

The Libation Cup

This of course brings to mind the Eucharist, and interestingly we can find references to Masonic Libations, and here again we find a certain mirroring of Catholic ritual, that was even compared to the bitter wine Jesus drank, while he hung dying on the cross. Various versions of the “libation cup,” appear in Masonic literature, under names such as, the “cup of brotherly love,” “Cup of memory,” the “Fifth Libation” and even the “cup of double damnation” by its detractors. This libation was sipped from a skull cup in some forms of the Scottish Rite, and allegedly some remnants of this practice have been carried down to the present by some Lodges. It is clearly plausible that these ritual Masonic Libations are a carryover from the punches and elixirs of Scottish Rite claimants Cagliostro and Schröpfer, who themselves claimed to hold actual Templar secrets.



Image of an initiate being given the “Libation cup” said to hold the blood of Hiram Abiff, from Forces Occultes (Occult Forces) – subtitled “The mysteries of Freemasonry unveiled.” A anti-Masonic French film from 1943. I would suggest by this time, even if we consider earlier entheogenic use, like the eucharistic rites of Catholicism, this was a placebo sacrament, and for the vast majority of Freemasonry, this is how it continued. In the American ritual, after swearing an oath to “conceal and never reveal any of the secret Mysteries of Free Masonry” to anyone outside the order, blindfolded new initiates were guided by a Master to kiss the Volume of Sacred Law and repeated the Latin phrase, fune merum Genio, meaning “pour out good wine for our pleasure.” The new devotee then drinks a toast given by the Master to the “heart that conceals, and to the tongue that never reveals.” Then all present drew their firing glass across their throats, indicating the solemnity of the obligation. Perhaps here, we have a remnant of earlier rituals where more than just wine may have been in use.

In their investigation into the origins of Masonic rites, the authors of *The Hiram Key* trace them back to the ancient rituals created for the coronation of Kings: “The new king would have undergone ‘death’ by means of a potion administered by him to the high priest in the gathering of the inner group of the holders of the royal secrets. This drug would have been a hallucinogenic that slowly induced a catatonic state, leaving the new king, as inert as a

corpse” (Knight & Lomas, 1996). The ritual, as they explain, was timed so that the now divine king who had traveled to the land of the Gods, awoke with the rising of the Morning star.

Ward’s classic *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* (1925) also traces the Masonic rite to death and rebirth initiations, and although he does not address the use of psychoactive substances directly, in reference to the ritual identification of acacia in modern Masonic rites, he refers to “the doctrine of the transmigration of souls into plants [which] was widespread among ... more civilized races” (Ward, 1925). There may be some indication here as to how magical *manna* could enter a plant and be transferred to another upon ingestion. Regardless, from both a historical and anthropological perspective, it is clear that psychoactive substances have often played a role in such Death and Rebirth rituals, from time immemorial.

Further, as Ward notes of the Templars, whom he sees as the transmitters of Masonic rites, from East to West, where such pagan death and rebirth rituals had been carried on by secretive sects, since ancient times: “We have learnt that the Templars had a peculiar, almost sinister, connection with one of these societies, namely the Assassins, and themselves had a mysterious secret rite, including a ritual of death and resurrection” (Ward, 1925). And in regard to these ceremonies, we know that it has long been suggested that hashish played a paramount role. As was

noted by Marco Polo, “When the Old Man sent them into the garden in groups of four, ten or twenty, he gave them hashish to drink. They slept for three days, then they were carried sleeping into the garden where he had them awakened.”

In the York Rite ritual, also called “Knight Templar,” “Order of the Temple,” or the “Fifth Libation” there is a reference to the “Libation Cup” taken with an oath of secrecy from a cup made of a human skull. The story that some Templars had escaped persecution disguised as stone masons, and made it to Scotland, where they formed a Lodge, is behind the claimed history of The Scottish Rite, and thus the need for devout secrecy by the initiates. The skull served as a reminder of what happened to those who betrayed this oath.

This version of the ritual appears in *Letters and opinions of the Masonic institution* written by the American Statesman and sixth president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, who was waging a war on Masonry. Like other anti-Masons of the day, Adams believed the best means to inflict damage on a secret society like the Freemasons was to make their secrets public. Due to the secrecy of the organization in the 18th and 19th century, much of what we do know about the no longer practiced rites and degrees of Masonry comes from the Craft’s distractors:

FIFTH LIBATION

This part of the ceremony attending the creation of the Knight Templar is deemed interesting in connection with the obligation.

Address of the Master.

Pilgrim, the fifth libation is taken in a very solemn way. It is emblematical of the bitter cup of death, of which we must all, sooner or later, taste; and even tho Saviour of the world was not exempted, notwithstanding his repeated prayers and solicitations. It is taken of pure wine, and from this cup. (Exhibiting a human skull, he pours the wine into it and says.) To show you that we here practise no imposition, I give you this pledge. (Drinks from the skull.) He then pours more wine into the skull, and presents it to the candidate, telling him, that the fifth libation is called the sealed obligation, as it is to seal all his former engagements in Masonry.

If the candidate consents to proceed, he takes the skull in his hand, and repeats after the most eminent, as follows:

This pure wine, I take from this cup, in testimony of my belief of the mortality of the body and the immortality of the soul; and as the sins of the whole world were laid upon the head of our Saviour, so may the sins of the person whose skull this once was, be heaped upon my head, in addition to my own; and

may they appear in judgment against me, both here and hereafter, should I violate or transgress any obligation in Masonry, or the orders of knighthood which I have heretofore taken, take at this time, or may hereafter be instructed in. So help me God. (Drinks the wine.) (Adams, 1851).

Clearly, Christ, the Cross and Wine are indicated here, and an association with the Templars. Although, by the time that was written, it was likely regular wine given to the initiate, from the history we have seen, the idea that some sort of more potent infusion may have originally been used, and possibly still was by some quasi-Masonic groups, cannot be ruled out.

As noted, Adams himself was not a Freemason, and far from an enthusiast, and in this case the description seems to be borrowed from Avery Allyn's *A Ritual of Freemasonry* (1831) a former Mason who claimed to have himself taken part in such a rite.

When I received this degree, I objected to drink from the human skull and to take the profane oath required by the rules of this order. I observed to the most eminent, that I supposed that that part of the ceremonies would be dispensed with. The sir knights charged upon me, and the most eminent addressed me as above. A clergyman, an acquaintance of mine, came forward, and said, "Companion Allyn, this part

of the ceremonies is never dispensed with. I and all the sir knights have drank from that cup and taken the fifth libation. It is perfectly proper, and it will be qualified to your satisfaction." I then drank of the "cup of double damnation" (Allyn, 1831).

This does not seem to be an overly propagandized account, from what I can see from other Masonic descriptions, and as I understand it the drinking from a skull cup is still practiced by certain Lodges.

The 19th-century author of *Freemasonry, British, continental, etc*, Michael di Gargano, claimed the password for the Fifth Libation of the Scottish Rite was "Golgotha" (the place of the skull), and the site of Jesus' crucifixion, and thus the libation itself, was taken from a skull cup. In the Fourth Libations a toast is given "To the memory of Simon of Cyrene, the friend of our Saviour, who bore his cross, and fell a martyr to his faith." Both the new initiate and the Most Eminent Commander give the drinking sign, by drawing the glass across the throat. Then according to di Gargano:

After drinking the toast of Simon of Cyrene, the Commander says to the candidate, "Pilgrim, before you will be permitted to participate in the fifth libation, I shall enjoin upon you one year's penance, which you will perform as a token of your faith and humility, under the direction of the Senior and the Junior

Wardens, with this emblem of humility (a skull) in one hand, and this emblem of faith (a lighted taper) in the other, you will take them and travel to the Sepulchre of our Saviour. The candidate starts on his journey and after traveling round the lodge awhile, they are accosted by a guard, stationed at the entrance of a dark room representing the Sepulchre of our Saviour. He demands "Who comes there?" Senior Warden answers: "A Pilgrim penitent traveling from afar, craves your permission here awhile to wait, and, at the shrine of our departed Lord, to offer up his prayers and meditations." Guard: "How does he expect to obtain this favour?" Senior Warden: "By the benefit of the Pilgrim Penitent's pass." The word or pass is Golgotha (Calvary) and is given by five cuts given under an arch of swords. The pass being given, the guard permits them to enter the Sepulchre of our Saviour. The candidate is directed to kneel at the entrance of the Sepulchre while the Senior Warden reads for him the Evangelist's account of the Resurrection. This done, the room, or hall, is darkened, and the candidate rises, to behold, in another part of the encampment, a brilliantly lighted transparency, representing the Resurrection and Ascension of the Saviour. A hymn in honour of the Resurrection is sung by the brethren, after which the Prelate takes the candidate by the arm and walks him near the

transparency, where he gives him a Scriptural lecture, half rhapsody and whole hypocrisy...

As he winds up with Amen and amen! the hall is again lighted up, and the candidate makes another alarm at the door of the Asylum, while the Senior Warden says: "A pilgrim penitent traveling from afar having performed his term of penance, seeks now to participate in the fifth libation, thereby to seal his faith." The pass Golgotha is then given, the veil is drawn aside, and the candidate enters the Asylum, and kneels at the base of the triangle, with its eleven burning tapers, and its coffin, Bible, and skull. The Most Eminent Commander addresses him thus: "Pilgrim, the fifth libation is taken in a very solemn way. It is emblematical of the bitter cup of death, of which we must all, sooner or later, taste; from which even the Saviour of the world was not exempt, notwithstanding his repeated prayers and solicitations. It is taken of pure wine, and from this cup." He exhibits a human skull, pours wine into it and says: "To show you that we here practise no imposition, I give you this pledge." He drinks from the skull, and afterwards pours more wine into it, and presents it to the candidate, telling him that the fifth libation is called among Masons "The Sealed Obligation," as it is to seal all his former obligations in Masonry. If the candidate, as is often the case, hesitates in taking the

"Sealed Obligation," the Commander cries out: "Attention! Sir Knights" – The Sir Knights at once form round the candidate. "Handle sword! Draw sword! Charge!" And while the swords of his companions glitter about his head, the Commander says to the candidate – "Pilgrim! you here see the swords of your companions, all drawn ready to defend you in the discharge of every duty we require of you; they are also drawn to avenge any violation of the rules of our order. You promised when you entered the Chamber of Reflection that you would conform to all the ceremonies, rules, and regulations of this encampment. We here have your promise in writing. We expect you will proceed." If the candidate consents, under this very pointed compulsion, he takes the skull in his hand, and repeats after the Eminent Commander as follows: "This pure wine I take from this cup," (the skull) "in testimony of my belief in the immortality of the soul, and the mortality of the body; and as the sins of the whole world were laid upon the head of our Saviour" – (mark the Masonic moral drawn from the contemplation of our Redeemer's Passion and Death) – "so may the sins of the person whose skull this once was, be heaped upon my head in addition to my own; and may they appear in judgment against me, both here and hereafter, should I violate or transgress" – (not the commandment of God, but) "any

obligation in Masonry, or the orders of Knighthood, which I have heretofore taken, take at this time, or may hereafter be instructed in. So help me, God.” He drinks from the skull. This “Sealed Obligation” is referred to by Masonic Templars in confidential communications relative to matters of extreme importance, when other Masonic obligations seem insufficient to insure silence, secrecy, and safety. Such, for instance, was the murder of William Morgan, their great American Secretary ... which was communicated from one Templar to another, under the pledge of the Masonic Templar’s skull Sealed Obligation...

