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Theosophical History (ISSN 0951-497X) is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October by James A. Santucci (Department of Religious Studies, California State University, Fullerton, CA 92634-9480 U.S.A.) The journal consists of eight issues *per* volume: one volume covering a period of two years. The journal's purpose is to publish contributions specifically related to the modern Theosophical Movement, from the time of Madame Helena Blavatsky and others who were responsible in establishing the original Theosophical Society (1875), to all groups that derive their teachings—directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly—from her or her immediate followers. In addition, the journal is also receptive to related movements (including pre-Blavatskyite Theosophy, Spiritualism, Rosicrucianism, and the philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg to give but a few examples) that have had an influence on or displayed an affinity to modern Theosophy.

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The final copy of all manuscripts must be submitted on 8½ x 11 inch paper, double-spaced, and with margins of at least 1¼ inches on all sides. Words and phrases intended for *italics* output should be underlined in the manuscript. The submitter is also encouraged to submit a floppy disk of the work in ASCII or WordPerfect 5 or 5.1, in an I.B.M. or compatible format. If possible, Macintosh 3½ inch disk files should also be submitted, saved in ASCII ("text only with line breaks" format if in ASCII), Microsoft Word 4.0-5.1a, or WordPerfect. We ask, however, that details of the format codes be included so that we do not have difficulties in using the disk. Should there be any undue difficulty in fulfilling the above, we encourage you to submit the manuscript regardless.

Bibliographical entries and citations must be placed in footnote format. The citations must be complete. For books, the publisher's name and the place and date of the publication are required; for journal articles, the volume, number, and date must be included, should the information be available.

There is no limitation on the length of manuscripts. In general, articles of 30 pages or less will be published in full; articles in excess of 30 pages may be published serially.

Brief communications, review articles, and book reviews are welcome. They should be submitted double-spaced.

All correspondence, manuscripts, and subscriptions should be sent to:

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Editor's Comments

In This Issue

A larger than usual *Theosophical History* contains major studies on assorted subjects, including archival material presented by Michael Gomes and Marco Novarino, articles on the ill-fated International Order of Chivalry Solar Tradition by Massimo Introvigne and Arnold Krumm-Heller's *Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua* by P.R. König, and a response from Paul Johnson to John Algeo's review of Mr. Johnson's book, *The Masters Revealed*.

In the last issue (V/7: 232–47), John Algeo, the President of The Theosophical Society in America, wrote a thoughtful and detailed review of Mr. Johnson's book, balancing the book's considerable contributions to this area of research with, in Dr. Algeo's assessment, its overall failure to establish the thesis as proven. Rather than simply restating the arguments made in the book, Dr. Algeo went to some length to demonstrate that the logic, analysis, and the data in his opinion leave something to be desired. It is understandable, therefore, that Mr. Johnson would wish to respond to many of the statements and conclusions in the review. As with Dr. Algeo's review, the response is presented without any abridgment.

The next installment of the H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge letters continues with a letter dated July 7, 1889. In it, Elliott Coues' mischief-making toward the T.S. and H.P.B. are much on her mind. Among the other personalities who appear in this letter is the wife of a member of Congress, Mrs. Ida Garrison Candler, an avid supporter of H.P.B. until Mrs. Candler's death two years later.

"Theosophical Reviews Preserved in the National Historic Archive of Spain." is an important contribution since it introduces us to "one of the main centers of documentation of the history of Freemasonry and esoteric societies" in Europe, the Archivo Historico Nacional of Salamanca. The collection arises from Francisco Franco's fear of such groups as being a threat against Spain, which soon led to a law passed in 1940 suppressing such groups. It was only in 1979 that the material collected by the government was incorporated in the Archivo Historico Nacional, in the *Sección Guerra Civil*, and afforded public access.

The final part of the OTO series, "Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua," by Mr. P.R. König, discusses the life and efforts of Arnold Krumm-Heller and his successors to establish the *Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua* to spread the organization throughout South America and elsewhere. As in previous articles, the history of those organizations associated with the OTO is extremely convoluted. Mr. König deserves our gratitude for shedding so much light on this little-known subject.

The reader will notice that of the three book reviews one appears in French by the noted expert on nineteenth and twentieth century esotericism, Jean-Pierre Laurant. Since *Theosophical History* has a wide distribution in Europe and Canada, occasional reviews in French will be printed therein.

* * *

London Conference on “The Origins of the Theosophical Society”

On July 15-16, 1995, a conference on Theosophical history entitled “The Origins of the Theosophical Society” was held at the headquarters of The Theosophical Society in England at 50 Gloucester Place (London W1H 4EA). Sponsored by The Foundation for Theosophical Studies, which describes itself as “an educational charity formed to promote the Ageless Wisdom...,” the conference

was advertised as under the direction of the Editor of *Theosophical History*, though most of the work and responsibilities fell upon the General Secretary of the T.S. in England, Lilian Storey, Executive Committee member Colyn Boyce, and Treasurer Donald Atkinson. With Miss Storey as the moderator and hostess, the program consisted of a total of nine presentations during the two day affair. On Saturday four papers were presented, beginning with the Editor’s **“Re-examination of the Origins of the Theosophical Society,”** in which the sources describing the events surrounding the formation of the T.S. in New York in 1875 were



From left to right (front): Lilian Storey, Nicholas Campion, Jean Overton-Fuller; (back): James Santucci, Alan Donant, Jerry Hejka-Ekins, John Patrick Deveney.

reviewed, including those passages contained in the writings of H.S. Olcott, H.P. Blavatsky, and the now well-known claim of the Society's first Treasurer, Henry J. Newton. Following this presentation came John Patrick Deveney's "**The Occult Duel Between Madame Blavatsky and Paschal Beverly Randolph: The Myth of the Hidden Hand.**" Mr. Deveney, the world's leading authority on the mysterious and influential Spiritualist *cum* Rosicrucian *cum* magician, introduced the audience to one of the most fascinating individuals of the nineteenth century, P.B. Randolph. The "occult duel" mentioned in the title arises from the account of Gustav Meyrink in his introduction to Randolph's *Dhoula Bel* (1922) and is related in Mr. Deveney's communication "A Note on Psychic Attacks" (V/6, July 1995: 194–97). An overview of Randolph's remarkable life was also summarized by Mr. Deveney, further details of which will be found in his forthcoming biography of Randolph. The Editor presented a second paper entitled "**George Felt: The True Inspiration of the Theosophical Society.**" Felt, a somewhat mysterious and peripheral figure during the formative period of the Theosophical Society, is recognized herein as the individual who moved Col. Olcott to suggest the formation of a society that would investigate phenomena along the lines of Felt's eventful lecture given on September 7, 1875. The last communication of the day was Alan Donant's "**H.P. Blavatsky's Teachers and the Theosophical Society.**" Mr. Donant, the National Secretary of the American Section of The Theosophical Society (Pasadena) Pro Tem, reaffirmed the meaning of Theosophy and the purpose of the Theosophical Society, the mystery of HPB *and* H.P. Blavatsky, and the role of the Masters.

Five presentations were given on the next day. The first by the President of the Astrological Association (U.K.), Nicholas Campion, entitled "**The-**

osophy and the Revival of Astrology," reviewed the place of the latter-day history of astrology from the time of its lost intellectual credibility in the seventeenth century to the role it played in the early years of the twentieth century, with special reference to the Astrological Lodge and that individual who played a crucial role in the encounter between Theosophy and astrology, Alan Leo (William Frederick Allen). The next paper, presented by Jean Overton Fuller, the biographer of H.P. Blavatsky, was on that still delicate and controversial topic among Theosophists, "The **Judge Affair.**" Miss Fuller reviewed the circumstances, personalities, and events surrounding the falling out of the leaders of the T.S.—Olcott, Judge, and Besant—that culminated in the separation of the American Section from Adyar in 1895. "**Theosophy and the Revival of Magic,**" was the topic offered by Robert Gilbert, who reviewed organizations that emphasized the Western esoteric tradition, including those organizations that included elements from the esoteric tradition such as Freemasonry and the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. He also discussed the rivalry of the latter with the early Theosophical Society, and the Rosicrucians of a later generation. Special attention, however, was given to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and its association with the T.S. The final paper on the program was a slide lecture by Associate Editor Jerry Hejka-Ekins entitled "**Theosophy, Victorian Hippies, Modernist Revolutionaries and William Butler Yeats.**" Centering around the life of William Butler Yeats, Mr. Hejka-Ekins emphasized Yeats' association with the Esoteric Society, his connection with the Dublin Society for Psychical Research, and his long association with occultism.

A surprise presentation came at the end of the day. General Secretary Lilian Storey and Leslie Price jointly presented a report on a largely unknown organization called the Angelic Order of

Life. Miss Storey related the serendipitous circumstances of how documents and other materials connected with the Order came into her hands. Leslie Price gave a description of the Order and reviewed some of the documents that were presented to Miss Storey, among which was the membership form containing the purpose and basic principles of the Angelic Order of Life. The purpose of the A.O.L. is as follows:

The Angelic Order of Life upon the external is the outward representation of an Order on the internal spheres of life, of which **The Most Illustrious One**—known in earth life as **EMANUEL SWEDENBORG**—is the **Grand Master**.

The basic principles of the A.O.L. are:

- (1) The recognition of the “Laws of **Life Influx**,” and of the “**Science of Correspondences**” as unfolded in the Works of **EMANUEL SWEDENBORG**.
- (2) The representative **Symbolism** as unfolded in the five volumes entitled “**Angelic Revelations**.”
- (3) The System of Philosophy—embracing the above—contained within the volumes entitled “**Life and Its Manifestations**,” the first volume of which was published March 20th, 1891.

Cassette recordings of all the talks are available for £5 per cassette. They are obtainable either by writing to Lilian Storey or to Colyn Boyce, The

Theosophical Society in England, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4EA. I understand also that *The Theosophical Journal* (the journal of the T.S. in England) will be printing edited versions of the talks.

The Foundation for Theosophical Studies plans to sponsor a similar history seminar in the summer of 1997. Details of the program will be included in TH as information is received.

* * *

Theosophy Seminar

The program for the Theosophy Seminar at the American Academy of Religion has been finalized and appears in the AAR program book as follows:

Theosophy and Theosophic Thought Seminar

3:45pm-6:15pm M-401

James A. Santucci, California State University, Fullerton, Presiding

Theme: *Personalities in Theosophy*

John Cooper, University of Sydney
Blavatsky in Philadelphia

Michael Gomes, Des Moines, Iowa
The Indian Epoch of Theosophy

Joscelyn Godwin, Colgate University
Lady Caitbness and Her Involvement with Theosophy

Respondents:

John Patrick Deveney, New York

James Burnell Robinson, University of Northern Iowa

Theme: *The Theosophical Phenomenon: 1575-Present*

Panelists:

Antoine Faivre, École Pratique des Hautes Études

Massimo Introvigne, Center for Studies on New Religions

Jean-Pierre Laurant, École Pratique des Hautes Études

Arthur Versluis, Washburn University

Business Meeting

James A. Santucci, California State University, Fullerton, Presiding

The Seminar will be held on November 18 (Saturday) at the Philadelphia Marriott. The American Academy of Religion holds its annual meetings in association with the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Schools of Oriental Research. Attendance ranges from 6,000 to over 8,000 participants. This year the AAR meeting will be held from November 18–21 at the Philadelphia Marriott and Pennsylvania Convention Center. If anyone is interested in attending the Meeting, you may call the AAR at 404/727-7920 (fax: 404/727-7959).

Future meetings of the AAR (and the Theosophy Seminar) will be held in New Orleans from November 23–26, 1996 and San Francisco from November 22–25.

* * *

Subscription Rates

In the July 1995 issue, it was announced that subscription rates would be increased for new subscriptions and renewals beginning on 1 January 1996. The new rates are as follows:

ONE YEAR (FOUR ISSUES)

U.S., Canada, Mexico	\$21
(California residents, add \$1.62)	
Elsewhere (surface mail)	\$25 (£16)
Air mail (outside the U.S. and Canada)	\$35 (£22)

TWO YEARS (EIGHT ISSUES)

U.S., Canada, Mexico	\$38	(California residents, add \$2.94)
Elsewhere (surface mail)	\$45	(£28)
Air mail (outside the U.S. and Canada)	\$65	(£40)

BACK ISSUES \$6 (£4.50)

* * * * *

CESNUR's 10th International Conference

The Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR), under the directorship of Dr. Massimo Introvigne, will hold its 10th International Conference in Montréal, Québec (Canada) from August 14-16, 1996. Organized jointly by CESNUR, The Faculty of Theology of the Université de Montréal, and the Centre d'information sur les nouvelles religions (CINR), Montréal, it is planned as a

multidisciplinary conference in the human and social sciences and will have as its theme "Societies and the New Religious Pluralism: The Interaction between New Religious Movements, Traditional Religions and Social Institutions." The deadline for proposals is January 10th, 1996. A one-page paper proposal and short curriculum vitae should be sent either to C.I.N.R. (Congrès 1996), 8010, rue Saint-Denis, Montréal (Québec), Canada H2R 2G1 (fax: 514/382-7554; telephone: 514/382-9641), or to CESNUR, Via Bertola, 86, 10122 Torino, Italy (fax: 39 11 53 95 63).

* * * * *

Correspondence

From Mr. Gladney Oakley (Morisset, NSW, Australia)

A “beta” version of an electronic index to almost all of the following four journals—

The Theosophist (Adyar)

The World Theosophist (Hollywood)

Lucifer (London)

The Theosophical Review (London) —

is available for students of Theosophy, on floppy disc, in tab delimited ASCII, IBM format, from the editor, PO Box 223, Morisset, NSW, 2264, Australia, under the usual beta software conditions. No hardcopy is contemplated for several years.

Communications

RESPONSE TO JOHN ALGEO'S REVIEW OF THE MASTERS REVEALED

Paul Johnson

I thank Dr. Algeo for opening his review with a thorough, accurate description of my book's characters and for judging it a "valuable contribution to the history of Theosophy and of the alternative traditions of the last two centuries." The rest of the review is devoted to the book's alleged thesis and flaws. Although my response must focus on the reviewer's misreadings, I admit the justice of some of his criticisms and recognize his effort to be fair and balanced.

THE THESIS

By definition, a book's thesis is a proposition for which arguments are presented throughout. The thesis of *The Masters Revealed*, stated in the introduction and supported thereafter, is this: Theosophy is genuinely derived from HPB's contacts with adepts of various religious and occult traditions, but her portrayal of them combined fact with fiction to protect their privacy and the neutrality of the TS. The book proposes 32 historical individuals as her Masters, ranging from possible (Liatto) through plausible (Afghani) to probable (Mazzini) and even proven (Dayananda). Casting a wide net to produce a set of nominees, the book does not claim to prove any of them the exclusive basis for any pseudonymous character in Theosophical literature. I concede that some share of

responsibility for misreadings of a book rests with the author's lack of clarity, but in this case it seems that my choice of a provocative, ambiguous, controversial title bears much of the blame. Such a title at least follows HPB's example, since one can still argue about how much she unveiled Isis or proved the existence of the secret doctrine. My book aims to "reveal the Masters" by partially unveiling the network of HPB's spiritual teachers and occult sponsors. But, as she wrote of another title, "people are always in the habit of judging things by their appearance, rather than their meaning." (*SD I*: xviii) The promise apparent in my title varies widely according to readers' assumptions and attachments.

Dr. Algeo first defines the thesis as being that "H. P. Blavatsky's Masters can be identified with historically attested persons" but later narrows this to mean that I have "succeeded in identifying some of HPB's Masters with historical persons," focusing on seven Master figures named in Theosophical literature. Thereafter, the success of these seven "identifications with ." becomes the primary criterion by which the book is evaluated. One among several objectives of the book has been to link these literary characters to historical prototypes; however, they account for fewer than a quarter of the Master nominees, and take up less than a third of the text. Even in the seven sections

in question, the primary focus is on historical persons and their connections to HPB and the TS; only about 5% of the book is devoted to linking them to the personae of Morya, Koot Hoomi, Serapis, Tuitit, Hilarion, Djual Kul and the Chohan. The review fails to mention five other adept pseudonyms from Theosophical literature that the book links to historical figures: “The Chohan Lama of Shigatse” (the Sengchen Tulku), “Ten-dub Ughien” (Ugyen Gyatso), “Endreinek Agardi” (Agardi Metrovitch), “Chandra Cusho” (Sarat Chandra Das) and “a Mahachohan” (Jamal ad-Din).

A crucial, prejudicial assumption is hidden in the words “identified with,” also apparent in Dr. Algeo’s reference to “the similarities Johnson finds between HPB’s Masters and his proposed prototypes.” He consistently uses “HPB’s Masters” to mean “the literary characters presented by HPB as her Masters” although their existence has never been confirmed. His criticism of my work thus rests on what he sees as failures to find enough similarities between the subjects of my research and the adept pantheon portrayed in Theosophical literature, especially the seven figures on whom most of his review is focused. But to me, and I think most readers, “HPB’s Masters” means “the historical persons who were HPB’s spiritual teachers and occult sponsors, upon whom the portrayals in her writings were based,” leaving open the question of how accurately they were portrayed. The book does not aim to make a detailed explanation of the provenance of her literary portraits, but rather to discover the historical persons who were her teachers and sponsors. It is a series of historical/ biographical investigations, not a literary analysis, and should be evaluated as such. A thorough study of the relationship between historical reality and HPB’s portrayal of the Masters is yet to be written. I hope that future

scholars will see my work as necessary, but not sufficient, groundwork for such a study.

