

FIG. 83
ROSE CROSS TABLET WITH THE UNITED SYMBOLS OF
ALCHEMY AND MASONRY, AN EVIDENCE OF THE PRIOR
ORIGIN OF THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER. (*Compass der Weisen
par Kelnala Vere Baron Proek*), BERLIN AND LEIPZIG, 1779, PAGE
112. (*From Les Illumine de Baviere et la Franc-Maçonnerie allemande*)

18th-Century Masons, Rosicrucians and Illuminati

As both Schröpfer and Eckartshausen were very active in the secret societies of their day, it is interesting to note other prominent figures associated with these groups can also be tied to the occult use of drugs. However, due to the intrigue of the time, the information regarding this is somewhat sparse. In this regard, it is also important to remember the political intrigue that followed a lot of these magicians and the secret societies they associated with. Such intrigue possibly contributed to the death of Schröpfer that was discussed in the last chapter. Schröpfer's connections with Masonry and Rosicrucians has long been noted, and it is here in the 18th century, with his punch and fumigation-fuelled seances and rituals that we come to more direct indications of the use of psychoactive substances in this context. Schröpfer claimed to be in possession of deep Masonic secrets, and allegedly, Schröpfer had taken rare Rosicrucian and Freemason texts, in the possession of the Duke Von Holstein-Gottorp during the Seven Years War (1756-1763).¹ As W.W. Morgan wrote of this situation in the *The Freemason's Chronicle*:

In order to attract disciples Schrepfer [sic] from the first represented that he had been entrusted with a special mission and special powers to re-establish in

Germany the ancient Order of the Templars. He represented that upon the dispersal of the Templars, a certain number took refuge in Aberdeen, in Scotland, with records and books of ritual of the Order, which had been hidden in some secret caves in the neighbourhood of Old Aberdeen, and that there had been a succession of Priors and members of the Order ever since. When, after the suicide of Schrepfer, some of the members sent an inquiry to the Rosicrucian Lodge actually established at Aberdeen, the Master said that nobody in that region had ever heard of any Order of Templars, or of documents or caves (Morgan, 1896).

As Renko Geffarth noted in *The Masonic Necromancer: Shifting Identities In The Lives Of Johann Georg Schrepfer*, "The opinion that many Masons had once held, i.e. that Schrepfer was a remarkable man, is now generally reinterpreted as an embarrassment for the history of Freemasonry. Schröpfer was included in books on magicians and swindlers, works which reproduced the polemical opinions of his critics, and presented Schrepfer's life as a cautionary tale designed to deter readers from superstition and 'pseudo-masonic aberrations'" (Geffarth, 2007). J.G. Findel's *History of Freemasonry from its origins down to the present day*, (1869) translated from the German edition (1861-62), gives the typical view of Masons on Schröpfer.

In 1768, he opened a Café in Leipzig, and established there a so-called "Scotch" Lodge, in which, by his ghosts and apparitions, he deceived many of the credulous, and even some men not entirely devoid of understanding. He affirmed that he was in the possession of many more important secrets than any German Lodge had, which nation he abused in no measured terms, and pretended that he had been deputed by the superior masonic authorities to destroy the system of the Strict Observance. His chief art consisted in the exorcising of departed spirits. One of Schrepfer's most zealous disciples was Joh. Rud. von Bischofswerder, who first served in the Prussian army, and then became lord chamberlain to Charles, Duke of Courland, a most enthusiastic Freemason. The Duke sent him, May 31, 1773, with a power of attorney, to Schrepfer, to inquire into the new secrets. Brother von Bischofswerder was not a visionary enthusiast, but fond of good-living; he had studied in Halle, and most likely saw through Schrepfer's designs, but wished to learn from him how to call up spirits, to make gold, and to prepare an ointment which should ensure youth and strength.

Happily Schrepfer's juggling tricks were not long played off upon the credulous: he was overwhelmed with debts and in dread of being unmasked and punished, so he shot himself Oct. 8, 1774, in the

Rosenthal near Leipzig.

From a letter written by Schrepfer himself in 1774 to a Prussian clergyman, we learn that he was an emissary of that power which worketh in darkness (the Jesuits!). This letter was published in 1786, in the July number of a Berlin monthly publication. Schrepfer was only 35 years old at the time of his death (Findel, 1862/1869).

Albert Mackey was even less kind in his *An Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*:

Schrepfer, Johaun Georg. The keeper of a coffee-house in Leipsic, where, having obtained a quantity of Masonic, Rosicrucian, and magical books, he opened, in 1768, what he called a Scottish Lodge, and pretended that he had been commissioned by Masonic superiors to destroy the system of Strict Observance, whose adherents he abused and openly insulted. He boasted that he alone possessed the great secret of Freemasonry, and that nearly all the German Masons were utterly ignorant of anything about it except its external forms. He declared that he was an anointed priest, having power over spirits, who were compelled to appear at his will and obey his commands, by which means he became acquainted not only with the past and the present, but even with the future. It was in thus pretending to evoke spirits that

his Masonry principally consisted. Many persons became his dupes; and although they soon discovered the imposture, shame at being themselves deceived prevented them from revealing the truth to others, and thus his initiations continued for a considerable period, and he was enabled to make some money, the only real object of his system. He has himself asserted, in a letter to a Prussian clergyman, that he was an emissary of the Jesuits; but of the truth of this we have only his own unreliable testimony. He left Leipsic at one time and traveled abroad, leaving his Deputy to act for him during his absence. On his return he asserted that he was the natural son of one of the French princes, and assumed the title of Baron Von Steinbach. But at length there was an end to his practices of jugglery. Seeing that he was beginning to be detected, fearing exposure, and embarrassed by debt, he invited some of his disciples to accompany him to a wood near Leipsic called the Rosenthal, where, on the morning of October 8, 1774, having retired to a little distance from the crowd, he blew out his brains with a pistol.... Schrepfer had much low cunning, but was devoid of education. Lenning sums up his character in saying that he was one of the coarsest and most impudent swindlers who ever chose the Masonic brotherhood for his stage of action (Mackey, 1874).

Schröpfer's "Scotch Lodge" was a form of Ecossais Masonry. The term "Ecossais" is derived from a French word, pronounced a-ko-say, which Masonically is generally to be translated as Scottish Master. Waite notes that the "most famous and most generally diffused of the Ecossais systems is the Scottish Rite of Thirty-three Degrees" (Waite, 1921). Despite various attempts at distancing the Scottish Rite from this history, it's hard not to see the influence of the style of Masonry practiced by Schröpfer and the pharmacist and Mason, Linck, in later initiations of the Masonic Kadosh degree, of the Scottish rite. In this degree the candidate is made to face a mirror, and while contemplating his reflection, the image magically turns to a skeleton before his eyes!

The Apparition

There are several ways to produce the ghost or apparition for the First Apartment. The easiest is simply follow the suggestion in the script and have an actor covered in a shroud rise up in the coffin.... More effective is to have an actor in a darkened room wearing a skeleton costume or a costume suggesting a dead body...

Even more effective is to use a device known as Peppers Ghost Machine.... In its simplest form, this is a large T shaped box. The arms of the T are equal in length and are open at the ends. The actor stands

at the end of one arm, and a skeleton is suspended at the end of a second arm. The end of the third arm fills a door opening in the set. The box is painted flat black inside, and there are internal lights, individually controlled by dimmers, which can light the actor and the skeleton. A sheet of plate glass is placed at a 45degree angle at the junction. When the skeleton is lighted and the actor is not, the skeleton will be visible. When light is brought up on the actor and faded down on the skeleton, the images will superimpose, and the skeleton will seem to gain flesh and turn into a person. The actor should be costumed as a Scottish Knight of St. Andrew.

Small versions can be built which will fit into a coffin-sized device, so the same effect can be used in a Lodge Room. Detailed drawings and specifications can be found in several stagecraft books.²

Comparatively, as Renk Geffarth notes of Schröpfer's influence on Masonry:

The most important aspect about Schrepfer's "Masonic necromancy" is its symbolical function: In analogy to the initiation ceremony to the master's degree, necromancy is the preferential way to gain access to higher secret knowledge. During the initiation ritual, the initiate is raised from his symbolic grave, following the legend of Hiram. Schrepfer took the

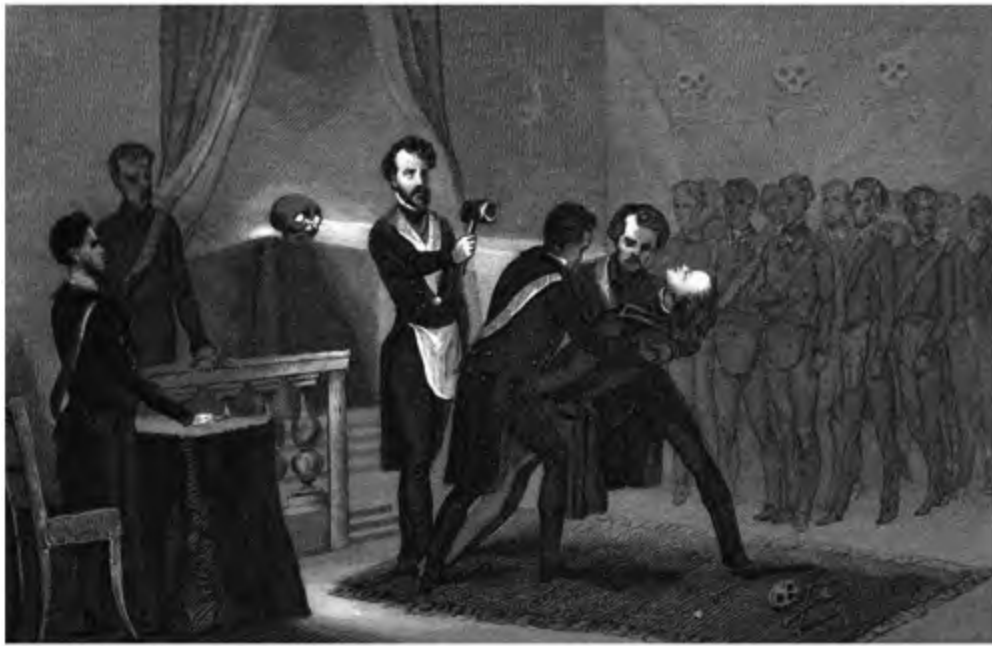
legend literally and interpreted it as the calling of spirits, culminating in the conjuration of Jacques de Molay. Thus, the necromantic performances definitely were an expression of the esoteric quest for higher knowledge. For the spectators, pursuing this quest indicated neither superstition nor simple mindedness, but was rather evidence of a serious spiritual endeavor (Geffarth, 2007).

Geffarth also described how in order to “impress his Masonic audiences, Schrepfer evoked the spirit of the Templars’ last Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, during a session in Dresden, and ordered him to travel to Frankfurt and visit Schrepfer’s companion, a man named Gradmann. Molay obeyed, and a few minutes later the spirit returned with a receipt that apparently had been signed in Frankfurt” (Geffarth, 2007); an act reminiscent of some of the shenanigans we find in later 19th-century spiritualism. Interestingly, we see similar invocations were alleged to take place in later Masonry.



Les manifestations diaboliques du prétendu crâne de Jacques Molay, à Charleston, en la salle du Suprême Conseil du Rite Écossais. (Page 227.)

Illustration from Le Diable au XIX Siecle (1894), an anti-Masonic French publication by the controversial figure Leo Taxil, showing a similar manifestation of the Templar Grand Master de Molay, to that attributed to Schröpfer a century prior.



Similar ritual as depicted in, Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie, (Clavel, 1844).

We can only imagine how such death and rebirth initiations would be enhanced by the optical techniques of the *Phantasmagoria*, and the use of potent entheogens. As we shall see, there are indications that such ritual use continued with certain occult groups into the 19th century at least.

Although rejected by Masons after his untimely demise, Schröpfer seems to be remembered more favorably by Rosicrucian circles. The controversies around his death and exposure of his alleged techniques, “strange to say ... did not shake the faith of the Brethren in the Order of the Rosy Cross” (Morgan, 1896). Schröpfer is often recorded as the founding apostle of what was seen as the 18th century’s new Rosicrucianism. In *A History of*

Freemasonry Throughout the World, F.C. Gould explained of the alleged connections between Rosicrucians and Freemasonry:

The Rosicrucians ... gave out that they had been the originators of Freemasonry; that the Craft was designed as a nursery for adepts; that in the higher degrees the symbols would receive their true interpretation, and so on; that ultimately the true adept would not only be able to make gold, brew the ‘elixir of life,’ command spirits ... but would absolutely incorporate himself with God, and partake of the knowledge, prescience and power of the Deity...

The first active apostle of this system was J. G. Schrepfer, an ex-Hussar of good manners and boundless impudence, but without education, and possessed of violent temper. In 1768 he opened a coffee-house in Leipzig; in 1772 he held a Scots Lodge at his house and based on it the Rosicrucian Degrees. His forte was “calling spirits from the vasty deep”; and they came... (Gould, 1887).

As Otto Henne am Rhyn recorded at the end of the 19th century in *Mysteria: History of the Secret Doctrines and Mystic Rites of Ancient Religions and Medieval and Modern Secret Orders*:

The New Rosicrucianism had its rise in Southern

Germany about the year 1760...

Their specialty was a mystical, kabbalistic, and totally absurd interpretation of the Bible, and of other alleged sacred or occult writings, whence they deduced an explanation of the universe.... They also practiced necromancy, exorcization, alchemy, the art of making gold, of preparing the elixir of life.... The first prophet of the New Rosicrucianism was John George Schrepfer, coffee-house keeper in Leipsic.... In his lodge he gave demonstrations of his supernatural powers as a magician and a necromancer: for example, he would summon up spirits of the dead. Puffed up by success, Schrepfer indulged in all manner of debauchery, and at last was reduced to penury. He died by his own hand, aged 35 years (Rhn, 1895).

However, Schröpfer's influence on Rosicrucianism did not end with his death, as it did with Masonry. Rhn notes Schröpfer had initiated the influential figure John Rudolph Bischofswerder (1741-1803), the chamberlain to the Elector of Saxony and a major in the Prussian army, while his lodge was active. Some sources report Bischofswerder also "belonged to the society of the Illuminati" (Lieber, et al., 1854).

Not content with the honor of being Knight of the Griffin in the Strict Observance, Bischofswerder went

in search of an order that practiced the magic art, and was so fortunate as to find it in the New Rosicrucianism. He was initiated into the mysteries by Schrepfer, and it was he who converted the Duke of Courland from an enemy into a friend of the coffee-house Rosicrucian. After the death of Schrepfer, whose most zealous supporter he had been, Bischofswerder obtained promotion in the Prussian service through the favor of the crown prince Frederic William, nephew of Frederic the Great, and shared his good fortune with Woellner. Knight of the Cube, who like himself had seceded from Templarism. The pair won the crown prince over to Rosicrucianism, and enjoyed his confidence both then and after his accession to the throne of Prussia in 1786, as William II (Rhn, 1895).

Admiration for Schröpfer among Rosicrucians seems to have carried over somewhat into the present day, *A Rosicrucian Notebook: The Secret Sciences Used by Members of the Order*, records unquestioned that "Johann Georg Schropfer (1730-1774) employed ultraviolet (i.e., invisible to ordinary sight) domestic servants as lightning messengers between Dresden and Mitau in the presence of the Duke Christian Joseph Karl von Kurland" (Schrödter, 1992). Elements of this Rosicrucian influence on Masonry have been carried down to the modern day as well. "In the

system of high degrees in Scottish Freemasonry, especially in the Rosendruetz degree, the Rosicrucian symbols are still retained with a Masonic interpretation” (DuQuette, 2012).

That techniques of the phantasmagoria, made their way into the initiations of various secret societies, is indicated in the failed initiation of William Beckford (1760-1844), the wealthy art collector, critic and novelist. In 1781, Beckford was invited by the noted architect Charles Nicholas Ledoux, remembered for his visionary designs, who was also a Freemason, to an initiation chamber that he himself had designed, and considered his greatest work, describing it as “...the most sumptuous apartment I ever erected.” The initiation suite belonged to an associate that Ledoux described to Beckford as having strange habits and dress, so much so, that he hid from the public eye, and only accepted guests who were “born under peculiar influences.”³ After receiving the approval of the mysterious host, Beckford was taken to a hidden chateau, and brought before him:

As I stood contemplating the last gleams of a ruddy sunset reflected on its placid surface the old man, risen at length from his stately chair, approached and no sooner had he drawn near, than the water becoming agitated rose up in waves. Upon the gleaming surface of the undulating fluid – flitted by a

succession of ghastly shadows, somewhat resembling, I thought, the human form in the last agonies of dissolution – but as horrid as these appearances passed along with inconceivable swiftness, I distinguished little, quite sufficient, however, to impart a thrill of terror to my whole frame I never experienced before (Beckford, 1781).⁴

Apparently, Beckford failed to give the appropriate response, and was rejected from further initiation. Techniques that included the use of smoke, mirrors and drugs, continued in such a context for some time, as indicated in the words of the 19th-century Rosicrucian grandmaster and hashish aficionado Paschal Beverly Randolph:

The world we live in is full of the pattering of ghostly feet, and the music of spiritual singers. It is not difficult to hear them. I may not here write concerning the methods of invocation, because fools will laugh, and the fraternity of the mystical, everywhere, would grieve thereat; and yet it is certain that perfumes, odours, and vapours of magnetic character have, in ages past, and may again and in ages yet to be, proved Immense aids to the true seer. There are hundreds who visited “Rosicrucian Rooms” in Boylston St., Boston, who marvelled greatly at hearing no raps, or ticks, and seeing no clouds pass over the splendid mirror there owned and used, until perfumes were

scattered and incense burned – whereupon, thousands of patterings rained upon the silver tripod, and glory-clouds, in presence of and seen by scores, floated over the black-sea face of the peerless mirror (Randolph, 1875).

Karl von Eckartshausen (1752-1803), whose similar use of drugs for elaborate seances was also noted last chapter, was at one time a member of the Illuminati, and one of a few practicing alchemists of the 18th century. Eckartshausen's *Cloud Upon the Sanctuary*, was deeply influential on later Rosicrucians. The idea of a "Great White Brotherhood" that watched over humanity and secretly led various occult groups, which would become a popular idea and claim of later occultists, is generally thought to have had its inception within this work. In his *Cloud Upon the Sanctuary*, said to be veiled in Christian Hermetic code, he refers to a hidden "Society of the Elect," an "invisible celestial Church," who have watched over and cultivated mankind. Eckartshausen promises that "it is the society whose members form a theocratic republic, which one day will be the Regent Mother of the whole World." Eckartshausen's work was deeply influential on the Golden Dawn, Aleister Crowley, as well as on Blavatsky's conception of the *Mahatmas* or "Ascended Masters" and the idea of a "Great White Brotherhood." In the view of the Theosophical Society, which Blavatsky founded, Eckartshausen

himself was "surely ... one of the messengers and teachers who appear at the close of every century ... to attempt to quicken human evolution, and who to that end re-teach the mystical truths, inherent in all religions, concerning God and His relation to humanity and the world" (Severs, 1909).

A turn of the century writer for *The Theosophist* pondered "How Eckartshausen gained his special knowledge I do not know, except by what is generally termed 'inspiration'" (Severs, 1909). "Inspiration" and, we might add, a little incense smoke may have helped. Although not a view of history the Theosophical Society is seen as keen to promote, their founder Helena Petrova Blavatsky has long been referred to for her own mystical use of cannabis. As one 19th-century acquaintance recorded "she was addicted to the use of haschish. She several times endeavored to persuade me to try the effect upon myself. She said she had smoked opium, seen its visions and dreamed its dreams, but that the beatitudes enjoyed in the use of haschish were as heaven to its hell. She said she found nothing to compare with its effects in arousing and stimulating the imagination" (Wolff, 1874:1891). Rumours of her fondness for hashish led to accusations that her "great Tibetan brotherhood of Initiates is a hashish pipe dream" (Carrithers, 1947).



The Famous eye of the Illuminati from von Eckartshausen's Aufschlüsse zur Magie, "The lofty aim of religion is the intimate union of man with God" –Karl von Eckartshausen (1752-1803).

Eckartshausen is not the only figure associated with both the Illuminati and the use of drugs. Although many of the claims in this regard are spurious there is some clear evidence as well. In regard to some of the looser claims, one of the more typical can be found in William Schnoebelen's *Masonry: Beyond the Light*. According to Schnoebelen, Adam Weishaupt's Illuminati was "founded on a mixture of Masonic secrets, Islamic mysticism, and Jesuit mental discipline. The element that made it even more unique and dangerous was its scientific use of the drug, Alamout hashish, to produce an 'illuminated' state of mind. This was the drug of the Assassins" (Schnoebelen, 1991). A similar claim is made by Mark Amaru Pinkham, the Founder/Director of The Order & Mystery School of the Seven Rays; The Djedhi School of Ancient Wisdom: &

Grand Prior of The International Order of Gnostic Templars. In his *Guardian of the Holy Grail*, Pinkham writes that the "Illuminati, and Weishaupt's Templar heritage was evident when he had his initiates achieve a level of illumination through the consumption of marijuana, the plant used in making hashish, the Flesh of Al- Khadir. It s interesting to note that their slogan, *Ewige Blumenkraft*, meaning 'Eternal Flower Power,' the Illuminati foreshadowed the drug-consuming hippies of the 1960s" (Pinkham, 2004).

This claim, from what I can see, and according also to Robert Anton Wilson, who played some role in perpetuating it with the hemp smoking characters of his and co-author Robert Shea's *Illuminatus Trilogy*, goes back to a 1969 edition of *TeenSet Magazine*, an excerpt of which even appears in the *Illuminatus Trilogy*.



The article about the Illuminati, which appears on the cover as “Diabolical World Conspiracy Exposed” appears in the final issue of *TeenSet* under that title (hence the question mark in the title), after that the magazine changed its name to *AUM*.

Inside the magazine, the title becomes, “The Most Sinister, Evil, Subversive, Conspiracy in the World” and was allegedly authored, according to the editor, by a Sandra Glass. “Before her recent, fatal accident, Miss Glass was a leading expert on subversive affairs.” According to Glass’ account, which has flavored various stories around the order ever since, in regards to the origins of “the Bavarian Illuminati”:

The nightmarish story begins in 1090 A.D. in the

Middle East, when Hassan i Sabbah founded the Ismaelian Sect, or Hashishim, so called because of their use of hashish, a deadly drug derived from... the killer weed marijuana. The Hashishim were noted for their tendency to sit around talking philosophy, their peculiar lurching gait and their innumerable foul deeds which filled the police files of the Middle East at the time...

The Illuminati surfaced next in Bavaria in 1776... Adam Weishaupt, a student of the occult studied the teachings of Hassan i Sabbah and grew hemp in his backyard. On February 2nd, 1776, Weishaupt achieved illumination and cried out... “Now I know why everybody’s flying these days” Weishaupt officially founded the Ancient Illuminated Seers of Bavaria on May 1st 1776. Their slogan was “Ewige Blumenkraft” (Flower Power Forever). They attracted many illustrious members such as Goethe and Beethoven (Glass, 1969).

All such claims about Weishaupt’s Illuminati and the use of hashish for “illumination,” as well as the now often repeated slogan, “*Ewige Blumenkraft*” go back to this article. A longer version of the motto appears in *The Illuminatus Trilogy*, “*Ewige Blumenkraft und ewige Schlangenkraft*” and translates as “eternal flower power and eternal serpent power.” This of course refers to the kundalini, which can

be awaked in sexual rites.

It seems most likely, either Robert Anton Wilson, and/or his co-author Robert Shea, wrote the *TeenSet* article themselves, and this led to, or initiated their writing of the occult fiction classic *The Illuminatus Trilogy*. The *TeenSet* article has Glass retrieve the story from a Simon Moon, and this is the name of a fictional character from *Illuminatus Trilogy*, and was also a writing pseudonym of Robert Anton Wilson, who had written about the role of cannabis and tantric like practices, as well as a connection between the Templars and Assassin in this regard, in his earlier work, *Sex and Drugs* (1973) [re-released as *Sex, Drugs and Magick*]

In *The Illuminatus Trilogy*, the Illuminati are depicted as an occult group, who secretly smoke cannabis and refer to money as “hemp script,” along with orchestrating all sorts of Machiavellian schemes from behind a veiled curtain of secrecy. If they still actually exist, then the Illuminati really could use some good PR, as many modern conspiracy theorists really believe they act as sinister figures behind modern political intrigue, and global control, communicating in magical signs and sigils to a hypnotized public through esoteric symbols on dollar bills, in television commercials, candy wrappers and milk cartons. I’m not to interested in any of that, and see them more as a brief and interesting phenomena that ceased to exist in the 18th century. Moreover, I agree with the view that despite what has

been written by conspiracy theorists, in reality “the Illuminati were perfectly innocuous and even praiseworthy” (Webster, 1924). Well at least if you were not a despot, as we shall see, there is political intrigue.... As Gary Lachman also noted, “Sentiments of tolerance, egalitarianism, universal brotherhood, and what we today would call multiculturalism” were “all part of the Illuminati platform” (Lachman, 2009). And most recently Masonic Scholar Dr. David Harrison, has noted in *The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry*:

The name of the Illuminati is perhaps more widely known today for being embraced by speculative authors and conspiracy theorists as an umbrella term for a wide range of collective secret societies, but the true history of the Order is far more interesting and appealing, especially as the original ethos of the society was to bring light in the form of maintaining the ideas of the Enlightenment (Harrison, 2017).

Moreover, anyone who takes the time to actually read the words of the illuminati founder, Adam Weishaupt, will find it difficult to reconcile the humanitarian they demonstrate, with the Machiavellian megalomaniac depicted by modern conspiracy theorists. As one biographer and translator of his works noted: “It is one of the deplorable and tragic ironies of history that a man who tried to inculcate virtue, philanthropy, social justice and morality has

become one of the great hate-figures of 21st-century 'conspiracy' thinking" (Page, 2014).

In regard to cannabis, despite the bogus claims of the *TeenSet* article, and the poorly researched references to the claims made in it that followed, it is interesting to note that a number of figures associated with the organization seem also to have been associated with the occult use of drugs in some way, such as Eckartshausen. Eliphas Levi indicated such use as well:

THE GERMAN ILLUMINATI

Germany is the native land of metaphysical mysticism and phantoms.... Long before there was any question of mediums and their evocations in America and France, Prussia had its illuminati and seers, who had habitual communications with the dead. At Berlin, a great noble built a house destined for evocations; King Frederick William was very curious about all such mysteries and was often immured in this house with an adept named Steinert. His experiences were so signal that a state of exhaustion supervened and he had to be restored with drops of some magical elixir analogous to that of Cagliostro. There is a secret correspondence belonging to the reign in question which is cited by the Marquis de Luchet in his work against the illuminati, and it contains a description of the dark chamber in which the

evocations were performed. It was a square apartment, divided by a transparent veil; the magical furnace or altar of perfumes was erected in front of the veil and behind was a pedestal on which the spirit manifested. In his German work upon Magic, Eckartshausen describes the whole of the fantastic apparatus, being a system of machines and operations by which imagination was helped to create the phantoms desired, those who consulted the oracle being in a kind of waking somnambulism, comparable to the nervous excitement produced by opium or hasheesh. Those who are contented with the explanations given by the author just mentioned will regard the apparitions as magic lantern effects, but there is more in it assuredly than this, while the magic lantern was only an accessory instrument in the business and one in no sense necessary for the production of the phenomenon (Levi, 1859).

Arkon Daraul, (a pseudonym of the Sufi, Idries Shah) in *A History of Secret Societies* (1961), claimed the Bavarian Illuminati were deeply influenced by an Afghani Sufi sect who were current at that time, the *Roshaniya*, which basically translates as the "illuminated Ones." "The Roshaniya or 'illuminated ones' surfaced in Persia in the sixteenth century. They believed they were inspired by special divine revelation, or illumination. A strong faction of this group

evolved in the mountains of Afghanistan and controlled a considerable amount of territory from their mountain stronghold. They called themselves mystical warriors, but their enemies, the Moguls of India, called them assassins..." (Childress, 1991) This sect itself has been connected with the much older history of the Assassins (*Hashishins*) by numbers of authors. Considering the esoteric role cannabis and other drugs have held with such groups in Islamic culture, it's not hard to imagine knowledge of such substances being a part of any esoteric transmission.

A potential avenue for such a connection between the *Roshaniya* and the Illuminati can be made through a mysterious figure named Kolmer. It has long been suggested that Weishaupt was initiated by a merchant who had spent time in the Arabic world, and some have suggested he carried Ismaili and Manichean secrets into Europe. "In 1771 he [Weishaupt] came across a ...merchant named Kolmer, who is said to have initiated him into Eastern Occultism. Cagliostro was one of this man's pupil's likewise. Again, the Sufis... seem to have been active in their propagandism" (Lillie, 1894). In *Masonry: Beyond the Light*, William Schnoebelen, who seems to base the idea of cannabis use on the whole *TeenSet* mythos, states that it "may be from this Afghan connection that Weishaupt, acquired his knowledge of hashish.... Through his use of drugs and occultism, Weishaupt produced an 18th century

version of the Hashishim. His 'illumination' was much more interesting than that produced by the regular [Masonic] Lodge" (Schnoebelen, 1991). These suggestions are made more intriguing by the longstanding claim that Weishaupt, and "the German Illuminati claimed the Prophet Mohammed as one of their initiates" (Cohen, 1989).

More recently, the rock star turned occult historian, Gary Lachman, has suggested the *Roshaniya* may have influenced another figure associated with the Illuminati, the Polish Count, Jan Potocki (1761-1815) with cannabis and esoteric lore. A Polish noble, and army captain, Potocki had a deep interest in culture and history, and was a noted linguist and Egyptologist in his own day. Lachman, who has explored the history of these secret societies in detail, has suggested that besides his long-alleged connection to the Illuminati, Potocki may also have been initiated in Cagliostro's form of Egyptian Masonry.

Potocki was among the first to study the stories of antiquity about the horse-back riding, cannabis-inhaling, nomads the Scythians. "In 1712 the famous German geographer Engelbert Kämpfer (1651-1716) identified the plants that the Scythians used for their purification as hashish. And in 1802 a Polish count, Jan Potocki (1761-1815), identified the Scythian seers with 'les Schamanes de la Siberie,' soon to be followed by classical scholar Christian Lobeck (1781) who ... called the ancient miracle workers ...

'sciamani' ... it would take until the end of the nineteenth century before shaman would again attract the attention of classicists" (Bremmer, 2003). In Potocki's *Voyage dans les steps d'Astrakhan et du Caucase: Histoire primitive des peuples qui ont habité antérieurement ces contrées* (Journey through the steps of Astrakhan and the Caucasus: The primitive history of the peoples who formerly inhabited these lands, 1829), Potocki cites Herodotus' famous descriptions of Scythian cannabis fumigation in a tent, commenting "We see that the tents were made like the *otaou* of today, covered with felt and all of a piece; They were lifted by one side, and they slipped underneath ... I do not know that no Tatar peoples now smoke hemp, but it is true that its intoxicating smoke, and this manner of getting drunk, is very much in use in Cairo, where people drink and smoke the hashish. The intoxication which it procures is different from that of opium, and from that which fermented liquors give, it is more a matter of madness" (Potocki, 1829). A statement that reveals his familiarity with such substances and their then-current cultural use.

Count Jan

Potocki (1761-1815)



Potocki is best known for his still reprinted tale, *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*, also known as *The Saragossa Manuscript*. This work is ripe with alchemical symbolism, esoteric Islamic and Rosicrucian references, as well as the occult use of cannabis, set against a back-drop of entertaining stories within stories and dreams within dreams. The story covers the adventures of a youthful Walloon officer, and his encounters with corpses, demons, magic, a Kabalistic Jew, secret societies and more.

Stronger evidence for a connection between Potocki and the Illuminati is *The Saragossa Manuscript* itself.... Secret knowledge and scenes and motifs run through ... [it] ... Potocki ... may also have been aware of another sect of "Illuminated Ones," the Roshaniya, who flourished in Afghanistan ... in the 1500s ... for some authorities, there is a possible connection

between the Roshaniya and ... the 11th century Assassins. Here Potocki's love of Islam would have formed a link (Lachman, 2003).

A scholar, historian and explorer, Potocki's interests led him to travels through Turkey, Egypt, Morocco and other exotic destinations. At one point, Potocki, who spoke fluent Arabic among other languages, went on a quest in search of the original manuscript of *The Arabian Nights*, which is said to have inspired his own work. Potocki was also known for dressing in Arabic attire, and it may have been this deep interest in things Islamic that first attracted him to the secret societies of his day. Unfortunately, no direct documentation for Potocki's connections to the Illuminati, Weishaupt, and Cagliostro exist, and much of the speculation in this regard may be based on Potocki's clear occult knowledge and leanings, as indicated in *The Saragosa Manuscript*.

...What's not in doubt are the genuine occult themes in *The Saragossa Manuscript*.... The Gallows that the young Alphonse finds himself under after his night of passion ... suggest the Tarot trump of the Hanged Man, a symbol of spiritual death and initiation. The weird adventures, and tales within tales, in which Alphonse is unsure whether he is awake, dreaming, or under the influence of hashish, is a reminder of the ambiguous nature of reality. They take place

within the liminal space between sleep and consciousness, the hypnagogic realm of magic and the paranormal...

...Potocki alludes to the central secret society of European legend: the Rosicrucians. In Rosicrucian legend, Christian Rosenkruz, the mythical founder of the society ... received his occult wisdom in [Syrian] Damascus... (Lachman, 2003).

In the closing chapters of *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*, the hero of the tale, Alphonse, is taken to a Druze Sheikh by guides who “recovered their strength by drinking and smoking hashish” (Potocki 1814/1995). Interestingly, Gary Lachman compares the Druze Sheikh, who is one of the central figures in the story, to Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the Illuminati. As we shall see from later accounts, the Druze, which as noted are thought to be the closest of the existing Isma’ili offshoots to the 12th century Hashshishin, or Assassins, were a conduit of esoteric knowledge into the West, and this often included elements of their secret use of hashish. “It is in Syria, in the southern part of Lebanon, inhabited today by the Druze, that the Crusaders met the famous (assassins) hachichins nation” (Louise, 1861).

Potocki came to a curious and tragic end, killing himself with a consecrated silver bullet, believing he had fallen victim to the curse of the werewolf. One wonders if

Potocki had been experimenting with some of the stronger concoctions associated with ointments that were believed to produce lycanthropy in previous centuries, such as those listed in Jean de Nynauld’s *De lycanthropie, transformation et extase des sorceries* (1615).⁵

One of the most well-known historical figures associated with the Illuminati is the scientist and poet Johann Wolfgang Goethe, (1749-1832). “It is well-known that Goethe was an initiate of the Freemasons and the Illuminati, that he was very likely an initiate of the Rosicrucians, that he dabbled in alchemy, that his religious beliefs were pantheistic, and that he was a Gnostic” (Crawford, 2007). “Having been a Mason since 1780, Goethe became a member of the ... Illuminati in ... 1783, the branch (lodge) closed in 1784 after the Illuminati were banned by the Bavarian Government” (Bridgewater, 2013). A 1917 edition of *The Word*, has it that it was as under the name “Illuminated Brother Abaris of Heliopolis ... which ... J.W. Goethe of Weimar appears on the *matricula* of the lodge of Weishaupt-Illuminati” (Mayer, 1917). As Christian Lepinte noted in *Goethe et l’occultisme*, Goethe’s “thinking is dominated by the idea of a society of initiates perpetuating a sacred myth.... The poem *Geheimnisse* (Secrets) haunts his spirit. The monastic order, whose mysteries are revealed in the fragments of the poem, shares in the Order of the Templars, Rosicrucianism, and the mystic quest for the Holy Grail” (Lepinte, 1957). Like Weishaupt and Potocki,

Goethe was deeply influenced by Islamic thought, his diaries record. In the *Divan* (1819) Goethe writes:

*Whether the Koran is of eternity?
I don't question that!...
That it is the book of books
I believe out of the muslim's duty.*

In his “*Notes and Essays*” to the *Divan*, at the ripe old age of 70, he recorded how he intended to “to celebrate respectfully that night when the Prophet was given the Koran completely from above.”⁶

Goethe is probably best remembered for his rendition of the life of the magician Johann Georg Faust (c. 1480–1540). His association with the Illuminati, and close friendship with Friedrich Schiller, make it clear he would have been familiar with the drug-infused seances and initiations of Schröpfer and Eckartshausen. Schiller, besides poetry, left us the incomplete novel *Der Geisterseher – Aus den Papieren des Grafen von O* (The Ghost-Seer, 1789). The main character of the story, the ‘Count of O’ is generally believed to be based on Johann Georg Schröpfer. It is also worth noting that “when Goethe’s Faust was given its first private showing in 1819, Phantasmagoria effects were used to show the Earth Spirit” (Ruffles, 2004). One wonders if Schröpfer’s necromancy and tragic ending, well known at the time, played a part in Goethe’s own conception of Faust?

Schiller, who some suggest was a secret Freemason, has been tied with both Goethe and the use of cannabis, with the publication of an alleged letter exchanged between the two that appeared in 1993, and was circulated widely through the European press. As Mark Boon describes in his *The Road of Excess: A History of Writers on Drugs*: “In a recently discovered manuscript, whose existence was announced in an Austrian newspaper, a text attributed to ... Goethe describes a visit to Johan Schiller ... in the autumn of 1797, during which the two writers and three of Schiller’s students smoked pipes of hemp resin (hashish) together to see whether the experience could shed any light on the plants principle as it applies to human beings” (Boon, 2002). As the alleged letter itself, translated from the German, relates:

At lunch-time I discussed with Schiller the whimsical custom, which was introduced ... by means of a ... sweet oriental resin, whose amusing power could be heard much praise. After an excited conversation about the fact that in every human being there was a triad of human, animal, and plant life, the latter being aroused by the inhalation of plantings again, I gladly suggested to Schiller’s proposal to go to a place tomorrow To smell the smell of the much-admired herb, as here, as often, only natural perception helps.

...My condition was the strangest thing: all sorts of

gloomy thoughts swarmed around me like cold goldfish in a glass...

