

# THE LIGHT OF LUXOR

VOLUME VI



COMTE de CAGLIOSTRO.

INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL MAGAZINE







# THE LIGHT OF LUXOR

Independent Theosophical Magazine



## Theosophy

We often speak of Theosophy as not in itself a religion, but the truth, which lies behind all religions alike. That is so; yet, from another point of view, we may surely say that it is at once a philosophy, a religion and a science.

C.W. Leadbeater

## The Society

"The Theosophical Society was organized for the purpose of promulgating the Theosophical doctrines, and for the promotion of the Theosophic life. The present Theosophical Society is not the first of its kind."

H.P. Blavatsky

## Its Objects

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

In extinct religions the same idea of a Trinity is found. In Egypt it dominated all religious worship. "We have a hieroglyphical inscription in the British Museum as early as the reign of Senechus of the eighth century before the Christian era, showing that the doctrine of Trinity in Unity already formed part of their religion". [S. Sharpe. Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christology, p. 14.] This is true of a far earlier date. Râ, Osiris, and Horus formed one widely worshipped Trinity; Osiris, Isis, and Horus were worshipped at Abydos; other names are given in different cities, and the triangle is the frequently used symbol of the Triune God. The idea which underlay these Trinities, however named, is shown in a passage quoted from Marutho, in which an oracle, rebuking the pride of Alexander the Great, speaks of: "First God, then the Word, and with Them the Spirit". [See Williamson's The Great Law, p. 196.]

Annie Besant - Esoteric Christianity

# Editors Note

In this edition of the Light of Luxor Magazine the entire focus is on the mysterious Count Cagliostro. A Freemason and healer of the 18th century which was loved by many and despised by others. His detractors felt threatened by his famous Egyptian Rite which would have given Freemasonry that extra edge that it needed to become a complete system of initiation. In Theosophical lore he was mentioned by Blavatsky in her Letters to A.P. Sinnett. He is also mentioned in the Mahatma Letters, as you will find in this issue. Blavatsky dedicated an essay to him for Lucifer Magazine. William Quan Judge wrote a paper for The Path magazine, titled Prince Talleyrand, which is a testimony of someone that met the count. I am also reprinting an essay on Cagliostro that I wrote for The Theosophist in 2023. Also, I will reprint the short essay: H.B.S.'s Rose Croix Jewel. For this issue I wrote an essay titled: Who is Darbhagiri Nath, this character is mentioned by Blavatsky in relation to Cagliostro's last days in his prison cell, therefore, I thought it would be appropriate to shed some light on who this character was and try to discover why he visited Cagliostro in his prison cell.

A reprinted article from Theosophical History by Nell C. Taylor (The Mysterious Life and Transitions of the Cagliostro Jewel) can be found in page 49. Dr. James A. Santucci in his editorial note for Vol. III No.3 July 1990, in which the original article can be found said the following on Miss Nell C. Taylor: Miss Nell C. Taylor's career began as a research scientist at the Clayton Foundation Biochemical Institute, University of Texas from 1945 to 1965, followed by a position at the Pritkin Research Foundation in Santa Barbara from 1977 to 1985. As a member of the Theosophical society (Adyar), Miss Taylor has written numerous articles and book reviews for Theosophical Journals and served as secretary at the Krotona School of Theosophy in Ojai (CA) from 1967 to 1971. She currently resides in Santa Barbara, California.

There are many speculations on Cagliostro's "real" identity. The Vatican's Holy inquisition even published a book "The Life of Joseph Balsamo" that was dedicated to denigrating his name. This book has been used by many writers to continue giving Cagliostro the name of an evil charlatan that conned people across Europe throughout the 18th century and that supposedly he had instigated the French revolution.

Nevertheless, his good deeds have not been forgotten and many writers have also ensured he is remembered as a reformer of freemasonry.

I might have missed some essays on Cagliostro by other theosophists, but the papers in this issue dispel many things many do not know about Cagliostro. For someone that lived in the 1700s his life sounds incredible, his life can be likened to that of Blavatsky's life. Both had many similarities, both were world travellers, they worked for the eastern brotherhood, and both had their names tarnished by similar opponents. However, Blavatsky's legacy could be said to be greater than that of Cagliostro's, but his rite and his life left a great impact on those he met.

It is uncertain for how long Cagliostro will be remembered, but it can be said that he was a true Freemason in every sense of the word and a student of Theo-Sophia. His interest in reviving the Ancient Egyptian form of Masonry has left a light of inspiration inside the craft that will continue for many centuries to come.

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"Cagliostro was the mysterious agent of the Knights Templars, the Rosicrucian initiate whose magnificent store of learning is attested by the profundity of the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry. Thus Comte di Cagliostro remains one of the strangest characters in history--believed by his friends to have lived forever and to have taken part in the marriage feast of Cana, and accused by his enemies of being the Devil incarnate! His powers of prophecy are ably described by Alexandre Dumas in *The Queen's Necklace*. The world he sought to serve in his own strange way received him not, but has followed with relentless persecution down through the centuries even the very memory of this illustrious adept who, unable to accomplish the great labor at hand, stepped aside in favor of his more successful compatriot, the Comte de St-Germain."

Manly Palmer Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*."







# Cagliostro: the Grand Copt of Egyptian Freemasonry

By Julian Ochoa

Giuseppe Balsamo or Thiscio.<sup>1</sup> Since he was from southern Italy his complexion was Mediterranean, and his critics used this to racially profile him and discredit his reputation. At a young age he was educated by Catholic monks in Sicily who taught him how to administer medicine to people.<sup>2</sup> In his twenties he travelled across the Mediterranean and the Middle East, from Medina to North Africa.<sup>3</sup> It is said that during his travels across the Middle East he met Althotas, the man who initiated him into the ancient mysteries. Cagliostro studied under him for several years. Others rumour that he was not born in Sicily but that he was either born in Medina or Mecca, that he was an Islamic prince, that Althotas was his appointed teacher, and Althotas taught him all the

hidden knowledge that had survived from Ancient Egypt.<sup>4</sup> H. R. Evans gives a different account about Cagliostro stating that he grew up in Medina, his tutor was Althotas, he was orphaned at an early age, his parents were a noble Maltese family, and later on in his youth he travelled to Malta where he became acquainted with Christianity and Western ideas of the time.<sup>5</sup> Eliphas Levi said the following about Cagliostro's master:

*The name Althotas, or that of Cagliostro's master, is composed of the word Thot, with the syllables Al and As, which, if read Kabalistically, are Sala, meaning messenger or envoy. The name therefore signifies: Thot, the messenger of the Egyptians, and such in effect was he*

1 M. Haven, (2015), Cagliostro the Unknown Master, Translated by P. Fergusson, Lewis Masonic, p. 29.

2 H. P. Blavatsky, (1890), "Was Cagliostro a Charlatan?" Lucifer, Vol. V, p. 29 January, p. 391.

3 I. McCalman, (2003), The Last Alchemist, Harper Collins, p. 3.

4 Ibid., p. 137.

5 H. R. Evans, (1919), Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry, Washington DC, p. 9-10.



*whom Cagliostro recognised as his master above all others.*<sup>6</sup>

As a young man, Cagliostro travelled from Messina to Rhodes and then to Alexandria and Cairo. In 1766 he travelled to Malta where he worked as an assistant in the apothecary for the Knights of Malta. Working as an apothecary he learnt all he could about healing from an alchemist who was living in the same quarters. In 1768 he travelled to Rome where he met and married Seraphina Feliciani. With his wife he continued his journey across different European countries, healing the sick and poor for free. They travelled from Italy through France and into Spain and Portugal. They travelled as far as England. In 1772 Cagliostro went back to mainland Europe, returning to Malta with his wife.<sup>7</sup>