Dr. Algeo presents two extreme versions of possible identifications of those few Masters named in Theosophical literature. Neither of these covers all such cases: one a simple equivalence of literary character with historical person, the other a remote resemblance of real-life prototype to fictional invention. He classifies the book’s problems as those of the second extreme definition, but *The Masters Revealed* assumes no consistent pattern for HPB’s behavior in this regard. Evidence suggests that in some cases her descriptions of pseudonymous adepts were mainly fictional (e.g. Endreinek Agardi), while in others she was almost entirely accurate (e.g. The Chohan Lama of Shigatse). Each relationship is presumed to be unique, and no consistent level of fictionalization is assumed. The charge of “shape-shifting hypothesis” is mainly due to mistakenly viewing many separate hypotheses as subclauses of one grand thesis that “all these identifications are successful,” i.e. proven. This confusion of lower-order, specific hypotheses with the higher-order, general thesis fails to see the forest for the trees. Such misreading sets up a straw man which is easily demolished, but leaves the real thesis unscathed.

Dr. Algeo asks “Why has Johnson pointedly identified a single, unique real prototype for each Master rather than looking for a combination of prototypical characteristics?” This is not true of the two lead characters among the Master identifications. The Morya *persona* has elements that indicate a composite of Ranbir Singh (the main nominee) and Giuseppe Mazzini (given a whole section of his own). In an endnote, I comment that KH also seems to be a composite character, combining a Punjabi Sikh aristocrat described in *Caves and Jungles* and *Old Diary Leaves* with a Kashmiri Buddhist described in *Isis Unveiled*. In

more minor cases, HPB's descriptions of adepts are so sketchy as to render a search for multiple identifications redundant. The book attempts to show that at least one real acquaintance matches crucial parts of the description of each Master named in Theosophical literature, not to establish exclusive one-to-one correspondences, although I see how this might be misunderstood.

Surprisingly, the review attributes to me ideas and strategies quite unlike my own. For example, "the unstated metaphysical basis of the second version of Johnson's thesis is that beings like the Masters of the Theosophical tradition do not exist, and therefore Blavatsky's assertion that they do must be a fiction." This could not be further from the truth. I have no bias against the existence of spiritually advanced humans with paranormal abilities, among whom I believe HPB herself can be numbered. My assumption, supported by her own statements, is that she deliberately avoided giving an accurate historical account of her life, so her assertions about the Masters must be weighed in light of her proclaimed vows of secrecy. A traditional definition on which Dr. Algeo and I might agree is that "HPB's Masters were her spiritual teachers and occult sponsors, highly evolved human beings with various paranormal abilities." The portion of this definition before the comma is accessible to historical investigation, but the remainder is not. Therefore, my focus has been on that element of the traditional Theosophical definition which is accessible to my research, while the second, inaccessible element is bracketed as beyond the range of inquiry. These are complementary parts of one integral definition, rather than two mutually exclusive categories, as Dr. Algeo assumes when attributing to me this strategy: "I cannot study such persons, so instead I will choose some others I can study and call them by the same name." Blavatsky was a historical person as well as

an inspired teacher, and there is no contradiction between the two; there is no reason the Masters cannot likewise be both historical and spiritual. In another review, Dr. Algeo has sweepingly denied that any of the Master nominees in my book are Masters in the "Blavatskyan" sense. But as she wrote, "supposing that they see the body of a MAHATMA, how can they know that behind that mask is concealed an exalted entity?" (*BCW*, VI: 240) Here is the "mystery" that is not and cannot be touched by my research, as Dr. Algeo and others have rightly observed.

In his critiques of seven Master nominations, Dr. Algeo repeatedly uses the words "no evidence," "no real evidence," and "unsupported." "No conclusive evidence" would have been a fair judgment, but there is indeed real evidence supporting the nominations. He rightly points out that some passages suggest more certitude than others; this is true, however, mainly in the cases of Morya and Koot Hoomi, well after it has been made clear that these identifications are tentative. It is a misreading to interpret the transition from "it is not unlikely. . . may have" etc. to "the men herein identified as the Mahatmas" as a case in which "tentative possibility is magically transmuted into certainty." The book has after all indicated repeatedly that identifications in this context are hypothetical and tentative. In the introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, HPB refers to critics who "fasten like lethal bacilli on the weakest points of the body." (I: xlv) Of course the effort to link particular Masters named in Theosophical literature to historical figures must of necessity be the weakest part of my book. This is inescapable due to the nature of the evidence provided by HPB, which is sketchy, confusing, inconsistent, and by her and Morya's admission, deliberately misleading at times. The weaknesses of many of these identifications are deliberately made appar-

ent in the book, as they represent many different levels of plausibility. My effort has been to find possible identifications for each Master in Theosophical literature while acknowledging how little evidence is available in some instances. If I had the “strong desire to prove a thesis” as defined by Dr. Algeo, it would surely have been convenient to exclude the least persuasive cases. Nevertheless, the evidence is not quite so nonexistent or unreal as he insists. Although I will not reply to all his objections, several misreadings require correction. In reference to Koot Hoomi’s passage expressing disgust with meat-eaters, Dr. Algeo concludes that “the parallel is between Ranbir Singh and Kuthumi rather than Morya.” He neglects this relevant part of the passage: “M. had to interfere and force the whole household to give up meat.” Dr. Algeo questions the passage in which I suggest that there was an agreement between HPB and Thakar about the letters. This does not mean that Thakar necessarily wrote them, but rather that he approved and encouraged the correspondence. As to my alleged “Wonderland logic,” to say that KH’s real name would not likely appear in a Theosophist story involving him is hardly to say that “every text that lacks mention of Thakar Singh becomes evidence of his identity with Kuthumi.” After describing the Mahatma letters’ portrayal of the Chohan as the “boss” of Morya and Koot Hoomi, Dr. Algeo writes that “nothing remotely of the sort was true of the relationship between Khem Singh on the one hand and Thakar Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh on the other.” But in fact, Khem Singh was the spiritual figurehead of the Singh Sabha, without whose support Thakar would have been unable to function effectively. In the context of this “lodge” he was indeed Thakar’s “boss,” although the working relationship had its conflicts (as did that of KH and the Chohan, according to the Mahatma letters). Finally, Dr.

Algeo misses two crucial elements of evidence for the identification of Dayal Singh as a possible basis for Djual Kul. Dayal, a fellow sirdar, was a close colleague of Thakar Singh in the Singh Sabha, just as Djual Kul was alleged to be of Koot Hoomi in his lodge. Also, their names are quite similar, which is a common pattern in HPB’s fictionalizations, e.g. Sarat Chandra Das/Chandra Cusho, Ugyen Gyatso/Ten-dub Ughien, Lala Mulraj/Mulraj Singh, Agardi Metrovitch/Endreinek Agardi.

I can only ask readers to weigh my work in comparison to Theosophical books that assume all HPB’s claims to be true and anti-Theosophical books that assume them all to be false. On the subject of the Masters, are any of these more thoroughly researched, more honest about the impossibility of certainty, more fruitful in providing stimulus to further research, more balanced in approach, higher in the ratio of facts to suppositions?

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of the review makes two serious charges not foreshadowed in the previous sections, for which no evidence is offered, and which are effectively contradicted by the book itself. First, Dr. Algeo charges that without “establishing the full range of specific interconnections it hints at,” the book promotes the “myth of the Great Esoteric Conspiracy.” In fact, the introduction explicitly rejects as paranoid any such conspiracy theories in their Theosophical forms, and implicitly all others. The subtitle indicates my view that while the Masters are historical, the idea that they are all linked in a global lodge is mythical. Although HPB is presented in the company of conspirators for various causes with which she had sympathy at various times, it is made clear that these are linked loosely at best. She and Olcott are shown consorting with members of opposing sides in various

conflicts: British spies and Russian sympathizers, Sikh aristocrats and their lower-caste opponents, Arya Samaj and Orthodox Brahmins. HPB is shown constantly redefining her views and her image based on an ever-changing cast of characters who influenced her, hardly the stuff of grand conspiracy theories. Second, the review charges that “the flaw” of the book is that it is reductionist, portraying the Masters as “political agents of one sort or another and treating everything else about them as ‘blinds’ or delusion.” This is the most regrettable misreading imaginable. The spiritual and literary activities of the characters are given equal attention as their political preoccupations, within the limits of available information. Alas, there is a general bias toward political emphasis in my biographical and historical sources, which may seem to carry over into my own work. That is why this disclaimer appears in the last chapter: “[T]his book is not an attempt to promote a reductionist view of Theosophical history. Because it emphasizes sociopolitical factors to a far greater degree than previous studies of HPB, it may be misinterpreted as denying her spiritual motivation. But in fact there is no reason to doubt that from first to last she saw the TS primarily as an agent of spiritual values, and allied herself with whatever political and social forces seemed useful to that purpose at the time.” (p. 242)

Several scholarly flaws are alleged by Dr. Algeo in his conclusion. He charges that the Witte memoirs are discussed at length in the book but that the source of my information about them is uncited. In fact, these memoirs are discussed in just one paragraph on pp. 35-36, with two footnotes citing Neff’s *Personal Memoirs of H. P. Blavatsky* as the source of quotes from Witte. I plead guilty to reversing the middle initials of the Hare brothers, but their book, contrary to Dr. Algeo’s complaint, is clearly acknowledged as hostile to HPB: “[the Hares] overstate the implica-

tions of their research . . . [make] dubious assumptions. . . regard the Theosophical teachings as discredited” (pp. 174-75). Dr. Algeo writes that “the reader is left without knowing how much of the Masters or any particular one of them Johnson thinks real and how much elaboration,” again implying a prejudicial assumption by his use of “the Masters.” I obviously think that all of the Masters were 100% real; the question is how accurately HPB portrayed them in print. I have no definite opinion on the matter to convey to readers. That fact and fiction are intertwined is, I think, fairly well established. To know exactly where one ends and the other begins is far beyond my capacity, and is the widest of open questions. When Dr. Algeo writes that the possibility of composite characters deserves more exploration, I agree, and regret the omission. When he observes that the thesis is not clearly stated and seems to shift, I regret the ambiguity that has invited drastic misreadings of the book’s intent. Nevertheless, the more serious charges made by Dr. Algeo do not withstand scrutiny. The thesis is not that my proposed prototypes for Masters named in Theosophical literature are firmly established by conclusive evidence (“successful”). I have no metaphysical bias against the possibility of paranormal abilities possessed by highly evolved humans, nor the claim that HPB’s Masters were such beings. The book does not reduce her work and her spiritual teachers to a solely political interpretation, nor does it deceive readers by duplicitous use of the word “Master.”

“NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH”

Dr. Algeo refers to the TS motto “There is no religion higher than truth,” which in his view obliges Theosophists to “accept demonstrated truth.” This is a passive, conservative interpreta-

tion of a motto that should have active, liberal implications. The Sanskrit original dharma has been translated as 'religion' in the English motto. Thus, as Dr. Algeo interprets it, no religious group can refuse to accept truths that have been conclusively demonstrated. But dharma is better translated as 'duty', 'path', or 'righteousness'. Thus, there is no duty or path that takes precedence over truthseeking. In this context, passive acceptance of truth proven by others is not what is required of Theosophists, but active pursuit of truth without fear of where it might lead; HPB certainly exemplifies this interpretation. Why would a society founded by her and committed to such a motto fail to inquire into the identities of its own mysterious adept sponsors for more than a century? Why has *The Masters Revealed* generated more intense opposition than all other recent works addressing Theosophical history combined? Are Theosophists committed to a belief system that must be protected from threatening inquiries, or a free and fearless search for truth that can only benefit from investigations like mine?

Especially revealing is Dr. Algeo's comment that "the view one takes of Blavatsky's Masters consequently reflects one's metaphysical assumptions about reality and one's experience of the reality they represent, rather than a conclusion based upon documented fact and reason." The TS has, for most of this century, maintained an uneasy truce among members with a wide variety of convictions about the Masters. Conflict about the topic has been evaded by bracketing it as entirely subjective, a mystery inaccessible to fact and reason and only touched by metaphysical assumptions and personal experience. To introduce objective inquiry into this topic may seem to threaten the peace and stability of the TS, opening a Pandora's box of potential disillusionment for some Theosophists. But if there are costs associ-

ated with approaching this topic objectively, there are also benefits. I suggest that historical investigation of the Theosophical Masters is like a combination fertilizer/herbicide. It can indeed be toxic to fantasies about the Masters that have prevailed in certain quarters. But on the other hand it can help to increase appreciation for the authenticity of HPB's sources, and thus Theosophy's plausibility to educated inquirers. Therefore, efforts to discredit the inquiry are not necessarily in the long-term interests of the Theosophical movement. Dr. Algeo concludes that "what is really important about Blavatsky's Masters is not who they were, but what they have been in the experience of Theosophists." I believe that what is really important about Blavatsky's Masters to the world at large is not what Theosophists have imagined about them, but their objective influence on the course of history. That extends far beyond the Theosophical movement, and is the topic of my *Initiates of Theosophical Masters*.

* * * * *

From the Archives

The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge: Part IX: Letter Dated July 7, 1889

With Notes by Michael Gomes

Written from Fontainebleau, France, Mme. Blavatsky's letter of July 7, 1889 marks not only a change of location but of spirit. The tumultuous years following her leaving India had culminated in the publication of her massive thesis *The Secret Doctrine* at the end of 1888. The adherence of Mrs. Annie Besant (1847–1933) during 1889 brought the Theosophical Society heightened visibility, and, as Mme. Blavatsky observed in a letter to her sister, it appeared that once again she was becoming “fashionable.”

The trip to Fontainebleau was taken as a restorative for health, and she raved to her aunt, N.A. Fadeyev, about the effect of the “delicious air,” the pine forests with gigantic oaks and scotch firs, and the fact that she had managed to tour forty-five of the fifty-eight state rooms at the palace there on her own two feet (*The Path*, November 1895: 239–40). It also provided a creative stimulus, for she began the writing of her popular little manual *The Voice of the Silence* there. (For more on her stay, see Jean-Paul Guignette's “Madame Blavatsky at Fontainebleau,” *The Canadian Theosophist*, Nov.-Dec. 1985: 101–104).

In the midst of all these activities, Elliott Coues was still on her mind, as this letter indicates. He had finally been expelled from the Society on June

22, 1889, for “conduct unbecoming a Theosophist,” and had retaliated by having an interview printed in that day's Washington *Evening Star* under the title of “Blavatsky's Alleged Tricks.” While claiming to profess friendship for her, he disparaged Blavatsky and the members of her Society. “They are to the spiritual world what the late New York strikers and rioters are to the financial world, and what the Chicago anarchists are to the political world of constitutional government, law and order. They are spiritual anarchists and ‘strikers.’ If they were numerous enough they would create discord and confusion, and play sad pranks in society.”

Reference is also made in this letter to the E.S., Blavatsky's Esoteric Section, a separate body from the Society though open only to its members “to promote the esoteric interests of the Theosophical Society by a deeper study of esoteric philosophy.” Notice of its existence was given to the public in the October 1888 issue of *Lucifer*. Mme. Blavatsky appointed Judge her “sole representative for said section in America” on Dec. 14, 1888, during his visit to England that December; Col. Olcott holding the same position for Asiatic countries.

* * *

Fontainebleau. France
Hotel de la Ville de Lyon & de Londres
July 7th 1889

My dear W.Q.J.

Having been spirited away by Mrs. Ida G. Candler, of Boston, and forced to take rest for a month here, I have a little time now to write, & I mean to tell you all I had to say since you left, & that remained unsaid.

1. I do not thank you for the two men you sent here, with regard to whom I have done all you wanted me to & followed your instructions. I am friends with both, have nothing against them, they love me, I love them, but neither is worth a two-penny damn for our work here. Both Fullerton & Lane¹ are complete failures in England. The former worked & did what he could at [least?]; the latter will not touch a [2] thing & speaks of nothing but suicide. Five days after he came he went off to the isle of Wight & remained a fortnight; no sooner had I gone to France than he went off to Scotland.

I can do nothing for him.

2. In re E.S. Now you know or ought to know—for the situation is full well defined, that if you drop now the E.S., down goes the whole of the

¹ Alexander Fullerton (1841–1913), Judge's assistant from New York, had also been out to the headquarters in India, where he stayed briefly. After returning from London he continued to work for the Society in New York, becoming General Secretary of the American Section after the "split" of 1895. He has left a colorful account of his connection with Theosophy, "Reminiscences of the Early Days of the American Section T.S." (*Theosophical Messenger*, Nov. 1908). Michael-Angelo Lane from St. Louis did not fare as well, and in fact, Blavatsky believed that based on what he had learned during his stay at the London headquarters, he had planned to publish an exposé of Theosophy. See her *Open Letter to all the Fellows of the American Section of the Theosophical Society* (London, 1890). Nothing ever came of this.