The letter is quite interesting, and I would have included it in total ... if it were authentic. Unfortunately the whole thing is a forgery. The author was one Constantin Seibt, an editor of the *Zürcher Wochenzeitung*, and he has admitted to forging the letter in 1993, and lamented that this fake letter has become his only international success, as it is still widely shared as a piece of authentic history on the German language Internet, and now English thanks to Boon's work; although to be fair he did write about it with clear reservations about its authenticity, though unaware at the time of Seibt's role as a forger.⁷

This is not to say that Goethe had no interest in such substances. In *Intoxication, Modernity, and Colonialism: Freud's Industrial Unconscious, Benjamin's Hashish Mimesis*, Dušan I. Bjelić suggests that Goethe's writings, particularly in *The Metamorphosis of Plants*, influenced the thoughts and philosophy of both authors' conception of drugs and the mind. Sigmund Freud's experiments and ten-year romance with cocaine is well known, and Walter Benjamin's *On Hashish*, is a classic of the genre.

Much has been discussed about Goethe's Faust's influence on Freud's and Benjamin's demonological dialects but much less Goethe's *The Metamorphosis of Plants*. The fact that drugs marked both the

beginning and end of Freud's and Benjamin's languages of intoxication resembles a labyrinth. My thesis is that the leaf, as botanical idea understood by Goethe and as the originator of their drugs and their drug-induced languages, might actually hold the thread leading out of the labyrinth (Bjelić, 2016).

Although remembered for his poetry, stories and plays, Goethe was interested in law, politics and science. *The Metamorphosis of Plants* (1788), was his first major scientific work. "Central to Goethe's botanical studies and the source of ideational intoxication was the idea of the primal plant, as a primal phenomenon or primal Thing, *Urding*, not only of botanical but also of organic life. While cocaine and hashish derive their powers of intoxication from the chemistries of Coca and cannabis, Goethe's primal intoxicating power comes from not only intuiting but also actually *seeing* idea" (Bjelić, 2016). As Goethe explained of this: "While walking in the Public Gardens of Palermo, it came to me in a flash that in the organ of the plant which we are accustomed to call the *leaf* lies the true Proteus who can hide or reveal himself in all vegetal forms. From first to last, the plant is nothing but leaf, which is so inseparable from the future germ that one cannot think of one without the other" (Goethe, 1786).⁸

In this sense, Goethe saw the leaf's patterns as evidence that plants themselves were in a sense unfolding

leaves that replicated themselves with the same sort of framework, one could see visibly in the structures of leaves, and in this he sensed divinity at work. It was the element behind this, the creative primal essence of all “plant,” Goethe sought, a quest in many ways similar to that of alchemists who pursued the quintessence, but rather than the essence of a single plant, the essence of all plants, and life. Goethe, in a very real sense, saw God in Nature. As Mephistopheles tells Faust, “All theory, dear friend, is gray, but the golden tree of life springs ever green” (Goethe, 1808).

Whether or not Goethe saw cannabis as related to this quest, or experimented with it, remains unsubstantiated. “Goethe was not only, as a poet, a great self-revealer, but also, in spite of the abundance of autobiographical records, a careful concealer” (Freud, 1930).⁹ However, we do know Goethe had some interest in cannabis and collected specimens of the plant.

He examined the growth patterns of cannabis in relation to his unfolding leaf theory in *Schriften zur Morphologie II* (1824), as well as referring to both industrial and psychoactive strains with references to “Hanf, Cannabis, Gattung der Kannabinazeen, Hanfgewächse ... Cannabis indica, der in Indien und im Orient angebaute Hanf...” (“Hemp, cannabis, cannabis seeds, hemp plants ... Cannabis indica, the hemp grown in India and the Orient”) (Goethe, 1824).



Goethe's specimen of cannabis from his Herbarium.

Although *hanf*, “hemp,” does come up elsewhere in the works of Goethe, I could not find anything that indicated his personal experimentation with it. However, Goethe did record a rather unfavourable trip with opium. “...Faust, the Goethe personage, sang a praise to the “enchancing narcotic juice....The drugstore bills of Goethe himself – like

those of Novalis, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Wordsworth, and Keats, the greatest poets of their time – prove a regular consumption of laudanum” (Escohotado, 1999). “Goethe ... acknowledged the creative surges that came during ecstasy, no matter how that ecstasy was induced, whether by muses, alcohol, drugs, or by stimulation of the inner ear” (Flaherty, 1992). He did refer to using opium during a bout of catarrh, but did not mention any sort of visionary experience. Boone notes that “Goethe also had an unpleasant experience with Brunonian opium therapy that resulted in Brown’s being added to a list of Goethe’s enemies” (Boon, 2002).

Both opium and hemp appear in Goethe’s writings elsewhere as well. *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, Volume 15, has a scenario that involved missing drugs: “A glass of liquid opium was absent from the priest’s household, and the most rigorous investigation was necessary” (Goethe, 1851). There also seems to be some sort of sleeping potion, or opium preparation, worked into *Faust*: “Here is a phial: in her drink/ But three drops of it measure,/And deepest sleep will on her senses sink.” A biographer¹⁰ recorded how Goethe made the following curious statement that incorporated a reference to “hemp” in a symbolic act of submission to a woman he was infatuated with, written in the language of “The New Heloise”¹¹: “And to the feet of his beloved beloved. He will break hemp. And he will wipe Hemp to break today. tomorrow and the

day after tomorrow, indeed his whole life.”

Carl Jung saw Goethe as an alchemical magus, and believed *Faust* was filled with the secrets of Hermeticism. “I regard my work on alchemy as a sign of my inner relationship with Goethe. Goethe’s secret was that he was in the grip of that process of archetypal transformation which has gone on through the centuries. He regarded his *Faust* as an *opus magnum* or *divinum*. He called it his ‘main business’, and his whole life was enacted within the framework of this drama.”¹² In his autobiography, Goethe amusingly details his youthful interest in alchemical and mystical writings, and many have come to see that “Goethe was profoundly influenced throughout his life by the religious and philosophical beliefs he derived from his early study of alchemy” (Gray, 1952).

Goethe was certainly familiar with the actions of drugs, as well as their use in magic. He obviously did extensive research into such occult matters in preparation for retelling the renaissance tale of *Faust*. As well, he was aware of the 16th-century polymath Benvenuto Cellini, who had referred to his attendance at a necromantic ceremony at the coliseum in Rome, which like the magic of Schröpfer and Eckartshausen, included the burning of “drugs of fetid odour.”¹³ E.M. Butler felt Goethe incorporated elements of this story into *Faust*. In reference to the “magician who produced such legions of spirits in the Coliseum” Butler notes “his ghost haunts the Second Part

of Goethe's *Faust* as the Necromant of Norcia. For Goethe translated Cellini's autobiography, and the name came back to him at a very appropriate moment in the fourth act" (Butler, 1979).

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) said that Goethe "attained the supreme mysteries" and suggested that "Goethe ... demonstrated his profound knowledge of Rosicrucianism" (Steiner, 2000). In *The Gloves of a Mason*, Francis Meyer suggests that besides being a Mason: "In the veiled interpretation of the *Faust*, Goethe often mentions that he is an R. C. [Rosicrucian], and uses many symbols ... even the allegorical interpretation of *Faust* furnishes sufficient evidence, concerning the true R. C. adept-ship of ... Goethe" (Meyer, 1917). William Page Andrews, in *Goethe's Key to Faust*, noting the classic works cultural influence, asked "Was he not himself plunged for a long time in the visions of the Illuminati; which even gave him the idea that he would be able to invent a religion?" (Andrews, 1915).

There is no dispute that Goethe's greatest work is his two-part play, *Faust*, his artful retelling of the tale of the renaissance German necromancer who sought to attain knowledge and power by making a pact with the Devil. That Goethe would have worked elements of his occult knowledge into the tale, such as the use of a "magic mirror," which appears a number of times in the play, seems a given. One magical theme that can certainly be seen as worked into it is the use of some sort of magical potion, a

love philtre which restores the vigour of youth, and as Mephistopheles informs Faust, only a witch knows how to brew: "Wherefore the hag, and her alone? Canst thou thyself not brew the potion?" (Goethe, 1808).

THE WITCH:

Wherein, Sirs, can I be of use?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Give us a goblet of the well-known juice!
But, I must beg you, of the oldest brewage;
The years a double strength produce.

THE WITCH:

With all my heart! Now, here's a bottle,
Wherefrom, sometimes, I wet my throttle,
Which, also, not the slightest, stinks;
And willingly a glass I'll fill him.
(Whispering)
Yet, if this man without due preparation drinks,
As well thou know'st, within an hour 'twill kill him.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

He is a friend of mine, with whom it will agree,
And he deserves thy kitchen's best potation:
Come, draw thy circle, speak thine adjuration,
And fill thy goblet full and free!

(The WITCH, with many ceremonies, pours the drink

into a cup; as FAUST sets it to his lips, a light flame arises.)

Down with it quickly! Drain it off!

'Twill warm thy heart with new desire:

Art with the Devil hand and glove,

And wilt thou be afraid of fire?

Thou'lt find, this drink thy blood compelling,

Each woman beautiful as Helen!

Helen of course is Helen of Troy, bringing to mind the mysterious *nepenthe*. An alchemical interpretation of *Faust* has suggested the tale has a veiled rendition of the alchemical marriage. "The preliminary scenes symbolize the consecutive steps in the work for perfection, which ... culminated in the marriage of Faust and Helena.... The alchemist will see here... a special station in the progress of the Great Work.... The true mystic marriage is enacted in the last scene of the tragedy. Here students of Rosicruciana will find ... analogies between ... the Beatrice of Dante and the like mysterious Queen in the 'chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreutz'" (Meyer, 1917). Meyer also notes further Rosicrucian symbolism in that "Faust is saved ... from being captured by Mephistopheles by the leaves of the Rose, representing Love Angelic, so hot that it burns the Devil himself" (Meyer, 1917). Elsewhere indications of fumigation are clearly given. As Snider summarized in his commentary of *Faust*, "Upon the

glowing coals of the tripod a magic drug is thrown which turns to clouds of incense rolling up into the gigantesque shadows of fleeting centuries" (Snider, 1886).

Nesta Helen Webster (1876-1960), a controversial author who is largely responsible for reviving conspiracy theories about the Illuminati, noting that Goethe was an initiate of both Freemasonry and the Illuminati, has suggested that "*Faust* may be the history of an initiation by a disillusioned Illuminatus" (Webster, 1924). This is an interesting suggestion, in regard to what might be seen as Goethe's disdain for the drug experience. Goethe's reaction to opium was clearly negative, and the tragic story of *Faust*, even if we were to interpret a possible drug reference, only indicates Goethe's view of the tragic end of those who would follow such a path. In another poem, *Wilfulness*, Goethe clearly rejects the use of drugs: "Then take this draught." "No; that tastes as distilled From Stygian pools: against such drug my whole Nature rebels." And again, in *Faust*:

Thus, with our hellish drugs, death's ceaseless fountains,

In these bright vales, o'er these green mountains,

Worse than the very plague we raged:

I have myself to thousands poison given,

And hear their murderer praised as blest by heaven

Because with Nature strife he Waged.

Perhaps Goethe, influenced by the warnings of

Eckartshausen about the dangers of the use of drugs in magic, along with the tragic end of Schröpfer, as retold by his close friend Schiller, came to see these substances as a parallel of the same sort of disastrous path as that followed by his anti-hero Faust? The tale of Schröpfer certainly has its parallels with Faust. Even more so the tragic story of Goethe's contemporary Count Alessandro Cagliostro's life, which Goethe took both interest and amusement in. The suggestion that this fascinating historical figure, magician alchemist, Rosicrucian, Freemason, and according to some sources, a secret member of the Illuminati, may have played a role in Goethe's conception of *Faust*, has also been suggested.

Goethe was initially taken with interest in Cagliostro around 1781, through various accounts he was hearing from other Freemasons, and possibly Illuminati, who were mesmerized by this mysterious Count, and the new brand of Masonic rites which he brought with him. However, with the scandals that followed Cagliostro, Goethe's initial admiration turned to disdain. Goethe referred to Cagliostro as "one of the strangest monsters" and he became part of a concerted effort to expose him as a fraud. In many ways, it is through Goethe's lens that the grandiose character of Cagliostro is generally viewed. One can only speculate that this colorful figure may have been one of the "deceivers" that Illuminati member Eckartshausen also worried were "deliberately traveling

around as ghost-seers in order to gain a reputation" (Eckartshausen, 1792/1803). Interestingly, Cagliostro has been connected with the use of cannabis and other substances by a variety of authors, as we shall see.

We do know Goethe used Cagliostro as a character in his retelling of one of the most celebrated jewel heists of the time, the "Affair of the Diamond Necklace." This story revolved around an enormously expensive necklace that in 1772 had been made on the bequest of Louis XV of France who had commissioned it in the hopes of charming a Madame du Barry. However Louis passed away due to smallpox, and the necklace was left without a buyer. In a notorious scandal, a group of con artists, through a series of letters and meetings, and impersonations, convinced the jewelers who were in dire need to sell the necklace or go bankrupt, that Marie Antoinette wished to purchase the necklace, and it was handed off to an impostor posing as her valet, who rode off into the night, never to be seen again.

Due to his reputation as a conman alone, Cagliostro was implicated in the successful heist, arrested and tried as a mastermind behind it all, even though he was nowhere in the vicinity of the crime at the time. Goethe incorporated Cagliostro and the necklace in his comedy *Der Grosskophtha*, which means High Priest of Egypt or its Chief Magician, and is in reference to The Egyptian Rites, which involved strange sacraments, and was taking

Masonic lodges by a storm at the time. As Charles Harris notes in *Goethe's Poems*, "The ... title was due to the circumstance that Cagliostro had pretended to revive an ancient Egyptian system of Freemasonry, and had called himself, as head of it, Grand Cophta" (Harris, 1899). "The Gross-Kophta, or Grand Master of an obscure order, is the self styled Cagliostro, who was no more a count than was Casanova a chevalier" (Friedenthal, 1963).

Goethe believed that Cagliostro was using his connections with such secret societies as a mastermind to orchestrate the Diamond Necklace Affair, thereby discrediting the monarchy and pave the way for the French Revolution. It does seem to be his association with such causes that led to Cagliostro's ignoble end, however, not through The Diamond Necklace Affair, as Cagliostro was found innocent and acquitted. At the trial, however, many questions were raised about the true identity of Cagliostro, and Goethe was among the first to pursue the idea that the "Count's" claims of an illustrious birth were pure fabrication, and that Cagliostro's true identity could be found in a common-born man by the name of Giuseppe Balsamo. In 1787, to prove the ruse, Goethe visited the Balsamo family in Palermo disguised as an Englishman, and promising news from their long absent relative, who they were desperate to see over unpaid loans and other troubling financial matters.

There is no denying there was an element of the classic

conman in Cagliostro, but at the same time, like an 18th-century Robin Hood, his generosity to the poor was equally well known.



Joseph Balsamo, Count de Cagliostro ,1791.

Goethe had an exchange of letters about Cagliostro with a fellow Mason, the poet and mystic Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), who was quite taken by the "Count," describing him as "an alchemist, fascinated by the mysterious, an infatuated astrologer, like Paracelsus ... a massive monument which commands attention..."¹⁴

Cagliostro claims the gift of second sight. He pretends to be able to see the Seven Celestial Angels

face to face.... But how his pride leads him to utter boastful words!...

Remote from vulgar charlatan though he is, he has yet a taint of it ... for an enchanter, he has surely very little charm, very little physical or sentimental allure. There is nothing seductive about him. And, nevertheless, Cagliostro surpasses the majority of great men. He is a giant monolith, in whose shadow lie a humble group of hovels.¹⁵

Goethe, who came to see Lavater as a superstitious dupe over this exchange, responded that when one has the understandings of “subterranean passages, cellars, and cloaca” in what seems to be an illusion to the various secret societies of the time, “it is much more understandable when here the ground collapses, there smoke rises from a crevice, and there strange voices are heard.”¹⁶ Here, one wonders if he makes an allusion to the the drug-infused phantasmagoria shows of Schröpfer and Eckartshausen. Like the latter, “Count de Cagliostro put his disciples in touch with spirits, after the fashion of the magicians” (Photiades, 1932). As well, the suggestion of drugs used in this context has long been made. Eliphas Levi noted:

The Magus ... must say to the material body, “Sleep!” and to the sidereal body, “Dream!” Thereupon, the aspect of visible things changes, as in hashish-visions. Cagliostro is thought to have possessed this

power, and he increased its action by means of fumigations and perfumes ... M. Ragon, in his learned work in Occult Masonry gives the recipe for a series of medicaments calculated to induce the exaltation of somnambulism. It is by no mean means knowledge to be despised, but prudent magists should avoid its practice (Levi, 1856: 1910).

In specific reference to this comment from Levi, a 1915 edition of the Theosophical journal *The Word*, (Vol. 20) noted: “The gum of hemp has been employed for many centuries as a ‘witch-herb,’ as well as aconite, belladonna, stramoniums, and opium, to produce visions and enable the spirit or noetic principle to leave the body unconscious, and have communication itself with other minds and spirits elsewhere. Trance or ecstasis is of this character. The human spirit is believed to take its original form under this condition. Many of the conceits of the ‘Thousand and One Nights’ exhibit traces of the hashish...” We can also be sure that Levi exemplified his reference to hashish with another from the noted Masonic figure Jean Marie Ragon, who specifically refers to experiments with cannabis in *Maçonnerie occulte suivie de L’Initiation hermétique: rôles des planètes dans les doctrines hermétiques et mythologiques des anciens philosophes et des poètes de l’antiquité* (Occult Masonry followed by Hermetic initiation: roles of the planets in the hermetic and mythological

doctrines of the ancient philosophers and poets of antiquity, 1853).

In reference to “plants” in the “religious ceremonies of old,” Ragon mentions the copious “perfumes burning in the Egyptian priest’s temples,” and then goes on to describe an experiment involving the ingestion of two grams of powdered cannabis, by a subject who exhibited inspired speech and the ability to read in pitch-black darkness, which was attributed to “a phosphorescent light ... pure enough illuminate” projected from “the interior skull.” You would have to be stoned to even come up with such a concept!¹⁷

Ragon also includes a section involving experiments with the sorts of “magnetized” discs, that were being used by Cahagnet, Randolph and others as discussed in Chapter 15 . In this case the discs were made to represent the seven planets and painted with colours and infused with extracts from plants that were identified with the various planets. Ragon refers specifically to hashish, datura, henbane, belladonna, being used in these experiments.



"Evocation of the spirits in Dresden by Cagliostro" (1882), depicting the classic billowing incense, likely narcotic smoke as with Schröpfer and Eckhatshausen, along with what looks like the overwhelming light of a magic lantern.

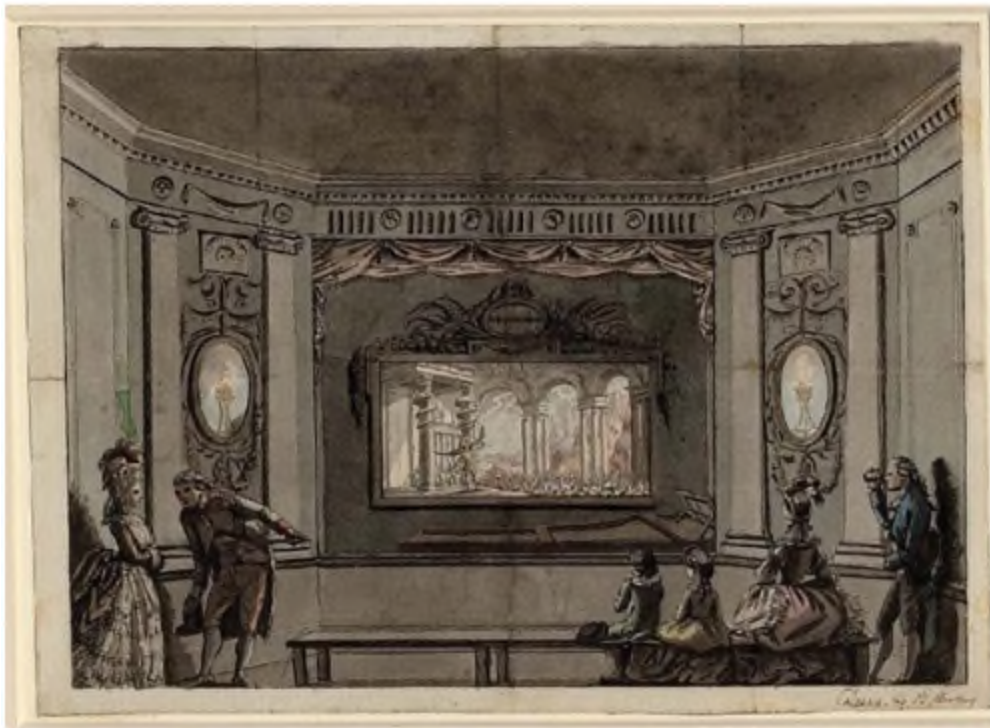


Cagliostro performing a seance, 'Banquet in the afterlife in Rue Saint-Claude', illustration from The mysteries of science, by Louis Figuier, 1893.

Charles Théveneau de Morande (1741-1805) a known blackmailer, gossip writer, and French spy, who is said to have outed Cagliostro's true identity as Balsamo, "warned ... that Cagliostro would soon be using illusionist tricks to bewitch his disciples.... Mind-bending techniques like these had been used by a fraudulent Mason in Leipzig, Johann Georg Schröpfer, who'd later blown his brains out when his deceptions were discovered. Hidden magic lanterns with magnifying lenses would play on moving transparencies to produce wraithlike images of the dead surrounded by tinted clouds" (McCalman, 2012). However, there are no direct references to Cagliostro using the various devices of the Phantasmagoria, and "although Cagliostro did evoke phantoms, his career is shrouded in

such mystery that there is no way to know how his effects were achieved" (Ruffles, 2004).

However, we can speculate! And in this regard it is worth noting that one of Cagliostro's students in the occult was one Philip James de Louthembourg (1740-1812), a talented artist, set designer and inventor of the Eidophusikon, a mechanical device that used mirrors and pulleys to produce moving images, and described as a "small, mechanical theatre." We can be sure de Louthembourg "made a great impression with... his [stage] innovations... of... scene-painting and [as] the inventor of many stock devices for light and sound effects" (Godwin, 1994). We do know that de Louthembourg was one of the most skilled illusionists of his day, so we can be sure Cagliostro was well familiar with the techniques of the phantasmagoria, and we also know that de Louthembourg worked with Cagliostro on producing murals and art pieces to be displayed in Masonic Lodges and used in the Egyptian Rites, an ideal situation for secretly installing such mechanisms.



The Eidophusikon a mechanical device that used mirrors and pulleys to produce moving images, invented by Cagliostro's student and colleague Louthembourg.

As we have seen, drugs aided in making such effects even more believable, and as noted, the Mason and Rosicrucian "Schropfer, who joined Cagliostro as one of the most renowned sorcerers of his day, served up magic punch made from his own secret recipe, along with lessons in summoning the dead, for anyone brave enough to take them" (Masello, 2014). Accounts of Cagliostro, even those from critics, acknowledge that whatever his origins, he did have a deep knowledge of the use of the herbs and potions of his time. Cagliostro certainly had a reputation for philtres, elixirs and the various infusions of

alchemy, and as we shall see, references to these in his form of the initiations of Egyptian rites Masonry, and elsewhere, abound.

Schröpfer and Cagliostro were often grouped together by their critics, and the famed Russian poet and historian Nikolay Karamzin, refers to Cagliostro as "a second Schröpfer." There are certainly parallels in the way the two set out to redefine Freemasonry with their own independent visions, and similar tales of mysteriously acquiring their directions for their new rites. In this regard, it's worth noting that there are numbers of claims that Cagliostro knew Schröpfer, and had cursed him for not accepting Cagliostro's Masonic revelation of the Egyptian rite! This claim can be traced back into the 18th century. In a 1792 letter, although Schröpfer is identified as "Schieffort," there is a story about how Cagliostro had confronted the circle of Masons that had gathered around Schröpfer, and condemned "the godlessness of their rite, as sorcery, and prophesied to them, that their chief, name Schieffort, who they will not give up, before a month has passed, will meet the hand of the Lord" (Marcell, 1792). This account was rehashed in reference to Cagliostro's ability to prophesize, by Charles Heckethorn, who wrote, in his influential mid 19th century *The Secret Societies of All Ages and Countries*, about Cagliostro's use of a child as a diviner, who often stared into a glass of water, or magic mirror, which the Count was also known to use, and "the

case of Schropfer one of the leaders of the Illuminati, who refused to join the Egyptian rite; the little girl declared that in less than a month Schropfer would be punished. Now it so happened that within that period Schropfer committed suicide, which of course gave an immense lift to Cagliostro" (Heckethorn, 1845).

As far as I can tell, Schröpfer was never a member of the Illuminati, let alone a leader of it. Claims that Cagliostro had foretold his death have since been disputed, with statements that the dates of the alleged prophecy was a few years prior to Schröpfer's death in 1774. However, claims of this go surprisingly far back, and a 1782 letter from a very enthusiastic aristocratic member of one of the Masonic lodges that Cagliostro presided over, records that "Schropfer ... communicated only with the angels. God was not yet manifest ... Schropfer doubted the grace of God; The great architect of the universe abandoned him. Despair took hold of him, and he blew his brains out, as Judas hanged himself for having betrayed the divine master. His death was foretold by the Count of Cagliostro long before he was arrested. It is this Count of Cagliostro who has shown me... marvels."¹⁸

This same source began his letter with the following paragraph, and I think we can see some of the tell-tale signs of the methods of the phantasmagoria being worked into Cagliostro's brand of Masonic ritual:

My dear friend. I have hitherto regarded masonry as a mere amusement. I had not formed an idea of all the sublime which this order contains. I want to see the light; God has enlightened me. Yes, my friend, you and I knew nothing of the fame of this divine art. I worked with God, with the angels. It is the master of this great universe who presides in the Lodge where I have been a received. I was not yet perfect enough to see him. But I heard his fortuitous voice from a cloud. I am prostrate, I tremble with fear. Angels were in the holy tabernacle.... Do not think this is a vision. The lodge where I was admitted is not like those we know. The Great Master (god) is always present there, but he is made visible only to those who have acquired the necessary perfection in order to have but one spiritual existence. I am preparing to perfect my being in order to obtain this moral regeneration and to put myself in a position to appear before the Great Master of the universe in this primitive state, where I was born...¹⁹

Knowing what we know about the phantasmagoria, its hard not to see the "voice from a cloud" and "angels in the tabernacle" as the product of the machinations of this art of illusion at work, rather than an actual divine spectacle invoked into a Masonic Lodge. The enthusiasm of the witness here is not the only indication that certain initiatory

drinks and fumigations may have been used as well. A draught or “elixir of immortality” is clearly referred to in Cagliostro’s Masonic initiations. Curiously, what this preparation consisted of has long been a matter of discussion. A 1922 edition of *du Journal des Débats*, (Vol. 29) referred to a firsthand account from “an apothecary who ... was initiated into the practices of Cagliostro,” who had some experience with various drugs along with other evidence from tales of Cagliostro’s initiations. The Apothecarist described how devotees were given a “philtre,” and told “after a reasonable time they will reappear transformed.” The enquiry into the matter concluded, despairingly, that “the philtre of Cagliostro was a mix of hashish and of Imagination.”

One of Cagliostro’s renovations of Freemasonry was to bring women into the fold of initiation. He had a beautiful wife, whom he treated with the utmost respect, and who accompanied and aided him in his work. Descriptions from *The Masonic Eclectic* (1865), of Cagliostro’s Egyptian rite, make it clear substances of some sort were ingested by both sexes.

The ceremony of purification was then performed, myrrh, incense, and laurel being cast into the flames. The presiding mistress then, taking a vase containing some portions of gold leaf, and blowing them into the air, said: “Wealth is the first gift I can bestow on

thee.” The mistress of ceremonies responded, “So passes away the glory of the world.” The candidate then drank of the “elixir of immortality,” which was to insure to her never fading youth and beauty, and was placed kneeling in the centre of the Lodge, her face turned toward the tabernacle. The Dove was commanded to summon all the seven angels, together with Moses, that they might consecrate the apron, sash, gloves, ribbon, and other ornaments destined for the new sister. The investiture then took place, a crown of roses was placed upon her head, she received a garter of blue silk, embroidered with the device, “Silence, Union, Virtue,” and the ceremonies closed.

The trials necessary to attain moral regeneration consisted in long-continued mystical studies and exercises, by which the requisite qualifications were acquired “to enable the candidate to hold communion with the seven angels.” To sustain him in his trials, he was promised the possession of divine fire, boundless knowledge, immeasurable power, and the final attainment of immortality. In order to obtain physical regeneration, which was to restore their bodies to a child-like purity, they were directed, once in every fifty years, commencing on the night of the full moon in May, to spend forty days in strict diet and seclusion, repeated bloodletting, and the taking of

certain drugs. On the last nine days they were to take daily one grain of the “materia prime,” which was to render them immortal, and the knowledge of which was lost by the fall of man.

The “materia prime” or “prime matter” was equated with the Philosopher’s Stone. We can be sure that no one was rendered immortal, and it seems more likely that an “experience of immortality” was what was sought after. This is the classic state of mystic trance, where time, space, duality are all transcended, and from the 1783 account referred to earlier, this seems to be the goal of Cagliostro’s initiations. “I am preparing to perfect my being in order to obtain this moral regeneration and to put myself in a position to appear before the Great Master of the universe in this primitive state, where I was born...”

Documents relating to Cagliostro’s Egyptian rites, reprinted in *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, makes a reference that “acacia is the primal matter” and that when “purified, it becomes cubical” and this is used in “the consummation of the marriage of the sun and the moon” (Faulks & Cooper, 2016). This is an obvious reference to the Philosopher’s Stone. Masonic descriptions describe a sprig of acacia growing on the grave of the mythical figure at the center of their rituals, Hiram Abiff, and when it is pulled from the ground, it appears without its root. The acacia is a particularly important symbol in the Masonic initiation ritual. When the neophyte says, “Acacia is known to me,” this indicates his knowledge of the superior or higher realms.

The roots of acacia are rich in DMT, and the modern Master Mason P.D. Newman, believes the missing roots, may be a veiled hint to this potent psychedelic in this reference, as well as elsewhere in the works of Cagliostro and others. As Newman has noted, in earlier accounts “cassia,” was the plant on Hiram’s Grave, and it was only later, during the life of Cagliostro, that the change to acacia took place. This seems to be affirmed in other documents as well. As noted in *Nouvelle encyclopédie théologique** Vol. 24 (1852).

Cagliostro undertook to make a new form and a new

certain drugs. On the last nine days they were to take daily one grain of the “materia prime,” which was to render them immortal, and the knowledge of which was lost by the fall of man.

The “materia prime” or “prime matter” was equated with the Philosopher’s Stone. We can be sure that no one was rendered immortal, and it seems more likely that an “experience of immortality” was what was sought after. This is the classic state of mystic trance, where time, space, duality are all transcended, and from the 1783 account referred to earlier, this seems to be the goal of Cagliostro’s initiations. “I am preparing to perfect my being in order to obtain this moral regeneration and to put myself in a position to appear before the Great Master of the universe in this primitive state, where I was born...”



Women taking part in Cagliostro’s Masonic Egyptian Rite.

Documents relating to Cagliostro’s Egyptian rites, reprinted in *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, makes a reference that “acacia is the primal matter” and that when “purified, it becomes cubical” and this is used in “the consummation of the marriage of the sun and the moon” (Faulks & Cooper, 2016). This is an obvious reference to the Philosopher’s Stone. Masonic descriptions describe a sprig of acacia growing on the grave of the mythical figure at the center of their rituals, Hiram Abiff, and when it is pulled from the ground, it appears without its root. The acacia is a particularly important symbol in the Masonic initiation ritual. When the neophyte says, “Acacia is known to me,” this indicates his knowledge of the superior or higher realms.

The roots of acacia are rich in DMT, and the modern Master Mason P.D. Newman, believes the missing roots, may be a veiled hint to this potent psychedelic in this reference, as well as elsewhere in the works of Cagliostro and others. As Newman has noted, in earlier accounts “cassia,” was the plant on Hiram’s Grave, and it was only later, during the life of Cagliostro, that the change to acacia took place. This seems to be affirmed in other documents as well. As noted in *Nouvelle encyclopédie théologique** Vol. 24 (1852).

Cagliostro undertook to make a new form and a new

certain drugs. On the last nine days they were to take daily one grain of the “materia prime,” which was to render them immortal, and the knowledge of which was lost by the fall of man.

The “materia prime” or “prime matter” was equated with the Philosopher’s Stone. We can be sure that no one was rendered immortal, and it seems more likely that an “experience of immortality” was what was sought after. This is the classic state of mystic trance, where time, space, duality are all transcended, and from the 1783 account referred to earlier, this seems to be the goal of Cagliostro’s initiations. “I am preparing to perfect my being in order to obtain this moral regeneration and to put myself in a position to appear before the Great Master of the universe in this primitive state, where I was born...”



Women taking part in Cagliostro’s Masonic Egyptian Rite.

Documents relating to Cagliostro’s Egyptian rites, reprinted in *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, makes a reference that “acacia is the primal matter” and that when “purified, it becomes cubical” and this is used in “the consummation of the marriage of the sun and the moon” (Faulks & Cooper, 2016). This is an obvious reference to the Philosopher’s Stone. Masonic descriptions describe a sprig of acacia growing on the grave of the mythical figure at the center of their rituals, Hiram Abiff, and when it is pulled from the ground, it appears without its root. The acacia is a particularly important symbol in the Masonic initiation ritual. When the neophyte says, “Acacia is known to me,” this indicates his knowledge of the superior or higher realms.

The roots of acacia are rich in DMT, and the modern Master Mason P.D. Newman, believes the missing roots, may be a veiled hint to this potent psychedelic in this reference, as well as elsewhere in the works of Cagliostro and others. As Newman has noted, in earlier accounts “cassia,” was the plant on Hiram’s Grave, and it was only later, during the life of Cagliostro, that the change to acacia took place. This seems to be affirmed in other documents as well. As noted in *Nouvelle encyclopédie théologique** Vol. 24 (1852).

Cagliostro undertook to make a new form and a new

certain drugs. On the last nine days they were to take daily one grain of the “materia prime,” which was to render them immortal, and the knowledge of which was lost by the fall of man.

The “materia prime” or “prime matter” was equated with the Philosopher’s Stone. We can be sure that no one was rendered immortal, and it seems more likely that an “experience of immortality” was what was sought after. This is the classic state of mystic trance, where time, space, duality are all transcended, and from the 1783 account referred to earlier, this seems to be the goal of Cagliostro’s initiations. “I am preparing to perfect my being in order to obtain this moral regeneration and to put myself in a position to appear before the Great Master of the universe in this primitive state, where I was born...”



Women taking part in Cagliostro’s Masonic Egyptian Rite.

Documents relating to Cagliostro’s Egyptian rites, reprinted in *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, makes a reference that “acacia is the primal matter” and that when “purified, it becomes cubical” and this is used in “the consummation of the marriage of the sun and the moon” (Faulks & Cooper, 2016). This is an obvious reference to the Philosopher’s Stone. Masonic descriptions describe a sprig of acacia growing on the grave of the mythical figure at the center of their rituals, Hiram Abiff, and when it is pulled from the ground, it appears without its root. The acacia is a particularly important symbol in the Masonic initiation ritual. When the neophyte says, “Acacia is known to me,” this indicates his knowledge of the superior or higher realms.

The roots of acacia are rich in DMT, and the modern Master Mason P.D. Newman, believes the missing roots, may be a veiled hint to this potent psychedelic in this reference, as well as elsewhere in the works of Cagliostro and others. As Newman has noted, in earlier accounts “cassia,” was the plant on Hiram’s Grave, and it was only later, during the life of Cagliostro, that the change to acacia took place. This seems to be affirmed in other documents as well. As noted in *Nouvelle encyclopédie théologique** Vol. 24 (1852).

Cagliostro undertook to make a new form and a new

certain drugs. On the last nine days they were to take daily one grain of the “materia prime,” which was to render them immortal, and the knowledge of which was lost by the fall of man.

The “materia prime” or “prime matter” was equated with the Philosopher’s Stone. We can be sure that no one was rendered immortal, and it seems more likely that an “experience of immortality” was what was sought after. This is the classic state of mystic trance, where time, space, duality are all transcended, and from the 1783 account referred to earlier, this seems to be the goal of Cagliostro’s initiations. “I am preparing to perfect my being in order to obtain this moral regeneration and to put myself in a position to appear before the Great Master of the universe in this primitive state, where I was born...”



Women taking part in Cagliostro’s Masonic Egyptian Rite.

Documents relating to Cagliostro’s Egyptian rites, reprinted in *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, makes a reference that “acacia is the primal matter” and that when “purified, it becomes cubical” and this is used in “the consummation of the marriage of the sun and the moon” (Faulks & Cooper, 2016). This is an obvious reference to the Philosopher’s Stone. Masonic descriptions describe a sprig of acacia growing on the grave of the mythical figure at the center of their rituals, Hiram Abiff, and when it is pulled from the ground, it appears without its root. The acacia is a particularly important symbol in the Masonic initiation ritual. When the neophyte says, “Acacia is known to me,” this indicates his knowledge of the superior or higher realms.

The roots of acacia are rich in DMT, and the modern Master Mason P.D. Newman, believes the missing roots, may be a veiled hint to this potent psychedelic in this reference, as well as elsewhere in the works of Cagliostro and others. As Newman has noted, in earlier accounts “cassia,” was the plant on Hiram’s Grave, and it was only later, during the life of Cagliostro, that the change to acacia took place. This seems to be affirmed in other documents as well. As noted in *Nouvelle encyclopédie théologique** Vol. 24 (1852).

Cagliostro undertook to make a new form and a new

sect under the name of Egyptian masonry. He composed the book, which served in the evidence of his trial, and of which he had left copies to the mother-boxes [Lodges] which he had founded. In this book he promises his followers to lead them to perfection by means of physical and moral regeneration. For physical regeneration, he makes them hope for the raw material or the philosopher's stone, and the acacia, which consolidates in man the structure of the ancient mysteries of Egypt.