In 1776 he visited London again where he would be initiated into freemasonry. On 12 April 1776, he was initiated in the Esperance Lodge, number 289, into the Rite of Strict Observance in London.<sup>8</sup> The Rite of Strict Observance had been officially founded in 1754 in continental Europe by three freemasons, the most notable of the three founders was Baron Von Hund. The Rite of Strict Observance claimed to have direct lineage to the medieval Knights Templar. What made the order more conspicuous was that

it claimed to be guided by "unknown superiors" whom no one ever knew. One of them was possibly Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the Scottish Pretender to the British throne who was exiled into Europe with the surviving Jacobite rebels after the battle of Culloden, Scotland, in 1746.<sup>9</sup> In Gary Lachman's biography of Blavatsky, he points out that her grandfather Prince Pavel was also a member of the Rite of Strict Observance in Russia, where this order was popular among high-ranking masons. Lachman does not discard the possibility that Prince Pavel met Cagliostro, as it is known that Cagliostro visited the Russian royal court and many masonic lodges in Russia.<sup>10</sup>

Another interesting character that Cagliostro met throughout his travels in Europe was a notable freemason called Count St Germain. Earlier in Cagliostro's life he was instructed by his tutor Althotas, who transmitted knowledge of the Egyptian Mysteries and other secrets of the Middle East, but it was with Count St Germain that he would be initiated into the Mysteries, which would inspire him to perform the Great Work, which is what he is commonly known for. Trowbridge said that St Germain had discovered the philosopher's stone.<sup>11</sup> Cooper-Oakley said that Count St Germain was present at the Templar initiation (Order of Strict

6 E. Levi, (2003), *The History of Magic*, Translated by A. E. Waite, Weiser Books, Boston, p. 302.

7 I. McCalman, (2003), *The Last Alchemist*, Harper Collins, pp. 135-136.

8 Ibid., p. 36.

9 Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, (2006), "The Rite of Strict Observance," <[freemasonry.bcy.ca/texts/strict\\_observance.html](http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/texts/strict_observance.html)>.

10 G. Lachman, (2013), *Madame Blavatsky: The Mother of Modern Spirituality*, Jeremy P. Tarcher / Penguin New York, p. 38.

11 W. R. H. Trowbridge, (1910), *Cagliostro — The Splendour and Misery of a Master of Magic*, London Chapman & Hall, p. 200.



Observance) of Cagliostro.<sup>12</sup> In the book, *The Masonic Magician* by P. Faulks and R. L. D. Cooper an additional meeting is said to have happened, in which Count St Germain officiated over the initiation of Count Cagliostro and his wife Seraphina. This initiation occurred at 02:00 hours at which time they were admitted into the “Temple of Mysteries” where Count St Germain sat on his throne accompanied by his officers.<sup>13</sup> In *The History of Magic* Eliphas Levi says that Count St Germain was a member of the Order of the Rosy Cross, but later created a new order.<sup>14</sup> In *The Mahatma Letters*, Letter number ML-54, Master KH says of Count St Germain and Count Cagliostro:

*Were not St. Germain, and Cagliostro, both gentlemen of the highest education and achievements — and presumably Europeans . . . regarded at the time, and still so regarded by posterity — as impostors, confederates, jugglers and what not?*<sup>15</sup>

Cagliostro’s masonic initiations, the Egyptian Rite, and legacy

After all the initiations Cagliostro underwent, he resumed his travels, and during this period he began working with Egyptian freemasonry. The Egyptian Rite

was formalised in 1789 in Lyon with the consecration of the “Lodge Triumphant Wisdom”.<sup>16</sup> Many scholars claim that the most common source attributed to Cagliostro’s inspiration for the formation of the Egyptian Rite was a book he had found in England written by George Coston. However, there is no evidence to the existence of this author. Cooper and Faulks trace other sources to his inspiration, one being that Cagliostro was introduced into the Egyptian Rite by a Danish merchant called Ananiah who had lived in Egypt. A London rabbi is also attributed for instructing Cagliostro into the Egyptian mysteries and other occult teachings.<sup>17</sup> Another teacher attributed for Cagliostro’s inspiration is Martinez de Pasqually, founder of the Masonic order, the Élus Coëns, in 1767. Cooper and Faulks quoted John Yarker from his 1909 book, *The Arcane Schools*, that Cagliostro’s rite was similar to Pasqually’s theurgy.<sup>18</sup> Regardless of the origin of Cagliostro’s inspiration, his rite caused ripples across continental freemasonry. The following quote from the book, *The Masonic Magician*, explains Cagliostro’s objectives for the Egyptian Rite and the “Regeneration of Humanity” as he coined his vision for this new type of Freemasonry:

*The wisdom of the Egyptian priests would*

12 I. Cooper-Oakley, (1912), *The Comte de St. Germain: The Secret of Kings*, Casa Editrice del Dott G. Sullirao, Milano, p. 146.

13 P. Faulks and R. L. D. Cooper, (2008), *The Masonic Magician: The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite*, Watkins Publishing London, p. 34.

14 E. Levi, p. 313.

15 A. T. Barker, (1992), *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett — from the Mahatmas M. & KH*, Transcribed and compiled by A. T. Barker, Second Ed., Theosophical University Press, p. 306.

16 P. Faulks and R. L. D. Cooper, p. 182.

17 Ibid., p. 175.

18 Ibid.



*be supplanted in the temple of Cagliostro —three vitally important magical practices would be the basis for his Regeneration of Mankind; firstly, the convocation of spirits, secondly, the practice of moral, physical, and spiritual regeneration, and finally, the use of divination by means of the medium or “dove” to interpret images sent from the Divine. His system of Egyptian Freemasonry would take the Mason from the mundane to the sublime, from purely speculative to positively transcendental.*<sup>19</sup>

Men and women could join the Egyptian Rite, and the meetings for each gender were performed in separate temples. Cagliostro's wife Seraphina officiated over the temple for women. For men, the prerequisite to join the Rite was that they had to be master masons of a regular masonic lodge as the Rite was not created to replace freemasonry, but to shed greater light on the masonic mysteries and fulfil the original purpose of freemasonry, and to instruct its members to lead a more spiritual and disciplined life. To be a member of the Egyptian Rite, it was also important to have a belief in God. The degrees of the rite were Egyptian Apprentice, Egyptian Fellowcraft and Egyptian Master.<sup>20</sup> After Cagliostro's death in 1795, the Vatican burnt his Egyptian Rite rituals and manuscripts, but several copies of his ritual survived in different lodges and private estates. Cagliostro's push to improve freemasonry and reform

humanity, and his rituals and teachings were an inspiration to many in freemasonry. Out of his masonic influence and masonic rituals that emerged and disappeared in the 1700s, the Rite of Misraim was formed, to replace the Egyptian Rite.<sup>21</sup> In 1814 another masonic order called the Memphis Rite was constituted. This rite was composed of 950 which pertained to different masonic orders that were unified to make a complete initiatic system.<sup>22</sup> The most notable member of the Rite of Memphis was Giuseppe Garibaldi who was Grand Master of the Italian Grand Orient. Garibaldi was Honorary Grand Hierophant of the Rite of Memphis for Italy with its Sovereign Sanctuary at Palermo, Sicily, until his death in 1882.

Jinarajadasa in his article in The Theosophist titled “The Rite of Memphis” mentions that during the 1900s a British consul based in Sicily, Reginald Macbean, had become Grand Master of the Order. C. W. Leadbeater, Jinarajadasa, George Arundale, J. I. Wedgewood, and O. Kollerstrom were invited and initiated into the sovereign sanctuary by Macbean in 1923. Jinarajadasa explains that Wedgewood was already a member of the Misraim Rite in England connected to John Yarker and Leadbeater had joined another lineage of the Misraim Rite based in France. Macbean granted the five theosophists a charter which they could use to consecrate a Sovereign Sanctuary

19 P. Faulks and R. L. D. Cooper, pp. 176–177.

20 Ibid., p. 183.

21 “Egyptian Freemasonry”, Universal Co-Masonry, The American Federation of Human Rights, <[universalfreemasonry.org/en/masonic-egyptian-freemasonry](http://universalfreemasonry.org/en/masonic-egyptian-freemasonry)>, (2023).