T.S. in America, save a few flapdoodling independent Branches. Drop it, and you yourself become useless & helpless. The E.S. is the throbbing heart of the T.S. & without it the T.S. becomes a sham & nothing more. Had we 100 Annie Besants & Herbert Burrowses² it might become in time a real Brotherhood of man, the nucleus of the future [weal?] of Humanity, as in "Looking Backward."³ But we have one Annie & one Herbert & hundreds of sentimental half selfish when not quite selfish ninnies, who will quarrel & dispute & ruin the whole. So true is [3] this, that the whole force of Coues' infernal cunning is directed against the E.S. alone, hence against me. If you do not understand this, then you are not the acute Irishman I take you to be. Now you know that Coues hates you, but pitches only into me though till now he has not hated me but had great hopes in me—for himself. He knows that once he has destroyed the E.S. he will have stopped the heart & activity of the whole T.S. in America, and—he acts accordingly. Coues is wise in his generation & you are not, I see. Read his interview with the "Washington Star"⁴ reporter & see how cunningly he acts. His whole air is to identify the Theosophists with the Butlerites, and make the "Esoteric" and the "Esotericists of the T.S." identical in the sight of the public, just to ruin us. Now what can you do against him? You have pitched him out, expelled him & he speaks as if he was the President of the T.S. having the impudence of saying [4] that "we (Coues) do not mean to permit her (Blavatsky) to do that & the other."

² Herbert Burrows, a social worker with Mrs. Besant who joined the Theosophical Society with her in May 1889.

³ A reference to Edward Bellamy's popular utopian novel *Looking Backward* published in 1888.

⁴ "Blavatsky's Alleged Tricks" (June 22, 1889). Blavatsky's reply was published in *Lucifer* (July 1889): 427–28.

And he will go on laughing at us because he has money & can bribe the dailies & we have none & that papers refuse insertion to our replies.

Now I say, that the only salvation to this is the E.S., because how ever ill-managed, the majority will ever be true and that if we could only establish ramifications & have esoteric Lodges, the Presidents of which would be responsible for their members, receive but one instruction for the whole lodge (two or three, if numerous) then it would be all right.

Your suggestion to abolish the 7 Councillors is impossible & excuse me, absurd. Do you want me to appear a fickle fool? I have just appointed them and now I will smash them? No sir. I was told to do it & I did it; [5] and if (through your fault & obstinacy) the E.S. falls, the 7 will fall with it and I—too. For, the moment the E.S. is destroyed I retire from the T.S. altogether. This I swear. Between Olcott's & Harte's flapdoodles the T.S. is as good as a farce. I tell you Coues knows it well; and if you let him triumph, then let the Karma fall upon you. Do what you like & how you like, I leave you with a carte blanche to act. So long as this fermentation goes on & the stream of the E.S. is not settled, I will give instructions which if they even fall into the enemies hands will do no harm. Catch me, giving the real until I know my chelas. All these were and are flowers & if you would have the fruit—behave yourselves. Dixi.

[6] Bert⁵ will send you an address of the Esot. "Horus" Lodge of the T.S. which please see if you can publish in Path.⁶ It shows that Mahatmas or no Mahatmas what I can teach personally is sufficient to old Kabalists of 20 years standing. All the members of the Horus Lodge (Bradford) are old

Masons & Kabalists & what they say in the Address is very suggestive & will wipe out Coues' nose off.

Now I see how true it is what Lane says. What you need in America is a weekly if not a fighting daily. Path is a "Lamb-Job" an ever meek Jeremiah, as is our Revue Theosophique⁷ in Paris. You hardly dare say booh in it for fear it should look like [7] polemics. If, profiting by the occasion, you should address every Theosophist & Esotericist and [have ?] Buck⁸ & a few others to help you—and representing [them ?] the truth, namely that Theosophy cannot triumph so long as every paper pitches into it and none will print an answer, collect money enough to publish a weekly, a theosophical packa fighting paper "the Champion," or the "Wrangler," or some such thing & set Fullerton as nominal editor & you the real Boss, then we could get on. Now Mrs. Candler⁹ (the wife of the member for Congress who proposes going for Coues' scalp in October at Washington) who adores me & proves it, promises 300 a year for something like that. She made me come to Paris & spent £30 on one way here only; forcing Bert to take coupé lit reserved carriages & what not—for me my maid & himself who accompanied me; [8] placing me in a suit of rooms at 25 francs a day, for a whole month, & spending money like mud—she will do anything for me. She is a generous, charming, devoted friend & theosophist & will be a valuable ally for you in October. She will start up a subscription for a Weekly for you & is sure to head it with a good sum. Your Path is a most excellent theosophical paper, but useless for militant purposes.

⁷ A short-lived journal from Paris edited during 1889–90 by Mme. Blavatsky and the Comtesse d'Adhemar.

⁸ Dr. Jirah D. Buck (1838–1916) of Cincinnati, Ohio.

⁹ Mrs. Ida Garrison Candler, who died two years later. Notice of her untimely death is given in *Lucifer* (May 1891): 264.

⁵ Bertram Keightley.

⁶ It was printed in the *Path*, July 1889: 163.

Well, that's all. Choose ye this day etc. Here Bert & I have received writs from Mrs. Cook, who proposes to sue us for defamation & damages for our two libels in Light!!¹⁰ She [begins ?] I had no right to reply & contradict her libel. What next. I am sick, sick, sick of all. If you don't help, I give up all.

Yours [?]

HPB

¹⁰ A reference to the letters from Bertram Keightley and Mme. Blavatsky describing her relations with Mabel Collins Cook, published in *Light* (London), June 8, 1889: 277–78. The suit was dropped by Mrs. Cook in 1890.

Theosophical Reviews Preserved in the National Historic Archive of Spain

Marco Novarino

The Archivo Historico Nacional of Salamanca is undoubtedly one of the main centers of documentation of the history of Freemasonry and esoteric societies, not only Spanish but throughout Europe. Curiously enough, what is today a welcome resource for scholars was created with more repressive goals, having the purpose of “obtaining information about the activity of state enemies, both at home and abroad, and supplying useful data to all the organs entrusted with its defense.”¹

The anti-Masonic repression, begun immediately after the revolt of 19 July 1936, was directly inspired by General Franco, who had a real phobia of Freemasonry and esoteric societies such as the Theosophical Society. Such an attitude, psychopathic in many respects, was a constant priority during his forty-year dictatorial career. This was confirmed in his last public speech, given on 10 October 1975, in which he claimed that “a Masonic and Izquierdist (left-wing extremist) conspiracy was plotting against Spain.”

Castilla del Pino, in an interview given to Vicente Verdú on the topic of the “Generalissimo’s,” psychoanalysis, confirms that “it wasn’t a matter of repetition for the public, but for himself,” since he “believed it firmly and was absolutely convinced

about it.”² This plot was almost always associated with the “Jewish-Communist” plot, and was used to unify all the forces in favor of the regime, restating the fundamental theories of Spanish traditional thought, which first identified Freemasons, then Jews, as the origin of the ills of Spain, such as its historical decay, with the loss of the colonies, and its political degeneration, with the establishment of the Republic.

Francisco Franco condensed all his anti-Masonic thought in a series of articles published in a Falangist daily newspaper, *Arriba*, successively assembled in a volume bearing the title of *Masoneria* and published under the pseudonym of “Boor.” His phobia also influenced the closest assistants of the dictator. One such example was Carrero Blanco, co-author of the above series of articles, who denounced the Masonic plot aimed at destabilizing the Spanish political system in a speech given as Spanish Prime Minister, just a few days before an attempt was made on his life by the ETA Basque extremists.

The direct influence of Franco was also felt in the judicial sphere, with the Law of 1 March 1940 described as the “Law for the repression of Freemasonry, Communism, and other surreptitious societies spreading divisive ideas against religion, the Fatherland, and their fundamental institutions, and against social harmony.”³ In its prologue, the law restated the concept of esoteric societies as the enemy of Spain and first cause of her decay:

¹ Orden de 20 de abril de 1937, de la Secretaria General del Jefe de Estado (Salamanca).

² Vicente Verdú, “Psicoanalisi de Franco. Entrevista de Castilla del Pino,” *Cuadernos para el dialogo*, 186 (1976): 32-37.

³ *Boletin oficial del Estado* (12 March 1940).

Among the many factors that have contributed to the decay of Spain, perhaps no one affected so perniciously and so frequently frustrated the beneficial reactions of the people and the heroism of our army as the secret societies of every kind and the international forces of a surreptitious nature did. Among the former, Freemasonry occupies the most important place. . . .”⁴

In order to provide documentary support to this repression, the government during April 1937 created an *Oficina de Investigación y Propaganda Anticomunista (OIPA)* that, with the help of military and civilian authorities, had the task of collecting, analyzing and classifying the largest possible amount of evidences about Marxist activities in Spain, and in particular those of Masonic societies. On 29 May 1937 the Government created the *Delegación de Asuntos Especiales*, which absorbed the tasks of *OIPA*, enlarging its work towards other “*sectas secretas*” such as Theosophical societies and Rotarian circles. In 1977, Royal Decree Number 2761/1977 transferred the Archive to the Education Board, and, finally, in 1979 it was incorporated into the *Archivo Historico Nacional* under the name of *Sección Guerra Civil*, hence becoming a public document with free access.

The Archive preserves documents (circulars, decrees, letters, degrees, certificates, minutes, etc.) as well as books, pamphlets, rituals, statutes, regulations, reviews, internal bulletins with Masonic/Theosophical/Rotarian subjects, divided into the following series:

- documents of lodges and about subjects related to Freemasonry (series “A”)
- documents about Theosophical societies (series “T”)
- documents about Rotarians (series “R”)

⁴ Ibid.

There are 602 issues of original documentation published by Masonic lodges, sixty issues published by various Theosophical societies, and twenty-three by different Rotarian clubs. The partial research which first revealed more than 2000 headings⁵ enabled us to examine and classify several Theosophical reviews. These reviews are specified by their years and numbers. It is hoped that this listing will aid historians in their research.

LIST OF HOLDINGS OF THEOSOPHICAL JOURNALS

Argentina

EVOLUCIÓN

Mensuario de la Biblioteca Teosófica Argentina
1935: N° 2, 4
1936: N° 2, 11, 12

PHILADELPHIA

Revista de Estudios Teosóficos
Buenos Aires
Mensual
1898: N° 1,2,3,4,5,6
1899: N° 1-12
1900: N° 7,8,9,10,11,12

Australia

THE AUSTRALIAN THEOSOPHIST

The Official Organ of the Theosophical Society in Australia

⁵ Under the direction of Dr. Maria Teresa Diaz de los Rios, a team of researchers has collected and classified 2380 magazines scattered in the different sources, thus helping scholars in their researches. We have made use of this study in our work of checking and comparison, bringing several valuable corrections to the research accomplished in the Archive.

Sydney
1928: N° 4

Czechoslovakia

ESPERO TEOZOFIA

Organo de Teozofia Esperanta Ligo
Praga
Trimestral
1922: N° 1,2
1923: N° 1,2,3,5,6
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1927: N° 2,3,4
1928: N° 1,2,3,4
1929: N° 2,3

Chile

REVISTA TEOZOFICA CHILENA

Organo de la Sociedad Teosófica de Chile
Valparaiso
1928: N° 12

Costa Rica

VIRYA

Estudios de Teosofia, Hermetismo, Orientalismo,
Psicología
San Jose de Costarica
1914: N° 28

Cuba

REVISTA TEOZOFICA

Organo Oficial de la Sección Cubana de la Sociedad
Teosófica
Habana

Mensual
1910: N° 5,6
1911: N° 1,2,7,11
1913: N° 6

REVISTA TEOZOFICA CUBANA

Organo Oficial de la Sociedad Teosófica de Cuba
Habana
1928: N°6

England

LUCIFER

A Theosophical Magazine
London
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THEOSOPHICAL SIFTINGS

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1890: N° 15,16,17,18
1891: N° 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,12,13,14,15
1892: N° 16,17
1893: N° 4

France

BULLETIN THEOSOPHIQUE

Orgue de la Sociètè Thèosophique de France
Paris
Quarterly
1916: N° 1
1917: N° 4

REVUE THEOSOPHIQUE FRANÇAISE: LE LO- TUS BLEU

Paris
Monthly
1891: N° 7,8,9,10
1892: N° 1-12
1893: N° 11,12
1894: N° 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
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1899: N° 1-10
1900: N° 11,12
1901: N° 1-10
1902: N° 1-12
1903: N° 11,12

Germany

THEOSOPHIE

Leipzig
Monthly
1912: N° 1,2,3,4,6,7
1913: N° 1-12
1914: N° 1,2,3,4,7,8,9,10,11,12

THEOSOPHISCHE KULTUR

Organ der Internationalen Theophischen
Verbrüderung
Leipzig
Monthly
1909: N° 1,2,3,4,7,8
1911: N° 9

THEOSOPHISCHE RUNDSCHAU

Leipzig
Monthly
1902: N° 1-7
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1904: N° 1-12
1905: N° 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,12
1906: N° 1-12
1907: N° 4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12

THEOSOPHISCHER WEGWEISER

Leipzig
Monthly
1899: N° 1,2,3
1900: N° 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11
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1907: N° 4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12

India

THE ADYAR BULLETIN

A Theosophical journal for East and West

Adyar

Monthly

1920: N° 11,12
1921: N° 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9

THE THEOSOPHIST

Adyar, Madras

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Italy

GNOSI

Rivista di Teosofia

Torino

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Armageddon in Switzerland: The Solar Temple Remembered

Massimo Introvigne¹

On October 4th and 5th, 1994, fifty-three people were found dead in Switzerland and in Canada. Their bodies—some showing signs of violence suffered before the fires—were found in the incinerated centers of a neo-Templar movement called originally International Order of Chivalry Solar Tradition or, for short, Solar Tradition, and after 1990-1991 Order of the Solar Temple. The movement is part of one of several currents which as a whole compose the universe of the contemporary occult-esoteric movements, the neo-Templar tradition. In this paper I propose to trace, first of all, the history of the neo-Templar tradition, then that of the Solar Temple, relating the essential information on the tragedy of October 1994, and finally suggesting some possible interpretations.

I. The Neo-Templar Tradition

1. “Templar” Degrees within Freemasonry

The modern neo-Templar tradition is *not* a continuation of the Order of the Temple, a monastic-chivalric Catholic Order founded in 1118-1119 by Hugues de Payens (or Payns) and dissolved by

Pope Clement V after the cruel persecution by Philip the Fair, King of France, in 1307. After its suppression, the order survived for a few decades outside of France, but by the beginning of the 15th century the Templars had totally vanished. The theory of a secret continuation of the order has been criticized by academic scholars of medieval Templar history such as Régine Pernoud as “totally insane” and tied to “uniformly foolish” claims and legends.²

The idea that the Templars, though officially suppressed, secretly continued their activities until the 18th century, spread mostly among French and German Freemasons. When from England it was introduced to continental Europe, Freemasonry could in fact hardly present itself as merely the heir—no matter how much esoterically re-interpreted in its meaning—of the British trade guilds of masons (composed not only of architects, but also of simple bricklayers). Its origins were too humble to be acceptable by the European nobles Freemasonry hoped to attract. The legend was thus formulated of persecuted knights finding a “hiding place” in the English and Scottish guilds of masons, where they could continue their activities. Especially in Germany, these mysterious

¹ A report for associates and friends of CESNUR. ©August 1995 CESNUR, Center for Studies on New Religions, Torino, Italy (fax 39-11-539563).

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² Régine Pernoud, *Les Templiers* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1988), 11. For more details, see Marco Tangheroni, “La leggenda templare massonica e la realtà storica,” in CESNUR (Centro Studi Sulle Nuove Religioni), *Massoneria e religioni*, ed. by Massimo Introvigne, (Leumann [Torino]: Elle Di Ci, 1994), 63-78.

knights were quickly identified with the Templars. These are the origins of the Templar degrees of Freemasonry. They were created in continental Europe³, but extended to the United Kingdom through the activities of Thomas Dunckerley (1724-1795), who in 1791 founded the “Grand Conclave of Knights Templars” (later known as “Grand Priory of Knights Templars”) within English Freemasonry.⁴ “Templar” Masonic degrees are today found in both the Scottish and the York Rites, and originated the present Encampments of Knights Templars, composed exclusively of Freemasons and widespread within Anglo-American Freemasonry.⁵

The presence of Templar degrees in the great majority of Masonic rites and obediences found today throughout the world must be correctly interpreted, and there could be two different levels of interpretation. At a first level, dating back to the 18th century, one could mention the idea of propagating a new organization such as Freemasonry through a captivating ritual, such as the one derived—with lavish display of costumes and swords—from the chivalric world of medieval times. At a second level, as far back as the 18th century, a tension was already developing within Freemasonry between a rationalistic “cool current” and a “warm current,” more interested in

esotericism and the occult. Such tension not only divided each of the several obediences and lodges from the others, but often existed within the same obediences where a lodge could easily include both rationalists and occultists.⁶ The Templar legend appealed, for different reasons, to both “cool” and “warm” currents. The “warm current” presented Medieval Templars as esoteric magicians, keepers of occult secrets (in the wake of what today’s historians regard as libelous allegations of witchcraft generated by the propaganda spread by Philip the Fair in his desire to destroy the Templar Order for economic and political reasons). The “cool current” considered instead the Templars not only victims of tragic historic circumstances, but rebels against the French Monarchy and the Roman Church (“against the Throne and the Altar,” according to the terminology of that time), and therefore predecessors of the Enlightenment protest and, later on, of the French Revolution. This consideration is once again false, if we consider the Templars’ real history, but represents an integral part of the myth surrounding them in the 18th century.

