikha Khadra al-Aswanija al-Sufiya, to aid women in controlling lustfully straying husbands. Black dresses, and black dye on the face and hands, accompanied by ritual incantations as well as "a type of incense was burned that included hashish and a medicinal gum called anzarut (sarcocol)" (Lebling, 2010).

With the help of the incense and its effects, the atmosphere darkens and the Sheikha begins her invocation, as recorded by Isma'il:"Good evening to you, oh stars of the evening! Oh, yellow ones like apricots.... Oh, Glorious Venus with the wakeful eyes! ... Good evening to you, oh Sindas! [Sindas is said to be the name of the god of lust and debauchery]..."[4] At this point the Sheikha refers to the women's vagina, and reveals it, beating it seven times with a dandle, causing Sinda to appear, and intones further "Oh, Sindas! You have helpers!Oh, Sindas! Where are your brethren!"[5] After some more prayers and invocations, "Oh, whirlwind! Oh, clever one! You have satins with you! Drag him and beat him, and carry him away to the home of this poor woman, and leave him there" a " number of 'Helpers' – that is, jinn – arrive in various shapes and sizes. They listen to the commands of the Sheikha and then respectfully hurry off to implement them" (Lebling, 2010).

Reminiscent of the view of emerging Renaissance scientists in regard to the medieval witches' drug-induced night flights to the Sabbath, on "reflection, Isma'il decided that the appearance of jinn and other mystical aspects in the ceremony he described must have been 'imaginings' caused by the hashish and other intoxicants" (Lebling, 2010). Isma'il said this act would "stupefy the 'remnant' of reason in the Woman" and this allowed for her disturbed vision to imagine the arrival of the various jinn and deities invoked. "Despite the good doctor's scepticism and the stern warnings of religious conservatives, jinn-summoning and jinn-propitating rituals have retained their popularity in Egypt, Sudan and other nearby countries" (Lebling, 2010).

Seeing the the use of hashish among the sufis and dervishes of his day as the product of both foreign contamination and demonic influences, al-Badria wrote that while worshiping an idol, an Indian shaykh, Bir Ratan, heard the voice of Satan speak from within it, introducing him to hashish and teaching him the the art of its preparation. al-Badri also decried a similar devilish recipe for hashish among the "Anatolians known as t-f-r-y:

> When at the end of autumn and in winter, one can find only dry leaves of uncultivated whose properties

have weakened because of the evaporation of humidity, they add to each nine parts of cultivated hemp, which has been kept fermenting (?) ... for a while, one part or more of cow dung to serve as ferment in place of the leaves of uncultivated hemp. They say 'If we put the cow dung in the mass of fermentation, it comes to light, hot, and very potent.... If it does not contain any dung, it comes out heavy, crude, and uneven. They then ferment it with urine and soak it in it until it starts to decompose and worms are generated in it. If the worms are slow in coming they squeeze out rags with menstrual blood, and if they do not find any, they take spilled blood ... and leave it there for a week until it swarms with worms. They then pulverize it for a complete blending of the parts. Then they sift the mass. Others do not sift it but form it into pills and leave it in the shade until it dries." Al-Badri is happy to report that this was also the method recommended by Satan to the Indian Bir Ratan. As an additional Satanic trick, he ordered his son and his cohorts to put their urine on all intoxicating plants without people seeing them do it so that hashish was defiled by Satanic human urine openly and by Satanic Jinn urine secretly (Rosenthal, 1971).

Although this Satanic recipe seems like the medieval Islamic version of "reefer madness," when one reads some of the instructions for the preparation of drugs in the 10th century Islamic grimoire, *The Ghayat AlHakim*, known in the West as *The Picatrix*, it cannot be completely ruled out as a work of fantasy. As well, as we shall see later, Idries Shah and others have suggested an Islamic influence on later European witchcraft, and its own use of potions and ointments containing narcotics.

The

Ghayat AlHakim and The Picatrix

...the Indian cannabis has so many functions and the Indians use it mostly in their incense mixture that is used in the temples and some people prefer it more then the dregs of the wine and Yanbushath said it is also called the Chinese seed.

– Ghayat AlHakim

[translation from (Hashem Atallah, 2002) edition]

Acertain avenue of the occult use of cannabis from the Mid-East into Europe, came through *The Ghayat AlHakim*, (The Goal of the Wise), which was an Arabic grimoire thought to have been written sometime between the 10th and 11th century. When it was translated into Latin and Spanish in the 13th century, during the reign of King Alfonso "The Wise, and under his orders, "it became known by the name *The Picatrix*, and serves as one of the founding documents of the Western magical tradition. Too controversial to ever have made it to the printing press prior to the 20th century, *The Picatrix* was passed around secretly, in sought-after hand-written manuscripts. Considering this mode of transmission, it is not surprising that there are number of differences between the Arabic *Ghāyat Alhakīm* and surviving European versions of *The Picatrix*, and it seems likely in copying, some things were lost, and some added by each additional transcriber, but over all there is enough in common to identify their relationship.

Besides the Latin and Arabic versions of *The Picatrix*, there were medieval Hebrew translations as well, identifying interest in the grimoire among Jewish Kabbalists. "There are two Hebrew versions of the most important composition on magic, the *Ghayat al-Hakim* or *Picatrix*."(Idel, 1992). The most important of the two was translated from the Arabic , and is known as *Takhlit he-Hakham*; later versions were translated from the Latin or Spanish versions of the grimoire. "Three Hebrew translations of *Picatrix* have been preserved in Italian manuscripts written at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries" (Idel, 1992).

The Picatrix is comprised of four books with detailed instructions in the arts of astrology, talismanic magic, and contacting the astral realm. The author of *The Picatrix* claimed to have put it together from the works of over two hundred "ancient sages." Influences from the ancient texts of Egypt, India, Persia, Assyria, Chaldea, Greece and others have been noted, and exotic ingredients from China, Africa, India and other locations can be found, indicating the metropolitan culture from which it was created. As David Pingree notes in his essay, "Some of the Sources of the Ghāyat al-hakīm," it is an "Arabic texts on Hermeticism, Sabianism, Ismailism, astrology, alchemy and magic produced in the Near East in the ninth and tenth centuries A.D." (Pingree, 1980). An obviously important text of Islamic magic, it provides modern readers with an idea

about some of the occult beliefs and practices of esoteric Islamic groups such as the Ismailis, and Sufis, whom we have already been discussing for their use of hashish. As the text was translated in 13th century Spain it is also worth noting that, at the time, hashish "was also openly consumed in Southern Spain until that country's reconquest by Isabella the Catholic and the re-establishment of the firm grip of the Roman Catholic Church" (Nahas, 1985).

The original authorship of *The Ghayat AlHakim* and thus *The Picatrix* has long been a matter debate. The Latin manuscript's prologue refers to "the wise philosopher, the noble and honored Picatrix" and it is generally thought he named the book after himself. A number of medieval sources claimed that the name "Picatrix," was a poor translation of Hippocrates, although this association has long since been dismissed, as Hippocrates appears on the pages of *The Picatrix* as "Ypocras." Others have claimed that the Arabic grimoire was written by Maslama ibn Ahmad al-Majriti (an Andalusian mathematician), an association thought to have been first made by the 14th century alchemist al-Jildaki, however, this authorship as well has since been called into question.

Modern scholarship has since traced the work to the 10th century figure Abu l-Qāsim Maslama b. Qāsim al-Qurṭubī, (shortened to "Maslama") who also compiled a text on alchemy, the *Rutbat al-Hakīm*, (*The Rank of the Sage*) and confirmation of this identity has recently come through the discovery of two medieval Arabic manuscripts that were missed by earlier researchers, which refer to Abu al-Qāsim Maslama born Qāsim al-Qurṭubī as the author. Maslama was described by Ibn al-Faradi as "a man of charms and talismans," and other sources have described him as a "magician and charmer," as well as a "Cordoban alchemist." The identity of Maslama may also be the source of the name "Picatrix," through "a kind of cross linguistic pun" (Atrell, 2016). The Arabic word "m-s-l" which relates to the name Maslama, means "to sting" and thus the Spanish translator rendered this as Picatrix, a variant of the Latin word picator, which means "one who stings or pricks" (Thomann, 1990).

Making no real distinction between white and black magic, the spells and recipes of this medieval grimoire blurred the lines between what would later be divided into the high and low magical traditions. Alongside the use of such preparations as mandrake, hellebore, opium, cannabis, datura and other psychoactive substances, can be found the ritual use of human remains, the blood of man and animal, semen, excrement and other foul ingredients. In certain recipes, some extremely toxic substances are included, and it has been suggested that this may have been a means used by the author of *The Picatrix* to separate the wise from unworthy aspirants. "Such ploys would have certainly reinforced the notoriety concerning the use of magical grimoires like *The Picatrix*" (Attrell, 2016).

> Both the Arabic and Latin version are concerned with talismanic astro-magic induced by aromatic fumigants, some inhaled through a "hollow cross" with precise directions and varied ingredients ... Translations of Arabic texts ... offer a context of supernatural plants and shamanic practices that evidence a continued use of psychoactive incenses as a catalyst into trance or ecstatic states (Dannaway, 2009).

Due to not-unfounded views of its "diabolical" nature, to be caught with *The Picatrix* in the medieval period would have resulted in accusations of witchcraft and heresy and likely a trial by the Inquisition. *The Picatrix* was listed among the most abominable works of Nigromancia,[6] or divination by means of daemonic conjuration, by Johannes Hartlieb in his mid 15th century work, *Das puch aller verpoten kunst, ungelaubens und der zaubrey puch aller verpoten kunst, ungelaubens und der zaubrey*, (The Book of all Forbidden Arts, Superstition and Sorcery), which has also been noted for containing the oldest known description of witches' flying ointments). References to *The Picatrix* can also be found in the *Steganographia* (Secret Writings), a work on "angelic magic," (1500) and the later *Antipalus Maleficiorum*, (The Enemy of Witchcraft, 1508) both of which were authored by Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516) a German Benedictine Abbot and occultist, whose students included the famous occult figures Agrippa and Paracelsus. Despite this diabolical reputation, this book's influence on the European and occult traditions cannot be understated.

> One of the most significant contributions of recent Renaissance scholarship has been the recognition of the considerable impact of magic on Renaissance thought ... the literary traces of Picatrix are discernible in the writings of several central thinkers such as Giordano Bruno and Tommaso Campanella..." (Idel, 1992).

Campanella's *Citta del Sole*, which influenced Thomas More's *Utopia*, has been noted as being influenced from and the "closest parallel to ... the City of Adocentyn[7] in *Picatrix*" (Yates, 1964). "'Adocentyn' is a corrupt transliteration of *Al-Ashmunain*, which is the Arabic name for Hermopolis in Egypt, the city dedicated to Thoth-Hermes" (Atrell, 2018). One wonders if there might also be an influence on Rabelais' concept of the Abbey of Thelema? As the French alchemist and monk, also reveals a familiarity with *The Picatrix*. *The Picatrix*'s description of its builder as one of the "masters of the art" who built his "temple to the Sun ... and knew how to hide himself from all so that no one could see him, although he was within it", also brings to mind the "Invisible College" of the Rosicrucians.

Recipes for elixirs, ointments, pills and incenses abound in *The Picatrix*, some being used to treat illness,

others to cause harm, and interestingly for this study, still others, for seeing visions and contacting the astral realm. Although cannabis, opium and other substances appear throughout the pages of *The Picatrix*, the identification of these substances in this medieval grimoire, has "hitherto received little attention from the scholars of medieval magic" (Attrell, 2016).

> The most highly active and dangerous substances used in the Picatrix come from the family of solanaceous plants, such as Mandragora officinarum and Hyoscyamus niger which are infamous for their uses in European witchcraft ... Mandrake and Henbane, like Datura Stramonium (jimsonweed, devil's trumpet, or thorn-apple) or Atropa Belladonna (Deadly Nightshade), are known to provoke bizarre delirium, nightmarish hallucinations, out-of-body experiences and "flights" (Attrell, 2016).

Opium appears more readily than cannabis in *The Picatrix*, and includes medicinal references ("breast milk with opium brings sleep to the feverish and insomniacs") as well as magical. One rather gruesome magical recipe calls for a recently removed human head, placed in a large jug with eight ounces of opium, with equal parts human blood and sesame oil, to be sealed and slow cooked! The author of *The Picatrix* wrote "that there were many marvels in that oil, and the first is that it allows you to see whatever you want to see." Another recipe calls for the magician to: "Take a human penis, and chop it into pieces, and stir in powdered opium"![18] Others recipes call for opium to be mixed with other psychoactive substances henbane seeds, nutmeg, calamus, wormwood, along with more mildly psychoactive ingredients, some for aid in producing smoke, like frankincense, myrrh and saffron, which aided in producing a more pleasant smelling smoke, and that was likely needed considering the use of blood, and other items like "the head of a black cat."

Dan Attrell, one of the two translators for the most recent English edition of *The Picatrix*, has written on the role of drugs in the medieval grimoire, and he notes that :

> Like the initiate of a pre-literate culture's shamanic rites, the sage who spent months planning his work, collecting animal, mineral, and botanical ingredients, and charting out the right astrological hours to perform his work, was doubtless assisted – in certain cases – with achieving what he desired through the help of psychoactive substances. The substances required for certain spells in the Picatrix are often demanded in such high quantities that a powerful mind-altering experience would have been inevitable for the practitioner suffumigating with it. In these dreamy (or delirious) states, the planetary spirits cascaded down into the mind of the adept who

straddled the realm of common experience and the abstract realm of forms hidden within the subconscious (Attrell & Porreca, 2018).

The main method of using these substances was through "suffumigation," i.e., through burning incenses and other means of creating smoke. As the author of *The Picatrix* wrote of this method: "Great miracles and great effects, according to the Hindus, are in suffumigations, which they call calcitarat, and with them are worked the effects of the seven planets. These suffumigations ought to be used according to the nature of the planet to which the petition corresponds."[9] Quoting Hermes Trismegistus, the author notes elsewhere that "Rituals performed with suffumigations and prayers are more effective than those in which suffumigations are lacking or the will is divided" (Attrell & Porreca, 2018).

This ritual fumigation required the magician to often stand over the burning fumes of the preparation and inhale the smoke in an enclosed space, and from some of the ingredients and amounts used of these substances, we can be sure a ritual intoxications was received. "The purpose of most suffumigation magic in *The Picatrix* is for the sake of contacting the planetary spirits. When the adept wished to speak with a planet, he dressed himself in robes dyed with the colours of his chosen planet, he chose its hours, he prayed its prayers, and he suffumigated with its ingredients" (Attrell, 2016). The ingredients varied depending on the planetary aid which was invoked, and not all ingredients or recipes were composed of psychoactive substances.

In regard to celestial deities, opium was used in an invocation to the Sun, whereas the use of cannabis appears in two magical operations which appeased the Moon. Here, considering what we have seen about the influence of the Zoroastrian tradition in the Islamic world, along with evidence of the survival of the Haoma cult into 19th century Syria, one could speculate that this association between cannabis and the moon, may be a remnant of the celestial deity's association with Soma/Haoma. In *The Picatrix*'s Book 4 chapter 2, which deals with moon magic, we find two recipes that involve cannabis:[10]

> How one can speak with the spirits of the Moon, and first, when she is in Aries. When you wish to attract the virtue and power of the Moon when she is in Aries, at the hour when she is completely risen, because that is better and more useful for your petition; in that very hour, put on a crown and go to a green and watery place near the banks of a running river or running water. Take with you a rooster with a divided crest, which you will behead with the bone of another rooster, as you must not in any way touch that rooster with iron. Turn your face to the Moon, for this is a

very great secret among them [Chaldeans, and Egyptians]. Put in front of yourself two iron thuribles full of burning coals, in which you should cast successively grains of incense, so that smoke rises up toward the Moon. Then stand upright between the censers and say: "You O Moon, luminous, honoured, lovely, who with your light shatters the shadows, you ascend in your rising and fill every horizon with your light and beauty. I come to you humbly, seeking wealth, for which I humbly ask you." Here state your petition. Then take ten steps forward, always looking at the Moon, and repeating the aforesaid words. Carry one of the thuribles with you, into which you should cast four ounces of storax.

Then burn your sacrifice, and draw the following figures on a leaf of cannabis with the ashes of the sacrifice and a small amount of crocus:

Then burn the leaf. At once, as the smoke rises, you will see before you the figure of a handsome man dressed in the finest clothes, standing between the thuribles, to whom you should address your petition, and it will be fulfilled by him. At any time after this, when you wish to ask something of him, repeat the working just given, and the aforesaid form will appear to you and answer your questions."[11]

Although the above recipe gives no real indication of an amount of cannabis that could be inferred for psychoactive effects and "it must be admitted that this could be a sheet of hemp (like hemp paper), but it's ambiguous" (Attrell, 2016). However, elsewhere copious amounts of cannabis resin can be found. As Dan Attrell has noted: "The blood of a stag, an animal governed by the Moon since antiquity, is ground together in a marble mortar with over a pound of hashish. The user of this particular suffumigation is instructed to put the mixture into a censer, set it alight, then stand above it whilst making prayers and sacrifices to the Moon, and only then would the "servant of the Moon" (Lune servus) appear" (Attrell, 2016). As *The Picatrix* itself records:

> When the Moon is in Pisces and you wish to draw upon her strength and power, take 1-1/5 lbs. of cannabis resin and the same amount of plane tree resin and mix them together. Extract these resins while the Sun is in Virgo and Mercury is luminous and advancing directly. Grind them up in a marble mortar. When this is done, add 4 oz. of mastic gum, 2 oz. each of amber and camphor, 1 oz. of alkali and 10 oz. of sarcocolla. Blend everything very well, to which you should add ½ lb. of the blood of a stag decapitated with a bronze knife. When everything has been blended together, place it in a glass container. Go to a running spring, and position the glass vessel

on its outer lip. Next, take a censer, and set it on a stone in the middle of the spring's waters such that the censer be entirely surrounded by water. Then, light a fire in it. Once it is lit, open the mouth of the glass container and empty out the container into the fire little by little until the whole thing has poured out into the fire. Next, make your sacrifice. The servant of the Moon will appear to you, to whom you should state your request. It will be led to its effect.[12]

In regard to the use of blood and narcotics in this invocation recipe, and throughout *The Picatrix*, it is worth noting the comments of Franz Hartmann, the German occultist and a founding member of the *Ordo Templi Orientis*:

> Various means have been adopted to suspend the discriminating power of will and render the imagination abnormally passive, and all such practices are injurious, in proportion as they are eflicacious. The ancient Pythoness attempted to heighten her already abnormal receptivity by the inhalation of noxious vapours ... others use opium, Indian hemp, and other narcotics, which not only suspend their will and render their mind a blank, but which also excite the brain, and induce morbid fancies and illusions.
>
> ...The fumigations which were used at former times for the purpose of rendering reason inactive, and allowing the products of a passive imagination to appear in an objective state, were usually narcotic substances. Blood was only used for the purpose of furnishing substance to Elemental's and Elementaries, by the aid of which they might render their bodies more dense and visible (Hartmann, 1893).

The idea that sacrificial smoke was a sort of food for demons, goes considerably far back. "Zosimos holds the view that the daimons which inhabit the upper regions of the world are nourished by the smoke of sacrifice, and so are dependent upon the offerings of human worshipers. There is an implication that the airy bodies of these daimons are actually replenished by the sacrificial vapours, a question that seems to have been debated in theurgic circles" (Fraser, 2004). "...[I]n order to attract the spirits into communion, a material medium was necessary. Some magi used thick fumigations to form an artificial or temporary body" (Godwin, 1994).

It should be noted that the choice of a location where the incense "censer ... [is] on a stone in the middle of the spring's waters such that the censer be entirely surrounded by water" would have offered some interesting light reflection opportunities that would have likely played well with the fire and thick smoke of the hashish and other ingredient infused incense. Putting all supernatural explanations aside, along with the effects of the firelight playing off the water and smoke, clearly, the chemical effects of

the smoke alone from these substances would increase any potential for "pareidolia," which refers to a psychological phenomenon in which the mind responds to a stimulus by perceiving a familiar pattern where none exists, i.e., as in seeing images in smoke, the same smoke that provided the source of inspiration. This is an ancient, time-tested and proven technique of magic.

Smoke-filled Invocations

Besides noting the role of smoke in giving the ability of entities to take form in such invocations, Hartmann also identified the continued use of narcotic fumigations in Europe for these same purposes. As we shall see by the Renaissance period, this shamanic technique of magic was considerably widespread, and references similar to those of *The Picatrix* appeared in a number of grimoires, but some discussion of this here, helps to better understand the context of *The Picatrix* account.

> There is not much doubt the procedures of ritual magic are likely to cause hallucinations. The magician prepares himself by abstinence and lack of sleep, or by drink, drugs and sex. He breathes in fumes which may affect his brain and senses. He performs mysterious rites which tug at the deepest, most emotional and unreasoning levels of his mind.... Through all this he concentrates on a mental picture of the being he hopes to see. It does not seem at all unlikely that at the high point in the ceremony he may actually see it (Cavendish, 1967).

More directly, in *The Black Arts*, Cavendish goes further on this explaining: "The fumes attract spirits and the spirits can make visible forms for themselves out of the smoke.... It is significant that many of the substances recommended for burning in operations of sorcery give off fumes likely to cause stupor, hallucinations or delirium--hemlock, henbane, black hellebore, indian hemp, opium, all of which are powerful narcotics" (Cavendish, 1967/2017).

This view of magical incense was also shared by 19th Century researchers. As Joseph Ennemoser explained in *Geschichte der Magie*, (1844), (which came out in English as the *History of Magic*, in 1854):

> The ... vapours by which the priests of old became ecstatic, or which were used upon the oracles, may be classed among the narcotics...
>
> ...Other preparations – by incense – have been known and handed down from the most remote ages in Asia, Egypt, and Greece; and it appears that they were thence transferred, partly by early migrations, partly by the Crusades, to Europe...
>
> ...the methods of producing the magical states at; will and artificially are here of ancient date and universal knowledge. Of narcotic substances, opium, hemp, and deadly nightshade, we find the most accurate accounts, and they are still in use among the modem Persians, Moslems, and Arabs. Theurgy even contained the art of communicating with Spirits and of subjecting them. Thus the nature of the vision often shows that they are produced by artificial

means... (Ennemoser, 1844/1854).

In *Fiends, Ghosts and Sprites, including an account of the origins and nature of belief in the supernatural* (1854), John N. Radcliffe echoed these views:

> ...the subsequent intoxication induced by the inhalation of powerful narcotic vapours – an intoxication which, as ... in the example of haschish, is peculiarly apt to the development of hallucinations – will sufficiently account for the illusion of the smoke of the chafing-dish presenting any figure which the mind desires to see.
>
> ...The action of the narcotic vapour alone was sufficient to induce hallucinations....
>
> ...The use of intoxicating and stupifying drugs doubtless contributed also to the development of those ideas of strange and wonderful transformations and anomalies of form with which the legends and romances of Oriental and European nations teem... (Radcliffe, 1864).

The Picatrix and the Western Magical Tradition

The Picatrix , as we have seen, was in circulation in Europe from the 13th century forward and passed through many hands. Interestingly, we may be able to detect its influence on some very important occult figures, and the use of the psychoactive plants involved seems to have been a part of this transmission. Notably in this regard are the the alchemist, Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541) (Paracelsus) and the theologian and occultist Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) both of whom were students of Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516) who made reference to *The Picatrix*, in two works, indicating its potential availability in this period. We can be sure that Trithemius circulated hand-written copies of his manuscripts among his most talented students, and that the reference to *The Picatrix* in regards to invocation of angels in Book Two of his *Steganographia* (Secret Writings), a work on "angelic magic," (1499; published 1606) stirred the interest of his students, as much as the warnings in the later *Antipalus Maleficiorum*, (The Enemy of Witchcraft, 1508, but not published until 1605), made them wary of being caught with a copy of the manuscript.

Considered Trithemius most notorious work, the *Steganographia* was largely focussed on magic, particularly invoking and communicating with spirits, with apparently still other material encoded into the text via cryptography and steganography.

> It claims to contain a synthesis of the science of knowledge, the art of memory, magic, an accelerated language learning system, and a method of sending messages without symbols or messenger. In private circulation, the Steganographia brought such a reaction of fear that he decided it should never be published. He reportedly destroyed the more extreme portions (presumably instructions for prophecy/ divination) but it continued to circulate in mss form and was eventually published posthumously in 1606 (Petersen, 1997).

Trithemius was attacked over the content of the manuscript, and moreover, he seemed concerned about it falling into the wrong hands, stating: "Let the *Stegnographia* stay hidden in the shadows, and let it not be made accessible to the society of cows, which is accustomed to make judgement concerning things of which it is ignorant..."[13] Not long after it was published it was placed on The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (List of Prohibited Books), a list of texts the Catholic Church deemed heretical, and anti clerical, in 1609, and remained there for some centuries. Dr. John Dee (1527-1608) apparently had a copy, and this likely influenced his own brand of angelic magic.

Trithemius' apparent disdain for *The Picatrix* in his later

Antipalus Maleficiorum, could conceivably be in reaction to the references to it in the *Stegnographia*. In *Antipalus Maleficiorum*, *The Picatrix* appears in a catalogue of necromantic books, and Trithemius describes its history and instructions in regard to the "spirits of the planets; rings with many different characters." But he was now concerned by its "frivolous superstitions and diabolical forms" and said "the mother of all the holy things, the Church, condemned... [it] as superstitious and unlawful."

Thus, from their teacher's warning about *The Picatrix*, and possibly due to his experience over it as well, both Paracelsus and Agrippa would have had good reason not to mention the influential Arabic grimoire by name, due to its association with black magic and conjuration, both of which would have led to unwanted interest and persecution from the religious authorities of the day. The French witch hunter, Nicolas Rémy, stated in 1595, that "Agrippa, Pierre d'Abano and Picatrix, three masters in damnable magic, have left more prescriptions than is necessary for the good of men." Despite the concerns about its contents, *The Picatrix* has often been named as one of the founding documents of Renaissance magic.

We can be sure Agrippa was familiar with the Arabic grimoire, as he refers to it by name. In a letter from Agrippa to his teacher Trithemius, we get a sense of the rising concern of the Church, over once accepted magical practices:

When I was ... with you ... we conferred together of divers things concerning Chemistry, Magic, and Cabala, and of other things, which as yet lie hid in Secret Sciences and Arts; and then there was one great question amongst the rest – Why Magic, whereas it was accounted by all ancient philosophers to be the chiefest science, and by the ancient wise men and priests was always held in great veneration, came at last, after the beginning of the Catholic Church, to be always odious to and suspected by the holy Fathers, and then exploded by Divines, and condemned by sacred Canons, and ... by all laws and ordinances forbidden? Now, the cause, as I conceive, is... this...: ....[B]y a certain fatal depravation of times and men, many false philosophers crept in, and these, under the name of Magicians, heaping together, through various sorts of errors and factions of false religions, many cursed superstitions and dangerous rites, and many wicked sacrileges, even to the perfection of Nature; and the same set forth in many wicked and unlawful books, to which they have by stealth prefixed the most honest name and title of Magic; hoping, by this sacred title, to gain credit to their cursed and detestable fooleries. Hence it is that this name of Magic, formerly so honorable, is now become most odious to good and honest men, and accounted a capital crime if any one dare profess himself to be a

Magician, either in doctrine or works.

...These things being so, I wondered much ... that, as yet, there had been no man who had either vindicated this sublime and sacred discipline from the charge of impiety or had delivered it purely and sincerely to us. What I have seen of our modern writers – Roger Bacon, Robert of York, an Englishman, Peter Apponus, Albertus [Magnus] the Teutonich, Arnoldas de villa Nova, Anselme the Parmensian, Picatrix the Spaniard, Cicclus Asculus of Florence, and many other writers of an obscure name – when they promise to treat of Magic do nothing but relate irrational tales and superstitions unworthy of honest men. Hence my spirit was moved, and, by reason partly of admiration, and partly of indignation, I was willing to play the philosopher, supposing that I should do no discommendable work – seeing I have been always from my youth a curious and undaunted searcher for wonderful effects and operations full of mysteries ... I have at last composed three compendious books of Magic, and titled them Of Occult Philosophy, being a title less offensive, which books I submit (you excelling in the knowledge of these things) to your correction and censure, that if I have wrote anything which may tend either to the contumely of Nature, offending God, or injury of religion, you may condemn the error; but if the scandal of impiety be dissolved and purged, you may defend the Tradition of Truth; and that you would do so with these books, and Magic itself, that nothing may be concealed which may be profitable, and nothing approved of which cannot but do hurt; by which means these three books, having passed your examination with approbation, may at length be thought worthy to come forth with good success in public, and may not be afraid to come under the censure of posterity.[14]

Trithemius whole-heartedly approved of his student's *Magnum Opus*, but with some sober advice on the need for secrecy: "This one thing only we warn you to abide by the counsel of, speak of things public to the public, but of things lofty and secret only to the loftiest and the most private of your friends. Hay to an ox and sugar to a parrot: rightly interpret this, lest you, as some others have been, be trampled down by oxen. Happy farewell, my friend."[15] This reference to the "Parrot" is interesting, as it may indicate a reference to "the language of the Birds" the esoteric language of symbolism and metaphor used to hide secrets from the profane,(i.e "oxen,) that was created by the Sufis, and adapted by later European Alchemists. Sufis, are particularly said to have used references to the "parrot" in this regard, and the poet Hafiz, referred to the "Parrot, who discoursest of mysteries, may thy beak never want sugar!" in reference "to the drug [hashish]" (Brown, 1893).