As also noted in an 1859 edition of *The Freemasons' quarterly (magazine and) review* "In his [Cagliostro's] system he promised his followers to conduct them to perfection by means of moral and physical regeneration; by the first to make them find the primal matter or philosopher's stone, and the acacia which consolidates in man the powers of the most vigorous youth and renders him immortal."

In his intriguing new book, *Alchemically Stoned: The Psychedelic Secrets of Freemasonry*, P.D. Newman, who acted as a consultant on this project as well, has noted the friendship of Cagliostro with fellow Freemason Pyotr Ivanovich Melissino, whose similar reference to extracting a "salt" from acacia were discussed in Chapter 12. In alchemical terms, crystallized DMT would be seen as a salt, and further indications from Melissino that it was

burned and inhaled in a fumigation ritual as an entheogen, has given considerable credibility to Newman's theories about its use in Cagliostro's Egyptian rites. "...[I]n Melissino's Rite ... the end of the degree states how 'All human insight and wisdom, the deepest knowledge read from all chemical and philosophical texts, the most solid knowledge of ancient and modern chemistry' can be achieved 'through the sacred door of our Order'" (Harrison, 2017). That door could quite possibly be the same one later popularized by Aldous Huxley... As Dr. Harrison notes, the rites of Cagliostro and Melissino are a form of "Freemasonry were the candidate is introduced to an alchemical concoction of magic and possible hallucinogenic experiences" (Harrison, 2017).

As Newman puts forth, the DMT "salts" obtained from the acacia, in Cagliostro's rite, were "dissolved into a 'red liqueur,' which is afterward imbibed by the candidate for initiation. Cagliostro's ritual states:...*The candidate ... shall drink [the red liqueur placed upon the Master's altar, thereby] raising his spirit which the Worshipful Master shall address to him...*" (Newman, 2017). The candidate is then told that he is "receiving the primal Matter" which gave an experience of immortality, "from a single grain of this precious matter becomes a projection into infinity." It is revealed that men of former generations once possessed this secret but through abuse lost it. "The acacia ... is nothing but that precious matter. And [Hiram's] assassination is the loss of

sect under the name of Egyptian masonry. He composed the book, which served in the evidence of his trial, and of which he had left copies to the mother-boxes [Lodges] which he had founded. In this book he promises his followers to lead them to perfection by means of physical and moral regeneration. For physical regeneration, he makes them hope for the raw material or the philosopher's stone, and the acacia, which consolidates in man the structure of the ancient mysteries of Egypt.

As also noted in an 1859 edition of *The Freemasons' quarterly (magazine and) review* "In his [Cagliostro's] system he promised his followers to conduct them to perfection by means of moral and physical regeneration; by the first to make them find the primal matter or philosopher's stone, and the acacia which consolidates in man the powers of the most vigorous youth and renders him immortal."

In his intriguing new book, *Alchemically Stoned: The Psychedelic Secrets of Freemasonry*, P.D. Newman, who acted as a consultant on this project as well, has noted the friendship of Cagliostro with fellow Freemason Pyotr Ivanovich Melissino, whose similar reference to extracting a "salt" from acacia were discussed in Chapter 12. In alchemical terms, crystallized DMT would be seen as a salt, and further indications from Melissino that it was

burned and inhaled in a fumigation ritual as an entheogen, has given considerable credibility to Newman's theories about its use in Cagliostro's Egyptian rites. "...[I]n Melissino's Rite ... the end of the degree states how 'All human insight and wisdom, the deepest knowledge read from all chemical and philosophical texts, the most solid knowledge of ancient and modern chemistry' can be achieved 'through the sacred door of our Order'" (Harrison, 2017). That door could quite possibly be the same one later popularized by Aldous Huxley... As Dr. Harrison notes, the rites of Cagliostro and Melissino are a form of "Freemasonry were the candidate is introduced to an alchemical concoction of magic and possible hallucinogenic experiences" (Harrison, 2017).

As Newman puts forth, the DMT "salts" obtained from the acacia, in Cagliostro's rite, were "dissolved into a 'red liqueur,' which is afterward imbibed by the candidate for initiation. Cagliostro's ritual states:...*The candidate ... shall drink [the red liqueur placed upon the Master's altar, thereby] raising his spirit which the Worshipful Master shall address to him...*" (Newman, 2017). The candidate is then told that he is "receiving the primal Matter" which gave an experience of immortality, "from a single grain of this precious matter becomes a projection into infinity." It is revealed that men of former generations once possessed this secret but through abuse lost it. "The acacia ... is nothing but that precious matter. And [Hiram's] assassination is the loss of

sect under the name of Egyptian masonry. He composed the book, which served in the evidence of his trial, and of which he had left copies to the mother-boxes [Lodges] which he had founded. In this book he promises his followers to lead them to perfection by means of physical and moral regeneration. For physical regeneration, he makes them hope for the raw material or the philosopher's stone, and the acacia, which consolidates in man the structure of the ancient mysteries of Egypt.

As also noted in an 1859 edition of *The Freemasons' quarterly (magazine and) review* "In his [Cagliostro's] system he promised his followers to conduct them to perfection by means of moral and physical regeneration; by the first to make them find the primal matter or philosopher's stone, and the acacia which consolidates in man the powers of the most vigorous youth and renders him immortal."

In his intriguing new book, *Alchemically Stoned: The Psychedelic Secrets of Freemasonry*, P.D. Newman, who acted as a consultant on this project as well, has noted the friendship of Cagliostro with fellow Freemason Pyotr Ivanovich Melissino, whose similar reference to extracting a "salt" from acacia were discussed in Chapter 12. In alchemical terms, crystallized DMT would be seen as a salt, and further indications from Melissino that it was

burned and inhaled in a fumigation ritual as an entheogen, has given considerable credibility to Newman's theories about its use in Cagliostro's Egyptian rites. "...[I]n Melissino's Rite ... the end of the degree states how 'All human insight and wisdom, the deepest knowledge read from all chemical and philosophical texts, the most solid knowledge of ancient and modern chemistry' can be achieved 'through the sacred door of our Order'" (Harrison, 2017). That door could quite possibly be the same one later popularized by Aldous Huxley... As Dr. Harrison notes, the rites of Cagliostro and Melissino are a form of "Freemasonry were the candidate is introduced to an alchemical concoction of magic and possible hallucinogenic experiences" (Harrison, 2017).

As Newman puts forth, the DMT "salts" obtained from the acacia, in Cagliostro's rite, were "dissolved into a 'red liqueur,' which is afterward imbibed by the candidate for initiation. Cagliostro's ritual states:...*The candidate ... shall drink [the red liqueur placed upon the Master's altar, thereby] raising his spirit which the Worshipful Master shall address to him...*" (Newman, 2017). The candidate is then told that he is "receiving the primal Matter" which gave an experience of immortality, "from a single grain of this precious matter becomes a projection into infinity." It is revealed that men of former generations once possessed this secret but through abuse lost it. "The acacia ... is nothing but that precious matter. And [Hiram's] assassination is the loss of

sect under the name of Egyptian masonry. He composed the book, which served in the evidence of his trial, and of which he had left copies to the mother-boxes [Lodges] which he had founded. In this book he promises his followers to lead them to perfection by means of physical and moral regeneration. For physical regeneration, he makes them hope for the raw material or the philosopher's stone, and the acacia, which consolidates in man the structure of the ancient mysteries of Egypt.

As also noted in an 1859 edition of *The Freemasons' quarterly (magazine and) review* "In his [Cagliostro's] system he promised his followers to conduct them to perfection by means of moral and physical regeneration; by the first to make them find the primal matter or philosopher's stone, and the acacia which consolidates in man the powers of the most vigorous youth and renders him immortal."

In his intriguing new book, *Alchemically Stoned: The Psychedelic Secrets of Freemasonry*, P.D. Newman, who acted as a consultant on this project as well, has noted the friendship of Cagliostro with fellow Freemason Pyotr Ivanovich Melissino, whose similar reference to extracting a "salt" from acacia were discussed in Chapter 12. In alchemical terms, crystallized DMT would be seen as a salt, and further indications from Melissino that it was

burned and inhaled in a fumigation ritual as an entheogen, has given considerable credibility to Newman's theories about its use in Cagliostro's Egyptian rites. "...[I]n Melissino's Rite ... the end of the degree states how 'All human insight and wisdom, the deepest knowledge read from all chemical and philosophical texts, the most solid knowledge of ancient and modern chemistry' can be achieved 'through the sacred door of our Order'" (Harrison, 2017). That door could quite possibly be the same one later popularized by Aldous Huxley... As Dr. Harrison notes, the rites of Cagliostro and Melissino are a form of "Freemasonry were the candidate is introduced to an alchemical concoction of magic and possible hallucinogenic experiences" (Harrison, 2017).

As Newman puts forth, the DMT "salts" obtained from the acacia, in Cagliostro's rite, were "dissolved into a 'red liqueur,' which is afterward imbibed by the candidate for initiation. Cagliostro's ritual states:...*The candidate ... shall drink [the red liqueur placed upon the Master's altar, thereby] raising his spirit which the Worshipful Master shall address to him...*" (Newman, 2017). The candidate is then told that he is "receiving the primal Matter" which gave an experience of immortality, "from a single grain of this precious matter becomes a projection into infinity." It is revealed that men of former generations once possessed this secret but through abuse lost it. "The acacia ... is nothing but that precious matter. And [Hiram's] assassination is the loss of

sect under the name of Egyptian masonry. He composed the book, which served in the evidence of his trial, and of which he had left copies to the mother-boxes [Lodges] which he had founded. In this book he promises his followers to lead them to perfection by means of physical and moral regeneration. For physical regeneration, he makes them hope for the raw material or the philosopher's stone, and the acacia, which consolidates in man the structure of the ancient mysteries of Egypt.

As also noted in an 1859 edition of *The Freemasons' quarterly (magazine and) review* "In his [Cagliostro's] system he promised his followers to conduct them to perfection by means of moral and physical regeneration; by the first to make them find the primal matter or philosopher's stone, and the acacia which consolidates in man the powers of the most vigorous youth and renders him immortal."

In his intriguing new book, *Alchemically Stoned: The Psychedelic Secrets of Freemasonry*, P.D. Newman, who acted as a consultant on this project as well, has noted the friendship of Cagliostro with fellow Freemason Pyotr Ivanovich Melissino, whose similar reference to extracting a "salt" from acacia were discussed in Chapter 12. In alchemical terms, crystallized DMT would be seen as a salt, and further indications from Melissino that it was

burned and inhaled in a fumigation ritual as an entheogen, has given considerable credibility to Newman's theories about its use in Cagliostro's Egyptian rites. "...[I]n Melissino's Rite ... the end of the degree states how 'All human insight and wisdom, the deepest knowledge read from all chemical and philosophical texts, the most solid knowledge of ancient and modern chemistry' can be achieved 'through the sacred door of our Order'" (Harrison, 2017). That door could quite possibly be the same one later popularized by Aldous Huxley... As Dr. Harrison notes, the rites of Cagliostro and Melissino are a form of "Freemasonry were the candidate is introduced to an alchemical concoction of magic and possible hallucinogenic experiences" (Harrison, 2017).

As Newman puts forth, the DMT "salts" obtained from the acacia, in Cagliostro's rite, were "dissolved into a 'red liqueur,' which is afterward imbibed by the candidate for initiation. Cagliostro's ritual states:...*The candidate ... shall drink [the red liqueur placed upon the Master's altar, thereby] raising his spirit which the Worshipful Master shall address to him...*" (Newman, 2017). The candidate is then told that he is "receiving the primal Matter" which gave an experience of immortality, "from a single grain of this precious matter becomes a projection into infinity." It is revealed that men of former generations once possessed this secret but through abuse lost it. "The acacia ... is nothing but that precious matter. And [Hiram's] assassination is the loss of

the liquid which you have just received..."²⁰



Cagliostro was reputed to have been in possession of an alchemical manuscript, allegedly authored by the mysterious St. Germain, *The Most Holy Trinosophia*. Images from the book certainly give some visual indications of the sort of fumigation rituals we have been discussing in this volume. The third image seems to show a bird with a sprig of acacia, over a burning incense altar. I find the designs of these images very similar to the alleged Templar “artifacts” depicted in von Hammer-Purgstall’s *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum* (1818). In this regard it should be noted that Cagliostro, like Schröpfer, claimed to be in possession of Templar secrets and rites. After the publication of *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, a number

of scholars quickly concluded that these were works of forgery created by “Rosicrucian or alchemical quacks” (King, 1887) – a description that fits in with the time period of Cagliostro, Schröpfer and others, who claimed to have valuable secrets regarding the origins and rites of Freemasonry and Rosicrucians, and who were holding rituals where such items might have made very useful props.



Satirical depiction of Cagliostro (Giuseppe Balsamo) administering his red “elixir of immortality,” reminiscent of

Schröpfer's "punch;" also note the various vials littering the table as well. "A Masonic anecdote," by James Gillray (1786). "Cagliostro became such an important figure in Freemasonry ... that he was invited to the Convention of Paris in 1784 to explain his system.... His claims included that he could renew youth, he could conjure the apparitions of the dead, he could bestow beauty on those who submitted to his system of Hermetic medicine, and that he could make gold. In short, his rite would reveal the true hidden mysteries of nature and science..." (Harrison, 2017).

Cagliostro certainly had a deep knowledge of plants and medicine for his time, and besides suggestions of their use in magic and initiation, he was well known as a healer, and many people came to him from all walks of life for his various preparations and cures. In this respect, although remembered as a con man in our own age, the impoverished of his time held him with deep honor and esteem, and many referred to his kindness and generosity in this respect. "...French gentlemen of credit (MM. de Segur, de Vergennes, and de la Borde) write...:— 'We have seen the Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, whose countenance bespeaks genius, and whose eloquence convinces and captivates the hearer. We have beheld him going round a vast hall, from one afflicted being to another, dressing their wounds, softening their miseries, imparting hope to all'."²¹ A Professor Meiners from Gottingen, who saw Cagliostro

as a "cheat," wrote of the dichotomy he presented in this respect, as, although Cagliostro " pretends to evoke spirits, and to bear rule over them. He takes nothing from his patients, and even lodges many of them at his house without recompense."²²



Cagliostro pursuing the study of Alchemy.

As even those critical have noted based on the historical record, "he lived in magnificent state, but at the same time prosecuting assiduous labour in hospitals and the hovels of the poor, with open purse and drug-box containing "extract of Saturn'. Miraculous cures attested his skill, and wonder grew on wonder" (Trowbridge, 1910). The reference to "extract of Saturn" is interesting in relation to what we saw about the planet Saturn's alchemical relationship to cannabis and other psychoactive plants. In *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, hemp appears with

nightshade and other plants designated under Saturn on a list of “Planetary Correspondences used by Cagliostro and his Contemporaries” (Faulks & Cooper, 2016).²³ However the metal of lead was also governed by this same planet, and a 1910 edition of the *British Medical Journal* (Vol. 2) state that he “gave it in such large doses that many of his patients got lead colic in consequence.” However, many unnamed herbal preparations are indicated in the formula as well.

Cagliostro is known to have made a serious study of alchemy, and it is very probable that his magic balsams and powders were prepared after receipts he discovered in old books of alchemy. Perhaps too, like all quacks – it is impossible to accord a more dignified title to one who had not the diploma of a properly qualified practitioner – he made the most of old wives’ remedies picked up haphazard in the course of his travels (Trowbridge, 1910).

Whether we are to accept Cagliostro’s claims of his illustrious heritage, or join in the accepted view that he was in reality Giuseppe Balsamo, a talented con man with a mix of Sage, he certainly had some deep esoteric knowledge, and had spent time in the Islamic world. It has been said that at age 15, his impoverished parents sent him off to be raised and educated at a “neighbouring monastery ... where his services were allotted chiefly to the convent

apothecary, within whose laboratory he gained his first insight into the principles of chemistry and medicine. It is probable that here also were sown the early seeds of his destiny, for in those days alchemy still formed a very favourite part of conventual study”²⁴ According to Photiades, the young and future Cagliostro was given an apprenticeship by the Brother in charge of the Apothecary, who was well known for his knowledge.

Every day, mortar in hand, the apprentice had to grind and powder and crush drugs. under his preceptor’s eyes, he mixed unguents and ointments. He watched over the elixirs and simmered the crucibles. After having used the the pill-machine and the spatula, he would compose the electuaries which by dint of effort, the monks had brought to a high state of perfection (Photiades, 1932).

This knowledge would come to serve Cagliostro well, and his elixirs, ointments and pills were sought after by Europe’s elite who paid dearly for them, as well as the poor, who, if we are to accept to contemporary accounts, were given them freely. However, Cagliostro’s own version of events differs somewhat. “According to his own account, he went to Alexandria, and there, by changing hemp into silk, made much money; thence to Malta, where he studied chemistry” (Chamber, 1888). “Through secret chemical operations, using hemp for raw material, fabrics

imitating gold [silk] were made. The results ... obtained were so wonderful, that industrial country presented themselves in crowds to buy their processes” (Figuier, 1880).

His chemical knowledge here clearly went beyond the textile industry, as we know that throughout Europe he was “selling love-philtres, elixirs of youth, mixtures for making ugly women beautiful, alchemical powders, etc.” (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, Volume 4, 1929). “In Paris his immense success was due above all to the drugs by means of which he prolonged not only life but the capacity for pleasure” (Photiades, 1932). Others have noted that “in Egypt and Turkey ... he sold drugs and amulets” and refer to him specifically as a “dealer in drug” (Bidwell & Agnew, 1849). Descriptions of him describe how he traveled around wearing “a showy gold-laced cap, rings in his ears, red pantaloons, a sabre, and cartouche box containing drugs ... and sold all manner of ... love potions and sovereign cures.”²⁵ “It is notorious that Cagliostro employed elixirs, red powder and kindred preparations. Perhaps they were extracts and compounds of powerful drugs” (Wilder, 1878).

Preparations like Cagliostro’s “Balm of Egypt,” “Egyptian Pills,” “Count Cagliostro’s Drops,” “Elixir de Cagliostro,” became so popular, that soon, forgers tried to cash in, causing Cagliostro to placard Paris with the following notice:

Notice – M. the Count de Cagliostro, having learnt that there are being sold for money in public, drops called Count Cagliostro’s Drops, is obliged to declare that the persons who sell them cannot have the true composition of his drops, and that he cannot be responsible for the evil effects which such a falsified medicine may produce. He therefore denounces them as spurious as well as all those which may be administered by any other than himself.²⁶

In another account Cagliostro lamented his interactions with a less than scrupulous apothecarist, at the same time giving an indication of the hard-to-get ingredients for his preparations, and his secretiveness around them:

I had need of a confidential apothecary for the preparation of the various remedies I administer to my patients. Mr. Swinton suggested Mr. Jackson. I went to him. As he spoke only English, I asked him through an interpreter for the drugs I needed. Mr. Jackson had only a very few of them. I took those he had and paid him at once for them. I then had some of the drugs which were not to be bought of Mr. Jackson bought elsewhere, and I compounded with those drugs and some other medicaments which are known to me alone, a certain quantity of paste for the Egyptian Pills. I sent this paste to Mr. Jackson, with three books of leaf gold for him to make the pills. He

sent me one small box of them but forgot to send the remainder of the gold and of the paste.

...Moreover, it is wholly false that I have proposed to Mr. Jackson, or to any other apothecary, to sell remedies for me. It is wholly false that I have ever made my patients pay for my remedies or my care. After my arrival in London a great number of them passed through my hands. The greater number are cured; all are living. I defy any one of them, rich or poor, cured or not cured, to dare to say that I have made them pay for my attendance or my remedies, either directly or indirectly.²⁷

Other accounts refer to Cagliostro's "Wine of Egypt, and other potions, washes, and charms innumerable ... precious drugs."²⁸ The Wine of Egypt, does bring to mind the cannabis-infused wines that were known in the Islamic world at this time. Although Cannabis or opium are not mentioned specifically in any of Cagliostro's accounts, others refer to Cagliostro's "love-philtres, [and] his cantharidic Wine of Egypt," ²⁹ indicating the use of the notorious quack aphrodisiac "spanish fly." Eliphas Levi wrote that what made Cagliostro "even more famous was a certain elixir of life which instantly gave vigor and the sap of youth to old men. This mixture had for its base Malvasian wine, and was obtained by the distillation of the sperm of certain animals with the juice of several plants. We have

the recipe, and I am sure you understand why I must keep it a secret" (Levi, 1850/2017). *A Treatise on the Manufacture and Distillation of Alcoholic Liquors* (1871), has the following recipe for an Elixir de Cagliostro, that would likely have had, if not medicinal, a psychoactive effect.

Elixir de Cagliostro

Cloves ... 800 grammes

Cinnamon ... 800 gr.

Nutmeg... 800gr

Saffron ... 200 gr

Tormentilla ... 200gr

Socotrine aloes 2 kilograms, 400 gr.

Myrrh ... 1 kilo., 200 gr.

Fine treacle... 2 kilo., 400 gr.

Alcohol, 85% 36 litres

Macerate for 48 hours, and distill gently to obtain 36 litres of spirit; do not rectify; add 50 kilogrammes of white sugar, dissolved by heat, in the usual quantity of water; mix, and add 15 centilitres of tincture of musk and three litres of orangeflower water, and then make up the quantity to 100 litres. Mellow, and color a golden yellow with saffron and caramel; size, and after rest, filter. This elixir is said to be useful in cases of debility, feeble digestion, &c. (Duplais, 1871).

Nutmeg contains the “psychoactive chemicals ... myristicin and elemicin. These two are similar in their chemical structure to the drug mescaline” (Spinella, 2013). In *Living with Drugs*, Professor Michael Gossop describes MDA and MDMA as “semi-synthetic drugs ... produced by the psychoactive ingredients in nutmeg and mace.... Both have been known as psychoactive drugs for thousands of years, though nowadays they are seldom used as a drug of choice. MDA and MDMA resemble the hallucinogens in many respects... (Gossop, 2013). Interestingly, Gossop suggests a role for prophetic purposes. “Nostradamus used various forms of meditation to induce his ecstatic trances and visions. These methods included the mildly hallucinatory powers of nutmeg, and his less well-known medical treatise of 1555 on cosmetics and preserves included a recipe ‘to make perfect nutmeg oil’” (Gossop, 2013).

Saffron, fennel, and cinnamon also contain psychoactive substances that are chemically similar to myristicin. Saffron oil, or safrol, can be processed like nutmeg to make the narcotic MDA (methylenedioxyamphetamine), which it should be noted is a precursor of the popular drug, MDMA. Clove, myrrh, may also have some mild psychoactive effects. I passed this recipe onto P.D. Newman who prepared a batch, and reported mild MDMA like effects, empathy and heightened emotions, as well as some nausea and amphetamine like nervousness, although not a particularly psychedelic effect. Duplais goes on to how

restorative effects of this elixir were used by Cagliostro to heal the “daughter of Salmon, who had been condemned to be burned alive, and who had just been pardoned by the parliament at Paris” (Duplais, 1871). A similar judgement would follow Cagliostro himself, with a much less happy outcome.

...[O]n the 23rd of August of that fatal year, 1785, at seven o'clock in the morning ... a commissaire of the Chatelet, with his constables broke into the apartment where Cagliostro was. One of the constables ... had been sent to Strasbourg to spy upon Cagliostro, but had come away with a mighty respect for him. No matter! Cupboards were overturned, drawers ransacked, the desk rifled. There was much cash therein, and it was transferred to the pockets of the “agents of justice” without more ado. Other things there were of unknown value, some of them priceless and irreplaceable documents and drugs such as were not to be found in all Europe, save in that room (Malpas, 1932).

An account that reminds this 21st-century author of the sad stories he has been told by modern enthusiasts of “rare drugs”:

...[I]n 1789 he was ... arrested by the emissaries of the holy inquisition, on the charges of being a

sorcerer, a heretic and a freemason. His wife was also incarcerated in a convent, where she soon after died. For eighteen months this famous man was kept in close confinement in the castle of St. Angelo. He was then brought before the secret tribunal. His chief accusers appear to have belonged to the Jesuitical fraternity. The documents produced against him at Rome in 1790 and at Zurich in 1791, accuse him of having practiced all kinds of imposture, of making gold by magical means and of possessing the alchemical secret of prolonging life; also of having taught the kabala and kabalistic arts; likewise, that he pretended to call up and exercise spirits, and actually did frequently foretell future events, doing this in small and secret companies, by means of a little boy employed by him, after the manner of eastern conjurers. He was also attainted of being a Freemason and it was charged that he acted in the character of agent and representative of Egyptian Freemasonry, and had heretically attached himself to all sorts of religions. But we do not find any allegation of complicity in the various revolutionary movements of Europe for which he had become notorious and universally feared. It was evidently the purpose of his murderers to disguise from the world as effectually as possible, the terror which had overspread Europe...

The sequel to this story is short. He was

condemned, as a matter of course, and sentenced to death. This penalty was commuted to imprisonment in the castle of St. Leon. Here he was subjected to the tender mercies of the Holy Office. The torture was repeatedly inflicted, in order to extort from him the Masonic and other secrets of revolutionary Europe; his limbs disjointed on the rack till they had been rendered useless. Finally, having learned, or failed to learn, whatever was desired to extort from him by confession, and reaction having set in over Europe, there was no further use for the unfortunate prisoner, and accordingly, in 1795, he was starved to death...

...If Cagliostro had been merely a charlatan, the Roman Inquisition would never have found it necessary to arrest him, to torture him for years in, its dungeon-hells, and persecute him to the death.... It was safer in the period of revolutionary excitement in the latter quarter of the eighteenth century, to render Cagliostro contemptible as an impostor and charlatan, than to let him be enrolled as a martyr. The burning of Bruno and imprisoning of Galileo had not checked the motion of the earth nor abolished the plurality of worlds.... So the tribunal calculated shrewdly in this weakness of men. Cagliostro was convicted of magical practices, such as modern scientists deride and affect to disbelieve, and so, of

all whom he sought to serve and benefit, he is without an apologist. Whoever intimates that he was a savant, is placed in peril of ridicule. Yet he doubtless possessed medical and other knowledge which entitled him to respect, if not to veneration (Wilder, 1878).

Through the Church's sentence all Cagliostro's works on Egyptian Masonry, magic, and other forbidden subjects were to be burnt and his life forfeited as a heretic and sorcerer, but the sentence was later commuted to one of perpetual imprisonment, where he died not long after his wife, who suffered a similar fate. However, Wilder is also indicating that there were other motivations for Cagliostro's arrest. One can not downplay the role of these various secret societies in the social and political revolutions that were taking place both in Europe and the New World in this time period. Both the Illuminati and Freemasonry, along with other "secret societies" were outlawed by an edict issued by the the Bavarian ruler, Charles Theodore, accompanied by the encouragement of the Roman Catholic Church, in 1784, 1785, 1787 and 1790.³⁰ In the several years following the dismantling of the Illuminati, the group continued to be vilified by various authorities who believed the Illuminati had gone even deeper underground and were responsible for the French Revolution. In such a contemporary political scenario, we can

be sure that Cagliostro's following comments, from the same 1783 letter we quoted from an enthusiastic convert to his form of Egyptian Masonry, was far more connected to Cagliostro's arrest, than elixirs and rituals.

In the midst of the instructions I received from him, I often had doubts. Then he stopped, and said to me: "You doubt, my son, To prove to you that I know what is going on inside your head, I will tell you what you are; And he at once perceived it. It was, therefore, only after a strong conviction of the truth of all that I saw, that I determined to believe. I have had long conversations with this great man; He told me speeches are apocalyptic. Here's how he explained things:

"It appears only to God's favourite of the future, but it is sometimes communicated to the righteous man. The righteous man, who regenerated himself, has visions, and in these visions, God speaks to him by the mouths of angels. The angels are the friends of God, and he has nothing to hide from them.

"The human species has become wicked, and God has resolved to punish. To punish him, he inspired men and told them the mouth, of the angels what they must do to humiliate those great of the earth who do evil.

"To God alone belongs the reading of hearts, and

a man who thinks he is not to dominate a great nation, will soon lose his dominion, and will be dominated by those whom he ruled.”

“A perfect equality ought to reign among men, and he who is great can only be honoured by his virtues. These virtues are personal, and the success of the great will not be great if he is not virtuous.

“It is the Masonry which ought to perfect this great other with the help of the great architect of the work of men, whom they believe to be firmly established, and will do vengeance.

“Apostles of the regeneration will be sent everywhere to prepare these great events. They signed their oaths not to reveal the orders that they received they will not reveal them to the public.

“The weapon of despotism will be broken for ever. The sheep will no longer obey the voice of the shepherd, and the dog will no longer listen to his master’s voice.”

Such talk, at the time of the overthrow of Kings and Empires, did not sit well with either a Church or State, who were committed to maintaining their control. This has also been suggested as one of the issues Goethe had with Cagliostro and other members of secret societies that were thought to have orchestrated the French Revolution, as Goethe preferred to see cultural change naturally unfold

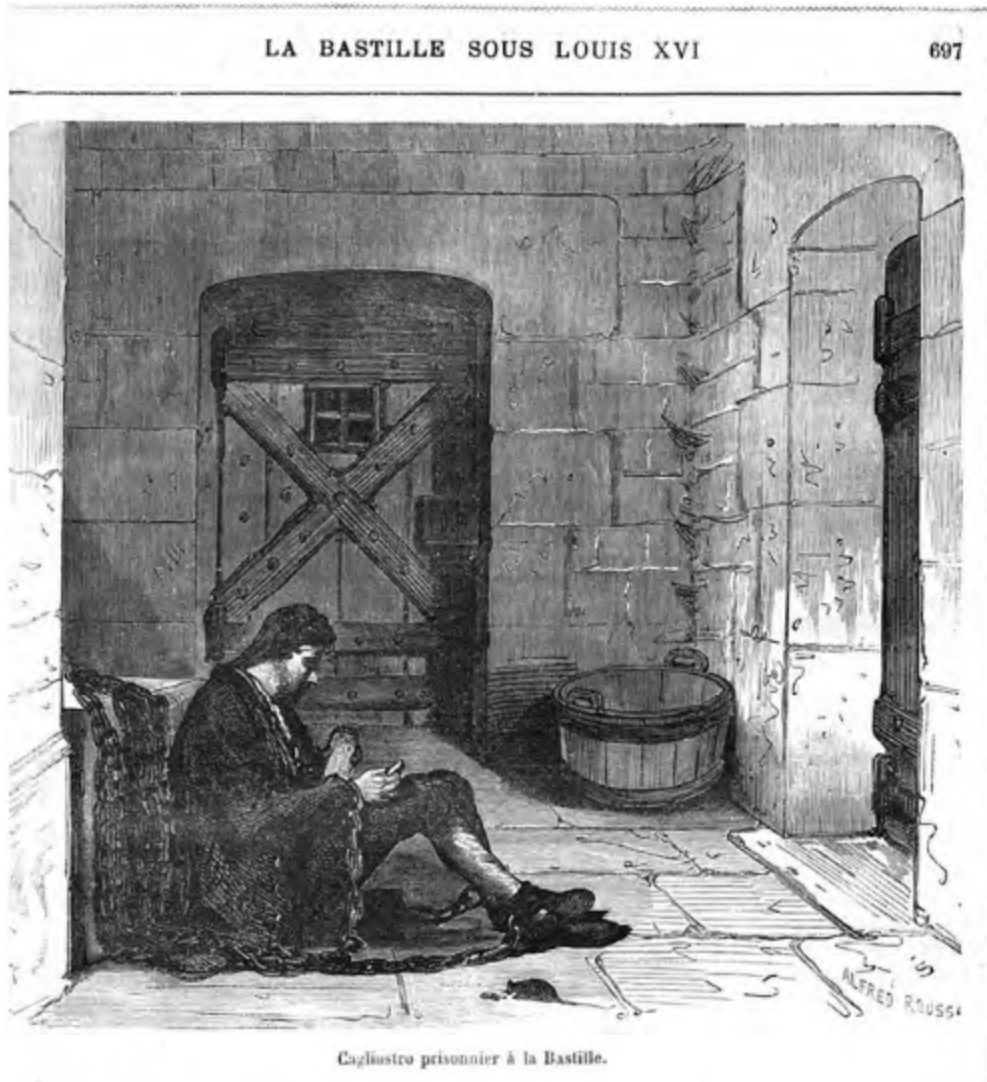
(as with his analogy of the leaf), rather than imposed with radical and violent upheaval. It has been suggested that to the present day, the French Revolutionary slogan “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” is the motto of the French Grand Orient Lodge of Freemasons.

Some very prominent Freemasons have shared this view. The American Freemason Albert Pike stated that “Cagliostro was the Agent of the Templars, and therefore wrote to the Free-Masons of London that the time had come to begin the work of re-building the Temple of the Eternal. He had introduced into Masonry a new Rite called the Egyptian, and endeavored to resuscitate the mysterious worship of Isis” (Pike, 1871). Moreover, Pike indicated that the overthrow of French Royalty via the French Revolution, was a part of his agenda. “The three letters L: P: D: on ... [Cagliostro’s] seal, were the initials of the words ‘*Lilia pedibus destrue*’ tread under foot the Lilies [of France], and a Masonic medal of the sixteenth or seventeenth century has upon it a sword cutting off the stalk of a lily, and the words ‘*talem dabit ultio messem,*’ such harvest revenge will give” (Pike, 1871).

The secret movers of the French Revolution had sworn to overturn the Throne and the Altar upon the Tomb of Jacques de Molai. When Louis XVI was executed, half the work was done; and thenceforward the Army of the Temple was to direct all its efforts

against the Pope (Pike, 1871).

We can be sure that would have been an agenda that the Church would do all that it could to ensure would never be fulfilled. Cagliostro was arrested by the Inquisition in “Rome ... for being a Freemason in 1789. After trying to escape from the Castel Saint’Angelo, Cagliostro was moved to the Fortress of San Leo, where he died soon after” (Harrison, 2017).



Cagliostro was far from the only drug-ingesting mystic and secret society member who paid the price for their connections and potential role in revolutions. The French author and mystic, Jacques Cazotte (1719-1792), with Masonic and Illuminati leanings, found his head separated from his body, only here by the Revolutionaries, and for being a loyalist to the King.

About 1775 Cazotte embraced the views of the Illuminati, declaring himself possessed of the power of prophecy. It was upon this event that Jean-François de la Harpe based his famous jeu d'esprit, in which he represents Cazotte as prophesying the most minute events of the French Revolution. On the discovery of some of his counter-revolutionary letters in August 1792, Cazotte was arrested; and though he escaped for a time through the efforts of his daughter, he was guillotined the following month (Della-Piana, 2010).

Cazotte, who is described as going into a waking trance, is said to have shocked guests at a dinner party with prophecies of the coming French Revolution. As Alexander Dumas would later write “Jacques Cazotte; the Illuminati, ten years before the Revolution, had foretold to each the fate awaiting them” (Dumas, 1862). In explanation of this upsetting event, where gruesome details of certain guests' demise were foretold, an account from

closer to the time, stated that drugs were involved. “When some days after dinner in the rue Du Bac Condorcet met our Cazotte and talked about the dismay, which had led to his prediction, the gray man said, ‘Opium, opium! You will not let yourself be scared by Cazotte’s folly. Cazotte is crazy, I assure you; Cazotte does not know what he says! When light, wine, perfumery, the lustre of precious stones, the face of beautifully dulled women work together to heat his imagination and flare his old senses, he speaks in confusion with all kinds of confused things’” (Meissner, 1878).



Cazotte

Cazotte’s writings certainly gave an indication of his interest in things Arabic, the Occult, and Opium. He is known to have translated several Islamic works, and had a deep interest in the Orient. His *Continuation des Mille et une nuits: contes arabes* (Continuation of the Arabian Nights: Arabian Tales) includes the following account

were a character is passed the opium pipe: “Smoke his pipe, there it is; It is filled with the most delicious opium to prepare the slabs of the banks of the Ganges, and makes use of them to prepare agreeable dreams; But now, my master reserves the task of making him dream: you are on his parade as a parade, and to bore you, I offer you here the choice of all that he possesses...” (Cazotte, 1789).

Like Goethe, one of his best known works featured Satan, *Le diable amoureux* (The Devil in Love, 1772), a work that revealed his considerable knowledge of occult lore, and is said to have attracted much attention:

It has been claimed that one evening shortly after the publication of *The Devil in Love* a “grave” looking gentleman “draped in a brown coat” was admitted to Cazotte’s room. The stranger began making all sorts of “bizarre” motions with his hands, those used as signs of recognition by members of certain secret societies such as the Martinists or Masons. Cazotte, who did not understand the esoteric meaning of such antics, grew impatient. When the stranger finally realized that Cazotte was not a member of either the Martinist or Masonic orders, he was dumbfounded. How could Cazotte have described these secret rituals so precisely if he had never been exposed to them? How could he have depicted certain gestures known only to those who had risen to the

first Degree? “What!” he asked, “Those evocations amid ruins, the mysteries of the Kabbala, the occult powers over air, the striking theories implicit in the power of numbers, the will, the fatalities of existence——could all these things be imagined?”³¹

The author of *The Devil in Love* was not a member of any occult society at that time. It was one of those inexplicable coincidences. Later, however, Cazotte was so taken with the tenets of the Martinist Order that he joined the sect (Knapp, 1980).



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Cazotte's Le diable amoureux (The Devil in Love) includes a scene where the Devil is invoked and appears in the form of a camel.