2. The Origins of Independent Neo-Templarism

During the French Revolution—an especially complicated time in Masonic history—not everyone agreed with the assumption that the set of Templar degrees was only a part of the Masonic system, and that it was to remain therefore subordinated to Freemasonry as a whole and to its leadership (although today such assumption is accepted in the majority of Masonic obediences

³For a detailed account of the matter, see René Le Forestier, *La Franc-maçonnerie templière et occultiste aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*. Two volumes (Paris: La Table d’Émeraude, 1987).

⁴See Frederick Smyth, *Brethren in Chivalry: A Celebration of Two Hundred Years of the Great Priory of the United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta of England and Wales and Provinces Overseas* (London: Lewis Masonic, 1991). According to Frederick Smyth it is possible that “Templar” Masonry reached Ireland even before England, maybe as early as the 1760s (*ibid.*, 19).

⁵See my article, “Che cos’è la Massoneria: il problema delle origini e le origini del problema,” in CESNUR, *Massoneria e religioni*, 13-62.

⁶See my book, *Il cappello del mago. I nuovi movimenti magici dallo spiritismo al satanismo* (Milan: SugarCo, 1990).

and rites). The first disagreements originated in the Lodge of the Knights of the Cross in Paris. There, it was argued that if the Templar legend is true and the British guilds of Freemasons are “interesting” only because they offered—since the 14th century—a hiding place to the heirs of the Templar Order, then the Templar Order precedes Freemasonry, and the Masonic organizations must be subordinated to the (neo-)Templar ones and not vice versa. This controversy began with a Masonic adventurer active at the time of the French Revolution, a Paris physician called Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat (1773-1838). In 1804 he declared to have discovered—together with his colleagues of the above mentioned Masonic Lodge of the Knights of the Cross in Paris—some documents proving the existence of an uninterrupted succession of Templar “Grand Masters,” operating secretly from the suppression of the Order in 1307 to 1792 (when the last “hidden” Grand Master, Duke Louis Hercule Timoléon de Cossé-Brissac, died in Versailles, massacred by the Jacobins). With the French Revolution and the fall of the French Monarchy, the Templars were now able to come into the open. In 1805 Fabré-Palaprat reconstructed the Templar Order, and proclaimed himself Grand Master. The idea of an autonomous Templar Order (independent from Freemasonry, unlike the Templar degrees) was generally well-accepted in the occult subculture, and caught the interest of Napoleon himself, who authorized a solemn ceremony in 1808.⁷

⁷ On Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat, his Order of the Temple and the Johannite Church, see *ibid.*, p.233-37; and—from a skeptical yet favorable viewpoint—the work of the Gnostic Church’s Bishop, Léonce Fabre Des Essarts, *Les Hiérophantes. Études sur les fondateurs de religions depuis la Révolution jusqu’à nos jours* (Paris: Chacomac, 1905), 124-153.

In spite of Napoleon’s interest, the Catholic Church remained obviously hostile to neo-Templarism. Fabré-Palaprat called the Roman Church “a fallen church” and founded in its place an “esoteric,” so-called “Johannite” church, of which later—due to his supposed prerogatives as Templar Grand Master—he consecrated as Bishop the radical socialist and former Catholic priest Ferdinand-François Châtel (1795-1857). Since the 1830s the neo-Templar movement intertwines therefore with the “independent churches,” schismatic groups led by “bishops” claiming an irregular, but nevertheless “valid” consecration of more or less remote Catholic or Orthodox origins, due to the Catholic theory admitting that the apostolic succession may validly continue also outside the Church of Rome as long as the consecrating Bishop is a “real” (although schismatic or excommunicated) Bishop and was in turn consecrated by a “valid” Bishop. The intertwining still remains today, within certain limits, and often, wherever there is a neo-Templar order, we find an “independent church” under the same leadership (and vice versa). There is no evidence that Luc Jouret, the co-founder of the Solar Temple, was consecrated as a Bishop, but he was ordained a priest in one of the French “independent churches” and in this capacity occasionally celebrated what he called an “Essene ritual,” in fact a version of the Catholic Mass.

In any case, Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat gave birth to a neo-Templarism independent from Freemasonry, though largely composed by “knights” who were at the same time Freemasons. Today the Templar knights and degrees within Freemasonry are found mostly in the Anglo-Saxon countries, while Fabré-Palaprat’s autonomous neo-Templarism has until today remained largely confined to the Latin countries.

3. The Neo-Templar Movement from 1838 to 1970

After Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat's death in 1838, the neo-Templars experienced their first schism, dividing promoters and opponents of the ties between the Templar Order and the Johannite Church of Ferdinand-François Châtel. (The Johannite Church, the history of which is not part of this paper, continues to have heirs to this day, though not all of them are at the same time neo-Templars.) The two branches, led respectively by Count Jules de Moreton de Chabrillan and by Admiral William Sydney Smith, reconciled in 1841 under the leadership of Jean-Marie Raoul. The Templar Order had, however, gone out of fashion and one of Raoul's successors, A. M. Vernois, put it—in the Masonic terminology—"to sleep" in 1871. Later on, the "regency" of the Order was given by some surviving members to the poet Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918), who, however, was mostly interested in another order he himself created, the Order of the Catholic Rose-Croix of the Temple and the Grail.⁸ Those were the years of the occult revival of late 19th century. The Templar Order, with dozens of other groups, ended in the great melting pot of occult orders operated by the strange bedfellows Joséphin Péladan and Papus (pen name of the medical doctor Gérard Encausse, 1868-1916). During these years, a certain "Templar" terminology and symbology was fashionable in a long series of occult

⁸On the events quoted in this paragraph, see my *Il cappello del mago*, 187-94. On the esoteric orders founded by Joséphin Péladan—which continue today in some forms—see *ibid.*, and Christophe Beaufils, *Joséphin Péladan 1858-1918. Essai sur une maladie du lyrisme* (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1993). For the history of those same orders, the testimony of Count Leonce De Larmandie, *Notes de psychologie contemporaine. L'Entr'acte idéal. Histoire de la Rose+Croix* (Paris: Chacornac, 1903), is essential reading.

movements of different origins: to quote just some of the most relevant examples, the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.), was founded by Austrian industrialist Carl Kellner (1850-1905) and made famous later by British magician Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), in the world of ceremonial magic; and the Ordo Novi Templi (ONT) was created in 1907 by Jorg Länz von Liebenfels (1874-1954) within the German "Ariosophy," a pan-German and racist version of Rosicrucian and Theosophic themes, which later had a real, but often overestimated influence on Nazism.⁹ In all these groups, "Templar" symbols were more or less prominent and were used side by side with other symbols of a different nature, within the frame of worldviews which differed from those of the Templar Order founded by Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat.

The succession of Fabré-Palaprat's Order of the Temple continued in Papus' Independent Group of Esoteric Studies, and later on in its Belgian branch, KVMRIS, an organization particularly interested in sex magic.¹⁰ In such environments, the neo-Templar tradition easily blended in with others (such as the neo-Pythagoric, Martinist and Rosicrucian traditions), especially since many occult orders shared the same leadership. In 1932 the Order of the Temple was legally incorporated by the Belgian group under the name of Sovereign and Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (OSMTJ), having as its "Regent" Théodore Covias (the number of members was considered to be too

⁹On the history of ONT and its influence on Nazism, see Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: The Aquarian Press, 1985).

¹⁰Among the members of KVMRIS who became neo-templars was the scandalous knight Georges Le Clément de Saint-Marcq, whose ideas on sex magic are described in my book, *Il ritorno dello gnosticismo* (Carnago [Varese]: SugarCo, 1993), 155-60.

small to nominate an actual “Grand Master”). The next “Regent” after Théodore Covias was Emile-Clément Vandenberg, elected in 1935. In 1942—in the midst of World War II—the Order of the Temple agreed to pass on the Regency to a member residing in the neutral country of Portugal, Antonio Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes, who secured for the neo-Templar movement a great international propagation, opening national “Priories” in almost all Western countries.

4. The Neo-Templar Orders after 1970: Schisms, Occultism, and Secret Services

In 1970 an international convention met in Paris to elect Antonio Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes’ successor as head of OSMTJ.¹¹ The majority of national Priories wanted to elect his son Fernando, but at the convention a turn of events caused Antoine Zdrojewski, a general of Polish origins but a French citizen and resident, to be unexpectedly elected as “Regent.” The 1970 convention started a rather unclear connection tying neo-Templars, secret services and European politics. The turn of events that brought on the election of Antoine Zdrojewski was in fact due to the massive enrollment in the Sover-

eign and Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem by members of SAC (Service d’Action Civique), a private French right-wing organization with ties to the Gaullist party, half-way between a private secret service and a parallel police. Right after the election, Antoine Zdrojeski nominated as his “*chargé de mission*,” Charly Lascorz, an influential member of SAC. OSMTJ’s headquarters were placed on the same premises as ETEC (Études Techniques et Commerciales), a Paris corporation later exposed as a front for SAC. OSMTJ, unsanctioned by any law—unlike the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, whose passports are recognized as valid by many countries—began issuing “diplomatic passports” in the name of the Order, of which many members of SAC benefitted. In 1972, the police—accusing ETEC of several irregularities, including possible collusions with organized crime—raided ETEC’s premises in Paris and put an end to its operations (seen by the press as a “cover” for SAC’s illegal activities). As a result of the raid, in 1973 Antoine Zdrojewski put OSMTJ’s French Priory “to sleep.” The history of SAC ended with the murder of police inspector Jacques Massié (a local leader of SAC) and his family in Auriol, near Marseille, in 1981. This affair, one of the most obscure of recent French history, culminated in a court case, and in a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry, which dissolved SAC in 1982. During the trial—held in Aix-en-Provence in 1985—Jacques Massié’s career within Antoine Zdrojewski’s OSMTJ was brought to light. Even after OSMTJ’s official dissolution in 1973, in fact, SAC members had kept alive the Order’s activities, which included the trafficking of OSMTJ passports and (according to press sources) an international traffic of weapons (never fully proved) between the neo-Templars connected with SAC and the notorious Italian Masonic Lodge P2 headed by Licio Gelli (later also dissolved in Italy after the inquiry of a Parliamentary Commission).

¹¹On the events described in this paragraph and the next, I have based my considerations on personal interviews with members of the occult milieu in France, and on two books which include, along with interesting information, also obvious inaccuracies, and must therefore be read cautiously: Arnaud Chaffanjon-Bertrand Galimard Flavigny, *Ordres & contre-ordres de chevalerie* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1982) [which has as its main purpose that of separating the true chivalric orders of ancient and noble descent from counterfeits]; and André Van Bosbeke, with Jean-Pierre De Staercke, *Chevaliers du vingtième siècle. Enquête sur les sociétés occultes et les ordres de chevalerie contemporains* (Anvers: EPO, 1988) [a journalistic survey mostly interested in the political and financial aspects of modern neo-templarism]. Both works quote extensively judicial, parliamentary and journalistic sources.

The election of Antoine Zdrojewski in 1970 brought about also a schism among the neo-Templars. Fernando Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes declared invalid the election and proclaimed himself as “Regent,” as his father’s successor, thus creating in almost every country at least two Orders of the Temple (often sharing the same name, OMSTJ): one loyal to Sousa Fontes and one loyal to Zdrojewski. Especially important for the number of members and for the international relations was the Swiss Great Priory, directed by Alfred Zappelli and recognized by Fernando Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes. When Antoine Zdrojewski left the stage in 1973, Alfred Zappelli tried to operate from Switzerland on an international scale, and to salvage what was left of Antoine Zdrojewski’s organization, establishing a French Priory dependent on the Swiss one. He then nominated as leader of the French Priory—according to press sources—Georges Michelin (also a member of SAC). At the time of the murder in Auriol, Antoine Zappelli issued a press release, clarifying that Jacques Massié had no part in his OSMTJ. During the same years Philip Guarino, an American political lobbyist, introduced himself as leader of an OSMTJ Priory in the U.S. Philip Guarino was also—according to the Italian Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the P2 Lodge—the American “correspondent” of Licio Gelli’s Lodge. Perhaps it is for this reason that a file on OMSTJ was found during one of the raids carried out by the Italian authorities at Licio Gelli’s villa in Arezzo. Many “fringe” and “irregular” Freemasons belonged to an Italian Grand Priory¹² of OSMTJ

¹² This Grand Priory did not represent the first Italian neo-templar Order. Since the last century there had been a few more, which later entered into the orbit of one of the main leaders of occult movements in Italy this century, Gastone Ventura (1906-1981). See also his *Templari e templarismo* (Rome: Atanòr, 1984).

(established—as it seems—with Alfred Zappelli’s authorization) which had as “bailli” (*i.e.* local leader) Pasquale Gugliotta (himself a member of the P2 Lodge) and comprised, among others, Pietro Muscolo of Genoa and Luigi Savona of Turin, both leaders of “clandestine” Masonic fraternities and, according to the Parliamentary Commission, Masonic allies of Licio Gelli.

At this point, however, the OSMTJ loyal to Sousa Fontes or Zappelli and the remainders of Antoine Zdrojewski’s OSMTJ were no longer the only two main characters of the neo-Templar scene. Almost everywhere, “independent” orders had sprung up, which—when not claiming to be receiving direct messages channeled from medieval Templars from the spirit world—produced genealogical trees which usually included both Bernard-Raymond Fabr e-Palapat and Antonio Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes. It is perhaps worth mentioning also two branches not stemming from Antoine Zdrojewski, nor from Fernando Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes. The first branch was established by a bizarre Spanish gentleman, Guillermo Grau, who—persuaded to be a descendant of the last Aztec Emperor, Moctezuma II—began claiming in the 1960s the throne of Mexico under the name of Guillermo III de Grau-Moctezuma, granting (not for free) honors, chivalric titles and even University degrees from a (mail-order) “college” in his “kingdom”. At that time a student of esoteric lore, Antonia Lopez Soler, asserted that the Templars, suppressed in 1307 all over Europe, had survived in Catalonia. The alleged Monteczuma enthusiastically espoused not only the theory, but also the student, changing Antonia Lopez Soler’s name into Countess Moctezuma and immediately proclaiming himself Grand Master of a Catalan Branch of OSMTJ. The Catalan Branch, founded in the 1960s, began establishing priories all over the world in the

1970s, taking advantage of the conflict between Fernando Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes and Antoine Zdrojewski.

A second “independent” branch sprang from the mystical-esoteric experiences of Jacques Breyer, a member of the current most interested in esotericism in French Freemasonry. After these experiences, which he underwent in 1952 in the Castle of Arginy, France, the French occultist came in contact with Maxime de Roquemaure, who claimed to be a descendant of a branch of the medieval Order of the Temple which had survived through the centuries not in Catalonia but in faraway Ethiopia. Breyer and de Roquemaure subsequently founded the Sovereign Order of the Solar Temple (OSTS). Some of the initial members of OSTS founded one of the many French Masonic organizations, the National Grand Lodge of France “Opéra” (the history of which is outside the scope of this paper). OSTS faced a crisis in 1964 following Breyer’s resignation, but was re-organized twice after that, in 1966 and 1973.¹³ Within this Order appeared most persistently apocalyptic ideas on the end of the world and the glorious return of the “Solar Christ.”

5. Julien Origas and the Renewed Order of the Temple

The more apocalyptic neo-Templar ideas caught also the interest of Julien Origas (1920-1983), who frequented other occult orders as well—including the Saint Germain Foundation in Marseille (not to

be confused with the Foundation of the same name in the U.S.A., which constitutes the organizational structure of the new religious movement called I AM Religious Activity). The French Saint Germain Foundation was led by a certain “Angela” who claimed to be a reincarnation of Socrates and Elizabeth I of England and at the same time the mother of the Count of Saint-Germain, the 18th century French occultist who never died and is still active—according to ideas common to dozens of groups of theosophical origins—in the Grand Lodge of Agartha, composed of “Ascended Masters,” which secretly governs the world. Julien Origas was also a member of the world’s largest Rosicrucian organization, AMORC, founded in the United States by Harvey Spencer Lewis (1883-1939) and extremely successful in the French-speaking countries. It is in those same French-speaking countries, in fact, that AMORC tried in the 1970s to gain a sort of total control of the esoteric community. Due to the widespread interest in Martinism, for example, in order to avoid that AMORC members seek elsewhere Martinist experiences, AMORC created its own Martinist Order. Around 1970, Raymond Bernard, then “Legate” of AMORC for the French-speaking countries (today he has no more ties with AMORC, but in the meantime much has changed within the international Rosicrucian community), embraced enthusiastically Julien Origas’ idea of creating a Renewed Order of the Temple (ORT, not to be confused with the similarly-named Order of the Renewed Temple joined by the famous esoterist René Guénon (1886-1951) at the beginning of our present century).¹⁴ Origas’ ORT may have offered the opportunity of keeping within AMORC fold members of the occult subculture interested in

¹³ See Jean-Pierre Bayard, *La Guide des sociétés secrètes* (Paris: Philippe Lebaud, 1989), 43; A. Chaffanjon-B. Galimard Flavigny, *Ordres & contre-ordres de chevalerie*, 169-71. From OSTS descend also other present-day orders, such as the Ordre des Veilleurs du Temple in France, with corresponding, parallel organizations in other countries, which have nothing to do with the developments described in the next paragraph.