Another Scripture lesson is read, after which the Most Eminent Grand Commander says: “Pilgrim, you are elected to fill the vacancy, in our encampment, made vacant by the death of Judas Iscariot, and in testimony of your acceptance of that appointment, you will relight the extinguished taper upon the triangle.” The candidate lights it, after which he rises from his knees, and is formally dubbed a Knight Templar and Knight of Malta. The signs, grips, and hailing signals of the degree are given. They are like the rest of the ceremony, most irreligious and blasphemous, The encampment is closed as it was opened (Gargano, 1883).

In di Gargano’s view, this ceremony is “most irreligious and blasphemous,” and he asks “where is the necessity for taking such a revolting and blasphemous oath, and sealing it by draughts of wine from a human skull, in order to perform works of charity and benevolence towards widows and orphans? ...” (Gargano, 1883). Gargano’s concerns were raised both before and after this period, down to the modern day. Closer to our own time, William Schnoebelen in *Masonry: Beyond the Light* saw this rite as “a blasphemy on the Lord’s Supper – an unholy parody almost as bad as the Satanic Mass. It is undoing the very covenant that Jesus began (Matthew 26:28). A Christian KT who partakes of this evil communion is ‘drinking the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils. (1 Corintheans 10:21)” (Schnoebelen, 1991).

Curiously, a reference to skull cups comes up in the *History of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, and Concordant Orders* (1892). A chapter on “Ancient Masonry” which looked at the role of initiation in various cultures, related the following account from “Hindoostan” where the use of a skull cup is used for a “fermented liquor,” which was likely equated with the Soma or the use of bhang among the Shivites, which is still consumed from skull cups. At the peak of the ritual that included the use of “aromatics and drugs” taken in ceremonies directed at producing visions:

The aspirant, who had become fatigued by all of these tedious ceremonies, was then given a potation of fermented liquor, from a human skull. Being a regenerated being, a new name was bestowed upon him, which indicated his then purity, and was presented to the Chief Brahmin, and was received by him as a brother and companion. He was then invested with a white robe and tiara, placed in an elevated seat, and instructed in the various tokens and signs, and also in the explanations of the Mysteries. A cross, the sectarial mark called Tiluka, was placed on his forehead, and explained to be the symbol of the four cardinal points of the world. The tau cross or inverted level was inscribed on his breast, the badge of innocence and the symbol of eternal life, to indicate his newly acquired dignity, which advanced him to the superior order of priesthood. The sacred sash or belt was presented and placed upon him. This cord could be woven only by a Brahmin, and by him with the utmost solemnity and by many mystic rites. Three threads, each measuring ninety-six hands, are first twisted together, then they are folded into three and twisted again, making nine, or three times three threads ; this is folded again into three, but not twisted, and each end is secured by a knot... (Hughan and Stillson, 1892).

This brings to mind not only the association of Soma with the Grail, but also the sacred cord that was alleged to have been used by the Templars; the Vedic descriptions refer to hemp being used as the material it was woven from, and this has also been suggested of the Templars' cord as well.

The idea that these Masonic drinks may be a remnant of earlier sacramental potions that contained psychoactive ingredients, is one that has been pondered for well over a century at this point. Likely due to the rumors about some of the earlier versions of the Scottish Rite, and the origins of Freemasonry, in the 18th century, via Cagliostro and Schröpfer, 19th-century Masons were speculating on just this subject.

John Fellows in *An Exposition of the Mysteries; Or, Religious Dogmas and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, Pythagoreans, and Druids* (1835), makes no secret of its target audience with its Masonic cover. Interestingly Fellows refers to “a soporific cake of honey and medicated grains” – (*medicatis frugibus*)” along with preparations of poppy and other psychoactive substances in various ancient myths and rituals, and relating to the Eleusinian mysteries as well, commenting that:

[W]ithout doubt, the images, which the juice of poppy presents to the fancy, was one reason why this drug had a place in the ceremonial of the shows; not

improbably, it was given to some at least of the initiated, to aid the impression of those mystic visions which passed before them. For that something like this was done, that is, giving medicated drugs to the aspirants, we are informed by Plutarch; who speaks of a shrub called *Leucophyllus* used in the celebration of the mysteries of Hecate, which drives men into a kind of frenzy, and makes them confess all the wickedness they had done or intended. And confession was one necessary preparative for initiation (Fellows, 1835).

In a footnote to this Fellows adds: "This practice obtains in a modern degree of masonry, denominated *Le Petit Architect*. A potion is given to the candidate, which, he is told is a part of the heart of master Hiram, preserved ever since his assassination; which every faithful mason may receive, but that it cannot remain in the body of one who is perjured. After the candidate has swallowed the dose, the master thus addresses him, brother, one thing you came here to learn is, that you ought never to refuse to confess your faults; obstinacy ought to be banished from the heart of every good reason" (Fellows, 1835). Making the entheogenic connection even more clear Fellows connects the Masonic rite with the Eucharist of the church, and the burning bush in which Moses heard the voice of God:

Theurgic magic is still adhered to by the church of Rome, and forms a part of the sacerdotal office. By which means, it is believed, that the real presence of the Saviour is manifested in the eucharist.

Masonry adopts the same principle. In the royal arch degree, the autopton agalma is exhibited in an illuminated bush: the candidate for initiation is ordered to put off his shoes, being told that the place where he stands is holy ground. In fact one of the characters personates the deity, and announces his actual appearance.

The more we examine the pagan system of religion, the more shall we be convinced that the rites and ceremonies of masonry, as well as those of the Catholic church, are derived from that ancient institution (Fellows, 1835).

It is certain that Fellows saw a connection to the drink of Masonry here, as he repeated these comments in *The Mysteries of Freemasonry; Or, an Exposition of the Religious Dogmas and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, Showing ... Their Identity with the Order of Modern Masonry* (1860).

manna of the Jews, are said to have served as their main sustenance in the early ages of the world” (Fellows, 1860).

A comparison between the ritual drinking of theentheogenic potion *Kykeon* at the Mysteries of Eleusis, and the Masonic Libations, was also noted by Jean-Marie Ragon. Ragon referred to the role of initiation in “the uneasy feeling of surprise which should be impressed upon the soul of a man who, during a deep sleep, would be transported to a place where even in imagination he would have had no idea of” (Ragon, 1841). A description reminiscent of the hashish initiations of the Assassins and Hassan I-Sabbah’s Pleasure Garden. “All associations founded on mysteries, that is to say, on secrets unknown to the vulgar, had initiations and initiates.... To convince you of this truth, I could unfold the glories of history, and acquaint you with all that has been transmitted concerning the various mysteries of antiquity, such as those of ... Eleusis ... [In the Mysteries of Eleusis, the] aspirant alone in a place prepared to receive him ... is lying on the skin of a beast. He has before him a vase of *kykeon*, a liquor used in the mysteries of Eleusis” (Ragon, 1841). Ragon makes this in reference to the ritual drinks of certain Masonic Rites:

“[The] ark of masonry is but a copy of the old mysterious chest of the ancient Egyptians; which, among other monuments of the ancient state of mankind, contained ‘acorns, heads of poppies, bay-berries, branches of fig-tree,’ etc.; which, like the

As a newly initiated brother, the drink you have been given is, by its bitterness, an emblem of the sorrows of life and of the obstacles which precede the initiation or the discovery of the truth. Let it be for you a

drink of ... forgetfulness with regard to the false maxims you have drawn from the profane!

The second beverage is pure ... a drink ... of memory for the lessons you will receive from wisdom (Ragon, 1841).

Manly P. Hall, who would later go on to become a 33rd degree Mason, wrote in his Occult classic, *Secret Teachings of all Ages*, that these sort of ritual were at one time, a common aspect of the "Mysteries."

Egyptian priests discovered herb extracts by means of which temporary clairvoyance could be induced, and they made use of these during the initiatory rituals of their mysteries. Shortly after the drugs were administered to him, the neophyte was attacked by a spell of dizziness. He found himself floating through space, and while his physical body was absolutely insensible (being guarded by priests that no ill should befall it) the candidate passed through a number of weird experiences, which he was able to relate after regaining consciousness. In light of present day knowledge, it is difficult to appreciate an art so highly developed that by means of draughts, perfumes, and incenses, the mental attitude desired could be induced almost instantaneously, yet such an art actually existed among the priestcraft of the early pagan world.

...The Mysteries taught that during the higher degrees of initiation the gods themselves took part in the instruction of candidates or at least were present, which was in itself a benediction. As the deities dwelt in the invisible worlds and came only in their spiritual bodies, it was impossible for the neophyte to cognize them without the assistance of drugs which stimulated the clairvoyant centre of his consciousness. Many initiates in the ancient Mysteries stated emphatically that they had conversed with the immortals and had beheld the gods.(Hall, 1928).

An 1868 edition of *The Masonic Trowel*, opened with an article "The Symbolism of Sacred Plants," by the noted Masonic authority Dr. Albert G. Mackey (1807-1881) who served as Grand Lecturer and Grand Secretary of The Grand Lodge of South Carolina, as well as Secretary General of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States. Mackey wrote about "the doctrine of sacred plants, as symbolic of great truths" and focussed on the psychoactive plant that was the source of the sacred libation of ancient Persia, the *Haoma*.

The religion of Zoroaster, which was practiced by the ancient Iranians ... is the one whose sacred plant the homa [sic], is ... to engage our attention ... it was ... a sacred plant of the Brahmans, and was, in all

probability, communicated by the Aryans.... The "Bunde-hesch," [sic] says that "Haoma gives not only health, but generative vigour also, and imparts life in the resurrection."

...goblets were filled with it, and it was drunk by the sacrificers. The intoxication that resulted from its use, like that produced by opium or the hasheesh, was of an ecstatic nature, and made a powerful impression on the imagination of the drinker. The visions seen by him while in this state of unnatural ecstasy were like those of the clairvoyant somnambulists of modern mesmerism, and were considered by the Persians as revelations and confirmation of their religious faith; and hence the home plant itself, and its sacred sap, became a god to the Zoroastrian worshipper.

The effects of the homa juice ... were to the Parsee the orgiastic side of his religion, and a never failing portion of it whenever deification of the power of nature had place. The home drink was the sacrament of their religion; nay, more, it was the medium through which the deity manifested itself, and much of the "Zend-avesta" has doubtless flowed originally from this source.... The homa plant was ... among the ancient worshipers of Zoroaster, the symbol of immortality.

In the Zoroastrian mythical doctrine, as the god

Homa was to bestow eternal life upon his worshipers under his other appellation of Ormuzd, so the plant homa became the medium through which that eternal life was to be secured when its consecrated sap was quaffed in the sacrifice.

And thus we find ourselves in conclusion, returning to that old and often repeated symbolism of sacred plants, where without one exception, through the acacia, the laurel, the palm, the myrtle, and many others, the lesson of resurrection to eternal life is taught. Like all of these, the homa plant of the ancient Persians, or its synonym, the Soma of the ancient Indians, became the acknowledged, although somewhat abstruse, symbol of immortality (Mackey, 1868).