22 A. G. Mackey, (1914), An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, The Masonic History Company, New York & London, p. 62.



at their convenience.<sup>23</sup> Upon retiring from his work at the British consulate in Sicily, Macbean relocated to live at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar, where he continued to work in the local Co-Masonic Temple.<sup>24</sup>

### Cagliostro in Theosophical Literature and anecdotes

In May 1875, one of the founders of the Theosophical Society, Charles Sotheran, who was also member of the Rite of Memphis and the Misraim Rite, presented a paper at the New York Liberal Club, on Count Cagliostro: "Alessandro di Cagliostro: Impostor or Martyr?"<sup>25</sup> In 1890 Blavatsky wrote an essay on Cagliostro, "Was Cagliostro a Charlatan?" for the *Lucifer* magazine, where she mentioned that Althotas his teacher was an "Eastern Hermetic Sage". She also said that the real reason for his clash with the Church and many others was due to his knowledge and connection with "Eastern Occult Science". Blavatsky goes on to say that Cagliostro's teachings were "Eastern Doctrines". She also said of Cagliostro: "He served the Masters of a Fraternity he would not name because on account of his pledge he could not."<sup>26</sup> In *The Path* magazine of 1890, William Quan Judge wrote an article about Count Cagliostro. This is an account of an encounter of the Prince

with Cagliostro.<sup>27</sup> W. R. H. Trowbridge in his biography of Cagliostro said that many years after his registered death in 1795 in Italy, he was seen in Russia where he was staying at Blavatsky's house. Trowbridge said Cagliostro performed phenomena during his stay. If this is correct, it occurred before Blavatsky was born in 1831.<sup>28</sup> Another connection between Cagliostro and Blavatsky was Blavatsky's Rose Croix Jewel which was handed down to Col. H. S. Olcott after Blavatsky's passing. It was recorded that Olcott had lent it to George Arundale, who handed it to Rukmini Arundale, who kept it until her passing. In 1992 Pedro Oliveira, former International Secretary of the Theosophical Society, on behalf of the then President of the Theosophical Society, Radha Burnier, officially collected the jewel from the Kalakshetra College of Fine Arts.<sup>29</sup>

### Conclusion

Since his youth, Cagliostro's life has been full of mystery and adventure. He had the fortune of having teachers that imparted knowledge from antiquity and the Far East. He travelled extensively across Europe, was initiated into freemasonry, was a healer, and worked incessantly on his Egyptian Rite which for a time was popular among Continental and British

23 C. Jinararadasa, (1951), "The Rite of Memphis", *The Theosophist*, December 1951.

24 Ibid.

25 Theosophy Wiki, (2022). "Charles Sotheran", <theosophy.wiki/en/Charles\_Sotheran>, (2023).

26 H. P. Blavatsky, (1890) "Was Cagliostro a Charlatan?" *Lucifer*, Vol. V, No. 29, January, p. 4.

27 W. Q. Judge, (1890), "Prince Talleyran — Cagliostro", *The Path*, October 1890.

28 W. R. H. Trowbridge, p. 306.

29 J. Ochoa, (2021), "HPB's Rose Croix Jewel", *The Light of Luxor*, Independent Theosophical Magazine, Vol. 3 (2023), p. 40–41.



freemasons. He travelled with his wife and made many worthy friends, the likes of Count St Germain and Louis Claude de St Martin. He had friends among royalty, and ecclesiastical authorities. But in the end his enemies had more influence and captured him, handing him over to the Roman Inquisition. The Inquisition arrested him for promoting freemasonry. He was jailed for life. His death remains a mystery just like the death of other occult adepts. His Legacy remains exemplary and admired by many within occult circles. The masonic orders of Memphis-Misraim and others carry his lineage and influence. Within the theosophical milieu he is known as one of many disciples of the Masters that dared to take the road, "steep and thorny". His life of service and sacrifice is left for those aspirants to observe. Blavatsky best describes that

road:

*There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe: I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that opens inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling — the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.*

Ochoa, J.,(2023), "Cagliostro the Grand Copt of Egyptian Freemasonry,"The Theosophist Vol. 4 No. 11 (August 2023).





SERAPHINA FELICIANI

*Gravée de C. L. L.*



# Was Cagliostro a "Charlatan"?

By H. P. Blavatsky

To send the injured unredressed away,  
How great soe'er the offender, and the  
wrong'd Howe'er obscure, is wicked, weak  
and vile Degrades, defiles, and should  
dethrone a king.

-SMOLLETT.

The mention of Cagliostro's name produces a two-fold effect. With the one party, a whole sequence of marvellous events emerges from the shadowy past; with others the modern progeny of a too realistic age, the name of Alexander, Count Cagliostro, provokes wonder, if not contempt. People are unable to understand that this "enchanter and magician" (read "Charlatan") could ever legitimately produce such an impression as he did on his contemporaries. This gives the key to the posthumous reputation of the Sicilian known as Joseph Balsamo, that reputation which made a believer in him a brother Mason say, that (like Prince Bismarck and some Theosophists) "Cagliostro might well be said to be the best abused and most hated man in Europe." Nevertheless, and

notwithstanding the fashion of loading him with opprobrious names, none should forget that Schiller and Goethe were among his great admirers, and remained so to their Goethe while travelling in Sicily devoted much labour and time to collecting information about "Guiseppe Balsamo" in his supposed native land; and it was from these copious notes that the author of Faust wrote his play "The Great Kophta."

Why this wonderful man is receiving so little honour in England, is due to Carlyle. The most fearlessly truthful historian of his age-he, who abominated falsehood under whatever appearance-has stamped with the imprimatur of his honest and famous name, and thus sanctified the most iniquitous of historical injustices ever perpetrated by prejudice and bigotry. This owing to false reports which almost to the last emanated from a class he disliked.no less than he hated untruth, namely the Jesuits, .or-lie incarnate.

The very name of Guiseppe Balsamo, which,



when rendered by cabalistic methods, means "He who was sent," or "The Given," also "Lord of the Sun," shows that such was not his real patronymic. As Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, F.T.S., remarks, toward the end of the last century it became the fashion with certain theosophical professors of the time to transliterate into Oriental form every name provided by Occult Fraternities for disciples destined to work in the world. Whosoever then, may have been Cagliostro's parents, their name was not Balsamo." So much is certain, at any rate.

Moreover, as all know that in his youth he lived with, and was instructed by, a man named, as is supposed, Althotas, "a great Hermetic Eastern Sage" or in other words an Adept, it is not difficult to accept the tradition that it was the latter who gave him his symbolical name. But that which is known with still more certainty is the extreme esteem in which he was held by some of the most scientific and honoured men of his day. In France we find Cagliostro;—having before served as a confidential friend and assistant chemist in the laboratory of Pinto, the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta-becoming the friend and protégé of the Prince Cardinal de Rohan. A high born Sicilian Prince honoured him with his support and friendship, as did many other noblemen. "Is it possible, then," pertinently asks Mackenzie, "that a man of such engaging manners could have been the lying impostor his enemies endeavoured to prove him?"

The chief cause of his life-troubles. was his marriage with Lorenza Feliciani, a tool of the Jesuits; and two minor causes his extreme good-nature, and the blind confidence he placed in his friends—some of whom became traitors and his bitterest enemies. Neither of the crimes of which he is unjustly accused could lead to the destruction of his honour and posthumous reputation; but all was due to his weakness for an in- worthy woman, and the possession of certain secrets of nature, which he would not divulge to the Church. Being a native of Sicily, Cagliostro was naturally born in a family of Roman Catholics, no matter what their name, and was brought up by monks of the "Good Brotherhood of Castiglione," as his biographers tell us; thus, for the sake of dear life he had to outwardly 'profess belief in and respect for a Church, whose traditional policy has ever been, "he who is not with us is against us," and forthwith to crush the enemy in the bud. And yet, just for this, is Cagliostro even to-day accused of having served the Jesuits as their spy; and this by Masons who ought to be the last to bring such a charge against a learned Brother who was persecuted by the Vatican even more as a Mason than as an Occultist. Had it been so, would these same Jesuits even to this day vilify his name? · Had he served them, would he not have proved himself useful to their ends, as a man of such undeniable intellectual gifts could not have blundered or disregarded the orders of those whom he served. But instead of this, what do we see?