¹⁴ On René Guénon’s Order of the Renewed Temple see my *Il cappello del mago*, 237-38.

joining a neo-Templar group. It seems that the creation of ORT was even confirmed by the apparition of a mysterious “White Cardinal” to Raymond Bernard in Rome, and that, as a result of this event, Julien Origas was crowned “King of Jerusalem,” with an actual crown. For several years before the coronation, Julien Origas had been in contact with Alfred Zappelli, and their two groups (ORT and the Swiss Branch of OSMTJ) had developed—without actually coming together—some common ventures, even if some strong disagreements arose soon after.¹⁵ It seems that there was also a “Secret Order” (assembling important members of ORT and of several branches of OSMTJ), unknown to the other members, within which were formulated ideas on the imminent end of the world and on the presence on Earth of living “Ascended Masters,” including Origas and “Angela,” the leader of the Saint Germain Foundation. Members of the “Secret Order” even offered prayers “to Angela and Julien” (Origas), both destined to assume a critical role in the soon-coming universal conflagration.

Julien Origas, to say the least, did not receive good press coverage in France. Several journalists noticed his relations with neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups from half of Europe and (once again) with members of SAC. A few years later, his

neo-nazi ideas and his relations with the Saint Germain Foundation in Marseille caused his separation from AMORC. Julien Origas’ ORT continued to operate independently (undergoing—of course—several schisms), accepting ideas from Jacques Breyer’s OSTs and from “Angela” on the end of the world and on messages received directly from the Ascended Masters of the Grand Lodge of Agartha. After Julien Origas’ death in 1983, these ideas became even more odd. It was in 1981 that Luc Jouret, one of the main characters in the Solar Temple tragedy, first contacted Julien Origas’ ORT.

Around 1980 all over the world there were over one hundred rival Templar orders. Today there are probably many more, and every large Western city (in Italy as well as in other countries) hosts at least a couple of them. It would be a serious mistake—especially right after the October 1994 tragedy—to lump all them together. They vary greatly, from apocalyptic associations to “cover-groups” for espionage and political machinations, from organizations dealing with sex magic to others that are little more than clubs where one dresses as a Templar mostly to cultivate (as it happens in a couple of Italian organizations) social and gastronomical interests.

II. Luc Jouret, Joseph Di Mambro and the Solar Temple

Luc Jouret (1947-1994) was born in Kikwit, Belgian Congo (present-day Zaire), from Belgian parents on October 18th, 1947.¹⁶ Fear of violence against Belgian citizens at the time of decolonization

¹⁵ Fernando Campello de Pinto de Sousa Fontes also tried to keep OSMTJ’s Priors free from ties with controversial groups, fearing mostly a loss of the independence from Masonic organizations so greatly stressed by Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat. During the second half of the 1980s a conflict arose between the Portuguese Regent and Alfred Zappelli. The majority of the Swiss Grand Priors’ members accepted the authority of Fernando Campello Pinto de Sousa Fontes and reorganized their Priory in 1988, with Joseph Clerc as Prior. Joseph Clerc’s branch is still quite strong, while Albert Zappelli, today old and in poor health, keeps only a small handful of followers (author’s telephone interview with Joseph Clerc, October 19, 1994.)

¹⁶ The only scholarly study on Luc Jouret and his activities, published before the tragedy, is Jean-François Mayer, “Des Templiers pour l’Ere du Verseau: les Clubs Archéda (1984-

persuaded his parents to settle back in their home country, where Luc enrolled in the Department of Medicine of the Free University of Brussels. In the 1970s the Belgian police opened a file on Jouret as a member of a small Communist group, the Walloon Communist Youth. In 1974 he graduated as a medical doctor. In 1976 he enlisted as a

1991) et l'Ordre International Chevaleresque Tradition Solaire," *Mouvements Religieux*, vol. 14/153 (January 1993): 2-10 (summed up in ID. *Les Nouvelles voies spirituelles. Enquête sur la religiosité parallèle en Suisse*, [Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1993], 148-49). In the U.S. a curious book by Gaetan Delaforge, *The Templar Tradition in the Age of Aquarius* (Putney, Vermont: Threshold Books, 1987) was published arguing that the Order of the Temple had indeed survived after the 14th century, keeping in its possession much occult knowledge and that the International Order of Chivalry Solar Tradition (i.e. Jouret's order) was its true and legitimate heir. The book (by a member of the Temple who later defected) was advertised and circulated in the occult-Theosophical subculture, but it is obviously not a scholarly work. I found also very useful a dossier including all Canadian press articles on the Solar Temple preceding the events of October 1994, compiled by the Centre d'Informations sur les Nouvelles Religions of Montreal, as well as CESNUR's collection of U.S., Swiss and Canadian articles following such events, of which I mention here some of the most thorough ones concerning facts, but whose opinions are to be read cautiously: Michael Matza, "Mix of Apocalypse and Ego Drove Cultist," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, (October 9, 1994); Alan Riding, "A Preacher with a Dark Side Led Cultists to Swiss Chalets," *The New York Times* (October 9, 1994); see also Massimo Introvigne with J. Gordon Melton, "The Solar Temple. A Preliminary Report on the Roots of a Tragedy," a paper presented at the annual conference of the Communal Studies Association in Oneida, New York, October 6-9, 1994; and Tom Post with Marcus Mabry, Theodore Stanger, Linda Kay and Charles S. Lee, "Suicide Cult," *Newsweek*, (October 17, 1994): 10-15. For the November 1994 report by the Sûreté du Québec, the Québec police, see Sylvain Blanchard, "Transit vers Sirius," *Le Devoir*, November 19-20 1994 and videotape of the press conference by officer Richard Saint-Denis and others supplied to CESNUR by the Centre d'Information sur les Nouvelles Religions, Montreal. The story of a "survivor" (with real names replaced by pseudonyms) has been related—with useful information but also with some obvious inaccuracies—by Thierry Huguenin, *Le 54^e* (Paris: Fixot, 1995).

paratrooper and took part in the Kolwezi raid, which allowed Belgian troops to bring back home a group of fellow-citizens threatened in Zaire. The prevailing ideas among paratroopers were diametrically opposed to Luc Jouret's Communism but, according to a former college mate, Marc Brunson, now a veterinarian, the young doctor asserted that, at the time, joining the paratroopers "seemed the best way to infiltrate the Army with Communist ideas."¹⁷ After the military experience, his interests focused on alternative forms of medicine. He studied homeopathy and later became a registered homeopath practitioner in France (in many French-speaking countries homeopathy is in fact regulated by law). In 1977 he had visited the Philippines (later he reported also visits to "China, Peru and India")¹⁸ in order to study the techniques of local spiritualist healers. According to Jean-François Mayer, Jouret claimed—in a long interview he had with him in December 1987—that the experience in India was crucial for turning to homeopathy, although he had been in contact with European homeopathic practitioners before. For a short while he supposedly became a follower of guru Krishna Macharia. In the early 1980s he started a homeopathic practice in Annemasse, France, receiving clients also from nearby Switzerland. His success as a homeopathic doctor was remarkable. People came to him from as far as the other side of the Ocean and, after a few years, Jouret had several practices in France, Switzerland and Canada.

In the 1980s, Geneva and Montreal were perhaps the two cities with the greatest number of

¹⁷ T. Post *et al.*, "Suicide Cult": 13.

¹⁸ Luc Jouret, *Médecine et conscience* (Montreal: Louise Courteau, 1992), 4; letter from Jean-François Mayer to Massimo Introvigne, December 14-15, 1994. Many thanks to Jean-François Mayer for his most helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

esoteric groups in the world. Besides continuing with his homeopathic practice, Luc Jouret became also a lecturer on naturopathy and ecological topics, active in the wider circuit of the French-speaking New Age movement. About 1981, he established the Amenta Club, an organization managing his conferences (the name was later changed into Amenta—without “Club”—and then into Atlanta). He spoke in New Age bookstores (in France, Switzerland, Belgium and Canada) and in eclectic esoteric groups such as the Golden Way Foundation of Geneva (previously called La Pyramide, which had as its leader Joseph Di Mambro, 1924-1994, who later became the co-founder—and largely the real leader—of the Solar Temple, while the Golden Way became for all purposes the parent organization of the Atlanta, Amenta and later Archédia clubs and groups). In 1987, Jouret was able to be received as a paid “motivational speaker” by two district offices of Hydro-Québec, the public hydroelectric utility of the Province of Québec. Besides getting paid 5,400 Canadian dollars for his conferences in the period 1987-1989, he also recruited fifteen executives and managers who later followed him to the end.

Amenta was nothing but the outer shell of an actual “Chinese box” system. Those who most faithfully attended Jouret’s homeopathic practices and conferences were given the invitation to join a more confidential, although not entirely secret, “inner circle”: the Archédia Clubs, established in 1984, in which one could already find a definite ritual and an actual initiation ceremony, with a set of symbols taken from the Masonic-Templar efforts of Jacques Breyer (whose books—and one audiotape, according to Jean-François Mayer—were still being circulated). According to Canadian reporter Bill Marsden—who in 1994 interviewed some former members of the Solar Temple and whose findings have been compiled by Susan Palmer in an

unpublished manuscript she kindly sent to CESNUR—Breyer personally attended OICTS meetings in Geneva in 1985: an ex-member described Origas, Breyer and Di Mambro as having been earlier “the three chums who spoke of esoteric things” in the first Templar meetings he had attended in Geneva. Jean-François Mayer also notes that in 1987 Amenta organized a seminar on Breyer’s thought. The Archédia Clubs were not yet the truly inner part of Jouret’s organization. Their most trusted members were invited to join an even more “inner” circle, this one truly a secret organization: the International Order of Chivalry Solar Tradition (OICST), in short Solar Tradition, later to be called Order of the Solar Temple (although it is not impossible that an Order of the Solar Temple had originally existed as an inner circle of OICST). OICST can be considered both a schism and a continuation of Julien Origas’ ORT, which Jouret had joined in 1981 with the knowledge of only a few friends. Apparently former Communist Luc Jouret and neo-Nazi Julien Origas understood each other very well, at least for a few months. After Origas’ death, Luc Jouret tried unsuccessfully to be recognized as ORT’s leader, facing opposition from the founder’s daughter, Catherine Origas: hence the 1984 schism and the establishment of OICTS. On the other hand, some of Luc Jouret’s co-workers in the Archédia Clubs, such as Joseph Di Mambro, co-founder of OICTS, and Geneva businessman Albert Giacobino, had been members, according to press sources, of Alfred Zappelli’s Sovereign and Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem¹⁹ and possibly of AMORC. But according to Jouret’s most

¹⁹ This information is also denied by Joseph Clerc, present Grand Prior of the Swiss OSMTJ loyal to Sousa Fontes, who states that Joseph Di Mambro had only casual relations with Alfred Zappelli, without ever becoming a full-fledged member of OSMTJ (telephone interview by the author with Joseph Clerc, October 19, 1994).

secret teachings, the schism that had given birth to OICTS was not only the mere fruit of disagreements, but was rather according to the will of the Ascended Masters of the Grand Lodge of Agartha, who had revealed themselves in 1981, before Julien Origas' death, disclosing a "Plan" that was supposed to last thirteen years, until the end of this world, predicted for the year 1994.

Di Mambro and Jouret's OICTS teachings stressed the occult-apocalyptic themes of Jacques Breyer's OSTs and Julien Origas' ORT, connecting together three traditions on the end of the world: a) the idea found in some (but by no means all) New Age groups of an impending ecological catastrophe (for instance, Jouret was very insistent about the lethal nature of modern diets and food); b) some neo-Templar movements' theory of a cosmic "*renovatio*" revealed by the Ascended Masters of the Grand Lodge of Agartha; c) the political ideas of a final international Armageddon propagated by survivalist groups both on the extreme right and on the extreme left of the political spectrum, with which Jouret had contacts in different countries. It seems that, in the years spanning from 1986 to 1993, Di Mambro and Jouret kept receiving "revelations," following Julien Origas tradition, especially of four "sacred objects": the Grail, the Excalibur Sword, the Menorah, and the Ark of the Covenant (whose "apparitions" were staged, ex-members now claim, through holograms and electronic devices), until it was revealed to them that between the end of 1993 and the beginning of 1994 the Earth would have been forsaken by its last "guardians": at first six "entities" hidden in the Great Pyramid of Egypt, and later—but this could have been a metaphor used for a spiritual experience of three leaders of the Temple—three Ascended Masters who had received a revelation on the end of this cycle near Ayers Rock Mountain, Australia (a country in which the Temple had in the meantime established itself). A crucial claim by the

leaders was that they were receiving messages from ascended Masters, whose "White Lodge" was not in Tibet but in Zurich. Occasionally, "apparitions" by the Masters were also staged, apparently through the same high-tech tricks. In 1982 the Masters presided over the "virgin birth" of a future World Teacher or female messiah (a theme not uncommon in the French esoteric tradition), Emmanuelle, introduced as the daughter of Solar Temple member Dominique Bellaton (1958–1994) and Master Manatanus (her father was in fact Di Mambro).

Luc Jouret was able to keep up his speaking engagements in the New Age circuit as long as the existence of a secret order with peculiar ideas on the end of the world was well hidden behind the different Amenta, Atlanta, and Archédia groups and clubs. When some curious journalists and the unavoidable disgruntled ex-members started to talk about the Solar Temple, the doors shut. The Archédia Clubs dissolved in 1991, and various European New Age bookstores had by this time begun refusing to host Luc Jouret's conferences. There remained, however, a solid operation in Canada, where Jouret and Joseph Di Mambro spent a great deal of their time since 1986, and where they had founded a Club Archédia de Science et Tradition International. Under the Atlanta and Archédia Clubs labels, Luc Jouret could thus keep up his conferences—on topics such as *The Sphinx*, *Christ*, and *the New Man*—in Québec (and it seems even at the University of Québec at Montreal) in the years 1991 and 1992. Motivational classes were offered to companies under the aegis of an Académie pour la Recherche et la Connaissance des Haute Sciences (ARCHS, whose literature was printed by Éditions Atlanta. The "Chinese box" system continued in Canada, where also Solar Temple members from Switzerland, France and Martinique moved. According to the Marsden interviews compiled by Susan Palmer, ex-members claimed in 1994 that in

1991 eleven members of the Solar Temple were brought to Canada from Martinique in order to increase the French “female” energy in Québec and further balance the English “male” energy there. Headquarters were located in Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade, in a historical boarding school purchased on October 26th, 1984 from the Catholic Brothers of the Sacred Heart, for 235,000 Canadian dollars. In the 1990s the house was the property of the Association pour l’Étude et la Recherche en Science de Vie Québec, and of the Société Agricole 81. In fact, “Science of Life” (Science de Vie) was often the topic of Luc Jouret’s conferences, who blamed many ills of the world on today’s poor diet, suggesting as an alternative “naturally-grown” products. The house in Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade was also a center for the production of “natural” food products, partly marketed through an “ecological” bread shop, the Boulangerie Aliments Naturels. Another Solar Temple center was established in 1992 in Saint-Sauveur, in a luxurious house on Rue Lafleur, bought for 450,000 Canadian dollars. A P.O. Box address and a bank account were kept in Charlesbourg, another small town of Québec. In Morin Heights, a mountainous area, were the two villas which served as personal residences for Luc Jouret and Joseph Di Mambro, with apartments for two other Temple leaders, Camille Pilet and Ms. Dominique Bellaton. Focusing on Canada and communal living meant a decrease in the number of devotees. In 1992-1993 only the “hard core” of about one hundred members of the Solar Temple was left, as opposed to 1980s international membership of about 200-300 people.

On March 8th, 1993, a crucial episode in the history of the Solar Temple occurred in Canada. Two Temple members, Jean Pierre Vinet, 54, engineer and project-manager for Hydro-Québec and Herman Delorme, 45, insurance broker, were arrested as they were attempting to buy three semiautomatic guns with silencers, illegal weapons in Canada. Daniel

Tougas, a police officer of Cowansville and a Temple member, was temporarily suspended from office on charges of having helped the two. On March 9th, judge François Doyon of Montreal committed them to trial, freeing them on parole. Luc Jouret—who according to police reports asked the two to buy the weapons—was also committed to trial, and an arrest warrant was issued against him. (The Temple leader could not be found, as he was in Europe at the time). The event drew the attention of the Canadian press on what newspapers called “the cult of the end of the world.” The separated wife of one of the members, a Swiss called Rose-Marie Klaus, took advantage of the situation, calling for a press conference on March 10th, in which she denounced sex magic practices and economical exploitation of members. On the same day, March 10th, another press conference was held in Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade. Sitting besides Jean-Marie Horn, President of the Association pour l’Étude et la Recherche en Science de Vie Québec, and Didier Quèze, Solar Temple spokesman, was the town’s Mayor, Gilles Devault, who declared that the Temple “never caused any trouble” but, on the contrary, “contributed to the development of the community.” “A cult?” Not at all, said the Mayor, “Their children take part in the town’s amusements, they play hockey. Actually I believe that they are people that give a very positive contribution.”²⁰ Even the reporters most bent to sensationalism could not find any hostility between this Québec town and the Solar Temple, and recounted that “residents of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade met yesterday [March 10th, 1993] do not seem to have any grievances towards members of the Order.”²¹ Rose-Marie Klaus was

²⁰ See Yves Boisvert, “L’Ordre du Temple Solaire n’a pas l’air de beaucoup déranger Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade,” *La Presse* (Montreal), March 11, 1993.