Mackey, in the conclusion, does draw an analogy to the acacia of Masonic ritual. However, it should be noted that although he compared the effects of homa to hashish and opium, he identified it as *Asclepias acida*, a candidate for the ancient beverage that is seldom discussed in today's literature. However, this does show the keen interest among leading Masonic figures in these sorts of entheogenic preparations.

In regard to an interest in *Haoma*, Mackey was far from alone. Albert Pike, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite's Southern Jurisdiction, and noted Masonic

historian, also referred to *Haoma* and in his *Indo-Aryan Deities and Worship* (1872/1930) citing passages from the Zend Avesta:

I praise the lofty mountains, where thou, O Haoma growest.... I praise the tracts where thou growest, sweet-smelling over the wide field. As a good growth of Mazda growest thou upon the mountains ... praises the healing Haoma.... O Haoma, give me of thy remedies...

Pike's interest in this regard, however, was more focussed on Haoma's Indian counterpart, Soma, and there are close to 250 references to "the great leafy plant, Soma" which was to be found in Pike's *Indo-Aryan Deities and Worship*. "The Soma of the Vedas, was used in the sacrifice, its juice being expressed in a consecrated mortar" (Pike, 1872/1930).

Soma, the juice of a plant (the Haoma of the Zend-Avesta), was also a Deity, invested with the most extraordinary powers...

Soma, [was] an intoxicating potion, consisting of ... [the] juice of plants, mixed with milk ... the Soma plant was not fermented, but was pressed out with stones at the very time of the sacrifice.... In this form ... it reminds us of the Turanian Shamanism, the product of ecstatic excitement...

The juice of the Soma plant, producing exhilaration and perhaps intoxication, was their sacred beverage...

The Atharva-Veda (nwi. 48. 3) thus exults:

"We have drunk the Soma, we have become immortal, we have entered into light, we have known the Gods: what can an enemy now do to us? What can the malice of any mortal effect, O immortal God!"

...No one who reads the hymns that ascribe the powers and faculties of Agni, Indra and all the Gods, to that power of intoxicating and exhilarating contained or rather manifested in the juice of the Soma plant, will wonder at the efficacy, powers and faculties ascribed to prayer and to praise and adoration, in worship and poetry.

We shall find the great deeds of Indra ascribed to the Soma juice used at the sacrifices; and it is generally supposed that this is because of its intoxicating and exhilarating effects.

...it seems singular that an intoxicating liquor, or that potency which produces intoxication, should be invoked to give a real immortality. The hymn to Soma rather resembles the rhapsodies of an opium-eater or of one in the habit of using hashish, than a devout prayer for immortality after death. "The great in heaven" more probably mean the celestial luminaries: but

still it is probable that these Poets had a vague idea of a life after this life, to be passed among the stars (Pike, 1872/1930).

Like Mackey, Pike identifies Soma as *Asclepias acida* and also makes the same comparison to the effects of Soma to hashish and opium; clearly this was something the two colleagues shared an expressed interest in. Curiously, neither Pike nor Mackey mention that the Templars could well have been a conduit for such ancient entheogenic substances into the European Hermetic tradition and secret societies, through their association with the *Hashishin* death and resurrection initiations and the latter's own influences from Zoroastrian and Gnostic rituals. We have also seen how such use was carried over with the hashish incense of *The Picatrix* and the 13th-century cannabis-infused wine of Master Mason Villard de Honnecourt, and its counterpart in a recipe from Pope John XXI, who was friendly with the Templars. Further we see a counterpart in the alchemical *arcana*, and *quintessences* of Paracelsus, Cardano and others. Moreover, indications of an occult history tying cannabis, the Templars and Masonry, in to the works of the likes of Dante and Rabelais has been shown. Moreover, we have seen, figurative individuals of both Masonic and Rosicrucian history can be tied to the occult use of drugs, or at least awareness of it including the likes of Dee, Hooke, Ashmole and many others.

Certainly such substances followed claims of Templar rites, as can be witnessed in the popular rise of both Cagliostro and Schröpfer. As well 19th-century alleged Templar documents and relics from *Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum* and Mertzdorff's *The Secret Rule*, and *The Baptism of Fire* that were popular with Masons, give clear indications of the use of psychoactive substances.

Thus the idea of an influence from these elements on the various Masonic versions of the Libation Cup, are more than reasonable, and even Masons have speculated on their entheogenic origins. The idea that psychoactive substances played a role in the Scottish Rite of Cagliostro and Schröpfer goes without questions, as does their influence on still-practiced forms of these rites. Thus whether a 13th-century Templar influence is a subject of fancy or fact, we can be near certain that the drinking of the Libation cup was derived at least from 18th-century sources, some of which likely used psychoactive substances in such rituals. Moreover, some groups in the 19th century, as we have seen, carried on such practices.

Crowley in his esoteric essay on hashish, *De Herbo Sanctissimo Arabico* (The Most Holy Grass of the Arabs) makes it clear that such rites had continued on in his own day. In *De Herbo Sanctissimo Arabico*, Crowley equates the cannabis initiate to "Parsifal" and equates his quest as the search for "Montsalavt, and the Temple of the Sangraal [Grail]" (Crowley, 1818). Crowley ended The Most Holy

Grass of the Arabs with the comment that, “a man must first be an Initiate, and established in our Law, before he may use this method” , likely here referring to codes of initiation in one of the occult organizations to which he belonged, and as this particular essay was dedicated to Charles Stansfeld Jones,⁵ who opened up the first American Charter of the O.T.O. in North America. This opens up some speculations, although the two did belong to various organizations and it may have been in reference to the AA or some other group. Likewise in his “Psychology of Hashish” Crowley states that in “order to keep the paper within limits” it would be necessary to keep the article to a scientific nature and use information that was already quite available to the public at large “...lest the austerity of such a Goddess be profaned by the least vestige of adornment” (Crowley 1909).

The use of a psychoactive substance in the death and resurrection rituals of Masonry based around Hiram Abiff, could veritably be the Lost key of Masonry, and the Stone the builders of the modern day Masonic Temple, rejected. There may well have been incentives to separate themselves from this form of the rite. One of the things that was suggested earlier, was that the Templars’ rejection of the Cross was due to the use of such a preparation to feign death on the cross. Interestingly, in certain Masonic and Bavarian Illuminati higher degrees, Hiram Abiff is revealed to be Jesus. In this regard it should be noted that

Abiff has also been equated with de Molay in other versions of the rite,⁶ and also the epithet “the widow’s son” has led to an association with Lazarus, another resurrected figure. Professor Morton Smith saw the story of Lazarus’ resurrection as an indication of the sort of death and re-birth rituals to be found in the various Mystery schools popular in that time. As Harrison has noted “the ‘raising’ of Lazarus and Resurrection of Christ ... may have been an influence in the formation of the Third Degree raising ceremony of Freemasonry” (Harrison, 2009). This in turn is indicated by secrets revealed in the later degrees.

Christ’s resurrection is presented in the modern Knights Templar ritual, presenting a similar theme to the Third Degree of Craft Masonry, with the raising of Christ being entwined with the search for hidden knowledge...

Later Rosicrucian societies also held the symbolism of immortality in its ritual. The resurrection of the mysterious mythical founder of the order, Christian Rosencreutz, was re-enacted within the ritual, the symbolic figure rising from his tomb (Harrison, 2009).

The association between Jesus and Hiram, however, was particularly widespread, and this was a cause for concern by its critics. In *Free Masonry: Its Pretensions Exposed*, Henry Ward wrote that “Hiram ... is the allegory of Jesus

Christ in Masonry finished.... In the ritual of Ancient and Accepted Scotch Masons, he [Jesus] is the emblem of beauty in one course, and in the other, by corresponding lessons, Jesus Christ is called Hiram, Grand Architect of his Church” (Ward, 1828).

The famed Mason Albert Pike also referred to the connection between Jesus and Hiram, indicating symbolic elements in Hiram’s ritualized murder, in *The Porch and the Middle Chamber*: “The Jewish Priesthood, at Jerusalem desired to silence Christ, being exasperated by his denunciations of their hypocrisy and vices: and therefore the Junior Warden, with the RULE, symbol of the Pontifical and Sacerdotal Power, smote Hiram on the throat, where the organs of speech are” (Pike, 1874). Moreover, as Dr. David Harrison has more recently stated “the Hiram/Jesus link is a deep one; the whole third degree is about the resurrection.... In the third degree the candidate is pushed into a grave and on the third attempt, raised up from a ‘figurative’ death” (Harrison, 2017). This of course is the number of days Jesus spent in the tomb after crucifixion, and before his return. Other numbers related to Christ’s life were also said to play a role. “In Scottish Rite Freemasonry there are 33 degrees in total, seen by other orders such as the Knights Templar, as representing the 33 years of the life of Christ” (Harrison, 2009).

The idea that Hiram was a veiled allusion to Jesus, was also one of the secrets of the Bavarian Illuminati. As Dr.

David Harrison explains: “Masonic elements were added to the Illuminati system. This was done with the help of Baron Adolph von Knigge, who had become disenchanted with the Strict Observance [which itself claimed Templar origins] and its elusive unknown superiors, and embraced the Illuminati wholeheartedly. Some of Knigge’s ideas included... an overall Christian flavour that culminated with an idea that Hiram was actually Jesus, Freemasonry being a way of propagating his secret teachings” (Harrison, 2017). Interestingly, after ten years of activity, when the order was banned through the “capture of all ... Knigge’s correspondence, papers” the seized documents included receipts for deadly potions... [and] a method for filling a bed-chamber with pestilential vapour” (Ward, 1928). One wonders if what is actually described here were the various drugs of Bavarian Illuminati initiations?

In this regard, my own theory has long been that in the death and rebirth initiation ceremonies, of Masonic rituals, there is more than a deeper awakening of spirit hidden within them. My own cannabis-infused hunch is that they may contain a remnant of the great heresy of the Templars, and the story behind their rejection of the cross. We referred to the “Libation cup” used in Masonry, and this is also known as the “bitter cup,” and these are reminiscent of Jesus’ words in Gethsemane, “let this cup pass from me.” In the York Rite wine is served and it’s referred to as the fifth libation and/or the bitter cup of death. It is also

known as the sealed obligation, a ritual of death and resurrection possibly going back through the Masons, to the Templars, Assassins, Gnostics, to Jesus' own feigned death on the cross, and a possible secret that was a threat to the very existence of the Catholic Church. "Jacques de Molay, thou art avenged!"



Interestingly, the skull and crossbones which at one time were signature symbols of Freemasons, used to also commonly

appear at the bottom of crucifixes, and were said to represent the hill where Jesus was crucified – Golgotha “Place of the Skull.”

In *Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods* (1921) Mason John Sebastian Marlowe Ward gives some indication how elements such as these may have come into play in Masonry:

The crusades had failed. Christ appeared to have failed to support the defenders of His faith against the Infidel; as a result, many thoughtful minds began to question whether His faith could be the direct Revelation from God that they had been taught it was. They had met men who did not believe it, and these had prevailed; above all, they had met men (Gnostics) who interpreted the Christian story in a different way to that of the Western Church, and some of the knights undoubtedly had been led into new lines of thought not compatible with the strict orthodoxy of the day.

...Many of the Gnostics anathematised the cross ... other strange, wild doctrines existed in the Near East, and may have affected some of the knights...

...[T]he Turkish dervishes have a system of initiation closely resembling our own [Masonic], and a tradition that we get our ritual from them via the Templars ... I think it is extremely probable that a new infusion of ideas was brought in this way, and that

the Templars were thereby brought into close touch with the Comacine Masons of that time...