Cagliostro charged with being the most



cunning and successful impostor and charlatan of his age ; accused of belonging to the Jesuit Chapter of Clermont in France'; of appearing (as a proof of his affiliation to the Jesuits) in clerical dress at Rome. Yet, this "cunning impostor" is tried and condemned—by the exertions of those same Jesuits—to an ignominious death, which was changed only subsequently to life-long imprisonment, owing to a mysterious interference or influence brought to bear on the Pope !

Would it not be more charitable and consistent with truth to say that it was his connection with Eastern Occult Science, his knowledge of many secrets—deadly to the Church of Rome—that brought upon Cagliostro first the persecution of the Jesuits, and finally the rigour of the Church? It was his own honesty, which blinded him to the defects of those whom he cared for, and led him to trust two such rascals as the Marquis Agliato and Ottavio Nicastro, that is at the bottom of all the accusations of fraud and imposture now lavished upon him. And it is the sins of these two worthies subsequently executed for gigantic swindles and murder—which are now made to fall on Cagliostro. Nevertheless it is known that he and his wife (in 1770) were both left destitute by the flight of Agliato with all their funds, so that they had to beg their way through Piedmont and Geneva. . Kenneth Mackenzie has proven that Cagliostro had never mixed himself up with political intrigue the very

soul of the activities of the Jesuits. "He was most certainly unknown in that capacity to those who have jealously guarded the preparatory archives of the Revolution, and his appearance as an advocate of revolutionary principles has no basis in fact." . He was simply an Occultist and a Mason, and as such he was allowed to suffer at the hands of those who, adding insult to injury, first tried to kill him by lifelong imprisonment and then spread the rumour that he had been their ignoble agent. This cunning device was in its infernal craft well worthy of its primal originators.

There are many landmarks in Cagliostro's biographies to show that he taught the Eastern doctrine of the " principles " in man, of "God" dwelling in man—as a potentiality in actu (the " Higher Self")--and in every living thing and even atom—as a potentiality in posse, and that he served the Masters of a Fraternity he would not name because on account of his pledge he could not. His letter to the new mystical but rather motley Brotherhood the (Lodge of) Philalethes, is a proof in point. The Philalethes, as all Masons know, was a rite founded in Paris in 1773 in the Loge des Amis Réunis, based on the principles of Martinism<sup>1</sup>, and whose members made a special study of the Occult Sciences. The Mother Lodge was a philosophical and theosophical Lodge, and therefore was right in desiring to purify its progeny, the Lodge of Philalethes. This is what the Royal

1 The Martinists were Mystics and Theosophists who claimed to have the secret of communicating with (Elemental and Planetary) Spirits of the ultramundane Spheres. Some of them were practical Occultists.



Masonic Cyclopædia says on the subject :

*"On the 15 February 1785 the Lodge of Philalethes in solemn Session, with Lavalette de Langes, royal treasurer ; Tassin, the banker ; and Tassin, an officer in the royal service ; opened a Fraternal Convention, at Paris. . . Princes (Russian, Austrian, : and others), fathers of the Church, councillors, knights, financiers, barristers, barons, Theosophists, canons, colonels, professors of Magic, engineers, literary men, doctors merchants, postmasters, dukes, ambassadors, surgeons, teachers of languages, re... ceivers-general, and notably two London names,-Boosie, à merchant, and Brooks of London-compose this Convention, to whom may be added M. le Count de Cagliostro, and Mesmer 'the inventor' as Thory describes him (Acta Latomorum, vol. ii. p. 95), of the doctrine of magnetism !' Surely such an able set of men to set the world to rights, as France never saw before or since !"*

The grievance of the Lodge was that Cagliostro, who had first promised to take charge of it, withdrew his offers, as the "Convention" would not adopt the Constitutions of the Egyptian Rite, nor wouldnt Philalethes consent to have its archives consigned to the flames, which were his conditions sine qua non. It is strange that his answer to that Lodge should be regarded by Brother K. R. H. Mackenzie and other Masons as emanating " from a Jesuit source." The very style is

Oriental, and no European Mason-least of all a Jesuit-would write in such a manner. This is how the answer runs :

*..."The unknown grand Master of true Masonry has cast his eyes upon the Philaletheans. . . Touched by the sincere avowal of their desires, he deigns to extend his hand over them, and consents to give a ray of light into the darkness of their temple. It is the wish of the Unknown Great Master, to prove to them the existence of one God--the basis of their faith ; the original dignity of man; his powers and destiny. . . . It is by deeds and facts, by the testimony of the senses, that they will know GOD, MAN and the intermediary spiritual beings (principles) existing between them; of which true Masonry gives the symbols and indicates the real road. Let then, the Philalethes embrace the doctrines of this real Masonry, submit to the rules of its supreme chief, and adopt its constitutions. But above all let the Sanctuary be purified, let the Philalethes know that light can only descend into the Temple of Faith (based on knowledge), not into that of Scepticism. Let them devote to the flames that vain accumulation of their archives; for it is only on the ruins of the Tower of Confusion that the Temple of Truth can be erected."*

In the Occult · phraseology of certain Occultists "Father, Son and Angels" stood for the compound symbol of physical, and astro-Spiritual MAN<sup>2</sup>. John G. Gichtel (end of XVIIth cent.), the ardent lover of Boehme,

2 See the Three Principles and the Seven Forms of Nature by Boehme and fathom their Occult significance, to assure yourself of this.



the Seer of whom St. Martin relates that he was married "to the heavenly Sophia," the Divine Wisdom-made use of this term. Therefore, it is easy to see what Cagliostro meant by proving to the Philalethes on the testimony of their: "senses," "God, man and the intermediary Spiritual beings," that exist between God (Atma), and Man (theEgo). Nor is it more difficult to understand his true meaning when he reproaches the Brethren in his parting letter which says :-"We have offered you the truth; you have disdained it. We have offered it for the sake of itself, and you have refused it in consequence of a love of forms. ..Can you elevate yourselves to (your) God and the knowledge of yourselves by the assistance of a Secretary and a Convocation ? " etc<sup>3</sup>.

Many are the absurd and entirely contradictory statements about Joseph Bálsamo, Count de Cagliostro, so-called, several of which were incorporated by Alexander Dumas in his *Mémoires d'un Médecin*, v those prolific variations of truth and fact which so characterize Dumas père's romances. But though the world is in possession of a most miscellaneous and varied mass of information concerning that remarkable and unfortunate man during most of his life, yet of the last ten years and of his death, nothing certain is known, save only the legend that he

died in the prison of the Inquisition. True, some fragments published recently by the Italian savant, Giovanni Sforza, from the private correspondence of Lorenzo Prospero Bottini, the Roman ambassador of the Republic of Lucca at the end of the last century, have somewhat filled this wide gap. This correspondence with Pietro Calandrini, the Great Chancellor of the said Republic, begins from 1784, but the really interesting information commences only in 1789, in a letter dated June 6, of that year, and even then we do not learn much.

It speaks of the "celebrated Count di Cagliostro, who has recently arrived with his wife from Trent vid Turin to Rome. People say he is a native of Sicily and extremely wealthy, but no one knows whence that wealth. He has a letter of introduction from the Bishop of Trent : to Albani. . . . So far his daily walk in life as well as his private and public status are above reproach. Many are those seeking an interview with him, to hear from his own lips the corroboration of what is being said of him." From another letter we learn that Rome had proven an ungrateful soil for Cagliostro. He had the intention of settling at Naples, but the plan could not be realised. The Vatican authorities who had hitherto left the Count undisturbed, suddenly laid their heavy hand upon him.