²¹ Denis Bolduc, “Les membres de l’Ordre nient vouloir importer des armes,” *Le Journal de Québec* (March 11, 1993).

considered an unreliable fanatic, and even the local parish priest, Father Maurice Cossette, admitted that, true, they were not Catholics, but he let them “advertise their conferences on nutrition and health on the church bulletin,” as long as they didn’t “talk about Apocalypse.”²² Later on the Solar Temple’s lawyer, Jacques Rochelle, hinted at a “schism” that would have happened “more or less” in 1990, during which the Canadian members supposedly left Luc Jouret. Allegedly also Herman Delorme and Jean-Pierre Vinet “had left the Order several months before” their arrest.²³ It is unclear whether this information represented a simple attempt of sidetracking the investigations, or if tension within the Order of the Solar Temple actually existed. In any case, the official leader of the Canadian Branch in March 1993, Robert Falardeau, head of a Department at Québec Ministry of Finance, died in October 1994 with Luc Jouret and Joseph Di Mambro.

A few days after the arrests, the press started to lessen the intensity of its attacks on the Solar Temple, asking the police for clarifications. Police officials were then forced to reveal that the operations against the Solar Temple were not caused simply by a desire to emulate their American colleagues, at that time engaged in the siege of the Branch Davidians’ ranch in Waco. On November 23rd, 1992, a man identifying himself as “André” had phoned four Canadian members of the Parliament on behalf of a mysterious group, Q-37 (so called—according to “André”—because it had 37 members, all from Québec), announcing the impending murder of Québec’s Minister of the Interior, Claude Ryan, found “guilty” of adopting a

political line too favorable to the claims of Native Americans. Reports by some informers—perhaps members of the Canadian intelligence services—to the Québec police, stating that the group Q-37 was tied to the Solar Temple, prompted the investigations which culminated in the trap against two Temple members who tried to buy illegal weapons from a person who turned out to be a police agent. Police authorities had to admit, however, that in five months of investigations they were not able to find any proof of ties between the Q-37 group and the Solar Temple (except for the Solar Temple’s hostility towards Native Americans, which came from Julien Origas’ white supremacist ideas). In fact, they could not even find any proof that a Q-37 group actually existed. Since this was about all the information Québec police could offer (apart from a wire-tapping report relating how Luc Jouret advised a member of the group to practice shooting with a pistol—advice justified by his lawyers because of the need for self-defence in the isolated Swiss centers)—at the June 30th, 1993 court proceedings in Montréal, Herman Delorme and Jean-Pierre Vinet plead guilty only of having bought illegal weapons—justified again with reasons of self-defence—and were freed with the local formula of “suspended acquittal,” with a fine of 1,000 Canadian dollars each to be given to the Red Cross. Judge Jean-Pierre Bonin justified the decision stating that “(the accused) have until now been victims of biases and bigotry which have become tremendously widespread through this event’s coverage; they have been regarded as members of a cult, and cults were not very popular in the media at the time of these events, especially due to the incident in Waco.”²⁴ On July 15th—discreetly and without

²² Y. Boisvert, “L’Ordre du Temple Solaire.”

²³ Norman Provencher, “L’Ordre du Temple Solaire se dit victime de diffamation,” *Le Soleil* (March 12, 1993); Martin Pelchat, “Jouret avait été écarté de l’Ordre du temple solaire,” *La Presse* (Montréal), March 18, 1993.

²⁴ Richard Héту and Martin Pelchat, “Le Juge absout deux ex-membres de l’Ordre du temple solaire,” *La Presse* (Montréal), July 8, 1993.

previous knowledge by the media—Luc Jouret returned to Montréal to answer in court the same accusations and to obtain his own “suspended acquittal,” under the same conditions as Herman Delorme and Jean-Pierre Vinet. Meanwhile, in Québec, three institutions were concerned about connections their officers and employees had with a “cult”: the police (which had agent Daniel Tougas condemned—with parole—and expelled him from its ranks), Hydro-Québec (which nominated an investigation commission that verified how 22 employees had participated in the activities of the Solar Temple and 15 were actual members of it, advising Hydro-Québec to refrain in the future from hosting occult-religious “motivational” conferences), and the Ministry of Finances (which sent Chief of Department Robert Falardeau on leave for one week, then let him slip quietly back into office). The tempest seemed to end smoothly, even if on March 17, 1994, a letter signed “Order of the Solar Temple” was found in Montréal, in which the Order claimed responsibility for an attack against a Hydro-Québec tower in Saint-Basile-Le-Grand on February 24th. The police questioned the authenticity of the letter as it mentioned only the Saint-Basile-Le-Grand attack and not another one committed the same day against a Hydro-Quebec installation in the Native American reserve of Kahnawake but kept secret by the authorities (which, however, had to obviously be known to the attackers).²⁵ The Canadian incident later appeared to be extremely significant in the final crisis of the Solar Temple. The tragedy, however, was precipitated also by Di Mambro’s health problems (and consequent loss of charisma) and by the discovery by a number of members that the Masters’ and the sacred objects’ apparitions and messages had been fabricated.

²⁵ See Bernard Plante, “L’Ordre du temple solaire serait impliqué,” *Le Devoir* (March 18, 1994).

III. The Tragedy

It will take months, perhaps years, to find out exactly how the events developed during the first week of October 1994. The most essential information has been extensively covered in the world media. On September 30th, nine people, including Luc Jouret, had dinner at the Bonivard Hotel in Veytaux (in the Vaud Canton, Switzerland). On October 3rd, Joseph Di Mambro was seen having lunch with others at the Saint-Christophe Restaurant in Bex (same Canton). On October 4th, a fire destroyed Joseph Di Mambro’s villa in Morin Heights, Canada. Among the ruins, the police found five charred bodies, one of which was a child’s. At least three of these people seemed to have been stabbed to death before the fire. In Salvan (Valais Canton, Switzerland), Luc Jouret and Joseph Di Mambro asked a blacksmith to change the lock in their chalet, and bought several plastic bags. On October 5th, at 1:00 a.m., a fire started in one of the centers of the Solar Temple in Switzerland, the Ferme des Rochettes, near Cheiry, in the Canton of Fribourg—which was also a center for natural agriculture—owned by Albert Jacobino, who as mentioned earlier was as an associate of Joseph Di Mambro in several esoteric and neo-Templar activities. The police found 23 bodies, one of which was a child’s, in a room converted into a temple. Among the corpses was Albert Jacobino’s, the farm’s owner. Some of the victims were killed by gunshots, while many others were found with their heads inside plastic bags. The same day, at 3:00 a.m., three chalets, inhabited by members of the Solar Temple, caught fire almost simultaneously at Les Granges sur Salvan, in the Valais Canton. In the charred remains were found 25 bodies, along with remainders of devices programmed to start the fires (such devices were also found at Morin Heights and at Cheiry), and the pistol which shot the 52 bullets destined for the people found dead in Cheiry. On October 6th, Swiss

historian Jean-François Mayer, secretary of the International Committee of CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions)—the scholar who in 1987 had conducted a participant observation of the Clubs Archédia—received a package mailed from Geneva on October 5th (in the space for the sender it said simply “D.Part,” meaning “departure” in French). The package included four documents summing up the ideology of the Solar Temple and explaining what had happened that night, together with an article extracted from the American *Executive Intelligence Review* as republished in *Nexus* on the Randy Weaver incident. Other copies of the package or parts of it were sent also to some Swiss newspapers. On October 8th, in Aubignan, France, the police discovered in a building owned by a member of the Solar Temple a deactivated device which could have burned down the house, similar to the ones found in Switzerland and in Canada. On October 9th, the French Minister of the Interior, Charles Pasqua, received in Paris the passports of Joseph Di Mambro and his wife Jocelyne (both already identified among the victims of the Swiss fire). The sender’s name on the envelope is that of a “Tran Sit Corp.” in Zurich. The Canadian television announced the same day that, according to their investigations, Joseph Di Mambro used the Solar Temple as a cover for weapon smuggling and for money-laundering, and had huge bank funds in Australia. The figures allegedly involved in this traffic (millions of dollars), which supposedly corresponded with those of the Australian bank account, were however drastically reduced by the Swiss prosecutors. On October 13th, the Swiss police had identified without a doubt among the charred bodies that of Luc Jouret (whom many thought had escaped), and had recognized as Patrick Vuarnet (a young member of the Solar Temple, son of former olympic ski champion and president of a multinational fashion firm, Jean Vuarnet) the “mailman” who had sent the documents to Jean-

François Mayer and the passports to French Minister Charles Pasqua following instructions by Joseph Di Mambro.

IV. Elements for an Interpretation

Suicide and/or murder? We can find some answers—if we know how to search for them beyond the esoteric jargon and without barring the possibility that they could also include some information aimed at side-tracking—in the four documents sent to Jean-François Mayer (whom we thank for passing them on to the CESNUR network promptly). The explanation includes a suicide and two types of murder. According to the documents, some especially advanced members of the Order are able to understand that—as the cycle started by the Grand Lodge of Sirius or of Agartha in 1981 is completed—it is time to move on to a superior stage of life. It is “not a suicide in the human sense of the term,” but a deposition of their human bodies to immediately receive new invisible, glorious and “solar” ones. With these new bodies, they now operate in another dimension, unknown to the uninitiated, presiding over the dissolution of the world and waiting for an esoteric “*redintegratio*.” There is also another class of less advanced members of the Solar Temple who cannot understand that in order to take on the “solar body” one must “depose” the mortal one. The documents state that these members must be helped to perform their “transition” (in other words, must be “helped” to die) in the least violent way possible. Lastly, the documents state that within the Temple’s membership were also found backsliders and traitors, actively helping the arch-enemies of the Solar Temple: the government of Québec and Opus Dei. To them the documents promise “just retribution” (in other words, murder, without the cautions used with the less advanced members). According to a survivor, Thierry Huguenin—

whose last-minute escape was apparently responsible for reducing the casualties to 53—Jouret and Di Mambro had planned that exactly 54 victims should die in order to secure an immediate magical contact with the spirits of 54 Templars burned at the stake in the 14th century. This account is, however, disputed by other ex-members.

This scenario may seem consistent with the different ways in which the victims in Switzerland and in Canada died, and with the results of the investigations, which seem to indicate that the murders in Morin Heights and Cheiry were carried out under the supervision of two members of the Temple, Joel Egger and Ms. Dominique Bellaton (a manicurist turned socialite through her affairs with rich Geneva businessmen and with Di Mambro himself, well-known in Geneva and in the ski resort of Avoriaz), who later joined other leaders in the suicidal act in Les Granges sur Salvan. In Morin Heights two Swiss members—Colette Genoud and Gerry Genoud—probably committed suicide, while Antonio and Nicky Dutoit were savagely murdered with their 3-month old baby Emmanuel. According to the Québec police report of November 1994 the Dutoits were included on the traitors' list also because they had named their son Emmanuel. As we mentioned earlier, Di Mambro's daughter Emmanuelle—whom Nicky Dutoit had been babysitting and whose mother was Dominique Bellaton—was regarded as the “cosmic child,” an exalted being with a precious future as World Teacher. By calling their son Emmanuel the Dutoits had usurped the unique position of Emmanuelle Di Mambro, the “cosmic child,” and had in fact transformed their baby son into the Antichrist. Hence—according to the Québec police—the particularly elaborate ritual used for killing baby Emmanuel Dutoit and his parents. Overall, it seems that a core group of eight to twelve people clearly committed suicide; the others were killed in different ways.

There is, however, more a continuum than a clear-cut division between suicide and homicide, with a gray area including poisoning and “mercy killing.”

On the other hand, there seems to be a contradiction between the first three documents and the fourth one. From the first three documents it seems that the tragedy was prearranged, as part of the Grand Lodge of Sirius' “Plan,” and as a preparation for the end of the world, which is at any rate impending for all humanity. The fourth document—on a more “political” note—presents the suicide as an act of protest against the persecution by the Government of Québec, which the document accuses of “mass murder,” finding a parallel with the activities of the U.S. authorities in Waco and with other episodes of violent repression of new religious movements by police or government authorities. Perhaps the contradiction is only apparent, if we interpret the Canadian incidents of 1993 as the instigating force leading to the final stage of an apocalyptic itinerary which actually began long time ago. The Québec police report of November 1994 claims that, although no evidence of weapon traffic by the Solar Temple exists to date, the police action taken in 1993 in fact prevented a mass suicide-cum-homicide from taking place in Saint-Sauveur, Canada, at least one year before the October 1994 tragedy, and may thus have saved some lives.

After the tragedy of October 1994, a faulty interpretation spread widely among the international press, and most probably among the general public. The Solar Temple incident was compared to earlier events—from Jonestown to Waco—and was simply blamed, once more, on the “danger of the cults.” Sociologically speaking, however, one can immediately notice a difference. The victims of Jonestown and Waco (two events which are already very different from one another), all belonged to low economical strata—unemployed young people, unskilled workers, low-salary employees facing diffi-

culties—as is the case of the members of many Christian-apocalyptic (or, in the case of Jonestown, political-apocalyptic) new religious movements. If we run through the list of the identified victims of the Swiss fires, we immediately notice a different picture. It is perhaps enough to read the first names (some of which we already mentioned) of the victims: Robert Falardeau, Chief of a (minor) Department of the Ministry of Finances of Québec; Joce-Lyne Grand'Maison, a reporter for the daily *Journal de Québec*, who worked for eight years as contributing editor for the financial page; Camille Pilet, recently retired as international sales manager of the Swiss multinational watch corporation Piaget (who was in the process of launching his own brand of designer watches); Robert Ostiguy, mayor of Richelieu, Québec; Albert Giacobino, businessman in Geneva. For a sociologist, this is not a typical list of members of a “cult” or a new religious movement. The media comparisons with the Jehovah’s Witnesses or The Family could be humorous if we were not talking about a tragedy. The high-ranking government officer, the financial reporter, the multinational manager, the mayor, are all types of people one expects to find enlisted not in a new religious movement, but rather in a club or fraternity. The anti-cult movements have tried to exploit the Solar Temple tragedy to attack the “cults” in general and to launch campaigns against The Family, Scientology and even Jehovah’s Witnesses or Hare Krishnas, who are, on the contrary, *religious* movements and must be carefully distinguished—from a sociological and doctrinal viewpoint—from the occult-esoteric groups such as the Solar Temple. As Jean-François Mayer has noted, the structure of the Solar Temple may recall for some features some new religious movements. On the other hand, as I have argued elsewhere, “new magical movements” share some *external* features with new religious movements but should not be confused with the latter since the experience they

offer is inherently different.²⁶ Even the expectation of the end of this world by Christian-based groups, such as The Family or the Jehovah’s Witnesses (as well as by millions of pre-millennialists in the evangelical protestant world) does *not* resemble the expectation of destruction and of magical reconstruction of the members’ and of the world’s destiny, as found in the magical-esoteric views of the Solar Temple and similar groups.

An acceptable interpretation of the Solar Temple tragedy must be reached on two levels, which do not exclude each other. The first level must necessarily consider the odd intrigues between secret services, more or less “deviant” clandestine Lodges and Templar organizations in recent neo-Templar history. Both elderly Joseph Di Mambro, and younger Luc Jouret, took part in orders such as Julien Origas’ Renewed Order of the Temple and the Sovereign and Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (in several of their controversial branches, not to be confused with others with similar or even with the same names) long enough to enter in the orbit of influence of groups whose ties with the French SAC, with the Italian P2 Lodge and with several countries’ secret services seem probable in view of court and parliamentary findings. The fact that Joseph Di Mambro and his wife’s passports were sent to French Minister Charles Pasqua—whom, according to the French media, was once tied to SAC—is, in this context, a strange coincidence (or perhaps a warn-

²⁶ Letter from Jean-François Mayer to Massimo Introvigne, December 14-15, 1994. For the differences between new magical movements (NMMs) and new religious movements (NRMs) see my *Il cappello del mago*. This difference—and the category of NMMs—has been acknowledged in the most recent position paper on NRMs by the Roman Catholic Church, the general report of Francis Cardinal Arinze at the Extraordinary Consistory of 1991, and is presupposed in the book by Raphaël Aubert and Carl A. Keller, *Vie et mort de l'Ordre du Temple Solaire* (Vevey: Éditions de l'Aire, 1994).

ing). Even more puzzling is the way some information of yet unclear origins provoked the police of Québec to attack the Solar Temple in 1993, thus exacerbating its apocalyptic fears.

The second level, referring to grounds more familiar to the sociologists than the world—certainly more obscure to them—of secret services and political intrigues, takes into consideration the specific nature of the apocalyptic current within the magical-esoteric universe. The vision of a “*renovatio*”, or a total renewal of the world—which frequently adopts as its symbols fire and death—is typical of an occult tradition which, though a minority trend in the world of magical-esoteric groups, seems to be growing in importance at the end of this second millennium. This occult tradition—which, unlike the new religious movements, appeals mostly to middle-aged people from a good social background who generally elude Christian beliefs and religion in their traditional meanings—usually maintains with the symbols of fire and death and, more generally speaking, with the idea of the destruction of the present world, a *metaphorical* relation. The episode of the Solar Temple, however, proves that it is not impossible for small, fringe sections of the apocalyptic current within the magical-esoteric milieu to live the ideology of destruction to tragical and extreme consequences.