This exchange between Trithemius and Agrippa indicates that besides fears of persecution from the Church, Agrippa likely had concerns as well about what was written in *The Picatrix*. Likely, the copious use of body fluids, and body parts in *The Picatrix*, along with other detestable ingredients had led to justifiable concerns for Agrippa, and he lamented that magic "must be learned from very reprobate books of darkness." However, his reference to Picatrix here shows also that Agrippa was clearly familiar with its texts. Agrippa hoped to reform magic with his *De Occulta Philosophia libri III* (Three Books of Occult Philosophy). Unfortunately for Agrippa, his legacy has come to be placed by many with the same sort of magicians he had hoped to redeem magic from.

Despite criticizing it in his letter to Trithemius, the influence of Picatrix is clear in *De Occulta Philosophia*, as Agrippa repeats the design of a number of talismans that can be found in Arabic grimoire, without naming the source. Similar claims have been made about the 15th century Italian scholar, Catholic priest and astrological magician Marsilio Ficino, whose *Three Books on Life* also reproduces talismans from the pages of *The Picatrix*, attributing them to the "Arabians" to avoid any guilt of association with the abominable reputation of *The Picatrix*. It has also been suggested that "the literary traces of Picatrix are discernible in the writings of several central [Renaissance] thinkers such as Giordano Bruno and Tommaso Campanella" (Idel, 1992).

Agrippa's use of talisman taken from *The Picatrix*, and his keen awareness of the type of astrological magic it contained, also indicates he would have had knowledge of cannabis, opium and other narcotics mentioned in it. He also would have known how the grimoire connected certain plants and substances with certain planets, for the purposes of "astral magic"such as the Sun with Opium and the Moon with Cannabis, and indeed he referred to these types of correspondences.

> But as often as we direct any work to the sun , we must make suffumigations with solary things; if to the moon, with lunary things, and so of the rest. And we must know, that as there is a contrariety and enmity in stars, and spirits, so also in suffumigations unto the same.
>
> It is necessary, therefore, to know of what substances the fumes are appropriated to each planet (Book 1, De Occulta Philosophia, 1533).[16]

In Book III (part 4), of his *Occult Philosophy*, Agrippa refers to an ecstatic prophetic state known as "phrensie," and describes various means of achieving this, including, "invocations, & certain sacred arts, or certain secret confections, by which the spirits of their God did infuse vertue, make the soul rise above the mind, by joyning it with dieties [deities], and Demons." In Agrippa's mind

some substances were naturally endowed with the ability to clean the mind, and even expel demonic forces.

> It is believed, and it is delivered by them that are skilful in sacred things, that the mind also may be expiated with certain institutions, and sacraments ministred outwardly, as by sacrifices, baptismes, and adjurations, benedictions, consecrations, sprinklings of holy water, by anoyntings [annointings], and fumes, not so much consecrated to this, as having a naturall power thus to do; upon this account sulphur hath a place in Religions, to expiate ill Demons with the fume thereof (Book 3, De Occulta Philosophia, 1533).

In relation, it has also been suggested, somewhat loosely and uncited, that in "the course of his magnum opus, Agrippa ... mentions experiments with drugs which may be opium, cocaine or cannabis derivatives" (Baigent & Leigh, 2013). Ernest Abel, has claimed that Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia*, vol. 43, makes reference to cannabis in a witches' unguent, but I was unable to find confirmation of this, (Abel, 1980). In earlier writings Agrippa shows familiarity with Pliny's writings on hemp, but only refers to it in reference to its use for ship's sails (Agrippa, 1526). However, Agrippa does list henbane, hellebore, poppy and other psychoactive substances in available versions of *De Occulta Philosophia* (1533), and these plants are identified in *The Picatrix* so it is clear that Agrippa had some awareness of the use of psychoactive substances in producing a visionary state, and their use for seeing spirits:

> There are also suffumigations under opportune influences of the Stars that make the images of spirits forthwith appear in the air or elsewhere. So, they say, that if of coriander, smallage, henbane, and hemlock, be made a fume, that spirits will presently come together; hence they are called spirit's herbs. Also, it is said, that fume made of the root of the reedy herb sagapen, with the juice of hemlock and henbane, and the herb tapsus barbatus, red sanders, and black poppy, makes spirits and strange shapes appear... (Three Books, Book 1, Chapter 43).[17]

The "reedy herb sagapen" is interesting, as this is a herb that appears in medieval spells, potions, and recipes, however its botanical identity is unknown, and it's considered a legendary or mythical herb.

Paracelsus, as well, had a deep knowledge of plant drugs, like cannabis, opium, henbane, mandrake etc. Generally, this has been assumed to have been garnered from Islamic medical texts, like those of Avicenna, who we know Paracelsus was familiar with (both have been seen as opium addicts as well). Unfortunately, like a lot of medieval Latin material, much of Paracelus' work remains untranslated. However, it seems likely that Paracelsus would

have been well versed in the use of psychoactive substances in magic, as he was familiar with their use in medicine. Dr. Manfred Frankhauser states that "Paracelsus described cannabis in a number of his many works" (Frankhauser, 2002). Dr Franjo Grotenhermen shared that view and stated further that cannabis was an ingredient in Paracelsus' "Arcana compositum" (Grotenhermen, 2009), a preparation which will be discussed in Chapter 11. However, Paracelsus was more widely known for his use of opium, which also figured prominently in the pages of *The Picatrix*, and as we shall see his alleged magical use of opium fits with the sort of magic described in the Arabic book of magic.

In his famous work, *The Magus*, Francis Barrett wrote that Paracelsus was "well acquainted with the use and virtue of opium... Oporinus [(1507-1568)] relates that he made up certain little pills of the colour, figure, and size of mouse-turds, which were nothing but opium. These he called by a barbarous sort of name, his laudanum; q.d. laudable medicine; he always carried them with him..." (Barrett, 1801).[18] There were accusations early on that Paracelsus also used opium for magical purposes, particularly the sort of invocations described in *The Picatrix*. These accusations first appeared in the 1625 century work, *Apolgie pour les grands personages faussement soupçonnés de magie*.[19] As we read in Davies' 1657 Old English translation of Gabriel Naudé's work, *The History of Magick By Way of Apology For all the Wise Men who have have unjustly been reputed Magicians from the Creation to the Present Age*:

> ...Johanes Oporinus, who was his fervant a long time, and having made firft difcovery of what is now objected to him ... who having ftayd twenty feven months with him, fayes ... that, when he was drunk, he would threaten to bring millions of Devils, to fhew what power he had over them, not to take any notice of what many fay of the familiar Daemon which lock-'d up within the pommel of his fword. For, not to bring upon the ftage the opinion of the Alchymifts who maintaine, it was the fecret of the Philofophers ftone, it were more rationall to believe, that, if there were anything within it, it was certainly two or three dofes of his Laudanum, which he never went without, because he did ftrange things with it and uf'd it as a univerfall medicine to cure all manner of difeafes" (Davies/Naudé, 1657).

This last comment indicates that opium was used for "strange things" as well as a medicine by Paracelsus. Naudé also gives us the likely origins for the often quoted claim that opium was the basis for Paracelsus' version of the "Philosopher's Stone." Paracelsus' servant, Johanes Oporinus, claimed that when Paracelsus "was drunk, he would threaten to bring millions of Devils, to fhew [show] what power he had over them, not to take any notice of

what many fay of the familiar Daemon which lock'd up within the pommel of his fword [sword]" (Naudé, 1625/1657). This shows that Paracelsus did make reference to his knowledge and practice of magic. It has been a long-standing view that besides his interest in alchemy and medicine that Paracelsus was also a practicing magician. "He not only told fortunes and interpreted dreams, but even ventured upon summoning spirits from the cast deep" (Maxwell, 1865). The two arts really went hand in hand at this time.

In reference to the "familiar demon," it should be noted that the "wizard of the Middle Ages was also a doctor, and it is claimed that the familiar that inhabited the sword of Paracelsus, which sword he always had by him and could never be parted from, was none other than a certain amount of opium concealed in the hollow pommel" (Bland, 1920). Images of Paracelsus have him holding his hand over the Sword, with the name "Azoth" written on it, said to be a title of the Philosopher's Stone, and the suggestion has been that this was a reference to a solid form of his laudanum tincture. As Maxwell noted in *Dwellers on the Threshold: Or, Magic and Magicians* of the Azoth and opium:

> This preparation of opium constitutes the first arcanum, or the first magistery ... it was perhaps, his Azoth – the spirit which he carried in the pommel of his sword – the demon which arouses a myriad other demons, some bright and beautiful, some horrent and diabolical, for the dreams of the opium-eater are not all lighted sunshine, but frequently plunge into the depths of darkness and despair!
>
> ...Paraclesus pretended that its pommel was the hiding-place of Azoth his familiar, who lay there imprisoned in a jewel. He often embraced it, and held mad converse with it, and gave out that it had in its charge the famous elixir vitae by which he could prolong the lives of men to the protracted date of the antediluvian fathers. He boasted that his word controlled an entire legion of spirits. Another of his attendants, named Wetterus, relates that he frequently threatened to summon a vast host of demons, and show him how his lightest breath directed their movements (Maxwell, 1867).

Azoth is similar to one of the Arabic names of a cannabis preparation, az-zrzh, and it should be noted that various esoteric names for hashish and opium, such as theriac, were used interchangeably. Seeing substances such as hashish and opium as "spirits" has long been part of magical technique, and also fits with what will be seen in regard to the extraction of the "spirits" of plants into alchemical "quintessences. "By inhaling or digesting that physical matter, one is also performing an invocation of

the spirit that resides within it ... there is no eucharist more profoundly striking than the consumption of a consecrated psycotropic substance, especially if one understands it to be a living being, rather than a mere dead mix of chemicals" (Leitch, 2005). Thus it seems clear that Paracelsus would have been well versed in the use of psychoactive substances in magic, as much as he was familiar with their use in medicine, and *The Picatrix* seems the most likely source and inspiration for this knowledge.

In relation to Agrippa's reference to poppies in a fumigation recipe, and Paracelsus' alleged use of opium for this purpose, it is also worth noting that their contemporary, the alchemist monk Rabelais stated, "On burning coals we will put the seeds of Poppy," for the practice of capnomancy, divination by scrying in smoke, which he referred to as "the gallantest and most excellent of all Secrets!" Francois Rabelais (1483?-1553), who will be discussing at length for his esoteric references to cannabis in Chapter 13, showed his familiarity with the Arabic grimoire, in a reference to a character who had studied in Toledo, Spain, and and learned magical techniques for protecting himself from demons, from the works of "the reverend father in hell Picatrix."

The 19th century occultist, Dr. Franz Hartmann, in his *Life of Paracelsus*, noted that through the "the judicious use of plants beneficial astral activities may be attracted" (Hartmann, 1891). In a chart of plants and the corresponding planets by which they were governed, Hartmann lists "Jupiter" as presiding over "Cannabis Sativa," however he does not clarify if this association was his own, or something he garnered from Paracelsus. In reference to the production of "hallucinations" for seeing "astral forms," Hartmann notes that "fumigations of poisonous substances were used for such purposes. The receipts for the materials used for such fumigations were kept very secret, on account of the abuse that might have been made of such, a knowledge, and in consequence of which a person may be even made insane. One of the most effective fumigations for the purpose of causing apparitions was, according to Eckartshausen, made of the following substances: Hemlock, Henbane, Saffron, Aloe, Opium, Mandrake, Solanum, Poppy-seed, Asafoetida, and Parsley" (Hartmann, 1891). Elsewhere in reference to the German Occultist and Alchemist, Karl von Eckartshausen's,

(1752-1803) "fumigant for the purpose of causing apparitions," Hartman makes it clear that it was used for similar purposes that are suggested here. Noting that after fumigating with this preparation and "undergoing a certain preparation, which he describes, he attempted the experiment, and saw the ghost of the person which he desired to see; but he came very near poisoning himself. Dr. Horst repeated the experiment with the same result, and for years afterwards whenever he looked upon a dark object, he saw the apparition again" (Hartmann, 1893). Eckartshausen's fumigation experiments will be more fully examined in Chapter 20.

It should be noted that in Naudé's account of Opirnus, he never witnessed Paracelsus' alleged "Magick, or his invocations," first-hand, so the manner used in this respect, or whether he just wrote about such things, remains unknown. Because of this Naudé pondered that since Paracelsus "pretended to the abfolute knowledge of all kinds of magick, why he never did anything by the affiftance of them. For Certainly it had been much more reputation to him to confirm this new doctrine by some of his experiences..." (Davies/Naudé, 1657). Referring to the "cryptic and queer" style of medieval writings on subjects such as this, and using Agrippa as an example, Albert G. Mackey, noted that "that there are several explanations for the need for secrecy ... [such as] the need to keep laymen from endangering themselves with drugs they could not understand (Thomas Norton's *Ordinal of Alchemy* [1477] mentions this)" (Mackey, 1878). In relation to this and Naudé's pondering on the lack of first-hand evidence for Paracelsus' practice of magic, it should be remembered that an important reason for secrecy was fear of the ever watchful eye of the church, and the potential for accusations of sorcery, along with the expected persecution that would likely follow.

An edition of *The Picatrix* in the British Library is known to have passed through the hands of noted figures in the history of Hermeticism such as astrologers and alchemists Simon Forman and Richard Napier. Freemason and Alchemist Elias Ashmole left a note in a copy that was given to William Lilly, identifying it as a gift from Napier. Lilly, who was an astrologer, placed cannabis with poppies, henbane, various nightshades and other narcotic plants under Saturn, in his compendium of *Herbal Astrology*. A copy in possession of Giacomo Casanova, who liked to be perceived of as a magician, has in part been seen as the cause of his arrest by the Venetian Inquisition. Knowing who was familiar with the manuscript, and more so, who owned it, may give us some idea of who was practicing the magic contained in *The Picatrix*. Figures like Ashmole, Lilly, Napier, Forman, and Casanova, did not acquire rare magical grimoires for simply decorating the bookshelf. These influences lasted well into the 20th century. Noted 19th century Golden Dawn founder S. L.

MacGregor Mathers (1854-1918), suggested in his introduction to *The Sacred Magic of Abremelin the Mage*, that both were likely authored by "Gio Peccatrix the Magician, the author of many manuscripts on magic"[20] (Mathers, 1900). However, Mathers wrongly associates it with Gio Peccatrix, (an obvious pseudonym) who edited an Italian version of *The Key of Solomon* (British Library, Sloane manuscript 1307). *The Key of Solomon* itself, however, does refer the reader to the pages of *The Picatrix*, "consecrationes amorem apud Picatricem" – "see the love spells at Picatrix."

Le Club des Haschisheen member Victor Hugo referred to *The Picatrix* in his classic, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, having those out to persecute the Gypsy girl Esmerelda claim: "She has a fiend-possessed goat, with the devil's horns, which reads, writes, knows mathematics like Picatrix..." (Hugo, 1862).

Esmerelda

In the medieval world, magic took on a variety of flavors, and has generally been defined as Low Magic or High Magic. Low Magic generally being seen as the spells and charms of the common folk, herbology, and witchcraft, often directed at real world effects, and usually including the direct involvement of spirits. High magic is based more around the Hermetic arts, and things like astrology, alchemy, Kabbalah, Theurgy, and the works of figures like Cornelius Agrippa, or Johannes Trithemius. However, such distinctions are not shared by all. Dan Atrell suggests that "High magic and low magic is a false dichotomy that obscures more than it enlightens – I believe it is clearer to speak of literate magic and non-literate/pre-lit-erate magic ... many scholars dispute the dichotomy altogether, since everyone has their own definition of what constitutes high vs low magic" (Atrell, 2017). "In the old world, those things wouldn't have even had the label 'magick' at all, really. At least until folks like Agrippa came along and referred to it collectively as 'Magia'" (Lietch, 2016). "To throw Hermeticism, alchemy, astrology, Kabbalism, and Rosicrucianism into one pot, to stir them up into an *olla podrida*, and then to call the mixture by the one misleading name of 'hermetism' is not history but is obscurantism." (Haywood, 1878)[21] Indeed, it is confusing to try and separate these competing elements of the magical tradition.

The Picatrix, in many ways, holds elements of both high and low magic, and for this reason, along with other magical texts from the medieval and renaissance period, like *The Key of Solomon*, it has even been suggested that "the grimoires really aren't High Magick at all. They are witchcraft" (Leitch, 2016). At least in the mind of Aaron Lietch and expert on grimoire magic:

> Grimoires were largely preserved in the libraries of esoteric scholars, masons, etc. Many of them were translated by Sam Mathers, head of the GD [Golden Dawn] – and the GD certainly made use of the grimoires.... So they have come today to be mistaken for "high magick" when they are pretty much straight up witchcraft. In the medieval and renaissance era, Solomonic magick was like the European version of Voodoo or Palo-Mayombe.
>
> [T]he white/black and good/evil thing is VERY hard to pin down in the grimoires. Truly, they are based on an older shamanic cosmology where there is no "good and evil," chthonic spirits are not automatically bad, etc. In fact, they preserve a hell of a lot of Pagan tradition (hence the appearance of Pagan Gods among the lists of "demons.") All the rhetoric in the books about good and evil and angels versus demons (etc) is really a vernier pasted over that older shamanic cosmology.
>
> Folks like Agrippa would label all of that "Goetia"

and insist we should never ever use any of it. (wink wink) And the grimiores are part of that goetic tradition. At that time, there really wasn't a huge gap between what we'd call a Solomonic mage and a witch. Sure the Solomonic mage could very well be a clergyman of some sort – but they worked hand in hand with the witches and often on the same material.

And, it was actually Christians who owned grimoires that got burned at the stake first. The inquisitions were founded to ferret out heresy "from within" the Church. They only turned to common midwives and healers after they ran out of fellow priests to hang (Leitch, 2016).

Some of the figures who analyzed the witch phenomena were practicing forms of the occult arts themselves. Arts like astrology, alchemy, and even what we might define as "ceremonial magic," were not frowned on by the Church in the early medieval period, and were even practiced by members of the clergy. It is also believed that besides grimoires like *The Picatrix*, some figures from the world of "high magic," garnered some of their knowledge from the Witches, along with the grimoires which they relied upon and cherished. Modern magician and historian Aaron Leitch explains, "those priests and scholars who owned and used the grimoires – they were out with the witches learning everything they could. As an example, see Agrippa's *First Book of Occult Philosophy* – which is pure grade-A witchcraft" (Leitch, 2016). Likewise the recipes and lore of manuscripts like *The Picatrix*, would clearly have been of interest to Hermetic magicians and witches alike.

In his excellent overview of the subject, *Secrets of the Magical Grimoires*, (2005) Aaron Leitch identifies a number of potent fumigations, and recipes that contained a variety of psychoactive plants that may in part have been adopted from the witches. Leitch refers to the use of a potent elixir for invocation of a spirit by Georg Schröpfer (1730-1774), as well as the use of fumigations for the same purposes, repeating Agrippa's recipe that contained ingredients such as, hemlock, poppy and henbane. Leitch points to a list of magical requisites from the renaissance-era *Goetia*, which refers to "perfumes, and a chaffing-dish of charcoal kindled to put the fumes on, to smoke or perfume the place appointed for action; also anointing oil to anoint the temples and eyes with..." Although the ingredients are not included, "the application to the eyes and temples indicates its hallucinatory aim"(Leitch, 2005). Also noted are passages from *The Key of Solomon* that give instructions for a "Magic Carpet" that is "proper for interrogation." As *The Key of Solomon* (14th-15th century) describes: "Taking thy carpet, thou shalt cover they head and body therewith" and then hovering over a bowl of burning incense. Through this method "thou shalt hear distinctly

the answer which though shalt have sought."

"This would seem to be a survival of the Scythian and biblical use of the 'tent of the meeting' which throws some question upon the nature of the 'incense' mentioned in the instructions" (Leitch, 2005). As Leitch refers to my own earlier research into the use of cannabis in both these instances, his implications are obvious, and as we shall see in Chapter 15, there are references to cannabis and other psychoactive plants in Solomonic magic. Referring to the accounts from the "Goetia" of *The Key of Solomon* and *The Picatrix*, as well as references to psychoactive fumigations listed by Agrippa, and the importance of these texts in the magical tradition, Leitch rightly concludes that it "is telling ... that all of these books indicate the use of psychotropics" (Leitch, 2005). As *The Encyclopedia of Magic and Alchemy*, by Rosemary Guiley, has also noted: "Some of the recipes provided in grimoires contain ingredients that have hallucinogenic properties and thus induce visions. Among such ingredients are henbane, poppy, hemlock, black hellebore, and hemp.... Some formulae were dangerous, potentially causing stupor, delirium, convulsions, temporary insanity, and even death" (Guiley, 2006).

Another area of *The Picatrix*'s influence was alchemy and the planetary designations of plants and metals in the grimoire was incorporated by the magician-scientists that were the spygiric Alchemists, who searched for the elixir of life. As *The Picatrix* records "You should know ... the power of purification that is called the elixir ... the elixir in alchemy works by ... converting a body from one nature into a nobler one.... This is the secret of the elixir according to the sages of old."[22]

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[1] As quoted in (Rosenthal, 1971).

[2] As translated in (Levy, 1966).

[3] As quoted in (Rosenthal, 1971).

[4] As quoted in (Lebling, 2010).

[5] Ibid.

[6] As Dan Attrell explains, "nigromancia ... ought not to be confused with necromancy in the classical sense of the word. Nigromancia is simply 'secret ceremonial magic' or as Greer and Warnock call it 'Black Ops'" (Attrell, 2016). However, with the copious use of human body parts and blood on the pages of the Picatrix, there does seem to be some crossovers between the two, although the Picatrix has no instructions for raising or communicating with the dead.

[7] "On the Eastern gate he placed the form of an Eagle; on the Western gate, the form of a Bull; on the Southern gate the form of a Lion; and on the Northern gate he constructed the form of a Dog. Into these images he introduced spirits who spoke with voices, nor could anyone

enter the gates of the City except by their permission.

There he planted trees in the midst of which was a great tree which bore the fruit of all generations. On the summit of the castle he caused to be raised a lighthouse (rotunda) the colour of which changed every day until the seventh day after which it returned to the first colour, and so the City was illuminated with these colours."

Near the City there was abundance of waters in which dwelt many kinds of fish. Around the circumference of the "City he placed engraved images and ordered them in such manner that by their virtue the inhabitants were made virtuous and withdrawn from all wickedness and harm. The name of the City was Adocentyn." –The Picatrix, in (Yates, 964).

[8] As translated in (Warnock & Greer, 2015).

[9] Ibid.

[10] Apparently these 2 recipes only appear in the Latin and Spanish versions of The Picatrix, and can not be found in the surviving Arabic version of the Ghayat AlHakim.

[11] As translated in (Warnock & Greer, 2015).

[12] As translated in (Attrell and Porreca, 2018).

[13] (Brann, 1999).

[14] To R. P. D. John Trithemius, an Abbot of Saint James, in the Suburbs of Herbipolis, Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim Sendeth Greeting, The Philosophy of Natural Magic, by Henry Cornelius Agrippa, L. W. de Laurence ed. (1913).

[15] (Morley, 1856).

[16] Ibid.

[17] The Philosophy of Natural Magic, by Henry Cornelius Agrippa, L. W. de Laurence ed. (1913).

[18] (Grotenhermen, 2009).

[19] This celebrated book was originally composed in defence of what Naudé saw as, legitimate scientists, accused of being magicians or sorcerers. Included in this defence were, Gerolamo Cardano, (for his recipe for a cannabis infused liquor see Chapter 11), Geber, Ramon Llull, Arnaldus de Villanova, Paracelsus, Agrippa, Roger Bacon, Pythagoras, Socrates, Thomas Aquinas and other important figures of occult, philosophical and scientific history.

[20] As quoted in (Davies, 2010).

[21] As quoted in (Mackey, 1878).

[22] As translated in (Warnock & Greer, 2015).

CHAPTER 10

Alchemical Roots

Alchemy is a very broad term, which since ancient times has been used loosely to describe everything from gold making and other forms of metallurgy to practices for the purification of the soul and spiritual attainment. Although alchemy has often been considered as merely the pursuit of a method to manufacture earthly gold from less costly materials, for purely financial gain, this was not always the case. The term alchemy from before the medieval period onward was applied to a wide variety of different schools of thought, dealing with philosophy, physics, chemistry, unlocking the healing virtue in plants, and countless other subjects. In the medieval world, as with the present, the term alchemist meant many different things to many different people. Many of the medieval alchemists pursued the Philosopher's Stone as shaman mystics, herbalist, metallurgists and cabalists all-in-one, in an attempt to find the very essence of creation and as a technique of personal spiritual distillation. As we shall see, as with magic, there is irrefutable evidence of cannabis' role in this mysterious medieval and renaissance art.

Although the use of drugs in alchemy has been little discussed, it in no way has escaped the eyes of all researchers. Francis King has noted that in regard to "alchemical and magical literature ... there are passages in such works as *The Magus* (1801) and *Theatrum Chemicum Brittanicum* (1652) which I think refer to processes designed to extract hallucinogens from plant and animal substances" (King, 1990). However very little has been written on this subject, and of that, even less that has cited source documentation on the matter.

Even the late psychonaut extraordinaire Terence McKenna seemed to only see a secondary role for drugs in alchemy: "When we look back through the alchemical literature there's very little evidence that it was pharmacologically driven. Only when you get to the very last ademptions of the alchemical impulse in someone like Paracelsus do you get the use of opium. But it is interesting that the great drugs of modern society were accidentally discovered by alchemists in their researches; distilled alcohol is a product of alchemical work and then, as I mentioned, opium was very heavily used by the Peracelsian school" (McKenna, 1998). McKenna also suggests that Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) was "presumably smoking some pretty descent goo they brought in from North Africa when he had his lightning flash of realization, sitting on a rooftop, that stars were distant suns, expanding the Universe of man forever, from its previous encapsulated seven heavens, a realization, unfortunately this same idea resulted in his death at the hands of the church, who preferred things as they were..." However, its hard to see more than a jest here from the "Emperor of Mushrooms."

In an earlier coauthored work, (Bennett, et.al., 1995), I first looked at potential references for cannabis and alchemy, and we offered some speculation on the matter. It is interesting how many times in researching the subject over twenty years later, I found that material as the source for alchemical cannabis claims made elsewhere. However, at this time, when so many old texts have been scanned and made available to the wider public, and long-forgotten Latin and old-language European texts have begun to once again see the light of day, it is quite clear that cannabis, opium, and other psychoactive substances did indeed hold an important role in the history of alchemy, as we shall see.

The Quest for the Philosopher's Stone...

In what indicates an even older continuity of traditions, like the myths of immortality associated with Soma, Haoma and Chinese Taoist's hemp-based sacred elixir of immortality, European alchemists searched for the Philosopher's Stone, a substance that was reputed to endow the successful alchemist who prepared it with immortality. Interestingly, the alchemical tradition has been connected with the mythology of the Grail, since the early medieval period. Besides referring to the Grail as a thing both "root and branch," von Eschenbach's *Parsival* also contained the following description given by the hermit Trevrezent to Parsival, which undoubtedly influenced the later European alchemical tradition immensely:

> You say you yearn for the Grail. You foolish man, I am grieved to hear that. For no man can ever win the Grail unless he is known in heaven and called by name to the Grail. This I must tell you about the Grail, for I know it to be so and have seen it myself.
>
> A valiant host lives there [at Montsalvat] and I will tell you how they are sustained. They live upon a Stone of the purest kind. If you do not know it, it shall be named unto you. It is called Lapsit Exillis...
>
> By the power of that Stone the phoenix burns to ashes, but the ashes give him life again. The Stone is also called the Grail.

As Mircea Eliade noted, "A Hermetic [alchemical] influence on Parzival seems plausible, for Hermetecism begins to become known in twelfth-century Europe following massive translations of Arabic works" (Eliade, 1982). Interestingly, many of these Islamic sources came from figures associated with cannabis using Sufi and Isma'ili groups. As we have seen with the Grail, where there is much more than just the quest for a material gold goblet and with alchemy, in some traditions, the meaning of turning "lead into gold" meant much more than material gain, and was representative of a process of spiritual purification. There are clear indications that cannabis and other plants played a role in this process for some alchemists.