Parts of the secret ritual of Knights Templars may well have been copied from some of the rites of the Dervish and Assassins. That the Templars were already associated with this mysterious body is well known, and the latter's probable descendants are the modern Druses, who are known to have at least one masonic sign, besides a somewhat similar system of degrees (Ward, 1921).

As we have seen, one of the key rites associated with the Assassins was the induction of the initiate with an infusion that had been drugged with hashish. The idea that Dervishes and Druzes were the carriers of this tradition can be seen in the works of de Nerval, Randolph, Rawson and other occult figures that we have discussed. Ward himself notes that "at first Assassin did not mean murderer, but a person who took the drug hashish" and of their sometimes allegiance with the Templars, that "the Assassins had to pay tribute to the Grand master of the Temple" (Ward, 1921). However, such ideas do not sit well with modern Freemasons and in 1987 the British Grand Lodge informed its members that "J.S.M. Ward's handbooks have no official standing and are not issued by Lodges to candidates. They were personal and very idiosyncratic interpretations of the history and meaning of

the Craft rituals."

However, rejection of this does not equate with wrong or false, and there are varieties of interesting parallels. In the version of The Knights Templar degree in *The Text Book of Advanced Freemasonry* (1873), the cup is referred to as the "Cup of Memory, and taken in honour of various historical figures, dating back to Hiram:

E. C. – Worthy Bro., at your first admission you were refreshed with bread and water, we now invite you to refresh yourself with the Cup of memory, which you will dedicate to seven distinct Libations, you will repeat after me. – E. C. – To Order Sir Knights.

(The Knights all rise to order. Eminent Commander dictates to the Candidate, who repeats after him, and drinks to each of the following memorials.)

E. C. – First Libation: "To the Memory of Moses, Be-saleal, and Asleab, the three Grand Masters who presided over the Holy Lodge." – Drink.

E. C. – Second Libation: "To the memory of Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff, the three Grand Masters who presided over the Sacred Lodge." – Drink.

E. C. – Third Libation: "To the memory of Zerubabel, the Prince of the People, Haggai the Prophet,

and Jeshua, the Son of Josedeck, the High Priest, the three Grand Masters, who presided over the Grand or Royal Lodge.” – Drink.

E. C. – Fourth Libation: “To the Memory of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ.” – Drink.

E. C. – Fifth Libation: “To the memory of John the Evangelist, who finished, by his learning, what the former commenced by his zeal.” – Drink.

E. C. – Sixth Libation: “To the Pious Memory of all those Valiant Knights who sealed their faith with their blood under the banner of the Cross.” – Drink.

E. C. – The next is called the Obligation toast and is drunk from the S and seals the rest of the Libations:

Seventh Libation: “To all Knight Templars, where-soever dispersed over the face of earth and water.” – Drink.

This version is intriguing, in relation to what we have observed of the Nusayri “Ritual of the Cup,” which as was shown was likely related to their use of cannabis and intended to initiate “a sense of alchemical correspondence between homologous individuals who lived in different cycles of time” (Babayan, 2002).

Between revolutionary elements and esoteric ones such

as those here, which could easily be deemed as sinister and heretical in the 19th century, we can see why such elements would be a cause for concern by the authorities; for secrecy by the adherents; and for brushing under the carpet and forgetting about by Masonic bodies intent on destigmatizing Masonry of any element which resulted in the pogroms against the Craft in previous decades.

In this 19th-century version of the Knight Kadosh degree of the Scottish Rite, allegiance was said to be paid to a skull representing Jacques de Molay, while two others, representing the Church and Royalty are cursed in turn:

...The candidate is led into the first chamber, which is fitted up as a sepulchre, or death-chamber, and is lighted by a solitary triangular lamp, suspended from the ceiling. A catafalque, covered with black, stands in the centre of the apartment, on which rests an open coffin, or cenotaph. A Knight Kadosh wrapped in a white cloak and with his face covered, lies within it, feigning death. Along the edge of the catafalque, at the foot of the coffin, three skulls are ranged, the centre skull is crowned with laurels, and represents the Masonic martyr, Jacques de Molay, that to the left is crowned with the Papal tiara, the third bears the diadem of royalty. Brother Conductor places the candidate in front of the cenotaph, admonishing him that, after he has seriously meditated upon the

surrounding objects, he should answer all the questions put to him, by one and the same answer – “I desire to advance.” This being said, the Brother Conductor leaves the room. Scarcely has he left, when First Lieutenant steals unobserved behind the cenotaph, and demands of the candidate, in a grave and mysterious tone, “What motive has conducted you to this habitation of the dead, and what do you wish?” Candidate: “I desire to advance.” “You ask a thing that is perhaps above your strength. Are you sincere in your request?” “I desire to advance.” “You will hear things that will make you tremble with fear. Is your soul freed from all prejudice?” (that is, constitutional or religious). “I desire to advance.” “If such be your firm resolution, hear, and remember.”

Then the Grand Master says, in a tone of authority, to the candidate: “Contemplate these objects which present themselves to your view on all sides. They speak to you profound mysteries. You ought not to be ignorant that all here is symbolical, nevertheless these symbols were, at one time, and even now are, in some places, symbols of terrible truth. At every time, and in every place, there were men wise, upright, and honest, who had respect for the liberties of the normal state of society; but what has been the fate, for the greater part, of those virtuous men who, at different epochs of history, ancient as well as

modern, came forward as the friends of civil liberty and religious tolerance? Almost all of them have been victims to the love they bore their brothers of the human family. Well-nigh all have been objects of the persecution of the powerful of the earth, who maintain their greatness through the ignorance and the prejudice of the people and the masses. The great principles of a sound and enlightened philosophy of progress ought to be proclaimed by public opinion; and this is one of the most powerful reasons why our ancient initiated have always celebrated secretly the mysteries of Freemasonry. Our end in thus presenting to your view the symbols of religious intolerance and civil persecution, is to make you comprehend that, inasmuch as we know how to honour and glorify the men who fell victims and martyrs to intolerance and persecution, so, on the other hand, we curse and execrate the tyrants and despots who are the instruments of this intolerance and persecution. We will likewise give you to understand that, in leaving this place, you are bound to put in operation all the means (all, without exception) that are in your power to combat, and to secure for yourself and your brothers of the human family, civil and religious liberty. Now, are you determined to advance further?”

The candidate answers once more: “I desire to advance.” The Grand Master approaches him, and says:

“Up to this time the theory only of our doctrines has been revealed to you. The time of action has now come. Follow me.”

The Grand Master then guides the candidate in front of the skull, crowned with laurels, and commands him to repeat with him: “Honour and Glory to persecuted innocence! Honour and Glory to virtue sacrificed to vice and ambition!” Then he shows him the skull crowned with the tiara, and places in his hand a dagger, directing him to pierce the tiara to the skull, crying out with him, “Hatred and Death to Religious Despotism!” Finally, he shows him the skull, crowned with the regal diadem, and commands him to stab it, and cry out with him, “Hatred and Death to Civil Despotism!”

The candidate, having obeyed, the Grand Master invites him to take the oath of a Knight Kadosh: “In presence of the Great Architect of the Universe, and in presence of these emblems of political and religious despotism, I, do solemnly swear to combat, as far as in my power lies, political tyranny and religious intolerance. So help me, God!”

The candidate is led through a second apartment hung with white; then the third, hung with blue. Finally, he comes to the fourth apartment, which takes the title of the Senate. It is hung with red, and lighted by twelve large yellow candles. To the east is a

pavilion. Upon the pavilion a transparency, upon which is figured a double-headed eagle, crowned, its wings spread, and holding in its talons a dagger. Upon the breast of the eagle is a triangle, with the words: “Nee proditor, nee proditur, innocens feret.” The officer, who sits enthroned in this pavilion, represents Frederick the Great of Prussia.

Here, in presence of the Grand Council, the Knight Kadosh repeats in public what he has performed in private. He once more stabs the skull crowned with the tiara, and then that with the regal diadem. And doing so he proves himself a Knight Kadosh, a perfect Mason, by repeating the words: “Death to Religious Despotism!” “Death to Political Tyranny!” (Gargano, 1883).⁷

Illustration from Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, (1887).

Similar descriptions of this rite were included in Jonathan Blanchard's *Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated* (1887), and other sources, as well as Waite's *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* who referred to the "the stabbing of skulls, the execration of Pope and King, the praise, reverence and incense poured out to the memory of Molay..." (2013;1st, 1921). Waite saw this rite as "foolish pretence," playing down the implications of it, and suggesting the story behind the rite was designed to "enforce the necessity of union" through common foes, which in reality is at the core of fraternal organizations.

Waite attributed this rite to Pike, but was unclear as to where, or if it was published. It has been suggested that this account was among the various versions of the Scottish rite that Pike had passed on to Albert Mackey who revised them into a single version, and we can be sure, if that is the case, much went to the wayside as a result.⁸ Pike's book *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* does mention hostility to the Papacy held by the Templars when discussing the Kadosh degree. "...[T]he Order of Knights of the Temple was at its very origin devoted to the cause of opposition to the tiara of Rome" (Pike, 1871). Although, this is Pike's commentary on the degree and is not part of the degree itself.

An hundred years ago it had become known that the

Kadosh were the Templars under a veil, and therefore the Degree was pro-scribed, and, ceasing to be worked, became a mere brief and formal ceremony, under another name. Now, from the tomb in which after his murders he rotted, Clement the Fifth howls against the successors of his victims, in the Allocution of Pio Nono against the Free-Masons. The ghosts of the dead Templars haunt the Vatican and disturb the slumbers of the paralyzed Papacy, which, dreading the dead, shrieks out its excommunications and impotent anathemas against the living. It is a declaration of war, and was needed to arouse apathy and inertness to action (Pike, 1871).

All this begs the question as to, could Templar secrets encoded into Masonic rituals pose a threat to the Papacy? Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall claimed that the libertine Gnostic rites of the Templars could be summed up in the creed of the first leader of the Hashishin, Hassan i-Sabbah, "Nothing is true, everything is permitted" a statement that relates to the Islamic concept of *Qiyamat*, which has to do with the end of religion and religious law. This also relates to a phrase attributed to i-Sabbah's grandson, Hassan II, "The Chains of the Law Have Been Broken." Midway through the month-long fast of Ramadan, from his mountaintop fortress at Alamut, Hassan II proclaimed *Qiyamat*, 'the Great Ressurrection'. "For

Ismailis, the *Qiyamat* symbolizes the end of time and also of all religious law. Hasan on this day effectively broke the chains of Islamic law by ordering all to break their fast with food and wine, the latter substance expressly forbidden by the Qur'an for consumption at any time" (Eberly, 2004).

It is not hard to connect the significance of this action taken by Hasan with the fulfillment of the duty of the Hidden Imam who will appear at the end of time. Ismailis perhaps felt that the *Qiyamat* amounted to the manifestation of prophecy, and yet for the mainstream Shi'ite the whole affair amounted to a vile and contemptible heresy...