Cazotte had a close “involvement with the Martinists,

an Illuminist sect claiming affiliation to the Rosicrucian Order and Weishaupt’s Bavarian Illuminati. The founder of the sect, Martinez de Pasqualis, had established a series of quasi-Masonic lodges in various French cities during the 1760s; after his death in 1768 he was succeeded by the self-styled Saint-Martin, whose close associate Madame la Croix became a member of Cazotte’s household, collaborating with him in seances and other occult experiments...” (Stableford, 1998). There seems to have been a long-standing interest in drugs among Martinists. Pasqually himself is said to have prescribed the following incense for his “Elus Coens” (Elect Priests) ritual:

The more important rituals, however, took the form of a series of invocations which were performed over three consecutive days which had to fall between the new moon and the end of the first quarter. The details of the ritual, such as the tracing on the floor within which the adept operated, changed periodically as Pasqually was constantly revising the procedures and introducing new ones. A fairly constant feature, however, was the method used to produce a pungent aroma during the ceremony. The adept carried a small earthenware dish containing hot coals on which he periodically scattered a mixture containing the following ingredients: saffron, incense, sulphur, white and black poppy seeds, cloves, white

cinnamon, mastic, sandarac, nutmeg and spore of agaric (McIntosh, 2011).

Martinez de Pasqually (1727?-1774): "Pasqually merged esoteric doctrines based on Gnosticism ... his version of Freemasonry blended with magic to form a unique type of rite. In this sense, the teachings of the Rite de Elus Coens enabled selected members to learn an aspect of magic that aimed to place the adept in communion with supernatural beings" (Harrison, 2017).



Pasqually

[R]ites such as the Rite de Elus Coens ... contained elements of ... magic that ... offered ... a way to commune with God himself. Contacting ... Angels was considered a very real practice in the eighteenth century.... These occult practices were certainly not new, ...similar rituals for contacting spirits and angels being seen in the later sixteenth century with the

magician John Dee and his scribe Edward Kelley... the same practices were later attempted by Freemason Elias Ashmole in the mid-seventeenth century...

...As Waite reminds us "the Ceremonial Magic of the Elect Priesthood is by no means fully available..." and there were certain invocations and descriptions that were not written down, so the little we do know gives us but a glimpse of Pasqually's occult workings... (Harrison, 2017).

Rumors of such rites in Freemasonry was seen as cause for concern. "The fact that Freemasonry is referred to as the Craft, suggests a direct link to the craft guilds of the mediaeval period, yet elements of the ritual and the symbolism also hint at connections with the occult, and particularly with witchcraft" (Harrison. 2017).

The link with witchcraft was a concern that was addressed, in the 1738 edition of the Constitutions, where it stated:

"Have not People in former Ages, as well as now, alleged that the Free Masons in their Lodges raise the Devil in a Circle, and when they have done with him, that they lay him again with a Noise or a Hush as they please?"

Certainly the use of chalk to set out the lodge in the 17th century, was similar to the use of consecrated

chalk in certain magic rituals, and the precision of the Masonic ritual, with the ending of prayers using the phrase “so mote it be,” also suggests a link to 17th century magic rituals, which also ended with a similar powerful ending in recognition to God.

The “casting” or “drawing” of a circle, used in Dee’s magical rituals, is also similar to the circle used in a Masonic lodge... (Harrison, 2017).

As we have seen already, the use of psychoactive substances in such rituals has been known, and certainly Ashmole, as well as likely Dee, worked with grimoires that prescribed their use, like *The Picatrix* and *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis*. The Elus Coen incense certainly contained substances known to have psychoactive properties, although I am unclear as to the amounts used and their effectiveness in a combined incense in regard to the potential psychoactivity of the above preparation, or if other unmentioned substances were used as well, as so much is now not known about this rite. However, the ritual did include the classical invocations of magic. One of these rituals, called the “Work of the Equinox,” included the following address to the evil demons:

I conjure you, Satan, Beelzebub, Baran, Leviathan: all of you formidable beings, beings of iniquity, confusion and abomination, hearken and tremble at my

voice and commandment; all of you great and powerful demons of the four universal regions and all of you demoniacal legions, subtle spirits of confusion, horror and persecution, hear my voice and tremble when it sounds among you and during your cursed operations; I command you by the one who has pronounced eternal death on all of you.

...On you, Satan, I impose excommunication, I tie and restrict you to your formidable region in the name of the Most High, God, the Eternal Avenger and Rewarder...³²

This was followed by an invocation of the good spirits, and as McIntosh notes: “None of these rituals, however, was done primarily for the purpose of calling up particular spirits. The main aim was of a higher order, namely communication with what Pasqually called the ‘Active and Intelligent Cause.’ ‘By this fact,’ says A. E. Waite, ‘the school of Martines de Pasqually is placed wholly outside the narrow limits and sordid motives of ceremonial magic.’”³³

In regard to revolutions and secret societies, it is worth at least a passing mention to consider certain comments made by a pivotal figure in the American Revolution, his Freemason ties, and his curious references to “Indian Hemp.” The role of secret societies in the founding of the United States of America has long been noted.

George Washington, Ben Franklin and other founding fathers were active Freemasons. Franklin, who is said to have contributed much occult symbolism in the founding American iconography, has also been connected to Rosicrucians, and according to some sources, even met Cagliostro, and other figures of European occultism and secret societies. Franklin also had a deep interest in Rabelais and is said to have attended a meeting of the notorious Hellfire Club that was influenced by him. It seems unlikely that Jefferson was a Freemason, and there is no documentation of such; however, he was friendly with Masons. Interestingly, he did write some praising comments about Adam Weishaupt and the Bavarian Illuminati.

What interests us most here are certain comments from Washington, that have long been debated by cannabis enthusiasts, as to whether they refer to industrial strains of hemp, used for fibre and seed, or, rather, if they identified psychoactive “Indian” cannabis. Cannabis historian David Malmo-Levine (2014) has examined various entries regarding hemp and suggests that these references identify the psychoactive strains of cannabis. First there is the specific use of the term “India hemp” in Washington’s diary:

I also gave the Gardener a few Seed of East India hemp to raise from, enquire for the seed which has been saved, and make the most of it at the proper Season for Sowing. – Jan. 6th 1794

I cannot with certainty recollect, whether I saw the India hemp growing when I was last at Mount Vernon; but think it was in the Vineyard; somewhere I hope it was sown, and therefore desire that the Seed may be saved in due season & with as little loss as possible: that, if it be valuable, I may make the most of it.– August 17th 1794.

The term, “Indian Hemp,” the precursor to “cannabis indica” was specifically created by Robert Hooke, to distinguish between the non-psychoactive varieties of hemp found in Europe and the psychoactive resinous strains that were known from India (Chapter 14). “Hemp has been cultivated in Bengal from time immemorial for the purpose of intoxication; but is never used by the natives for cordage or cloth, as in Europe. The intoxicating preparation made from it is called Bang. There is no perceptible difference between the European and Bengal Plant” (Milburn & Thornton, 1825). Thus “Indian hemp” was specifically created to designate that very difference. That this “Indian hemp” was grown in a vineyard, also indicates that it was for a more refined crop than an industrial harvest.

Further, there is Washington’s reference from August 7th, 1765: “Began to separate the Male from the Female hemp at Do. – rather too late.” This has been equated with the practice of pulling males from marijuana plantations, so the females produce more resin. Moreover, final stand

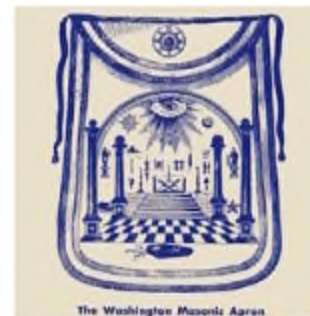
density for a fibre crop of hemp, should be approximately 30-35 plants per square foot. Sorting and removing out the males from the females in that sort of density, without upsetting the remaining females roots, would be a considerable task, especially that far into the season, as those would be big plants, with well-established root systems.

In a curious letter from George Washington to Dr. James Anderson, May 26, 1794, he refers to an “artificial preparation of hemp”: “I thank you as well for the Seeds as for the Pamphlets which you had the goodness to send me. The artificial preparation of Hemp, from Silesia, is really a curiosity...” No description of what this substance was, but it is worth noting that it comes from the same area, that figures like Schröpfer were known for their use of psychoactive substances in seances and Masonic rituals.

Interestingly, in a story in the *National Tribune* (1880), an article appeared titled the “‘Vision of Washington’ at Valley Forge,” based on an alleged account from a soldier named Anthony Sherman, who claimed Washington saw visions! However, no 18th-century accounts of this alleged visionary ability of Washington are known to exist.

In their *Illuminati Trilogy*, Shea and Wilson use this history to depict the Founding Fathers as cannabis smoking, “hemp script” – (money) hungry Masons and Illuminati. If we were to consider the idea that there are indications that Masons were using psychoactive substances in their

initiations, and the secrecy that was involved in such rituals, this may be one reason there is no explanation of why Washington used the term “Indian hemp” instead of the standard “hemp” and why there are no direct references to cannabis consumptions in his and other Masonic Founding Fathers writing.... This is of course pure speculation. However it is important to remember “that Freemasonry was a secret society and was rarely discussed in journals or in the memoirs of members. For example, the writings of James Boswell and Benjamin Franklin, two well known and influential 18th-century Freemasons who bequeathed many documents and personal letters, hardly refer to the Craft in their writings” (Harrison, 2017).



Left: Washington's Masonic apron, with the disembodied eye in a cloud (of smoke?). **Right:** The famous Illuminati “eye in

the triangle” on the American dollar bill.

Another mason that was showing a keen interest in drugs in the 18th century, was the high-ranking Freemason Dr. Thomas Arnold (1742-1816). In an essay that preceded the work of Dr. J.J. Moreau, founder of Paris *Le Club des Hashisheen*, and who suggested that in cannabis intoxication, one might acquire a state of momentary “insanity,” Arnold wrote in his book on causes of madness, “[N]arcotic, and indeed all poisons which have the power of intoxicating, as most of the vegetable poisons have – such as the henbane, Datura, Monk’s hood, belladonna, hemlock, Dog’s mercury, Cannabis, Myrtle, certain species of *fungi*, and a few more – since they affect the brain nearly in the same way as wine and opium, are likely under familiar circumstances, to give rise to familiar effects and to be like them, productive of insanity.” His discussion turns to the origins of the use of such plants in ancient times and a description of the Greek *nepenthe*.



That the safe, or at least the agreeable, internal use of some such vegetable production, besides the juice of the poppy, was known in times of very high antiquity, seems evident from what we read in Homer of a medicament which Helen mixed with the wine which she gave to Telemachus, and his companion.

*Mean time with genial joy to warm the foul.
Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl:
Temper'd with drugs of sovereign use...
The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage;
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,
And dry the tearful sluices of despair:
Charmed with the virtuous draught, the exalted mind.
All sense of woe delivers to the wind....*

The intoxicating effects, so dissimilar in some

respects from those of opium, here ascribed to this exhilarating beverage; and attributed to the addition of a mysterious drug, which, from the first epithet applied to it by the immortal bard, has obtained the appellation of Nepenthe; as well as the total ignorance of the Greek writers, to whom the properties of opium were no secret, concerning the nature of this wonder-working substance which Helen is said to have infused into the bowl; seem plainly to indicate, that it was something different from simple opium, of which, however, some portion might possibly enter into the composition – According to the poet...

*These drugs so friendly to the joys of life,
Bright Helen learned from the Throne's imperial wife;
Who swayed the sceptre, where prolific Nile
with various simples clothes the fattened soil
With wholesome herbage mixed, the direful bane
Of vegetable venom taints the plain.*

It seems indeed, highly credible that the Egyptians, and the inhabitants of India, had a very early knowledge of inebriating substances of this sort; since, besides what may be collected from the verses of Homer, and other passages of ancient writers, it is an undoubted fact that they are in possession of several at this day, of which numbers of testimonies might be adduced; and it is well known that the opinions,

manners and customs of the inhabitants of India, and of other Asiatic nations, have undergone very little change since the earliest times in which we have any account of them. Some of the Egyptians prepare themselves; while others, with whose preparations they are unacquainted, they still receive, as they probably always received them, from the luxurious Asiatics, to whom they may have been originally indebted for them all; and with whom it is certain that they carried on a considerable traffic, as we learn from sacred history, long before the days of Homer, or of Helen.

Kempfer,³⁴ mentions a medicament of this sort, the effects of which seem nearly to have resembled those of the Nepenthes. He says, that he, and others, his companions, partook of an electuary, which was offered them at an entertainment in India; that they soon felt themselves so exceedingly happy, as they could no way express themselves but by laughing, roaring, and embracing each other; that in the evening, when they mounted their horses to return home, they seemed to be flying through the cloud upon Pegasus, surrounded with rainbows; that when they came to themselves, they eat most voraciously of whatever was before them; and that they were on the day following, in perfect health both of mind and body... (Arnold, 1786).

Dr. Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716), refers to what is obviously an Indian cannabis concoction, and the descriptions of 18th-century Egyptian use from Arnold, fit with what we know of hashish delectables in Egypt at that time.

The suggestion is that the Nepenthe of Homer, originally a preparation of cannabis, was first suggested by Freemason, Dr. Thomas Arnold in 1786. Since then, numerous researchers have concurred.³⁵

Arnold, in his essay, did not seem altogether clear on the use of cannabis in the Mid-East and India, and the reports he knew of, such as those referred to above, indicated something along the lines of datura, or henbane to him. This was probably based on experiments with European hemp. He seems wholly unaware of the earlier work of the scientist and aspiring Rosicrucian, Robert Hooke (1635-1703), who was the first to distinguish the industrial European hemp from the more resinous varieties found in the East.

In regard to opium, it is interesting to note that Thomas De Quincey, author of the classic drug tale, *The Confessions of an Opium Eater* (1824) also wrote an essay "Origin of the Rosicrucians and the Free-Masons" (1824) that was published in the popular *London Magazine*. De Quincey is credited with suggesting that the "Rosicrucian belief system effectively became embedded within the stone mason's guilds to form Freemasonry as we know it, a theory that has been discussed by many researchers in this field

ever since" (Harrison, 2016).

...De Quincey's Masonic text is certainly an interesting one as it explores a thought provoking view on the origins of Freemasonry in England ... his Masonic piece was later commonly published with his *Confessions*, it gave many a reader an insight into the mysterious origins of Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, and remains an enigmatic piece in its own right (Harrison, 2016).

As Harrison has noted "there has been certain English Freemasons who have enjoyed a life of debauchery that included over-indulgence of alcohol, laudanum and opiates; such as the poet Branwell Brontë, who was a member of the Lodge of Three Graces in Haworth, Yorkshire, and certainly Freemasons Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Oscar Wilde wrote about the use of opium in late Victorian society ... Frederick Hockley may have used opium during his scrying sessions and even Crowley had his drug addictions" (Harrison, 2009). Although, in Harrison's view, "there is no evidence whatsoever that these gentlemen combined their Masonic interests with any form of drug use, but their awareness of opiates reminds us how commonplace the use was amongst the gentlemen classes during the Victorian era" (Harrison, 2009). I think Harrison is correct about the mainstream and more orthodox brand of Masonry, but I would suggest that numbers of

Masonic figures were using cannabis ritually, or for magical purposes, and some quasi-Masonic groups were using it in initiations, as we shall see in Chapter 22.

Rumors of drug use in Masonic rituals were often suggested by their critics. On the opposite page we see an illustration from *Le Diable au XIXe siècle: ou, Les mystères du spiritisme, la Franc-Maçonnerie luciférienne* (1892-1894) an anti-Masonic French publication by the controversial figure Leo Taxil, showing an initiate drugged on opium, indicating that at least in the minds of their critics, this sort of use was part of the secret rites of Masonry at the time. As Taxil notes “...while the intoxication of opium has annihilated you, and you are completely at the mercy of these unknown brothers; There is no other way to get the introduction” (Taxil, 1894). The Chinese men in the picture bring to mind Waite’s references to a Palladian Initiation which took place via a Chinese school of Occultism “the San-Ho-Hei, an association ‘parallel to high grade Masonry...’” (Waite, 1896). As Waite describes in *Devil-Worship in France*, “When a Palladian Mason seeks admission for the first time to one of its assemblies, he betakes himself to the nearest opium den, carrying on his person the documents which prove his initiation; he places his umbrella head downwards on his left side, and stupefies himself with the divine drug. He is then quite sure that he will be transported in a comatose condition to the occult reunion” (Waite, 1896).



On est donc apporté inerte à la réunion de la San-ho-hoef, tandis que l'ivresse de l'opium vous a anéanti et que vous êtes complètement à la merci de ces frères inconnus; il n'existe pas d'autre moyen d'obtenir l'introduction. (Page 257.)

Taxil warned that “ecstasy can... be produced artificially, and we find here, in these means employed by magicians, sorcerers, a natural way of communicating with the devil...” (Taxil, 1892-1894). Among such methods, he warned of “Certain beverages and certain liniments”

These include: the stupefying pollen of the temples

of Aesculapius; nepenthe that the beautiful Helen held the polydamna Egyptian; the hashish of the Old man of the Mountain; opium of the San-ho-hoeï; The beans of the priests of the Great Spirit, among the Nadoëssis of North America; The Kava of Pacific fetishists; The liqueur of pastinaca, of the Kamstchadales; The cohobba juice of the caciques, among the Incas; The l'asserol [hashish] of the Turks; The bacca [cannabis] of the Hollentots; The ointment of the sorcerers of the Middle Ages; The fetid ointment of the Aztec priests of Mexico (Taxil, 1892-1894).

Taxil portrayed the use of opium and hashish as evidence of the sort of dangerous multiculturalism that Masonry taught and used this to tap into the racism of his day.³⁶ As Maurice Magre explained in *Magicians, Seers and Mystics*, “many secret societies, Persian, Indian and Chinese, have made and still make use of beverages based on hashish, opium and many other plants, in order to promote the emergence of the astral ‘double’ and the attainment of the early degrees of ecstasy” (Magre, 1932). We can be sure that such stories caught the attention of both Masonic enthusiasts and detractors alike.

Leo Taxil, is a fascinating character. Born Marie Joseph Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pagès (1854-1907), he took the writing name Leo Taxil, to at first write a variety of pieces

mocking Catholicism and the Bible throughout the 1880s such as *La Bible Amusante* (The Amusing Bible, 1882); *Les Maîtresses du Pape* (The Pope's mistresses, 1884) and others. He then went on to pull one of the greatest hoaxes of the 19th century.





*Luciferian Masonry, Cannabis Infused Wine
and the*

Taxil Hoax

After writing numerous tracts condemning and mocking the church for years, Taxil renounced his former activities and faked a very public conversion to Catholicism. Not long after this, he then went on to create a hoax over a 12-year period, about a Luciferian form of Freemasonry. According to some sources Taxil was himself at one time a low level Mason, and he did have some knowledge of Freemasonry. As W.G. Sibley explained in *The Story of Freemasonry*:

In 1881 he had been made an Entered Apprentice, but was soon after expelled from the fraternity because of indiscretions of which he was guilty. With reckless disregard for facts, and unrestrained by his ignorance of Masonry, he gave his extraordinary imaginative powers full play, and with a fecundity of detail and illustration truly remarkable, represented the rites of the craft to be a hideous form of Devil-Worship. One entire volume he devoted to Female Masons, on which impossible foundation he constructed a shameful edifice of fiction, full of shockingly scandalous and beastly fabrications that were received with delight by the papal authorities, who saw in them perfect justification for the attitude of their church toward Masonry (Sibley, 1913).

On April 20, 1884, Pope Leo XIII released his notorious anti-masonic encyclical, *Humanum genus*, that said that humanity was “separated into two diverse and opposite parts, of which the one steadfastly contends for truth and virtue, the other of those things which are contrary to virtue and to truth. The one is the kingdom of God on earth, namely, the true Church of Jesus Christ.... The other is the kingdom of Satan.... At this period, however, the partisans of evil seems to be combining together, and to be struggling with united vehemence, led on or assisted by that strongly organized and widespread association called the Freemasons.” Knowing the long standing concerns of the Papacy with Freemasonry, and particularly Pope Leo XIII’s concerns with this, Taxil fabricated a number of characters and wrote under them as pseudonyms, and with the aid of at least two close allies, and his created aliases, he perpetrated various false stories about a form of Satanic Masonry, that corroborated each other. These periodicals, although sensational, caught the eye of both the public and the Holy See of the Vatican, at the highest levels, all of whom were all too willing to believe the vilest atrocities of their perceived arch-enemies, the Freemasons.



An 1891 cartoon in *Puck* shows Pope Leo XIII doing battle with Freemasonry.

In his creation of this Luciferian Freemasonry we can see that Taxil was deeply influenced by von Hammer-Purgstall's Templar/Baphomet/Freemason conspiracy as found in *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*, if not directly, then through its filtration in the works of Eliphas Levi, by both his borrowing of Levi's imagery and descriptions of Baphomet, and also utilizing the cannabis-infused wine that appears in the same chapter of Levi's work with the description of Baphomet. We find this situation in the writings attributed to one of Taxil's characters, "Diana Vaughan," an alleged descendant of the Rosicrucian alchemist Thomas Vaughan, who had been swept up into a form of Luciferian Masonry that was taking place in the American South, and being led by none other than the noted Mason and Scottish Rite figure Albert Pike!



Advertisement for *Les Mystères de la franc-maçonnerie dévoilés* (*The Mysteries of Freemasonry unveiled*) by Léo Taxil (1895), showing Taxil's use of Levi's Baphomet, here wearing a Masonic Apron.



Left: An 1890 Illustration from *Taxil of an alleged Masonic invocation of Baphomet*. Right: Léo Taxil's *Diana Vaughan: Mémoires d'une Ex-Palladiste* (Memoirs of Miss Diana Vaughan), Palladiste is the name Taxil gave his hoax form of Luciferian Masonry) instalments of which were published in France from 1895 to 1897.

A.E. Waite Summarized much of this French material and released it just before it was all exposed as a complete hoax, in his book about Luciferian Freemasonry, *Devil-Worship in France: with Diana Vaughn and the Question of*

Modern Palladism in 1887, written it would seem, with tongue firmly placed in cheek. Waite describes Vaughan's alleged initiation with indications of drug use, as well as the sort of wire pulling trickery used in the phantasmagoria. So rather than realizing the whole thing was a complete hoax, Waite seems to have believed that Vaughan may have been victim to the sort of stage trickery that was used by the phantasmagorists, and intoxication with cannabis.

Miss Vaughan began her preparations by a triduum, taking one meal daily of black bread, fritters of high-spiced blood, a salad of milky herbs, and the drink of rare old Rabelais. The preparations in detail are scarcely worth recording as they merely vary the directions in the popular chap-books of magic which abound in foolish France. At the appointed time she passed through the iron doors of the Sanctum Regnum. "Fear not!" said Albert Pike, and she advanced remplie d'une ardente allegresse, was greeted by the eleven prime chiefs, who presently retired, possibly for prayer or refreshments, possibly for operations in wire-pulling. Diana Vaughan remained alone, in the presence of the Palladium, namely, our poor old friend Baphomet, whom his admirers persist in representing with a goat's head, whereas he is the archetype of the ass (Waite, 1887).

We can be sure that Waite's reference to "the drink of rare old Rabelais" is a reference to a cannabis-infused wine, as the regime given of "fritters of high-spiced blood" and "salad of milky herbs" is the same as that given by Levi in *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie* (1856), which Waite had translated the year before, in a description of a ritual for invoking the devil: "this repast must be made off black bread and blood seasoned with unsalted spices, or off black beans, and milky, narcotic herbs; every five days, after sunset, one must get drunk on wine in which five heads of black poppies and five ounces of bruised hemp have been steeped..." (Levi/Waite, 1886). As well, in the French original of the Taxil/Vaughan account, there is no mention of Rabelais, and cannabis appears quite clearly in this context, alongside numbers of references to hashish use by these Luciferian characters throughout the tale. As Taxil's Diana Vaughan: *Mémoires d'une Ex-Palladiste*, describes: "It is obvious that Miss Diana Vaughan was only a subject between hands of criminals Charleston operators. Autosuggested ... and exhausted by the deprivation of food and sleep, excited by an infusion which possessed the narcotic properties of hashish, she fell into a state of dream and thought she saw Lucifer as she had desired. This vision fascinated the poor woman and troubled her. for many years." (Vaughan/Taxil 1895-1897). It is worth noting here, that Waite's use of the "drink of rare old Rabelais," although not appearing in Taxil's works, seems to have

been used in a way that those in the know would be aware of the reference to cannabis-infused wines in this sort of ritual context.



Taxil's depiction of Diana Vaughan's cannabis infused "Masonic" initiation and introduction to Baphomet!

In *The Story of Freemasonry*, Sibley included a translation of an account of Diana's fanciful experience in a Masonic "Black Mass":

"In a thick cloud of perfumes the priest ascends the altar of Satan's Synagogue.

"On the table is seen a goat with a human face already excited by some preliminary homages,

intoxicated by perfumes and adoration.

"The priest opens a box and takes out some wafers.

"The rites performed and the words spoken during the continuance of the magical ceremony are blasphemous in character, and the sacred vessel and its contents are subjected to insult and mockery. The goat plays the infernal part, cursing and reviling, and lastly the following incantation is delivered: Master of the Esclandres, dispenser of the benefits of crime, intendant of sumptuous sins and great vices, sovereign of contempt, preserver of old hatreds and inspirer of vengeance and misdeeds" (Sibley, 1913).

Taxil's account of cannabis-infused Satanic Masonry was completely embraced by the foes of the Craft, particularly the Vatican, where even the Pope was excited to read the latest account from Diana Vaughan, or one of Taxil's works on the diabolical secrets of Freemasonry! Taxil was entertained at the Vatican on a number of occasions after his public conversion and redemption, and the whole farce continued for some twelve years, before public outcry as to the authenticity of the writings attributed to Diana Vaughan forced a press conference. However, on the date of what was supposed to be Vaughan's long awaited public appearance, April 19th, 1897, Taxil showed up alone, wearing a Fez, and gave one of the most hilarious press

conferences of the century. The French prankster completely admitted his hoax, to the various members of the press, clergy, freemasons and public who had gathered to meet the mysterious Vaughan, and the crowd reacted with laughter, cheers, boos and anger throughout Taxil's unveiling. In conclusion Taxil thanked the press, clergy, and masons for playing the willing dupes of his hoax. As Taxil was quoted in a later interview with America's *National Magazine* in regards to the whole escapade:

The public made me what I am, the arch-liar of the period, for when I first commenced to write against the Masons my object was amusement pure and simple. The crimes laid at their door were so grotesque, so impossible, so widely exaggerated, I thought everybody would see the joke and give me credit for originating a new line of humour. But my readers wouldn't have it so; they accepted my fables as gospel truth, and the more I lied for the purpose of showing that I lied, the more convinced became they that I was a paragon of veracity (Taxil, 1906).



*Marie Joseph Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pagès (1854-1907) aka
Leo Taxil*

Taxil went back to publishing parodies of the Christian faith, after his elaborate Satanic Masonic hoax, with works such as *La Vie de Jesus* (The Amusing Gospel of Jesus, 1890).



Curiously, despite Taxil's publicly admitting to the hoax, many key elements of it still persist in modern conspiracy theories about Freemasonry being Luciferian, and its association with Baphomet. Words falsely put into the mouth of Albert Pike by Taxil, are still quoted as verbatim

fact by modern conspiracy theorists who have managed to gobble, hook, line and sinker, Taxil's fraudulent bait. Complicating things further, quasi-Masonic organizations like the *Ordo Templi Orientis* and their seeming embarkment of the sort of Templar Masonic cosmology laid out by von Hammer-Purgstall, make it difficult to completely separate fact from fiction for some. Some O.T.O. members seem to have embraced the whole Diana Vaughan and Paladin Masonry as actual history. In Frater Shiva's *Inside the Solar Lodge-Behind the Veil*, he relates how. Author Louis T. Culling "was in possession of a formal *Charter for The Order of the Paladin* that had originally derived from Diana Vaughan" (Shiva 2007).

This Charter had been historically, formally, and sequentially transferred over the years until it came into his name. Culling generously signed it over, transferring the Grand Mastership of The Order of the Paladin into Frater Luna's name.

Frater Luna appeared at Solar Lodge, grinning like the cat ate the canary, with his Charter and his new Grand Master status. But he also readily agreed to sign it over to the "O.T.O." (Shiva, 2007).

I have no idea if Culling was in on the dupe, or part of a chain of dupes, that helped link this nonsense to the O.T.O. in the modern day, but I can not help but think of Taxil giggling from the grave over the longevity of his hoax

and “Frater Shiva’s” embracement of it.

Even the current Pope seems to share his predecessor, Leo XIII’s concerns, warning about the Freemason infiltration of the Knights of Malta and commenting as recently as 2015 on the Vatican website “On this earth at the end of the 19th century freemasonry was in full swing, not even the Church could do anything, there were priest haters, there were also Satanists.... It was one of the worst moments and one of the worst places in the history of Italy” (Pope Francis, 2015).



One can only imagine how much this hoax contributed to the demonization of cannabis, likely contributing to its concept as the Devil's Weed' as reefer madness gripped America!

Part of the longevity of Taxil’s hoax is due to his knowledge of the occult and cleverly mixing together fact and fiction ... which part cannabis may have played in that recipe, shall be further explored in the next two chapters.

There may have been some awareness and interest in drugs amongst the Holstein-Gottorp dynasty. Adam Olearius (1599-1671), the German scholar, mathematician, geographer and librarian, who was the secretary to the ambassador sent by Frederick III, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, and later became the librarian to the duke, and keeper of his cabinet of curiosities described an account of ingesting cannabis while the guest of the Governor of Amadabat: “...he call’d for a little golden Cabinet enrich’s with precious stones, and having taken out two drawers, out of now he took Offion or Opium, and out of the other Bengi, a certain Drug or Powder made of the leaves and seeds of Hemp, which the use to excite luxury. Having taken a small spoonful of each, he sent the cabinet to me; and told me that it could not otherwise be, but that during my aboad at Ispahan, i must needs have learnt the use of that Drug, and that I should find that as good as any I had seen in Persia. I told him that I was no competent Judge of it, in regard I had not used it often; however I would then take

of it for the Honour's sake of receiving it from his hands. I took of it, and the English Merchant did the like, though neither of us had ever taken any before..." (Olearius, 1662).

² Reprinted from a text that states that it is never reprinted beyond the needs of the Lodge, I have my connections!

³ From a quote in (Godwin, 1994).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See (Hatsis, 2015) for more on this.

⁶ See Was Goethe a Muslim? By Shaykh 'Abdalqadir Al-Murabit (1995), which gives an impressive overview of Goethe's esteem for Islam.

⁷ http://www.hanfarchiv.ch/cgi-bin/a_text.cgi?352

⁸ As quoted in (Bjelić, 2016).

⁹ As quoted in (Frankland, 2000).

¹⁰ (Griswold, 1889).

¹¹ A reference to Julie, or the New Heloise (1761), by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

¹² As quoted in (Nicolaus, 2010)

¹³ From (Ruffles, 2004).

¹⁴ As quoted in (Photiades, 1932).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ From a quote in (Safranski, 2017).

¹⁷ In this regard, it should be noted that modern research indicates that cannabis may in fact increase night vision, as cannabinoids are known to reduce the concentration of chloride ions inside the retinal ganglion cells, and this

increases the effects of light on them and makes them more sensitive to it.

¹⁸ Translated from Lettres historiques, politiques et critiques sur les événements, qui se sont passés depuis 1778 jusqu'à présent, Volume 12 (1791).

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ From a quote in (Newman, 2017).

²¹ Sharpe's London Journal (1849).

²² Ibid.

²³ The opium poppy appears under the moon, and mandrake under mercury, acacia under the sun.

²⁴ Sharpe's London Journal (1849).

²⁵ The St. James's magazine (1842).

²⁶ As quoted in (Malpas, 1932).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ "Count Cagliostro," The Medical World, Volumes 1-2 (1857).

²⁹ "Count Cagliostro," Fraser's Magazine Vol. VIII, (1833).

³⁰ René le Forestier, Les Illuminés de Bavière et la franc-maçonnerie allemande, (1914).

³¹ From Gerard de Nerval's Oeuvres Complètes, (1868).

³² As quoted in (McIntosh, 2011).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Dr. Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716), his Amoenitatum exoticarum politico-physico-medicae fasciculi V. (1712), has a number of entries on cannabis.

³⁵ Such as the French Pharmacist Joseph Virey (1775-1846)

who suggested in 1813 that hasheesh was Homer's nepenthe (*Bulletin de Pharmacie*). Many others have since concurred. "The opinions entertained by the learned, on the nature of the Nepenthe of the ancients have been various. By Th. Zwinger, and ... by Sprengel, in his history of botany, it is supposed to be opium.... But the best authorities, with whom our author coincides, are of opinion that the Nepenthe was derived from the Cannabis sativa of Linnaeus" (Christen, 1822); "the famous nepenthe of the ancients is said to have been prepared by decocting the hemp leaves" (Watt, 1853); "nepenthe which may reasonably be surmised was bhang from the far east" (Benjamin, 1880). As the authors of *The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* also concluded: "Nepenthes.... Perhaps the Bust or Hasheesh, a preparation of the Cannabis sativa" (Wilkinson & Birch, 1878). See also (Walton, 1938; Burton, 1894; Lewin, 1931; Singer and Underwood, 1962; Oursler, 1968; Wills, 1998). In *A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases*, Yule and Crooke note an interesting connection between a Coptic (Greek-Egyptian) term and the nepenthe; "Bhang is usually derived from Skt. Bhangā, 'breaking,' but [Sir Richard] Burton derives both it and the Ar. Banj from the old Coptic Nibanj, 'meaning a preparation of hemp; and here it is easy to recognize the Homeric Nepenthe'" (Yule, et al., 1903/1996). As Abram Smythe Palmer also notes in *Folk-etymology*: "Nepenthe, the drug which Helen brought from Egypt, is

without doubt the Coptic nibendj, which is the plural of bendj, or benj, hemp, 'bang,' used as an intoxicant" (Palmer, 1882). When one returns to the contemporary Avestan term for cannabis, b'arj'ha, the similarity in this context, ne- b'arj'ha, brings us to an even closer to the cognate pronunciation 'nepenthe.'

³⁶ Pike recorded this element in a mid 19th century description of the Scottish Rite to a line of questioning that the aspirant was expected to reply yes to: "Master of Ceremonies 'My Brother, there are several questions that you must answer sincerely and truly, before I can attempt to introduce you into this Sovereign Chapter of Knights of Rose Croix. 1st: 'What is your religious belief?' 2nd: 'Do you respect the character of every Reformer that has in the different periods of the world's history appeared on earth to teach men virtue and morality?' 3rd: 'Do you regard with toleration the religious opinions of other men?' 4th: 'Are you willing to meet in the Masonic Temple, and to recognize as Brothers, all good Masons who believe in one God and the Immortality of the Soul, whether they have received that belief from the teachings of Moses, of Zoroaster, of Buddha, of Mahomet, or of the founder of the Christian religion?'" (Pike, 1857).

PUNCH'S FANCY PORTRAITS.—No. 83.



CAPTAIN BURTON,
OUR UN-COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

Chapter 22

19th-Century Masonic and Rosicrucian Hashishin

Islamic Influences

Even before the publication of von Hammer-Purgstall's anti-Masonic work *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum* (1818), some Masons themselves were tying in the history of the order with that of the Templars, and this of course led to the Hashishins, causing some branches and offshoots of Masonry to take on a particularly Islamic flavour. As Sir Richard Burton (1821-1890) has been popularly noted as stating: "Sufisim" is "the Eastern parent of Freemasonry" (Burton, 1856). This view of Masonic origins was also incorporated into Freemason Rudyard Kipling's *The Man Who Would Be King*. Interestingly, both of these figures also used cannabis and a variety of other drugs.

Sir Richard Burton had a deep knowledge of both the occult and drugs; in *A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights Entertainments* he expressed his deep knowledge of cannabis, even identifying Rabelais' references, and suggesting an interesting etymological

connection to nepenthe:

The Arab "Banj" and Hindú "Bhang" (which I use as most familiar) both derive from the old Coptic "Ni-banj" meaning a preparation of hemp (*Cannabis sativa seu Indica*); and here it is easy to recognise the Homeric "Nepenthe." Al-Kazwini explains the term by "garden hemp (Kinnab bostáni or Sháhdánaj). On the other hand not a few apply the word to the henbane (*hyoscyamus niger*) so much used in mediæval Europe. The Kámús evidently means henbane distinguishing it from Hashish al haráfísh" = rascals' grass, i.e. the herb Pantagruelion. The "Alfáz Adwiya" (French translation) explains "Tabannuj" by "Endormir quelqu'un en lui faisant avaler de la jusquiame." [Asleep someone making him swallow henbane]. In modern parlance Tabannuj is = our anæsthetic administered before an operation, a deadener of pain like myrrh and a number of other drugs. For this purpose hemp is always used (at least I never heard of henbane); and various preparations of the drug are sold at an especial bazar in Cairo. See the "powder of marvellous virtue" in Boccaccio, iii., 8; and iv., 10. Of these intoxicants, properly so termed, I shall have something to say in a future page.

The use of Bhang doubtless dates from the dawn

of civilization, whose earliest social pleasures would be inebriants. Herodotus (iv. c. 75) shows the Scythians burning the seeds (leaves and capsules) in worship and becoming drunken with the fumes, as do the S. African Bushmen of the present day. This would be the earliest form of smoking: it is still doubtful whether the pipe was used or not. Galen also mentions intoxication by hemp. Amongst Moslems, the Persians adopted the drink as an ecstatic, and about our thirteenth century Egypt, which began the practice, introduced a number of preparations to be noticed in the course of *The Nights* (Burton, 1885).

Elsewhere Burton noted of hashish's use in the East, "by magicians to... 'deify themselves and receive the homage of the genii and nature spirits'" (Burton, 1885). Biographer Thomas Wright, wrote how Burton "smoked... the forbidden weed hashish, and grew confidential" with his friend of 30 years Haji Wali, who had inspired Burton to adopt Arabic dress, so he could travel more freely in the East, eventually enabling his famous trip to Mecca (Wright, 1906).¹

Burton belonged to Lodges in both England and India. Kipling was a registered Freemason for four years in England and acted as a Secretary of the Lodge in 1887. Besides the clear Masonic themes in a *Man who Would be King*, in

1926 Kipling released *Debits and Credits*, which included four Masonically inspired stories.



In *Kipling Sahib: India And The Making Of Rudyard Kipling*, Charles Allen describes a late 19th-century account where in India, Kipling sought relief from a bout of dysentery by smoking opium, and ingesting chlorodyne, a medicine that in some patents was a tincture mixture of opium, cannabis and chloroform. "There is convincing evidence that this double dose hit him with the force of a revelation. In modern parlance, it 'blew his mind,' opening the doors of his unconscious hitherto kept tight shut and causing him to lose some of his fearfulness" (Allen, 2015). Allen suggests that this event brought a "new dimension to his thinking ... freeing him to speak more directly from within himself" (Allen, 2015). As Kipling expressed in a letter to a relative of this experience. "Here am I ... with my head still ringing like a bell from the fumes of that infernal opium, plotting and planning and crowing on my own dunghill as though I were one of the immortals."