Some alchemical references to the purification of matter are in fact allegorical references to yogic-like processes associated with the perfection of spirit. This was particularly true of the Arab alchemists: "Several mystics and Sufi masters, among them al-Hallaj and especially Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Ibn Arabi, have presented alchemy as a veritable spiritual technique" (Eliade, 1985). Thus, in many accounts of European alchemy it "is neither the transmutation of base metals nor the life-prolonging elixir which are the ultimate and absolute objects of the alchemical search. Obviously the condition of perfection, or of Supreme Illumination, which the discovery of the Stone affords, is quite ineffable and transcends such mundane considerations as the supposed finality of death"

(Johnson, 1980). Our interest here is how cannabis and other etheogenic plants may have played into that.

Medieval and Renaissance alchemy was in many ways a combinations of magic, religion and science. And like these various traditions, it had its roots to more ancient times. As with other heretics and magicians, their interest often took them into areas of study, that would likely not have been approved of by the Church and other authorities, for theological reasons. For this, and also likely with some personal motivation to keep their knowledge out of the hands of the unworthy, they used a form of veiled language, known as the "Green Language" or "Language of the Birds," which we have already referred too. Thus, the meanings of the symbolism used in the language of many alchemical texts have remained undeciphered, and even those thought to be understood, or interpreted, subject to debate.

Without going too far back, for the sake of space and staying on topic, it is worth discussing some of the elements in the historical milieu out of which alchemy is believed to have sprung, before its transition from the Islamic Mid-East into Christian Europe.

Gnostic and Jewish Influences

It would not seem to me illogical if a psychological condition, previously suppressed, should reassert itself when the main ideas of the suppressive condition begin to lose their influence. In spite of the suppression of the Gnostic heresy, it continued to flourish throughout the Middle Ages under the disguise of alchemy.

It is a well-known fact that alchemy consisted of two parts which complement one another on the one hand chemical research proper and on the other the "theoria" or "philosophia." As is clear from the writings of Pseudo-Democritus in the first century, (See Alchemy of the Greeks *by Berthelot), the two aspects already belonged together at the beginning of our era. The same holds true of the Leiden papyri and the writings of Zosimos in the third century. The religious or philosophical views of ancient alchemy were clearly Gnostic.*

– Carl Jung, (1937/1955)

Gnostic influences on later Alchemy have been long suggested. An important figure in this transmission, is " Zosimos, the Alchemist," who lived on either side of 300 A.D. Zosimos is particularly known for his use of Zoroastrian and Gnostic themes in his surviving texts, and for his early references to Hemerticism in the context of alchemy, such as the image of the krater or "mixing bowl," through which the initiate was "baptized" and purified in the course of a visionary ascent through the heavens and into the transcendent realms, in a similar manner to the cannabis-inspired voyages of the Zorastrian figures Ardu Viraf and Vistaspa.

It has been suggested that Zosimos, during the period when the Christian Churches were actively suppressing pagan and Gnostic groups, took the group initiations of Gnosticism and turned them into personal initiations of alchemy, which he saw as a symbolic technique of spiritual refinement, rather than a purely chemical process directed at things like making lead into copper, or silver into gold. The surviving works of Zosimos, and references to others, were considered among the most sublime and important founding documents by later medieval alchemists.

Important to this study, surviving translations of Zosimos' work have the ancient sage identify references to cannabis-infused wines and beers: "...wines can be made in a multitude of ways, [as shown] through many accounts that authors have left to us, and nature, and art such things, that is, grown wines from the vineyard and medicinal, or by adding various spices like palm, cannabis seed, etc ..."; "Certainly brewers of Egyptian beer [zythi], which is more powerful [then our beers] are not lacking in the false and wicked arts, and might be better used for intoxication. This [concoction] includes: borage, cannabis seeds and leaves, helenium, ivy leaves, strychnine, and darnel."[1] As Tom Hatsis has noted:

> Interestingly, he uses "lolium temulentum" for "darnel" (a known psychoactive), which specifically draws attention to the intoxicating powers of the plant (temelentum means "intoxication")! He is also comparing the addition of things like cannabis, darnel, and strychnine to the magical arts!!! I mean, he calls them "false and wicked arts,' but that is exactly how writers commented on magical works. He is openly recognizing the use of cannabis and darnel in potions by magicians! (Hatsis, 2016).

Darnel was still used in recipes for "beers as late as the nineteenth century" (Merkur, 2014). It was also another alleged ingredient used in witches' flying ointment. Merkur has noted the "Paracelsian preparation" in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, that contained hemlock, and other plants along with "Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow/In our sustaining corn" (Merkur, 2014). Thomas Cooper wrote in *Thesaurus linguae Romanae & Brittannicae* (1565) "A vitious grain called ray or darnell, which commonly groweth among wheate. If it be eaten in hote breade it maketh the head giddie."[2]

Eusèbe Salverte, in his *Des Sciences Occultes* (1829), referred to "bearded darnel" mixed with wheat, stating it produces a bread that "occasions violent giddiness."[3] Darnel has also been noted as an ingredient in a werewolf salve![4] Again, as with other references, "seeds" likely refers to seeded buds of cannabis and seeds surrounded by resin rich calyxes. The use of darnel in conjunction with cannabis seems to have been common at one time. "One vernacular Arabic name for darnel means 'horse's hashish.' Darnel has been included in the recipes of Middle Eastern intoxicating compounds ... usually with cannabis.... The description by Van Linschoten (a sixteenth century traveler in the Near East) of the preparation of bengue, berge, bers (cannabis based compounds of psychoactive plants containing ingredients such as opium, datura, darnel, nux vomica) ... includes a mixture of darnel and hemp seeds in water called bosa" (Danaway, et. al., 2007).

Zosimos was deeply influenced by the work of a female alchemist who is thought to have lived in the 1st century A.D., who wrote under the pseudonym of Maria Prophetissa, and was also known as "Mary the Jewess" (Mary Hebraea). "The first nonfictious alchemists of the Western world, lived ... in Hellensitic Egypt. And the earliest among them was Maria ... the Jewess, for whom are chief source was Zosimos..." (Patai, 1994). Her works are often referred to by later alchemists. Carl Jung, who studied both alchemy and Gnosticism, believed her work "may go back to very early times and thus to Gnostic societies" (Jung, 1970). Plants seem to have been involved in her alchemical processes as well. "Maria the Jewess was said to have identified the philosophers's stone with a mysterious

'white herb of the mountain'" (Patai, 1994). In *Better Living Through Alchemy Vol. I: Origins of Alchemy*, Lynn Osburn, who has been researching alchemical texts for decades, suggests that she may have also made a veiled reference to cannabis, (Osburn seems to have been unaware of the direct references to cannabis in the surviving writings attributed to Zosimos):

> Unfortunately the alchemical writings of Maria Prophetissa are incomplete, surviving only in fragments copied by later writers. In one treatise ascribed to her, – Practica Mariae Prophetissae in artem alchemicam ... she discusses matrimonium alchymicum (alchemical wedding) with the philosopher Aros. From it comes the oft repeated alchemical dictum "Marry gum with gum in true marriage." ... C. G. Jung, wrote concerning the nature of that alchemical gum, "Originally it was "gum arabic," and it is used here as a secret name for the transforming substance, on account of its adhesive quality. Thus Kunrath declares that the 'red' gum is the 'resin of the wise' – a synonym for the transforming substance." Had Jung been an initiate of alchemy he would have known that gum arabic was itself a pseudonym for the true transforming substance – the red resin of the wise – a gum gathered from the resinous flower clusters of female Cannabis sativa plants. That highly fragrant reddish resin has been produced in India since time immemorial and carried to the west by Arab traders (Osburn, 2008).

Engraving depicting Maria Prophetissima from Michael Maier's book Symbola Aurea Mensae Duodecim Nationum (1617). "She knew the hidden mysteries of the great stone. Sage that she is she taught us with her words, Smoke loves smoke, and is loved by it in return: But the white herb growing upon the high mountain captures both" (Maier, 1617).

Zosimos also testified that the "true teachings about the Great Art" were to be found ... in "the writings and books of the Jews" (*Encylopedia Judaica*, 2008). "Azulai speaks of the philosopher's stone in his Midbar Kedemot

(Lemberg, 1869, fol. 19), and calls it *esev* ('weed') as it was also called by the alchemists (and as it is called in other kabbalistic writings as well as in Hebrew manuscripts dealing with alchemy)" (*Encylopedia Judaica*, 2008). The Hebrew term *esev* has in modern times been used to designate cannabis and its products (Ben Israel, 2011), however it is not clear how far back this association can be dated. Although, as "hashish," meaning "herb" goes back to the early Islamic period, that such an association may have been used in medieval times with *esev* deserves at least some consideration. And as we have seen, in Chapter 2 there does seem to have been indications of cannabis use among the more esoterically minded members of Jewish culture.

As a result of this Jewish influence, many Old Testament figures, such as Moses, Ezra, and most notably Isaiah, were deemed medieval practitioneers of alchemy, by later medieval and renaissance alchemists. "Several of the biblical prophets were considered adepts in alchemy. The prophet Elijah was often referred to by Christian alchemists, several of whose work carry the name Elijah in their title. In some of these treatises Jewish influence is evident..." (Patai, 1994).[5]

Elijah, in this respect, is an interesting choice, for as we have seen in Chapter 3, in the Islamic world Elijah has been identified with the Green One, "*Khidr*," seen as the patron saint of cannabis. And in that respect, it is important to note of the Jewish and Gnostic influences, all of this came to European alchemists after it had been filtered through Islamic culture.

In this regard there may have been some cross-pollination between medieval Jews and Arabs. As Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan has noted, a number of medieval Kabbalists refer to a technique of philosophical meditation, that included drinking a cup of "strong wine of Avicenna," that induced a trance in order to aid the adept in pondering difficult philosophical questions (Kaplan, 1985). Unfortunately, no recipe for this remains, but the medieval Islamic alchemist and physician, Avicenna, as we shall discuss, refers in his works to the effects of hashish, opium and datura extracts, and he was familiar with the infusion of these drugs into wine. Moreover, as noted, cannabis-infused wines were used by the Ismai'li of which Avicenna has been associated. Simeon Sethus, an 11th century Byzantine Jewish doctor wrote of "cannabis as follows: Arabs will squeeze [the oils?] into wine to intoxicate'" (Gruner, 1814). Charles Dickens' annual weekly journal, *All the Year Round*, noted such combinations, in use well into the 19th century by Jews and Moslems alike. "Pure wine, however, is not for the topers of Ispahan and Teheran, the Jewish and Armenian dealers ministering to that fondness for narcotics which tend so greatly to enervate the East, by mixing myrrh, incense, and the juice of the Indian hemp with the finest growths" (Dickens, 1862). However, the

same claim could be made for infusions of opium, or other herbs, and Avicenna is remembered for his love of the juice of the poppy as well.

The Moslem influence

It is hashish that brings enlightenment to reason; but he who devours it like food will become a donkey. The elixir is moderation; eat of it just one grain, so that it can permeate your existence like gold.

– Amir Ahmad Mahsati-Roman, 12th century[6]

As European alchemy came about via Islamic influences, it is worth noting that many of the key individuals in this transmission were involved with hashish. The hashish-using Ismaili influence on alchemy is particularly well known, and Islamic figures important in European alchemy like Geber (Jabir ibn Hayyan); Attar (Abū Hamīd bin Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm), also known as "the chemist"; Ibn 'Arabi (Abū 'Abd Allāh Muhammad ibn 'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn 'Arabī al-Hātimī at-Tāī); and Avicenna (Abū 'Alī al-Husayn ibn "Abd Allāh ibn Al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Sīnā) are all thought to have held Ismaili ties, and also referred to cannabis products in their influential writings. Arab alchemists are widely credited with the development of techniques like distillation, sublimation, and crystallization. As Edward Burman has noted in *The Assassins*, "Works on science nowadays considered occult, such as alchemy formed an important part of ... so many ideas germane to the creation of the Isma'ili doctrine. Studies in alchemy had been translated from Greek ... as early as the eighth century ... many Isma'ili poets such as Attar, were spoken of as 'conjurers' and 'alchemists'" (Burman, 1987).

The need for secrecy regarding such techniques of ecstasy in the dogmatic Islamic world can be seen in the variety of names and epithets used to esoterically refer to hashish in the Islamic world. The popular and widely used Arabic term "hashish" is itself thought to originally have been a nickname derived from a more general word meaning "herb," and was applied to hemp resin products in the same way the generic "grass" came to refer to cannabis in the 20th century. "Most likely, it may may be simply 'the herb' as distinguished from all other (medicinal) herbs" (Rosenthal, 1971). Translations of other Medieval Islamic names for cannabis products reveal a variety of secret names and pseudonyms, directed at concealing its from the uninitiated, and include "the one that cheers," "little morsel," "shrub of emotion," "shrub of understanding," "peace of mind," "girlfriend," "the one that facilitates digestion," "the pleasing one," "the one that connects the heart," "provisions," "branches of bliss," "the one that lightens the load," "medicine," "holy Jerusalem," "sugary," "pill," "the pretty one," "medicinal powder," "theriac" (heal-all), "peacocks tail," "consolation," "the one that causes good appetite," "the one that softens the temperaments," "the one that brings the party together," "the little agent," "amber scented," "from Zion," "emerald mine," and "*esrar*," meaning "the secret," Islamic philosopher's referred to hashish as "thought morsels," and astrologers

refferred to it as "fortune has arrived" (Rosenthal, 1971).

This technique of concealment was termed "The Green Language" or alternatively, "The Language of the Birds." Use of this symbolic language and how it was directly related to the use of cannabis and other drugs, can be seen in the works of various Sufi poets and mystics such as certain "verses by one of Persia's greatest mystic poets, Hafez, in praise of hashish: 'O Parrot, discoursing of mysteries, may thy beak never want for sugar'. These lines are reminiscent of the parrot symbolism in a Sufi author reputed to be near the Isma'ilis as many sufis were: Attar, in his *Conference of the Birds* has her arrive 'with sugar in her beak, dressed in a garment of green, and round her neck a collar of gold'. He then observes the hawk 'is but a gnat beside her brilliance; earth's green carpet is the reflection of her feathers, and her words are distilled sugar'" (Burman, 1987). Terms like "Theriac," "Medicinal Powder" and "The Secret" (*esrar*) for hashish bring to mind some of the preparations and secret names associated with alchemy. "As much was made of addicts of the ability of hashish to show them 'secret meanings,' or, as we might say, to open up for them new levels of mental perception, it is not surprising to find 'secrets' (esrar) as a commonly employed nickname for hashish among the Turks" (Rosenthal, 1971).

In his *Tadhkirah*, Davud al-Antaki, the blind physician, pharmacist and occultist, who was one of the most respected names in 14th-15th century Arabic medicine, mentions an Anatolian, "kind of hemp, called az-zrzh..." (Rosenthal, 1971). This is very similar to a name later used by Paracelsus, Azoth, used to describe the 'Philosopher's Stone', although in his case this has generally been assumed to have been a preparation of opium. As well, it is important to remember when using some of these esoteric names, in the Islamic world, the terms for Hashish, cannabis and opium were "most commonly lumped together without, it seems, any clear of the distinctions that might exist, or should be made, between them" (Rosenthal, 1971).

As we shall see, elements of this "Green Language" followed alchemy into Europe, and it was not necessarily only to conceal what they were doing from the Church. There seems to have also been concerns about the highest of secrets being profaned by the unworthy. As Albert G. Mackey noted in the Encyclopedia of Freemasonry: "It is admitted that the texts and nomenclature of Medieval materials on those subjects ... were cryptic and queer; but for that there are ... explanations for the need for secrecy ... [such as] the need to keep laymen from endangering themselves with drugs they could not understand" (Mackey, 1878). "The Arabian origin of alchymy is indicated by the fanciful terms under which the adepts concealed their drugs and processes; allegorical and symbolic expressions plainly revealing an Oriental character" (Maxwell, 1867).

Jabir Geber is considered by some as "the father of chemistry," a science which of course originated with the occult art of alchemy, and his works particularly have been noted for their Ismaili persuasion, and it has long been suggested that the "Jabirean [Geber] corpus of texts belonged to the ... Ismaili movement" (Daftary, 2012). "Jabir [Geber] ... was an alchemist.... He was a member of the Hashashins, radical group that took part in political murders, reportedly under the influence of hashish" (Beli, 2008). Geber "has been acknowledged by both the Arab and European alchemists as the patron of the art since the eighth century"(Shah, 1964). Dr. M. Aldrich has commented that "skilled alchemists with pretty classy lab equipment experimented with all kinds of potions; if Geber and others could distill alcohol, they could have made hashish (or even hash oil), and, indeed, Geber included banj among his powerful prescriptions" (Aldrich, 1978).

Ibn Arabai, the Sufi mystic, philosopher and Saint "presented alchemy as a veritable spiritual technique"(Eliade, 1985). The Islamic theologist and polymath al-Taftazani suggested the mystical and alchemical writings of Ibn Arabi were "disorderly visions and ravings ... instilled in him by his addiction to hashish" and "apart from being an infidel was also a hashish-eater"(Knysh, 1999). "By way of ad hominem criticism, al-Taftazani made capital of the theme of Ibn Arabi's drug addiction ... he cited the introduction to the *Fusus* [*Fusus al-Hakim* (The Seal of Wisdom)] in which ... Ibn 'Arabi claimed to have written this controversial book on the Prophet's orders. For al-Taftazani, this story was a typical product of Ibn 'Arabi's drug addiction and concomitant inability to separate fantasy from reality" (Knysh, 1999).

Regarded as one of the greatest intellects of Islam's Golden Age, the geographer, astronomer, poet, theologian, Avicenna, Ibn Sina, (980-1030) is probably best known for his contributions to medicine and his works, after being translated into Latin became deeply influential in Medieval and Renaissance Europe. "In his Canon on pharmacology he named over 760 drugs and chemicals, many used by alchemists and physicians (e.g. narcotics such as opium, cannabis, mandragora, and hemlock) ... Avicenna was among the first of several medieval skeptics who questioned the transmutations of metals and minerals into gold" (Krebs, 2004). A 1595 edition of *Avicennae Arabum Medicorum Principis Canon Medicinae ex Gerardi Cremonensis versione, etc.* (*Avicenna's Canon of Medicine*), by the Prince of Arab Physicians, according to Gerard of Cremona's *Version*, etc.', holds a number of entries under cannabis, including cannabis and other pulverized herbs infused in wine, as well as an elaborate sounding combination of herbs, including cannabis, poppy and harmaline containing Syrian rue seeds, under the elaborate sounding name Confectio Cognominata Imperialis (Confection Named Imperial).

Confectio Cognominata Imperialis

> ...and 8 oz. of parsley root stem and iron dross, cleaned and abraded for three weeks, together with sugar for one week, with water and honey for a week, and for a week with vinegar. Then begin and infuse it in vinegar for a day. Then convert it to sugar in the morning and on the third day convert it into water of honey. Do that in this fashion for three weeks. Then dry it in the shade and (stir?) it until it becomes smooth, like alcohol, and rub the remaining medicines and pulverize them and the crumbs themselves.... Of red and white tuder and ammis and [text corrupt] and fennel seed and cinnamon and balsam and (?) and harmel seed and some grains of myrrh and mustard and cannabis and shelled sesame and fenugreek and baucis seed, all up to 5 grams. Of secacul and ginger, both up to 4 drams. The (tendrils?) of (?) and white pepper and gariofoil and of the flowers of all-cane and pyrethrum, all...

Avicenna utilized the whole cannabis plant as a medicine, and there are references to the use of seeds, roots and leaves for various treatments taken both topically and internally. "Juice of cannabis leaves" is specifically mentioned as well, roots, seeds, and the "woody [cortex] part of cannabis," which could refer to everything from stems, to the calyxes around the seed and other vegetable matter. Some examples from Avicenna include: "The dose is like that of chick pea with water of fennel bark and parsley and make the caput purgium in proportion to one grain of wheat with water of cannabis"; "...with oil and the must of quinces and althaea and dragonflower and (gum Arabic?) and chymolea, properly in its own juice (?). One hour afterwards it is poured over the head. And he (the patient) becomes placid due to damp willow leaves, since they are ripest and with tamarinds, and is sedated with a decoction of parsley and its juice and with the leaves of cannabis and sesame and the taste of both is perhaps enjoyed." The problem for which this is prescribed is not mentioned in the text provided, and this is true of the following as well, which seems to be more of a delicacy for enjoyment: "In a vessel cleaned with sugar cane and its granules mix a dram of cannabis and licorice roots, up to a pound, and when these medicines are ground and crumbled, blend with bleached honey, and use after six months." Avicenna's connection with cannabis-based medicines was strong enough that *The Pharmacopoeia of Bauderon* written in 1681 refers to "Cannabis ex Avicenna," in reference to the herb.

Like Ibn Arabi, Avicenna saw alchemy as more of a spiritual process, and both also shared a deep interest in cannabis. Avicenna wrote of the inebriating substance "hushish" [hashish], prepared from the plants bruised leaves, as well as the drink made from the plant, under the

name "banghie," (Ainslie, 1826). Avicenna's father was initiated into the Islamic sect the Ismailis, who have long been associated with the esoteric use of hashish, and Avicenna was familiar with their teachings. This has led to the claim that Avicenna's "father was ... an intellectual who belonged to a hashish cult" (Simmons, 2002). As noted in Chapter 3 there has also been the long standing suggestion that some members of the Persian Ismai'ili mixed hashish with wine. "...Ibn Sina (Avicenna) introduced neo-Platonism into Islamic philosophy. Neo-Platonic theory of emanation of nature from God especially appealed to the Sufis ... the distinction between the individual and the absolute vanished; the Sufi proclaimed himself thus: I am the Truth, I am the Reality. Sometimes this conclusion was reached by artificial means, by adequate dose of hashish" (Chatterji, 1973).

Idries Shah claims that Paracelsus and other medieval European alchemists like Roger Bacon, Raymund Llully and Henry Cornelius Agrippa, were transmitting Sufi knowledge in the West, acting as scouts for the Arab dervishes and their system of attainment.

> That the alchemists of the West knew they were pursuing an internal goal is clear from their admonitions and innumerable cryptic illustrations in their works. Alchemical allegory is by no means difficult to read if one bears in mind Sufi symbolism. In the seventeenth century, a thousand years after the time of their original inspirer, Geber (born circa 721), the European alchemists were keeping lists of successive masters, reminiscent of the Sufi "spiritual degrees." One of the most interesting things about this fact is that these chains of succession refer to people linked in the Sufic and Saracean traditions, but otherwise have no common denominator. In the records, we find the name of Mohammed, Geber, Hermes, Dante and Roger Bacon. (Shah, 1964).

As noted in Chapter 3 Sufi and Isma'ili sources used the name of el-Khidr (Khizr), the Green One, as a hidden reference to hashish and bhang. As el-Khidr is also identified with the Biblical Elijah, it is interesting to note that we find this same figure playing a highly regarded role in medieval alchemy. Alchemists like Paracelsus and Eirenaeus Philalethes mention the name Elias, which in the authorized version of the Bible is the same as Elijah, the powerful magician-prophet of Tishpeh. Comparable to the Sufi reference to hashish as a "visit of Khidr," Paracelsus, who recorded recipes for cannabis, opium and other substances, refers to "the advent of Elias Artista" in *The Book Concerning the Tincture of Philosophers*. Tinctures and other alcohol extracts and elixirs were of prime importance to Paracelsus and other alchemists, and as we shall see later, cannabis and opium were of particular interest to him in

this regard. These Islamic-adopted alchemical techniques and their preparations are the root of modern medicine.

> Arabian medicine was, in fact, the parent of alchemy, the founder of which was Geber (702-765), the discoverer of nitric acid and aqua regia and the describer of distillation, filtration; sublimation, water-baths, and other essentials of chemical procedure. Alchemy was combined with astrology in this wise. The ancient Chaldaic Pantheism, the doctrine of an anima mundi, or "soul of the world," with indwelling spirits in all things, was applied to whatever could be extracted from substances by fire, as "spirit" of wine, "spirit" of nitre, or the various essences and quintessences; while to the seven planets (the sun, the moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Saturn, Venus) corresponded the seven days of the week and the seven known metals (gold, silver, iron, quicksilver, tin, lead and copper). As these metals were supposed to be "generated" in the bowels of the earth, the special aim of alchemy was to find the fecundating or germinal substance, under appropriate planetary influences.
>
> Thus Geber's parable of a medicine which could heal any of six lepers was regarded ... as nothing more than allegory of the philosopher's stone for transmuting the six baser planetary metals into gold.

Hand in hand with this idea of transmutation of metals went the notion of a polyvalent "elixir of life," which could cure all diseases and confer immortal youth and which was supposed to be of the nature of a "potable gold" (aurum potahile). The search for potable gold led to the discovery of aqua regia and the strong acids by Geber and Rhazes, and the quest of the elixir became the foundation of chemical pharmaceutics. Even as late as the sixteenth century, we find Paracelsus still upholding Geber's idea that everything is made of mercury, sulphur and salt, and that as "the sun rules the heart, the moon the brain, Jupiter the liver, Saturn the spleen. Mercury the lungs, Mars the bile, Venus the kidneys," so the seven planetary metals and their compounds were specifics for the diseases of these organs under the will of the stars.

Arabian chemistry probably survived beyond the decadence of Arabian medicine, for Leo Africanus, a traveler of the fifteenth century, mentions a chemical society which existed at Fez at that time. From their constant contact with strange lands and peoples, the Arabian pharmacists or "sandalani" were the exploiters if not the introducers of a vast number of new drugs; in particular, senna, camphor, sandalwood, rhubarb, musk, myrrh, cassia, tamarind, nutmeg, cloves, cubebs, aconite, ambergris and

mercury; besides being the originators of syrups, juleps, alcohol, aldehydes (all Arabic terms), and the inventors of flavoring extracts made of rose- water, orange and lemon peel, tragacanth, and other attractive ingredients. The use of hashish (Cannabis indica) and bhang (either Indian hemp or hyoscyamus) to produce drug-intoxication (tabannuj) or deep sleep were well known, and the unseemly behavior of addicts of those drugs is described in the Arabian Nights. King Omar casts the Princess Abrizah into a heavy slumber with "a piece of concentrated bhang," if an elephant smelt it he would sleep for a year In another tale, the thief Ahmad Kamakim drugs the guards "with hemp fumes." Thus the possibilities of anesthesia by inhalation were known to the Arabians, as well as to Dioscorides and the medieval surgeons, and presumably the original knowledge came from India, since the Egyptians did but little surgery. The Arabian apothecary shops were regularly inspected by a syndic (Muhtdsib) who threatened the merchants with humiliating corporal punishments if they adulterated drugs (Guigues). The effect of Arabian chemistry and pharmacy upon European medicine lasted long after the Mohammedan power itself had waned and, with the simples of Dioscorides and Pliny, their additions to the materia medica made up the better part of the European pharmacopeias for centuries (Garrison, 1917).

Garrison refers to "Leo Africanus" and a Chemical Society in Fez, which does bring to mind certain elements of the whole Rosicrucian mythos, an alchemical group whose connections to cannabis and other drugs will be explored in later chapters. It has been suggested that the "earliest account of cannabis intoxication to appear in Europe was that of a Moroccan Christian convert named Leo Africanus, who in 1510 described to the Pope the giggling of Tunisian Fakirs who were using hashish" (Boon, 2002). As Leo Africanus described of his time in Fez: "They have here a compound called Lhasis [hashish], whereof whosoever eateth but one ounce falleth a laughing, disporting, and dallying, as if he were halfe drunken; and is by said confection marvuellously provoked unto lust" (Africanus, 16th century; 1896).

Garrison noted the Indian influence on Islamic branches of Alchemy, and in this regard it is worth noting the comments of the Iranian alchemist al-Biruni (973-1048), who wrote that the Hindus "have a science similar to alchemy which is quite peculiar to them. They call it Rasayana. It means the art which is restricted to certain operations, drugs, compounds, and medicines, most of which are taken from plants. Its principles restored the health of those who were ill beyond hope and gave back youth to fading old age."[7] We can be sure the use of

cannabis was long common in both traditions.

Another Islamic chemist and doctor who "distinctly mentions the intoxicating properties of hemp, is Ibn Baitar, a native of Africa, who died in Damascus in 1248. He was known as Hashdishi or "the botanist," from his accurate observations on medicinal plants. Ibn Baitar was an expert herbalist, and is said to have recorded the many additions to medicine made by Islamic physicians in the Middle Ages, which added between 300 and 400 types of remedies to the one thousand previously known since antiquity. He left detailed chemical information on Rosewater and Orangewater production, as well as instructions for the preparation of scented Shurub (Syrup) extracted from flowers and rare leaves, by means of using hot oils and fat. And in a precursor to European alchemical techniques, essential oil was produced by joining various retorts, the steam from these retorts condensed, combined and its scented droplets were used as perfume and mixed to produce the most costly medicines. All these techniques were deemed alchemical.

The Alchemists, by Mehdi, 1893. Golestan Palace Library, Tehran, Iran.