Jabir Ibn Hayyan ... foresaw Hasan's declaration of the *Qiyamat* when he describes the Glorious One. The Glorious One was said to be an ex-patriot come from afar who would require no long initiation or Master. He proclaims the esoteric meaning of the end of religion and the end of linear time with the announcement of Eternal Life, spoken in an immaterial diction. (Eberly, 2004)

The heretical use of wine in this association also brings to mind the used of hashish-infused wines, which as we have noted seem to be the *Hashishins* method of ingestion, as well as possibly the Templars. In this respect it is worth noting that the detractors of Sufis and the *Hashishin* had their own apocryphal tales associating cannabis with the

end of time, in the most negative of connotations. Writings attributed to a Mahmud al-Muhammadi, have the Prophet state; "...there is a tree called *ghubarya*, an accursed tree. It will appear at the end of time. Those who eat from it do not belong to us." The following was written during the middle ages by a Hudhayfah b. al-Yaman; "I went together with the Prophet into the countryside. He saw a tree and shook his head. I asked him why he was shaking his head, and he replied: A time will come upon my nation when they will eat from the leaves of this tree and get intoxicated. They are the worst of the worst. They are the bira of my nation, as God has nothing to do with them" (Rosenthal, 1971).

Templar imagery from von Hammer Purgstall, Cybelle/Sophia/Metis on the far right breaking the chain of incarnation, perhaps symbolizing "The Chains of the Law Have Been Broken," and an end to religious laws and moral codes, symbolized by the naked woman dousing the candles of the menorah. This also brings to mind the Hashishins libertine mottos of "nothing is true, everything is permitted" and even Rabelais; "Do what thou wilt."

It could be seen that the “heresies” of the Templars, the rejection of the cross and claim it was a hoax, the defilement of the sacraments and sexual rites, if we accept the accusations as true, were a potential form of Qiyamat, and were seen as a threat to the foundations of the Church.

Moreover the role of cannabis in the shamanic practices of the ancient world, that later led to religion, particularly in the Biblical account, could be viewed as, as much of a threat to modern religion as Darwin’s Theory of Evolution was to the Myths of Creation in Genesis – in that what this information indicates is the plant-based shamanism at the very inception of the religion itself. This is something the Abrahamic traditions have always battled against, whether it was with the Pagan and Gnostic cults at the beginning of the Dark Ages, the witches of the Medieval or the use of peyote, iboga, mushrooms and other sacraments that the Church suppressed and murdered the partakers of in the New World and Africa.

Such interpretations could be seen to indeed be troubling for those with a religious mindset. As J.G. Jackson recorded of the philosophical challenges these ideas hold, in *The Religio-Philosophical Journal*, an occult newspaper popular with spiritualists in the 19th century in regard to the idea that Ezra’s cup was dosed with cannabis and St. John ate more than a reed scroll:

If the Revelations of the seer called “John the Divine”

were considered apocryphal by many of the early church fathers; if the reputed prophet, Esdras, (synonymous with Ezra) in forty days and forty nights with the help of many scribes wrote the “history of all things from the beginning” – as he himself tells us – under the inspiration of the “fiery cup,” i. e., – as now proven – drunken with the extract of Indian hemp, called “hasheesh”; if! – if! – if a hundred things are true, as time is now revealing them, and as I know many of them to be, then must I doubt all prophecies “inspired” by such “records,” by whom written no one can now tell; then may we safely ask... What “fiery cup” hast thou been drinking? Go to with thy unwholesome and useless predictions! – unless they prove remedial (Jackson, 1890).

What if the pillar of smoke in which Moses saw and spake to God was thick with cannabis resins? What if Jesus on the cross feigned death with a cannabis-infused potion?

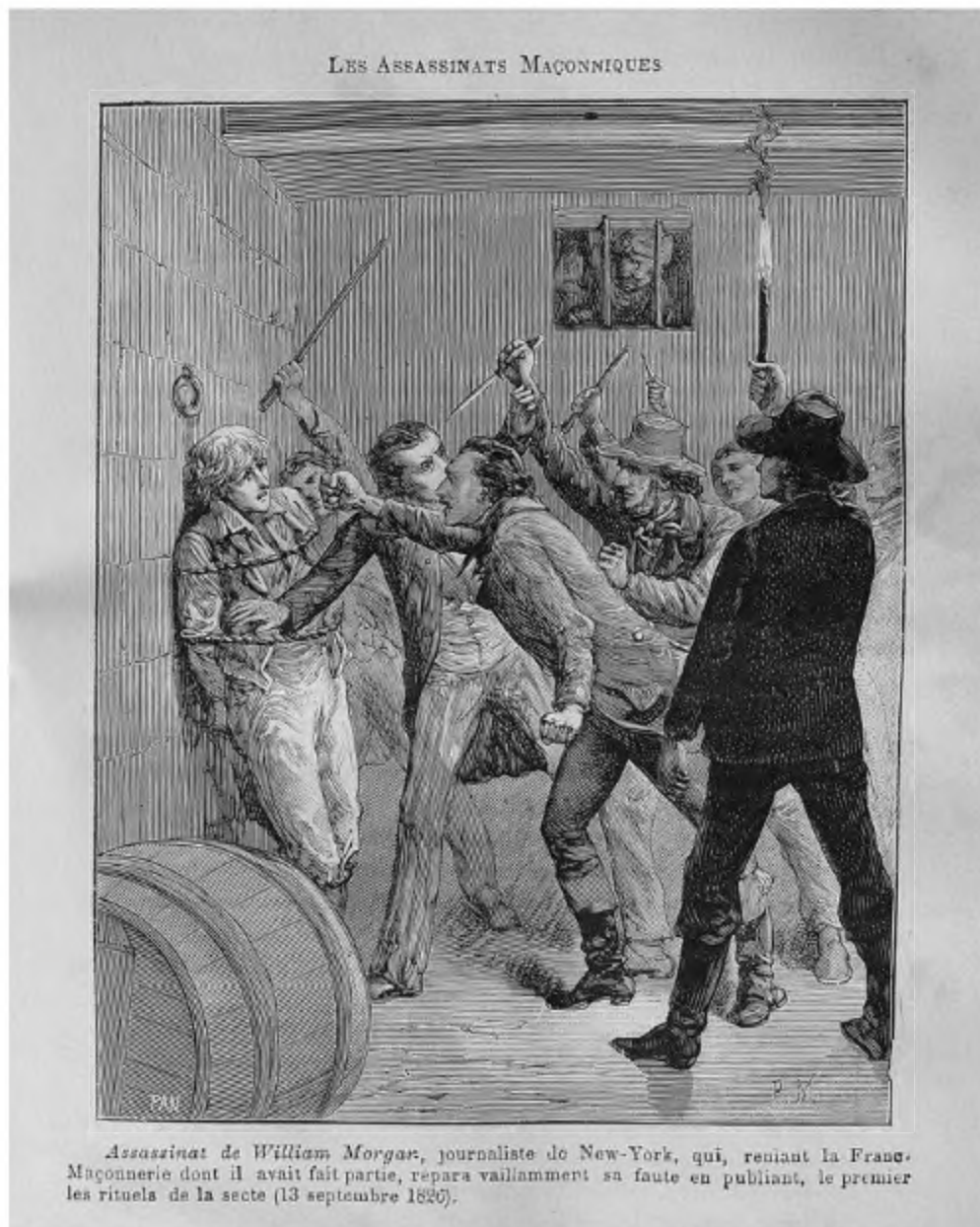
Now whether Freemasonry was the custodian of such Templar secrets of the religion, in the form of rituals, is pure speculation. However, it is important to remember that what secrets they did have were guarded jealously, and with oaths upon the lives of those initiated. This was apparently taken quite seriously. In 1826, Freemasons were implicated in the (still unsolved) kidnapping of William

Morgan, a Masonic secretary who had threatened to reveal their secret rites, giving rise to anti-Masonic concerns. As well, the deaths of Schröpfer, allegedly shot through closed teeth for speaking too much, and de Nerval hung like Judas,⁹ with a cord that could conceivably have been an indication of initiation, may well have been for violating such oaths.

The assassination of William Morgan, engraved by artist Pierre Méjanel.

This in no way indicates that modern Freemasons are using entheogenic sacraments and are the custodians of such secret knowledge. I think for the most part, Masonic Lodges serve as gentlemen's clubs, and the degrees serve as mere badges, like those of so many Boy Scouts, rather than as the forms of spiritual initiation and social justice that was originally intended. Considering the persecution of former times, due to the Craft's association with magic, heresy and revolution, to survive, Masonry was forced to adapt and exorcise such elements from their lodges, and ironically, this cleansing accounts for increased popularity as well. "The Anti-Masons, traitors and perjurers some, and some mere political knaves, purified Masonry by persecution, and so proved to be its benefactors; for that which is persecuted, grows. To them its present popularity is due, the cheapening of its Degrees, the invasion of its Lodges, that are no longer Sanctuaries, by the multitude; its pomp and pageantry and overdone display" (Pike. 1871).

...Masonry continued to degenerate; candidates were admitted without due inquiry, and for the sake of revenue alone; the degrees were conferred with too great rapidity, and without a knowledge of the principles, or even of the work of the preceding degrees, on the



part of Candidates; men of little intellect and information swarmed in the order, and debased and degraded it; others joined it merely through idle curiosity, and wholly degraded and set at naught their obligations; frivolous ceremonies were multiplied and new degrees invented, and large bodies of men calling themselves Masons threw off their allegiance, pretended to a knowledge of the True Word, and invented new Rites; so that the Temple of Symbolical Masonry became a mere arena of strife and a house of contention (Pike, 1857).

However, Arthur Edward Waite suggested that at his time at least, there was “a Masonry which is behind Masonry and is not commonly communicated in lodges, though at the right time it is made known to the right person. But it is requisite that he should come in by the door and should pass through the preliminary grades to attain the ineffable ends” (Waite, 1903).¹⁰ Pike shared this view of a more esoteric Masonry that was withheld from the wider mass of brothers. “Part of the symbols are displayed there to the Initiate, but he is intentionally misled by false interpretations. It is not intended that he shall understand them; but it is intended that he shall imagine he understands them. Their true explication is reserved for the Adepts, the Princes of Masonry. The whole body of the Royal and Sacerdotal Art was hidden so carefully, centuries

since, in the High Degrees, as that it is even yet impossible to solve many of the enigmas which they contain” (Pike, 1871).

Masonry, like all the Religions, all the Mysteries, Hermeticism and Alchemy, conceals its secrets from all except the Adepts and Sages, or the Elect, and uses false explanations and misinterpretations of its symbols to mislead those who deserve only to be misled; to conceal the Truth, which it calls Light from them and to draw them away from it. Truth is not for those who are unworthy or unable to receive it, or would pervert it...

So Masonry jealously conceals its secrets, and intentionally leads conceited interpreters astray... (Pike, 1871).

As Manly P. Hall has also later noted:

Freemasonry is a fraternity within a fraternity – an outer organization concealing an inner brotherhood of the elect ... it is necessary to establish the existence of these two separate and yet interdependent orders, the one visible and the other invisible. The visible society is a splendid camaraderie of ‘free and accepted’ men enjoined to devote themselves to ethical, educational, fraternal, patriotic, and humanitarian concerns. The invisible society is a secret and

most August fraternity whose members are dedicated to the service of a mysterious Arcanum Arcanorum (Hall, 1929).

It is hoped that this volume might aid in opening that *Arcanum Arcanorum* to all, and play a part in restoring the mysterious initiations of Masonry. Likewise, the return of entheogenic substances into our culture currently taking place, would benefit from the sort of structured use that accompanied them in ancient times.