Gerard

de Nerval and his Hashish-Infused Tales of the Druze and Hiram Abiff

As most readers who have made it this far are likely aware, an important figure in the rituals of Freemasonry is a character named Hiram Abiff, said to be the architect and builder of Solomon's Temple. Also known as the Widow's son, Hiram Abiff is the central character of an allegory presented to all candidates during the third degree in Freemasonry. In the mythology of the story Abiff is murdered by three ruffians, who want him to reveal the secret signs and passwords of the higher degrees of Masonry, which were used in receiving payment for work on the temple. Some of the central initiations of Masonry are death and rebirth ceremonies based on this particular story.

Interestingly, the first public retelling of this mythos had the tale tied up with the occult use of hashish. The French poet, Gérard De Nerval (1808-1855) included what has been suggested as the first published account of the Masonic story of Hiram Abiff, in his autobiographical account of his travels, *Voyage en Orient* (1851) which is similar to Potocki's work, in the way it contains stories within stories along with esoteric secrets. It is within this curious entanglement of tales where we find de Nerval's accounts of hashish, Hiram Abiff and Biblical secrets! As the authors of *The Temple and the Lodge* noted of this:

Nerval not only recited the basic narrative. He also

divulged – for the first time, to our knowledge – a skein of eerie mystical traditions associated in Freemasonry with Hiram's background and pedigree. What is particularly curious is that Nerval makes no mention of Freemasonry whatsoever. Pretending that his narrative is a species of regional folk-tale, never known in the West before, he claims to have heard it orally recited by a Persian raconteur, in a Constantinople coffee-house (Baigent & Leigh, 1988).

Nerval was likely introduced to a lot of Masonic ideas through his mentor Charles Nodier. Nodier's father was a close friend of Jacques Cazotte, and so from an early age he had become familiar with a variety of esoteric views, and aspects of Martinist and Masonic philosophy. "Charles Nodier and his father were both Masons, and may have belonged to the Royal Order of Scotland..." (Emerys, 2007). "Nodier was a ... Mason and many of his novels feature initiatory plots..." (Montague & Rarignac, 2012).

Both Nodier and Nerval shared a deep interest in Faust, with Nerval writing his acclaimed translation when he was only 18 years old, and Nodier writing his adaptation of the story for the stage. Like Cazotte, Nodier was known to use opium for visionary purposes. "The pioneer of drug transcendence was the French novelist Charles Nodier in the 1790s. Nodier was a Romantic for whom life was a voyage

of introspective self-discovery, and he convinced himself that opium gave him revelations that he could not obtain when sober” (Davenport-Hines, 2003). “Opium, he believed, provided a gate to another world – the realm of dreams and nightmares” (Melton, 2010). As Nodier wrote in an 1831 correspondence with a friend “The decoctions of various plants, loaded with spirits, are highly recommended, opium does wonders. The ether is sovereign, and I would not know any other specific for my use” (Nodier, 1876). “[O]pium taken at high doses accelerates life” (Nodier, 1844). Nodier, in *La Fée aux Miettes*, (1832) narrates the adventures of a inspired devotee of the mandrake, and has been noted for “discoursing on the rites of Freemasonry” (Montague- & Rarignac, 2012).

In reference to this use of drugs for inspiration in the works of Nodier, in *Un carnaval de Paris* (A Carnival of Paris), Joseph Méry, refers to a “to a sect of sleepers, of which Charles Nodier ... was for a long time one of the venerated pontiffs” (Méry, 1856). Méry noted their use of “opium, which was then a pleasure reserved for a few privileged sensualities, to lead their souls even to the heights of the celestial mountains and to the lands of ancient faeries. Some of them, progressive and audacious, invoked the help and efficacy of a mysterious substance still at that time, the hashish of which the jaded youth now intoxicate themselves, to plunge into a ravishing and ecstatic drunkenness, ‘She is the orgies of the real world’”

(Méry, 1856).

Nodier’s co-authored *Histoire pittoresque de l’Angleterre et de ses possessions dans les Indes* (Picturesque history of England and its possessions in the Indies), made reference to the Assassins who were “wont to get drunk with the fermented juice of a kind of hemp-like plant, and Named hashish. See the fables of the ‘Old Man of the Mountain’, and those of Eastern Tibet” Nodier, et. al., 1835). The myth behind this account would come to be very influential on Nerval and other young writers who were known to frequent Nodier’s company, like Victor Hugo, Honore de Balzac, Alexander Dumas and Theophile Gautier, as we shall see.



Nerval’s own depth of occult knowledge is revealed in a number of his works. “In his *Aurelia*, he mentions having

read the Kabbala, Swedenborg, and the Egyptian Hermetic Books.... His interest in occultism also inspired him to a longer research work on eighteenth century initiates of secret societies, such as Jacques Cazotte ... [and] Cagliostro..." (Bays, 1964). When one reads Nerval's writings, it becomes clear that the French poet regarded hashish as instrumental in the "Great Work" and an important aspect of occult history, and even Masonic lore. In her excellent work, *The Orphic Vision*, the Professor of French literature, Gwendolyn Bays, makes clear the profound influence that hashish had on de Nerval and other French poets, describing how they "made free use of hashish to 'penetrate the Unknown'..." (Bays, 1964).

As the authors of *The Book of Grass* noted half a century ago, in a dedication to his close friend, and fellow hashish enthusiast Alexander Dumas, "Nerval uses the word 'supernaturalist' to describe the state we moderns call 'high'" (Andrews & Vinkenoog, 1967). I suspect the reference to "Germans" refers to certain Rosicrucians and Occultists of that area in the 18th century.

And since you have had the prudence to cite one of the sonnets composed in the state of day-dreaming the Germans call "supernaturalist," you must hear them all; you will find them at the end of the volume. They are hardly more obscure than the metaphysics of Hegel or the "Memorabilia" of Swedenborg, and

would lose charm by being explained, if such things were possible.²

There are actually two occult tales related to Masonry, that Nerval reveals in his *Journey To The Orient* and the role of hashish in these stories is very intriguing, in relation to the occult history of the herb we have been alluding to in this volume, particularly in regard to Freemasonry. "It is unclear what level of freemasonry Nerval achieved; although it is clear he was well versed in Masonic lore, his actual status in the craft is vague" (Lachman, 2003). The first of these stories, Nerval claims, was told to him by an imprisoned Druze sheik named Eshayrazy. As Nerval explained "The Druze have been compared to the Pythagoreans, the Essenes, and the Gnostics, while some scholars claim that the Knights Templar exploited many of your ideas, and that the Rosicrucians and Freemasons have done the same today" (Nerval, 1851/1972). It has also been noted that the beliefs of the Druzes, "makes them many ways the closest of the breakaway sects of Isma'ilism to the Assassins" (Burman, 1987). The second of these tales is the aforementioned account from Nerval of the Masonic Hiram Abiff story, here under the name of Adoniram, a combination of the Hebrew Adon and Hiram, signifying the master who is exalted, and is based around the building of Solomon's temple.

The first tale, that of Caliph Hakim, is set in 1,000 A.D.

Nerval claims “the principal facts” of this account “are definitely based upon authentic traditions” (Nerval, 1851/1972). It recounts the story of a powerful Moslem, Caliph Hakim, who was in the habit of visiting the city disguised as a commoner. In one of these visits he enters a cavern which is frequented by members of the Sabian faith, a surviving Gnostic sect, whose establishments offered hashish. There Hakim is befriended by a young man, Yousouf, who introduces the reluctant Caliph to hashish, telling him: “This box contains the paradise promised by your prophet and his believers. If you weren’t so scrupulous I could soon put you into the Houris arms without making you pass over the bridge of Alsirat.” Alsirat, being the Islamic counter-part of the Zoroastrian Cinvat Bridge, which is mentioned in the *Arda Wiraz Namag*, and crossed with the aid of a potent cannabis infusion. At first reluctant, Hakim gives in to the temptation, stating that this “marvellous paste which is the same, perhaps, as ambrosia, the food of the immortals.” After feeling its full effects Hakim states to his new Sabean friend Yousouf: “Hashish renders you equal to God.” “After imbibing the drug, Hakim’s vision expands, the barriers erected between the conscious and the unconscious vanish, and he experiences feelings of exaltation, rapture, and frenetic excitement...” (Knapp, 1980). The two friends in De Nerval’s tale were said to meet together to enjoy hashish on a number of occasions, and as *Journey To The Orient* tells us, the

experiences of Hakim and Yousouf included potent visionary dosages:

When both of them were deeply intoxicated by the hashish something strange occurred: the two friends entered into a certain communion of ideas and impressions. Yousouf imagined that his companion, kicking the earth which wasn’t worthy of his glory, soared up towards the heavens and, taking him by the hand, carried him off into space amidst the whirling stars and glittering marvels of the Milky Way. Pale but crowned by a luminous ring, Saturn increased in size as it approached them, followed by seven moons borne along in the wake of its rapid advance. Then... but who could relate what happened when they had reached this divine home of their dreams? Human language can only reveal experiences conforming to our nature, and we must bear in mind that the two friends conversed together in this celestial dream even the names by which they addressed each other were no longer names which are known on earth (Nerval, 1851/1972).

This story of astral travel comes in at a time when many occultists had decided to take things further with the magic mirrors, and “step through the looking glass,” and not surprisingly, there are many such accounts of the use of hashish for astral travel from this period. Nerval

connects it with the next story, that of Hiram Abiff, or Adoniram, and the building of Solomon's temple, with a story overheard by Caliph Hakim, who found himself imprisoned in an asylum while under the influence of hashish, and his claims of being the Caliph went unbelieved, and instead identified his continuing insanity to his captors and caretakers. In the asylum Hakim is paid a visit by the great Arab alchemist Ebn-Sina (Avicenna), and he is overheard saying "The word hachichot appears in the Song of Songs, and the inebriating properties of this mixture..." (Nerval, 1851/1972). Unfortunately, the Caliph was unable to hear the rest of the famed alchemist's words. In this regard, it is worth noting that Nerval's account is the first known written reference which refers openly to cannabis in the Bible that I am aware of.



Nerval based Caliph Hakim on the actual historical figure Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah (996-1021), sixth Fatimid caliph and 16th Ismaili imam. Druze founder ad-Darazi proclaimed him as the incarnation of God in 1018.

Another way the stories of Caliph Hakim and Hiram Abiff are tied is in the description of an assassination, or attempted assassination, on Hakim by three assailants, which are in many ways reminiscent of the three murderers of Hiram Abiff in the Masonic tale. In Nerval's account, Hakim escapes the assassination attempt, and De Nerval is told by his host, Sheik Saide-Eshayrazy, that the teachings of Caliph Hakim were the foundation of the secretive sect to which he belongs, the mysterious Druzes. Adoniram, in the next tale, fares less well, and perishes in the same way as he does in the traditional Masonic account. Curiously, after Nerval's placing of hashish in Solomon's "Song of Songs," through the mouth of Avicenna, we see no direct reference to hashish or cannabis in the story. However, there may be an allusion in the account of Belkis, the Queen of Sheba, or in Nerval's version of the tale, Sabea, likely another means of connecting the two stories, i.e. Sabea-Sabean. Belkis gives Solomon a potion that renders him unable to move, much like the cataleptic state we discussed in Chapter 6, and then its effects render him unconscious and send him off into dreams.

In relation to that, it's interesting to note that Nerval

refers to how one of Hakim's ancestors "hid himself for a few days and said that he had been taken up to the heavens. Later he withdrew to an underground vault, and the people claimed that he had disappeared from the earth without dying like other men" (Nerval, 1851/1972). This is of course reminiscent of the story of Jesus' resurrection and ascension. The story even has Jesus appear to Hakim and the doubts of Hakim, who came to recognize his own divinity while on Hashish, "corresponded to those of the Son of Man at Gethsemane, [ie Jesus on the cross] but, above all, he was almost crushed by the thought that this divinity had first been revealed to him in the ecstasies of hashish ... would a herb of the fields be able to create such marvels?" (Nerval, 1851/1972). Could all this be an account of an even deeper occult and Masonic history? In Gerard de Nerval, *The Mystic's Dilemma*, Bettina Knapp states that "Nerval's version of the Soliman-Sheba-Adoniram myth had special significance for the Masons. In fact, every detail and event depicted is replete with Masonic symbolism" (Knapp, 1980).

Adoniram's ordeal has become the essential part of the ceremony of reception to the Grade of Master in the Masonic Order...

In the Masonic initiation ceremony, as in the ancient mysteries, the acolyte experiences the death of the "profane" self and the "birth" of the new spiritual

being. The object of the initiation is to lead the neophyte into the experience of an inner illumination, the transcendental light or the centre of Self...

...According to some eighteenth-century Masons, namely Martines de Pasqually, the initiation is supposed to help man reintegrate back into the universal pleroma [Universal Godhead] ... (Knapp, 1980).

In Nerval's account of the story of Adoniram, the hero takes a Dantesque descent into the underground, which has also been described as an "Orphic descent." There Adoniram meets his ancestor Tubal-Cain, the master black-smith, and learns that here "they preserved their esoteric traditions ... and ... in their secret traditions, Tubal-Cain explains, men may partake of the tree of knowledge without perishing from it" (Bays, 1964). One wonders if some sort of initiation ceremony like that which has been suggested around Dante's *Inferno*, is indicated in the story.

Nerval is both Hakem [sic Hakim] and Adoniram, and it is quite possible that he chose these two legends because of his feelings of identification with the two oppressed but superior heroes. Nerval is like the prince who discovers his duality and mysterious divinity, [under the influence of hashish!] who is frustrated, misunderstood, and finally committed to an asylum [Nerval had similar struggles with mental

health, and had extended forced care at times]. In spite of this, his divine nature triumphs and the liberated hero leaves the asylum to become the founder of a new syncretic religion – exactly what Nerval hoped his occult studies would accomplish. Hakem is therefore Nerval the poet priest. The Drusian religion interested Nerval immensely because it provided him with a living example of syncretism ... [as] modern descendants of the Gnostics, Pythagoreans, and Essenes.... Nerval maintains ... that this was the source of Masonic mysticism brought into the Western world by the Templars during the Middle Ages (Bay, 1964).

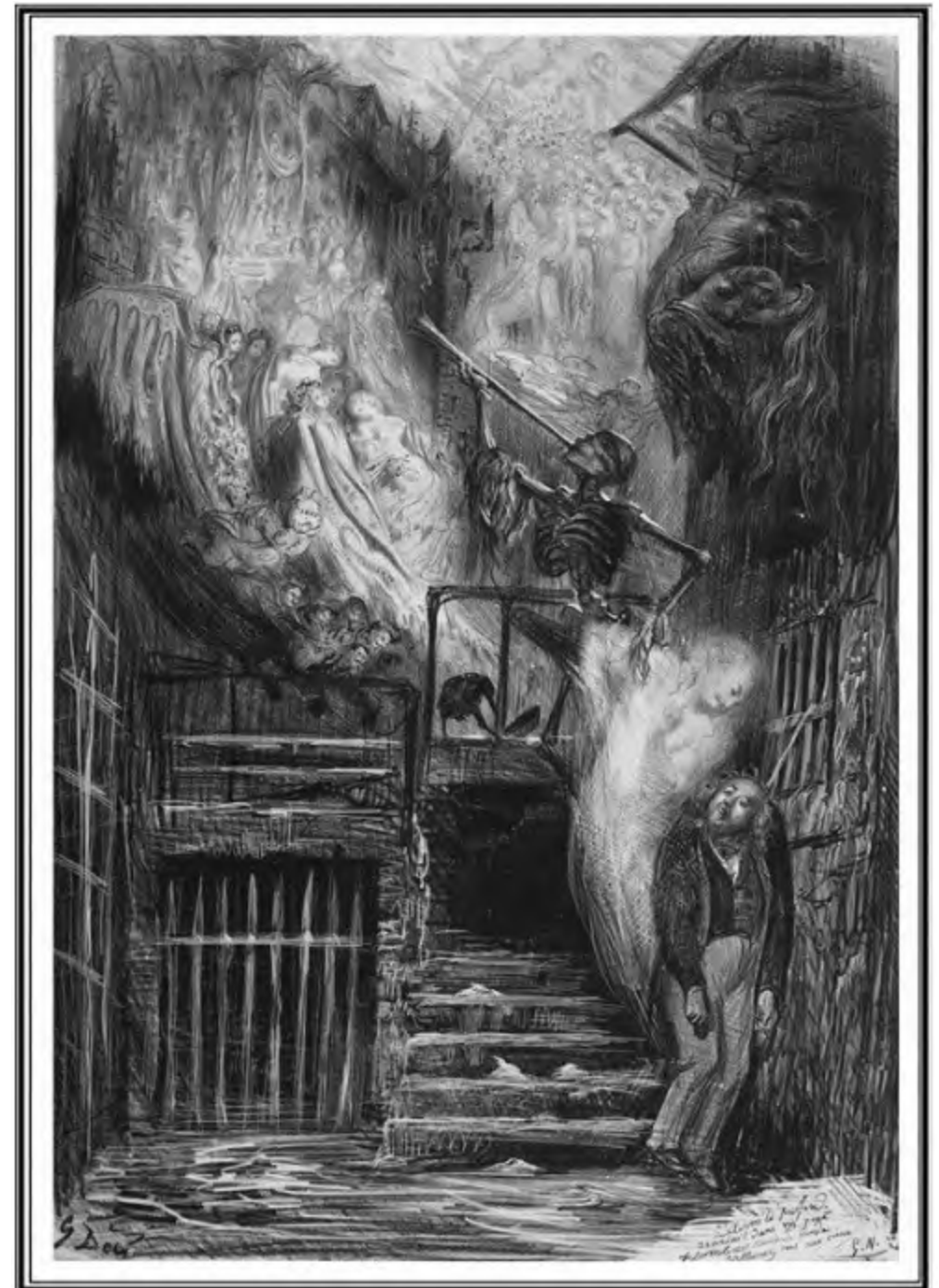
As noted earlier, in the closing chapters of *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*, the hero of the tale, Alphonse, is taken to a Druze Sheikh by guides who “recovered their strength by drinking and smoking hashish” (Potocki 1815/1995). As we shall see, other figures associated with both hashish and secret societies were also influenced by this same group. Druzes have maintained a reputation for growing hashish to this day, and Lebanon’s outspoken Druze leader Walid Jumblatt has been calling for the legalization of hashish in Lebanon, which has a long history of marijuana cultivation.

The concern over secrets such as these has made me question whether Nerval’s death was a suicide, as has

been the accepted view. Certainly the publication of the story of the central myth of Masonry, that of Hiram Abiff, would constitute a breach of a Mason who had taken the sacred oath. Nerval was found hung by a white cord, hat still on his head, in a lonely dark Parisian alley. We have seen the sacred role that cords have played in certain secret societies, so perhaps there was some symbolism intended here?³ In a poem dedicated to Nerval, which refers to “Cain and Tubal-Cain and Adoniram” Nick Lyon refers to Nerval’s end “hanging/ by some mystic cord.../what matters in an alley?”⁴ As Carlile noted of an oath to keep the secrets of the Craft taken over a skull in a Masonic Templar degree, “If ever I wilfully deviate from this my solemn obligation, may my light be put out from among men, as that of Judas Iscariot was for betraying his Lord and Master” (Carlile, 1825). Judas, as will be remembered, hung himself over his betrayal.

...Nerval saw himself as a type of vehicle, a transforming agent through which or by which the outer world could become manifest ... he was privileged to see directly beyond the world of appearance into the cosmic pleroma.... Owing to some rash act on his part –perhaps he had revealed, like Prometheus and Cain, esoteric secrets to mankind – he too was doomed to punishment.... Nerval was so convinced of his martyrdom, of his guilt, that on certain

occasions he was able to take the situation in stride, knowing as he did that he would be forgiven eventually, and that he would attain a superior sphere—but only after the ordeal of life had ended (Knapp, 1980).



Death of Gérard de Nerval, illustration by Gustave Doré.

Nerval himself was also a member of the famous *Club des Hashischins*, which borrowed their name from the cult

which formed around the Old Man of the Mountain, and his group of hashish-ingesting Assassins. *Club des Hashischins* was active from about 1844 -1849, and counted among its Parisian members such literary and intellectual elite as Dr. Jacques-Joseph Moreau, Théophile Gautier, Charles Baudelaire, Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas. Monthly “séances” were held at the Hôtel Pimodan, later renamed Hôtel de Lauzun. After being introduced to hashish by Moreau, who became familiar with the psychoactive resin in Egypt, Gautier created, according to the modern Modern Masonic sensationalist, Leo Zagami, “an Illuminati Club called the Hashish Club, which included the participation of many luminaries. It was considered a secret initiation of the highest degree and was sought after by Masons and intellectuals such as Dumas (18th degree of the A.A.S.R.), who was devoted to experiments with hashish” (Zagami, 2016). “The club’s pantomimic rites were modelled on an Oriental order [the Assassins], commanded by autocrat called the *Vieux de la Montagne*, or Prince of Assassins...” (Davenport-Hines, 2012). Coffee was served with a mixture of hashish, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, pistachios, sugar, orange juice, butter, cardamom and cantharides (Spanish Fly). This resulted in a thick, green mixture, like a jam, also known as *Dawamesk*, “medicine of immortality,” and which we have referred to before. Certainly many of the members of *Club des*

Hashischins shared a deep knowledge and interest in occult matters.

In his *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* (The Count of Monte Cristo), Dumas included the story of an encounter with the hashish-eating Sinbad the Sailor, whom he based on Hasan I-Sabah of the Assassins, and a young Frenchman named Franz, who Sinbad offers some of his “green preserve.” After a delightful dinner in Sinbad’s decorated island cave, his servant Ali serves deserts, and other delicacies....

Between the two baskets he placed a small silver cup with a silver cover. The care with which Ali placed this cup on the table roused Franz’s curiosity. He raised the cover and saw a kind of greenish paste, something like preserved angelica, but which was perfectly unknown to him. He replaced the lid, as ignorant of what the cup contained as he was before he had looked at it, and then casting his eyes towards his host he saw him smile at his disappointment. “You cannot guess,” said he, “what there is in that small vase, can you?”

“No, I really cannot.”

“Well, then, that green preserve is nothing less than the ambrosia which Hebe served at the table of Jupiter.”

“But,” replied Franz, “this ambrosia, no doubt, in

passing through mortal hands has lost its heavenly appellation and assumed a human name; in vulgar phrase, what may you term this composition, for which, to tell the truth, I do not feel any particular desire?"

"Ah, thus it is that our material origin is revealed," cried Sinbad; "we frequently pass so near to happiness without seeing, without regarding it, or if we do see and regard it, yet without recognizing it. Are you a man for the substantials, and is gold your god? taste this, and the mines of Peru, Guzerat, and Golconda are opened to you. Are you a man of imagination – a poet? taste this, and the boundaries of possibility disappear; the fields of infinite space open to you, you advance free in heart, free in mind, into the boundless realms of unfettered revery. Are you ambitious, and do you seek after the greatnesses of the earth? taste this, and in an hour you will be a king, not a king of a petty kingdom hidden in some corner of Europe like France, Spain, or England, but king of the world, king of the universe, king of creation; without bowing at the feet of Satan, you will be king and master of all the kingdoms of the earth. Is it not tempting what I offer you, and is it not an easy thing, since it is only to do thus? look!"

At these words he uncovered the small cup which contained the substance so lauded, took a

teaspoonful of the magic sweetmeat, raised it to his lips, and swallowed it slowly with his eyes half shut and his head bent backwards. Franz did not disturb him whilst he absorbed his favorite sweetmeat, but when he had finished, he inquired, -- "What, then, is this precious stuff?"

"Did you ever hear," he replied, "of the Old Man of the Mountain, who attempted to assassinate Philip Augustus?"

"Of course I have."

"Well, you know he reigned over a rich valley which was overhung by the mountain whence he derived his picturesque name. In this valley were magnificent gardens planted by Hassen-ben-Sabah, and in these gardens isolated pavilions. Into these pavilions he admitted the elect, and there, says Marco Polo, gave them to eat a certain herb, which transported them to Paradise, in the midst of ever-blooming shrubs, ever-ripe fruit, and ever-lovely virgins. What these happy persons took for reality was but a dream; but it was a dream so soft, so voluptuous, so enthralling, that they sold themselves body and soul to him who gave it to them, and obedient to his orders as to those of a deity, struck down the designated victim, died in torture without a murmur, believing that the death they underwent was but a quick transition to that life of delights of which the

holy herb, now before you had given them a slight foretaste.”

“Then,” cried Franz, “it is hashish! I know that – by name at least.”

“That is it precisely, Signor Aladdin; it is hashish – the purest and most unadulterated hashish of Alexandria, – the hashish of Abou-Gor, the celebrated maker, the only man, the man to whom there should be built a palace, inscribed with these words, ‘A grateful world to the dealer in happiness.’”

“Do you know,” said Franz, ‘I have a very great inclination to judge for myself of the truth or exaggeration of your eulogies.’”

“Judge for yourself, Signor Aladdin – judge, but do not confine yourself to one trial. Like everything else, we must habituate the senses to a fresh impression, gentle or violent, sad or joyous. There is a struggle in nature against this divine substance, – in nature which is not made for joy and clings to pain. Nature subdued must yield in the combat, the dream must succeed to reality, and then the dream reigns supreme, then the dream becomes life, and life becomes the dream. But what changes occur! It is only by comparing the pains of actual being with the joys of the assumed existence, that you would desire to live no longer, but to dream thus forever. When you return to this mundane sphere from your visionary

world, you would seem to leave a Neapolitan spring for a Lapland winter – to quit paradise for earth–heaven for hell! Taste the hashish, guest of mine – taste the hashish.”

Franz’s only reply was to take a teaspoonful of the marvelous preparation, about as much in quantity as his host had eaten, and lift it to his mouth... (Dumas, 1845).

LE COMTE DE MONTE-CRISTO PAR ALEXANDRE DUMAS



Jules BOUTY et C^e, Éditeurs, 11, Cloître-Saint-Honoré, PARIS.

Dumas' account of the serving of hashish was very similar to the description of the distribution of the "green

paste" at *Club des Hashischins* recorded by Theophile Gautier (1811-1872):

The doctor stood by a buffet on which lay a platter filled with small Japanese saucers. He spooned a morsel of paste or greenish jam about as large as a thumb from a crystal vase, and placed it next to the silver spoon on each saucer. The doctor's face radiated enthusiasm; his eyes glittered, his purple cheeks were aglow, the veins in his temples stood out strongly, and he breathed heavily through dilated nostrils. 'This will be deducted from your share in Paradise,' he said as he handed me my portion... (Gautier, 1846).



Depiction of the "Prince of the Assassins," Dr. Moreau, illustrated by Gautier at one of the gatherings of the *Haschischins*.



Illustration of Gautier smoking a hashish.

We know that members of the *Haschischins* Club in Paris, were also aware of Rabelais' esoteric reference to cannabis, for Gautier made cryptic references to this when describing his hashish visions: "What bizarrely contorted faces. What abdomens huge with Pantagruelion mockeries. All the Pantagruelion dreams passed through my fantasy." Gautier also made some very interesting comments on the effects of hashish: "I was in this blessed phase of hashish which Orientals call 'Kief.' I could no longer feel my body; the links between mater and spirit

were broken; I moved by my will alone in an atmosphere which offered no resistance. In this way I imagine, souls behave in the world which we go after death."

Honore Balzac, according to some an initiated Martinist, wrote of his experience under the influence of a hashish infused cigarette prior to attending a performance of Gioachino Rossini's *La Gazza*, and described how the "music came to me through shining clouds, stripped of all the imperfections that human work contains" and the orchestra became "a vast ... incomprehensible mechanism ... since all I could make out were the necks of double basses, the daring of bows, the golden curves of trombones, the clarinets, the finger-holes, but no musicians. Just one or two powdered wigs, motionless, and two swollen faces grimacing."⁵

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, was a Freemason, and sometimes worked elements of the craft into his writings. Doyle had a deep knowledge of both the occult and drugs. In

The Vital Message, he wrote that “When a man has taken hashish or certain other drugs, he not infrequently has the experience that he is standing or floating beside his own body, which he can see stretched senseless upon the couch.... How did the hashish victim see his own unconscious body?... There is a power of perception in the spiritual body which does give the power. We can say no more. To the clairvoyant the new spirit seems like a filmy outline. To the ordinary man it is invisible” (Doyle, 1919).

Not all those who attended the *Haschischins* Club were receptive to the experiences. Balzac barely dabbled, Victor Hugo wrote “Leave the kief to the Turks,” and Baudelaire’s *Les Paradis artificiels* (1860) was a rejection of the drug experience and the damages it wrought. Baudelaire’s repudiation of Hashish and opium caused fellow *Haschischins* Club member Flaubert to comment that within Baudelaire’s poetic rejection “You can smell the yeast of Catholicism” and in a personal letter to Baudelaire that “I would have preferred you not to condemn hashish, opium, overindulgence. How do you know what may ultimately come of all that?” (Flaubert, 1860) ⁶ in reference to the potential art and poetry which might arise from its use.

Another curious 19th-century account that ties Hashish with Freemasonry, is the 1879 German work, *Haschischgenuss im Abendland: anleitung zu’ Kenntniss und*

gebrauch des feinsten und merkwürdigsten Genussmittels (Hashish enjoyment in the West: guide to the knowledge and use of the finest and most remarkable pleasure) by Ferdinand Amersin. Amersin was well-known before the publication of his tome on hashish, for his book *Das Land der Freiheit* (The Land of Freedom) (1874). Amersin states he wrote *Haschischgenuss im Abendland* in order “To establish free, non-mysterious, hashish masonry, which can easily attain the importance of a new religion equal to that of the young Christianity” (Amersin, 1879).

I am, by the fact that I know the hashish, at the same time became a confidant of the Freemason’s secret. The lodges of the Freemasons, I think, are, in their secret part, that is, for the higher degrees, nothing but hashish-palaces. It is true that in old times, in the early morning, a man of intelligence, in the most refined, intellectual Hashish state, has made the following considerations: “The pleasure is too glorious to give to any man, perhaps unworthy. Only the good ones should have it!” For this reason he had established a secret union among confidants, who had to conspire to inaugurate the hashish use only those who have proved themselves in certain trials, which then took place at community meetings. The servant of the guardianship had a good sense of pleasure, and the hashish-ruffian always had a certain degree

of shame, and the spirit was aroused and widened, and the imagination, in particular, played its masterpiece. The great ideas which have come to light in the meetings are recorded in a holy covenant, and further developed with every meeting. The principal content of this is the beautiful thought of the noble, great task of mankind, while the other enjoyment during the hashish intoxication has its own happiness. The real lodges nowadays still carry a tincture, which is branched off from the ancient one of the founder of the covenant, and which is filled with fresh tinctures continually (Amersin, 1879).

Like Caliph Hakim in Nerval's tale, Ferdinand Amersin's use of hashish led him to identification with divinity and reoccurring lives:

The later series of ideas (which were not to be reproduced any longer) were concerned with the new religion based on hashish, and the peculiarity of each of the existing ones, that there was always something dizzy about the founding. This is, of course, also the case with hashish (a beautiful delusion is used as a bait), but as small as possible. The thought-game goes beyond the persons of world-famous swindlers, such as Count St. Germain, Cagliostro, and the like, with their pretension that they had already lived many centuries ago (which I could well explain by the

Hashish effect, And the hashish appeared to me as the much-sought "stone of the wise," as rejuvenation, & c.), to hold me with these miracles for one and the same personality, and to throw myself together with Pythagoras. The men of the same kind who appeared in the course of history, who were to be something very special, were all I myself, and my present existence is also only a single form of my entire past and future. It was a great uplifting thought to which I gave myself with delight, yet at the same time clearly aware that it was only a beautiful delusion. Mesmerism and spiritism were also the starting points. All this was only myself, and my present existence is also only a single form of my entire past and future.

...Is not Muhammad the founder of Hashish Masonry? Will not the pilgrims be introduced to this mystery when they arrive at Mecca? I am now also a Muslim in this sense. The Europeans are also to be put together by me. I am about to become one of the prophets, the Hashish-Prophet. The image of the founder now gradually fuses with his own. In the end, I am the one who took the thought of the founder, so I am equal to him (Amersin, 1879).

However, other selections from Amersin's work also indicate the sort of paranoia which some have experienced

under the use of hashish. A scene he describes of walking the streets, under the influence of hashish, gives us a clear example of his thought processes; he imagines “two captains ... have given me inviting Freemason signals. I feel a mild horror at this remark, assuming that this is the beginning of the persecution of the covenant against me. I supposedly dismiss them two times in succession. When they invited me on the bridge to the coffee-house, I was appalled by the fact that I had not been poisoned, so as to get me out of the world. Nevertheless, I accept everything willingly, and drink it courageously, consoling myself with the fact that the danger might perhaps be best evoked by a stranger. Later on in the conversation on the bridge, I hear the alleged members of the family saying to each other, ‘He is a master!’” (Amersin, 1879).

Up to this point in the tale Amerisin himself gives no indication he is a member of an existing Masonic lodge, and much of his thoughts on it should be framed more as suspicions, or intuitions he has come up with while high. It is only at the end of the account he realizes aspects of his hashish adventure have been some sort of initiation into an organization referred to as the “covenant” and “league,” that was comprised of hashish-using intellectuals. When he is confronted by a member of this group who questions whether he is an initiate of the order revealing secrets, Amerisin responds “did I unconsciously and involuntarily strike a string that aroused a reverberation at

the League?” When the answer comes in affirmative, Amerisin responds with these words, “What am I to do to join your honourable covenant?”

“The great oath of secrecy!” Replied the assembled unanimously solemnly.

They gave me time to consider. “So it is. I’m ready,” I said with a quick resolution.

I will take care not to list all the foolishness which they now, after having secretly led me into a great hall with other disguised men, made with me. “Let the ancient ritual, in which every little thing is full, as I myself will see later, not be mutilated,” they said devoutly, and subjected me to a binge of intimidation, so that I should not break the oath Pistols, presumably loaded, in front of my face, a sharp guideline dragged across my throat, and they clumsily clothed me with the skin. I could read pills for swallowing, which might be poisoned, etc. All this was from a solemn Raising and well-spoken text, Which made the matter bearable.

...At last, when the patience which so long had been preserved, They asked unanimously: “You will so with full determination your admission to the covenant?”

What else could I say more than a loud decided “Yes!”

The devil now went on to this. I felt as overwhelmed with fresh water, the congregation lifted their coverings, so that among them I could see the whole horde of my acquaintances together with some new scholars, writers, and artists, and all collapsed into a laugh. Now and then the shouts were out of the question: "O thou incorrigible idealist! Don Quixote! Fantastic Light-loving beauty!"

I was about to break out in anger; But the laughter had such an amiable tone, and the faces of my tormentors, in spite of my anxiety, that I was so eager to meet them that I immediately joined the ruling laughter, and thus showed that I was not willing to accept the well-played comedy.

"You see, thoughtful dreamer," they mocked singing, "what you did with your hashish!"

"Now, by the side," another one said, "since we are so beautifully together, and if you will forgive us the Sabbaths, we will also taste the wilderness and dream of your miraculous miracle!" [i.e. his hashish stash] (Amersin, 1879).

Amersin's intuitions in this story proved to be true, and he was told that he had caught the attention of the "League" through the earlier publication of *Das Land der Freiheit*, and they then decided to invite him into their secret order, leading to the initiation described.

Hashish and other substances, also held the interest of a number of members of the Masonic offshoot discussed earlier, Martinism. Martinism had become popular in the 19th century, largely through the work of Gérard Anacleto Vincent Encausse (1865-1916), popularly known by his pseudonym Papus. "Papus ... claimed to have several of Saint-Martin's original notebooks, something that Papus hoped would give some legitimacy to the revival. Papus is also noted as copying part of Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite from a transcription taken from an original copy" (Harrison, 2017).

Papus was the organizer of the "International Masonic Conference" in Paris in 1908, and besides being the head of the Martinist order, he held memberships in the Theosophical Society, the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn temple in Paris, the Rosicrucian Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix. Theodor Reuss of the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, also elevated Papus to that order's 10th degree. Papus also studied material which came from Charles Nodier, and Cazotte.

Papus wrote of hashish and other drugs in his *Traité élémentaire de magie pratique* (Elemental treatise of practical magic, 1893). "To keep within the limits of our study, we shall only deal here with the following stimulants: alcohol – coffee – tea, morphine, hashish. There are many other substances employed..." (Papus, 1893).

HASHISH - OPIUM - MORPHINE

Many people figure for themselves that hashish, fits into the class of the most dangerous drugs on the psychic viewpoint that can be handled and immediately gives sublime visions and plunges the experimenter in Ecstasy. However, thus presented, the action of hashish does answer to nothing of its reality. This substance, as with opium, but is with much more intensity, acts on force reserves of the nervous centres, emptying them in an instant of any reserve, and throws one en masse into the intellectual sphere. Also, ideas are exaggerated, amplified, embellished in a prodigious way: but we still need that the primordial idea and the paramount physical sensation to exist. So a lamp becomes, under the influence of hashish, a magnificent Palace lit by 10,000 lights and dripping jewels; on the other hand, when the incident idea is vulgar, Impressions are also. So a beginner taking hashish without preconceived idea and waiting for what was going to happen, simply dreamt it was a pipe and that he smoked himself.

Hashish is an amplifier and not a creator. But this exhilarating action is followed by a terrible reaction: reserve centres, emptied of their contents, agonize the unfortunate imprudent, and most awful nightmares, the most poignant pain are a natural

continuation of dreams charm and Astral sensations.