As Edward Gibbon eloquently noted, for better or worse of the alchemical mix of science, magic, and medicine that is the legacy of medieval the medieval Islamic world:

> ...in this science of medicine, the Arabians have been deservedly applauded. The names of ... Geber ... and Avicenna, are ranked with Grecian masters.... The science of chemistry owes its origins and improvement to the industry of the Saraceans. They first invented and named the alembic for the purpose of distillation, analysed the substances of the three kingdoms of nature, tried the distinction and affinities of alkalis and acids, and converted the poisonous minerals into soft and salutary medicines. But the most eager search of Arabian chemistry was the transmutation of metals, and the elixir of immortal health; the reason of the fortunes of thousands were evaporated

> in the crucibles of alchymy, and the consummation of the great work was promoted by the worthy aid of mystery, fable and superstition (Gibbon, 1776/1855).

After the Crusades, through various channels, this Islamic alchemical lore and knowledge filtered into Europe, and manifested in various ways, helping to invigorate the medical and scientific knowledge, that pulled Europe out of the Dark Ages and into the Renaissance period. As we shall see, the use of cannabis in alchemical elixirs and other preparations was part of that important cultural exchange.

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[1] Translated by Tom Hatsis, from the Latin De Zythorum confectione fragmentum (Gruner, 1814).

[2] Ibid.

[3] (English translation (1846).

[4] "A French judge, Henri Boquet, who presided at a trial of werewolves, explicitly noted that their transformation was accomplished by the aid of a salve; and the French physician, Sieur Jean de Nynauld (in Transformation and Ecstasy of Sorcerers, 1615) listed the ingredients of such an unguent, which included wolfsbane, along with other psychoactive toxic plants, such as ergot-infested darnel, opium, hemlock, and sweet flag. Sometimes the werewolves or bear-men wore a girdle or pelt soaked in the same substance. 'By using a so-called wolf strap, any person could transform himself into a werewolf. Whoever fastened such a strap around himself would turn into a wolf.' These animals were considered the shaman's spiritual helpers, with the shaman often metamorphosing into it as its empowered persona or assuming consubstantial identification with the 'animate' plant." (Ruck, et al., 2007).

[5] For a fuller understanding of the Hebrew influence on alchemy, read Patai's The Jewish Alchemists.

[6] As quoted in (Rätsch, 2001).

[7] As quoted in (Ray, 1903).

CHAPTER 11

Quintessences, Aracana and Tinctures in Alchemy

O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give,
Nor aught so good but strain'd from that fair use
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
And vice sometimes by action dignified.

– William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (1594-97)

The techniques of preparation of disease fighting life-preserving elixirs was the core of alchemy for many medieval and renaissance alchemists, and this again was an adaption from Islamic influences that came into Europe following the Crusades. In references to figures such as " Lully, Paracelsus, Jerome Cardan, etc." Albert G. Mackey in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, wrote that these figures were not "occultists.... They had been physicians and chemists; the 'alchemy' they studied was chemistry, and they studied it for medical uses ... (along with botany, etc.)" (Mackey, 1873). Interestingly, all three of the figures mentioned by name have associations with cannabis elixirs; Cardano and Paracelsus both left recipes for cannabis preparations, and cannabis appears in a number of Llullian texts.

> These attempts to assuage human physical suffering were manifested in the utilization of the sacred narcotic herbs; the extraction of the sedative qualities of mandragora and Indian hemp; the concoctions of the alchemist; the magical powers of alleviating pain by a resignation transcending even the powers of potentates or priests (Gies, 1948).

These preparations came under various names such as arcana, tinctures, and quintessences (fifth essence), and all were equated with having the same sort of life-preserving effects and qualities as the Philosopher's Stone by their adherents. From the very beginning "quintessence became linked to the Arab elixir – a substance that could prolong life" (Ball, 2006):

> The elixir holds a similar position in the alchemical tradition to the philosopher's stone; indeed, the two are sometimes interchangeable. Zoismos ... wrote a ... encyclopedia of alchemy, the Cheirokmeta, in which he mentioned a potent alchemical preparation called the Xerion, a word derived from the Greek for "dry." It seems to allude to a dry powder, but in its Arabic form of al-iksir it became later identified as a miraculous potion (Ball, 2006).

It is in the branch of alchemy known as Spagyrics from Ancient Greek σπάω spao "I collect" and ἀγείρω ageiro "I extract," a name thought to have been coined by the European alchemist Paracelsus, that we find plant-based alchemy. Spagyrics refers to extraction processes involving fermentation, distillation, tincturing, as well as extraction of essential oils with vapors and extraction of mineral elements from the ash of plants through calcination.

Tincturing was one of the major arts of alchemy since the time of Zosimos, and this included tinctures of plants, animals, stones and metals. One of Zosimos' own surviving works, the *Final Quittance*, is devoted to this art. and he discusses the "differences between 'opportune tinctures', which are astrologic and daimonic in origin, and 'natural tinctures', which are grounded in a more empirical methodology and technique" (Fraser, 2004) – comments which reveal the combination of magic and science at work in alchemy.

The terms arcanum and quintessence are often used interchangeably, but when differences occur, it seems to be that quintessences are medical, and arcana could be spiritually transformative. However both, when the term is not used purely symbolically, can be seen as references to some form of tincture, whether that be through marinated wine, or in some more pure alcoholic preparation. Let us first look at the quintessence in this regard. "Quintessences could be extracted from anything he [Paracelsus] said in his treatise *On the Consideration of Quintessences*, and they had marvellous medical properties" (Ball, 1972).

In the 15th century text, *The Book of Quintessence*, which was a translation of earlier continental works, the quintessence appears as a medicine for a variety of human ailments. Judging from early texts on the subject, it was something 15th-century alchemists partook of often, and an experience they wished to share. *The Book of Quintessence or the Fifth Being: That is to Say Mortal Heaven* (1460) gives a process of creating the quintessence through the distillation of wine, a technique, the author claimed, that was handed down by "Hermes [Trismegistus], father of philosophers":

> Take the best wine that you may find, if you have some money. If you are poor, then take corrupt wine, that is, rotten, of a watery nature, but avoid any that is sour, for the quintessence is naturally incorruptible and will be drawn out by sublimation. The four elements, as it were, the rotten feces of wine, will be left in the bottom of the vessel. But first you must distill this wine seven times, and then you'll have good burning water. In truth, this is the watery matter from which is drawn our quintessence ... it will be an incorruptible medicine, almost as heaven above and be of the nature of heaven. Therefore, our quintessence is worthy of the title mortal heaven.[1]

The spiritual nature of this quintessence reminds us of the association of alcoholic beverages as spirits. As the modern translator of this tract has noted; "The instructions that follow lead me to believe that this form of the "quinte essencia" is ethanol ... the author refers to ... repeated distillation ... I would be pretty darn jolly if I regularly dosed myself with high-concentration ethanol" (Mahoney, 1995). In *Notes on the Chemistry of the Text*, a 19th-century commentator on the text, C.H. Gill, Esq., of University College, London, recorded that "The direction to distill the wine seven times is a good practical suggestion for the obtaining of strong alcohol which will burn well. Then follows a description of the distilling apparatus, which seems to have been arranged to ensure a very slow distillation, so as to obtain a product as colourless and scentless as possible" (Gill, 1866/1889).

The author of the medieval tractate further explains that leaves, flowers and other substances put into the quintessence, have their powers increased:

> Now, I have shown you an extreme secret, how you may draw out, with our heaven, every quintessence from all things aforementioned. Therefore, put any necessary ingredients for every syrup into our quintessence, and within three hours this water will be such a syrup, understand this well, better by a hundred times than it would be without our quintessence. So I say of comfortatives, digestives, laxatives, restrictives, and all other medicines. Because, if you

> put seeds, flowers, fruits, leaves, spices, cold, hot, sweet, sour, moist, whether they be good or evil, into our quintessence, since our quintessence is the instrument of transmuting the virtues of all things if they be put into it, the virtues of the thing are increased a hundredfold.[2]

As author Bryan Mahoney notes of this process, "This is simply a florid description of tincturing, or extraction by soaking in ethanol" (Mahoney, 1995). This method is in fact still used in the production of cannabis medicines and home remedies and has been so in the intermittent period as well. As we shall see, a number of alchemists used this technique, with cannabis, opium and a variety of other plants and drugs.

From descriptions of recipes and processes, the amounts condensed were considerable. The alchemist Paracelsus noted in his *De Origine Morborum Invisibilium, Lib. IV* "Nothing of true value is located in the body of a substance, but in the virtue thereof, and this is the principle of the Quintessence, which reduces, say 20 lbs. of a given substance into a single Ounce, and that ounce far exceeds the 20 lbs. in potency. Hence the less there is of body, the more in proportion is the virtue thereof" (Paracelsus, 1530).[3] Paracelsus "in his fourth Book *Archidox* [1601] of the Quintessence saith, 'A Quintessence is a matter which is corporally extracted out ... of all things that have life, being separated from all impurity and mortality, most purely subtiliated, and divided from all the Elements thereof ... it is a matter little and small, lodged and harboured in some Tree, Herb, Stone, or the like; the rest is a pure body, from which we learn the separation of the Elements."[4]

In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, a considerable body of work on esoteric subjects was misattributed to the Franciscan Philosopher, writer, poet, theologian, mystic, mathematician, logician, and in the end martyr, (dying from injuries inflicted by stone-throwing Moors) Ramon Llull (1232-1315). Regarded as one of the most wide ranging and original thinkers of his age by Spanish historians, and fondly known as Doctor Illuminatus, Llull's influence in some areas of study are still felt. It is well known that numbers of works have been falsely attributed to ancient prophets and philosophers, and this is due to aspiring writers, who would sometimes use the name of a Biblical figure, or noted Philosophers, and other figures of importance, in order to imbue their own work with more prestige. Likewise, later medieval authors would attribute their works to more famous figures of their own time, such as Llull, with the "desire to endow it with the prestige and respect commanded by Lull in the fourteenth century among the philosophers, theologians and physicians of Spain" (Patai, 1994). Llull himself, however, condemned many of these subjects, such as alchemy and magic. None the less,

these works of pseudo-Llulls became deeply influential among Hermeticists, Alchemists, and other Esoterics, over 80 such works are known, and many are still in circulation as Llullian works. Among the most influential of these treatises was the *De secrets naturae sive quinta essentia* (On the Secrets of Nature or the Fifth Essense),[5] first published in 1514, and bearing Llull's name through countless reprints and translations, as with other similarly allegedly misattributed works.

> However, the conclusion that these alchemical treatises could not have been written by Lull seems never to have reached alchemical circles, whose admiration for Lull the alchemist continued to secure him an honored place in alchemical literature (Patai, 1994).

The general view is that *De secrets naturae sive quinta essentia*, was actually written by Raymond de Tarrega, thought to have been born around (1335?-1371), who was born a Jew, but converted to Christianity at an early age, only to be later persecuted as a heretic by the Church he had converted to, dying in custody, possibly through self poison, perhaps to avoid a fate worse than death. From historical accounts of this figure, "it appears he never pretended to be anybody but himself, Master Raymund, an alchemist. It was only after his death that his works came to be attributed to Raymond Lull" (Patai, 1994). Besides his tractate on the quintessence, de Tarrega also had a book, *De invocation demonum*, which drew the ire of the Inquisitors, and as a result is no longer extant. A 1365 Church document recorded of this work, that under the orders of Pope Innocent VI there were "caused to be burned, a certain large and bulky book, *Demonium invocation*, in seven separate parts, which is titled, *The Book of Solomon*, in which is described sacrifices, discourses, offerings, and very many nefarious things with which demons can be consulted."[6] This is worth mentioning as it shows the cross over between alchemy and magic, and most alchemists of the time could be considered practising magicians, and many had grimoires and others books of spells readily on hand.

De secrets naturae sive quinta essentia had complex alchemical instructions for purifying the quintessence from wine, and then advice on various plants and other substances that could be extracted into the "Quintessence." This information, as with the grimoires, also seems to have been considered heretical and was prohibited literature in the 14th century, and the "Lullian alchemical treatises ... were burned in 1372 at the orders of Pope Gregory XI" (Patai, 1994). Ten years prior, the alchemist Johannes de Rupescissa, author of *De consideration quint essentia rerun omnium* (On the consideration of the Fifth Essence of All Things) [and also thought to be the original author of the popular Llullian work, *De secrets naturae sive quinta essentia* by some sources] seems to have been

burned at the stake after a lengthy imprisonment under Pope Innocent VI. Rupescissa's experiments in distillation led to the development of what he named *aqua vitæ*, aka the *quinta essentia*, and he claimed it as a panacea for all diseases. The persecution of Raymond de Tarrega, burning of the Llullian alchemical texts, along with the mortal body of Rupescissa, provide us with evidence for the motivation behind the obscuring language of alchemy, meant to be understood only by the initiated. This may also offer a reason for so few direct references to cannabis in surviving alchemical literature. However, these various 14th and 15th-century manuscripts gives clear instructions on the process of how the quintessence is distilled from wine, and show clearly this was a widespread alchemical preparation that was widely used by the adepts of the time which, as we shall see, clearly involved the tincturing of cannabis and other psychoactive plants.

It was in his excellent essay and accompanying translation, *An Unknown Hebrew Medical Alchemist: A Medeival Treatise on the Qunita Essentia* (1984) that the respected scholar of Jewish history, Raphael Patai first discussed a number of alchemical texts devoted to the quintessence, and particularly identifies preparations containing cannabis, opium and other psychoactive plants. Patai returned to this topic in his pivotal work *The Jewish Alchemists* (Patai, 1994). He noted that "among the many Latin writings published by Ramon Lull there are several that deal with the fabulous *quinta essentia*. the purest of essences, which was supposed to rejuvenate the old and cure all kinds of diseases including mental aberrations" (Patai, 1994).

Of such texts, Patai's work was directed at a Hebrew alchemical text devoted to the quintessence, attributed to an anonymous author who claimed it was a copy of a text written by "a great sage whose name is Raimon," a name believed to have been used in hopes of of associating it with the works of Ramon Llull. This centuries-old text, written in Hebrew, appeared in a medieval manuscript alongside selections from the works of Avicenna. It was likely a copy of an even earlier lost Latin manuscript that did not survive, and may have been destroyed in the Church's 14th-century purge of such documents.

The 14th-15th century Hebrew manuscript opens with the words "And now I shall copy for you a great secret of the fifth essence, which is called in their language [Spanish] *qinta esensia*.... It was written by a great sage whose name Raimon..." Raphael Patai notes that as "for the identity of the author, all that can be said was that he was a Jewish physician whom lived in Spain in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and knew, in addition to Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Sanskrit" (Patai, 1984). Like the English version of *The Book of Quintessence*, with which it holds some strong comparisons, the author "influenced by the alchemical teachings of his time in

which the *quinta essentia* occupied a prominent place. He repeats again and again that the admixture of the *quinta essentia* will increase the effectiveness of drugs" (Patai, 1984). As the Hebrew text records:

> ...if you want to prepare a potion for a disease ... place those drugs which are appropriate for that potion into our Fifth Essence, and it will become like the potion, and it will be more effective, one part of it to a hundred. And likewise ... the fragrant drugs, and thus all things of this kind, and thus all the cordial drugs must be pounded to utter thinness, until one cannot feel it by palpitation...

The author of the 14th-century Hebrew text goes onto give a variety of medicinal plants to be infused into the Fifth Essence and prescribes them for various ailments and conditions. Preparations of poppy and belladonna were also noted, via an infusion of "popillion ointment," prepared opium, wolfsbane, henbane, monkshood, mandrake, and a variety of plants under foreign names which are not always clearly identifiable, as well as a preparation of "Pills ... from India," so it is clear exotic imported ingredients were also in use. As the author of the tractate states of such plants and preparations "apply these things to our heaven [quintessence]." Patai notes of this in *The Jewish Alchemists*, where he also discusses this Hebrew alchemical text, "It should be noted that his instructions throughout the lists of his medicaments is to add them to 'our heaven, that is, the fifth essence, whereby the original medicinal property and effectiveness of the substances in question will be maximized" (Patai, 1994/2014). It is clear that the term "heaven" was used in reference to this ethanol-like preparation, the quintessence, that could absorb the "essence" or "soul" of the plant, and leave the material body behind, as with the concept of the human soul leaving the mortal body and ascending to Heaven.

> Like Lull, he considers that the quinta essentia can cure almost anything, from melancholy, to pestilential fever, and from poisoning to demoniac possession ... it can rejuvenate old men, renew the spirit of life, and endow women with beauty. Yet despite these clearly alchemical features, one gains the impression that the author relies more on the curative powers of the drugs themselves than on the quinta essentia added to them. Nowhere does he recommend the application of the quinta essentia by itself; he always suggests its use as an agent intensifying or augmenting the curative powers of drugs (Patai, 1984).

I think Patai has it incorrect in his understanding of what has taken place. The *quinta essentia* was not "added" to the plants, the alchemical view was that the essence of the plant itself was extracted into the elixir, and the potion

became the quintessence of the plant or plants used. The anonymous author of the Hebrew treatise also refers to a mixture used both internally and topically that includes "chaff of hemp" for the treatment of "dropsy" and "Persian fire," which is thought to have been a form of venereal disease, and a variety of other ailments; noting that the mixture is "also utterly effective against the illness of cancer if it is imbibed with sabar [aloe]" (Patai, 1994/2014). According to the anonymous Hebrew author of this 14th century tractate on the quintessence: "This medicine was invented by a great sage, and many old diseases came upon him, and he saw this in a dream, and made it, and was cured, and he put it in writing so as to help many people . And it helps internal [diseases] by drinking and external [diseases] by way of a plaster chaff of qanavos (hemp). And we have tried this medicine many times, and all those who take the above mentioned mixture will be saved form leprosy and perselia [palsy?], and from bad diseases which have no [other] cure" – miraculous cures reminiscent of the tales of the Holy Grail.

In this respect, it should be remembered that even things like curing maladies was considered miraculous, and the maladies themselves, as in ancient times, were often considered demonic in nature. As Raymond de Tarrega, recorded in *De secrets naturae sive quinta essentia*:

> ...The demons are attached to human bodies because of bad dispositions and corrupt humour, or because of melancholic infection which generates evil, black, and horrible images in fantasy, and disturbs the intellect, for the demons habitually take on such forms, and generally dwell in obscure and solitary places. When by virtue of the fifth essence [quintessence] and other things this humor, which is the reason they enter such a body, is expelled from it, then at the same time also the demons vanish at once altogether with the humor.
>
> ...And because of this there exists a revelation of how the sensate medicines have the effect of expelling demons from any body. Use, therefore that aforementioned medicine, and you will cure any demoniac...

This act of herbal healing is compared by de Tarrega to "Solomon's act of necromancy, with which demons were forced to perform good works; or with evil virtue of words, stones, and plants. It is therefore clear how the demons are subject to the action of senate things." Thus, to cure someone of disease was equal to control over demons, and even an exorcism, and herein may have laid the issues the Church had with the alchemists who were preparing the quintessence and writing about its various manifestations from different plant preparations.

The association of demons with tincturing goes back at

least as far as Zosimos, and throws some light on the close association ceremonial magic held with alchemy. This may relate to Zosimos' reference discussed earlier, where he associates cannabis-infused wines and beers, with the "wicked arts." As Kyle Fraser explains of Zosimos' text, *The Final Quittance*:

> Zosimos claims that those tinctures which are called "opportune" (kairikai) in his day were, in the time of Hermes, regarded as natural tinctures (physikaibaphai). But this true alchemy, which Hermes knew, has been almost forgotten, due to the jealous stratagems of the daimons, who resent the independence of the alchemists and their natural methods. Eventually these natural secrets were appropriated by the daimons and became contingent upon their inluence and will. The daimons now jealously guard these secrets of tincturing, revealing them only to the priests who slavishly worship them...
>
> ...In order to ensure the maintenance of their sacrifices, Zosimos says, the daimons plotted to keep the alchemists dependent upon them. They concealed the old Hermetic secrets of natural tincturing and replaced them with non-natural or "opportune" tinctures, which they now reveal only to those who make the proper sacrifices.
>
> Zosimos says that these alchemists, who serve the daimons in exchange for secrets of tincturing, are fixated on the material ends of the art. They are "wretched lovers of pleasure" ... who cannot see, or do not care to see, the spiritual dangers of their enslavement. Instead of seeking liberation through alchemy from the pleasures and pains of the body, they surrender themselves, body and soul, to these predatory daimons, in exchange for the superficial trappings of the art. In other words they care only for profane gold but not for the "gold" of self-purification. It is clear that these misguided alchemists are in precisely the same situation as those blind followers of Fate, criticized by Zosimos in On the Letter Omega: those who ridicule the techniques of natural alchemy and trust only in astrologic and daimonic principles.
>
> ...In the end, however, the problem of daimons remains largely unresolved. Given that the alchemist must take some account of these daimonic and astrologic influences – inasmuch as he works through the material world – how can he do so without compromising the spiritual integrity of the Art and risking daimonic seduction? Is there any way to reconcile the spiritual aims of the Art with its material necessities?
>
> There is one tantalizing suggestion. Zosimos advises Theosebeia to perform certain sacrifices after

the example of Solomon: "Then, without being called to do it, offer sacrifices to the daimons, not the useful variety, not those which nourish and comfort them, but those which deter and destroy them, those which Mambres [Jambres?] gave to Solomon, king of Jerusalem, and of which he himself has written according to his wisdom" (Final Quittance...). Zosimos here shows his familiarity with the folk legends of Solomon as a magus and exorcist, who holds divine dominion over daimons. One wonders whether he has read the Testament of Solomon in which Solomon describes how he harnessed the powers of the daimons, with the aid of their angelic superiors, in order to complete the construction of the Temple. Solomon, through the divine power of his ring, commands each demon, in turn, to reveal its name, its distinctive activity, its planetary or zodiacal designation, and the angelic or divine power that thwarts it. So long as he maintains a pious relation to God, he is able to control the demons, through their divine superiors, and harness their powers for sacred ends. But when his piety is compromised, and he sacrifices to pagan gods, his control over the demons is lost, and he becomes enslaved to them: '"...my spirit was darkened and I became a laughingstock to the idols and demons." (Testament...).

As K. von Stuckrad argues, one sees in the Testament a monotheistic response to the problem of the malevolent astral powers. Of special interest is the manner in which the Egyptian decan gods are demoted to daimons, now held under the dominion of the Jewish angels and, ultimately, the Jewish God (Testament...). If Zosimos does have this Solomonic tradition in mind, then he may be suggesting to Theosebeia that the daimons which are attempting to control and seduce her can, in turn, be controlled and made subject to the spiritual work of the alchemist – just as Solomon was able to harness the daimons toward the spiritual ends of the Temple (Fraser, 2004).

This brings up a number of, interesting points regarding alchemy's ties with magic. Like de Tarrega, Zosimos, indicates the Solomonic tradition of magic and its control of demons, as with Solomon's forcing a demon to spin hemp, in the afore-mentioned *Testament of Solomon*. In relation, we shall see later, cannabis played a role in late Solomonic magic, with a cannabis ointment used to see and bind demons into magic mirrors, referred to in the 16th-century grimoire *Sefer Raziel: Liber Salomonis* and references to a cannabis-empowered magic ring. Further, the sort of planetary and zodiacal magic referred to is a development of earlier Jewish and Gnostic magic, and can also be found in grimoires such as *The Picatrix*, *Sefer*

Raziel: Liber Salomonis and countless others. As well, Solomon in a sense in the above description, where he loses his power to the demons, can be seen as a prototype for Faust, and serves as warning to later aspiring alchemists and magicians, not to let these sorts of demonic figures get the better of them!

As both de Tarrega, and the 14th-century Hebrew alchemical text regarding the quintessence, have been grouped with the Llullian alchemical texts, it is interesting to see that despite any perceived persecution of this tradition, cannabis appears with other plants on a list of "Arcanum Lulllianum" centuries later in a early 17th-century alchemical text the *Panaceae Hermeticae*, which was written as a defense and assertion of the "universal medicine." The book was written by an alchemist known as Johann Conrad Gerhard, and described as a "Discussion and examination of his arduous search for medicine, whether in leaf or gold can be reduced to powder, or even infused into wine or distilled water or other liquid, extinguished inside the body assumed to have a medicinal effect and beneficial use?" (Gerhard, 1640). Cannabis appears twice in a section devoted to "The Arcanum Lullianum, or secret method of making and managing universal remedy, the true and genuine art technique spagyrica" (Gerhard, 1640).

It should also be noted that, although little recognized, there may have been a variety of exotic substances available for use in such alchemical preparations in Europe in this time frame as well. The noted French Historian Professor Robert Fossier (1927-2012), in *The Axe and the Oath: Ordinary Life in the Middle Ages*, said drug use in the Middle Ages was often no more frowned upon than excessive drinking, or other personal vices.

> Drug use, not denounced, was thus not described or much investigated. It is clear that it was present, however. In the Frankish states of the East or in the nearer lands of Islam, the mastication or smoking of Indian hemp was certainly practiced more widely than just among the Muslim sects of Lebanon or the Atlas Mountains. In Europe itself, powders made from poppies picked in Asia were known in Italy before 1200 or 1250, and were transported in bundles of "spices" or in medicinal phials (Fossier, 2010).

The name arcanum (plural "arcana") comes from the Latin *arcanus*, "secret." It came into use as the the Dark Ages transitioned into the Renaissance. As alchemists were commonly said to be pursuing the arcana or "secrets" of nature, which resulted in the discovery of elixirs for curing disease, extending lives, as well as a means of deeper knowledge, the word itself came to be used to describe these same preparations. The use of arcanum for elixirs is reminiscent of the Sufi use of the term *asrar*, meaning "mysteries" for hashish. This association was in no way limited to the Llullian corpus of texts, and we find a

reciepe for an arcanum containing cannabis from Europe's most famous alchemist.

Despite the apparent dangers on both sides of demons and the church, European alchemists continued on with their experiments with various forms of tinctures, arcana, and quintessences, albeit with increasingly cryptic language. However, here too we find identifiable references to cannabis in such preparations, and in the works of some well-known alchemists and books of alchemy. This brings us to a particularly well-known figure, who is remembered for his knowledge of cannabis, opium, and other substances, as well as tinctures, quintessences, and arcanum, and is even said to have bragged about conjuring up demons!

The Arcanum Compofitum of

Paracelsus

It is doubtful that one could read a book on alchemy and not come across the name Paracelsus, as this Swiss renaissance philosopher, physician, botanist, astrologer, and all-around general occultist is so intertwined with the history of this craft. As well, he is widely considered the Father of Toxicology, and an important figure in the history of medicine. Born Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, and in his bombastic style he later changed his name to Paracelsus ("equal to Celsus") indicating himself as a rival to ancient medical authorities like Galen and Celsus. Paracelsus was extremely well traveled, and paid keen attention to not only the learned remedies of doctors in the countries he traveled in, but also to folk remedies. In his time Paracelsus represented a one-man revolution in medicine.

Paracelsus search for alchemical and occult secrets also led him to travel to Germany, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, China, and to the Mysterious East. As J. Maxwell described of the travels of Paracelsus and the mythological dimensions they took:

> He ... set out for the East to gather if he could from its treasury of precious things; in his researches omitting nothing which had bearing upon his favourite studies. In the dusky catacombs of dead Egypt he interrogated the dust of the immortal Hermes. he conversed – or said he did – with the mummies if the Pyramids. He pretended to collect the secret instructions of the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia and the priests of Zoroaster. At the same time he could sink at will to the ordinary level of humanity. He could talk with gipsies and strollers, players and musicians, merchants, beggars, wizards, witches, and quacks. But he not only learned; he taught, or, at least, rewarded. He cured the disease of his new friends, and instructed them how to cure maladies of others. Thus his fame as an erudite and generous physician preceded him at every stage of his journey... (Maxwell, 1867).

It was in Constantinople where it is claimed he met an Arabian alchemist who bestowed the supreme secret of the "alkahest" upon him. The alkahest was a hypothetical universal dissolvent and Paracelsus' recipe for it was said to have consisted of caustic lime, alcohol, and carbonate of potash. It is important to remember the discovery of alcohol itself is attributed to alchemists, and it played a paramount role in the preparation of the various alchemical elixirs that became known as the quintessence.

Tincturing was central to Paracelsus' alchemy. "Paracelsus's elixirs, like quintessence (indeed, rather like arcana too) are preservatives..." (Ball, 2006). In these alcohol-based preparations, Paracelsus would capture the

active ingredients of various plant drugs. "The role of the alchemist and preparer of drugs, in the view of Paracelsus, was to isolate the 'quintessence' or 'arcanum'" (Wertheimer & Bush, 1977). "Paracelsus (1493-1591) developed the first, albeit alchemistic idea of active principles contained in a medicinal plant (the so-called arcanum, which he considered as an immaterial principle) and the concept of dose dependency of drug action and toxicity (sola dosis facit venenum)" (Petersen & Amstutz, 2007).