¹ See also (Lomas, 2000).

² 'Pot of Incense', Short Talk Bulletin - Vol.XIII May, 1953 No.5.

³ Newman also notes that "Lycopodium contains huperzine A" a psychoactive compound. "Not only is huperzine highly intoxicating, but Thomas Yuschak, in his book *Advanced Lucid Dreaming: The Power of Supplements*, (2006) relates that acetylcholinesterase inhibitors are used to promote lucid dreaming via the prolongation of REM cycles" (Newman, 2017). However descriptions suggest that rather than being used for its psychoactive properties, it is used for purely visual effects in the Masonic rite, as it is by stage magicians, and as Newman has also noted all the lycopodium powder is burnt in less than 1 second, so it is not used for lucid dream or visionary purposes. A special smell stays in the temple for 1 or 2 minutes, and then it is totally finished.

⁴ This same description appeared in a number of newspapers at the time, so not a typo.

⁵ In a series of synchronistic events regarding Liber Aleph, Crowley, and Jones, worthy of the "cup of memory" I learned while writing this book that Jones lived just doors down from the home I was raised in, and Crowley visited him there!

⁶ In an 1827 American version of the 33 degree, in answer to the first question De Molay? the password answer is "Hiram Abiff." In a version said to have been based on older sources and published by Ragon in 1861, an oath is sworn on a weapon that is never to be used unless it is in self defence, against the common enemy of one's country or "against blood stained criminals, the murderers of our Honourable Master, Jacques de Molay."

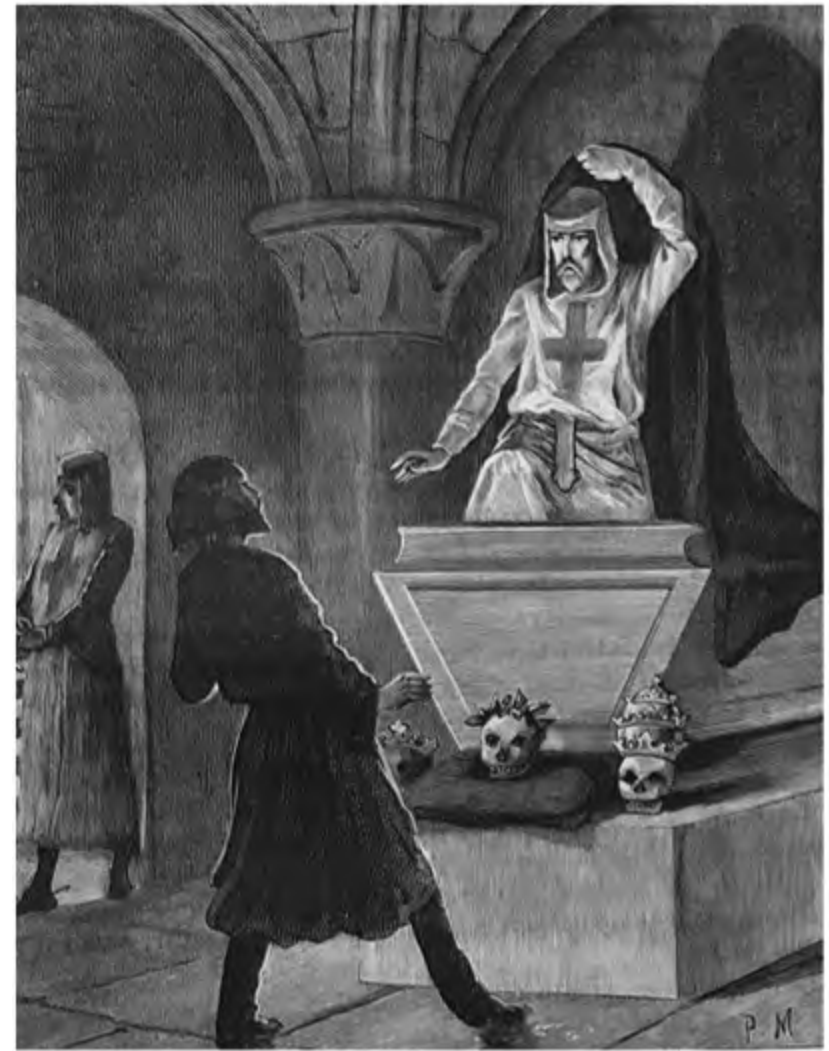
⁷ In an 1827 version of the ritual, the enmity that was directed at the church and crown but instead is lodged against The Knights of St. John in Jerusalem and The Knights of Malta, who allegedly benefitted from the arrests and forfeiture of the Templars and their goods. This however, may well have been a more culturally palatable situation than the overthrow of the Papacy and Crown. However, there may still be more to it, as a January 7 article in the *National Catholic Register*, 'Disorder in the Order of Malta', on November 10, it is related that Pope Francis, "made it clear to Cardinal Burke that he wanted Freemasonry 'cleaned out' from the order, and he demanded

appropriate action” (Pentin, 2017).

⁸ Pike does refer to 3 skulls in the 23rd degree ‘Chief of the Tabernacle’ “During a reception, there is a dark apartment, with an altar in the centre of it, near which are placed a light and three-skulls. In front of the altar is a human skeleton” (Pike, 1874).

⁹ “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, 1855).

¹⁰ As quoted in (Harrison, 2017).



Above Right: Illustrations of Phantasmagoria like effects in a Masonic rite. **Above Left:** Templar figure, raising from the tomb in place of Hiram Abiff, from the anti Masonic work *Les Mystères de la franc-maçonnerie dévoilés* (The Mysteries of Freemasonry unveiled) by Léo Taxil (1895). **Below Right & Left:** Incense being burnt in Masonic rites as depicted in *Les Mystères de la franc-maçonnerie dévoilés* (1895) by former Mason and Master Hoaxer Léo Taxil.



Conclusion

So what are we to make of cannabis' role in alchemy, magic and spiritual initiations? Clearly, all speculation aside, information regarding its use in all three of these traditions has been documented in many cases. The direct references to cannabis in the alchemical works of Avicenna, Paracelsus and Cardano show it was used by Alchemists. The references in magical grimoires like *The*

Picatrix, *Sepher Raziel: Liber Salomonis* and *The Book of Oberon* establish its role in Magick. Accounts, from the *Hashishin* to the Brotherhood of Luxor, make it clear it was used by some initiatory societies.

One may have received the impression that this work has taken a purely anthropological perspective, and reduced the various supernatural claims and accounts to the mind-bending and hallucinogenic effects of drugs, combined with the sort of tricks we might expect from stage magicians. However, that is far from the case. Although, I do think here as well, there may be a scientific, or at least “quasi-scientific” explanation to be had, and I think this lies in the relationship between cannabis, dreaming, and what has been deemed the “subconscious” by Freud and “unconscious” by Jung. Jung, who had started out as a student of Freud, eventually rejected the latter’s conception of the subconscious just being a storehouse of repressed desires and memories, and instead held it as akin to a doorway to the Akashic records, a treasure trove of symbols and archetypes, and a repository of the collective memory of humanity.

The role of cannabis in mapping out the subconscious mind in the last centuries, through the works of the likes of Dr. Jacques-Joseph Moreau, Dr. Thomas Arnold and others, could be compared to the mapping out of the endocannabinoid system through the discovery of cannabinoids in our own. Early psychiatric doctors like

Arnold and Moreau saw in cannabis a mirroring of the madness of insanity. This led to a comparison to the dream state, as what is the dream but a momentary loss of sanity and division of self, where one is simultaneously telling oneself the dream, listening to the dream and participating in the dream as an audience of one? It does not get much more schizophrenic than that! The early study of “...drugs provided the infrastructure to the rise of concepts pertaining to fantasy such as ‘the unconscious,’ ‘dreams,’ ‘phantasmagoria’ and ‘collective dreams’” (Bjelić, 2017).

Dr. Moreau not only played a role in the founding of *le Club des Hashchischins*, but also wrote *Du Hachisch et de L’aliénation Mentale* (1845) later translated into English as *Hashish and Mental Illness*, a very influential work in its day.

...[I]t seems that two modes of mental life are known to man. The first results from our relationship with the external world, with that great whole known as the universe; we share it with the creatures that resemble us. The second one is but the reflection of the first, and feeds only, in a sense, on materials supplied it by the first, while remaining completely separate.

Sleep is like a barrier raised between these two lives: the physiological point where external life ceases and internal life begins.

So long as this situation exists, mental health prevails (Moreau, 1845/1973).

However, Moreau felt that should the two become confused, through various mental and physical factors, “an imperfect fusion occurs,” and the individual was caught between the dream and reality. In Moreau’s view, hashish enabled one to cross the threshold and enter this same state, temporarily and at will. Through this, it also became clear that the source of madness was also the source of imagination, creativity and the muse. This led to Moreau sharing the exotic green paste from the Orient, hashish, with a collection of the brightest minds of his day, literary giants that included authors Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, Charles Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, Gérard de Nerval, and Honoré de Balzac, whose works are still published more than a century and half after being written.

...Moreau ... tried to further the understanding of dreams by studying the dream state induced by hashish.... In the hashish dream state, he said, “I has to admit for delirium in general a psychological nature not only analogous but absolutely identical with dream-states.” On at least one occasion, Nerval and other writers were invited to experiment with hashish at a private salon, and without warning found themselves exhibited in their drug-induced state to a group of doctors ... after Nerval’s death, Moreau ...

cited the first phrases of Nerval’s Aurélia, for a medical description of delirium as the overflowing of dream into real life “because from a psychic point of view, dream and delirium are one and the same.” Moreau and other sleep and dream researchers such as Alfred Maury [also known for his use of hashish] worked to identify the laws as well as the logic of dreaming as a means with which to counter the alienating effects of mental illness. Even Jean-Martin Charcot, the neurological pathologist, himself experimented with hashish in 1853 in his investigations of hysteria and hypnosis (Stephenson, 2015).

Craig E. Stephenson, a Jungian analyst, wrote the above as a foreword to Jung’s *On Psychological and Visionary Art: Notes from C. G. Jung’s Lecture on Gerard de Nerval’s Aurélia* (2015). Jung lectured specifically on de Nerval, as he was considered such a text book case of the potential for both genius and insanity, when the barriers between the unconscious and conscious mind were too suddenly breached. In the Jungian view, only part of the mind is actually what we would call conscious, what we see as our “personal awareness” or “ego.” Beyond this lies “unconscious mind” which holds the two aspects of the “subconscious mind” which deals with our fears, distressing emotions, and the functions of the body; and, traversing the boundaries between science and mysticism (too much for some), Jung

saw the “superconscious mind,” which was the home of a “Collective Unconscious” which connects the individual to the collective memory of his or her race and is passed down genetically. “This collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited” (Jung 1959).

Jung held that what he termed the “superconscious mind” and the “collective unconscious,” was in fact what we term as “instinct” in other species, and the same genetic memory and force that enabled a new-born horse to stand and walk, or an elephant seal to catch fish the day it was born, was present in humanity, albeit buried deep beneath the ego, or consciousness and awareness of self. The collective unconscious in this sense, is the storehouse of human experience, the sort of thing that creates a natural inbred fear of spiders and snakes, and comprised of the latent memories of our ancestors, species, and evolutionary past. It was in this element that Jung recognized what he at first identified as “primordial images” and later termed “archetypes,” these are symbols so widespread and engrained in human consciousness, that they are recognized at deeper levels than the present state of awareness held by the personality. In his formative essay “Instinct and the Unconscious” Jung stated that these archetypal images “might suitably be described as the instinct’s perception of itself, or as the self-portrait of the instinct” (Jung 1919). Jung postulated that it was because of this Collective Unconsciousness that certain symbols,

myths and archetypes had become so ingrained or “impressed” in the mind of man, and reached beyond cultures, and speak to us symbolically in dreams and intuitions.¹ One is reminded here of the Sufi and Alchemical, “Language of the Birds.”