3 The statement on the authority of Beswick that Cagliostro was connected with The Loge des Amis Réunis under the name of Count Grabionka is not proven. There was a Polish Count of that name at that time in France, a mystic mentioned in Madame de Krüdner's letters which are with the writer's family, and one who belonged, as Beswick says, together with Mesmer and Count St. Germain, to the Lodge of the Philalethes. Where are Lavalette de Langes' Manuscripts and documents left by him after his death to the Philosophic Scottish Rite? Lost?



In a letter dated 2 January, 1790, just a year after Cagliostro's arrival, it is stated that: "last Sunday secret and extraordinary debates in council took place at the Vatican." It (the council) consisted of the State Secretary and Antonelli, Pillotta and Campanelli, Monsignor Figgerenti performing the duty of Secretary. The object of that Secret Council remains unknown, but public rumour asserts that it was called forth owing to the sudden arrest on the night between Saturday and Sunday, of the Count di Cagliostro, his wife, and a Capuchin, Fra Giuseppe Maurijio. The Count is incarcerated in Fort St. Angelo, the Countess in the Convent of St. Apollonia, and the monk in the prison of Araceli. That monk, who calls himself 'Father Swizzero,' is regarded as a confederate of the famous magician. In the number of the crimes he is accused of is included that of the circulation of a book by an unknown author, condemned to public burning and entitled, 'The Three Sisters. The object of this work is to pulverize certain three high-born individuals.'"

The real meaning of this most extraordinary misinterpretation is easy to guess. It was a work on Alchemy; the "three sisters" standing symbolically for the three "Principles" in their duplex symbolism. On the plane of occult chemistry they "pulverize" the triple ingredient used in the process of the transmutation of metals; on the plane of Spirituality they reduce to a state of pulverization the three "lower" personal "principles" in man, an explanation that every Theosophist is bound to understand.

The trial of Cagliostro lasted for a long time. In a letter of March the 17th, Bottini writes to his Lucca correspondent that the famous "wizard" has finally appeared before the Holy Inquisition. The real cause of the slowness of the proceedings was that the Inquisition, with all its dexterity at fabricating proofs, could find no weighty evidence to prove the guilt of Cagliostro. Nevertheless, on April the 7th 1791 he was condemned to death. He was accused of various and many crimes, the chiefest of which were his being a Mason and an "Muminate," an "Enchanter" occupied with unlawful studies; he was also accused of deriding the holy Faith, of doing harm to society, of possessing himself by means unknown of large sums of money, and of inciting others, sex, age and social standing notwithstanding, to do the same. In short, we find the unfortunate Occultist condemned to an ignominious death for deeds committed, the like of which are daily and publicly committed now-a-days, by more than one Grand Master of the Masons, as also by hundreds of thousands of Kabbalists and Masons, mystically inclined. After this verdict the "arch heretic's" documents, diplomas from foreign Courts and Societies, Masonic regalias and family relics were solemnly burned by the public hangmen in the Piazza della Minerva, before enormous crowds of people. First his books and instruments were consumed. Among these was the MS. on the Maçonnerie Egyptienne, which thus can no longer serve as a witness in favour of the reviled man. And now the condemned Occultist



had to be passed over to the hands of the civil Tribunal, when a mysterious event happened.

A stranger, never seen by any one before or after in the Vatican, appeared and demanded a private audience of the Pope, sending him by the Cardinal Secretary a word instead of a name. He was immediately received, but only stopped with the Pope for a few minutes. No sooner was he gone than his Holiness gave orders to commute the death sentence of the Count to that of imprisonment for life, in the fortress called the Castle of St. Leo, and that the whole transaction should be conducted in great secrecy. The monk Swizzero was condemned to ten years' imprisonment; and the Countess Cagliostro was set at liberty, but only to be confined on a new charge of heresy in a convent.

But what was the Castle of St. Leo? It now stands on the frontiers of Tuscany and was then in the Papal States, in the Duchy of Urbino. It is built on the top of an enormous rock, almost perpendicular on all sides; to get into the "Castle" in those days, one had to enter a kind of open basket which was hoisted up by ropes and pulleys. As to the criminal, he was placed in a special box, after which the jailors pulled him up "with the rapidity of the wind." On April 23rd 1792 Giuseppe Balsamo-if so we must call him-ascended heavenward in the criminal's box, incarcerated in that living tomb for life. Giuseppe Balsamo is mentioned for the last time in the Bottini correspondence in a letter dated March

10th 1792. The ambassador speaks of a marvel produced by Cagliostro in his prison during his leisure hours. A long rusty nail taken by the prisoner out of the floor was transformed by him without the help of any instrument into a sharp triangular stiletto, as smooth, brilliant and sharp as if it were made of the finest steel. It was recognized for an old nail only by its head, left by the prisoner to serve as a handle. The State Secretary gave orders to have it taken away from Cagliostro, and brought to Rome, and to double the watch over him.

And now comes the last kick of the jackass at the dying or dead lion. Luigi Angiolini, a Tuscan diplomat, writes as follows: "At last, that same Cagliostro, who made so many believe that he had been a contemporary of Julius Cæsar, who reached such fame and so many friends, died from apoplexy, August 26, 1795. Semironi had him buried in a wood-barn below, whence peasants used to pilfer constantly the crown property. The crafty chaplain reckoned very justly that the man who had inspired the world with such superstitious fear while living, would inspire people with the same feelings after his death, and thus keep the thieves at bay. ..."

But yet-a query! Was Cagliostro dead and buried indeed in 1795, at St. Leo? And if so, why should the custodians at the Castle of St. Angelo of Rome show innocent tourists the little square hole in which Cagliostro is said to have been confined and "died"? Why such uncertainty or-imposition, and such disagreement in the legend?



Then there are Masons who to this day tell strange stories in Italy. Some say that Cagliostro escaped in an unaccountable way from his aerial prison, and thus forced his jailors to spread the news of his death and burial. Others maintain that he not only escaped, but, thanks to the Elixir of Life, still lives on, though over twice three score and ten years old !

“Why” asks Bottini, “if he really possessed the powers he claimed; has he not indeed vanished from his jailors, and thus escaped the degrading punishment altogether ?”

We have heard of another prisoner, greater in every respect than Cagliostro

ever claimed to be. Of that prisoner too, it was said in mocking tones, “He saved others; himself he cannot save. .... let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe. ...” How long shall charitable people build the biographies of the living and ruin the reputations of the dead, with such incomparable unconcern, by means of idle and often entirely false gossip of people, and these generally the slaves of prejudice! So long, we are forced to think, as they remain ignorant of the Law of Karma and its iron justice.

H. P. B.

#### Reference:

Blavatsky, H.P., Lucifer, Was Cagliostro A Charlatan, Vol. V, No. 29, January, 1890, pp. 389-95, Hathi Trust Digital Library, 2021.

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## LETTER 22

The *lost one*<sup>1</sup> is restored in its proper place. The gueburs made it invisible out of malice.

Brother mine, he who cares for the opinion of the multitude will never soar above the crowd.

SERAPIS

<sup>1</sup> Refers to the Rosicrucian Jewel of the 18th Degree, which H. P. B. possessed, and which is now the property of Dr. Annie Besant. It is said to have belonged to Cagliostro.



# Cagliostro

Article from Lucifer Magazine 1896

A strange fascination surrounds the name of Cagliostro— Adept according to some, charlatan according to others. Few of our readers are likely to have come across the following accounts ; the first is taken from some Memoirs of Talleyrand, edited by the Countesses de O-----due, published in Paris in 1838. The second is from some recollections of the same famous statesman, by his private secretary.