In *The Book Concerning the Tincture of Philosophers*, Paracelsus promises to reveal his secrets to the worthy, and indicates the similarity shared between the terms, tinctures, arcana, and the quintessence, as well as blasts all his critics in his typical bombastic style.

> THE BOOK CONCERNING THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, WRITTEN AGAINST THOSE SOPHISTS BORN SINCE THE DELUGE, IN THE AGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD; By PH. THEOPHRASTUS BOMBAST, of HOHENHEIM, Philosopher of the Monarchia, Prince of Spagyrists, Chief Astronomer, Surpassing Physician, and Trismegistus of Mechanical Arcana [excerpt]:
>
> SINCE you, O Sophist, everywhere abuse me with such fatuous and mendacious words, on the ground that being sprung from rude Helvetia I can understand and know nothing: and also because being a duly qualified physician I still wander from one district to another; therefore I have proposed by means of this treatise to disclose to the ignorant and inexperienced: what good arts existed in the first age; what my art avails against you and yours against me; what should be thought of each, and how my posterity in this age of grace will imitate me. Look at Hermes, Archelaus, and others in the first age: see what Spagyrists and what Philosophers then existed. By this they testify that their enemies, who are your patrons, O Sophist, at the present time are but mere empty forms and idols. Although this would not be attested by those who are falsely considered your authentic fathers and saints, yet the ancient Emerald Table shews more art and experience in Philosophy, Alchemy, Magic, and the like, than could ever be taught by you and your crowd of followers. If you do not yet understand, from the aforesaid facts, what and how great treasures these are, tell me why no prince or king was ever able to subdue the Egyptians. Then tell me why the Emperor Diocletian ordered all the Spagyric books to be burnt (so far as he could lay his hands upon them). Unless the contents of those books had been known, they would have been obliged to bear still his intolerable yoke, – a yoke, O Sophist, which shall one day be put upon the neck of

yourself and your colleagues. From the middle of this age the Monarchy of all the Arts has been at length derived and conferred on me, Theophrastus Paracelsus, Prince of Philosophy and of Medicine...

...So then, you wormy and lousy Sophist, since you deem the monarch of arcana a mere ignorant, fatuous, and prodigal quack, now, in this mid age, I determine in my present treatise to disclose the honourable course of procedure in these matters, the virtues and preparation of the celebrated Tincture of the Philosophers for the use and honour of all who love the truth, and in order that all who despise the true arts may be reduced to poverty. By this arcanum the last age shall be illuminated clearly and compensated for all its losses by the gift of grace and the reward of the spirit of truth, so that since the beginning of the world no similar germination of the intelligence and of wisdom shall ever have been heard of. In the meantime, vice will not be able to suppress the good, nor will the resources of those vicious persons, many though they be, cause any loss to the upright....

I, PHILIPPUS Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast, say that, by Divine grace, many ways have been sought to the Tincture of the Philosophers, which finally all came to the same scope and end. Hermes Trismegistus, the Egyptian, approached this task in his own method. Orus, the Greek, observed the same process. Hali, the Arabian, remained firm in his order. But Albertus Magnus, the German, followed also a lengthy process. Each one of these advanced in proportion to his own method; nevertheless, they all arrive at one and the same end, at a long life, so much desired by the philosophers, and also at an honourable sustenance and means of preserving that life in this Valley of Misery. Now at this time, I, Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast, Monarch of the Arcana, am endowed by God with special gifts for this end, that every searcher after this supreme philosophic work may be forced to imitate and to follow me, be he Italian, Pole, Gaul, German, or whatsoever or whosoever he be. Come hither after me, all you philosophers, astronomers, and spagyrists,[7] of however lofty a name ye may be, I will show and open to you, Alchemists and Doctors, who are exalted by me with the most consummate labours, this corporeal regeneration. I will teach you the tincture, the arcanum, the quintessence, wherein lie hid the foundations of all mysteries and of all works.

...the Tincture of the Philosophers is a Universal Medicine, and consumes all diseases, by whatsoever name they are called, just like an invisible fire. The dose is very small, but its effect is most powerful. By

> means thereof I have cured the leprosy, venereal disease, dropsy, the falling sickness, colic, scab, and similar afflictions; also lupus, cancer, noli-me-tan-gere, fistulas, and the whole race of internal diseases, more surely than one could believe. Of this fact Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Bohemia, etc., will afford the most ample evidence (Paracelsus).

Paracelsus refers to Albertus Magnus, and it is worth noting that de Laurence's 1919 edition of *Abertus Magnus: Egyptian Secrets*, contains a number of remedies that include hemp seed and hemp okum, (the latter may be a mistranslation, as it generally refers to ship caulking). And a 19th-century book of magic *Le livre rouge, résumé du magisme, des sciences occultes*, attributes a cannabis and opium infused wine to this figure (Flamel, 1842). The eagerness and enthusiasm of writers from the 19th century, leave the reliability of such historical information wanting.

Although stones, minerals, animals were used in quintessences, the role of plants in such "tinctures" was of prime concern to Paracelsus. "The liberation of virtues, says Paracelsus, is achieved by the alchemical process of separation: a parting of the detritus and waste of mundane reality from the vital, healing forces of nature "which are too wonderful to be ever thoroughly investigated. This separations yields rarefied, pure essences of nature such as the 'quintessence' – 'nature fortified beyond its grade' – of which there is but an ounce in every twenty pounds of ordinary matter" (Ball, 1972).

Dr. Manfred Frankhauser states: "Paracelsus described cannabis in a number of his many works" (Frankhauser, 2002). Sadly, however, not much about these preparations can be found in modern works about Paracelsus, although from what little has been written on it, it seems to have held some importance. "In his book *Das Neunte Buch in der Arznei* [*The ninth book of medicine,* 1526], he mentioned cannabis as a component of the 'Arcana compositum,' which he regarded to be the most important medicine" (Grotenhermen, 2009).

Alchimia, the goddess or spirit of alchemy. from a 16th century Woodcut by Leonhard Thurneysser, a student of Paracelsus. Note the plants around her crown. Paracelsus gave lectures at Universities on alchemy, often wearing an alchemists leather apron, and the door was open for all to attend for free, even the wise women of the villages, those who were often deemed 'witches' and whom Paracelsus said he, in return, had garnered much herbal wisdom from. "I have not been ashamed," he wrote, "to learn from tramps, butchers and barbers" as well as "gipsies, sorcerers, wandering tribes, robbers, and felons."[8]

Although prepared similarly, "We might hope to distinguish elixirs from arcana according to the idea that the former preserves and the latter transform..." (Ball 1972). As Paracelsus himself noted "That is called arcanum then which is incorporeal, immortal, of perpetual life, intelligible above all nature and knowledge more than human... [Arcana] have the power of transmuting, altering, and restoring us, as the arcana of God, according to their own induction."[9]

I was unable to track down this volume cited by Grotenhermen, to retrieve more information on this arcanum; however, after considerable searching and effort I was able track down the following recipe, from an Old Dutch translation, for the *Arcanum Compofitum*, "secret composition," in the *Fasciculus. Oft Lust-Hof der Chimescher Medecijnen, uyt allen Boecken ende Schriften Doctoris Theophrasti Paracelsi van Hogenheym vergadert* (1614) which contained cannabis:

The forward from the this Dutch work explains how the work was translated so many could benefit from Paracelsus' medicine, and celebrated it over the formerly used medicines of Galen.

> Having paid attention that there are so many unheard of dangerous and long diseases are cured and healed by the Medicines of Paracelsus, prepared based on the 'Chimische Ordonnantie', such as gout, falling disease, stroke, paralysis, leprosy, smallpox, cancien, fistulas and many other similar diseases, that are considered as incurable, this way there are some, by the grace, love and inspiration of God, he focussed on chemistry with which he made many, good, delicate and attractive secret means, magisteria tinctures and the fifth element, he found, that they, disgusted by the fluid viands of Galenus Apotecaryen, vomited those and accepted the medicines of Paracelsus, prepared with the art of chemistry, with which the stomach was not completely filled with fluid viands that burdened the nature of the diseases, and instead of curing, weakened further and made the sickness worse (1614).

Translated from the 17th century Dutch and Latin we get for the *Arcanum Compofitum*:

> About four secret means against contractions and paralyses.
>
> The first is called composed secret means.
>
> Wine alcohol 6 English pounds cantharidum [Spanish beatle] 10 [drams?] flowers of tapsi [barbati] [an herb – also called verbascum thapsus or mullein,[10] probably from Latin mollis, soft] Cannabis, Chamomile, St. John's wort ana [of each].
>
> 6. hands full / crush it and mix it together, allow it to draw in the rays of the sun or in the heat of manure for one month. Distillate it afterwards until this distillated liquor withers [Dutch: bloemen van = flowers of] cannabis tapsi, chamomile, St. John's wort, centaurea, prunella vulgaris, stachys officinalis ana [betony – common hedge-nettle, dried] 1.5 pond / Mastichis [resin, or gum] Numia [divine? resin] ana

Thuris [Frankincense] 5 ounces. Earthworms and vorschen ana 1 half onse/1. Half pond.

Distillate this in Circulatorio for 8 days and use the method discussed above under balm.

centaurea – centaury a medicinal herb, prunella vulgaris – a herb known as common self-heal or heal-all

.

This recipe seems to be for an epilepsy and seizure medicine. Epilepsy was considered a form of demonic possession well into this period. That it was used as an alcohol-based topical is interesting, as this would allow for much more absorption in a topical preparation and would ensure penetration through the skin into the bloodstream, than an ointment. As well, a balm applied as a covering would keep this preparatiion on the skin.

The reference to *Cantharidin*, "Spanish fly," once thought to be a potent aphrodisiac, is interesting, as this was also an ingredient in dawamesk "the medicine of immortality." Dawamesk was sought after in the 19th century by the mystics of *Le Club des Haschischin*, and the Rosicrucian P.B. Randolph. It was "a greenish preserve, its ingredients a mixture of hashish, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, pistachio, sugar, orange juice, butter and cantharides" (Green, 2002).

Paracelsus' interest in cannabis is notable, and there are other references waiting to be translated from his work, but this 16th-century alchemist is more known for his association with another plant, which likely entered medieval Europe via identical channels as cannabis products, the Poppy. "Paracelsus... called opium the philosopher's stone of immortality" (Spiegel & Fatemi, 2003). The invention of the opium extract laudanum, which he saw as his *magistrale arcanum*,[11] is attributed to Paracelsus.

Paracelsus' use of opium also filtered into his interest in alchemy and it has long been put forth that the "philosopher Paracelsus ... always carried opium in the pommel of his saddle and called it 'the stone of immortality" (Clendening, 1933). There are indications that such substances were used by Paracelsus for more than mere medicine. In his classic mock-heroic narrative poem, *Hudibras*, Samuel Butler (1613-1680), ridiculed Paracelsus' alleged magic abilities, in a way that indicated his use of drugs for this purpose:

Bumbastus[12] kept a devil's bird – Shut in the pommel of his sword,
That taught him all the cunning pranks
Of past and future mountebanks (Butler, 1664).

Mountebanks were basically medieval con-men. This is likely in reference to comments made about Paracelsus by Gabriel Naudé (1600-1653) in his 1625 century work, *Apologie pour les grands personages faussement soupçonnés de magie*. In Davies Old English translation, Naudé lamented

that Paracelsus seemed to "follow the ordinary track of *Mountebanks*, who break out into a torrent of common and popular eloquence to celebrate the miraculous power of their Druggs, and call themfelves Professors and Operators, as if they had the certain cure of all difeafes" (Davies/Naudé, 1657). Commenting on Butler's verse on Paracelsus, Zachary Grey in an annotated version of *Hudibras*, also referrered to Naudé in reference to this "devil's bird-Shut in the pommel of his sword," in order to identify it with opium. This association was quite clearly made by Naudé, who claimed the drug was also equated with the alchemical philosopher's stone. Naudé refers to Paracelsus' use of "extractions and diverfe effences ... their properties and preparations ... such as he made use of in the compofition of his Remedies":

> ...[T]ake any notice of what many fay of the familiar Daemon which lock'd up within the pommel of his fword. For, not to bring upon the ftage the opinion of the Alchymifts who maintaine, it was the fecret of the Philofophers ftone, it were more rationall to believe, that, if there were anything within it, it was certainly two or three dofes of his Laudanum... (Davies/Naudé, 1657).

Laudanum, being Latin for Laudable, is a reference directed at praising the many virtuous qualities that Paracelsus saw in his opium elixir. "The invention of laudanum is attributed to Paracelsus... He proclaimed it to be the true Elixir of Life and said it contained gold and pearls, among other things, but the main ingredient seems to have been opium, as in theriac" (Luck, 1985/2006). Theriac was an ancient remedy that included opium, frankincense, snake meat and a variety of other exotic ingredients, but its greatest effect likely came though opium. It should be noted that one of the names of hashish in the medieval Islamic world was "theriac" (Rosenthal, 1971). Moreover, other names were used interchangeably for both hashish and opium, and the two were often mixed together.

Likely from Arabic alchemical sources, Paracelsus had learned that the alkaloids of opium dissolved much better in alcohol than water. However, although later extracts developed under the name Laudanum were tinctures focused on the opium content, Paracelsus also included ingredients such as crushed pearls, musk, amber, and other substance. It also seems likely that he would render this preparation down to a pellet that could be taken in a pill the size of a "mouse turd." This may also have explained a transition from 'quintessence' to 'philosopher's stone'. There seems to have been some continuation of that technique: "Laudanum, as listed in the *London Pharmacoepoeia* (1618), was a pill made from opium, saffron, castor, ambergris, musk and nutmeg" (Hodgson, 2001).

Numerous depictions of Paracelsus depict him guarding his opium stash, with his hands hidden in the pommel of his sword where he is alleged to have kept two or three "mouse turd" -sized pellets of the drug.

> Paracelsus's ... "laudanum" ... was ... a kind of panacea; some regard this as his greatest secret, a veritable elixir in its universality, precious enough that his assistant Oporinus is alleged (probably falsely) to have risked stealing some when they parted company in Colmar in 1529. In an account of his tumultuous apprenticeship, Oporinus himself mentions laudanum with awe, although he was apparently never initiated into the secret of how it was made... (Ball, 2006).

As we saw in Chapter 9, Oporinus also made claims that Paracelsus drunkenly bragged about using this same

substance in the invocation of demons! However, Paracelsus was in no way a Satanic magician. "Paracelsus saw himself as restoring a truly Godly and Christian medicine, the only kind of medicine that a proper Christian should follow. It is a medicine by, of and for the Spiritual Christians" (Cunningham, 2016). Despite this, as with earlier devout proponents of the quintessence, Paracelsus' activity of healing with his various elixirs brought him afoul of the Church. As Maxwell described:

> Summoned to the bedside of moribund peasant, he observed that a priest was holding something to his lips. "Has the patient taken anything?" he inquired. "Nothing," replied the priest; "but I was about to give him the Corpus Christi." "Then," quoth the profane Paracelsus, "since he has called in another physician, he does not need me," and he strode out of the room. This irreverent speech provoked the fierce wrath of the priesthood, and fatal murmurs of "heresy" and "sorcery" warned Paracelsus of the danger he had incurred. He fled to Bavaria, taking with him his drugs and self-confidence. Oporinus [his servant] ... abandoned him, stole what he could of his secrets, and swelled the outcry against him (Maxwell, 1867).

He is alleged to have died at 47, through poisoned wine, although others have suggested the results of a lifetime of drug addiction and withdrawal, along with ingestion of mercury and other toxic substances in various alchemical elixirs. The facts versus myth of his death, are as hard to sort out as the various romantic details of Paracelsus' fascinating life.

I suspect that one of the reasons Paracelsus is more remembered for his advocacy of opium-based products, and not cannabis ones, is the element of dependence that the former invokes in its users. There is little to no historical record of addiction issues until these more concentrated extracts of the poppy were produced, and the use of raw opium goes back thousands of years. One could speculate that the renaissance alchemist, not being aware of the basics of "addiction" in the way it is known in our own time period, may have imagined when not having it his powers were waining, and then upon ingesting one of his mouse-size turds of laudanum, or drinking it in a tincture, imagining his powers restored miraculously. Paracelsus is said to have called opium "the stone of immortality" and claimed of it, "I have an arcanum which is called Laudanum, which is superior to everything when death is to be cheated."[13] The cause of Paracelsus' death is unknown, so not clearly linked to his use of Laudanum, although both addiction and death by overdose by opiate-based medicines have been suggested of Avicenna, and certainly the use of opiates by later 19th-century occultists claimed its victims.

Two women and a man work at distilling the properties of plants and herbs. From Eucharius Rösslin, Kreuterbuch, von natürlichem Nutz... (1550).

For the development of his arcana and quintessences, Terrence McKenna saw Paracelsus as "essentially the inventor of drugs. Because he was the first person to extract herbs, and to get this notion of the essence. That if you have a medicinal plant, then there is something in there which you want to get out and concentrate ... and he invented pills, of the ordinary sort, and he said 'I have made a great discovery, the centre of my alchemical opus rests with the magic of laudanum.' Which of course was gum opium. There was a craze in the late 15th century among alchemists for opium. The alchemist Van Helmont,[14] signed some of his alchemical tracts "Dr. Opiotaus"... (McKenna, 1998).

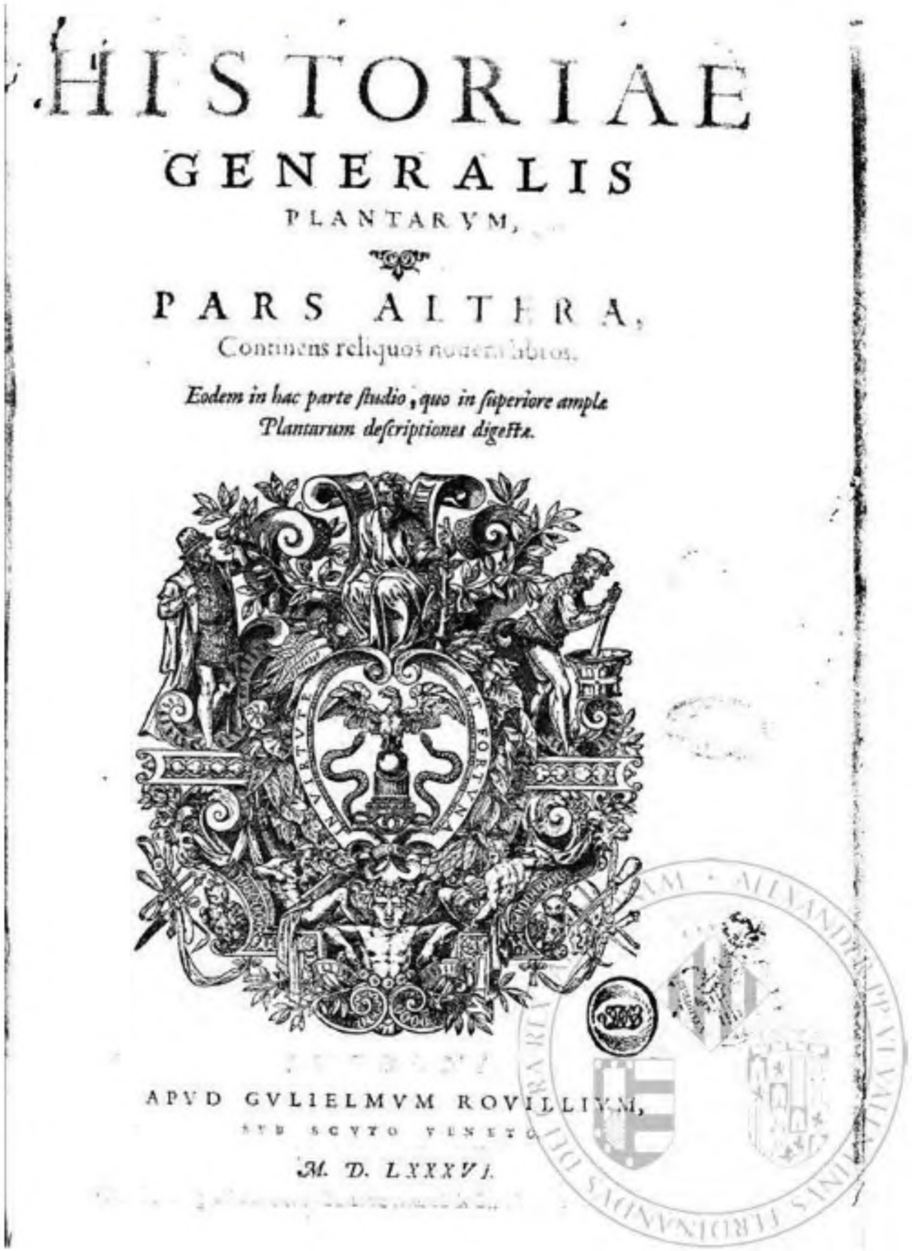
In reference to laudanum and other preparations adopted from Paracelsus, biographer H.S. Redgrove noted that Van Helmont (1580-1644) "made considerable use of these valuable medicines.... He ... employed many other medicines of diverse character including herbal preparations ... and like Paracelsus he roundly accused the apothecaries (altogether justly) of adulterating their drugs" (Redgrove, 1922). Van Helmont, like many alchemists, practiced the imperial method, and for him this included studying the effects of various drugs on himself. "Very interesting is an account of a remarkable experience he had as the result of swallowing a small quantity of monkshood,[15] in the course of an investigation of the effects of poisons. Soon after taking the drug he most clearly felt his powers of understanding and thought to be concentrated in his stomach" (Redgrove, 1922). "He also mentions the sweet spirit of vitriol, with the smell, vapor, and fury of opium, which is very hot and causes sleep and which was known to Paracelsus" (Rosenfeld, 1985). Vitriol, as we shall see later, is a name that appears in conjunction with the Philosopher's Stone. Like many alchemists of the time Van Helmont's work got the ire and attention of the Spanish Inquisition, and as a result, ecclesiastical court proceedings of various kinds were placed against him for more than 20 years.

In relation to the invention of pills, it has also been noted that in medieval Europe, "poudre of hemp-seed"[16] became a key ingredient in the forerunner of the modern medicinal pill, the exotically titled "Pelotus of Antioch" (the pellet or pill of Antioch).

By the 16th century, it is clear the intoxicating elements of cannabis were widely known, as were various methods of ingestion. Jacques Dalechamps' *Historia generalis plantarum* (*General History of Plants*, 1587) gives us some idea of the widespread use, through various local names and knowledge of cannabis in 16th-century Europe, as well as the European knowledge of the various methods to obtain the plants psychoactive effects, and how it was employed for use in the Arabic world:

> p. 496: Cannabis is called asterion and schoinotrophon in Greek, Cannabis n Latin, Schehedenegi in Arabic, Canab in Italian and Çanape in German, Kemp in Belgian, Himp and Hemp in English, Cannamo in Spanish, and Chanure and Cheneue in French. According to Dioscorides, Cannabis is of two kinds. For there is Cannabis sativa [cultivated] and sylvestris [living in the forrest]. Likewise, sativa is double, male and female. Cannabis sativa...
>
> p. 499: related that burnt hemp seed brings the same kind of harm as Coriander; for if it is burnt immoderately, it will cause madness but the dry leaves, consumed in a draught as a kind of porridge, or preferably as the flour of the leaves dried out, causes a certain agreeable and harmless intoxication that is not felt from drinking. Among the Arabs it is pounded and kneaded and used as an intoxicant instead of wine... (Dalechamps, 1587).

References also came into Europe via the 16th century Portuguese physician Garcia de Orta (1501-1568), who traveled to India, according to some sources, to avoid the Inquisition, and from there managed to publish *Colóquios dos simples e drogas he cousas medicinais da Índia* (*Colloquies on the Simples and Drugs of India*, 1563), which gave a remarkable account of the spices and drugs of the region, and included the following description of cannabis' preparation and effects under the name "Bangue":



HISTORIAE
GENERALIS
PLANTARVM,

PARS ALTERA,
Continens reliquos nouem libros.

Eodem in hac parte ſtudio, quo in ſuperiore ample Plantarum deſcriptiones digeſta.

APVD GVLIELMVM ROVILLIVM,
SUB SCVTO VENETO
M. D. LXXXVI.

They make the pressed leaves, sometimes with the seeds, into a powder. Some inject Areca Verde, and those who drink it become beside themselves. For the same purpose they mix nutmeg and mace with it, and there is the same effect in drinking it. Others inject cloves, others camphor of Borneo, others amber and Almisque, others opium. These are the Moors, who are much addicted to it. The profit from its use is for the man to be beside himself, and to be raised above all cares and anxieties, and it makes some break into a foolish laugh. I hear that many women take it when they want to dally and flirt with men. It is also said, but it may not be true, that the great captains, in ancient times, used to drink it with wine or with opium, that they might rest from their work, be without care, and be able to sleep; for the long vigils of such became a torment to them. The great Sultan Bahadur said to Martin Affonso de Souza, to whom he wished every good thing and to whom he told his secretes, that when at night, he wanted to go to Portugal, Brazil, Turkey, Arabia, or Persia, he only had to take a little BANGUE. This was made up into an electuary with sugar and spices, and was called Maju.

Some of the added ingredients would have not only been for flavor, but also for added effect, and not just the obvious opium. "Nutmeg's essential oils include safrole, which is similar to MDA, and myristicin, which is related to MMDA" (Eisner, 2013). "Mace, the exterior covering of the nutmeg seed, also contains the hallucinogenic compound myristicin" (Hanson, et. al., 2006). Interestingly, it

has been suggested by various sources that Nostradamus would give his prophecies "after preparing himself with spiritual exercises and copious amounts of hallucination-enhancing nutmeg" (Reading, 2009). The *maju* mentioned is an early account of the hashish delectable majoon, de Orta also gave an account of its effects.

> ...I myself saw a Portuguese jester, who was for a long time with me ... eat a slice or two of the electuary, and at night he was pleasantly intoxicated, his utterance not intelligible. Then he became sad, began to shed tears, and was plunged in grief. In his case the effect was sadness and nausea. Those who saw or heard of it were provoked to laughter as if it was an ordinary drinking bout, those of my servants who took it, unknown to me, said that it made them so as not to feel work, to be very happy, and to have a craving for food. I believe that it is so generally used and by such a number of people that there is no mystery about it. But I have not tried it, nor do I wish to do so. Many Portuguese have told me that they have taken it, and that they experience the same symptoms, more especially the female partakers. However, this is not one of our medicines and we have better not waste any more time over it (de Orta, 1563).[17]

Garcia de Orta was posthumously condemned as a Jew, and his body exhumed and burnt with an effigy, along with whatever copies of his books the Inquistion could get their hands on at the time.

Descriptions of intoxicating varieties of cannabis could also be found in the *Treatise de Medicina Aegyptiorum* (1645) of the Italian doctor and botanist, Prospero Alpini (1553-1617):

> We are told by Prosper Alpinus, that the Egyptians were, in his time, acquainted with a great variety of these inebriating compositions; which they had in such familiar use, that it was no uncommon thing to see persons intoxicated with them, and acting like madmen: and especially in the strange motions of their heads, and eyes: and that it was usual for them, when they wished to avoid any disagreeable engagement, to excuse themselves by alleging that it would interfere with their stated time of taking the herb; a term signifying the taking of any of these inebriating substances; the principals of which are known by the names of assion, assis, bosa, bernavi, and bers; of all which he gives some account. – See his Treatise de Medicina Aegyptiorum... (Arnold, 1786)

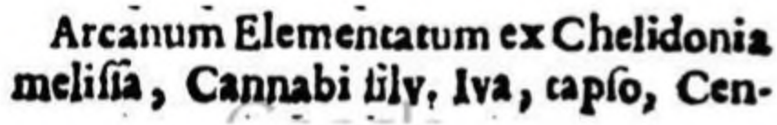
The names *assis*, *assion*, local variations of the term of "hashish," *bers*, and *bosa*, make reference to various preparations related to barsom that were known to contain cannabis, darnel, opium, datura and other substances, as has been noted elsewhere (see Chapter 10). This also

shows that cannabis was still popular in the Islamic world more than 500 years after the time of Avicenna, and thus we can be sure that interest in such preparations carried over into Europe, and followed the same trail as the quintessences and arcana.

The Arcanum Elemntatum

In a 1676 work by Georg Hieronymus Welsch, *Curationum exoticarum chiliades ii et consiliorum medicinalium centuriae iv cum adnotationibus ejusdem* (Two Chiliads of Exoteric Cures people's and Four Centuries of Medical Advice, with Notes by the Same) we find cannabis in a elixir known as the *Arcanum Elemntatum*, as well as in a number of other wine infusions, among the many medical recipes written in alchemical fashion. Welsch lists a number of recipes in other works, such as *Sylloge curationum ... medicinalium* (1668) and other texts. Welsch's work was derived from "Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Hebrew sources in addition to Greek and Latin" (Keller, 2015). His knowledge of these dialects helped him access both rare knowledge and goods:

> Other scholars acknowledged Welsh as an expert on Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew ... Welsch had proven familiarity with linguistically obscure sources in his ... studies of Avicenna ... [and] his knowledge of foreign languages allowed him privileged access to such questions as the true identity of cinnamon, the art of Egyptian glass superior to the Venetian, cannabis and other Turkish drugs, and the silk of Cleopatra (Keller, 2015).