Opium, which morphine is derived from, has the same action, but with less intensity, and the unfortunate slave of this substance, willing to flee the reaction, which is imminent, gradually increasing the dose of the poison up to complete exhaustion, is soon followed by death.

Magical standpoint, the danger of these drugs is considerable, since they increase the empire to be impulsive about the willingness and need a good strong will to not to be dominated by these substances, incarnation / embodiment of the soul of the world in matter are key.


We do not want to unduly lengthen this presentation and we believe that what we have just said will be enough to understand these exciting theory (Papus, 1893).⁷

At least 12 issues of the Martinist/Masonic journal, *L'Initiation*, of which Papus was the director, contained articles on the use of hashish. An 1889 issue included an essay "Testament d'un Haschischeen," from regular contributor, the pharmacist, theosophist and founder of "Cannabinology" Jules Giraud, also know as Numa Pandorac. Giraud wrote about the ability of hashish to "see through the veil of Isis," and referred to it as the "the guardian angels in jam, the. Patriotism in marmalade, and

Providence in compote!" Giraud wrote numerous articles on hashish for various occult journals through the end of the 19th and start of the 20th century. In his "Prédictions d'un haschischéen sur le haschisch" which appeared in a 1905 edition of *La Voie, revue mensuelle de Haute Science*, he wrote how to take "hashish, [is] to place oneself in the hemp of the Lord, it is not a vulgar drunkenness: it is a retreat, a consultation of a tabernacle, a Eucharistic duty... a noble habit of sacred intoxication, an orphic diathesis" (Giraud, 1905).⁸ A disapproving critic in an 1889 edition of *The Theosophist*, (Volume 10) wrote of Giraud's celebration of cannabis and mysticism, *The Great Paradoxes of Numa Pandorac*, (1888) as "a disgraceful rhapsody on the pleasures of intoxication, by a writer who seems to practice what he preaches."

1889 - 11 - 32 951123

Le Numéro : UN FRANC. — Un An : DIX FRANCS.



L'Initiation

Revue philosophique indépendante des Hautes Etudes
Hypnotisme, Théosophie
Franco-Maçonnerie, Sciences Occultes

Directeur : PAPUS

Rédacteur en chef : George MONTIÈRE | Secrétaires de la rédaction : C. BARLET, J. LEJAY

SOMMAIRE (Voir ci-contre)

2^{me} VOLUME. — 2^{me} ANNÉE
N° 4. **JANVIER 1889**

RÉDACTION : 14, rue de Strasbourg, 14 PARIS | ADMINISTRATION : 58, rue St-André-des-Arts, 58 PARIS

Digitized by Google



Docteur Papus
grand-maitre des Loges martinistes.

Cover of L'Initiation, a Masonic Journal that Papus was editor of, and an illustration of Papus from Leo Taxil's 19th century anti Masonic journal Le Diable.

Other figures associated with the twelve Martinist masters at the time of Papus within the "Order Martiniste" of 1891, also known as "Conseil Occulte des 12 de la Rose+Croix," that wrote about and experimented with

drugs, included Stanislas De Guaita, Paul Sedir and Josephin Péladan, as well, later initiates like René Guénon.

Sedir dedicated his *Les Plantes Magiques* (1902) to Papus. *Les Plantes Magiques* covered philtres, tinctures unguents, and the various herbs used in their preparation, and these included a variety of psychoactive plants: "Let me introduce to You this small essay, dedicated to, You; who was the first, to awaken my spirit to the things of the Occult; since the twelve years that You have admitted me to the show of your labor many faces of science have passed before me which you have made to see the beauties of and also, its flaws. Now that I finally understood the Path You follow, I am pleased to say in public the great debt I owed to You..." (Sedir, 1902). The dedication of this particular volume from Sedir to Papus, whom he credits with awakening him to the occult, may well indicate that this introduction came via the aid of the plants discussed. Sedir certainly indicated a keen awareness of drugs and their occult use:

Hashish and Opium are two of the most known among the plants of mental action/effects; but no One, in the Occident, knows of the scientific handling of them, unless the person was to be initiated in the Orient,⁹ the stories of Quincey or Baudelaire, which regardless of their merit of art and of sincerity, does not give any indication on the possibilities of

such admixtures. All we can say is that the use of such drugs can lead to intellectual ecstasy that if the subject could, in advance ... [can] by sheer force of will, master his mental strengths and become able to govern the association of ideas without excitement; for this is not an easy task. - Otherwise, if a haschichéen' has not fixed understanding of it, he leaves on an adventure, in a boat without rudder on an ocean otherwise more terrible than the sea of India with its cyclones; and he may return, with madness as a companion, or even never return at all of (Sedir, 1902).

Paul Sedir (1871-1926):“ The Indian hemp gives an extracted resin which is the famous hashish. This ointment smoked or swallowed provides some ecstasies poorly understood in the West, but some Muslim sects, budhists' and Asia's Taoists use it in a intellectual dosage, for the study of psychurgy [analysis and study of the mind]” (Sedir, 1902).

Giving more evidence of the popularity of such substances in these circles, Carl Raschke refers to “Marquis Stanislas de Guaita and Josephine Péladan who smoked hashish, cultivated decadence, and endeavoured to revive the Rosicrucian Botherhood” (Raschke, 1980). Péladan does make references to hashish and opium in his writings, but it is more with Stanislas de Guaita (1861-1897) we see the open endorsement of such substances. “Hashish always favours and sometimes spontaneously determines the exit from the astral body. Indian hemp is a magical herb, first and foremost” (de Guaita, 1891). De Guaita's *Rosa Mystica* (1885) contained the following poem dedicated to cannabis and the poppy,

The Venetian Flowers

*Yet, Dangerous Flowers,
You're Generous
Sometimes – and Heal*

*Injured hearts!
Sweet is your caress
To the outcasts, what oppresses
What can not be banished:
The Souvenir!*

White poppy of Asia,

*When the cold Aspasia
Forces one of us
At his knees,*

*Thy opium, oh plant,
makes her soul indolent,
and, against sorrow,
all of brass,*

*And your bitter Morphine
Calm the poor mother
That obsession bites*

*From a dead child...
To the solitary monster
Who hides under the ground,
(All hearts remaining deaf to his love),*

*Divine Hashish, you are
drunk The beautiful houris drunk
– To the lips of coral –
Of your seraglio.*

*Salute, flora equivocal!
The unfortunate invokes you: Tamers
of sorrows,
Salute, O Flowers!
Be blessed, in short,*

*saps that pour to the man with
a pale face
The quiet Forgotten !*

As Jose Moreno notes: “Even the traditionalist, ultra-conservative and bourgeois gnostic René Guénon is attested to have used hashish (and opium) as an aid to contemplation, at least until marriage; And the most plausible thing is that he persisted in it later, since it began in the Sufi mysteries from 1912 trying to keep it in the greatest of secrets” (Moreno, 2002).¹⁰

A curious and humorous account in *La Magie a Paris*, (Thimmy, 1934) records how certain hidden masters told Rene Guénon to smoke cannabis from a water-pipe. The story has it that the occult author Zam Bhotiva had sought Guénon to write a foreword for his *Asia Mysteriosa*, a work that involved channeled messages from three Sages who were supposedly stationed in the Himalayas, the sort of occult shadow “hidden master” figures popularized by the works of Eckartshausen and Blavatsky, and, according to Rene Timmy, Guénon insisted on questioning them on their authenticity by choosing a Sanskrit word, “Hamsa,” which Timmy stated signifies the symbolic Swan and also the liberation of the mind/spirit, to see if they could identify it, and test them. They responded “Smoke hemp root in a water pipe and you will know what Hamsa is”! I think a few things may have become altered in Timmy’s

retelling of this story. I have my doubts that Hamsa was used as a Sanskrit word, as the identical word is used in the Mid-East for the “Hand of Fatima” and amongst the Druze it is seen as a reference to a hidden messiah, who is periodically reborn. This figure of Caliph Hakim, discussed in Nerval’s story, was considered an incarnation of Hamsa, and considering his realization of deity in the story came through the ingestion of hashish, the answer, from Bhotiva’s hidden masters, fits with the earlier account. However, the suggestion to smoke hemp root would be peculiar, as although the roots of cannabis do have some medicinal qualities, they would not be psychoactive smoked, and this again is likely a mistake on the part of Timmy.

This response is a little ironic when you know a few decades prior, Blavatsky’s own secret occult rulers, The Mahatmas, were at times written off as the stoned hallucinations of her hashish use!

According to Timmy, Guénon, who at this point in his life was abstaining, refused to let them use the foreword, as he was not taken with “the sages who invited him, the grave philosopher, to smoke hemp in a water pipe” (Timmy, 1934). However in a rebuttal, Bhovita produced a forward written by Guénon, in a 1931 edition of *Revue des Polaires*, and said it had been rejected prior to Guénon’s story of its refusal, with the comment deriding Guénon as the “‘Grand Master’ of Occultism who distributes, with the

morgue and sufficiency of the Medicine of Moliere, plasters and ointments Hermetic ..." (Bhovita, 1931).

L'Initiation also included works from the Freemason Victor Michal, "who was familiar with crystal-gazing, with hashish, astral projection, table-turning, and a certain 'theory of Seidism'¹¹ as taught by the Old Man of the Mountain, i.e., the chief of the 'Assassins' of Lebanon." (Godwin, 1994). Michal contributed the following poem, dedicated to cannabis, with dedications to the great pantagruelist Rabelais.

Hemp, himp

*Hemp, is, of humanity,
Living under the laws of harmony
And flourishing in liberty,
The strict image, define.
And Rabelais, by his burin'
Of hemp eternalizing glory,
When he gave it for godfather
His hero of august memory.*

*The pantagruelion' herbs
Grow straight and spud space
It discards of its furrow
Thief's bad herbs, slugs.
Its leafs goes by five and seven
Number of group and series, set*

*as the field formed a forest
that the brave wind fury.*

*As far as that goes of humanity
Hemp is born male and female.*

At the hour of puberty

The double sex reveal itself

And we see the field covering itself

Of a luminous dust;

Stamens just opened themselves!

This, is the love that populates the earth!

Swaddling cloth, bed sheet or grave cloth,

Hemp which we make canvas from

Follow man to his coffin;

Still Yesterday it was a cloth, a sheet.

Isn't the whole of humanity?

to replace of memories

That become the paper

On which we write stories?

Hemp doesn't only have a body:

Of its spirit, fiery flamed,

It's prodigal, unsparing us the treasures;

Of hemp, hashish is the soul

Hashish this precious juice

Of African or Asian hemp,

Which once drunken the gods,

Which they called ambrosia!

*None says that happiness
Isn't the human destiny,
Which each carries in his heart
The eternal hope, innate.
Of hashish, they haven't tasted;
Cause, a little of its green paste,
Then Dream are made as reality,
It's as always, the open door!*

– Victor Michal¹²

Michal is particularly notable for his close relationship with Helena Petrova Blavatsky (1831-1891), founder of the Theosophical Society, author of the occult classics, *Isis Unveiled* (1877), and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) and possibly the most influential figure of 19th-century occultism. “It was Michal who developed the mediumistic faculties of Madame Blavatsky” (Queenborough, 1933). “Victor Michal. Michal ... used hashish in his work – a possible link to HPB’s [Blavatsky’s] own disputed use – and he is said to have found HPB a wonderful trance subject” (Lachman, 2012). A.L. Rawson a painter, author and Mason, was a close friend of Blavatsky for over forty years, stated concerning her relationship with cannabis:

She had tried hasheesh in Cairo with success, and she again indulged in it in this city under the care of

myself and Dr. Edward Sutton Smith, who had had a large experience with the drug among his patients at Mount Lebanon, Syria. She said: “Hasheesh multiplies one’s life a thousandfold. My experiences are as real as if they were ordinary events of actual life. Ah! I have the explanation. It is a recollection of my former existences, my previous incarnations. It is a wonderful drug and it clears up profound mystery” (Rawson, 1892).

A.L. Rawson was one of a few life-long friends Blavatsky had, and she herself attested to the validity of his character. The two traveled throughout Europe and to the East together and in the 1850s the duo are said to have journeyed to Cairo, both disguised as Egyptian men, and seeking out magical knowledge from figures like the Coptic magician Paulos Metamon. “In Egypt, Rawson had also imparted various Freemasonic secrets to Blavatsky, after which the two had experimented with hashish” (Nance, 2009). Rawson and Blavatsky also spent time in 1850’s Cairo, with Sir Richard Burton, who was also a devotee of hashish and esoteric pursuits, and who, as noted, suggested that the origins of Freemasonry were to be found in the Mid-East.



Helena Petrovna Blavatsky



Depiction of Rawson from Freemasonry in the Holy Land: Handmarks of Hiram's Builders (Morris, 1875)

In *Isis Unveiled*, Blavatsky made the following comments concerning her good friend and associate A.L.

Rawson: "Outside the East we have met one initiate (and one only), who, for some reasons best known to himself, does not make a secret of his initiation into the Brotherhood of Lebanon. It is the learned traveler and artist, Professor A.L. Rawson, of New York City. This gentleman has passed many years in the East, four times visited Palestine, and has traveled to Mecca. It is safe to say that he has a priceless store of facts about the beginnings of the Christian Church, which none but one who has had free access to repositories closed against the ordinary traveler could have collected" (Blavatsky, 1877). The Brotherhood of Lebanon, in this case are the Druzes, whom we have mentioned in relation to Nerval, Potocki and others. Hakim Bey has suggested Rawson as a possible author of the 19th-century essay, "The Orgies of the Hemp Eaters," which recorded the use of cannabis as "Homa" by an Islamic group in Syria, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Rawson was ... deeply involved with secret societies. He was adopted as a "brother" by the Adwan Bedouins of Moab and initiated by the Druze in Lebanon ... he ... was one of the founders of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, a life member of the Society Rosicruciana Americae, a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason, and a member of the 95th degree in the Rite of Memphis. He wrote rituals for several secret societies (Johnson, 1994).

Rawson was also an initiate of Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (Rosicrucian Society of England) a Masonic esoteric Christian order formed in 1865, and he was particularly influential in the drafting of the initiation rites, or ceremonies, of the Shriners, and is said to have provided much of the Arabic background. Rawson himself is said to have converted to Islam by some sources. In *The Masonic Myth*, Jay Kinney states that Rawson, whom he saw as “something of a fringe Masonic confidence man” had “claimed to have translated the original rituals from the Arabic and to have provided the new organization with actual contacts with Eastern brotherhoods...” (Kinney, 2009). An article about Rawson from an 1896 edition of *The Masonic Review*, refers to him as the “Founder of the Mystic Shrine,” in a glowing biography:

...After studying law, he made four visits to the Orient, and in 1851-2, made a pilgrimage from Cairo to Mecca with the annual caravan, disguised as a Mohammedan student of medicine.... Mr. Rawson has been adopted as a brother by the Adwan Bedouins of Moab, and initiated by the Druses of Mount Lebanon; is a founder of the Theosophical Society in the United States, and is a member of various literary, scientific and geographical societies.... Mr. Rawson had, in 1853, been initiated into the Order of Bektash Dervishes, and from him came the

inspiration of the incantations, the Oriental symbolism and mystic allegory which makes the texture of this great Fraternity's [Shriner's] ritual.

The Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America identifies Rawson as a pivotal and founding member of the Shriners:

The constitutional authority for promulgating the principles and practice of the Order was confided to Dr. Walter M. Fleming, 33°, and his associates, William J. Florence, 32°; Edward Eddy, 33° ; John W. Simons, 33° ; Sherwood C. Cambell, 32° ; Oswald Merle d'Aubigne, 32°; James S. Chappell, 32°; John A. Moore, 32° ; (the last seven have since entered the unseen temple), Charles T. McClenachan, 33°: Albert P. Moriarty, 33°: Daniel Sickels, 33°; George W. Millar, 33°, and William S. Paterson, 33° together with Albert L. Rawson, 32°, the Arabic translator, all prominent Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite Masons and Knights Templar of New York, N. Y., who instituted the first Temple of the Order in that city under the title of “Mecca Temple, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine,” on September 26, 1872 (Livingston, 1903).

It was “Through Professor Albert L. Rawson” who through correspondences and knowledge of the language, the Shriners rituals and history were “comprised... [and]

from which the Order started" (Livingston, 1903).

The Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine was instituted by the Mohammedan Kalif Alee, the cousin-germane and son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed (God favour and preserve him!) in the year of the Hegira 25 (A.D. 644) at Mecca, in Arabia, as an Inquisition, or Vigilance Committee, to dispense justice and execute punishment upon criminals who escape their just deserts through the tardiness of the courts, and also to promote religious toleration among cultured men of all nations...

The "nobles" perfected their organization, and did such promote and efficient work that they excited alarm and even consternation in the hearts of evil doers in all countries under the Star and Crescent.

The Order is yet one of the most highly-favoured among the many secret societies which abound in Oriental countries, and gathers around its shrines a select few of the best educated and cultured classes...

Its membership in all countries includes Christians, Israelites, Moslim, and men in high positions of learning and of power...

Frequent revolutions, however, in Arabia, Persia, and Turkey have obscured the Order from time to time, as appears from the many breaks in the

continuity of the records at Mekkah, but it has as often been revived...

The Nobles of the Mystic Shrine are sometimes mistaken for certain orders of Dervishes ... but this is an error. The only connection the Order ever had with any sect of Dervishes was with that called Bektash (white hats). This warlike sect undertook to favour and protect the 'Nobles' in a time of great peril, and have ever since been counted among its most honoured patrons.

The famous Arab known as the Bektash, from a peculiar high white hat or cap which he made from a sleeve of his gown, the founder of the sect named in his honour, was an Iman in the army of Sultan Amurath I., the first Mohammedan who led an army into Europe, A.D. 1330. This Sultan was the founder of the military order of the Janizaries (so called because they were freed Christian captives, who were adopted into the faith of the army), although his father, Orkhan, began the work. Bektash adopted a white robe and cap, and instituted the ceremony of kissing the sleeve...

Among the modern promoters of the Order in Europe was Herr Adam Weishaupt, a Rosicrucian (Rosy Cross Mystic) and Professor of Law in the University of Ingolstadt, Bavaria. This distinguished scholar opened a Temple, 1st May 1776, the members of

which were styled Illuminati, and exercised profound influence before and after the French Revolution (Livingston, 1903).

Historically we know that figures associated with the order have been for centuries referred to as smoking “hashish... in a ceremonial way” (Stauth, 2015). “Bektashi poetry speaks eloquently and frequently of hashish and opium as paths to the divine” (Jay, 1999). Opium and hashish were “held by dervishes to secret kaif, or the quintessence of the soul. The Bektashi order was said ... to make naked novices, under its influence, take secret vows.... Mixed with costly spices it became baharab and took one to paradise” (Goodwin, 2013). Kaygusuz Abdal was a famous 15th-century Bektashi Dervish poet whose name, Kaygusuz, is a catch word for hashish, and this has been interpreted by some scholars as a pseudonym implying that he was a hashish addict and was reputed to have composed many of his poems in a trance under the herb’s effects. Mark Sedgwick refers to Giovanni Antonio Menavino’s account of the Bektashi from *Trattato dei costumi dei Turchi*, published in 1548 in Venice: “The ‘dervishes’ (Bektashis) are ‘very merry people.’ Their use of powdered hashish (asseral) to make them ‘intoxicated’ (imbriaco) is noted but not condemned” (Sedgwick, 2016). “One wonders whether Menavino himself has become a Bektashi, as his detailed knowledge of the Bektashis could hardly have

been acquired by means other than participant observation, and the Bektashis were present at the Ottoman court” (Sedgwick, 2016).

The Bektash are generally viewed as heretics by mainstream Islam, and their beliefs are a syncretic mix of esoteric elements: “...[B]esides different Sufi doctrines and practices, many religious traditions may have contributed to the development and appearance of Bektashism, including ancient Turkic elements preserving pre-Islamic and non-Islamic beliefs and customs originating in shamanism, Buddhism, Manichaeism, Christianity and antique religions.... [T]he Bektashis also incorporated anthropomorphic and cabbalistic doctrines of letter and number symbolism...” (Doja, 2008). Gershom Scholem, has also seen an association between the Bektash and the heretical Jewish movement that formed around Sabbatai Zevi (Scholem, 1995). This is interesting in relation to the messianic Jewish figure Joseph ben Zur whose inspiration from hashish was described in Chapter 15. Writing in the 19th century, Richard Davie wrote that the Bektash “are said to even be affiliated to some of the French Masonic Lodges.” (Davie, 1897). This connection seems to have been well known. In 1906, H.N. Brailsford stated in reference to the Bektashi, that “their place in Islam is perhaps most nearly analogous to that of Freemasonry in Christianity” and that “Bektashis themselves like to imagine that the Freemasons are kindred spirits” (Brailsford, 1906).¹³



A BEKTASH DERVISH INHALING
HASHEESH.

There may be some surviving elements of the Bektashis' divine intoxication to be found still today in the Mystic Shrine, albeit here adapted to Western tastes, and alcoholic beverages taking the place of the hashish and opium preferred by the Bektashis. As Master Mason P. D. Newman relates, "In stark contrast to the contemplative formalities of Masonic ritual, since its inception and according to its own description, the Ancient Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine has always been about

'fellowship and fun.' ... Moreover, alcohol has always been a mainstay of Shrine activities. Indeed, even in Masonic Jurisdictions where Freemasons are not permitted to participate in the wine-stained jovial toasts of the Table Lodge and Festive Board, the Shrine has always allowed its alcoholic indulgences" (Newman, 2018).

Curiously, later accounts of Shriner history seem to somewhat downplay Rawson's role in it.

Rawson also wrote about turning on the 19th century physicist Dr. John Tyndall (1820-1893), who was said by Rawson to have remarked after a number of experiments with hashish "This is how Jacob saw heaven above his ladder, and how Saint John, the Revelator, got his glimpse of the celestial and infernal regions."¹⁴

The rumours of hashish use by Theosophists was certainly cause for scandal. The authors of *The Methodist Review*, complained: "Theosophy ... 'the Wisdom Religion,' visits us from afar from time to time in the persons of such missionaries as Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Henry Olcott, Mrs. Anne Besant. It also hails from the dreamy Orient and comes to convert the Occident. With the mild delirium of hasheesh swimming in its eyes it feebly stretches out its soft and inefficient hands to direct and push on the intense interests and urgent affairs of this practical land. It attempts to bring reverie to bear upon action and achievement. It produces a weak literature, attempts limited philanthropies.... If a theosophist has a

creed he keeps it carefully hidden. The truth he claims to possess is, on his representation, so deadly dangerous to all other faiths, and is so completely covered from sight, as to suggest to the malignant mind of a prowling enemy the possibility of having him arrested and locked up under the statute against carrying concealed weapons” (Mason & Soule, 1893). It is likely over such controversy as this, which was widespread, that Blavatsky’s later writings seem to reject the use of cannabis and other psychoactive substances for spiritual purposes, as does the modern Theosophical society.



Above and below: Illustrations from *The Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America* depicting a candidate’s dream and its otherworldly adventure.



Blavatsky was also well acquainted with the 19th century Freemason and inventor George Felt, who gave a lecture in Blavatsky’s apartment in 1875, on “The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians,” knowledge that came to him “by chemical means.” Felt had hoped to “introduce into the Masonic fraternity a form of initiation such as prevailed among the ancient Egyptians.”¹⁵

Felts desire to make Freemasonry better resemble the Egyptian mysteries – one of its supposed ancestors – brings him into the same ambit as Rawson, the propagator of the Rites of Memphis and other orientalizing orders. One possibility that leaps to mind is

the controlled use of a drug such as hashish, with which the French magnetizes often enhanced the perception of somnambulists, which had brought Randolph such unforgettable experiences, and with which Blavatsky herself had experimented both in Cairo and New York (Godwin, 1994).

Rene Guénon believed that Felt had introduced Blavatsky into the occult order the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, (H.B. of L.) and that she was later expelled, then went on to form the Theosophical Society, all orchestrated by veiled Eastern Masters, in Guénon's hidden hand view. In reference to the mail order instructions for initiation of the H.B. of L. Godwin notes "An essential part of the initiation ceremony seems to have been the taking of a pill that was sent along with instructions. Probably this contained a concentrated dose of hashish and/or opium, to ensure a memorable experience and perhaps even a communication with the entities of the 'Interior Circle'" (Godwin, 1994). The Interior Circle was a group of hidden initiates, deriving from the concepts of Eckartshausen, Blavatsky, Guénon, etc.



A depiction of a ritual taking place in a Masonic lodge, New York, circa 1900; note the fumigation, Fez - shriners hats, and alchemical set-up.

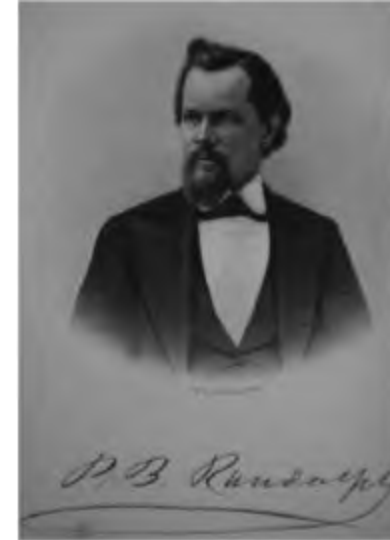
In their excellent book on this order, *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor*, (Godwin, Chanel, Deveny, 1995), the co-authors offer a description from the Mason and so-called Alchemist of the Golden Dawn, of which he was also a member, Rev. William Alexander Ayton, regarding his initiation into the H.B.L. In his initiation into the group, Ayton was required to drink "what purported to be the real Soma juice drunk at a certain stage.... I hesitated very much to drink this drug ... & I thought of omitting it. However, I opened the bottle & smelt of it. All my life, I have been used to drugs, & I at once recognised [sic] this. I knew its effects were most powerful, but I decided to take

it. Whether it was hallucination produced by this drug I know not, but I was conscious of another presence ... I was fully three hours at it from midnight. When over, I felt my pulse, & found just what I expected, that it was intermittent, which was what I knew to be the effect of the drug I thought it was." The authors, who are some of the most knowledgeable historians of this period in occult history, note that "hashish ... certainly played a role in the initiation of the H.B. of L. [and of] the Rev. Ayton..." (Godwin, Chanel & Deveny, 1995).

There seems to have been an overall interest in the occult use of drugs shared by key members of the group. In "*The Occult Magazine* 1, no. 1 (February, 1885) ... the editor ... Peter Davidson" an important figure in the The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor "quotes Eckertshausen on the narcotic properties of substances which will exalt the nervous susceptibility, as well as assist in clarifying the veil of atmospheric density, inducing trance, etc., and increasing the power of representation, and consequently of the Astral Visions" (Deveney, 1997). H.B. of L. was particularly known for their fascination with magic mirrors, which like other aspects, likely came through the influence of P.B. Randolph.

The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor drew heavily on the teachings of Paschal Beverly Randolph, (1815-1875) the mulatto mystic and importer of hashish, who sold a variety of cannabis-infused elixirs in the United States, advertising

them, as well as writing articles about hashish for the popular American spiritualist magazine, *Banner of Light* and detailing it in his own works, such as the essay "Hashish, Its Uses, Abuses, and Dangers, Its Extasia, Fantasia and Illuminati" (1867).



A leader for a few years (1857-1861) of a Rosicrucian order in San Francisco that he had founded, Randolph traveled alone in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, France and the United Kingdom, dedicating himself in all those places to learning techniques and knowledge from Occultists and to take advantage of the use of hashish, whose discovery he described as true "revelation." This prompted him in 1860 to write a definitive treatise ... on the use of this substance to reach the state of trance, And another equally important around the clairvoyance with the magic mirror... (Moreno, 2002).

Randolph's life, and his use of hashish are detailed in John Deveney's excellent biography, *Paschal Beverly Randolph: A Nineteenth-Century Black American, Spiritualist, Rosicrucian and Sex Magician* (Deveney, 1997). Like Rawson, Randolph had been initiated into esoteric teaching while traveling in the Mid-East, in this case the Ismaili offshoot the Nusa'iri, thought to be the sect described drinking a cannabis infusion under the name "homa" in the forementioned 19th-century article "Orgies of the Hemp Eaters." In his travels in Europe and particularly France, Randolph was befriended by a number of mesmerists, occultists, Masons and Rosicrucians, who were working with cannabis for use with magic mirrors, astral traveling and other techniques, such as Louise Alphonse Cahagnet, Baron du Potet, Kenneth R.H. Mackenzie, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Eliphas Levi and other important figures of the 19th-century occult revival.

The French Mesmerist, Spiritualist and occultist Louis-Alphonse Cahagnet (1809–1885), was particularly influential on Randolph, and it is likely here he gained his biggest influence in regards to the mystical use of hashish. In *The Sanctuary of Spiritualism: A study of the human soul, and of its relations with the universe, through somnambulism and ecstasy* (1851)¹⁶ Cahagnet recorded the experiences of over a dozen participants who had ingested coffee infused with 3 grams of hashish and concluded: "These phenomena demonstrated to me that these

hallucinations, so called by all those who have taken this beverage, and on whom similar effects have been produced, were intended to establish sacred truths, especially by directing towards them the serious observation of all studious men..." (Cahagnet, 1851).

...There is not one of these ecstatic who, after emerging from this state, has not felt a desire to thank God for such an initiation... and each has found himself penetrated with these truths....

...Does not a medicine exist, which I dare only whisper to you, which is that of the word, the living word which says, let that be, and that is—the medicine of the Christs, of the Saints,... of all the thaumaturgists generally, of our curers by the touch in country places, of our sayers of neuvaines, of faith, of the will—a medicine the virtue of which may even be included in the mere name of a plant!!

Mesmerism, a name taken from that of its "discoverer," the German doctor Franz Mesmer (1734-1815), is the popular term for a force he called "Animal magnetism," an invisible natural force possessed by all living/animate beings (humans, animals, vegetables, etc.). Mesmerists believe that this force has physical effects, including healing. Ernest Bersot's *Mesmer et le magnétisme animal* (1854) gives some indications of the interest in the use of such substances by the Mesmerists of the 19th century:

Extraordinary states of the soul: exaltation of the intellectual faculties: imagination, memory, etc. Some drinks excite the mind. We know what effect the opium, mixed with leaves of a kind of hemp, produces on the Orientals. Koempfer, who took a bowl of these preparations in Persia, believed himself for several moments transported to the clouds in the midst of the rainbow, and did not emerge from his ecstatic delirium until after a few hours' sleep. The Old Man of the Mountain, by similar drinks, mounted the imagination of the young men, and promised them for eternity the enjoyments of these moments, if they executed his orders. Fasting also excites the imagination.... The ancient sibyls were exalted by the vapours of the cave where they made predictions (Bersot, 1854).

Bersot goes on to list the various witch drugs used to travel to the Sabbath, in reference to this as well, "These plants are mainly mandrake, belladonna, spiny apple (*datura stramonium*), darnel, tares, poppies or opium, all herbs of smell and stunning properties, or are stupefying and narcotic" (Bersot, 1854). As we saw in Chapter 15 Mesmerists were not only ingesting such substances, but infusing magic mirrors with them as well, believing that this gave the devices the magnetic energies of the various plants used. Randolph also practiced this technique and

wrote about it.

However, it was with the 19th-century French Rosicrucians that the use of hashish particularly flourished. Contemporary accounts attest to the widespread use of the resin of the Orient.

I have been assured that there are many priests in France who are also Rosicrucians, and still more who are Templars.... These men were expert alchemists and able magicians. By the fumes of drugs burnt as incense, they could wrap the spirit in delight, and throw the body into a state of coma, in which mesmeric clairvoyance might easily be induced, and the party believe himself to converse with the invisible world.... By hasheesh they could wrap them in ravishing enjoyment almost beyond human power to support, unfitting them for the duties of life for ever afterwards.... All these experiments are performed every Sunday in Paris by parties who avow that they derive their sciences and their religion from the ancient mysteries.

– *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, (1852).

As Deveney explains, "...Randolph – as the French mesmerists before him – found that hashish constituted the perfect food for the soul.... If ... he had been searching for years to find the 'wine of life,' the elixir that would perfectly restore the depleted vital fluids that served to connect the

soul to the body, he had found it in hashish, the real secret of the wisdom tradition” (Deveney, 1997). Randolph’s enthusiasm could not be made more clear than by his own words.

The serenest and most beatific vision that I ever experienced, resulted from taking 18 grains of Dowam Meskh an Egyptian preparation. I first took it in France, and subsequently obtained the secret of its composition as it is made in Cairo. It may astonish those who knew me some years ago as a blank atheist, and believer in the accursed individual sovereignty sophistry, when I tell them, that when in the deepest gloom of soul after trying to believe in Jehovah, with only partial success, I was at last perfectly convinced through the agency of this wonderful conserve. I took a portion of Dowan Meskh; it perfectly illuminated me, but the lucidity infinitely exceeded anything that I had ever known before, either spiritual, self-induced, or mesmeric. In this illumination there was no loss of will or self. When fully clear, I asked the question, “Is there a God?” The answer came, or I went to it; but the mysteries revealed to my astonished soul on that eventful night, will never be disclosed to mortal ears. One thing only shall be said, namely – Never! no, not for an instant have I since doubted the existence of God (Randolph,

1860).

As Randolph noted of the Rosicrucians: “I am induced to say thus much in order to disabuse the public mind relative to Rosicrucianism... which was not originated by Christian Rosencrux; but merely revived, and replanted in Europe by him subsequent to his return from oriental lands, whither, like myself and hundreds of others, he went for initiation” (Randolph, 1874). As A.E. Waite wrote in, *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*: “... I am not in a position to affirm that Paschal Beverly Randolph produced the first putative Order of the Rosy Cross in America, but I have failed to trace anything anterior to his date, and he will answer as the first witness in a line of occult adventurers who are typically characteristic of their place and circumstance” (Waite, 1924).

Randolph’s *Ravalette: The Rosicrucian Story* (1861) is generally seen as a somewhat sensationalized account of his time in the French Rosicrucian scene, his various initiations, and it has numerous references to his search for “the Elixir of Life – that very Elixir for which the Philosopher’s have toiled.” *Ravalette*, also describes Randolph’s trip to the Mid-East “to obtain the material in Jerusalem, for the composition of the elixir of Life; not that I intended to make it, but because I wanted to use them in my medical practice” (Randolph, 1861). It was here that Randolph was allegedly initiated into the Nusa’iri tribe of Syria, who

we discussed in Chapter 3 for their sacramental use of cannabis as “homa” in the 19th century, as well as their Grail-like “ritual of the cup.” The knowledge that Randolph gained from these people led to his *The Anseiratic Mystery* (1873); the name “Ansayrii” identifies the same people as the name Nusa’iri, the latter spellings representing the elision of the original Arabic name with the initial “N.”

As we saw in Chapter 12, Randolph clearly viewed the Elixir of Life as some sort of preparation of cannabis, and we can be sure his mission to Jerusalem was a success, as by the time of *Ravalette’s* publications he was already advertising a variety of products from the “very best Oriental Hemp.” He was preparing and selling with his Native American wife, Mary Jane, “an Indian woman, descended from a long line of native ‘Medicine Men,’ and is thoroughly educated in her profession” (Randolph 1860). At “one point before the Civil War he was probably the largest importer of hashish into the United States” (Deveney, 1997).

In reply to the numerous correspondents let me say that nearly all the Hashish I brought with me from Europe, (and none other is fit to use,) is exhausted. The balance I will sell at \$ four a bottle, with full directions on how to secure the celestial, and avoid the ill fantasies. I have only twenty-five cases left out of three hundred and fifty, so that those who want

the genuine Oriental article must send at once to: Dr. P.B. Randolph, 17 Bromfield St., Boston, Mass.

– *Banner of Light* advertisement, October 1860.

Randolph patented a variety of cannabis based aphrodisiacs and medicines, giving them alchemical sounding names such as *phymylle* and *amylle*, and the differences he attributes to its effects, leaves one wondering if he had stumbled upon the opposing effects of CBD and THC. “He touted the first as especially suited for nervous exhaustion and the second as a panacea for ‘passional excess, onanism, etc’. Together they were the best ‘aphrodision’ in the world” (Deveney, 1997).

The story of *Ravalette*, and the search for sacred elixirs, is particularly interesting in relation to other Rosicrucian adventure stories such as Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s *Zanoni: A Rosicrucian tale*. Baron Edward George Earle Bulwer-Lytton, (1803-1873) was an English novelist, poet, playwright, politician and Rosicrucian. His novels were immensely popular and he coined the phrases “the great unwashed,” “pursuit of the almighty dollar,” “the pen is mightier than the sword,” “dweller on the threshold,” and the well-known opening line. “It was a dark and stormy night.” “Bulwer-Lytton led the English Rosicrucians, a branch of the Scottish Rite Masons headed by Prime Minister Palmerston. Unlike the comparatively closed-mouth members of the British elite around him, Bulwer-Lytton

was an outspoken exponent of the Isis Cult.” (Kalimtgis, 1992). Alexander Kok has suggested that the British version of the “Isis ritual” that Lytton was involved in, was known for “its dependency (for spiritual renewal) on hashish” (Kok, 2008). Unfortunately Kok failed to reveal the source of his claim.



In *Zanoni: A Rosicrucian tale* Bulwer-Lytton wrote: “To quaff the inner life, is to see the outer life; to live in defiance of time, is to live in the whole. He who discovers the elixir, discovers what lies in space; for the spirit that vivifies the frame strengthens the senses. There is attraction in the elementary principle of light. In the lamps of Rosicrusius, the fire is the pure elementary principle. Kindle the lamps while thou openest the vessel that contains the elixir, and the light attracts towards thee those beings whose life is that light” (Bulwer-Lytton, 1842). Many real-life figures were referred to in *Zanoni*, such as the opium seer, “Cazotte ... [who] appears in person and as a companion of Zanoni, uttering his prophecies in a circle of national, enlightened philosophers while in a clairvoyant trance, which Zanoni induced” (van Schlun, 2007). Like Cagliostro, Zanoni is known for his various medical cures. “The astonishing feats of healing produced by Zanoni are perfectly explicable given sufficient knowledge of the herbal medicine he practices. In explicitly rejecting supernaturalism and superstition, Bulwer-Lytton argues for Rosicrucian esotericism as a sacred science rather than diabolism” (Machin, 2003).