In *The Orphic Vision: Seer Poets from Novalis to Rimbaud* (1965) the late Professor of French literature, Gwendolyn Bays (1917-2013), suggested that the explorations of hashish and drug-ingesting 19th century French poets, like de Nerval and others in many ways, were the forerunners of the discovery of the subconscious mind, preceding science by close to a century:

Psychological data of this sort are particularly relevant here because many of the French Romantics ... – Nodier, Nerval, Gautier, Baudelaire, Verlaine² and Rimbaud – made free use of the drug hashish to “penetrate the unknown,” as Rimbaud expressed it. Les Paradis artificiels of Baudelaire, Nerval’s Aurélia, and Rimbaud’s Voyant letters, as well as ... Les Illuminations ... contain much valuable information about the unconscious, anticipating the discoveries of science by some fifty to a hundred years. These poets not only succeeded in revolutionizing French poetry but also discovered a whole new area of the human psyche. Only partially aware of the original nature of their discoveries, they took hashish not so

much to shock and scandalize, as many critics in the past have thought, but in order to explore this unknown world. In fact, Baudelaire's last words at the end of *Les Paradis artificiels* contains a plea for achieving, without the use of drugs, the extraordinary state of consciousness which he had experienced with hashish. Rimbaud, in particular, expressed in the *Voyant* letters his great urgency to find a technique, but he assumed, in accordance with the knowledge of his times, that the method could only be a destructive one. All of the above mentioned poets are nocturnal seers, as defined here, because of the dark regions into which they delved at such terrible price for their health and sanity; their visions may be more accurately termed the orphic vision to distinguish it from the mystic vision with which it has been so often confused (Bays, 1965).

I would add to Bays' observation, that alchemists and magicians tapped into this centuries before the French poets through the same means of drugs; add to this sage poets like Dante and Rabelais as well. Moreover, as we have seen, this technique of spiritual ecstasy could be traced back even further to the seers and prophets of much more ancient times. (It should be noted that many of the harmful effects that Baudelaire and Rimbaud were concerned with, were much more likely alcohol and

opium-related, in their own cases as well as that of their peers.)

A 1930 edition of the French occult journal, *Revue Métapsychique*, included an article "Un Revelateur du Subconscient: Le Haschisch" (The Revealer of the Unconscious: Hashish) by pharmacist M.E. Pascal, that highlighted the relationship between cannabis and the subconscious.

It is not to the readers of this Review that we have to define the subconscious, a notion that has become classical in psychology. The *Métapsychique*, deals entirely with the effects produced by the unconscious mediums. In medical practice, psychoanalysis, so in vogue at the moment, consists in the search for subconscious ideas provoking psychoneuroses. The phenomena of natural somnambulism, of hypnosis, delirium of intoxication, irresistibly suggest the existence of a psychic activity, exerted outside the normal consciousness. Finally, in normal psychology, dreams, distraction, certain forgetfulness, prove that the unconscious plays a primordial role in the life of each of us...

The interest of the study of this obscure area of the mind is therefore appreciated.... Most often, it is difficult to sufficiently inhibit normal consciousness, to allow the unconscious to manifest itself. We have

previously exposed some of our research aimed at facilitating this exploration of deep psychic layers. We have shown that a narcotic combination: Scopolamine and chloralose [a compound of scopolamine and chloralose], facilitated the production of somnambulism...

Other substances, though not provoking like Scopolamine, deep hypnosis, reveal however the subconscious of the subject. The Hashish in particular produces a kind of delirium of exceptional richness. From our personal experience ... hashish is the most powerful of intellectual modifiers.... Hemp is the exhilarant par excellence.

...The hashish, if it paralyzes voluntary power and exalts imaginative faculties, does not completely destroy the higher faculties of judgment and reasoning.... Hence this strange sensation of duplication. It feels like "split in two," as one of our subjects said...

The psychological interpretation of this impression of duality is very simple.... Hashish has the property of weakening the upper center [of the mind], so as to give free play to the subconsciousness.... In hashish, this revelation of the subconscious is carried to its highest degree. The deepest, most suppressed tendencies are revealed and strongly expressed.

M.M. Gley and Richet put this fact in evidence

by studying the unconscious fibrillary movements under the influence of hashish. These movements explain the rotation of the tables, the swinging of the pendulum, the transmission of thoughts.... Their origin is subconscious, they can achieve great perfection, as in automatic writing.

"With Mr. Gley," says Professor Richet, "we have the following experience: in the normal state, he has no unconscious motions. We thought that hashish, which exaggerates all gestures and attitudes, would have the power to make unconscious movements appear in people who, in the normal state, are deprived of them. The experiment confirmed our predictions and Mr. Rondeau and I were able to observe that Mr. Gley, having taken a certain dose of hashish, produced involuntary and unconscious movements of great strength, which completely revealed his thought without his doubting it in the least."

The mental background of the subject is not revealed only by unconscious movements, but also by his words, actions, hallucinations or illusions. Hallucinations, dreams, says Meunier, "Suddenly arise unknown layers of the subconscious mental background. This is one of the clearest effects of hashish, that it is above all the revealer by excellence of distant images and deep emotionality." (Le Hachich, 1908,

p. 46) “The hashish,” he adds, “helps us to reveal ourselves to ourselves and to others ... it is perhaps the most powerful reagent to reveal apart from our mental images and their modes of grouping”...

...[T]hese experiments confirm our conclusions and justify the title of this article: hashish is a remarkable developer of the subconscious. This deserved to be highlighted (Pascal, 1930).

Pascal refers to “fibrillary movements,” and these are a key factor in moving the planchette of an Ouija board. Interestingly, modern studies using the Ouija Board, have been taking place as a means of accessing areas of the sub-conscious mind, here referred to as the “the non-conscious mind.” Researchers at “the UBC Visual Cognition Lab, engineering, computer science and psychology have joined forces to see if the movements of a Ouija Board can tell us something about our non-conscious mind” (Worden, 2013).

Dr. Sid Fels of ECE with Dr. Ron Rensink (Computer Science and Psychology) and PostDoc H  l  n Gaucho (Psychology) have conducted a number of experiments using the Ouija Board that demonstrate how clever implicit cognition (the non-conscious mind) really is. In one experiment people were asked a number of yes or no, fact based questions, with and without the Ouija Board. When asked to use the

Ouija Board to answer questions participants were told they were moving the planchette or pointer with a person sitting in another room. In fact, Dr. Fels had designed a robot that mimicked [sic] and amplify the participant’s movements. Answering the questions verbally people got about 50% of the questions right, but with a Ouija Board they got 65% of the questions right (Worden, 2013).

One can only speculate how the results of such a study might be enhanced by the inclusion of mind-altering substances known to enhance the subconscious mind.

Cannabis has an interesting relationship with dreaming, the clearest domain of the subconscious mind. A common factor noted by frequent users is that they dream much less frequently, and then if they stop using it dreaming frequency returns. (This effect may also be why people use cannabis for PTSD - less dreaming equals less nightmares). The effect of less dreaming has been my personal experience as well, however, I have also noted a particularly contradictory effect. On occasion, I have woken up in the middle of the night, and smoked a little cannabis as an aid in getting back to sleep, and what I have found is that when I do this, I have experienced the most vivid lucid dreams I have ever had. Upon questioning fellow cannabis users about this, I have found others have had this same experience. Upon investigating the relationship with

cannabis and dreaming further, I have come to see that in both the cases of less dreaming from frequent use, and intense dreaming from middle of the night use, that this is likely related to a huge spike in melatonin that is said to follow shortly after cannabis is smoked or ingested. Melatonin is well known to effect dreaming, and ingested melatonin has been particularly associated with lucid dreaming. However, it should be noted clearly, that there is far more than melatonin levels at play here with cannabis, as the use of melatonin during the day, just makes one sleepy, and produces no daytime “high.”

In his book, *Melatonin*, Dr. Russel J. Reiter of the University of Texas Health Science Center, Department of Cellular and Structural Biology, states that:

Of all the known ways to stimulate melatonin production, none is more dramatic than smoking Cannabis. Cannabis stimulates production of a prostaglandin called PGE₂, which may relate to its ability to stimulate melatonin production. Italian researchers discovered that test groups smoking pot had dramatically higher melatonin levels twenty minutes later. After two hours, their melatonin levels were 4,000 % higher than before (Reiter, 1996).

An earlier study, “Effects of tetrahydrocannabinol on melatonin secretion in man” (Lissoni, et. al., 1986) was directed at investigating whether the effects of cannabis

“involve the participation of the pineal gland” throughout the “response of melatonin to Delta-9-THC.” The study found that there was a “very high significant increase ... of melatonin serum mean levels ... was noticed in eight of the nine subjects after delta-9 THC administration; the highest values were obtained at 120 mins. from administration” (Lissoni, et. al., 1986).

...[T]he present data suggest that delta-9 THC may regulate the activity of the pineal gland either by stimulating or inhibiting melatonin secretion, and that melatonin response to delta-9 THC seems to depend on its basal levels. Moreover, these findings could lead to the hypothesis that the pineal gland is involved in the mechanism of action of delta-9 THC. However, further research and more data... to ascertain whether the effects of delta-9 THC on the pineal gland are direct or mediated (Lissoni, et. al., 1986).³

The “pineal gland” is of course, identified by many New Agers as the “third eye,” and the great renaissance thinker Descartes deemed it the “seat of the soul.” The association of the pineal gland with spiritual processes goes back to at least early Gnostic accounts. The angry Church father Hippolytus wrote of “the conclusions which ... [certain Gnostics] attempt to deduce ... [from their] dissection of the brain, asserting that the substance of the power of the universe and the power of procreation and the

Godhead could be ascertained from the arrangement of the brain.” Hippolytus quoted the now lost text attributed to the Gnostic sect the Peratae, as an example of what these ancient Gnostic neuroscientists were up to: “The cerebellum, by an ineffable and inscrutable process, attracts through the pineal gland the spiritual and life-giving essence from the vaulted chamber [?third ventricle]. And on receiving this, the cerebellum [also], in an ineffable manner, imparts the ‘ideas’.”⁴ Perhaps cannabis’ effect on the pineal gland, through melatonin production, accounts for its long and widespread use and reputation as a spiritual tool? The pineal gland has certainly been indicated as a component of instinctual functions, and thus likely related to Jung’s “collective unconscious.” It has also been increasingly suggested that evidence of REM sleep in the fetuses of mammals in the womb, may not only indicate dreaming, but may possibly be a means of downloading instinctual information needed for survival.

A 1918 edition of the *Journal of the American Society for Society for Psychological Research* wrote that “It is claimed by occultists that the pineal gland and the pituitary body are the organs involved in supernormal powers.” This was not a view limited to occultists by any means. “Shiva is always represented with three eyes, the third being the eye of wisdom, which man opens on the realization of divinity” (Avalon 1964). Shiva, it will be remembered, has an intimate relationship with cannabis.