Arcanum Elementatum ex Chelidonia meliſſa, Cannabi lily, Iva, capſo, Cen-

Arcanum Elementatum ('Primal Secret') is prepared out of swallowswort, wild cannabis, ivy, rhubarb, centaury, chamomile flowers, and ground-pine with x.

A recipe for another wine infusion is also recorded "N. Distilled from cannabis [*S. Cannabis*] and wine]. This has narcotic strength and thus also a diaphoretic sense." Another recipe from Welsch indicates delicacies were also being prepared, with exotic ingredients "Hydrops is prepared from wine and the sap of green walnut bark, rue, hyssop, and cannabis purified with Indian sugar mixed with (extract of Chinese roses?)." Other recipes include less enticing ingredients "...urine distilled with unsalted unripe radishes and cannabis [*S. Cannabis*]."

Unfortunately, there is a lack of clarity as to the the abbreviations "*S. Cannabis*," possibly "*Sativa*" – "useful" or "*Semina*" – "seed," though the latter seems unlikely in a wine infusion, as we have seen elsewhere, cannabis seed, often referred to seeded cannabis buds, or seeds surrounded in psychoactive chaff. In this regard, it should be noted that in the view of some medieval writers, the sexes of cannabis were oppositely labeled as to the modern botanical designation of the sexes. As noted in *A Dictionary of English Plant Names*, (1878) "Female Hemp, of the old herbalists, is the *male* plant of hemp, *Cannabis Sativa*,

L... – 'The female hempe ... beareth no sede.' – Fitzherbert, Book of Husbandry." However, this is not true of all authors. "Most pre-Linnaenan botanical authors, except Ray and Morrison, applied the term *mas* (male) and *foemina* (female) ... without any concept of true sexuality in plants comparable to that of animals. Thus, of two kinds, usually distinct species, the more robust or more vigorous or more useful one, especially if having larger leaves or harder wood, was designated 'Male' and the inferior one 'female'" (Stearn, 1975).

A number of other medical preparations were listed in Welsch's works:[18]

> The surgeon of the Duke of Lotharingia used to praise D. Heubergerus for having found his secret for curing most people's burns. To these an extract of cannabis [Ol. exrepressum fem. Cannabis[19]] into which some wax has been dissolved is applied. It relieves the pain and draws away (the sensation of) burning. N. T
>
> ....To these an extract of cannabis [O. ex. fem. Cannabis] green cannabis ; the freshly extracted sap from this is used for earaches at Dioscorides, Book I, Chapter 165.

In *Nature's Alchemist: John Parkinson, Herbalist to Charles I*, Anna Parkinson refers to the growing of cannabis at Long Acre, by the botanist and apothecarist John Parkinson (1567-1650). Parkinson included a number of medical applications of cannabis in his *Theatrum Botanicum* (The Botanical Theatre or Theatre of Plants, 1640).

Opening page for Georg Hieronymus Welsch's Sylloge curationum et observationum medicinalium (1668), which like

Welsch's other works contained a variety of cannabis medical recipes and wine infusions, as well as arcana, that also included cannabis, mandrake, opium and other psychoactive substances.

Image of cannabis from Theatrum Botanicum (1640).

The 17th-century English poem, *The Praise of Hemp-Seed* by John Taylor, which celebrated all aspect of things that sprouted from the noble hemp seed, sails, cloth, rope, paper, etc, as well as medicine and magic elixirs, makes it clear that cannabis products were an important commodity for the apothecaries of that age.

Apothecaries were not worth a pin,

If Hempseed did not bring their commings in ;
Oyles, Vnguents, Sirrops, Minerals, and Baulmes,
(All Natures treasures, and th' Almighties almes,)
Emplasters, Simples, Compounds, sundry drugs
With Necromanticke names like fearefull Bugs,
Fumes, Vomits, purges, that both cures, and kils,
Extractions, conserues, preserues, potions, pils,
Ellixers, simples, compounds, distillations,
Gums in abundance, brought from foraigne nations.[20]

The Aquae Inebriates

In some alchemical writings, "water" is used as a euphemism for the solvent alcohol, as with the term *aqua vitae* . It is likely this use we see in the following 16th-century references from *A Homelie Herbe: Medicinal Cannabis in Early England*:

> "Water of hempe" was recommended in The Vertuous Boke of Distillacioun for headache and "for all hete wheresoe'er it be" (trans. Andrewes 1527). John Parkinson, in Theatrum Botanicum (1640), and Nicholas Culpeper (1652) subsequently confirmed this indication for the aromatic water.... William Turner (1551) offers his readers Latin, English, French and Dutch names for medicinal hemp, indicating widespread use in northern Europe (Crawford, 2002).

That this preparation could hold fragrances indicates it was an alcoholic based substance that essential oils could be dissolved in. The alchemist Gerolamo Cardano referred to a preparation of alcohol as *aqua ardens*, and describes an intoxicating alcoholic infusion, that contained cannabis, mixed with it.

Cardano's Cannabis Infusion

Acannabis-infused elixir recorded by the the Renaissance figure, the genius Gerolamo Cardano (1501-1576) seems to have been another form of the quintessence. Cardano was an Italian polymath, being a mathematician, physician, biologist, physicist, alchemist, astrologer, astronomer and philosopher, among other endeavours, recorded the following alchemical sounding recipe in his encyclopedia of natural science, *De Subtilitate* (1550) which was composed, like other texts of the period, in an elliptical and often obscure Latin. [21] *De Subtilitate* covered a wide array of topics "from cosmology to the construction of machines; from the usefulness of natural sciences to the evil influence of demons; from the laws of mechanics to cryptology. It is a mine of facts, both real and imaginary; of notes on the state of the sciences; of superstition, technology, alchemy, and various branches of the occult" [22] (Gillispie,1981). Cardano's *De Subtilitate* leaves us the following alchemical sounding recipe, regarding a infusion of cannabis into *aqua ardens* [ardent water]:

> The best extract is the one whose substance runs out without a cooking process. The most reliable is what is made by infusions. The most effective is what is made by cooking processes – I refer to a dry process, not one in water – that is to be reckoned in the next place...
>
> If fire is not applied with due moderation, it burns up things of an earthy nature – but if this is done with due moderation, it simply intensifies them. Therefore the Muscovites use water distilled from oats, since they have no wine – and it is as warming and inebriating as wine. Oats being of rather thick substance, they must be warmed for distillation, and are thinned out and intensified, [exacuatur] and approach the nature of alcohol [aqua ardens]. Cannabis leaves, turned into powder make a sweetly intoxicating drink, because their impact is on the head (Cardano, 1550).

Cardano's description of the extraction process for his cannabis elixir, transferring the spirit of one plant into another spirit, certainly brings to mind what we have discussed in relation to the quintessence. Cardano continues: "On the same basis, its boiled leaves and seeds (as is said of the rather green husk of nuts), if the water is poured out on the earth, draws the worms up to the earth's surface, whether it entices them by the odour or drives them forth. This is why fishermen commonly use it. If hens eat the same seed, it makes them fertile in the winter – it is heating, and thinning" (Cardano, 1550).

It has also been suggested that the following reference to "*asseral*" in *The De Subtilitate of Girolamo Cardano* (Forrester, 2013) may indicate hashish. Cardano compapres

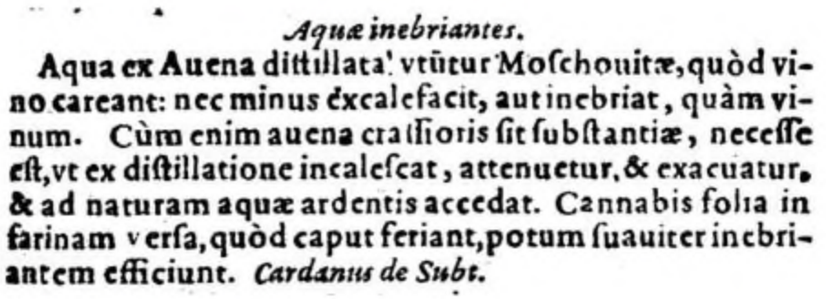
"*asseral*" to "plants, such as the Cohobba[23] in the island Hispaniola in the West Indies, which inebriates by its odor alone, and makes men frantic [phanaticos] I think this herb is of the thorn-apple kind, which when drunk produces a brainstorm [*infuroremvertit*] – no different in its powers from the one that the Turks call *asseral*, of which they make great use, because it not only makes them cheerful and eager, but also drives away all anxiety and fear, making them also more prepared for military duties." The translator notes of *asseral*: "Possibly hashish, the leaves, shoots, or resin of hemp (cannabis)" (Forrester, 2013).

Beside these references to cannabis and hashish, "Cardano ... also gave recipes to evoke the Spirits and unveil the future" (Bosc, 1907). Cardano described "various unguents, which (he says) not only induce sleep but cause dreams of certain kinds, glad or sorry. He mentions that he himself made trial of 'uulgatum ungentum quod Populeon a frondibus populi dicitur'" (Summers, 1933). In *De Subtilitate rerum* (1550), Cardano reveals a recipe for a witches' ointment that contained potent ingredients such as aconite, nightshade alongside non-psychoactive ingredients. It is within Cardano's work, that the "words witches and ointment appear side by side for the first time. it is also here that the ... effects these drugs can have on the psyche are first outlined" (Hatsis, 2015). He described visions obtained from such substances included "theatres, pleasure-gardens, banquets, beautiful ornaments and clothing, handsome young men, kings, magistrates, demons, ravens, prisons, desert wages, and torments."[24]

Like the earlier alchemists who wrote about the quintessence, Cardano suffered persecution and was the subject of serious threats from the religious authorities. Cardano was arrested by the Inquisition in 1570 for unknown reasons, and was forcibly confined in prison and had to abjure his professorship. Later, he moved to Rome, and received a lifetime annuity from Pope Gregory XIII, continuing with his writing and research until his death in 1576. The Swiss physician, philosopher and alchemist, Johannes Jacob Wecker, repeated Cardano's cannabis infusion recipe in his *De secretis libri septemdecim*, (1642) a book

that is believed to have led to accusations of sorcery, and caused Wecker to flee to Basel.

Cardano's recipe was repeated by the alchemist and physician Johann Jakob Wecker, under the name, *aquae inebriates*, "inebriating water" in *De secretis libri XVII* (1613).



Aquæ inebriantes.

Aqua ex Auena dittillata vtũtur Moſchouitæ, quòd vino careant: nec minus excalefacit, aut inebriat, quàm vinum. Cùm enim auena craſſioris ſit ſubſtantiæ, neceſſe eſt, vt ex diſtillatione incaleſcat, attenuetur, & exacuatur, & ad naturam aquæ ardentis accedat. Cannabis folia in farinam verſa, quòd caput feriant, potum ſuauiter inebriantem efficiunt. ***Cardanus de Subt.***

> The Muscovites use water distilled from other allied grasses (avena/oats) because they have no wine: and it does not warm any less nor is it less inebriating than wine. Since oats are indeed of a rather thick substance, it is necessary that they become warm during distillation, (are) thinned out and intensified and (then) come close to the nature of fiery water (alcohol). Cannabis leaves turned to powder produce a pleasantly intoxicating drink because they go to (literally: strike) the head.

18th century References to alchemical tinctures

Thomas and Rebecca Vaughan's *Aqua Vitae: Non Vitis* (Vaughan & Vaughan, 1741), also uses *Aqua* for alchemical elixirs, and contains a number of recipes with narcotic ingredients. A.E. Waite, explained that although Vaughan had done some work with metals, his writings indicate his higher goal was the union of the soul with God, so he classifies him as a spiritual alchemist (Waite, 1888). Vaughan himself is known to have been an advocate of the Rosicrucian teachings of the time, and I would add that his *Aqua Vitae: Non Vitis* further identifies him as a spagyric alchemist. Although largely written in the veiled language of the alchemists, Thomas and Rebecca Vaughan's *Aqua Vitae: Non Vitis,* does contain some overt references to opium, such as the following:

Certain Notes on the Spirit of Vitriol For Making Medicine

> Antimony can be set right with that if the antimony is first purged by resin.... And ... all narcotics, and especially opium. The amended matter can in fact be dissolved in our burning spirits, etc. (Vaughan, 1741).[25]

As well under the title "Extraction of Tinctures from ... Opium ..." Vaughan advises "Mix together equal parts distilled water and vitriol. Then put in the matter and decoct, until the water is tinged. Pour spirit of wine into the tinged water, and it will draw the tincture to itself, et.... If they are heated with the required weight of nitre, then the tincture can be extracted with aqua vitae alone" (Vaugan, 1741).

SWIFT'S JOKE ABOUT A CANNABIS ARCANUM

Jonathan

Swift, (1667-1745) a Freemason, who is famous for his often retold tale *Gulliver's Travels*, written as a social parody, and inspired by Rabelais' tale of the two giants, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, also left us a curious reference to a cannabis-based arcanum. In a satirical letter "From the Facetious Dr. Andrew Tripe, at bath, To the Venerable Nestor Ironside," published in 1714, which bares "internal marks of Swift's corrections, though chiefly written by one of those subordinate party authors whom he calls 'his under spur-leathers' ... The letter is a bitter satire upon Steele, who... wrote the Guardian, under the title Nestor Ironside..." Indicating that the role of cannabis in alchemical arcana was popular enough to be ridiculed in the satire of the day, we read in this faux letter:

> He extols to the very sky his new method of preparing Steele-pills, with which he proposes in time to open all the obstructed spleens of this nation. This is also a narcotic and a nostrum; but his arcanum magnum is, his emplastrum pro nucha, which, I am fully satisfied, is a specific catholicon for all distempers, if rightly applied, and tied on secundum artem under the left ear. This he has studied ex professo for the present ease and relief of such of his friends as are not very well in their minds; and I hope they will find the benefit of it. It is a noble preparation of hempseed, which he holds to be that true seed of the right female fern, so mightily cried up by modern philosophers (Swift & ?, 1714).

Here Swift, likely inspired by symbolism from Rabelais about pantagreulion's (hemp) use for rope nooses, makes a symbolic jest about execution by hanging with rope, "if rightly applied, and tied on *secundum artem* under the left ear" and he is more explicit with this later in the letter:

> But in case your distemper should prove so obstinate as not to yield to these most sovereign remedies, your last refuge must be a cataplasm of hemp, applied cravat-wise to your neck, which, though in its operation it be somewhat violent, yet it is an infallible one, if rightly used, according to that celebrated observation of one of our learned predecessors: This, with a jerk, will do your work, and cure you o'er and o'er; Read, judge, and try, and if you die, never believe me more (Swift & ?, 1714).

In this humorous reference to arcana, hemp seed and ropes, Swift may have, like his source of comedic inspiration Rabelais, hidden an alchemical clue in this work of literary mischievousness. Moreover, Swift's reference indicated that the association of cannabis with such alchemical names and infusions, must have a been recognizable

association by many, in order for them to get the joke.

[1] Translated by Bryan J. Mahoney in 1995 from the 1866 Old English edition of the 1460 manuscript.

[2] Ibid.

[3] As quoted in (Cockren, 1941).

[4] From a quote in The Tomb of Semiramis (1674).

[5] Some do consider this particular text and actual work of Llull himself.

[6] From a quote in (Patai, 1994).

[7] Spagyrist (plural spagyrists) refers to an alchemist whose work was centred on the discovery of remedies for diseases.

[8] (Kuhn, 1982).

[9] As quoted in (Conway, 2016).

[10] As quoted in (Ball, 2006).

[11] Numia – likely from Latin numen, numina [divine] The identity of the Mastichis Numia that was added to the mixture is not given, but it was likely a reference to "mastic" popularly known as Arabic Gum, which was a prized compound for holding together various mixed ingredients.

[12] Maxwell, 1867.

[13] This was part of Paracelsus' full name, Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim.

[14] As quoted in (Kapoor, 1995).

[15] J.B. van Helmont (1577-1644).

[16] "Its physiological effects are due to three alkaloids, aconine, aconitine, and benzaconine" (Redgrove, 1922).

[17] (Ficalho, 1913).

[18] Also cited here are Sylloge curationum et observationum medicinalium centurias vi complectens cum notis ejusdem et episagmatum centuria I (Summary of Cures and Medical Observations, Embracing 6 Centuries, with Notes by the Same and One Century of Illnesses, 1668).

[19] [In regards to "O. ex. fem. Cannabis," Tom Hatsis suggests "oil extracted from the female plant" (Hatsis, 2017), however there is also a possibility that the "f" has been used as instead of "s" as happens in texts from this period, and this could mean "Oil extract of cannabis seed."

[20] (Taylor, 1630).

[21] This has been an issue for me in seeking out translations of various medieval Latin texts.

[22] For more on Cardano's work in magic, alchemy, and the arts of divination, see Lynn Thorndike, A History of Magic and Experimental Science, V (New York, 1951).

[23] "Encyclopedia Britannica describes Cohoba as a hallucinogenic snuff made from the seeds of a tropical American tree (Piptadenia peregrina) and used by Indians in the Caribbean and elsewhere." (Forrester, 2013).

[24] As quoted in (Hatsis, 2015).

[25] As translated in (Dickson, 2001).

CHAPTER 12

Other Alchemical Elements

Tincturing was but one method of extraction employed by spagyric alchemists. There is evidence of other methods as well.

An interesting reference to cannabis oil can be found in one of the most well-known 17th-century Alchemical texts. *Theatrum Chemicum* (1602-1661), a six-volume compendium released in parts, is considered the most comprehensive work on alchemy of its time. It contains the following reference to oil derived from female cannabis. In a section "Concerning fire and salt" we read:

> And there are many oils so far from which we have made combustibles, and for this reason unpleasant smells, and smelly empyreans when they burn. Therefore, they should be committed to the air and left alone for several days to get rid of the empyreans.
>
> Therefore, on the other hand, we will speak now of the oils that are good and of pleasing odor, from which that which they call Ben first occurred, which is in use for perfumers, and which lacks color and sap, for which reason it easily takes on all the qualities that anyone may want to impart to them.
>
> If it is mixed with sand and distilled, it will last for a long time, nor will it exhale an unpleasant smell, but too much charè is taken on.
>
> Other oils to use are olive oils, turnip oil, female cannabis [should be genitive like the other oils, but it is ablative plural, from cannabum, instead of cannabis, ablative of use with uti?], sesame, which among us is rare, and other oils which are pressed in the wine press or the oil press, even though sometimes mixed with sand and aided by heat they are distilled, they do not lose their strong odour, which however in proportion to their degree of purification is lessened and the oils become longer lasting.

I sent this passage to Warren Ji, of *Evolved Alchemy*, who teaches spagyric techniques in Colorado. In his view this "sounds like distillation of different oils into their more subtle oils ... reminds me of essence making. It seems they are specifically talking about oils that are fixed versus volatile oils, only the really volatile oils are used in perfumes and have a boiling point below 212 degrees F" (Ji, 2017).

> The heavier oils are usually the psychoactive ones. The more subtle pleasant smelling oils are terpenes. But to some degree they could also be purifying the heavier oils in a sand bath. In distillation the terpenes burn and smell foul. After one distillation and slight heating you can boil off the foul smelling terpenes and leave the strong cannabinoids behind (Ji, 2017).

However, alternatively, as cannabis appears alongside olive oil and sesame oil, in this reference, it is difficult to discern for certain if any psychoactive substance was indicated or derived. The reference to odor does beg inquiry, but then cannabis itself would be more of a fragrance or scent, and odor may well refer to the nutty smell of the seed oil of cannabis, and female cannabis used in this reference as it holds the seeds, which have been used for a lighting oils, foods, paints and varnishes and other uses. Unfortunately, between translations, the passage of time, and the veiled way alchemists wrote, like a lot of alchemical literature, there may be no firm interpretation of this.

But could there be other reference to burnable or otherwise ingested preparation of cannabis in alchemy? In a modern work on chemistry, *The 100 Most Important Chemical Compounds: A Reference Guide*, Prof. Richard Meyers writes "Medieval alchemists used Cannabis vapours to clear the mind, and hemp oil was distilled from flowers for use in various formulation" (Meyers, 2007). Unfortunately, Meyers gives no hint as to how he came to this conclusion. However there may be more veiled indications of the use of cannabis and other drugs indicated in the surviving texts. Perhaps if we open ourselves to the language of the birds, the green language of the alchemists, we might get some intuition into such matters...

The Philosopher's Stone

It appears then that this Stone is Vegetable, as it were, the sweet Spirit that proceeds from the Bud of the Vine joined in the Work, first to a Body, fixed and whitening as is said in the Green Dream wherein after the Text of Alchemy is very notably described the practice of this Vegetable Stone to those who wisely discern the Truth...

– Count Bernard Trevisan, Verbum Dismissum, (15th century)[1]

The goal of many Alchemists was the production of what was known as the *Lapis Philosophorum* the "Philosopher's Stone." This mythical substance was alleged by its adherents and seekers to have been able to turn lead into gold, or make the successful initiate immortal. Like a lot of Alchemical terms, the core story of this alchemical object of desire has been lost as much in the ocean of the symbolism that has grown around it, as it has through the passage of time. Historically the concept of the Philosopher's Stone can be traced back to Zosimos' time, mythically it goes back to Adam, and accounts for the long lives of the patriarchs, and was the "keystone" rejected by the builders of Solomon's Temple. As Jung noted of the secrecy surrounding the production and identity of the Philosophers Stone:

> Hoghelande [(1560-1608)]... says: "No one can reveal the name of the stone, who does not want to risk the damnation of his soul, because he could not account for it before God."
>
> The ROSARIUM [(1550)] says: "One must transmit such a material in symbolic form."
>
> In the same book Hortulanus says:"Only he, who knows how to make the stone, understands the words which refer to it. The philosophers evidently tried to reveal this art to the worthy, and, on the other hand, to conceal it from the unworthy."
>
> We see here that they did want to speak of it, but only to make allusions for those who could understand.
>
> KHUNRATH, who wrote in the sixteenth century, says directly: "He who knows the stone, is silent about it" (Jung, 1941).

"An Anonymous Treatise on the Philosopher's Stone,"[2] warns that "Many who found it were so intoxicated by its fumes that they remained in their place and could no longer raise themselves." In *Religio Medici*, (1643) Sir Thomas Browne indicates entheogenic properties with his comment that "The smattering I have of the Philosopher's Stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold) has taught me a great deal of divinity."

Thomas Vaughan uses the symbolism of cloth and drugs to indicate the secrets of the *Lapis Philosophorum*,

hidden within the pages of his *Aula Lucis*, (1651). "It will be questioned perhaps by the envious to what purpose these sheets are prostituted, and especially that drug wrapped in them – the Philosopher's Stone..." In *A Golden and Blessed Casket of Nature's Marvels* (1608), Benedictus Figulus writes, that "It is this most famous medicine which philosophers have been wont to call their Stone, or Powder. This is its fount and fundament, and the Medicine whereby Aesculapius raised the dead. This is the herb by which Medea restored Jason to life." Figulus indicates the plant origins of this alchemical prize, and one could speculate that Michael Sendivogius (1566-1636) hinted that even references to gold in relation to the stone, may have been veiled vegetable symbolism... "The Philosopher's stone, or tincture is nothing else, but Gold digested to the highest degree: For vulgar Gold is like an herb without seed, when it is ripe it brings forth seed; so Gold when it is ripe yields seed, or tincture."[3]

From the earliest periods, the production of the mythical stone, like the Quintessence, was associated with a plant, that served as the *prima materia* for its preparation. It seems clear that certain alchemists viewed the 'philosopher's stone' as something that was rendered down from one or another plant, creating a variety of "vegetable stones." We have encountered this already with Paracelsus, as from accounts close to the time of his death, it has long been suggested that his form of the "philosophers stone" was nothing more than a solid for his laudanum. These pellets, which could be consumed in the size of 2 or 3 "mouse turds" were likely a form of the quintessence of opium rendered down to a solid. "It seems likely that Paracelsus discovered how to prepare the anesthetic compound diethyl ether, the same either that doctors in the nineteenth century used to knock out their patients before surgery (a quintessence indeed!)" (Ball, 2006). If that is the case, then the sorts of extractions and evaporations that could have been prepared would have been very potent and condensed.

Ernest Bosc de Vèze, in his *Traité Théorique et Pratique du Haschich et autres Substances psychiques: cannabis, herbes magiques, opium, morphine, éther, cocaine* (Theoretical & Practical Treaty of Hashish of Psychics Substances and of Magical Plants: Cannabis, Magical Herbs, Opium, Morphine, Ether, Cocaine, 1895), gives us some idea of the processes involved. In reference to the role of plants in alchemy, Bosc notes:

> Turning more directly to our topic, we say that the living plant can be used exoterically in various ways: in juice, decoction, infusion, powder, Magisterium, in Tincture (alcohol), in essence; all Codex ancient or modern, all the pharmacopoeias provide lessons on manipulations and operations for the treatment of plants.

HERMETIC TREATMENT OF PLANTS.

[O]nce harvested, it is a matter of treating them the best possible way to obtain from them the maximum useful effects; We can only achieve this result by hermetic treatment, in order to release plant that which Bœrhernave defines as follows: The balm is the essential oil of Plants; This is not vulgar oil nor salt, neither Earth nor water, but something very subtle (the vehicle of the astral body of the plant).... It is obtained by the fire and not by fermentation.

The great Paracelsus calls this balm an Arcane i.e. a substance fixed, immortal and intangible so to speak, that changes, restores and keeps the body; This force is wrapped in a tincture obtained by reducing plant from its second to its raw material, his cagastrum at his illiastrum. [raw material to spiritual, as in the concept of the quintessences and arcana]

St.-Thomas said in his De Lapide Philosophico [The Philosopher Stone]: "We're burning plants in the calcinating furnace, then we convert the lime in water, we distil It and coagulate; It's transformed into a stone with more or less Great Virtues, according to the Virtues of the Plants used and their diversity."

From the above preceeding, we can say that the power of Plants is their Spirit, Oil, Essence; However, in their Natural State, the activity of their spirit is paralyzed and their Light obscured by their material forms; It is therefore necessary to transmute them into a pure fixed essence, and this transmutation can be obtained only by firing; During this last operation, must be added to the liquids a substance capable to absorb, to annihilate or destroy all impurities from the Juices contained in Plants (Bosc, 1895).

Bosc connects the arcana, and quintessences with the Philospher's Stone, and indicates that a variety of extraction process, calcinating plant matter for the collection of mineral salts, extracted oils, and essences, etc, were all recombined in the production of the *Philosopher's Stone*. It is unclear if this was the standard procedure of all alchemists, however it does seem to fit with some texts and references. Thus different plants could be run through this process, with various "stones" that contained their spirit and elements obtained as a result. Unfortunately Bosc, who was inspired by his use of Hashish in putting together his treatise, was unaware of Paraclesus' use of cannabis in his *Arcanum Compofitum*, and makes no direct connections between cannabis and alchemy in his otherwise interesting study and history of hashish.

As Patai has noted, works attributed to the Spanish Arab alchemist Khalid ibn Yazid (668-704), (who like Llully had his name used by other aspiring alchemists), viewed a preparation of mandrake as the Philosopher's

Stone. "In his description of 'the stone that is not a stone' it is unmistakable what Khalid had in mind was not so much a stone as a plant ... the ... plant Khalid had in mind was none other than the mandrake..." (Patai, 1994). Ibn al-Baytr, who lived in the 12th-13th century, described the "virtues of the mandrake: it is a remedy for all maladies caused by jinn, demons, and Satan, it cures lameness, cramp, epilepsy elephantiasis, insanity and loss of memory.... This belief in the mandrake as the universal medicine may well have influenced Khalid in attributing mandrake like features to the mysterious philosophers' plant-stone to be sought in the mountains" (Patai, 1994).

The Russian aristocrat, General, Freemason and alchemist Pyotr Ivanovich Melissino (1726-1797), referred to a stone made from the acacia, used in Masonic rites:

> The cubical stone is the alkaline Universal-salt, which dissolves all metals and precious stones, because this salt is the mother, the origin, and the magnet of all of them. The Master Degree speaks to us of the acacia found upon Hiram's grave. This is the true matter, from which the philosophers create their treasures. It is the true light of the world, from which glorious Hiram shall rise again under the guise of the Redeemer. It is the burning coal of which Isaiah (in chap. 6:6-7) and Ezekiel (in chap. 10:2) speak, and which must be prepared in accordance with the secret system of the wise men of old and the philosophers...
>
> One of our most mysterious materials is therefore the burning coal, which the Egyptian Cabbala names clearly and without fuss (Melissino, 1762).[4]

This is a very interesting passage, as it connects the stone with the flaming coal that was lifted to the mouth of Isaiah, which has already been alluded to in reference to its obvious entheogneic overtones (Chapter 2). Interestingly, one of the most potent psychedelic compounds can be derived from the root of acacia, DMT. And modern Freemason, P.D. Newman has upset many of his brethren with his controversial suggestions in his book *Alchemically Stoned: The Psychedelic Secret of Freemasonry*, that for "some of the alchemically inclined Freemasons, this stone was none other than *Dimenthyltryptamine* (DMT) *salts* extracted from certain species of acacia" (Newman, 2017). In Newman's view candidates who partook of the acacia stone of Melissino, would "actually inhale the fumes of incinerating DMT crystals" (Newman, 2017).