I.

Desperate at the prolonged enmity of the Queen, Prince Louis asked of the Occult Powers a talisman, which should procure for him the Queen's favour. Chance, or better still, the Devil, sent him the fraud who deceived him.

I cannot describe here a very extraordinary personage, who, about 1740, appeared in France for the first time. This was the Count

St. Germain. This prince of the Rosy Cross, possessor of very extraordinary secrets, had the confidence and esteem of Louis XV., and the friendship of the Marquise de Pompadour. He had left France a long time before an adroit imitator of him appeared, first at Strasburg, and subsequently at Paris.

The Count of Cagliostro was the fruit of a union of the Grand Master of Malta with the daughter of a sovereign, the Scherif of Mecca or Median. He was brought up by an Adept, a Knight of Malta, the sage Atholtas: he was instructed in Occult Science in Egypt, in the Pyramids and in India, among the Gymnosophists. From there he traversed Italy and all of Germany, Russia, Sweden, Prussia, Denmark, England, Ireland, Scotland, Holland, and finally the Low Countries, whence he came to France.



Everywhere working prodigious miracles or cures, covered with diamonds, carrying with him the retinue of a lord, curing the poor gratis, and opening his purse for their use, he was environed with a dazzling reputation. His young and pretty wife joined him in these good deeds and incredible cures, and nothing could work better. At Strasburg, the Count of Cagliostro had become very intimate with Prince Louis. He had unveiled for him the great arcana of Nature. He had predicted for him the future. He promised him a colossal fortune, and at last succeeded in causing him to sup with phantoms.

Drawn to Paris by his disciples, his fanatics, and by the Grand Almoner, Cagliostro came there to practise hermetic medicine, supernatural chemistry, and charlatanism.

II.

Talleyrand said :

Cagliostro had arrived from Italy under extraordinary and mysterious circumstances; his coming had been preceded by numerous rumours more strange, more surprising still, and his door was besieged at once by all the rich and idle, the marvel-loving population of Paris. Among the rest I am ashamed to confess that I was one of the most ardent. I was young at the time. . . . Many months had elapsed before I could obtain the audience I so much coveted. Thousands of persons had to pass by right before me, and it was said that immediately on his arrival his books were

so filled with the names of the highest and the mightiest that had he been just and received them in turn, the candidates at the bottom of the list would have known their fortune by experience long before he could by any possible means have foretold it. . . M. de Bouffles had kindly consented to accompany me. It was already dark when we were admitted into the awful presence of the conjurer; not quite dark without doors, yet sufficiently so within to require the aid of tapers. The ante-chamber was filled with impatient applicants. We found the magician in his study. He was just at the moment engaged in dismissing two poor patients to whom he had given advice gratuitously.

As soon as we entered Cagliostro led his guests to the door at the further end of the room, which was veiled by thick tapestry, and opening it without the slightest noise, ushered them through it into the passage beyond, and then closed it with the same attention to silence, returned to the spot where we were standing, and placing his fingers on his lip, pointed towards a still and motionless figure seated in one corner of the room, and which from the obscurity that reigned about us had not been observed at our entrance. The figure was that of a female covered from head to foot with a long veil of crape, so long and ample that it disguised even the form of the fauteuil in which she was seated.

Cagliostro bade us take seats at a table covered with green velvet upon which were placed divers mysterious looking instruments of torture, sundry queerly



shaped bottles and diabolical volumes, and then standing up before us, in solemn and biblical language inquired wherefore we had sought him, and what it was we desired to know.

Cagliostro was then a man in the very flower of his age, of exceedingly prepossessing appearance. His person, although small, was so well and firmly knit that its proportions seemed those of a much larger man. His countenance was remarkably keen and penetrating, being formed of a succession of sharp succeeding lines, which gave him a look of cunning that he would willingly have disguised, and with which the solemn tone and mysterious aspect were altogether at variance. His sharp piercing eyes I shall never forget: they absolutely seemed to light up the obscurity of the chamber, and, as they flashed from one to the other of his visitors, they seemed to belong to some wild bird of prey hesitating between two victims, which to devour first. His beard and eyebrows were dark and bushy, with here and there a streak of grey amid their jetty blackness. . . . When we entered he had upon his head a velvet cap, which, with gentlemanlike courtesy, he doffed when he addressed us, and then I perceived that the summit of his crown was already bald although his hair curled downward upon his neck and shoulders in a thick and silky mass. The hand which rested upon his table, and upon which he seemed to be leaning his whole weight as he stood in graceful and theatrical attitude awaiting our communication, was small and delicate as that of a lady of

the court, . . . and yet it needed not any very profound knowledge of anatomy to enable the observer to discern at a glance that it was the hand of a man possessed of almost herculean strength and power, so vigorous were the firm-knit muscles, so well-strung the tightened cord-like nerves. . . .

De Bouffles remaining mute (both he and Talleyrand were very young and very much frightened), the conjurer turned to me and asked me in a voice which had already lost much of its solemnity, and partook of something like harshness, if I also had come unprepared with a subject of consultation. . . . I answered in a low voice that I wished to consult him in regard to the health of a person who was dear to me. . . . Cagliostro turned, and by a movement so abrupt and sudden that it made us both start to our feet, drew the fauteuil whereon was seated the veiled mysterious form of the female, who had remained all this time silent and motionless, across the floor, and still the figure moved not. The feet resting on a board attached to the bottom of the fauteuil moved with the rest, producing an indescribable effect. . . . "What is it you seek to know ? " said Cagliostro, resuming once more his solemn and theatrical air, and drawing a little aside the veil of black crape, he bent towards the ear of the female and whispered a few words which we could not understand. . . .

I replied hurriedly, " I wish to learn the cause of the migraine of my friend the Marquise de-----"



" Chut," said Cagliostro, " the name is of little import. What see you?" he added in a loud, deep tone, turning to the veiled figure.

" I see a fair and beauteous lady," replied a sweet, soft voice beneath the veil. "She is attired in a dress of sea-green Padua silk, her powdered hair is wreathed with rose-buds, and she wears long and splendid ear-drops of emerald and topaz. . . The lady is pressing her hand to her forehead at this very instant. Is it with pain, or is it with care ? She is waiting for some one, for she now rises and looks at the clock upon the console, and now she goes to the small side door to listen." (It seems that Talleyrand had agreed to escort her to the opera, but had been detained by his engagement with Cagliostro.) " Enough, enough," said I, in my turn growing impatient, " tell me at once what it is that ails the lady, and what may be the remedy."

The figure spoke aloud no more, but whispered long in Cagliostro's ear, and the latter, turning towards me, said with ease and aplomb, " The lady's migraines are caused by over-watching and anxiety. The cure is easy and must be applied at once. The will be removed in time."

He pushed back the fauteuil into the corner whence he had drawn it, the veiled figure that had occupied it still remaining as motionless as death. He then opened a small door in the wainscoting belonging to a small cupboard filled with shelves

containing bottles of all sorts and sizes, and drew from it a phial which he filled with liquid from a jug which stood on the floor, and having performed various "passes"over it, he handed it to me, bidding me and my companion lose no time in retiring, as others were waiting outside.

His dismissal of us was abrupt. . . " You have told your ailments and your griefs. You bear with you the never-failing cure. Now begone."

How could the Adept know by natural means that the Marquise de Br-----, whom he had not suffered me to name, was young and beauteous; that she possessed eardrops of emerald and topaz, which mixture of jewels was very peculiar, and that she should wear them on that very night.

(Talleyrand and his friend de Bouffles proceeded at once to the opera to see if the Marquise was attired in the dress and jewels that Cagliostro had described. They found that the dress and ornaments corresponded in every particular to those the seeress had seen, and that she was somewhat out of humour because Talleyrand had not escorted her that evening. He regained her good graces by telling her he had a sure cure for her headache.)