In *Bulwer-Lytton: The Rise and Fall of a Victorian Man of Letters*, Lytton is described as often dressed in foreign attire and accepting “visitors while smoking a pipe six or seven feet in length, or taking opium through a hookah. Interviews were offered in a room decorated in the style of

Pompeii and lighted by 'a perfumed pastille modelled from Mount Vesuvius' ... small children found the whole effect terrifying. Sir Leslie Ward found him 'almost satanic looking,' ... Thomas Carlye exclaimed 'I shall never forget Bulwer in this world. A mad world, my masters'" (Mitchell, 2003). Wilkie Collins reported that "Bulwer Lytton had told him that he used opium as a stimulus and tranquilizer, and in an article he wrote on Lytton's *A Strange Story* he said Lytton's inspiration for the tale obviously came from laudanum, which was the resource that sustained his work, as he had confessed to Collins" (Hayter, 2015). "Bulwer-Lytton ... regularly smoked opium, suggested that opium enhanced his intellectual well-being: 'A pipe is the fountain of contemplation, the source of pleasure, the companion of the wise; and the man who smokes, thinks like a philosopher and acts like a Samaritan'" (Barter, 2004).

Bulwer-Lytton also seems to have held some interest in opium trade, as a letter reprinted in the *Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons and Command, Volume 48* (1860) refers to being "directed by Secretary Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton ... for the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the treasury" included a "copy of a Despatch from the Governor of Hong Kong" regarding the "licensing and regulating the sale of prepared Opium."

Another writer of this genre was William Ainsworth's, *Auriol: or, The Elixir of Life* which combined the Rosicrucian

theme with elements from the tragic story of *Faust*. *Auriol* contains the following hallucinatory description of a dwarf, drinking what he thinks is his recently deceased master's potion of the *elixir of life*:

I next looked round to see whether the precious elixir was gone. On the table stood a phial, from which a strong spirituous odour exhaled; but it was empty. I then turned my attention to a receiver, connected by a worm with an alembic on the furnace. On examining it, I found it contained a small quantity of a bright transparent liquid, which, poured forth into a glass, emitted precisely the same odour as the phial. Persuaded this must be the draught of immortality, I raised it to my lips; but apprehension lest it might be poison stayed my hand. Reassured, however, by the thought of the young man's miraculous recovery, I quaffed the potion. It was as if I had swallowed fire, and at first I thought all was over with me. I shrieked out; but there was no one to heed my cries, unless it were my dead master, and two or three skeletons with which the walls were garnished. And these, in truth, did seem to hear me; for the dead corpse opened its glassy orbs, and eyed me reproachfully; the skeletons shook their fleshless arms and gibbered; and the various strange objects with which the chamber was filled, seemed to deride and menace

me. The terror occasioned by these fantasies, combined with the potency of the draught, took away my senses. When I recovered, I found all tranquil. Doctor Lamb was lying stark and stiff at my feet, with an expression of reproach on his fixed countenance; and the skeletons were hanging quietly in their places (Ainsworth, 1844).



Image from Auriol, of a treacherous rogue partaking of a dying alchemist's preparation of the elixir of life.

We can be sure that Ainsworth was well familiar with the effects of various drugs and their role in the occult. He did in fact, write about the Assassins and other Islamic groups' use of hashish, in the journal that he edited *The New Monthly Magazine*, which also featured the work of Bulwer-Lytton. An 1852 edition of the *Monthly*, had an article "The Ansayrii, or Assassins." "The term Assassin is now generally admitted to be derived from these people, and from the intoxicating drugs, hemp and opium – hashish – which they used to excite themselves to deeds of desperation. Under that name, and under the name of Churrus in Persia, and Gunjah in India, this drug is still extensively used in the East.... The mass of argument is rather in favour of the Ismayli being the so-called Assassins of the Crusaders, than the Ansayrii; both no doubt have used, or do use, the drug hashish" (1852).

In *A Personal Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*, Ainsworth reveals his deep knowledge and interest in such groups, in a description that I would argue should see him added to the list of potential authors proposed by Hakim Bey, for "The Origes of the Hemp Eaters," (1895) with Rawson and Randolph.

The use of this herb is very common in the East...
The Indian, Persian, and Arabic physicians and

authors treat of it in their works. Makrisi particularly describes, in glowing terms, certain pleasure resorts ... near Cairo, which were famous above all for the sale of hashish...

It is said in a work by Hasan to have been first used in 658 of the Hegira, by a Sheikh of the order of Haider. An Arab poet sings of this Haider's 'emerald cup,' an evident allusion to the rich green colour of a tincture of the herb. The Sheikh, it is said, only survived the discovery ten years, subsisting chiefly on the drug, and on his death, his disciples, by his desire, planted it round an arbour over his tomb – a fit emblem of his death...

Volney and Burckhardt interested themselves in seeking out how much there was that was pagan in these Christian-Muhammadan doctrines. The solar apotheosis of their chief prophet is declared to have been a pagan dream; but how far the doctrine of metempsychosis is grafted on the worship of Baal, or what affinity exists between Baal-Phezer and the Juggernaut of India, appear really to be questions but remotely connected with the Ansarians, supposing they did admit the transmigration of souls as one of their many strange beliefs.

The Ansarians have also been calumniated in common with the ... Ismaelis ... and the ... Yezidis, Kurd worshipers of Ized, the "evil spirit," as

performing rites of an infamous description, similar to what were laid to the charge of the ancient Gnostics (Ainsworth, 1888).

The above description fits with the ideas and beliefs brought back by Randolph after his own sojourn with this mysterious Mid-Eastern sect. It seems that the research and travels of some occultists may have led them back to the very source and origins of the Western magical tradition, the homeland of the magic of *The Picatrix*, the elixirs of Alchemy and alleged source of Templar initiations.

The anti-Masonic writer Charles Nicoullaud, in his *L'Initiation Maçonnique*, used the difference between the philosophical high of hashish, as opposed to the dulling effects of alcohol, to describe the differences between Rosicrucians and Freemasons. "The Rose-Cross is to the Ordinary Master what a Man who has an intoxication of hashish must be to the vulgar drinker who has recreated Himself only with the Red Blood, of the vine" (Nicoullaud, 1913).

Occult writer Francis King refers to the work of an “early member of the ‘Soc. Ros.’ [Rosicrucian Society in England] ... Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie [1833-1836]), a young Mason and occultist who claimed that he had been initiated into a continental Rosicrucian fraternity by an Austrian named Count Apponyi – it is interesting to note that someone of this name was attached to the Austrian Embassy in Paris at a time when it is known that Mackenzie was also there. Mackenzie was a pupil of Fred Hockley, a great collector of ancient magical texts, who had himself been the pupil of a member of Francis Barrett’s magical school...” (King, 1989). Mackenzie also spent time with Eliphas Levi, and was an avid devotee of magical mirrors. Most notably, he was the author of *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia: Of History, Rites, Symbolism* (1877). Giving us a clear indication of how substances like hashish and opium might have been viewed by Rosicrucians and Masons of the time, “Mackenzie wrote an important article for the *Rosicrucian*, the short-lived magazine of the Soc. Ros., and in this he gave... [his] exposition of his personal attitude towards the magical arts” (King, 1989):

Magic is not necromanteia – a raising of dead material substances endowed with an imagined life – but a psychological branch of science, dealing with the sympathetic effects of stones, drugs, herbs, and living substances upon the imaginative and reflective

faculties – and leading to ever new glimpses of the world of wonders around us, ranking it in due order of phenomena and illustrating the beneficence of The Great Architect of the Universe. Magic, therefore, is a legitimately masonic field of study, and in these days, where practical chemistry produces alcohol from flint stones, surely we may not be very astonished at the possibility of obtaining spiritual truth from the interrelations of material substances. In such wise acted the elder alchemists, to whom the proud modern chemist, wrapt in ineffable disdain of their labours, but whence he sprang, will give no praise and no ear.

–Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, 19th-century Freemason and Rosicrucian.¹⁷

The famous magical group the Golden Dawn, was formed in 1888 by several members of the group Mackenzie belonged to, *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (Rosicrucian Society of England), and the structure and grades of this order were derived from an 18th-century German Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross. There was clearly interest in the magical use of drugs with many members of the order, such as W.B. Yeats, Aleister Crowley, Dr. Edward W. Berridge, Alexander Ayton, whose cannabis infused initiation with the “Soma” of the H.B. of L., was discussed earlier, as well as others.



Dr. William Wynn Westcott depicted in the ceremonial garment of the Rosicrucians

The general view has been that Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, the head of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, clearly rejected the use of drugs in magic and “frowned upon all such methods” (Regardie, 1968). Thus, drugs are not a part of the Golden Dawn, and the adepts who used it did so outside of the order. However, one of the Golden Dawn’s original co-founders, a Freemason and a chief of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, Dr. William Wynn Westcott (1848-1925), wrote about drugs in

at least two unpublished tracts. These tracts, originally meant as inner teachings and given privately to students of the occult arts, have since been reprinted in *The Magical Mason: Forgotten Hermetic Writings of William Wynn Westcott, Physician and Magus* (Gilbert, 1983). A tract on Dreams recorded the following .on opium and hashish:

Opium gives rise to deep, sound sleep in persons unused to its action, but large doses in persons who have outgrown its soporific effect exhibit the power of causing dreaming in a very exaggerated form: opium eaters dream, and remember dreams, characterised by gorgeous imagery, exalted impressions and boundless grandeur. Students should read the dreams of Thomas De Quincey, the famous author who was an opium eater. Alcoholism on the other hand creates dreams of terror, hatred, malice and suspicion; hauntings by animal forms, by serpents or by insects, and an indescribable terror arising from colours and from horrors of attack by persons who have never been associated with any suspicion of enmity or hostility to the sufferer.

The Hashish of the Turks and Arabs, prepared from the Cannabis Indica plant, is credited with the power to give rise to dreams of intense pleasure, often of a sexual character; samples of this drug vary very much in quality; some are powerful sedatives,

others almost inert; it is a dangerous drug to experiment with. The old medieval magicians taught that dreams of different characteristics would be produced by sleeping in the presence of certain perfumes from incense made from particular herbs, burned on plates of different metals (Westcott, 1906).¹⁸

Another tract, titled “Divination and its History,” which included various definitions of magical techniques such as Crystallomancy, Necromancy, etc, Westcott included the following description:

PHARMAKEIA

Enchantment by drugs is reckoned among Divinations; medicated compounds were administered internally, either openly or by stealth, to create love and passion, or to cause enmity, or to produce dreams on certain subjects.

Leaves of the herb called Moly and of the Laurel, also Jasper stones were worn as amulets to ward off the effects of other charms used maliciously. The Cannabis plant or Indian Hemp was given to produce mystic visions. Enchanted girdles were also supplied by magicians to bestow foresight to the wearer and to keep dangers away from him (Westcott, 1910).¹⁹

Pharmakeia is the Greek word that is translated in most modern New Testament accounts as “sorcery” and makes specific reference to the use of drugs in magic. Our modern term pharmacy comes from this same Greek Root. In this tract the warnings about the use of cannabis for visionary purposes are not included. As well, there is the reference to “enchanted girdles” made from the plant, which is interesting in regard to the hemp cords that have been suggested as worn by witches, Templars, Dervishes, and going back to Zoroastrian and Vedic references. These passages do open up the possibility that the use of cannabis was a part of the inner teachings of the Golden Dawn.

As Harrison notes, Westcott, was particularly instrumental in the formation of the Golden Dawn:

The founding of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn can be traced back to 1887, when Dr William Wynn Westcott, a Freemason who was constantly delving deeper for hidden knowledge ... obtained a mysterious manuscript in cipher from fellow Freemason the Rev. A.F.A. Woodford. The cipher – on translation – turned out to be a series of rituals, and Westcott asked fellow Freemason and Rosicrucian Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers to work on and expand them. Amongst the papers of the cipher manuscript that Westcott had received from Woodford, he had

found the name of a certain Fraulien Anna Sprengal, a Rosicrucian adept from Germany, and after writing to her, Westcott was given permission to form an English version of the Golden Dawn (Harrison, 2017).

Golden Dawn member and noted Irish Poet, W.B. Yeats (1865-1939) recorded, “I took the Indian hemp with certain followers of Saint-Martin [i.e., Martinists] on the ground floor of a house in the Latin Quarter. I had never taken it before, and was instructed by a boisterous young poet, whose English was no better than my French. He gave me a little pellet, if I am not forgetting, an hour before dinner, and another after we had dined together at some restaurant. As we were going through the streets to the meeting-place of the Martinists, I felt suddenly that a cloud I was looking at floated in an immense space, and for an instant my being rushed out, as it seemed, into that space with ecstasy” (Yeats, 1906/2017). Yeats is known to have experimented with other drugs. He used hashish in experiments with clairvoyance, and for divinations. Yeats’ book *The Secret Rose*, (1897) reveals its esoteric and rosicrucian influences in the title.

The Secret Rose reflects another arcane subculture too: it was no accident that the language was by turns narcotic and hallucinogenic. WBY [W. B. Yeats] had learnt to take hashish with the shady followers of the

mystic Louis Claude de Saint-Martin in Paris.... In April 1897 he experimented with mescal, supplied by Havelock Ellis, who recorded that “while an excellent subject for visions, and very familiar with various vision-produc- drugs and processes, WBY found the effect on his breathing unpleasant; ‘he much prefers haschich’, which he continued to take in tablets, a particularly potent form of ingestion” (Foster, 1998).

Modern occult writer Francis King has speculated that Aleister Crowley may have been initiated into the magical use of drugs by chemist and student of pharmacology C.G. Jones, who also introduced the young Crowley into the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. (Crowley would later find himself in a court battle with the Order after publishing some of their secret writings.) Occultist Kenneth Grant, who studied magick under Crowley in 1945, believed it was Golden Dawn member “Allan Bennett ... who introduced Crowley to the use of drugs between 1898 and 1899. This Adept of the Golden Dawn had already experienced some of the high spiritual trances by the time Crowley met him” (Grant, 1972). Bennett, who suffered with severe asthma, in search of relief, experimented with all sorts of drugs, and was a bit of an expert on the subject of their use and effects. “...Bennett ... fired Crowley’s imagination with hints of a magical tradition which featured a certain rare drug to ‘Open the gates of the World behind the Veil

of Matter.' In the flat at Chancery Lane, where Crowley lived under a variety of aliases and where he entertained voluptuous women, Bennett and he sampled many of the well-known drugs and several 'strange' ones as well" (Grant, 1972).

Writing in his diary in 1901,²⁰ Crowley recorded "I think Physical Astral Projection should be preceded by a (ceremonial) 'loosening of the girders of the soul'. How to do it is the great problem. I am inclined to believe in drugs - if only one knew the right drug." Crowley clearly found these in mescaline and particularly hashish, as decades later in his exquisite Cabalistic treatise, "Little Essays Towards Truth" he wrote "... such drugs as Cannabis Indica and Anhalonium Lewini [mescaline] do actually 'loosen the girders of the soul...'" (Crowley, 1939). As Crowley's many references to hashish, both esoteric and exoteric, such as his essay "The Psychology of Hashish" (1909) and "*De Herbo Sanctissimo Arabico*" (1918) will be fully explored in a later volume, I shall leave it at this for now; suffice to say, there is much to be said.

The Golden Dawn member, Dr. Edward W. Berridge's esoteric experiments with cannabis and sex were directly inspired by those of P.B. Randolph. These techniques also went on to influence Crowley and the magical sexual practices of the O.T.O. In regard to Berridge, it is interesting to note Moreno's observation of the contribution to cannabis science by Berridge and other medical figures associated

with Masonic lodges and the occult.

...[T]he alchemist and medical doctor Edward W. Berridge, trained in canonical tradition in England and homeopathic in the USA, and recognized even today for his formulations of various psychic syndromes such as the.... Fear of coal scuttle, mainly based on their own experiments with mother tincture of hashish. European and American homeopaths had contributed greatly to the progress in describing the symptomatology and therapeutic applications of the virtues of cannabis sativa since the very establishment of this medical discipline, given the interest shown to the plant by its founder, Samuel Hahnemann, and dozens of initiators such as Clemens Maria Franz von Boenninghausen, Adolphus Graf von Lippe, Robert E. Dudgeon, James Tyler Kent, William Boericke, Henry Clay Allen, AC Cowperthwaite, JW Hutchison, Timothy Field Allen, etc. Some of them were also called occultists, and almost all were linked to a greater or lesser degree to various Masonic lodges (Moreno, 2002).

There seems to have been at least some awareness of this occult history of cannabis among some Rosicrucian groups, into the mid-20th century, and after the time of cannabis prohibition. A 1945 edition of the *Rosicrucian Digest*, Volume 23, published by the then Supreme Council

of the Rosicrucian Order, in regard to the question, “What Herbs Have Mystical Powers or Virtues?” Answered: “Throughout history the mystics and ancients used for incense various highly aromatic herbs, seeds, and gums to quiet the mind and place it in a receptive and psychic mood for spiritual meditation. The ancient Egyptians and Persians used a combination of ‘lobhan,’ hemp, and belladonna for magical purposes. All races have had certain herbs which they believed had supernatural powers to prolong life.” A description that fits with claims of the various Rosicrucian elixirs we described earlier.

Paul Foster Case (1884-1954), the Occultist and Freemason who belonged to various occult orders, and founded the Builders of the Adytum, seems to indicate that drugs, likely referring to hashish, could be identified in the early Rosicrucian accounts, in a private letter to Israel Regadie:

Yoga breathing ... has a tendency to raise the carbon monoxide content of the blood, just as does the inhalation of tobacco smoke. Patanjali is careful to tell us that the Siddhis may be brought into manifestation by chemical means, by which he intends to indicate the use of certain drugs. (To be sure the reaction from these drugs makes the unsatisfactory for the purpose of genuine unfoldment; it being, so to say, too high a price to pay for the Siddhis). But it

seems to me very clear that all practices leading to the evolution of our latent powers must include the chemical changes I have referred to. Hence Brother C.R. [Christian Rosenkreuz] meets the Wise Men in the temple of the Blood of the Lamb – or, in plain language, one establishes rapport with the Chiefs of the Invisible Order because of subtle physiological changes in one’s own body, and particularly in the chemical states of the blood-stream. Yoga practices bring about some of these changes. So does ceremonial magic. So do some kinds of ascetic practice. So do drugs.... The Qabalistic interpretation of C.R. and of Dam-car [sic] is but the recognition of a formula which sums up the experience. The more so because the Temple is in Arabia ... hence the Fama says that C.R. bargained with the Arabians ... stops at Damascus, hears of Wise Men.... Then he goes down to Egypt to study plants and animals.... The whole thing adapts itself perfectly to the actual experience one goes through (Case, 1933).

In regards to Patanjali, Case refers to *Yogasutras* 4.1: “The subtler attainments come with birth or are attained through herbs, mantra, austerities or concentration.” Case also seems to indicate here that one avenue of contact to the “Chiefs of the Invisible Order” was through the use of drugs, and identifies Christian Rosenkreutz’s (C.R.) own

study of plants before going on to found the Rosicrucian order. However, Case also warns of the danger of such methods and goes on to describe his rejection of Enochian magic, out of concerns about it being “indubitably potent,” and then places the occult use of drugs in this same category. “So, too, are mescal buttons, and hashish, and opium... it is not necessary to burn down the house to roast a pig ... there is far more to magic than getting results” (Case, 1933). (I don’t know about that, results are pretty cool.)

As for Isreal Regardie, who Case was writing to, and who would play an important role in the continued interest in both the magic of the Golden Dawn and legacy of Aleister Crowley, he went on to publish a collection of writings on hashish and other drugs, from the works of Crowley and other authors, under the title *Roll Away the Stone: An Introduction to Aleister Crowley’s Essay on the Psychology of Hashish*. As he wrote in the foreword “Some of the more ancient schools of initiation must have employed drugs of one kind or another in a sacramental manner” (Regardie, 1968).

References to the use of cannabis for releasing the astral double, can also be found in the writings of the Czechoslovakian occult author Karel Weinfurter (1867-1942). He was a founding member of the “Theosophic Lodge of the Blue Star,” a group which was dedicated to Masonic, Rosicrucian and other occult influences and

included Gustav Meyrink, who was discussed for his alchemical references to drugs, in Chapter 12 in *Man’s Highest Purpose: The Lost Word Regained* (1935)²¹ Weinfurter, like Case, referred to Patanali’s’ ancient reference in the Yoga Sutra (400 B.C.?) , to “siddhis [i.e. Yogic powers]... attained in different ways.... They are gained by birth, plants, incantations, asceticism, or Samadhi”:

By plants are understood opiates, hashish and other narcotics, by means of which the astral body is freed and thereby the contact with the transcendental world is obtained. The Orientals know a great many of those vegetable means for the arousing of the higher senses and for the attainment of magical powers. The Indian vegetable mixture used for gaining these powers is secretly kept and usually known but by the Guru (leader) how to be applied (Weinfurter, 1932).

It is clear, however, that not all Rosicrucians were accepting of this message, certainly H. Spencer Lewis rejected such, and he commented that when he reintroduced the Order in the early part of the 20th century, he altered the Rosicrucian methods more than had ever been done before, in order to make it more acceptable to the modern initiate. *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* comments that the Rosicrucians had been, up “until the war, very active in good works, especially in carrying investigations

into the uses of vegetable drugs and the relief of disease by means of colored lights and hypnotic processes” (Hastings, et. al., 1919): A statement which seems a likely reference to the use of narcotics with infused magic mirrors and discs created on the basis of planetary correspondences by certain Rosicrucians referred to in Chapter 15.

The Christian Occultist and Rosicrucian, Max Heindel, author of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* (1909) warned that “Certain negative phases of clairvoyance are also developed by taking drugs, by crystal gazing, etc. In all such cases the faculty is a danger and a detriment, being uncontrolled by the Spirit. Drugs have a fearfully destructive effect on the different vehicles of man” (Heindel, 1955). However, as Heindel immediately goes on to warn, about breathing exercises, I think we can take this warning with a grain of salt, and inhale safely, “the most dangerous method of development is indiscriminate breathing exercises. Many a man is in the insane asylum today or his body lies in a consumptive’s grave, on account of having practiced breathing exercises in development classes, taught by persons as ignorant as himself” (Heindel, 1955). I suppose rhythmic breathing was the original gateway drug!

As we enter into the late 19th- and early 20th-century period of occult history, I could go on at great length about groups who ignored such warnings about the use of hashish and other drugs, and utilized them in initiation

and practice, such as the *Gruppo di Ur*, *Fraternitas Saturni*, the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, and others, along with a variety of well-known independent occultists from this time period. A whole book could be written about Aleister Crowley’s magical references to hashish and other drugs alone. However, as this period of history will be the topic of my next book, I will refrain from that here, for space’s sake, and save that discussion for then.

However, before closing this chapter, I do want to note the intriguing influence of the Masonic and Rosicrucian traditions, in the development of a modern, influential and increasingly popular religion of Rastafarianism, which is well known for its sacred use of Ganja. This Caribbean tradition has long been noted for its syncretic elements of Christianity, and traditions involving “ganja” in India, that include matted hair, or dreadlocks, smoking through chillums and other elements.

In his excellent volume on the origins of the Rastafarian tradition, *Dread Jesus*, William David Spencer, brings into play other contributions to Rastafari, that have been otherwise unrecognized. As Spencer has noted: “two early founders of Rastafari, H. Archibald Dunkley and Joseph Nathaniel Hibbert, were members of the secret Egyptian Masonic order, The Ancient Brotherhood of Silence or Ancient Mystic Order of Ethiopia. The Masons had consciously adopted the name Jah from Psalm 68:4...” (Spencer, 2011). Spencer also identifies Rosicrucian

elements adopted and influencing Rastafarianism, and other Rastafarian historians such as Dennis Forsythe, in *Rastafari: The Healing of the Nations*, refer to “secret knowledge” that has been “guarded and kept alive over the years by such people as the Freemasons, the Rosicrucians, the Alchemists etc.” (Forsythe, 1983). Clearly, one of those secrets is this hidden history of cannabis, a plant which like the Masonic story of acacia growing on the grave of Hiram Abiff, according to Rastafarian traditions, grew on the grave of wise King Solomon.

With the onset of drug prohibition, there was clear motivation for already secretive societies to distance themselves from the now illegal use of cannabis and other magical herbs, as even rumours of such use would be cause for concern, leading to investigations, and possibly arrest. As the occult writer, former member of the Golden Dawn, and member of various magical groups, Dion Fortune lamented in her classic work *Psychic Self Defence*:

It is well known that there are Various drugs which can be used to exalt consciousness and induce a temporary psychism. It may not be equally well known that most of these Substances come under the regulations of the Dangerous Drugs Act and that to obtain them from irregular sources, or even to be found in possession of them Save for a legitimate purpose, is to render oneself liable to prosecution

and in this case too, the authorities are exceedingly alert and the magistrates exceedingly drastic (Fortune, 1930).

Crowley was but one of a few occultists who attempted to challenge these laws in a number of articles. “In this matter of the Dangerous Drugs Act Parliament seems to have been inspired by ignorance made deeper by the wildest ravings of that class of newspaper which aspires to thrill its readers – if reading it can be called – with blood-curdling horrors” (Crowley, 1922). The changes this legal situation wrought in the occult world can be seen in the watered-down versions of such groups that are around in our modern times. “Despite ... older connections, the modern rosicrucians movement is largely an artificial creation with its origins in academic histories of the occult” (Jenkins, 2000).

To be clear, I doubt that the vast majority of modern Masonic organizations, or popular Rosicrucian groups like AMORC have been concealing secret drug-infused initiations,²² or even deep secrets of the Bible. Even modern Masons acknowledge that much of their rituals and rites has been lost through time, and countless books have been written attempting to reclaim what has been lost, and understand their origins. This has also been true of the history of cannabis and other entheogenic substances, and most people have little knowledge of their

role in magic, religion, alchemy and the initiations of certain secret societies. Although much of the evidence here has come through identifying its use by member of such groups, there has been enough evidence presented that we can be sure that it was also used in ritual initiations by some groups at some points in history. This technique is as ancient as magic and religion itself, and psychoactive substances were used and still are, in shamanic tribal initiations, as well as more refined cultural events, like the Mysteries of Eleusis. Perhaps today, as anthropologists and psychologists examine the benefits of things like Ayahuasca rituals and the potential benefits of psychoactive drugs, as opposed to the purely recreational use, the rediscovery of the Western Magickal Tradition's use of such substances for similar purposes, will come back into play, and help restore the heart and mind of humanity, at this troubled point in history.

Circa 1905 postcard depicting a fez-wearing mystic, smoking hashish and having hallucinations.

¹ Burton, also recorded the following account of his journey to find the Mormons via the Pony Express route in the 1860s “There is another kind of cactus called by the whites “whiskey-root,” and by the Indian “peioke,” [i.e. peyote] used like the intoxicating mushroom of Siberia [i.e. Amanita muscaria]” (Burton, 1862/1977) “This footnote of Burton’s is particularly interesting because he may have been the first writer to speculate that the effects of the peyote cactus bore some resemblance to the effects of the ‘fly agaric’ mushroom (Amanita muscaria)” (Everitt, 2016).

² As quoted in *The Book of Grass*.

³ Some accounts report the “cord” was the garter of a woman he loved.

⁴ From an excerpt in (Knapp, 1980).

⁵ As quoted in (Davenport-Hines, 2012).

⁶ *The Letters of Gustave Flaubert: 1857-1880* (1980).

⁷ Translated excerpt by Fr. A.T.A. 11.

⁸ From a quote in (Moreno, 2002).

⁹ This term also covered the Mid-East, not just Asian countries.

¹⁰ See *Ésotérisme et christianisme autour de René Guénon*, (James, 2008) for more on Guénon’s relationship with hashish and opium.

¹¹ Minion making!

¹² Made available into English eyes by Fr. A.T.A.11.

¹³ See (Melanson, 2008) for more on this.

¹⁴ Quoted in (Rawson, 1894).

¹⁵ From a quote in (Godwin, 1994).

¹⁶ Originally published as *Sanctuaire du spiritualisme: Étude de l'âme humaine, et de ses rapports avec l'univers, d'après le somnambulisme et l'extase* (1850).

¹⁷ From a quote in (King, 1989).

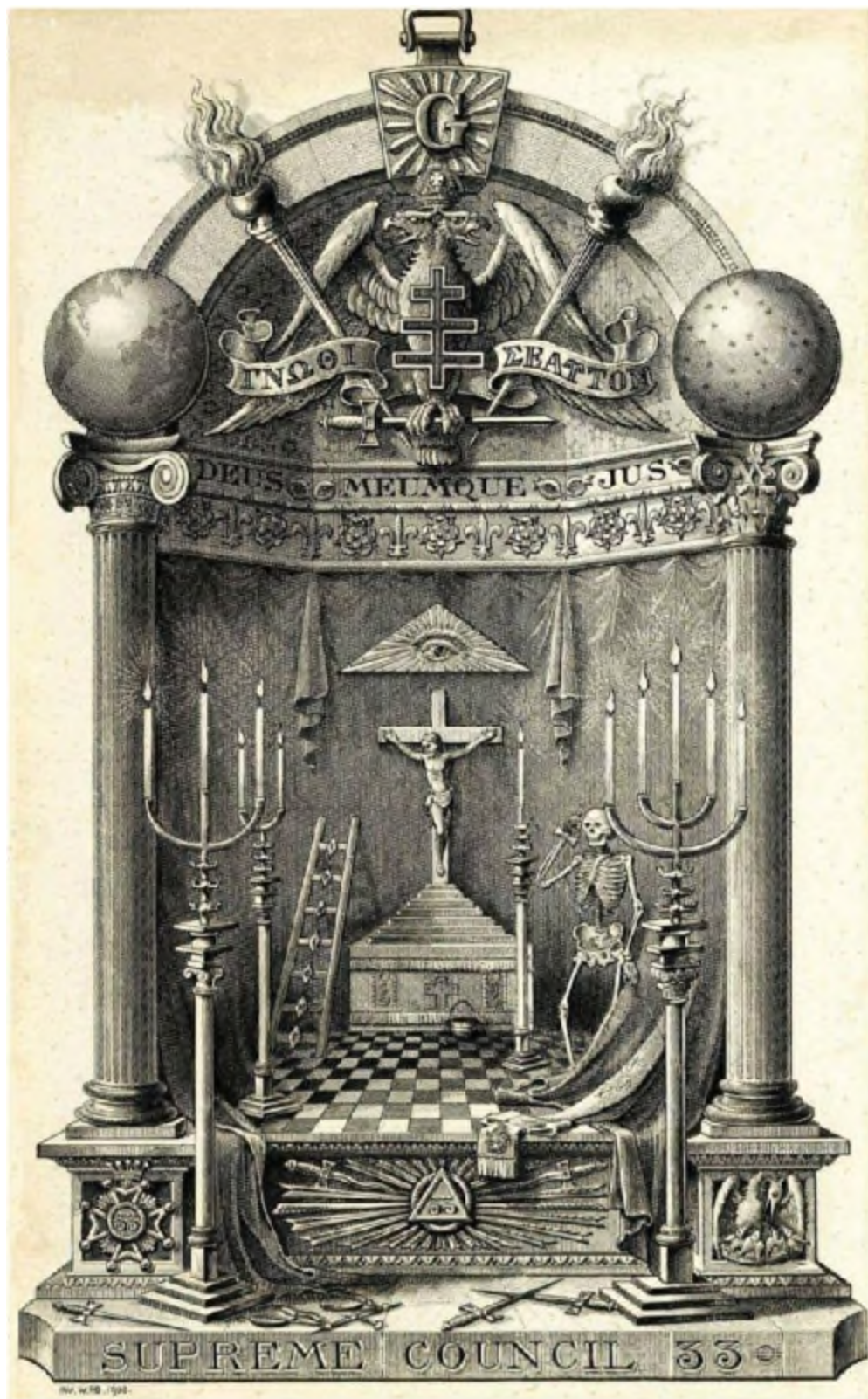
¹⁸ In (Gilbert, 1983).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Reprinted in *The Equinox* (1.4) (1910).

²¹ This book was originally released under the Czech title, *Ohnivý keř čili odhalená cesta mystická* (1923) which translates as “The fire bush, or the mystical path revealed,” and one is left to speculate as to what the nature of the “fire bush” was.

²² I would argue, H. Spencer Lewis, founder of AMORC, specifically chose to leave such material out.



Masonic Myth and Ritual: Some Speculations

As we have seen in the previous two chapters, and elsewhere in the book, there are numbers of Masonic figures that were also dabbling in drugs and the occult, and there have been some indications that this may have taken place in the context of Masonic, or at least quasi-Masonic rituals.

The suggestion that Freemasonry holds some occult secrets, is as old as the Craft itself. Like the Illuminati, Masonry is shrouded in all sorts of conspiracy theories, and anyone from outside the Lodge who delves into their history sails a stormy sea of mixed fact, fiction and misinformation, which without maps is difficult, if not impossible, to navigate through. Fortunately, when navigating these confusing esoteric waters, I have had the assistance of practicing Masons and authors on Masonic history to act as guides and entertain my thoughts, such as Scottish Rite Freemason and a Masonic Rosicrucian P. D. Newman, and noted historian of the Craft, Dr. David Harrison, and without their help, I doubt I could have made a believable case.

With that in mind, and after writing about many figures involved with Masonic history, I wish to offer some speculation on what those secrets could pertain to, and why they may have been so deeply hidden in Masonic ritual, that even Masons themselves came to forget them, but I want

to emphasize, this is speculation...

As Dr. David Harrison has shown in *Genesis of Freemasonry*, the documentable history of Freemasonry, “evolved in England during the late 17th century and all of the 18th century” (Harrison, 2009). Prior to this period, there were of course Masonic Lodges, but they were limited to working Masons.

Dr Robert Plot ... writing in his *Natural History of Staffordshire*, [(1686) ... stated that Freemasonry was extremely prominent in the county and had deep rooted traditions there. Though Plot referred to the “Craft” as a localised operative “Fellowship,” he did discuss the “secret signes, whereby they are known to one another all over the Nation” (Harrison, 2009).

We also saw references to such practices in the works of Rabelais in 15th-century France, so clearly we can include parts of the European continent as well, and take this back two centuries earlier. This period is known as “operative” Masonry. Beginning in the 16th century, in Scotland there is evidence that non-working Masons were permitted into Lodges, and the focus went from trade to spiritual initiation; by the 17th century this had spread to Lodges in Britain, France and elsewhere. This period is known as “speculative” Masonry. “This evolution led to a further transition after the foundation of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1717, which was accompanied by changes

in ritual, in symbolism, and in its general ethos” (Harrison, 2009). Even then, there was debate about the origins of this ritual, and “the confusing blending of history and myth is compounded by the account of mysterious ancient Masonic manuscripts that were supposedly destroyed in 1720” (Harrison, 2009).

In this period, Masonic initiation went from two degrees to three, with the first blindfolded initiate taken through a series of three rituals, or degrees dressed in the manner of a medieval heretic being taken to the gallows. We can see cultural references to this in sayings like “give him the third degree,” “take off the blinders” and “hood-winked.” These original degrees were based around the myth of the murder of the Masonic builder of Solomon’s Temple Hiram Abiff, and his resurrection. As Richard Carlile noted in his essay “Ceremony of Raising a Master Mason, or the Third Degree,”: “It is thus all Master Masons are raised from a figurative death” (Carlile, 1855). “The themes of resurrection and necromancy displayed in the Third Degree, act as the culmination of the powerful and dramatic ritual, and certainly produced a profound finale to the educational journey of the new Freemason” (Harrison, 2009).

The Third Degree is the most powerful and dramatic part of the Masonic ritual, with the initiate being laid into a symbolic grave, which is represented by the

skull and cross bones, where the head of the initiate rests. A raising or resurrection then takes place, where the initiate rises from the grave on the third attempt to raise him, to face the Worshipful Master, as a reborn Master Mason. The atmosphere during the Third Degree ritual is ethereal with, usually, just one candle flickering and powerful magical imagery; the senses becoming exhilarated as the newly made Master Mason rises from the grave (Harrison, 2009).

Harrison compares this ritual to an account of raising the dead recorded by Dr. John Dee, and notes that “Necromantic rituals to raise the dead, such as this, had the ultimate aim to extract hidden knowledge from the dead individual and, although symbolic in nature, the Third Degree Masonic ritual held strikingly similar ceremonial elements” (Harrison, 2009). In this regard it should be noted that Ashmole, who played a big part in 17th-century Masonry, was deeply influenced by Dee’s works, and occult matters in general.

After the assassination of Hiram, we are told that the original signals, passwords and rites of the Masonic guilds were lost, and replaced. As the authors of *The Hiram Key* explain: “Not only are the origins of Freemasonry no longer known, but the ‘true secrets’ of the Order are admitted to have been lost, with ‘substituted secrets’ being used in their place in Masonic ceremony, ‘until such

time as they are rediscovered” (Knight & Lomas, 1996). Thus the now centuries-long Masonic search for ‘lost secrets’ was initiated. The whole ritual was directed to this end. “The rebirth, or raising of the Master Mason from a grave which features the skull and crossbones... suggests images of alchemy, magic, necromancy and immortality....” (Harrison, 2009).



“Bretheren kneeling at prayer around the grave of Hiram Abiff, the Widow’s Son” – Duncan’s Masonic Ritual and Monitor (1866).

The Blindfolded and noosed initiate from Duncan’s Masonic Ritual and Monitor (1866).

The confusion of the origins of Freemasonry was compounded with later conflicts, changes and eventual codifications of Masonry, and as a result, this “lack of documentary source material and the promotion of legends by the various Grand Lodges has fuelled modern day speculative writers and misguided some Masonic historians”

(Harrison, 2009).

The most popular legend that has emerged in recent years concerns the mediaeval order of the Knights Templar, involved in the Crusades of the 12th and 13th centuries, and how they discovered the Temple of King Solomon while occupying Jerusalem. The supposed archaeological excavation took place in secret and the ancient order of warrior priests discovered long lost treasure, which has been kept in a mysterious secret location ever since. This lost treasure has been the focus of many speculative writers and ranges from the Holy Grail, lost biblical scrolls, to even the lost Ark of the Covenant (Harrison, 2009).