Newman has also suggested that a reference from the Alchemist Michael Maier's *Atalanta fugiens* (1617) may give a description of the Philosopher's Stone that alludes to the psychedelic, *P. cubensis*, mushroom: "But every man ought to take care that he be very well acquainted with those Dragons that are to be joined to the Charriot of

Triptolemus before he undertake any thing, for they are Winged and Volatile, and if you desire to know them you will find them in the Philosophickal Dung. For they are Dung and generated from Dung, and are that Vessel which Maria affirms not to be Necromantick but that Regiment of your Fire without which you will affect nothing."[5] Mushrooms of course grow on cow dung and here "Maier informs us emphatically that these 'Dragons,' without which the Alchemist is sadly impotent, are to be found only upon dung, wherefrom they are generated. They are Winged and Volatile insofar as they, when unfixed from their dung heap, possess the potential to project the soul of the Alchemist into astral flight" (Newman, 2016).

The English alchemical manuscript *The Epitome of the Treasure of all Health* (1562) refers to an "angelic stone": "By this stone shall mans body be kept from corruption also he shall be endued with divine giftes & foreknowledge of things by dreams and revelations." Based on this description, Professor Dan Merkur suggests the "angelic stone was entheogenic" (Merkur, 2014). This substance was also called "food of Angell" a name used for manna. "Here, in an early Elizabethan alchemical text, the angelic stone was psychoactive and identified with manna" (Merkur, 2014).

> The motif of the angelic stone that was identical to manna may be traced in English alchemy over two centuries. It occurs in the writings of Simon Forman, a London astrologer, magician, and alchemist of the late sixteenth and early seventieth centuries ... and in the Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum (1652) of Elias Ashmole ... where, for purposes of mystification, it is additionally called the red stone (Ashmole 1652). Robert Boyle adopted Ashmole's trope, stating it was "possible or lawful ... by the help of a red powder which is but corporeal and even an inanimate thing to acquire communion with incorporeal spirits." ... Lastly, the essay on alchemy in Francis Barrett asserted that the true aqua vita, "the celestial manna," fills the alchemist with the grace of God and opens his spiritual and internal eye (Merkur, 2014).

If we consider that in some cases the Philosopher's Stone may have been a potent psychoactive preparation, then we might also see the claims of immortality in some cases may have been an experience, such as the "eternity in an hour" of William Blake – being taken out of time is an experience reported by many psychonauts. As well, there can also be seen an alchemical rendering down of the personality to the quintessence of the individual, the immortal core at the center of consciousness.

As we have already noted cannabis' established role in the quintessences and arcana of alchemy, we can speculate a role as the *prima materia* for a philosopher's stone.

It has been suggested that "This resin, wrung from the reluctant females with so much care, is the pure quintessence of the Indian hemp" (Taylor, 1949). Collected in this manner, we certainly see a solid form, which in appearance and texture is close to some of the existing descriptions of the Philosopher's Stone. Unfortunately, as with some of the other alchemical recipes we have discussed, there are no direct references to cannabis in the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone that I was able to uncover for this study, but there are some areas of interesting speculation.

As we have seen, cannabis and opiate preparations were often clothed in the sorts of names we find in alchemy, such as *Theriac* (medicine) or *esrar* (secret) or Paracelsus's *Azoth*, which, it should be noted, is similar to the Arabic term for a preparation of a "kind of hemp, called az-zrzh..." (Rosenthal, 1971). Other Islamic origins of the term *Azoth* have also been noted. Paracelsus traveled in the East and came into contact with Sufis and other esoteric Islamic groups. "Paracelsus ... introduced several Sufi terms into Western thought. His 'Azoth' is identical with the Sufi *el-dhat*" (Shah, 1964). As Shah notes, this term in Persian becomes *az-zaut*, and appears this way in much Sufi poetry. As Shah explains of this term:

> The stone, the hidden thing, so powerful, is also called the Azoth in the West. Azoth is traced by Orientalists to one of two words – al-dhat (or ez-zat), meaning essence or inner reality; or dhat, the essence, which is so powerful that it can transform whatever comes into contact with it. It is the essence of man, which partakes of what people call the divine. It is "sunshine," capable of uplifting humanity to the next stage... (Shah, 1964).

Although Shah sees this as something purely spiritual in nature, it is clear the *Azoth* of Paracelsus, was also something material. His reference to "essence" is reminiscent of the alchemical view of the "quintessence" which we know was prepared from a variety of plant candidates including cannabis, opium and other substances. As well, the term "*dhat*" "*al-dhat*" is not far removed from the term "*Dādhi* ... a plant with intoxicating leaves"[6] that was infused in wines. *Dadhi*, has been suggested to be the same plant that provided the resinous hashish, that was revered by many of the same Sufi groups that Shah suggests influenced Paracelsus. As we have seen in Chapter 3 this herb was ingested by them to awaken their inner essence to the call of God.

The association of cannabis with precious stones, and emeralds also occurs in the Islamic world. "The reddening of the eyes was another boon for poets, as it enabled them to play around the concept of emerald (green) hashish turning into red carnelian ... in the eyes. The same

precious stones, incidentally, also served to picture the contrast between green hashish and red wine" (Rosenthal, 1971). So with this, and the "Language of the Birds" in mind, and a little bit of green inspiration, we might speculate on the elusive *Lapis Philosophorum* the "Philosopher's Stone" and ask, "were the Philosopher's getting stoned?" In this regard Freemason, modern mystic, and psychonaut P.D. Newman, has again raised some interesting speculation:

> In his text Septimana Philosophica, Rosicrucian apologist and practicing Alchemist Count Michael Maier informs his reader that:
>
> > "The green lion encloses the raw seeds [and] yellow hairs adorn his head."[7]
>
> GREEN LION IS A TERM OFTEN EMPLOYED BY ALCHEMISTS TO DENOTE THE PRIMA MATERIA OR FIRST MATTER OF ALCHEMY, FROM WHICH IS PREPARED THE LAPIS PHILOSOPHORUM (PHILOSOPHER'S STONE) AND THE ELIXIR VITAE (ELIXIR OF LIFE). IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE TO SUSPECT MAIER'S DESCRIPTION IS NOTHING MORE THAN A VEILED ALLUSION TO THE POLLINATED BUD OF A FEMALE CANNABIS SATIVA PLANT. WITHIN SAID BUDS ARE TO BE FOUND THE "RAW SEEDS" OF THE CANNABIS PLANT. AND, WITHOUT THE BUDS CAN CLEARLY BE SEEN PROTRUDING FROM THE GOLDEN TRICOMES OR "HAIRS" WHICH ADORN IT – NOT UNLIKE MAIER'S "GREEN LION" WITH HIS GOLDEN MANE. IN THIS CONTEXT THEN, THE LAPIS PHILOSOPHORUM IS CONCEIVABLY THE HASHISH CONCOCTED FROM THE FEMALE CANNABIS SATIVA PLANT – A VERITABLE STONE-LIKE SUBSTANCE PREPARED FROM THE PRESSED KIEF OF THE BUD; THE ELIXIR VITAE, THE POWERFUL CANNABIS TINCTURE OR OIL PREPARED FROM THE SAME (NEWMAN, 2017).

The Green Lion

Alchemical references to the "Green Lion" in regard to a connection to cannabis, has been suggested by other researchers. Although like a lot of the symbolic language of alchemy, there seems to be a lot of room for interpretation and even conflicting references of the "green lion," a selection of choice references to it in the literature of alchemy is intriguing. This was also something my coauthors and I referred to in *Green Gold the Tree of Life: Marijuana in Magic and Religion* (1995). Then we noted references from a variety of alchemists, like George Ripley (1415–1490) who stated that "the Philosophers call it the Green Lion. It is the medium or means of joining the tinctures between the sun and the moon" [8]; indicating its key role in the Alchemical Marriage. A reference from an alchemist known as "The Cosmopolite," in the 16th century, also indicates it was used in these sort of seven-stage initiations that were described in Gnostic texts... "There is this one green lion, which closes and opens the seven indissoluble seals of the seven metallic spirits which torments the bodies, until it has perfected them, by means of the artist's long and resolute patience." [9] Other references indicate some sort of fragrant gum or resin, that produced "fumes."

> Of this self-same body, which is the matter of the Stone, three things are chiefly said; that it is a green Lyon, a stinking Gum, and a white Fume.
>
> But this is spoken of Philosophers, purposely to deceive Folks, and to bring them into doubts, by the many different names.
>
> But understand thou shalt, one thing always is really signified, though accidentally and by names it is said to be three: for the Green Lyon, Stinking Gum, and White Fume, are spoken of one and the same subject, wherein they altogether lie hid, until by Art they are made manifest.
>
> – St. Dunstan (pseudo),*Philosophia Maturata*

In reference to "the making of our Gum or Green Lyon" in his *The Bosome-Book of Sir George Ripley of Bridlington, Containing His Philosophical Accurtations in the makeing of the Philosophers Mercury and Elixirs* (1683), Ripley warns that once the preparation has "coagulated into a green Gum called our green Lyon, which Gum dry well, yet beware thou not burn his Flowers nor destroy his greenness." The *Turba Philosophorum* (*Assembly of the Philosophers*) one of the oldest European alchemical texts, which originated as an Arabic 9th century manuscript, and like *The Picatrix* was translated into Latin, also makes reference to a similar gum, "O how many are the seekers after this gum, and how few there are who find it! Know ye that our gum is stronger than gold, and all those who know it do hold it more honorable than gold.... Our gum,

therefore, is for Philosophers more precious and more sublime than pearls..." The 16th/17th century alchemists Conrad Poyselius' *Another Corollary* indicates a fragrant oil: "The aforesaid Green Lion's Blood is the true Philosopher's Oil, above all aromas, always fixed and unalterable in the fire."

Paracelsus also referred to the Green Lion: "You will see marvelous signs of this Green Lion, such as could be bought by no treasures of the Roman Leo. Happy he who has found it and learned to use it as a treasure!" Remarking in these veiled references in his 19th century essay on the work of Paracelsus and other alchemists on modern science and medicine, Alexander Wilder noted:

> ...Paracelsus is a "Great Unknown." As little is comprehended of his character as of his Green Lion, his Quintessence of the Sun and the grapes of Diana, or "the wine of which being purified, is the most secret secret of all the more secret chemistry," and was declared by him to be "the peculiar refreshment of the adopted sons, but the heart-breaking and stumbling-block of the scornful and ignorant." Not being emulous of deserving a place in this latter class, we refrain from criticism, and remark simply that this peculiar diction is not more obscure than that of ancient sages, and that the reasons which perhaps justified its employment in former periods, have probably, and we hope forever, ceased to exist (Wilder, 1878).

This of course is the "wine of the philosophers" we have seen indicated elsewhere, and refers to a concoction that is more than just sour grapes. In *Dwellers on the Threshold Or, Magic and Magicians*, William Henry Davenport Adams, makes it clear that he thought Paracelsus veiled language, indicates a "green lion" infused in wine, in a youth instilling elixir, described in Paracelsus' *De Renovatione et Restauratione Hominis*. As Adams explained of Paraclesus work, this tincture of regeneration was obtained by pouring "a few spoonfuls [of a youth giving elixir] into a good white wine until the wine assumes the same colour as the essence, and then to drink it fasting every morning" (Adams, 1864). Sharing our own confusion at the veiled language of the alchemists, Adams writes:

> Here we must own a formidable difficulty presents itself. Of what wine does Paracelsus speak? Is it the ordinary juice of the vine, or the philosopher's wine, which is only and infusion of the "green lion" into the "milk of the virgin" – which is nothing more than the "blood of the red lion dissolved in the vinegar of the philosophers" – which again is the "mercury of vitriol"? I feel the force of objection. But it is not insuperable. After mature reflection and an attentive examination of the text, we have convinced ourselves

that Paracelesus only refers to good Rhenish wine, which is easier to procure than a "green lion" diluted in the blood of the "red lion" (Adams, 1864).

Paracelsus' confusing description, through Adams however, does give an indication that the potent quintessences and arcana were diluted in wine for consumption, and that the "green lion" could be used in such a manner for the preparation of "the philosophers wine." This is an interesting connection to what we will later find of infused wines in relation to Rabelais and his *pantagruelion*.

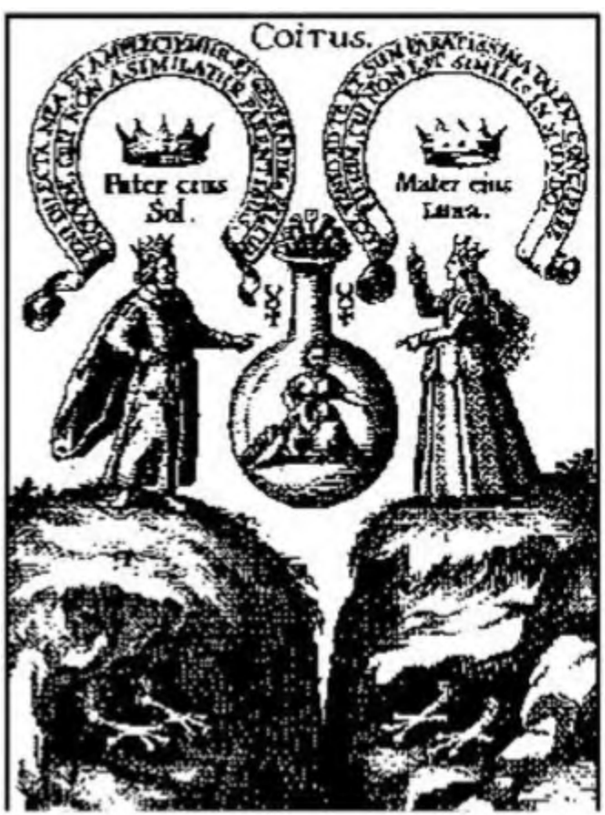


Image from The Pretiosissimum Donum Dei, depicting some sort of alchemical tincture as part of the marriage of the Sun and the Moon. "In the secret language of alchemy the vessels used for distillation and sublimation are known as 'wedding chambers'" (Fraenger, 1994).

An association with the Green Lion, to the *Azoth* of Paracelsus is indicated in a number of alchemical works. The 15th century alchemical text, The *Pretiosissimum Donum Dei (The Most Precious Gift of God*), records: "First in our Green Lion is had the true matter and of what colour it is, and is called Adrop or Azocke, [clopum], Duenech. If thou will well understand this work, read it from part to part and thou shall see miracles wrought in our days, and unless I had seen them and touched them I could not so particularly have written them and painted them. I have not shown all the appearances and things necessary in this work, for there be some that be not lawful to be spoken of man..."

A Verse on the Threefold Sophic Fire (1705), also makes the Azoth connection as well as indicating of an out-of -body experience:

Unvail'd, unbound, from Earthly Chains set free,
This third most sacred Fire the Sophi see,
Which Azot some, but others do it name
The Lyon Green, well known in Rolls of Fame.

Other coded references hint that though gold is referred to in reference to the Green Lion, a plant might also be indicated. The 17th-century German Alchemist, Martinus Rulandus, wrote "Leo Viridis [Green Lion]- is the Ore of Hermes ... and Vitriol. The green is that which is perfect upon the stone, and can easily be made into gold. All growing things are green, as also our stone. It is called a plant. The stone cannot be prepared without green." The alchemical word vitriol is a reference to the motto "*Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem*," (Visit the interior of the earth and rectifying [purifying] you will find the hidden stone), which originated in the 15th century alchemists Basil Valentine's *L'Azoth des Philosophes*, which uses Paracelsus' term for the *Lapis Philosophorum* in the title.

The 15th-century alchemical manuscript *Le Tres Precieux don de Dieu* (The Most Precious Gift of God, 1415), depicts "a glass matrass, half filed with green liquid, and adds that the whole art is based on the acquisition of this single green lion and that its very name indicates its colour" (Fulcanelli, 1924). Fulcanelli, in his references to the "Green Lion" also termed it the *Herb of Saturn*, and this is made most interesting by more direct references in the alchemical literature to cannabis in association with this planet.

Illustration by the herbalist and alchemist, Leonhardt Thurneysser zum Thurn, 1574.

The Saturnian Herb

Alchemists like magicians, were deeply influenced by the Kabbalah and Hermetic arts, and this included astrology. Every conceivable plant, animal, metal and mineral, was given to the dominion of the planets above. Cannabis in this case appears with other psychoactive plants, in a number of alchemically influenced herbals, and magical texts, under the dominion of Saturn. As Dr. William Sharp lamented, in trying to distinguish the history of medicines from magical potions, in the 19th century.

> Every kind of virtue has been attributed superstitiously to the action of drugs. They have been given with incantations of every character. They have been worn as amulets and charms of every form, and of every material. And these things have been done in all ages, and in every country, to avert or to remedy disease. Alas! that such a method of discovering the action of drugs should have existed, should still exist in the world. It is checked only where, and so far as, the influence of pure Christianity is felt.
>
> We may dismiss the further consideration of it here; but we should not do so without a blush: for we may well blush for the ignorance, for the folly, and for the sin which all such practices reveal.
>
> They have been viewed astrologically.
>
> For many centuries a belief has been maintained that the action of drugs is under the government of the sun, moon, and stars.
>
> All the details of this misbelief are given with perfect good faith, and with entire confidence, so lately as the middle of the seventeenth century, in one of the most popular medical books of the time – by "popular" I here mean among medical men; this is the Pharmacopaeia of John Shroder. (1656). From the ninth chapter of this celebrated book "De influentiis Stellarum" – a book, let me again observe, received and used by the orthodox physicians of the time – we may learn the puerile story of the "star-gazers."
>
> A short extract will show the character of the statements :—
>
> > Saturn is a malignant planet; it is diurnal, masculine, extremely cold; a friend of Mars, and an enemy to all the rest (of the planets). It corresponds to the little world of the spleen.
> > Things medicaments) under the influence of Saturn are plumbum, antimonium, aconitum, cannabis, agnus castus, opium, sabina, &c.
> > Jupiter is a benevolent planet ; it is moderately warm, &e. It corresponds to the liver.
> > The things (medicaments) under the influence of Jupiter are stannum, argentum, berberis, mentha, quercus, symphitus, &c.

> Mars is a planet extremely hot and dry, &c. The things (medicaments) under the influence of Mars are cinnabar, arum, carduus, plantsgo, urtica, &c.

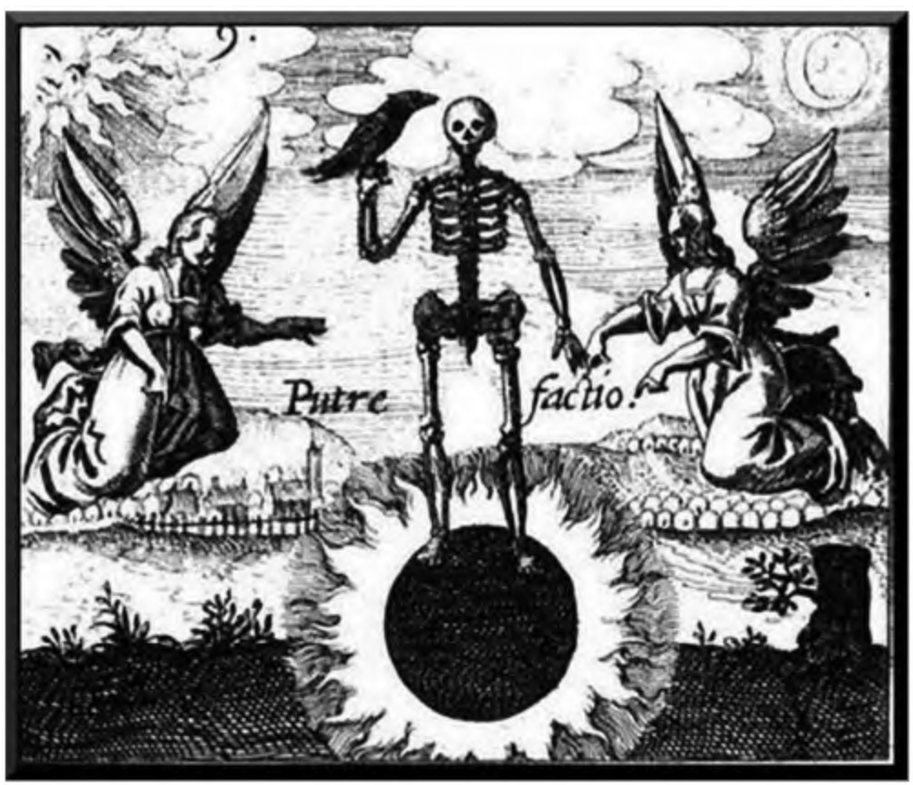
And so through the planets, and also through the twelve signs of the zodiac.

These fancies having been received and assented to by the profession until times so recent, it is not wonderful that they still survive in "Culpeper's Herbal."

This starry method of discovering the action of drugs is wholly destitute of proofs; indeed, it rests upon the wildest conjectures. It may be dismissed without hesitation, notwithstanding its prevalence and popularity, as altogether erroneous and wrong (Sharp, 1876).

Now, whether we share Sharp's disdain for such astrological association is neither here nor there, that this was a popular view among the alchemically and magically minded, may lead to some interesting associations. In this regard, it is important to remember that "The alchemists ... spoke a secret language and concealed their secrets in peculiar forms or symbols, and that they used a great number of pseudonymous words ... the alchemists say again and again that one must not take their words literally, that the real meaning is quite different, it is only expressed as it is to deceive the stupid and so on..." (Jung, 1941).

The 16th and 17th-century Flemish alchemist Johann Isaac Hollandus, who was familiar with plant alchemy wrote of a "quintessence of saturn" in *A Work of Saturn*. "My child shall know, that the Stone called the Philosopher's Stone, comes out of Saturn. And therefore when it is perfected, it makes projection as well in mans' Body from all Diseases, which may assault them either within or without, be they what they will, or called by what name soever, as also in the imperfect Metals."



Mylius, Philosophia reformata (1622), The eclipse of the Sol

niger in the negredo.

From an alchemical perspective, Saturn is of great importance as it is the border between personal, and transpersonal, or cosmic, powers. The Black Crow is the symbolic messenger of Saturn, symbolizing the Black Phase of alchemical transformation, sometimes referred to as The Dark Night of the Soul. In relation to psychoactive substances and what they can bring to the table in the spiritual process, in regards to shamanic like concepts of symbolic "Death and Rebirth" this seems like the perfect planetary host.

Nicholas Culpeper's *Herbal*, first published in 1652, in reference to cannabis, states that "it is a plant of Saturn." This Planetary dominion is also given in William Lilly's *Christian Astrology* (1647) which includes known hallucinogens such as " Woolf-bane ... Hellebore the white and black, Henbane ... Mandrake, Poppy, Nightshade" and other plants. We see this planetary association still in use centuries later, in a list of "Planetary Correspondences used by Cagliostro and his Contemporaries" that included "hemlock ... nightshade, [and] hemp"(Faulks & Cooper, 2016). Familiar with such references, the respected German anthropologist and ethnopharmacologist, Christian Rätsch, has noted:

> In the alchemical tradition hemp ... was ... numbered among the Saturnian plants, together with mandrake ... henbane ... the opium poppy ... [etc.] all of which distinguish themselves because they are able to alter consciousness, that is transform the spirit. It must be assumed that the alchemists of medieval times, for example Agrippa ... were aware of the psychoactive effects of hemp ... so ... as an "elixir" ... hemp transcends time, the alchemist can have an experience of immortality (Rätsch, 1998).

Such a state of consciousness would be ideal for an aspiring seer to see visions. In reference to "what are the powers of the soul to which the Planets answer" in his *Second Book of Occult Philosophy*, Cornelius Agrippa placed the "Receptive on Saturn," and it would be the "receptive" that one would want for an oracular state. He refers to the divine "frenzy [Phrensie] which leads us to wisdom and revelation, especially when it is combined with a heavenly influence, above all with that of Saturn," and through this "some men have become divine beings, foretelling the future like Sybils" (Agrippa, 1510). According to Agrippa, one of the means of achieving "frenzy," included "secret confections, by which the spirits of their God did infuse vertue, make the soul rise above the mind, by joyning it with dieties [deities], and Demons" (Agrippa, 1533). Through such means Agrippa taught that one can "learn the secrets of divine matters ... the laws of God, the angelic hierarchy, and that which pertains to the knowledge

of eternal things and the souls's salvation."[10] To suggest some sort of entheogen is indicated, seems plausible.

In relation to this, in *Marijuana Medicine*, Christian Rätsch cites Agrippa regarding Saturn, in a quote that is reminiscent of the classical black obsidian stone style of magic mirror, that would be used later by John Dee, and imagery of occult entities such as Baphomet, as well as the magnetized discs sometimes infused with cannabis and other drugs used by 19th century occultists, that shall be looked at in Chapter 15. "Of the operation of Saturn, when this planet would ascend, the ancients would depict on a so-called magnet stone an image of a man with the face of a stag and the feet of a camel, who sat on a a stool or dragon, and who held a sickle in the right hand and an arrow in the left...." (Agrippa).[11]

"Both *The Picatrix* and Agrippa cite three different saturnine spirits carrying a sickle or scythe..." (Decker, 2013). The Scythe takes its name from the Scythians and was the traditional tool for harvesting cannabis. The name Saturn is said to come from the Latin, serere meaning to 'sow' or 'plant'. I should note that, although Rätsch refers to Agrippa in relation to Saturn and cannabis, the listings of cannabis under Saturn, takes place in Astrological Herbals centuries after his time, and although Agrippa did ascribe various astrological powers to various herbs, I know of no direct reference to cannabis from him in that regard, but I can appreciate Rätsch's speculation.

Saturn

Saturn seems to play a particularly interesting role in the symbolism in this beautiful alchemical woodcut reproduced in Christian Rätsch's *Marijuana Medicine*, and described as an: "Alchemical illustration of a water pipe. The man shown drawing from the pipe sees a typical vision in the ascending smoke. But what is the smoke pouring from the 'lion's-mouth'? (woodcut, Bibliotheque de Geneve)" (Rätsch, 1998). One of the really interesting things about the image as it appears in Rätsch's book is that the circle of Serpents, or geese heads, emerging from the hearts, referred to by Rätsch,as the "vision in the ascending smoke." Rätsch does not mention, this same serpent/heart coming from the smoke, appears in an illustration from Basil Valentine's *The Ninth Key*, as part of an image for Saturn. Unfortunately, Rätsch does not provide any other information on this image. It took me considerable effort to track it down, so I could understand it in its original context, which in the end was a rather unsatisfying quest...

What I am assuming is the original use of this illustration, is from Johannes Stephan Kestler's *Physiologia Kircheriana Experimentalis*, (1680), where it is used to describe the flow of smoke through a water pipe, and the text explicitly refers to *tabaci folia*, 'tobacco leaves' as to what is being smoked. Although water-pipes are believed to have originated as cannabis pipes, they were soon used for tobacco as well, and this is the case with this illustration. Adding to the disappointment, the image of Saturn is not in the original, but was borrowed from the Illustration in Valentine's work by whoever did the graphics for Rätsch's book, and added too it, with no reference to the addition, and even a comment on the picture that describes the image in the smoke as if it was part of the original.