* * * * *

Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua (Part VI of the OTO)

P. R. König

Arnoldo Krumm-Heller

Heinrich Arnold Krumm was born in Germany on 15 April 1879. His father, Ferdinand Krumm, was foreman of a mine while his mother, Ernestine Heller, was daughter of a parson. By the age of 15 he had traveled extensively and was working on the railways in Chile.¹ He acquired certain medical skills from his contact with the American Indians and set up a clinic first in Constitution and then in Santiago. He followed the Spaniard Asuero's extreme methods of treatment which included for example, singeing the inside of a patient's nose with red-hot needles², prescribing huge quantities of unrefined sugar for those suffering from gastric ulcers and placing the dying in bathtubs equipped with overhead irrigation.³ The practice was lucrative enough to fund expeditions to the Amazon. To this day his Inca finds allegedly adorn many a German museum.⁴ In 1897 he married, for the first time, the 21-year-old Rita Aguire Valery.⁵ He

¹ Herbert Fritsche, *Merlin* #3 (Hamburg 1949), 39.

² A. Krumm-Heller, *Osmologische Heilkunde: Magie der Duftstoffe* (Berlin 1955), 110.

³ Henri Birven calls this "quackery" in his article, "Aus dem Leben Aleister Crowley's," in Metzger's *Oriflamme* (Zürich) 119 (1972): 119.

⁴ *Merlin*, 39.

⁵ "Programa de Actividad 1986" (Maracaibo 1986).

moved to Mexico and became involved with politics. He was appointed Professor of German Language and Literature and advanced to the post of Head Medical Officer in President Francisco J. Maderos' (1873–1913) general staff. Subsequently President Venustiano Carranza (1859–1920) appointed him managing Director of the local Special Schools.⁶ Photographs of Krumm-Heller (it is Spanish custom to add the mother's maiden name after the father's) still adorn book shops and public libraries in Bogota, Columbia.

Frater Huiracocha⁷

On 31 March 1897 Krumm-Heller was made a member of the Theosophical Society in Paris, personally initiated by H.S. Olcott.

In September 1902 Krumm-Heller became Honorary Member of the "Initiates of Tibet" in Washington, D.C.

In 1906 he met Gérard Encausse/Papus in Paris

⁶ Besides Fritsche's memoirs and already above-mentioned biographies, also see Ana Delia Gonzales: "Dr. Arnoldo Krumm-Heller-Huiracocha" (Maracaibo 1956).

⁷ Huiracocha Pachamac is a white-skinned creative deity worshipped by the Incas of Peru promising to return one day. The term "Viracocha" appears in Reuss' V-rituals.

⁸ Krumm-Heller, *Heilkunde*, 101.

where both undertook scent experiments.⁸ On 24 December 1907, he became 1st class member of “Tibet (Inde), Suprême Conseil d’Initiation, Ordre Humanitaire et Scientifique Pour le Développement des Études Esoterique de l’Orient” in Paris. He also became a Martinist member of the Lodge “Hermanubis” (Diploma #192).

Soon after, on 15 March 1908, Krumm-Heller received the 90° and 95° Memphis-Misraïm for Mexico from Theodor Reuss and Heinrich Klein (equal to the X° of the OTO?). And on 11 April 1908 Charles Détré extended these authorities to Chile, Peru and Bolivia.⁹ At this time, he also had contacts with François-Charles Barlet (1838–1921), and with the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light.

Around this time period he built temples in South America under the authority of the Martinist bishops Encausse, Girgois (Buenos Aires), the American Davidson and the French Clements.¹⁰ He was on friendly terms with Franz Hartmann and the Mexican freemason Don Jesus Medina.¹¹

In 1910 Krumm-Heller contributed to the “Scientific Commemorative publication on the occasion of the unveiling of the Humboldt-statue in Mexico.” He traveled to Lourdes, was received by the Pope and in 1918 published his experiences in the Mexican civil wars of 1912–16.¹² From 1914–18 he was Mexican legate and military attaché in Berlin where he represented Mexico at the Weimar

⁹ Krumm-Heller, *Golden Book*, 13–18.

¹⁰ R.S. Clymer, *Book of Rosicruciae*, Volume III (Quakertown 1949), 266. Also Krumm-Heller, “Conferencias Esotéricas” (Mexico) 27 March 1909: 1.

¹¹ Fritsche, *Merlin*, 39.

¹² Oberst Dr. Krumm-Heller, *Für Freiheit und Recht* (Berlin 1918).

National Union in 1919.

Krumm-Heller time and again turned up in Germany, France and Spain making use of his proficiency in foreign languages. After the assassination of Mexico’s President Carranza in 1920, he returned to Germany, where, in 1920, he bought a printing business and commenced a career in journalism, at the same time writing trashy novels and muddle-headed books on ascetic (i.e. sex without ejaculation) sex magic. In December 1921 he published the first issue of his magazine *Der Rosenkreuzer*, which he co-wrote with Theodor Reuss, both describing themselves as “Rosicrucians” and heirs to Carl Kellner and Franz Hartmann.¹³

After Reuss’ death in 1923 Krumm-Heller considered himself successor to all of Reuss’ compilation of orders, including those of the Gnostic Catholic Church. On the basis of charters they had received, both Heinrich Tränker (charter of 1921) and Aleister Crowley (charter 1912) also claimed to be Reuss’ successor.

In 1927 Krumm-Heller started to establish his *Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua* (FRA), comprising seven grades,¹⁴ in South America. The German Henri Birven jealously described Krumm-Heller as being “too mean to offer a bent farthing for the Great Work,” although Krumm-Heller would most certainly have paid Reuss handsomely for his charter. (Birven was ridiculing Krumm-Heller by making a pun on his family name, the two parts of which can be translated as follows: Krumm = bent or crooked, Heller = farthing or small coin. He was playing on the German idiomatic expression “Kein krummer Heller” which means ‘not a brass farthing’ or ‘not a tuppence.’)

¹³ Munich 1921, p. 32; facsimile in Clymer, op. cit., II, 601.

¹⁴ Three freemasonic and four spiritual degrees, maybe to be terminated with the VIII°-X° of the OTO, to make it ten degrees.

Huiracocha Meets Baphomet

Martha Küntzel represented the “Thelema Verlagsgesellschaft Leipzig.” She, a former personal friend of H.P. Blavatsky, had committed herself completely to Aleister Crowley in 1925 and soon after to Adolf Hitler, whom she believed to be her magical son. Krumm-Heller received from her Crowley’s address and on 17 February 1928 wrote to him in his most broken English. Soon they would meet, but he first contacted Karl Germer, who opined that the more he saw of Krumm-Heller “the less valuable he appears to me.”¹⁵ Germer (who feuded with the ex-Theosophist Heinrich Tränker over financial disputes with the breakup of Pansophia, the Fraternitas Saturni, and Crowley’s disastrous visit to Tränker’s and Germer’s homes in 1925)¹⁶, got angry because of Krumm-Heller’s speaking highly of Tränker. “I do not think he can distinguish between hay and straw,” Germer reported to Crowley. Germer wanted to prevent Krumm-Heller’s meeting with C.W. Leadbeater in London. When Krumm-Heller offered to lecture on Crowley in the public¹⁷, they all met in Henri Birven’s home in Berlin: Karl Germer, Gerald Yorke (the world’s most active Crowley collector and member of Crowley’s own order AA), and Krumm-Heller (why Martha Küntzel was absent remains unclear.) Henri Birven reported that Krumm-Heller’s exaggerations succeeded: Crowley called Krumm-Heller a man who

¹⁵ Karl Germer to Aleister Crowley, letter dated 17 February 1928.

¹⁶ Crowley wanted to get elected a “world saviour,” but this was in vain.

¹⁷ Phyllis Seckler, In the Continuum (Oroville) III/4 (1983): 36. The subject of his lecture was Crowley’s biography.

must have done more for the Great Work than Crowley himself.¹⁸ Both went to the Casino.¹⁹ Birven also mentioned Krumm-Heller’s degrees, a 96° for Germany while Reuss was a 97°, and Crowley a 96° for England.²⁰ In 1930 Karl Germer and Krumm-Heller visited the widow of Theodor Reuss in order to buy all her order’s material; in vain, however: it was too expensive.

After the meeting with Crowley, Krumm-Heller maintained that he held the highest grades of the OTO, AA and the Gnostic Church.²¹ It is hardly to be assumed that Krumm-Heller’s Church had anything in common with the Liberal Catholic Church since, after the meeting with Leadbeater in 1930 in London, he set his face against Theosophy!²²

It is most possible that Krumm-Heller “inherited” H.C. Peithmann’s Gnostic Church (see *TH V/5*: 172).

Que Las Rosas Florezcan

Krumm-Heller participated in organizing the Red Cross in Spain but left the country for South America after General Franco’s ascent to power. He continued to travel (Palestine, Egypt, Turkey and Rhodesia) but was forced to spend the Second

¹⁸ Henri Birven, *Oriflamme* (Zürich) 120 (1972): 1362.

¹⁹ Marcelo Ramos Motta: *Oriflamme* (Nashville) VI/3 (1983): 434.

²⁰ Heinrich Wendt, a reporter to Gerald Yorke, has seen the pertinent charter. Fritsche, *Merlin* 3: 39.

²¹ Krumm-Heller, *Logos* (Berlin) 1930: 45.

²² Krumm-Heller, “Recuerdos de mi peregrinacion”; in *Rosa-Cruz* (Berlin) IV/3 (1930): 232.

World War in Germany, where he happened to be at the outbreak of war.

Whilst staying in a German clinic in Marburg due to a heart condition, Huiracocha tried to maintain contact with his many lodges and collaborators (e.g. he corresponded with the 2nd Agape OTO-Lodge in California²³). On May 19, 1949 Krumm-Heller died in total isolation from his groups in Marburg, leaving his widow Carlota (María Luisa Elisabeth Frieda Julie von Diringshofen)²⁴ and four children, Guadalupe, Cuauthemoc, Sieglinde and Parsival.²⁵ He also left confusion not only regarding the question of a successor but also to the question of WHAT organization he was to assume leadership? His OTO, since he was a X° for South America? His FRA of which he only described himself “Soberano Comendador para España-America-Latina, Antillas y Filipinas.” Or the Gnostic Catholic Church?

Parsival allegedly corresponded sporadically with Eugen Grosche (founder of the *Fraternitas Saturni*). He took on Marcelo Ramos Motta as his private pupil in Germany in 1953 and later passed him on to Karl Germer in the United States. Parsival has remained in Australia since 1955 with his wife and son, wrapped in silence. His approach and the alterations he made in Germany (while trying to lead the FRA-groups) to his father’s lectures threw the different branches of the FRA into considerable confusion.

Brazil

Krumm-Heller signed 3 charters on 15 April 1933 and a fourth one on 27 July 1934. The most active

²³ Minutes of the OTO-lodge meeting of 5 March 1948.

²⁴ *Golden Book*, 17.

²⁵ “Programa de Actividad 1986,” (Maracaibo, 1986).

members were Joaquim Soarez de Oliveira (1899-1946) and J. Elias Bucheli of Swinburne Clymer’s “World Circle of Arcane Orders.”²⁶ The Brazilian FRA now became FRC, *Fraternidas Rosa Cruz*, with the distinction of not accepting Thelema as a main base.²⁷ In March 1942, before the merger of Krumm-Heller’s organization with Clymer’s, Clymer’s organization in Rio de Janeiro was led by Oliveira, Duval Ernani de Paula and Manuel Victoriano Soares.

Krumm-Heller appointed as his successor in Rio (by letter) the chemist Albert Wolf, who was then living in Germany. Although Parsival Krumm-Heller also agreed with his father’s decision,²⁸ Wolf did not meet with Clymer’s approval. In any case, he died in Brazil in 1950 and was replaced by Ernani de Paula. De Paula, still alive, possesses one of the three rock crystal grails to have escaped destruction. These grails had originally been manufactured for Krumm-Heller for use in his initiation temples.²⁹ On the grail both in Spanish and German is written: “This is my Blood.”³⁰

Clymer died in 1966 and was replaced by his son Emerson. Today, the FRC worldwide is led by Gerald E. Poesnecker in Pennsylvania, who possesses the second grail. Supposedly, the third one was destroyed. Until 1994 de Paula distanced himself from the FRC³¹, but by this time he became head of both the FRA and FRC in Brazil.³²

²⁶ Clymer III, xxiv.

²⁷ Thelema also is rather unfamiliar to most of the FRA-groups.

²⁸ *Estudios Esotericos Rosacruces* (Medellin) 6 (1986): 7.

²⁹ *Estudios Esotericos Rosacruces* #6: 1.

³⁰ Umberto Fuentes Villalobos, letter dated 1 July 1992.

³¹ Letter dated 12 June 1991.

³² Interview with the writer in Brazil in May 1994.

Chile

Krumm-Heller visited Chile via Argentina where Bucheli initiated Sergio Valdivia, who had his Aula (= Lodge) “Rasmussen” in Bacata. Krumm-Heller traveled with his four-year-old son, Parsival, but soon left the country because the local authorities called him a Bolshevik spy. Clymer also appeared in March 1941.³³

Rosario Carey and Oscar Bravo exchanged material with the Spanish FRA branch and head of the FRA in the 1980s, Manuel Cabrera Lamparter, who then published in 1987 many of the FRA-teachings.³⁴

Peru

The FRA in Lima was established on 27 May 1935 and led by Juan Gonzales, Sigmund Sipilesko and Joaquim Duranzo.³⁵ On 29 September 1972, the headship was taken over by Manuel Garay Requena³⁶ who was succeeded in 1986 by Paul Chavez. This FRA-wing stays on friendly terms with the Venezuelan branch (see below).

On 6 August 1974, Ruben Pilares Villa (born 1948) was initiated into this FRA but soon was expelled. Pilares established contact with Grady McMurtry (“Caliph,” head of the new 3rd Agape Lodge) in 1977 and from then on described

himself as “OTO Huiracocha F.R. Americana” or “OTO Sudamerica.” Both the “Caliphate” and Pilares’ organization accept each other (in view of lacking historical continuity) as “regular,” Pilares even gets addressed as “Gran Maestro de OTO Sud America.”³⁷ His organization, however, is void of any “regular” succession and consists of only one member—himself.

Colombia

Israel Rojas Romero was made President of the FRA in Bogota on 27 April 1928.³⁸ While in Colombia, Krumm-Heller lectured on the Occult in German Opera (e.g. Richard Wagner’s “Parsival”³⁹). During W.W.II contact between Krumm-Heller and most of his groups became impossible. In Columbia, “el superhombre”⁴⁰ Krumm-Heller was believed to be dead. Rojas got his FRA legally registered in 1945, which remained so until he died in 1985. His death caused endless fights in Columbia which to describe in this article would go too far.⁴¹ One of the alleged leaders is Jorge Cruz Toquica, a rather wealthy individual who is opposed by Gabriel Sanchez Gaviria, a protégé of the Venezuelan branch, and the third party in the game is Gabriel Ramirez Cifuentes, once representative of Ernani de Paula and now busy exchanging charters by postal intercourse

³³ Clymer III, 208.

³⁴ *Las Esenanzas de la Antigua Fraternidad Rosa-Cruz* (Malaga 1987).

³⁵ *Reglamento* (without further dates).

³⁶ Photograph in *Gnosis* (Peru) #4 (1991): 30.

³⁷ H.P. Smith to R. Pilares V., letter dated 19 September 1980.

³⁸ *Rosa-Cruz de Oro* (Bogota) 139 (1985): 3.

³⁹ Israel Rojas B., *Por los Senderos del Mundo* (n.d.).

⁴⁰ *Fraternidad Rosa-Cruz Antigua* 29 (1949): 18.

⁴¹ The interested reader is referred to my *Ein Leben für die Rose* (München 1994).

with Italian FRA-branches (which come from Spain).

A certain Samael Aun Weor (Victor Manuel Gomez Rodriguez) also promulgated a “Gnostic Movement” (also known as “Gnostic Christian Universal Movement”), which is said to have been based on Weor’s contacts with the Colombian FRA-branch. His claims have been vigorously opposed by every other FRA-group. For example, the English branch (“Gnostic Institute of Anthropology”) wrote “that Samael was the Patriarch of the Gnostic Church and A. Krumm-Heller was the Archbishop.”⁴²

Mexico

It is said that Gabriel Montenegro y Vargas (Zöpiron, Theòpilos, 1907-1969), who already received teachings from priests of the Toltec Indians, led the Mexican FRA. It was only in 1948 that he was initiated into Crowley’s OTO (2nd Agape Lodge).⁴³ Montenegro visited Metzger’s OTO in Stein, Switzerland in 1967, which “indeed [was] a little bit of heaven.”⁴⁴ While there, he was appointed by Metzger as OTO-Sovereign of North and South America.

Cuba

In Cuba, Johannes Rider not only cured his cancer with medicinal herbs but also established the FRA,

⁴² C. Amagro, letter dated 5 May 1992.