The idea that Freemasonry is the custodians of some Templar secret, in textual references, as Harrison explains, goes back to at least 18th-century Masonry, and has been continued today in a variety of pseudo-histories that have been written about both. The general claim is that some of the Knight Templars escaped their persecution in Europe and headed for sanctuary in Scotland, where they infiltrated a working Masonic lodge, and then operated in secret. As Arturo de Hoyos, the modern Grand Archivist and Grand Historian of Scottish Rite Freemasonry has laid it out:

According to continental Masonic legends a group of medieval Knights Templar eluded arrest and extermination, and fled to Scotland, where they joined with operative stonemason's companies. The knights contributed to Masonic symbolism, and offered superficial interpretations until new members could be trusted to conceal their Templar origin. Thus, the "lower initiates" were told that they had descended from stonemasons, while the "Adepts, the Princes of Masonry," were informed that they were actually Knights Templar. Although the same symbols were used throughout, in the lower degrees they were explained in the context of Craft Masonry and Biblical history, while in the higher degrees they were unveiled as relating to knighthood and Templar history. This mythical tale was central to the Rite of Strict Observance, and it continues in modified form in the Swedish Rite and the Rectified Scottish Rite. This legend is not accepted as historical by most [modern] Masonic historians (de Hoyos, 2013).

We have already seen this with Schröpfer's claim of secret Templar rites from Scotland that he had acquired, in some unexplained manner, from Duke Von Holstein-Gottorp during the Seven Years War (1756-1763). Similar claims of Templar Scottish Rites were made by both Melisino and Cagliostro as well. We can also see similar

mythical origins for the 19th-century quasi-Masonic group, *Ordo Templi Orientis* (Order of Oriental Templars) which I would argue, can be seen to have been deeply influenced by von Hammer-Purgstall's *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum* (1818), which also did much to popularize such notions.

Late in the 19th Century the Ordo Templi Orientis appeared, claiming direct descent from the Knights Templar. They used Tantric sex yoga in association with the traditional astral projection of the European occult tradition, and when Aleister Crowley... became their leader in 1910, drugs became a secret part of their teachings, at least in some of the higher grades in certain of their lodges (Wilson, 1973).

Proponents of the belief pointed to things such as in: "the Third Degree, the Mason, as he lies in the figurative grave, has his right foot crossed over his left, which is also similar to effigies of the buried Templar Knights" (Harrison, 2009). As well, the skull and crossbones "very likely represented necromancy themes within the mediæval Knights Templar order" (Harrison, 2009).



The Skull and Crossbones was known as the Memento Mori, “remember that you have to die.” “Though the skull and crossbones can be interpreted as a sign of mortality, the use of the image on the figurative grave in the Third Degree raising ceremony represents immortality, with the Master Mason being symbolically resurrected” (Harrison, 2009). This symbol also used to mark the graves of Freemasons, however “Masonic tombstones began to change in the early 1800s, and the traditional and somewhat terrifying skull and crossbones were replaced by the much more ‘modern’ square and compasses” (Harrison, 2009).



Left: A Royal Master Mason’s Apron that was worn from 1810-1823 by the first Masters. Right: Masonic Knights Templar Apron from the 19th century, no longer used in modern lodges.



It has been suggested that the noose and blindfold are evidence of a Templar influence on Masonic initiation. “The picture on the left shows a small sculpture found in the Chapel at Rosslyn built in the years 1440 -50 in Scotland. We can see a Knight Templar and a young man kneeling between two pillars ... [as in Masonic lodges]. The young man is blindfolded, with a noose around his neck and his right hand on a book marked by a cross (most likely taking an oath on a Bible). The pictures on the right depict a modern candidate, also blindfolded and with a noose (cable tow) around his neck...” (Lombardo, 2010).¹ However, even the suggestion of Rosslyn Chapel as a bastion of Templar secrets is questionable. None the less, the implications are interesting in light of the various claims of Templar survival in Scotland. Although, the alleged Templar/Masonic imagery may well have been added at a later date. It has been noted that James St Clair-Erskine, 3rd Earl of Rosslyn instructed Edinburgh architect David Bryce, who was a noted Freemason, to undertake restoration work on areas of the church in the 1860s and this

included various carvings.

In 1737, *Ramsay's Oration* was published in Paris, by Andrew Michael Ramsay (1686-1743), commonly called the Chevalier Ramsay. Ramsay was a Scottish-born writer and tutor to the Young Pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart. Ramsay claimed that Freemasonry was created by crusader knights and that they had formed themselves into Lodges of St John. Karl Gotthelf von Hund, also known as Baron von Hund (1722-1776) made similar claims in 1754, about the Rite of Strict Observance, but expanding this more specifically to the Templar knights as the source, on information he claimed to have been given from “Hidden Superiors.” Although the Rite of Strict Observance was practiced by Masons for some time, and embraced by some 40 Lodges at its peak, there was increasing frustration over the failure in being initiated into the mysteries of the “Hidden Superiors” or any indication of their existence. This situation led to the Convent of Wilhelmsbad in 1782, where the delegates renounced the claimed Templar origins, however not unanimously, and gave greater self-governance to the individual Lodges, which resulted in the order fragmenting and the Lodges adopting other rites over the next few years. The Rite of Strict Observance disappeared from many Lodges, although it is still practiced in Sweden and in other areas was reorganized into the Rectified Rite.

Parts of the various secrets that were claimed to have

come from the Templars into Masonry by various such sources, were, according to a 19th-century Edition of the *Masonic Voice Review*, by C. Moore the elixir of life and the Philosopher's Stone, as well as the secrets of magic. A subject so controversial that it created a schism in Masonry:

The Rite of Strict Observance was founded in Germany, by the Baron Hunde, in 1754 ... is based on the order of the Knights Templar. It comprises seven degrees, viz.: Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason, Scotch Master, Novice, Templar, and Professed Knight. The legend of the Rite thus narrates its origin. On the murder of Jacques de Molay the Grand Master of the Templars, Pierre d'Aumont, Grand Prior of Auvergne, with two Commanders and five Knights, escaped from France, and sought safety in Scotland, under the disguise of operative Masons. Soon after their arrival, they were so fortunate as to discover one George Harris, a Grand Commander, with some other Templars; a Chapter of all the Knights was held on St. John's day, 1313, and Pierre d'Aumont was elected Grand Master. To avoid the persecution which still pursued their own body, they met as a Lodge of Freemasons, that Order being tolerated at the period of the Templar persecution. In 1361, the chief seat of the Order was established at

Old Aberdeen; and, under the veil of Masonry, in this rite the Templar Order was diffused from Scotland to various parts of the continent. Some of the degrees embody the practice of alchemy, magic, and other now obsolete pseudo-scientific delusions. We have no knowledge of this rite being now anywhere practised.

This rite nevertheless attained considerable influence at one period; proof of which is found in the schism that was created among its members... [T]he last degree was divided into five sections, and it required seven years for completion. Alchemy and magic were the objects of this rite, Clavel says its members boasted that they had possession of the true philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, the command of spirits, and a method of discovering the hidden treasures of the temple (Moore, 1859).

Moore is referring to François Timoléon Bègue-Clavel (1798-1852), Editor of the Masonic Revue *L'Orient et la revue Scientifique et Morale de la Franc-Maçonnerie* (1822-1823) and author of *Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie*, (1844). Clavel saw a deep connection to the origins of Freemasons and Rosicrucians, going back through the alchemists, poets, to the Templars and Hashishins. He was deeply taken with Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall's *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum* (1818),

and wrote in his book on the history of Masonry, in regards to various secret societies at its roots, how “the secret doctrine of the Ismailites was divided into nine degrees, the initiates formed only two distinct classes, the *refik* (companions) and the *dai* (masters)” and that the Group became known as the Assassins a name that “derives from the Arabic *haschischin*, herb-eaters, because it was taken ... by the novices, as the inveterate liquor beverage prepared with herbs called *haschische*” (Clavel, 1844).



Frontpiece for Clavel's Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie, (1844) with Hiram Abiff's murder in the background.



Clavel's depiction of Hassan I- Sabbah pleasure Gardens, from Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maconnerie, (1844) "...[T]he novices of the sect take intoxicating drinks prepared with herb called haschische" (Clavel, 1844).

As with de Nerval, and others that we have discussed in Chapters 21 and 22, Clavel, saw a connection between Masonry and the mysterious Druze and the Nusa'iri who we discussed for their Grail-like ritual of the cup, and consumption of cannabis as their sacred libation Haoma as described in the 19th-century account "Orgies of the hemp Eaters," and these in turn, with the Assassins:

Other sects from the same source [Hashishins/ Ismailis] likewise inhabit the Syria. These are the Nusa'iri ... and the Druze. All these sects have secret assemblies, which they hold at night; and, if we are to believe the Muslim Orthodox, are in veritable orgies,

where one surrenders to the pleasures of the senses. The Druze bend outwardly to the exercise of recognized cults, and only among them do they profess their particular doctrines. They have several degrees of initiation. The place where one assembles is different for each grade. Some guards watch outside so that they do not approach; and every profane man who succeeds in penetrating it would be punished with death. The Druze are recognized by an enigmatic formula. The questioner asks: "Sow Is there in your country of the seed of halalidje, or mirobolaüs?" To which it is necessary to reply: "They are sown in the heart of the Faithful [a name that the Hashishin used for themselves]."

A reformed branch of the Ismailites has survived to this day in Albania, where it constitutes a kind of freemasonry. It admits among its ranks the followers of all religions, and is received there only with a mystical ceremonial and after taking an oath of discretion (Clavel, 1844).

Clavel went on to suggest that "The institution of chivalry derives, according to all appearance, from the secret societies of Persia" and included in this "The religious and military orders of chivalry, especially that of the Templars, [which] had similar mysteries and initiations" (Clavel, 1844).

The mysteries of the Templars, long ignored by the public, were, in 1307, the occasion and the reason for the abolition of their order. The horrible persecutions experienced by these knights, the execution of their chief, Jacques Molay, burnt alive in Paris in 1314, in the city, are too well known for us to retrace its history. In the last century, the memory of this order has been cleared up, and the truth of the accusations against him has been contested in the course of his trial; but of recent findings establish that the majority of the alleged facts were of greater accuracy [ie. *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum*]. It is now demonstrated that the Templars were a branch of Gnosticism, and that they had adopted, for the most part, the doctrines and allegories of the sect of the Ophites.

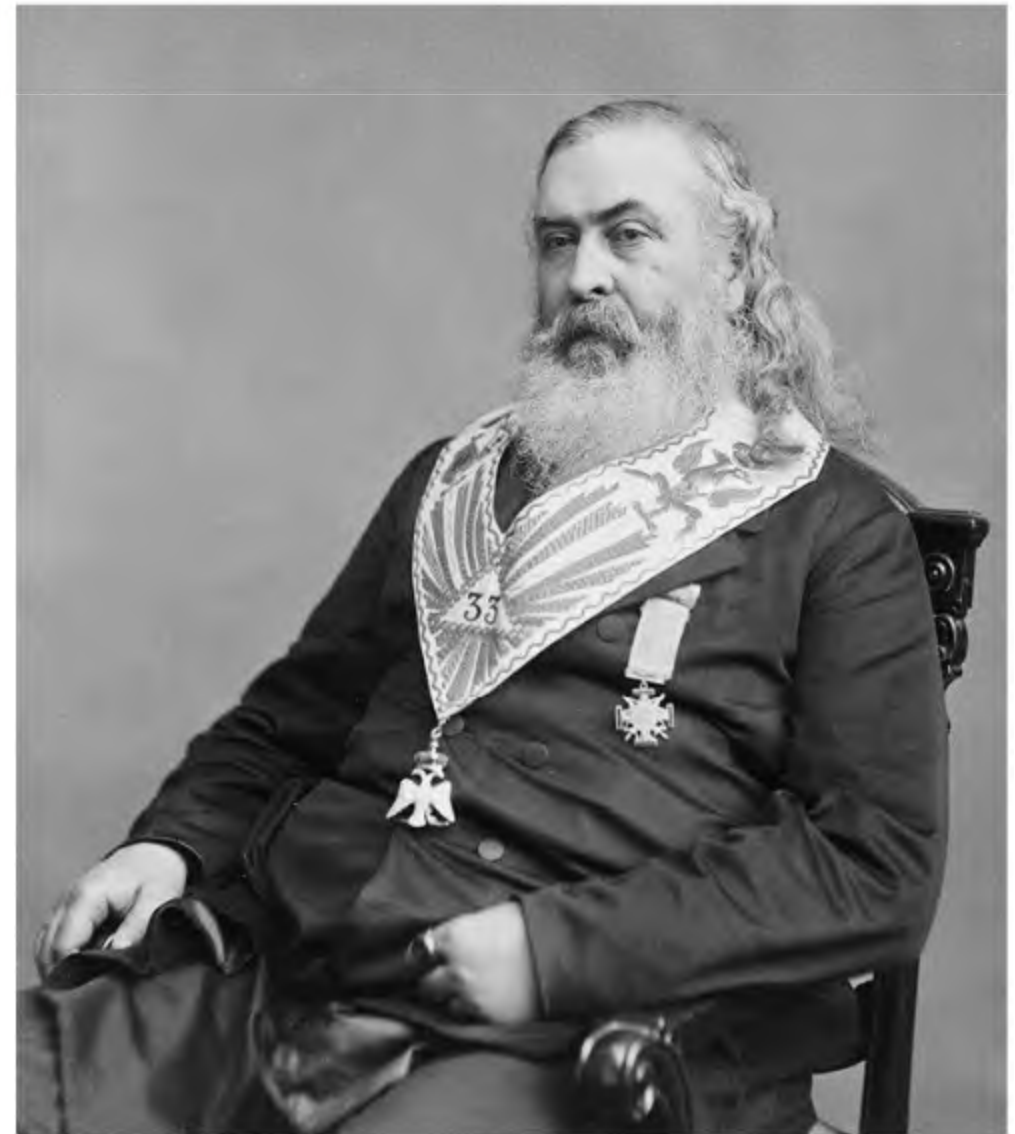
...Oriental historians show us, at different times, the order of the Templars maintaining intimate relations with that of the assassins, and they insist on the affinity which existed between the two associations. They observe that they have adopted the same colors, white and red; they had the same organization, the same hierarchy of grades, degrees of *fédavi*, of *Refik* and of *dai* of one meeting the degrees of novice to professed and of knight of the other; that both implored the falseness of the religions they professed in public; and that both then had to many

castles, the first in Asia, the second in Europe. It is at least constant that they were bound by occult transactions, and that they performed mutually all sorts of good offices. It was through the intervention of the Templars that Beaudouin II, king of Jerusalem, secretly concluded a treaty with the Assassins, by which they promised to deliver the city of Damascus in return for that of Tyre, which was to be abandoned at order (Clavel, 1844).

Clavel seems to follow the same thread that has been traced in this volume, and notes the transference of this stream into Alchemy and the Rosicrucians, pointing to their goal to “compose the universal panacea and the elixir of life” and referring to “Cornelius Agrippa ... Paracelsus, Raymond Lulle, Arnaud de Villeneuve, Cardan, and a host of others. All of whom in the writings they published, surrounded the exposition of their doctrines with the emblems and of allegories of authors of antiquity, and some concealed the principles of hermetic science under the veil of the fables of mythology” (Clavel, 1844). This last comment could be seen as an allusion to the works of Dante, Rabelais and others who veiled their secrets in cleverly told stories. It is also worth nothing that references to cannabis and other drugs can be found in the writings attributed to three of the four alchemists Clavel referred to.

Albert Pike (1809-1891), a Freemason and Sovereign

Grand Commander of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite, composed and published his classic work, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* in 1871, and gave the following history of the Templars, which he borrowed in part from Levi's *The History of Magic* (1859) which with its references to "Johannite Christians," which was a 19th-century term used for Gnosticism, and the lost knowledge of the "anointed," which also fits seamlessly with much of what has been suggested in this volume.



Albert Pike

An enemy of the Templars shall tell us the secret of this Papal hostility against an Order that has existed for centuries in despite of its anathemas, and has its Sanctuaries and Asyla even in Rome.

The secret thought of Hugues de Payens, in founding his Order [Templars], was not exactly to serve the ambition of the Patriarchs of

Constantinople. There existed at that period in the East a Sect of Johannite Christians, who claimed to be the only true Initiates into the real mysteries of the religion of the Saviour. They pretended to know the real history of YESUS the ANOINTED.... They held that the facts recounted in the Evangels are but allegories, the key of which Saint John gives, in saying that the world might be filled with the books that could be written upon the words and deeds of Jesus Christ; words which, they thought, would be only a ridiculous exaggeration, if he were not speaking of an allegory and a legend, that might be varied and prolonged to infinity.

The Johannites ascribed to Saint John the foundation of their Secret [Gnostic] Church, and the Grand Pontiffs of the Sect assumed the title of Christos, Anointed, or Consecrated, and claimed to have succeeded one another from Saint John by an uninterrupted succession of pontifical powers. He who, at the period of the foundation of the Order of the Temple, claimed these imaginary prerogatives, was named THEOCLET; he knew HUGUES DE PAYENS, he initiated him into the Mysteries and hopes of his pretended church, he seduced him by the notions of Sovereign Priesthood and Supreme royalty, and finally designated him as his successor.

Thus the Order of Knights of the Temple was at its

very origin devoted to the cause of opposition to the tiara of Rome and the crowns of Kings, and the Apostolate of Kabalistic Gnosticism was vested in its chiefs. For Saint John himself was the Father of the Gnostics, and the current translation of his polemic against the heretical of his Sect and the pagans who denied that Christ was the Word, is throughout a misrepresentation, or misunderstanding at least, of the whole Spirit of that Evangel.

The tendencies and tenets of the Order were enveloped in profound mystery, and it externally professed the most perfect orthodoxy. The Chiefs alone knew the aim of the Order: the Subalterns followed them without distrust.

The Templars, like all other Secret Orders and Associations, had two doctrines, one concealed and reserved for the Masters, which was Johannism; the other public, which was the Roman Catholic. Thus they deceived the adversaries whom they sought.

The Templars were gravely accused of spitting upon Christ and denying God at their receptions, of gross obscenities, conversations with female devils, and the worship of a monstrous idol.

The end of the drama is well known, and how Jacques de Molay and his fellows perished in the flames. But before his execution, the Chief of the doomed Order organized and instituted what

afterward came to be called the Occult, Hermetic, or Scottish Masonry. In the gloom of his prison, the Grand Master created four Metropolitan Lodges, at Naples for the East, at Edinburg for the West, at Stockholm for the North, and at Paris for the South.

The Order disappeared at once. Its estates and wealth were confiscated, and it seemed to have ceased to exist. Nevertheless it lived, under other names and governed by unknown Chiefs, revealing itself only to those who, in passing through a series of Degrees, had proven themselves worthy to be entrusted with the dangerous Secret. The modern Orders that style themselves Templars have assumed a name to which they have not the shadow of a title (Pike, 1871).

This alleged history of the Freemasonry put forth by the 19th century Masons Clavel, Moore and Pike is all in reference to the alleged transference of Templar secrets into practical Masonic Lodges. As well, the secrets of those rites are described as lost by this period, (19th century) and Moore writes that “We have no knowledge of this rite being now anywhere practised” (Moore, 1859).

When claims of Templar origins were made in the 18th century by the likes of von Hund, Cagliostro, Melissino and Schröpfer, they were also accompanied by new Templar and Scottish Rite of initiation and new degrees in

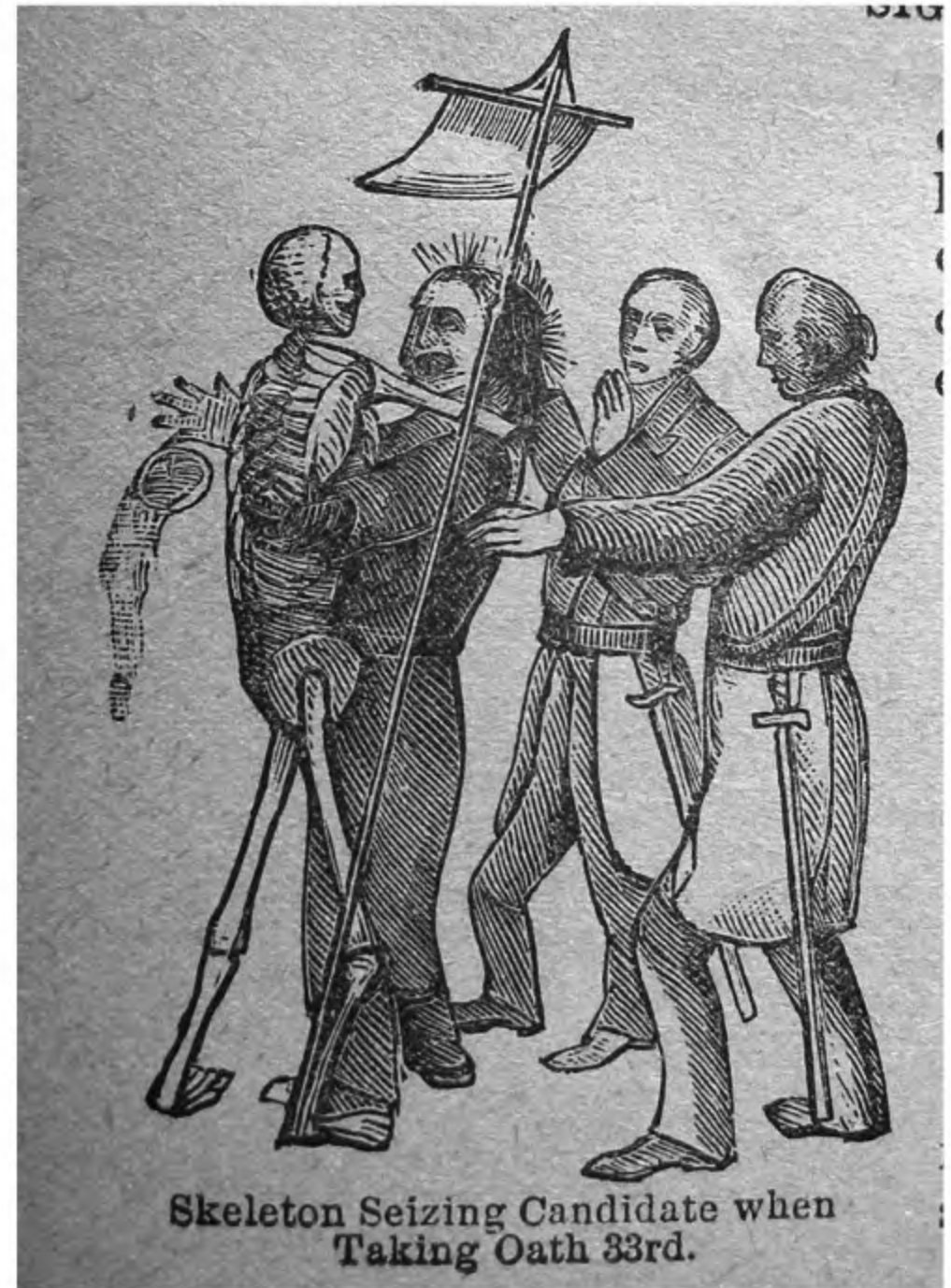
Masonry, and as a result, scores of new degrees have been discovered, or written. Pike is said to have collected a variety of versions of these rites, and Albert Mackey condensed these down to a single version of the degrees. Pike saw this as “uniting the excellencies and rejecting the defects of the others” (Pike, 1857). We can be sure much was edited out as a result.



Phantasmagoric-like elements abound in some surviving version of Scottish Rite. An initiate is taken into the 33rd degree in this illustration from Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie, (1844). We have already noted elements of the Phantasmagoria being still incorporated into the Scottish Rite, via the optical illusion of Pepper's Ghost, and suggested this may have been a remnant of Schröpfer's influence on such rites.

The “Scottish-Templar legend can also be found in

Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite, where in the first degree it puts forward that 'one of the Templars, who took refuge in Scotland, follow the Freemasons to the number of 13, afterward 33...' (Harrison, 2017). The number 33 being the highest degree of the Scottish Rite. Elements of the Elus Coen ritual of Pasqually, also "were absorbed into the re-structured Rite of Strict Observance ... creating the Rectified Scottish Rite" (Harrison, 2017).



33rd Degree Oath, from Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated (1887).

Regardless of their questionable origins, and the matter of "are they authentic Templar rites or fabrications from

18th century con-men?” the idea that there may be a remnant of influence of these now lost, more occult Masonic rites in modern Freemasonry, is shown to be the case in Dr. David Harrison’s excellent overview *The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry* (2017). As Harrison notes, the modern version of the “Rectified Scottish Rite is certainly an example of a rite that emerged from the blending of different Masonic ideas. Ideas do seem to have been shared, and certain parallels do exist between other rites... especially when examining aspects of Cagliostro’s and Melissino’s ritual content” (Harrison, 2017). I would add Schröpfer to these influences as well.

The imagery of the Lodge, was built with a set and setting, that in many ways could be enhanced by the use of entheogens. The black and white checker-board floor would certainly be disorienting under the influence of psychoactive substance, and the occult imagery of the Lodge, and costumed officers of the Lodge would also add to the surrealness of the experience. The checker-board floor has been suggested to be related to the chessboard, which Crusader knights brought back to Europe from Persia, and the Templar black and white “Beausant Banner.” Certainly the rites of Cagliostro and Schröpfer played with such elements and expanded on them. They also knew that adding the exotic smell of foreign incenses, and the drinking of unknown elixirs, could intensify such effects immensely.



The Lodge Room where the Quatuor Coronati Lodge meet at the United Grand Lodge in Great Queen Street, London. Photo courtesy of David Harrison. (One of the founders of Quatuor Coronati Lodge was Sir Charles Warren of Jack the Ripper fame).

References to psychoactive fumigations, elixirs and punch being used by these three figures, begs the question of whether or not such substances could have been used in the various versions of 18th-century Masonic initiation, and whether indications of this might remain in some of the 19th-century rituals of Freemasonry, and even down to the present day. Not to suggest that modern Masonic orders are using entheogens, but rather where such substances might have been used in a ritual context, and later substituted by placebos. If we are to consider the possibility of such an influence, likely places to look would be in Masonic references to such tools of initiation as “the

pot of incense” and the “libation cup.”

The Pot of Incense



Image from *A Ritual of Freemasonry: Illustrated by Numerous Engravings* (Allyn, 1831).

As one 1950's Masonic Bulletin noted "Just when the pot of incense became an emblem of the third section of the Sublime Degree cannot be stated with certainty" ² What the nature of the incense was, is unknown, but as we have seen with *Rite de Elus Coens*, Cagliostro and also Johann Schröpfer, the use of exotic and psychoactive substances as ingredients in such ritual incenses, cannot be ruled out.

As Albert Mackey has noted in *An Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry*: "The 'burning of incense' was a part of worship common to all nations of antiquity, including the Hebrews, the Egyptians, and the Hindus. Among the

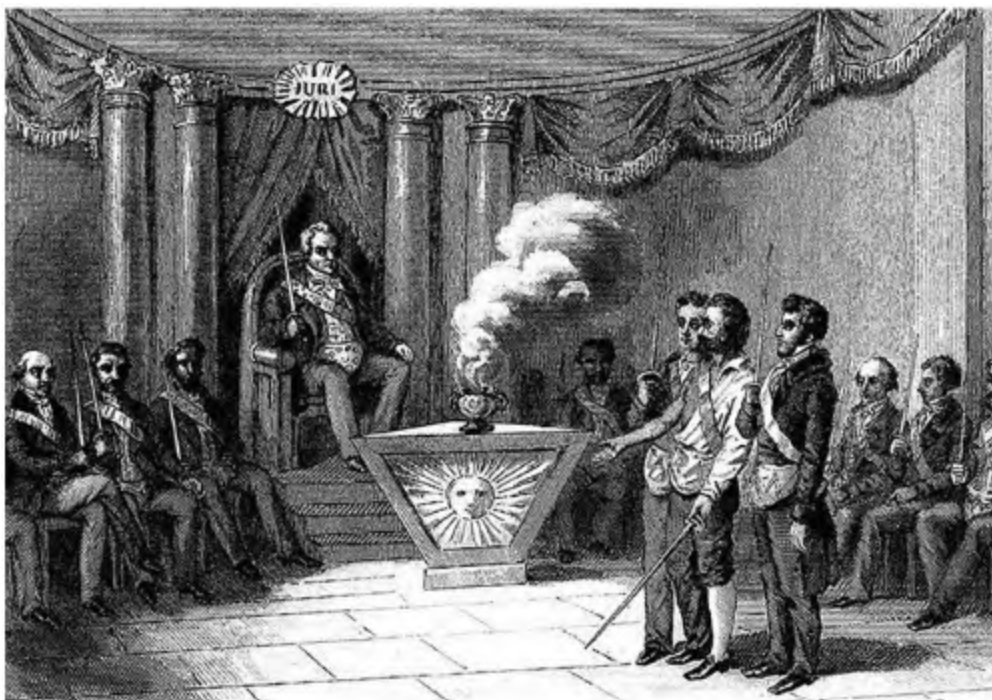
Hebrews this was a symbol of prayer, of holy devotions, of purity of affections in divine worship. It has in Masonry similar significations; hence the pot of incense has been adopted as a symbol in the Third Degree, and the 'burning of incense' is practiced in some of the high degrees" (Mackey, 1874). In *A Ritual of Freemasonry: Illustrated by Numerous Engravings* (1831), Avery Allyn suggests that the incense was used as a means to invoke God into the Temple, and with this invocation:

*Almighty Jehovah, descend now, and fill
This lodge with thy glory, our hearts with good-will;
Preside at our meeting, assist us to find
True pleasure in teaching good will to mankind.
Thy wisdom inspired the great Institution...*

—(Allyn, 1831).



Initiation Of A French Mason Into The Brotherhood, from Societes Secretes, Les Francs Macons (1867).



The initiation of Garibaldi in Montevideo, mid 19th century engraving.

This would certainly be a good entrance point for an entheogenic substance in ritual. One Masonic source suggests these images indicate that “continental Freemasonry tried to copy the mystical aspect of Catholic Church by using incense as well.” This could equally well be the case as elements of Catholic rites in Masonic ritual have been noted, and the illustration used by Allyn includes a figure dressed as a Pope. From what I can understand this particular rite is no longer practiced in the same form. Dr. David Harrison suggests that the symbolism was considered too esoteric/religious and disappeared in the purge of Christian symbolism after the Union of the Ancients and Moderns Masonic Lodges in 1813. One would imagine that many magical elements of Masonry disappeared at this same time.... In most modern lodges, when it does appear, “the pot of incense” is purely symbolic, although it is still in use in the Knights Templar rites, and this does bring to mind von Hammer-Purgstal’s claims of the ritual burning of incense by Gnostic and Hashishin-influenced Templars.

Allyn also notes that the use of incense was accompanied by a trick worthy of those used by Phantasmagorists. During the burning of incense in this rite an initiated “brother who stands back of the candidates touches a piece of gum-camphire to a candle, and throws it, with a sort of sleight of hand, all blazing, into the pot of incense, of the same combustible matter, which stands on the altar before the kneeling brethren which instantly

ignites and makes a very brilliant light” (Allyn, 1831).

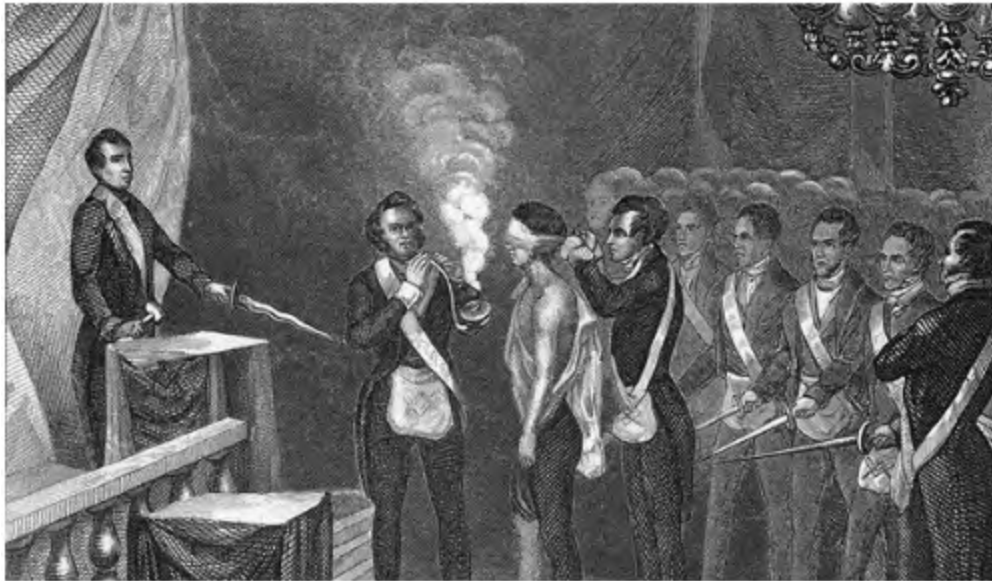
Interestingly, this flash of light later took on an initiatory rite of its own in Freemasonry, and it again has an indication of Catholic influence.



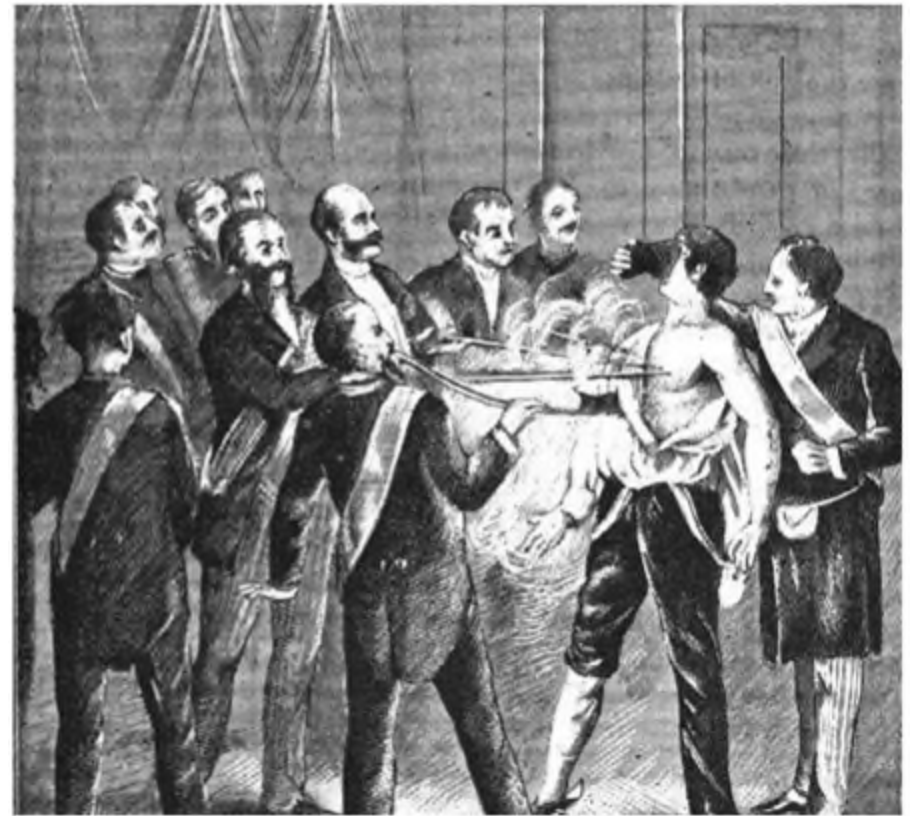
Incense used in the Kadosh degree, from Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry (1871).

The Flash of Light

A form of this ritual is still practiced in France, in the Rectified Scottish Rite. A big flame is created with a candle via a chemical reaction, when Lycopode spores are added, and this takes place just at the moment when the blindfold is pulled from the eyes of the candidate. "Lycopodium is burned in the Rectified Scottish Rite for the purpose of creating a fire flash" (Newman, 2017). ³



"Reception D'un Apprenti," from Histoire Pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie, (1844). In this image the Candidate is about to have the blindfold removed for the flash of light, which occurs via blowing lycopode through a specially designed pipe on to a burning coal.



The Blindfold is removed for the flash of light as depicted in a Masonic ritual from Leo Taxil's anti Masonic journal, Le diable au XIXe siècle: ou, Les mystères du spiritisme, la Franc-Maçonnerie luciférienne (The Devil in the 19th Century: or, The Mysteries of Spiritualism, Luciferian Freemasonry, 1894).



Fig. 98. — *Lycopodium obscurum*, L. (Capris Ballou.)

ground pines or creeping cedar. **Right:** The “pipe lycopods” used in Masonic rituals.

Curiously, the lycopodium has not always been used. In the ritual written by Jean-Baptiste Willermonz in 1802, the light is given to the candidate by firing an “oakum of reeds.” Oakum was a hemp product at the time, and was given with the Latin exclamation *Sic transit gloria mundi* meaning “Thus passes the glory of the world” which has been interpreted as “Worldly things are fleeting” This slogan was used in the ritual of Papal coronation ceremonies between 1409-1603. Interestingly early 20th-century accounts of the coronation of Pope Pius X record that “The master of ceremonies knelt three times before the pontiff, each time lighting a handful of hemp, which surmounted a silver torch, and as the flames rushed up and went out he said: ‘Holy father, thus passeth away the glory of the world’” (*Kennewick Courier*, August 14, 1903).⁴ In this case, the “hemp” referred too, could be simple Hemp oakum, which also burns quite bright. The similarities between the Masonic initiation and the Pope coronation rite, are too profound here to be accidental or coincidental. I had pondered considerably on this Catholic reference to “hemp” and how it was being used, until I came across its Masonic counterpart. Are these rites a remnant of some sort of ritual mirroring the Catholic coronation of Popes? This could be a culprit for the sort of heretical mockery of the

Left: *Lycopodium* is a genus of clubmosses, also known as

rites and sacraments of the Church that the Templars and later Masons were accused of.