A 16th-century grimoire, referred to in C.J. Thompson's *Mysteries and Secrets and Magic*, (1927) offers instructions for the contraction of a magic ring dedicated to Saturn, and made of the planet's metal, lead, and to be used for receiving oracles. The instructions call for cannabis or other narcotic plants under the dominion of Saturn to be used in its construction, for further magnetizing it with the Saturn's prophetic power:

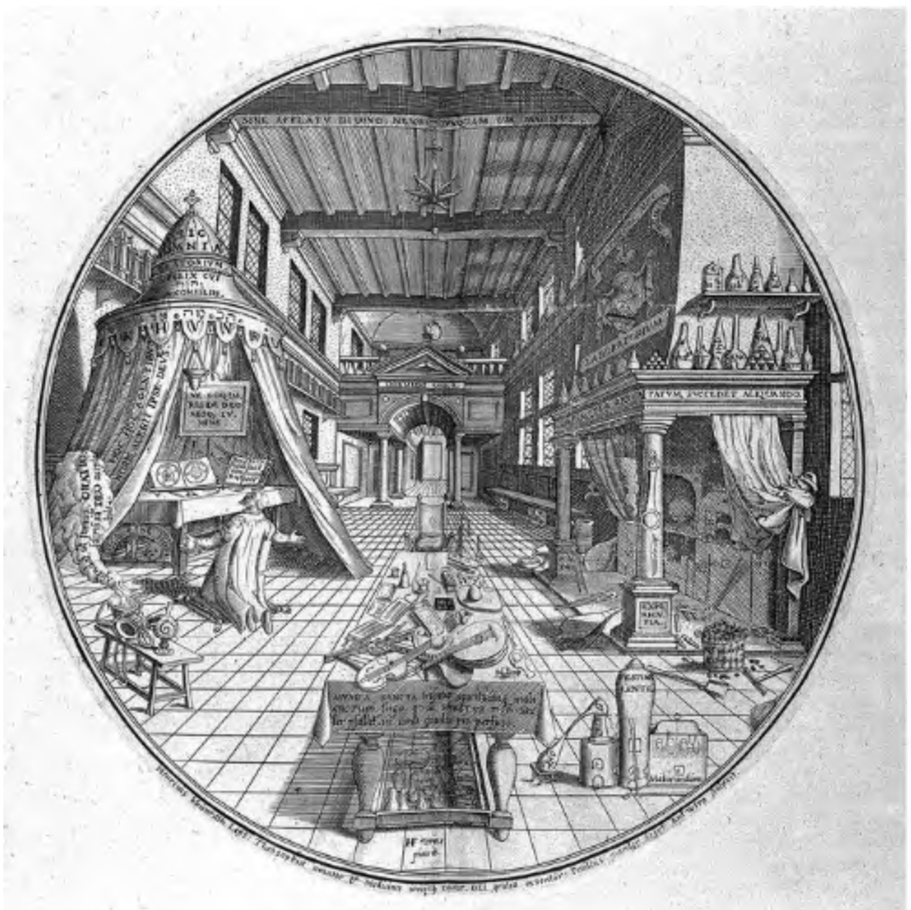
> Write or engrave thereon ye name of ye angell Cassiel, then fumigate it. Then being so prepared, put it on thy finger as thou art entering into thy bed sand speak no word to any person, but meditate thereon. If thou wilt complete the ring, truly, ye shall put a piece of ye roote of some special herb governed by Saturn and put it under ye stone of a signet, as for example a little root of dragon or dragon-wort, or of black hellebore or hemp, upon which puts some little onyx stone or sapphire, or lapis lazuli, but onyx is best, but let it first be made and engraved, and make ye mood to cast it, and all finished in due time with name of ye angel of Saturn.

Thomas and Rebecca Vaughan's *Aqua Vitae: NonVitis* has a recipe that advises: "Press out the juice of the Saturine herb, and evaporate it, so that you have its purest earth" (Vaughan, 1741). The editor of the republication of this work, Donald Dickson adds in reference to "Saturine herb": "According to Ruland Lexicon, 375, a 'Vegetable Matter from which the Hermetic Philosophers know how to extract their Mercury'" (Dickson, 2001). As well under the heading "Universal Oil" Vaughan has: "Take animating

Saturine herb from the plain or from the hills. Distill with the heat of the ashes, and separate the water from the oil. Rectify the oil by itself, and it will extract doors and quintessences from the spices and any flower whatsoever, etc." (Vaughan, 1741).

Carl Jung notes the significance of the term Saturn, in the works of the 16th century alchemist Heinrich Khunrath, who was a student of Paraclesus:

> The old sixteenth century alchemist KHUNRATH wrote ... about the necessity of the secret: "The age of Saturn is not yet, in which everything that is private shall become public property: for one does not yet take and use that which is well-meant and well done in the same spirit."
>
> Khunrath means that the age of Saturn has not yet dawned. The great question is: What is the age of Saturn?
>
> It is in the future for Khunrath, and he is evidently of the opinion that an age will dawn when it will be possible to reveal this secret openly. In his days the thing, which was so "well-meant," was not accepted or understood. But he believes this will improve in the age of Saturn. Obviously the question is: what does Khunrath mean by the age of Saturn? The old alchemists were of course also astrologers, and thought in an astrological way. Saturn is the ruler of the sign of Aquarius, and it is quite possible that Khunrath meant the coming age, the age of Aquarius, the water carrier, which is almost due now. It is conceivable that he thought mankind would be changed by that time, and would be able to understand the alchemists' mystery. We can only leave this as a question mark (Jung, 1941).



Khunrath's workshop as depicted in his Amphitheatre of Eternal Wisdom (1604).

Lynn Osburn identified some of the Latin inscriptions

in this illustration, as well as noting other potential elements hidden in this alchemical mandala. Above the open doorway near the center of the image is written "While sleeping, watch!... In the left foreground before the tent is a large censor with smoke billowing forth from it. In the smoke is written in Latin, 'ascending smoke, sacrificial speech acceptable to God'" (Osburn, et. al., 1995)

> To the right of the centre is laboratory equipment and high above everything else alone near the ceiling beams is a curious seven-leafed chandelier that is out of perspective compared to the converging lines in the beams. The chandelier looks more like a seven-fingered marijuana leaf with a flame at the tip of every finger. The only other flame in the engraving is in the tent itself. The plaque below the flame in the tent says "Happy is the one who follows the advice of God." On the cross beam above the seven-fingered marijuana-leaf chandelier is written "Without the breath of inspiration from God, no one finds the great way."
>
> ...Khunrath declared the entrance to eternal wisdom could be gained "Christiano-Kabalically, divino-magically and even physio-chemically." He revealed the secret transforming substance was a red gum, the "resin of the wise ." Concerning the nature of the Stone Khunrath wrote: "[The] Cabalistic habitaculum Materiae Lapidis was originally made known from on high through Divine Inspiration and special Revelation, both with and without instrumental help, 'awake as well as asleep or in dreams.'" Khunrath said that one could "perfectly prepare our Chaos Naturae in the highest simplicity and perfection" through a "special Secret Divine Vision and revelation, without further probing and pondering of the causes..." (Osburn, et. al., 1995).

That cannabis or other drugs could have been intended for the tent, is made completely plausible through Khunrath's association with Paracelsus, and knowledge of the works of Agrippa. It is also likely that an alchemist of this calibre would have had access to *The Picatrix*, which explicitly describes such use, and other magical grimoires by this time also called for fumigation with psychoactive substances, and some of these were also known to have been in the hands of famous alchemists of the time (see Chapter 9). We also know that later alchemists were practicing fumigation with psychoactive substances through the works of Eckartshausen, who will be discussed in Chapter 20, and who seemed to have taken the plants he used, from those prescribed by Agrippa for raising the dead. This opens up some intriguing interpretations for other alchemical images as well. Khunrath was considered by Frances Yates to be a link between the philosophy of John

Dee and Rosicrucianism, which was basically an alchemical guild, and which does in some points in history, as we shall see later, have a number of interesting connections with cannabis. Khunrath also claimed to have been in the possession of the "green lion": "I have visited many lands, and had speech of many learned men. I have seen the Green Catholic Lion, and the Blood of the Lion, i.e., the Gold of the Sages, with my own eyes, have touched it with my hands, tasted it with my tongue, smelt it with my nose. By its means I have cured many whose life was despaired of" (*Amphitheatre of Eternal Wisdom*, 1605).

The anonymous 16th century alchemical engraving known as "the expulsion of demons" could be seen as a fumigation ritual with the initiates subconscious content being expelled in the rising smoke and fumes. With the collection of medicines on the back shelves, mortar and pestle and other items, we clearly see evidence of an alchemical laboratory.

We find this association still in use in the works of the German Dr. Heinrich Arnold Krumm-Heller (1876-1949) the occultist, Rosicrucian, *Ordo Templi Orientis* member, and founder of Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua (FRA), a traditional Hermetic order in Brazil. In *Del Incienso a la Osmoterapia* (1934) 'From Incense to Osmotherapy', Krumm-Heller lists under Saturn, "Aconite (Aconitum napellus l.), Pansy (Viola tricolor), Belladonna (Atropa belladonna l.), Menbrillo (Cydonia vulgaris l.), hemp (Cannabis saliva l.), Cress (in Chile), bag of Shepherd (in Spain), Capsella bursa pastoris Moench), hemlock (Conium maculatum)..." (Krumm-Heller, 1934). As well in Germany around this same time we see the rise of the *Fraternitas Saturni*, a German occult group that was particularly devoted to the use of cannabis, mescaline and others substances, even going so far as to provide them by mail-order to their members. In *Fraternitas Saturni* documents pertaining to the preparation of "Philters, Potions, Fumigants, Witches and Elixirs," and proceeding instructions for a "*Extractum arabicum canabis*" the initiate is instructed that when the "plants are cut, and only the flowering tops. They are processed immediately ... in the hour of Saturn" (Wolther, 1978).

Later Alchemical Influences

Interestingly, some later occultists who used hashish equated their own use with the secret elixirs and philosopher's stone of the alchemists. The 19th-century African-American Rosicrucian, magician and doctor Paschal Beverly Randolph (1825-1875) devoted much time to the study and effects of hashish and wrote that in this resin from the East he had rediscovered the Philosopher's stone of the alchemists and the elixir of life.

> There is no doubt that Confucius, Pythagoras, and his disciples, the Alchemists, Hermetists, Illuminati, and mystic brethren of all ages used it to exalt them while making their researches for the Philosopher's Stone, B. Secret of Perpetual Youth, C ; and the Elixir of Life, A. Terms laughed at by wise people, as idle dreams, and yet idle as they are deemed, I proclaim my entire belief in all three – as I understood them, and have defined them in the note below...
>
> A. An universal solvent, – a fluid that will vacate the body of all morbid humors, and thus let the vital forces have free action.
>
> B. Crystals, rings, and mirrors – means of clairvoyance.
>
> C. A fluid so fine, as when taken, to be instantly converted into vital magnetism. thus supplying all waste, repairing all effects of excess and exhaustion, reinvigorating the brain, nervous forces, and therefore restoring the vigor of youth (Randolph, 1867).

Randolph was particularly proud of a preparation that bore the alchemical-sounding Arabic name, *Dowan Meskh*, which means "medicine of immortality." "...Randolph appears to have gone to Egypt, where he succeeded in learning the secret of how to concoct this Dowan Meskh. Hashish was henceforth the crown jewel of his pharmacopoeia, being an ingredient of all the 'elixirs' that he peddled in person and by mail order. (Godwin, 1994). In *Eulis* Randolph describes a scene where in "Jerusalem or Bethelehem, I really forget which ... I became affiliated with some dervishes and fakirs ... I found the road to other knowledges; and of these devout practicers of a simple, but sublime and holy magic.... I became practically what I was naturally – a mystic, and in time chief of the lofty brethren; taking clues left by the masters, and pursuing them farther than they had been ever before; actually discovering the ELIXIR of LIFE; the universal Solvent, or celestial Alkahest; the water of beauty and perpetual youth, the philosopher's stone, all of which this book contains, but only findable by him or her who searches well" (Randolph, 1896).

The Jewish occultist and writer, Gustav Meyrink

(1868-1932), best known for his fictional work of Jewish magic, *The Golem* (1914) also cloaked references to psychoactive drugs, in the language of alchemy. Meyrink wrote on various occult topics, such as Rosicrucians, Kabbalah, magic, as well as drugs. In the mid-1890s, he came to experiment with and write about the use of drugs in magic and alchemy, including substances such as hashish, opium, mandrake, henbane, night-shade, thorn apple, prepared in various concoctions, and "rendered into soup" or "cast into the fire, providing smoke with a 'narcotic effect.'"[12]

Gustav Meyrink's *Der Engel vom westlichen Fenster* (The Angel of the West Window, 1927)[13] tells the story of a man who becomes convinced that he is the reincarnation of the Elizabethian magician, Dr. John Dee after he inherits some of Dee's diaries from a relative. Pursuing this thought, the character is eventually initiated by an adept, and is presented with a red ivory sphere containing the powder.

> ...Meyrink referred to two alchemical drugs. They are kept in "two small ivory spheres, the one red and the other white" [Coagulum, Meyrink] ... The colour coding referenced the red king and white queen, or sun and moon, of the alchemical wedding. The white sphere and its powder do not play a role in the novel. The "red ivory sphere" contains "the royal powder," the "Red lion," which consists of "flaky purple granules" ...It can be used to transform base metals into gold ... but when it is prepared as an incense ... it has a psychoactive effect. "inhaling the red smoke" enables them to "step out" of their bodies and cross the threshold of death; there, through marriage with their female "other half," which in their earthly existence almost always remains hidden, they acquire unimaginable magical powers such as personal immortality as the wheel of birth comes to a standstill; in short they achieve a kind of divine status which is denied other mortals as long as they are ignorant of the secret of the blue and red spheres ... (Merkur, 2014).

The two ivory spheres, red and white, are allusions to Dr. John Dee and his companion and assistant Edward Kelley (also spelled Kelly), who claimed to have found the vessels in the grave of a bishop. Kelley's assistant dropped the white sphere and the powder was lost, but he kept the red. As Meyrink describes of the protagonists's initiation in *The Angel of the West Window*:

> "If you insist on taking an oath on this, even if only as a joke, then you must take it after the manner of the Yang monks. Are you willing?" — — — When I agreed he made me put my left hand on the ground and say: "I demand, and I accept the consequences that thou mayest be released from all karmic

revenge." — — I smiled; it seemed a rather silly piece of play-acting, even though at the same time I could not repress a feeling of revulsion.

"That settles the matter!" said Lipotin in a satisfied tone. "You must forgive my being so finicky, but as a Russian I am part Asiatic myself and would not like to be disrespectful towards my Tibetan friends."

Without further ado he handed me the red sphere. After a brief search I soon found where the two halves were screwed together. – Was this not one of the spheres of John Dee and his apothecary. Kelley? – The sphere opened up: in the hollow was a greyish-red powder, about enough to fill a walnut shell.

Lipotin was standing next to me. He gave me a sideways look and spoke in an undertone. His voice reached my ear as if from a great distance, in a strange, lifeless monotone: "A stone bowl and a pure flame have to be prepared. Pour some spirit of alcohol into the bowl and light it. Empty the contents of the sphere over the flame. The powder must flare up. Wait until the spirit has burnt away and let the smoke from the powder rise. A Superior must be present so that the head of the neophyte..."

I stopped listening to his whispering, took the onyx bowl I use as an ashtray and cleaned it out as carefully as possible given my haste, poured some spirit from the scaling-lamp, that I have on my desk, into the bowl, lit it, took the half of the red sphere with the powder and poured it onto the flame. Lipotin stood to one side; I ignored him. Soon the alcohol had burnt off. Slowly the remains in the bowl began to glow and smoulder. A cloud of greenish-blue smoke formed and rose curling up from the onyx bowl.

"Thoughtless and foolish, indeed," I heard Lipotin say, and it sounded like a mocking cackle in my ears, "the old overhasty foolishness, wasting precious material without being sure that all the conditions which guarantee success are fulfilled. How do you know that one of the required Superiors is present to carry out the initiation? You are fortunate – undeservedly so – that one just happens to be present, that I just happen to be an initiated Dugpa monk of the Yang sect...

I could still see Lipotin, as from a great distance, and mysteriously changed, a figure in a violet cloak with a strangely formed, upright red collar, on his head a cone shaped purple cap on which six pairs of glass eyes glittered; he approached me with a grin of satanic triumph distorting his mongoloid face. I wanted to call out "No!," but I had lost the power over my own voice. Lipotin – or the red-capped monk behind me, or the devil in person or whoever it was –

grasped me from behind by the hair with irresistible force and forced my face down into the onyx bowl and the incense rising from the red powder. A bittersweet aroma rose through my nostrils, and I was in the grip of an indescribable trepidation, I was racked by death throes of such long- lasting, excruciating violence that I felt the mortal terror of whole generations flow through my soul in an unceasing, icy stream. Then my consciousness was obliterated.

I have retained almost nothing of what I experienced "on the other side." And I think I am justified in adding "Thank God!', for the torn-off scraps of memory which swirl through my dreams like leaves in a storm are so steeped in horror that it seems a blessing not to be able to understand them in detail All I have as a vague, dark memory of having seen and passed through worlds such as those Frau Fromm described when she spoke of the depths of the sea steeped in a dull greenish glow where she claims she met Black Isais. I, too, met something awful there. I was fleeing, terrified, from — — I think it was from black cats with gleaming eyes and gaping mouths shining white; my God, how can one describe half-forgotten dreams!

And as I was fleeing, numb with nameless terrors one last saving thought surfaced: "If only you could reach tree! If only you could reach the Mother, the Mother the ... of the red and blue circle – is that it? – you would be saved." I believe I saw the Baphomet in the distance, high above glassy mountains, beyond impassable swamps and painful hazards. I saw Elizabeth, the Mother waving to me from the tree — — I cannot remember what the gesture signified, but at the sight of her my racing heart was gradually soothed and the numbness left me. I woke feeling I had spent hundreds of years in the green depths.

When I looked up, my head still whirling, Lipotin was sitting before me, his gaze fixed upon me, playing with empty halves of the ivory sphere. I was in my study everything around was as it had been before ... before...

"Three minutes. That is sufficient," said Lipotin in a tone, his features haggard, as he put his watch into his waistcoat pocket. I will never forget the puzzlingly disappointed expression on his face as he me: "So the Devil didn't take you, after all. That indicates a sound constitution. – Congratulations, anyway. I think from now on you will be able to use this coal with a certain degree of success. It is charged, that I have been to able to establish."

I bombarded him with questions about what had happened to me. It was clear I had been through one of hallucinatory experiences that have always played

> an important role in supposed magic practice. I had taken opium or hashish, I could tell by the mild headache and slight feeling of nausea the noxious fumes had left me with (Meyrink, 1927: 1991).

Meyrink may have intuitively identified a role for drugs in the magic of Dr. John Dee. In *Opium Traders and Their Worlds, Vol. 1* (2008), M. Kienholz, who worked in the Spokane Police department for 18 years, repeats the often made claim, that Dee was "was Queen Elizabeth's special agent" and further that Dee was a likely candidate for advising "the British to deal in opium." However, her following unsubstantiated claim calls into question her credibility, as it requires one to accept that H.P. Lovecraft's *Necronimicon*, was an actual grimoire, and had been in Dee's Possession! "While in Prague in 1586, Dee and Kelley searched out and plagiarized a copy of *Necronimicon* by Abdul Alhazred of Yemen, who developed a kind of incense containing 'olibanum, storax, dictamus, opium and hashish'" (Kienholz, 2008). However, in Chapter 15 more indications that Dee and his assistant Kelley, who was an apothecarist and alchemist, did likely have some familiarity with cannabis, opium and other drugs are put forth.

Interestingly, in the same year he wrote *The Angel of the West Window*, Meyrink also composed and essay on the potential psychic effects produced by cannabis, *Haschisch und Hellsehen* (Hashish and Clairvoyance, 1927). In *The Angel of the West Window,* Meyrink "narrated two experiences of the red powder. After the first, the protagonist concluded from 'the mild headaches and the slight feeling of nausea the noxious fumes had left' that he, 'had taken opium or hashish'".... The wide variety of drugs in Meyrink's story was consistent with the experimentation of several occultists of his period: Stanislas de Guaita and Edourard Dubus ... as well as Crowley..." (Merkur, 2014).

In his essay "The Psychology of Hashish," Aliester Crowley (1875-1947), wrote that in his extensive studies into the history of the occult he "found this one constant story. Stripped of its local chronological accidents, it usually came to this – the writer would tell of a young man, a seeker after hidden Wisdom, who, in one circumstance or another, meets an adept; who, after sundry ordeals, obtains from the said adept, for good or ill, a certain mysterious drug or potion, with the result (at least) of opening the gate of the other world. This potion was identified with the Elixir Vitae of the physical Alchemists, or one of their 'tinctures' most likely the 'white tincture,' which transforms the base metal (normal perception of life) to silver (poetic conception)...." (Crowley, 1909). In 1908, Crowley wrote a short story "The Drug," which has generally thought to have been a fictionalized account of his experiences with either hashish, or *anhalonium lewinii* (mescaline).

The alchemical laboratory and "...the drug that giveth strange vision"

Crowley's "The Drug" tells the tale of a man visiting a friend, who he had no idea was dabbling in the magical arts, till a door he had thought was a cupboard, was opened, revealing an alchemical laboratory, full of glass and silver vials and bottles, along with all sorts of lab equipment, and he is giving an alchemical preparation that leads to fantastical visions. Elsewhere, Crowley also left an interesting comment in regard to the whole-plant extracts of alchemy vs the modern chemical isolates of chemistry.

> One of the great differences between ancient and modern Chemistry is the idea of the Alchemists that substance in its natural state is, in some way or other, a living thing. The modern tendency is to insist on the measurable. One can go into a museum and see rows of glass globes and bottles which contain the chemical substances which go to make up the human body; but the collection is very far from being a man. Still less does it explain the difference between Lord Tomnoddy and Bill Sykes. Nineteenth century chemists were at great pains. to analyse opium and isolate its alkaloids, rather like a child pulling a watch to pieces to see what makes it go. They succeeded, but the results were not altogether wholesome. Morphine has much more direct hypnotic effect than opium; its action is speedier and more violent; but it is also a very dangerous drug,

> and its effects are often disastrous. The action of morphine is sensibly modified by the other twenty odd alkaloids which exist in opium. The intoxicating effect of alcohol differs according to whether one absorbs it in Richebourg '29 or in synthetic gin. An even more startling example comes from Venezuela, where running messengers chew coca leaves, cover their hundred miles a day, and sleep till they are rested. They have no bad reaction, and they do not acquire the habit. Cocaine is a different story. The adepts of the Tarot would say, quite simply, "We are alive and the plant is alive, so we can make friends. If you kill the plant first, you are asking for trouble (Crowley, 1944).

Crowley, may have picked up on this alchemical symbolism of the "Green Lion" in relation to hashish. In his "Psychology of Hashish," he refers to "harnessing to our triumphal car the white eagle and the Green Lion we voyage at our ease upon the Path of the Chameleon" (Crowley, 1909). Here he identifies hashish with both the symbolism of alchemy and its use in certain tantric-like practices of his brand of "sex magick." Crowley was deeply influenced by the works of the alchemist, monk and physician, Francois Rabelais, who as noted and will be discussed further in Chapter 13, devoted a number of coded chapters to cannabis, which was identified as a herb referred to as *Pantagruelion*, the last part of the name of which may indicate a connection to the term, "Green Lion." A keen interest in Rabelais was something that Crowley shared with a number of later occultists, including a mysterious figure known as the last of the great Alchemists, Fulcanelli. "*The Life of Gargantua and Pantagruel* by Francois Rabelais is an esoteric work... [he] reveals himself in it as a great initiate" (Fulcanelli, 1924). Fulcanelli also makes some intriguing comments about the "Green Lion":

> The first magnetic agent which is used to prepare the solvent – designated, by some, Alkahest is called the Green Lion ... the embryo of our stone, the stone of our Elixir. Certain Adepts, Basil Valentine among them, have called it green vitriol... Others have called it the Philosophers' Emerald, the Dew of May, the Herb of Saturn, the Vegetable Stone, etc. "Our water takes the name of the leaves of all the trees, of the trees themselves, and of everything green in colour, in order to mislead the foolish," says Master Arnold of Villanova (Fulcanelli, 1924).

Like the Philosopher's Stone, the identity of Fulcanelli is shrouded in mystery. As the story goes he passed off his manuscript to his student Cansaliet, before disappearing into anonymity to complete the final stages of the "Great Work." The student would later write about reconnecting

with his master, who had perfected the production of the Philosopher's Stone, and appeared many years younger than when he had known him decades prior. Robert Ambelain (1907-1998), who was also deeply involved in the French occult scene of the day, and wrote about such matters, claimed that Fulcanelli in fact was the illustrator of Fulcanelli's *Le Mystère des Cathédrales*, Julien Champagne. Ambelain knew Champagne and in a sensational article entitled "Jean-Julien Champagne, alias Fulcanelli" (1962), he explains that Julien Champagne was called "my master" by Eugène Canseliet when the latter presented themselves to the publisher of "Fulcanelli's" work. Champagne was also deeply versed in the occult and the language of alchemy, and had a reputation of being something of a practical joker. This is worth noting in relation to this study, as Champagne was said to be in possession of a magical incense he referred to as the "Incense of the Rosy-Cross" and to have been capable of of astral projection and this is at a time in France, where many Rosicrucian and occult figures were experimenting with cannabis preparations for these exact reasons! Other accounts refer to Champagne's spagyric experiments, his works with various resins and how he "sniffed galbanum from a metal box he always kept at hand, and slowly sipped absinth," noting the former was "a bitter aromatic gum resin from an Asiatic plant (*Ferula galbaniflua*) or any of several related plants and used in incense and medicinally" (Rivière, 2006), a description that could encompass cannabis resin. In this respect, "The gum of hemp has been employed for many centuries... to produce visions and enable the spirit or noetic principle to leave the body unconscious and have communications itself with other minds and spirits elsewhere" (Percival, 1915).

There may also have been some continuation of the use of the alchemical terms "aqua" and "waters" to veil magical drug elixirs, as with the *aquae inebriates*, 'inebriating water' noted earlier. Francis Barrett *The Magus* (1801) which does identify the use of witch's drugs, has, as the goal of the adept, to attain "'the true aqua vita" so that "he may be filled with the grace of God ... his spiritual and internal eye is open ... and ... he is filled with the celestial manna" (Barrett, 1801). The *Gruppo di Ur* (Group of Ur), an occult group founded in 1927, and hosted a number of practicing alchemists and well known Masons, are said to have identified drugs with a similar name. "An important role has always been given the 'corrosive waters' (as they call drugs in alchemical language), as long as they are used in the right context" (Zagami, 2016). Through the ritualized use of certain drugs, and other methods, this organization was dedicated to taking the human species to the next level. Some of the founding members, such as the Occultist and Alchemist Julius Evola (1898-1974), were well familiar with hashish, opium, mescaline and other substances. Evola wrote an essay *Sulle droghe* (On Drugs),

about their particular use in magic (Evola, 1971). Co-founder, the high ranking Mason, Arturo Reghini, stated that cannabis was a herb of divine transformation in myth and in reality that "... Hashish ... can make wonderful changes in the state of consciousness" (Reghini, 1922).[14] Thus it seems likely that cannabis served, along with other magical plants, as the alchemical "corrosive waters" for the Group of Ur.

Quintessences have returned somewhat as the modern cannabis tinctures, often available in the modern counterpart of the medieval apothecary, the medical marijuana dispensaries. As one modern aspiring alchemist noted of such a preparation containing cannabis in the 1990s:

> When properly prepared the Cannabis elixir manifests what the adepts called the Qunita Esentia, the Quintessence, or fifth essence which is life force.... The Lavendar Gold Elixir of Cannabis is the most potent liquid magistracy in plant alchemy....
>
> The spirit of cannabis contains the spiritually psychoactive aromatic volatile oils of cannabis (volatile sulfur or volatile soul) which distill over the alcohol in an alchemical marriage made in "heaven"...
>
> Spirit of cannabis is the finest of all distilled spirits, possessing the delicious essential bouquet, flavour and taste of cannabis. It initiates the sensation of floating with heightened sense perceptions in very small doses and is a most effective pain reliever imparting no symptoms of alcohol intoxication or poisoning.... The liquid quintessence of cannabis, the elixir, is a perfected medicine from the plant world.... (Osburn, 1995).

The reintroduction of cannabis-based medicines has resulted in a modern-day interest in cannabis tinctures and preparation, and many craft business are marketing themselves as Apothecaries. With all the extraction possibilities, here has also been a revival of cannabis alchemy, and elaborate looking extraction equipment that looks like something out of a renaissance alchemical manuscript, is available in all shapes and sizes for this purpose. With such equipment, and the same sort of competitiveness that was apparent between alchemists, resin extractions of cannabis have been taken to new levels, producing golden coloured gums, rich with cananbinoids. Claims about their medical qualities and effects of these extracts parallel those of the Philosopher's Stone and quintessence before them. A Colorado-based company, Evolved Alchemy, operated by Warren Ji, has taken a deep interest in both cannabis and spagyric arts, and offers courses dealing with both.

Modern cannabis extraction equipment, used by 21st century alchemists seeking cannabis gold. Image courtesy of Warren Ji.

[1] Translated from the French by Sigismund Bacstrom, and transcribed by Robert Nelson, British Museum Sloane Ms.3630.

[2] Reprinted in The Teachings of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries, (1935).

[3] From a quote in (Nicholl, 1980).

[4] Kloss Collection, MS 266 VII a 1, ff. 72–74.

[5] As quoted in (Newman, 2016).

[6] (Nasrallah, 2007).

[7] (Silber, p 64) Silberer, Herbert, Hidden Symbolism of Alchemy and the Occult Arts (1917).

[8] From a translation in (Fulcanelli, 1926).

[9] Ibid.

[10] From the translation in (Yates, 1999).

[11] As quoted in (Rätsch, 1998).

[12] As noted in (Merkur, 2014).

[13] The (1991) English edition is cited here.

[14] As noted in (Zagami, 2016).