I have discussed the pineal gland’s relationship with the spiritual experience at length in an earlier work (Bennett & McQueen, 2001), suffice to say, this brings us into aspects of human consciousness where it becomes difficult to divide the scientific from the spiritual. Scientific concepts like “instinct” and “genetic memory,” come close to the alchemical *anima mundi*, the Kabbalistic “Adam Kadmon,” Gnostic “Anthropos,” and other spiritual definitions. In this regard it is important to remember that Jung himself in identifying the “super consciousness” and “collective unconscious” was deeply influenced by all these traditions and their concepts.

A drink from a well of collective memory, is clearly what was identified in the cannabis’-using Nusarai’s “ritual of the cup.” An access to ancestral, or genetic memory, may account for the association of cannabis with spontaneous past-life regressions, noted by Blavatsky and others. As A.L. Rawson recorded, Blavatsky explained the mystical qualities of hashish she had experienced as “a recollection of my former existences, my previous incarnations.” I have come across similar accounts elsewhere. See also *The Trance of Fitzerse: A Tale of Two Centuries* (1888) by Alfred Fitzerse, which tells the story of the crossed lives of a 17th-century soldier who partook of “bengue” (cannabis) in the palace of a rajah in India and an English gentleman in the 19th century, who recalls the latter’s past, after ingesting hashish. Architect, archaeologist, Freemason and friend of

Arthur Conan Doyle, with whom he shared a deep interest in psychical research, Frederick Blyth Bond (1864-1945), used hashish to explain how a past-life regression back to biblical times, described in *The Gospel of Philip the Deacon* (1932) might have taken place.

But if the normal working of the brain be suspended as in the case of dream-conditions, or under the influence of any drug or anaesthetic, the relation of our consciousness to the mundane time-scheme becomes altered to an indefinite extent and may for a while be obliterated entirely. Under the influence of opium or hashish, a moment of time may seem almost an eternity, or, reversing the process, a long period may be compressed. It would seem that the sense of accurate measurement of time is therefore dependent upon the harmonious working of our two orders of consciousness, namely that which we call the intellectual and that which may be termed the intuitive, which has to do with subjective realities rather than objective actualities of life (Bond, 1932).

One of the most common effects novice users of cannabis experience, is a shift in time perspective. “It seemed like an hour but it was only a minute,” or visa versa. This shift in time can have very powerful implications, as the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* noted in 1909.

Let us suppose that under the influence of some substance the sense of “time” is altered while the consciousness and reason are still retained. This is actually the case after the administration of Indian hemp and it shows that the sense of time is not an invariable constant or an unalterable accompaniment of consciousness under all conditions, which is a fact to be taken seriously into consideration in the analysis of our idea of Time.

Noticing a difference in the experience of linear time may well have played a role in the conception and formulation of the idea of time itself. Likewise, a deeper awareness of seasonal time may have developed alongside agriculture and the necessity of keeping track of the growing season. Carl Sagan has speculated that early man may have begun the agricultural age by first planting hemp. Sagan used the pygmies from southwest Africa to demonstrate his hypothesis; the pygmies had been basically hunters and gatherers until they began planting hemp, which they used for religious purposes (Sagan 1977). The pygmies themselves say they have been using cannabis since the dawn of time, which more likely means, since the pygmies’ conception of time.

Interestingly, both the archetypal figures of Father Time and the Grim Reaper hold a scythe, an ancient tool used for harvesting cannabis and whose imagery and name go

back to the Scythian cult of the Dead, who used hemp for ritual ecstasy. Likewise, the conception of a beginning and end of time, was conceived of in the cannabis-based revelations of the Zoroastrian hero, King Vishtaspa. On a more nostalgic note, the experience of time differentiation led the 1930's jazz great, Gene Krupa, to claim that with cannabis he was able to get drum beats in where it was formerly impossible, contributing greatly to jazz drumming. Referring to Krupa's claim, the horrified father of modern cannabis prohibition, Henry Anslinger, in his *Marijuana: Assassin of Youth*, commented on the "strange quality of marijuana which makes a rubber band out of time, stretching it to unbelievable lengths. The musician who uses 'reefers' finds that the musical beat seemingly comes to him quite slowly, thus allowing him to interpolate any number of improvised notes with comparative ease. While under the influence of marijuana, he does not realize that he is tapping the keys with a furious speed impossible for one in a normal state of mind; marijuana has stretched out the time of music until a dozen notes may be crowded into the space normally occupied by one" (Anslinger 1937).

More powerful doses could, when partaken with the right intent, literally take one out of the realm of time altogether, and this was an effect attested to in both ancient and later occult literature via potent cannabis extracts and ingested hashish. Cannabis' effects on the perception of

time were greatly noted in esoteric circles. As a 1925 article from the *Occult Digest* suggested: "The opium or hasheesh time scale, metaphysically speaking, may be much truer than our usual conception. Many have realized the existence of a radically different time scale in dreams. Events which would normally occupy several hours or days, take place in a few seconds or at any rate at an incredible rate of speed" (Gray, 1925). Paschal Beverly Randolph wrote of these same effects in *The Rosicrucian Story*: "They say there are no miracles! What then, is this? What are these strange experiences of soul which we are constantly having – fifty years compressed in an hour of ordinary Dream! – thirty thousand ages in a moment of time, while under the accursed spells of Hashish?" (Randolph, 1863).

Crowley described this difference in the perception of time after he ate "the Grass of the Arabians, and by the Virtue of the Bewitchment thereof behold that which might be appointed for the Enlightenment of mine Eyes. Now then of this may I not speak, seeing it involveth the Mystery of the Transcending of Time, so that in One Hour of our Terrestrial Measure did I gather the harvest of an Aeon, and in Ten Lives I could not declare it" (Crowley, 1918). Like the dream state, the cannabis high can take one "out of time." Crowley, in a 1918 diary note, also made it quite clear he understood the source of cannabis' magical properties: "Hashish brings the subconscious up into the conscious" (Crowley, 1918).

As a mentor of mine, drug historian Dr. Michael Aldrich has noted, “To watch drug history unfold is to tap into the most profound of human senses: déjà vu – it has all happened before, it will all happen again. Drug-induced distortions of time’s pace allow the participant to slip effortlessly from eon to eon, from scene to cosmic scene. And maybe it is this heightening of ancestral memory, this sense of timeless mythology produced by the drugs themselves, that best illuminates the history of drugs through the ages” (Aldrich 1978).

Access to these deeper, and still little understood, regions of the mind, I believe, is at the core of the use of cannabis and other magical herbs in the magical tradition. This is why its use with “magic mirrors” has been particularly common. For the one who speaks from the mirror, is the same one who tells us our dreams as we sleep at night. The mirror seers used cannabis and staring into a mirror as a means of creating a trance state between sleeping and waking, to interact with this shadow self through the mirrors, invoking it in part with the same sort of brain chemistry that enables it to take over and weave our dreams at night, thus speaking through the mirror in the same sort of esoteric language we receive in dreams as well. For who is it that speaks from the mirror but the emperor of dreams?

If magic, before the modern era, is not wholly distinct

from science and technology, then certainly some parts of magic could be the ancestors of scientifically or technologically valid practices. Obvious examples may be found in the real of magical herbalism, where, to cite some examples at random, a tea made from bark of the willow tree may be useful in relieving a headache, or an incense containing ground-up hemp leaves may make it much easier to see images in a mirror when one is performing that kind of divination. Here, of course, we have crude pharmacology or psychopharmacology, for willow bark contains the active ingredient of aspirin and hemp is marijuana (Mathiesen, 1995).

Likewise with the sort of fumigations we saw in *The Picatrix* and elsewhere, such as Moses in the Tent of the Meeting, but here images in the undulating smoke, instead of the shadowy reflections of a mirror. As Terrence McKenna noted “If you smoke cannabis, the energy which would normally be channeled into dreams is instead manifest in the reveries of the cannabis intoxication” (McKenna, 1991). Or, in this case, focussed into magic.

Alchemists were also deeply aware of and interacting with this same aspect of the “collective unconscious.” For what is the chemical marriage of the Sun and Moon, but the merging of our daily state of awareness, with its shadow counterpart of the night, our truest of soul mates, and

without the unification of which, we can never attain “completeness.” As Crowley said in his occult essay *De Herbo Sanctissimo Arabico*, the hashishin is “in Unity with his own Secret Nature” (Crowley, 1918). Both the alchemical processes, and schools of esoteric initiation were directed at arriving at this unification in a balanced way, lest one fall into madness, by too much, too soon. As the poet and Rosicrucian Stanislas de Guaita explained of the effects of hashish:

He is an expansive director of latent passions and ideas; through it, the Unconscious manifests itself to the Amazed Consciousness – and the soul, contemplating itself in its own mirror, reveals itself positively to itself.

One thus makes the acquaintance of a friend from within, whom one did not suspect: one speaks with one’s Guardian Angel, or, if one prefers, with this instigator of perdition that each one carries in oneself (de Guaita, 1891).

And who is that Guardian Angel, but that other half of self that watches over us each night and whispers to us our dreams? Thus, in the sense that cannabis can help us traverse the barriers between the conscious and subconscious minds, potentially taking us even deeper into the areas of the “Collective Unconscious,” “Superconscious” or if you prefer, “Instinctual” areas of the brain, I think

when understood, Cannabis is Magick, and moreover, as techniques and interfaces for the introduction, conversation and control of those areas of the brain, Magick, Alchemy and Initiation themselves, are, in their own ways, real technologies and interfaces for utilizing cannabis and other entheogens to that end.

The effect of Hashish is quickened Intuition. It is a key that unlocks the door which is shut to our sensuous vision, that hides the limitless shores of the soul’s eternal possessions, which it is too feeble, while an inhabitant of the material body, in a normal condition, to endure.

It may be that the time has come in the world’s progress when future glories shall shed upon us glimmering rays of their reality; and hashish may be the subtle agent, in the wise ordering of Providence, to this end. Everything is good, and its use is in its time and in its place. Hashish, though much used as an agent of Intoxication and debauchery, may be, in a higher sense, a mighty agent for the presentation to the soul’s conscious realities of unutterable beauty.

– Dr. A.B. Child, “Hashish Its Effects,” in *The Banner of Light* (1860).

Cannabis is a plant whose time has come. The Gates to the Cannabis Arcanum are now open.....

So mote it be.

1 Jung made no references to hashish I could find, but did briefly mention the roles of LSD and mescaline in unveiling the unconscious (Jung, 1964), although he seemed to disapprove of this method over-all.

2 See Verlaine's Hashish and Incense (1929).

3 Unfortunately, I could find no recent studies that looked at the direct contact effect of cannabis on melatonin levels.

4 From a quote in (Mead, 1900).

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A Moroccan servant delivers keef and tea on a tray, in this beautiful illustration by Ritchie from Keef: A Life-story in Nine Phases (1897) by Timothy Wilfred Coakley, A love story that takes place on the astral plane, and under the influence of

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AN AMBROSIAL NIGHT.

Leon Abecassis, the protagonist of *Keef: A Life-story in Nine Phases* (Coakley, 1897) reclines on a divan, smoking keef from a sebsi, before drifting off to voyage on the astral plane, in this beautiful illustration from Ritchie.

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