After the performance was over, we all adjourned to her hotel. I had completely renovated myself in her good graces by the promise of a complete cure for her



migraine. The gentlemen of the company, however, voted that a glass or two of champagne be tried first. . . . Of course the phial and its contents soon became the subject of attacks, and I was petitioned on all sides for a view of them. . . . B---- -proposed that the remedy should be applied at once in the presence of all. . . .

It was not until I had uncorked the phial and was about to pour it into a glass, that it occurred to me that I had entirely omitted to ascertain whether the liquor was to be taken as a medicine or applied externally. To the eye it was nothing but pure water from the fountain. It possessed neither smell nor colour.

It was decided that there would be less danger in mis applying it externally than in swallowing it, should it prove pernicious, and as I was chosen to be the operator, I poured a small quantity of the water into the hollow of my hand which B----- guided so that not a drop was spilt. I placed it as gently as possible over the forehead of the Marquise, pressing it there, but certainly not with violence, and supporting the back of the head with the hand that was free, held it there, thus awaiting the result.

The Marquise closed her eyes but uttered not a word, and there was a moment's silence among the clamorous group bending over her with such eager curiosity . . . when suddenly it was broken by a loud convulsive shriek from the Marquise herself, which was echoed almost by many of those present, so solemnly and

startlingly did it burst from her lips.

" Take away your hand. For God's sake, take away your hand," exclaimed she, in a voice of agony, and starting to her feet she endeavoured with all her strength to pull away my wrist downward; but strange to tell, not all the efforts of the Marquise nor those I used myself could tear away my hand from her forehead. No words can describe the sensation of terror with which I found myself deprived of the power or faculty of withdrawing my hand, but drawn by some powerful attraction closer and closer still, until it seemed that my fingers would bury themselves in the flesh. . . . It was not, however, until the Marquise sank back in her chair fainting and exhausted that the Due d'Argenton, recovering from the general consternation. . . seized my wrist in a nervous manner and tore it away by main force, drawing with it patches of skin from the forehead of the Marquise, upon -which the imprint of my touch remained in bleeding characters. My hand was torn and bleeding likewise, and the pain was unbearable. I bound up my hand and gave all the assistance in my power toward the recovery of the Marquise, who was conveyed to bed, still in a deep swoon. We all remained in the saloon awaiting the report of the surgeon who had been sent for to apply the proper remedies to the wounds of the Marquise, who was not declared out of danger until towards morning. We then dispersed with the firm determination of having the mystery cleared up by Cagliostro himself as soon as possible.



(Talleyrand and de Bouffles, accompanied by two policemen, went to interview Cagliostro on the subject at his house. The liquid in the jug was seized by the police and taken to a chemist for analysis, who pronounced it to be pure water.)

To my bitter reproaches, Cagliostro replied with perfect calmness that the liquid was pure and innocent when he placed it in my hands, and that if it had grown

pernicious it must have been owing to the guilty passions, or to the evil sympathies, of those who used it.

The Marquise carried the marks of that night's adventure to her grave—a long, narrow scar. The corner of one of her eyebrows had been torn off. (She never would have anything to do with Talleyrand afterwards.)

Lucifer Magazine, (1896), "Cagliostro," Lucifer Magazine Vol XVIII, No. 108, (August 1896) pg: 495-501.







# Prince Talleyrand-Cagliostro

William Q. Judge

A good deal for and against Cagliostro has been said since the time when he disappeared from the scene, and so much has been written against him by his enemies, especially the members of the order of Jesus, that the ordinary run of people have come to think of him as no more than an impostor, and a very cheap one at that. This has been pushed so far that his name in the encyclopædias stands for one of the great charlatans who from time to time are said to appear for the delusion of mankind and their own profit. The same sort of reputation has been given also to our honored fellow student Helena P. Blavatsky, and for similar reasons, with just as little basis. Indeed, there seems to be little doubt that in time to come her enemies, like his, will delight to call her a great impostor, as has been done already by a little-minded so-called investigator who went all the way to India to look into matters theosophical.

If Cagliostro was in fact an impostor, it is a strange thing that so much attention

was paid to him by the very best men and women of Europe. That fact will always call for explanation, and, until it is given due weight, the unbeliever in encyclopædias will be likely to think a good deal of the Count. There are some persons now of quite bright minds and wide acquaintance with men who say they believe he is still living, not under his old name but with another, and that he is engaged in a great work which embraces the whole human family. This may or may not be true, since it calls for a very great age on his part, but the student of the occult knows that we are neither old nor young, but ever immortal.

The great Prince Talleyrand has left us something regarding Cagliostro which is of weight. It is to be found in a book published in London in 1848, containing the Memoirs of the Prince by his private secretary M. Colemache, in chapter four. It there appears that the Prince was asked to give the incidents of his visit to Cagliostro, and did so at some length. He had heard so much about the Count that he resolved to



pay him a visit and see for himself the man about whom nearly every one was talking. An appointment was made, and at the time set Talleyrand called and was ushered into the presence, where he found the strange figure - a woman dressed in black and whose face was veiled - of whom much has also been said on the ground that she was alleged to be the confederate of Cagliostro or else a very good sensitive or medium. The Count appeared to be busy, and gazed into the eyes of the Prince with such a peculiar stare that the latter was not able to collect his thoughts, obliging Cagliostro to remind him of the many people waiting for an audience who could not be kept waiting if there was nothing to be said. Thereupon, as the Prince says himself, being utterly confused he failed to recollect the posers he had prepared, and was forced to ask Cagliostro if he could tell him anything about a certain Countess. The reply he received to this was that she would be at the theatre that night and would wear a certain dress and certain ornaments. Then Talleyrand asked if he could have a remedy for headaches she often had, and Cagliostro reaching down took up a jug and gave the Prince what looked like water. It was directed to be applied to her forehead, and the strict injunction given that no one else was under any circumstances to handle the bottle or touch the water. Talleyrand then went off, the Countess appeared at the theatre exactly as was said, and after the play the party, including Talleyrand, went

to a supper. The meal had progressed almost to the coffee when some one asked for the result of the visit to the supposed impostor. The Prince produced the bottle, but, contrary to the directions, allowed every one of the company to smell it and handle it. It was then proposed to apply the water to the fair forehead of the Countess, but there was some hesitation, until at last a quantity of the liquid was poured in the hand of one of the guests and placed on her forehead. Immediately she screamed with pain, but the hand could not be easily withdrawn; it had to be pulled off with violence, and with it came a large patch of the lady's skin. The next day the police were sent after Cagliostro, and the jug of liquid was taken to an official analyst who made report that it was water and nothing else, just the same as what was in the bottle. This could not be explained by the Prince, but on the examination Cagliostro said it was indeed water which he had strongly magnetised, and that if the Prince had followed directions no harm would have come; he, however, had permitted a lot of roysterers to handle and smell it, and they had turned the immensely strong magnetism into the violent agent it turned out to be. Of course the manufacturers of hypotheses will say that it was not water but "some" acid or the like, not being able, though, to tell what they mean exactly. The incident is well attested and made a deep impression on the Prince, who gives evidence thus to facts and not to disputable theories.







"Now I must mention the various branches of Freemasonry and their tendencies, even if i am only to indicate some thing briefly. First of all, it is to be borne in mind that the whole of the masonic higher degrees trace back to a personality often spoken about but equally very much misunderstood. He was particularly misunderstood by nineteenth century historians, who have no idea of the difficult situations an occultist can meet in life. This personality is the ill-famed and little understood Cagliostro. The so-called Count Cagliostro, in whom an individuality concealed itself which was recognised in its true nature only by the highest initiates, attempted originally to bring Freemasonry in London to a higher stage. For during the last third of the eighteenth century, Freemasonry had fairly well reached the state that I have described. He did not succeed in London at that time. He then tried in Russia, and also at The Hague. Everywhere he was unsuccessful, for very definite reasons.