⁴³ Minutes dated 5 March 1948.

⁴⁴ Letter from Montenegro to Günther Naber, dated 2 May 1967.

EGC and the OTO in accordance with Krumm-Heller’s tradition, signing his name as 33°, 90°, 97°, X° and OHO. In 1960, Rider accepted Roberto C. Toca (born 11 January 1943 in Cuba) and made him a bishop of the EGC and OHO of his OTO in 1976.⁴⁵ Photographs of his consecration to the bishopric show an altar⁴⁶ similar to the OTO’s altar. This OTO now has 12 “grados iniciaticos.”

Toca left Communist Cuba and, *via* Spain, now lives in Florida. Here he regularly gives lectures on Pay TV (Channels 12 and 33) or speaks about Thelema and the like in Spanish-speaking newspapers.⁴⁷ All his orders now are compiled in a “Conclave Universal Iniciatico (CUI).”⁴⁸

Spain

In 1933 Dionisio Rios Ballester (Aureolus) was given a charter by Krumm-Heller. In 1939, the latter traveled to Badalona/Barcelona and Valencia, leaving all his material to Rios. After this, Krumm-Heller returned to Germany, remaining there the rest of his life.⁴⁹

After the death of his father, Parsival Krumm-Heller (then about 30 years old) declared Rios as Spanish successor although he asked that his father’s materials be returned. In 1979 Manuel Cabrera Lamparter received a Charter by Rios and took over the FRA after the latter’s death that same

⁴⁵ Richard P. Daly: “Iglesia Catolica Del Rito Antiqueno,” Florida without date.

⁴⁶ Six reproductions appear in *Ein Leben für die Rose*.

⁴⁷ E.G. “El Sol de la Florida”, 2 October 1982, 5.

⁴⁸ Toca, letter dated 3 April 1992.

⁴⁹ Letter of Manuel C. Lamparter, dated 21 March 1990.

year. In 1986, Lamparter was acknowledged by Roberto Toca. Lamparter published FRA documents and issued charters for both FRA and OTO to Italy, for example to a former member of the Red Brigade. Lamparter became OHO of Michael P. Bertiaux's OTOA in 1982 as well.

Austria

Eduard Munninger (Medardus, 1901–1965) rented the Austrian castle “Krämpelstein” in 1937, where he not only established a little hostel but also held the meetings of his “Fraternitas Crucis Austriae.” On 8 May 1951 he told Clymer that he had been appointed by Krumm-Heller as his Austrian successor.

Munninger, also a Theosophist, got tied in with the German branch of AMORC and soon called his group “Antiquus Arcanus Ordo Rosae Rubeae Aureae Crucis” (AAORRAC). This term was already used by Krumm-Heller, Theodor Reuss, and by Spencer Lewis (the founder of AMORC), but always with different meanings.

Since Munninger never had more than a handful of disciples, AAORRAC ceased to exist after his death in 1965.

At present, there is a newly invented AAORRAC busily putting ads in the German esoteric magazines as well as trying to attract sheep by mentioning the “Castle Krämpelstein.” This castle, however has no connection with the group in question, nor is it inhabited by its owner: the count of Vichtenstein.

Germany

In 1942, Herbert Fritsche (b. 14 June 1911 in Berlin) was a medical assistant in the same hospital where Krumm-Heller stayed as a patient. He

was consecrated bishop in 1947 on a bank in a park. His consecration, which most probably went along with the FRA-succession, was already mentioned in a previous article on the Gnostic Church.⁵⁰

Venezuela

In 1952, Ana Delia Gonzales “received with surprise” a diploma from Parsival Krumm-Heller, which “authorised me to represent the Order in all interests”⁵¹; in other words, ultimate control. She quickly managed to antagonize Ballester (when she wanted his materials), whereupon Parsival withdrew from the affair.

Metzger published in 1960 an advertisement in Bucheli's “Anuario Americano Bucheli” and called forth all his disciples of Krumm-Heller to put themselves under his authority. Metzger, annoyed at Clymer's success in Rio, tried to seek support to bring all the branches of the FRA under his jurisdiction.

Ana Delia now visited Stein two times and received the title of Counselor for Central and the South American countries. In December 1963 she sent a circular letter to all the Krumm-Heller groups but “nevertheless, my title was not well seen by the elder directors of the Colombian, Brazilian and Mexican Halls. . .but the halls of Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala and Santo Domingo”⁵² continued their membership under Ana Delia, that is, Metzger! The reason why Ana

⁵⁰ See “Stranded Bishops” in V/5: 169-75. Fritsche's very interesting biography (he was very important in the development of homeopathy) is discussed in further detail in *Ein Leben für die Rose*.

⁵¹ Letter dated 4 March 1989. Diploma enclosed.

⁵² See above.

Delia was not accepted was that a woman was not supposed to hold a gnostic office.

The endeavor of uniting all FRA-branches failed, as most FRA groups regard themselves as only spiritually bound to Krumm-Heller and refuse to accept global leadership. As seen above, even Krumm-Heller described himself as head of Spain, Latin America, the Antilles and the Philippines.

Metzger died on July 14, 1990, and it remains to be seen what course of action his successor, Mrs. Aeschbach, will take with his compilation of orders (OTO, IO, FRA and EGC).

In June 1991 Ana Delia Gonzales again visited Stein⁵³ but, as rumor goes, she left disappointed.⁵⁴

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⁵³ Ana Delia G., letter dated 27 February 1992.

⁵⁴ This article is an outline of my *Ein Leber für die Rose*. The book not only contains A. Krumm-Heller's interview with Charles Leadbeater, but also a study of Theodor Reuss' and Aleister Crowley's Gnosticism.

Book Notes

La Vie Astrologique il y a Cent Ans, d'Alan Leo à F. Ch. Barlet (Astrological Life a Hundred Years Ago, from Alan Leo to F. Ch. Barlet).

By Patrick Curry, Nicholas Campion and Jacques Halbronn. Paris: La Grande Conjonction (8, rue de la Providence, 75013 Paris), 1992. Pp. 202. Price unavailable.

This study is comprised of three parts of unequal length. The book opens with a prologue by Patrick Curry entitled “The Revolution of Alan Leo,” offering a summary of the title character’s influence on astrology. Leo, a Theosophist, “radically modified the course of modern astrology, and in so doing laid the foundations of what it has now become.” Curry notes that Leo was both esotericist and popularizer. His greatest influence was through the creation of a new, nondeterministic paradigm which made astrology more psychological in focus and less oriented to predicting events.

Nicholas Campion is the author of the second section, “Alan Leo, father of English Astrology.” Campion, former president of the Astrological Lodge of London, recognizes three major aspects of Leo’s influence: organizational, literary, and conceptual. On the organizational front, Leo (1860-1917) was active in founding the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society (which in 1982 became the Astrological Lodge of London), the Astrological Society, the Society for Astrological Research, and the Astrological Institute. In 1890, he founded the *Astrologer’s Magazine*, which later became *Modern Astrology* and survived until 1940.

He was the most influential astrological writer of his time. Campion points out that Leo, who had met HPB shortly before her death, became a “court astrologer” to TS luminaries and was particularly active in the circle surrounding Krishnamurti. His slogan, “character is destiny,” summarizes his psychological approach, according to which “all events which took place in the course of a person’s life were the result of an inner orientation rather than a destiny acting externally or a planetary influence.”

Jacques Halbronn’s “Astrological France at the time of Alan Leo” occupies four-fifths of the book. It surveys the astrological scene in France prior to Leo’s emergence, then traces his considerable impact on its evolution during the first third of this century. Halbronn analyzes the transmission of Leo’s influence through French publications and associates in great detail. Theosophy is frequently mentioned, and the early French Theosophists Flammarion and Barlet appear as players in astrological history. The book is well illustrated with reproductions of title pages from astrological books and magazines of the period.

Studies of astrology’s intellectual history are all too rare, and Halbronn and his co-authors have done a great service by documenting a period in which Theosophical influence was predominant. Their book is a solid contribution to a heretofore little-known aspect of Theosophical history.

Paul Johnson

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IL RITORNO DELLE FATE. By Arthur Conan Doyle. Introduction et appendice de Masimo Introvigne et M.W. Homer. Traduction de Maria Teresa Beccaria. Varese (Italie): SugarCo Edizioni, 1992. Pp. 221. ISBN 88-7198-169-3. L 22,000.

L'objet de ce livre est de reprendre en le réactualisant un intéressant débat de société des années 1920 autour des phénomènes irrationnels. A l'origine des photographies prises par une jeune fille Elsie (16 ans) et une fillette Frances (10 ans) qui avaient coutume de voir et de parler avec des fées en jouant dans un bois près du petit village anglais de Cottingley près de Bradford. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, le père du très rationaliste Sherlock Holmes, rassembla et publia le dossier en 1928 dans *The Coming of the Fairies*: il se composait des articles les plus représentatifs parus dans la presse britannique de l'époque, notamment le Strand Magazine, et des correspondances échangées avec les parents des enfants, la famille et ses amis, et Edward L. Gardner, membre de Comité exécutif de la Société Théosophique. Doyle, qui avait fréquenté Alfred Percy Sinnett entre 1882 et 1884, participait au mouvement spirite depuis 1887 et jusqu'en 1916 il collaborait à la revue spirite *Light* et fit paraître une seconde édition à Londres (Psychic Press). A sa mort en 1930, il demeurait convaincu de l'authenticité des photographies et, donc, de la réalité de l'apparition des fées. Gardner, de son côté, publia *Fairies, The Cottingley Photographs and Their Sequel* (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1945).

M. Introvigne et M.W. Homer ont complété le dossier dans le sens du travail de Conan Doyle avec les témoignages de Florizel von Reuter, Elsa Arnhem, Gertrude N** et, surtout, replacé la question dans l'environnement intellectuel et religieux de l'époque en définissant les enjeux. Comme pour l'électricité ou le magnétisme à la fin du

XVIII^e siècle, il s'agissait de faire appel à de nouvelles sciences ou techniques pour apporter des réponses à d'anciennes questions. Les sciences occultes, en prétendant apporter la lumière sur la structure des mondes intermédiaires dès les années 1830, avaient ouvert un débat qui courut pendant tout le XIX^e siècle en Europe et en Amérique et dont les fées de Cottingley sont un nouvel épisode. L'enjeu était la légitimité scientifique et cette recherche n'est pas neutre. Les photographies n'avaient suscité que l'indifférence-avant que la Société Théosophique ne soit entrée dans le débat; Gardner put donner des interprétations comme expert en cette matière. Evoluant dans un domaine de "vibrations" proches des nôtres, les fées pouvaient être aperçues par les enfants avant l'âge de la puberté et impressionner une plaque photographique. Leur forme humaine s'apparentait à un "corps subtil" figure de l'âme des végétaux.

Les auteurs soulignent que la même année 1917 la Vierge était apparue à des enfants à Fatima, au Portugal, et que la grande presse avait parlé de superstitions médiévales. Le coeur du débat est là, entre la nature de la preuve et celle de ce qui est à prouver.

Jean-Pierre Laurant¹

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¹ Jean-Pierre Laurant was born in Paris in 1935. He studied history at the Université des Lettres, Sorbonne, then read "Esoteric Currents in the XIXth Century" in École Pratique des Hautes Études, Sorbonne. Among his publications are the annual *Politica Hermetica, L'Ésotérisme chrétien au XIXe siècle* (1992).

L'ÉSOTÉRISME CHRÉTIEN AU XIX^e SIÈCLE. By Jean-Pierre Laurant. Paris: L'Age d'Homme, 1992 (Series *Politica Hermetica*). Pp. 244. ISBN 28251-0330-6. Fr.150.

Jean-Pierre Laurant is a Lecturer in Religious Sciences at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (the Sorbonne) and has published widely on the esotericism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His first book, *Le sens caché dans l'oeuvre de René Guénon* (Paris: L'Age d'Homme, 1975), remains the best single source for information on Guénon's life and summaries of his works. This book, based on his doctoral dissertation, is a survey of French occultism and esotericism from the time of Napoleon to World War One.

L'Ésotérisme chrétien is written from the point of view of a historian, expert in the political and cultural background of his period. Laurant also edits the journal *Politica Hermetica*, now in its seventh year, and his book draws on the circle of historians and thinkers who have made that journal unique in the world as a forum for studies of the meetings between esotericism and politics. As in the case of *Politica Hermetica*, the book is entirely without sectarian prejudice. Although focused on France, it touches briefly on developments in Britain and somewhat more on those in the German-speaking lands. Few recent works are as packed with information on obscure figures and their writings, as well as on the more predictable ones familiar to readers of Viatte's *Les sources occultes du romantisme* (2 vols., Paris: Champion, 1979) and Brian Juden's *Traditions orphiques et tendances mystiques dans le romantisme français* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971). Viatte's book covered the period 1770-1820; Juden's, 1800-1855. Laurant's is complementary to theirs, highlighting the Christian theme and continuing the story up to 1914.

L'Ésotérisme chrétien is fully indexed, unlike many French scholarly works. My only complaint is that the Bibliographic Index, which lists all the works mentioned with their page-references in the text, does not give the dates of publication. These have to be hunted out through the text and endnotes, making the book difficult to use for ready reference.

The first chapter is a searching investigation of the terms "occultism" and "esotericism," tracing their origins and the variety of their meanings in French and English sources. It is an essay of primary importance to those interested in precision in language and the definition of terms. Briefly, it turns out that both of these are early nineteenth-century concepts that have since been projected into the more distant past.

Laurant traces the invention of esotericism in the early nineteenth century as the inheritor of Illuminism, fed by currents from the theosopher Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, from high-degree Freemasonry, from Swedenborg and other visionaries, and from scholarly studies of ancient and oriental religions. Two encyclopedists of this stage are Ferdinand Denis, author of *Tableau historique analytique et critique des sciences occultes* (1829) and Eusèbe Salverte, author of *Sciences occultes, ou essai sur la magie, les prodiges et les miracles* (1829). (Salverte, incidentally, was a friend of Godfrey Higgins, and is mentioned in the *Anacalypsis*. An expurgated English translation of his book, as *The Occult Sciences*, appeared in 1846.)

The Catholic reaction to these interests was mixed. There were Catholics who saw value in occultism, especially for the retrieval of ancient wisdom. Ferdinand Eckstein, Abbé Lacuria, and Bishop Devoucoux are the most prominent among the many named here. On the other hand, there

was a wave of fascinated revulsion, which resulted in the works of Collin de Plancy (*Dictionnaire infernal* (revised after his conversion as *Dictionnaire des sciences occultes*, 1846-52) the Marquis Eudes de Mirville (*Des Esprits*, 1853), and Gougenot des Mousseaux (*La magie au XIXe siècle*, 1860). These names will be familiar to readers of H.P.B., who used their erudition without sharing their demonology. The period after them, 1870-1907, Laurant calls “Les beaux jours de l’occultisme” (The happy days of occultism). He delineates the twisted lines of development that led to the themes and figures of the *fin de siècle*: prophetic themes of the Great Monarch and the restoration of the Jews, so significant for French Hermetic politics; figures such as Joséphin Péladan, Stanislaus de Guaita, Saint-Yves d’Alveydre, Papus, Abbé Roca, and Lady Caithness.

The story ends with “L’occultisme trahi par l’ésotérisme (1905-1914)” [Occultism Betrayed by Esotericism]. Occultism declined during these years for several reasons. In the officially secularized society that France now became, the pretensions of a Papus or a Péladan seemed comical rather than awe-inspiring. Secondly, modern science became less open to studying phenomena such as spiritualism and telepathy that called into question the materialist hypothesis. Thirdly, beliefs in a primordial revelation and in the importance of symbolism were weakened by the progress of scholarship in oriental studies, philology, and ancient civilizations.

Laurant sees a new wave in esotericism as starting with the Taoist initiate and soldier Albert de Pourvoirville, known as “Matgioi” (on whom he has written a book: *Matgioï, un aventurier taoïste*, Paris: Dervy-Livres, 1982), and with René Guénon. Matgioi stood for pure metaphysical truth as against the “consoling and sentimental” religions of Jesus and Gautama Buddha. The

alternative was to embrace these consolations, while allowing for the wider vistas of esotericism. This was the way of the new Catholic esotericism, which was much taken with the apparitions of the Virgin at Lourdes and elsewhere, and with apocalyptic prophecy, while discarding the excesses of occultism. Laurant situates the young Guénon among Catholics of this type: Paul Vulliaud, Grillot de Givry (author of the popular *Illustrated Anthology of Sorcery, Magic and Alchemy*, original French edition 1927), and the Pont-Aven painter Emile Bernard.

Students of Theosophical history may be surprised to see their subject marginalized here. But in Blavatsky’s lifetime, at least, esoteric Christianity was the least of its concerns. Figures such as the Abbé Roca, Lady Caithness, and the young enthusiasts who joined the French T.S. for a short time are presented in the broader perspective of their interests and agendas, to which the T.S. was indeed marginal. *L’Esotérisme chrétien* is an excellent supplement to the Anglo-Saxon view of much Theosophical history. It opens up vistas unsuspected even by French scholars. Like James Webb’s *The Occult Establishment*, it is a book I shall have to re-read every few years, as my knowledge catches up with the author’s and the unfamiliar names take on more meaning.

Joscelyn Godwin

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