Then, however, he was successful in Lyons, forming an occult masonic lodge of the Philalethes (Searchers after truth) out of a group of local masons, which was called the Lodge of Triumphant Wisdom. The purpose of this Lodge was specified by Cagliostro. What you can read about it is, however, nothing but the work of ignorant people. What can be said about it is only an indication. Cagliostro was concerned with two things: firstly, with instructions enabling one to produce the so-called Philosopher`s Stone; secondly, with creating an understanding of the mystic pentagram. I can only give you a hint of the meaning of these two things. They may be treated with a deal of scorn, but they are not to be taken merely symbolically, they are based on real facts."

Rudolf Steiner, (1904), "The Essence and Task of Freemasonry from the point of View of Spiritual Science III," (December, Berlin).



# The Great Theosophists, Cagliostro

from ULT magazine Theosophy 1938

FOR 150 years Alessandro Cagliostro has been defamed as the arch-impostor of the eighteenth century. Why? Because it is claimed that Cagliostro was one of the many aliases assumed by the notorious adventurer Giuseppe Balsamo. This claim is based, first, upon the lies of Theveneau de Morande, a French spy and blackmailer who, in the words of a brilliant study by M. Paul Robiquet, was "from the day of his birth to the day of his death utterly without scruple"; and, second, upon a Life of Balsamo published anonymously in 1791 under the auspices of the Inquisition.

In 1890 H. P. Blavatsky boldly took issue with these two "authorities" by declaring that "whoever Cagliostro's parents may have been, their name was not Balsamo." In 1910 W. R. H. Trowbridge, in his book on Cagliostro, asserted that the statement that Cagliostro and Balsamo were the same person "would appear to be directly contrary to recorded fact." As Cagliostro gave out his own story through his advocate, Thirolier, common justice

demands that some attention be paid to his words.

In these Memoirs, Cagliostro frankly admitted that he knew neither the name of his parents nor the place of his birth. He had been told that his parents were Christians of noble birth who had left him an orphan at the age of three months. He believed that he had been born on the Island of Malta. His earliest recollections took him back to the holy city of Medina in Arabia, where he was called Acharat and where he lived in the palace of the Muphti Salahaym. Four persons were attached to his service, the chief of whom was an Eastern Adept named Althotas who instructed him in the various sciences and made him proficient in several Oriental languages. Although both teacher and pupil outwardly conformed to the religion of Islam, Cagliostro later wrote, "the true religion was imprinted in our hearts."

When the boy was twelve years old, he and Althotas began their travels. The first



stopping place was Mecca, where they lived for three years in the palace of the Cherif. On the day of their departure the aged Cherif pressed the boy to his bosom and exclaimed: "Nature's unfortunate child, adieu!"

In Egypt they "inspected those celebrated Pyramids which to the eye of the superficial observer appear as enormous masses of granite," but which, to the Adept-eye of Althotas, were holy fanes of initiation. Certain Temple-priests of that ancient land took the boy into "such palaces as no ordinary traveller has ever entered before." Finally, after wandering through Asia and Africa for three years, the two reached the Island of Malta, where they were entertained in the palace of Pinto, Grand Master of the Knights of Malta. There Althotas donned the insignia of the Order, and the young wanderer assumed European dress for the first time and received from his teacher the name of Cagliostro.

Althotas died in Malta, and Cagliostro, accompanied by the Chevalier d'Acquino, then visited Sicily and the Isles of Greece, stopped for a while in Naples, and finally reached Rome, where he made the acquaintance of Cardinal Orsini and the Pope. It was in Rome, when Cagliostro was twenty-two years old, that he met and married Lorenza Feliciani, who proved to be a tool of the Jesuits and the chief cause of his troubles.

In 1776 the Count and Countess Cagliostro were occupying apartments

in Whitcombe Street, Leicester Fields, London. Cagliostro, now a man of twenty-eight, spent most of his time in his chemical laboratory, while his attractive wife amused herself with her new-found friends. Cagliostro's extreme good nature and the blind confidence which he placed in his friends made him their easy victim, and when he left London eighteen months later he sadly confessed that they had swindled him of 3,000 guineas.

On April 12, 1777, Cagliostro became a Freemason. His life in Egypt, his association with the Temple-priests, and his probable initiation into some of the Egyptian mysteries had fired him with a determination to found an Egyptian Rite in Masonry based upon these Mysteries, the aim of which was the moral and spiritual regeneration of mankind. The Masonic authority, Kenneth Mackenzie, says:

*His system of Masonry was not founded on shadows. Many of the doctrines he enunciated may be found in the Book of the Dead and other important documents of ancient Egypt. And though he may have committed the fatal error of matching himself with the policy of Rome and getting the worst of it, I have not yet been able to find one iota of evidence that he was guilty of anything more reprehensible than an error of judgment during his various journeys. (Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia, p. 100.)*

*Baron von Gleichen, a man of irreproachable integrity and wide experience, declared that "Cagliostro's Egyptian Masonry was worth the lot of*



*them, for he tried to render it not only more wonderful, but more honorable than any other Masonic Order in Europe."*

Although Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite was open to both sexes, his was by no means the first attempt to give women a standing in Masonry. The Grand Orient of France established a "Rite of Adoption" in 1774. The Duchesse de Bourbon was Grand Mistress of the Rite in 1775, and in 1805 the Empress Josephine acted in the same capacity.

Cagliostro made his first speech on Egyptian Masonry in The Hague, where a Lodge was formed in accordance with the Rite. In Nürnberg, when Cagliostro was asked for his secret sign, he replied by drawing the picture of a serpent biting its own tail. This symbol was the "Circle of Necessity" of the ancient Egyptians, and it is also found on the seal of the Theosophical Society. After establishing his Egyptian Rite in other German cities, Cagliostro arrived in Mittau, capital of the Duchy of Courland, in March 1779. The Masonic Lodge in Mittau was composed principally of noblemen, most of whom were interested in some branch of the occult sciences. The head of this Lodge, the Marshal von Medem, had been a student of alchemy from his early youth, and he welcomed his new brother with open arms. Cagliostro was immediately invited to give an exhibition of his occult powers. He refused, declaring that such powers should never be displayed for the gratification of idle curiosity. Later, after much persuasion, he consented. As

a result, some of his new friends began to look upon him as a supernatural being, while others denounced him as a charlatan.

Cagliostro then proceeded to St. Petersburg, where he appeared for the first time as a magnetic healer. In May, 1780, he arrived in Warsaw, then a great stronghold of both Masonry and Occultism. There he was entertained by Prince Poninski, whose initiation into the Egyptian Rite gained the adherence of a large number of the Polish nobility. The King of Poland heard of Cagliostro's occult powers through a prediction he made to a young lady of the Court. "I do not know," writes Laborde, "what confidence the King and the young lady placed in these predictions, but I do know that they were all fulfilled."

In September, 1780, Cagliostro reached Strasbourg, the capital of Alsace. On the morning of his arrival crowds of people gathered on both banks of the Rhine to catch a glimpse of the mysterious stranger whose fame as a magnetic healer and friend of humanity had preceded him. From the day of his arrival in Strasbourg Cagliostro gave up his entire time to altruistic service. No sick or needy person appealed to him in vain. Every day he visited the unfortunate, whose distress he relieved not only with money, but, as Baron von Gleichen says, "with manifestations of a sympathy that went to the hearts of the sufferers and doubled the value of the actions." He refused all compensation for his services, and if a present were



given to him, he repaid it with a counter present of double value. He supported his poor patients for months at a time, often lodging them in his own house and feeding them at his own table. Like Mesmer, Cagliostro treated his patients magnetically, applying the force directly without the aid of magnetized objects. When he left Strasbourg 15,000 people claimed to have been helped by him.

Shortly after Cagliostro's arrival in Strasbourg he was summoned to the palace of the Prince Cardinal de Rohan, who was deeply interested in the occult sciences and possessed one of the finest alchemical libraries in Europe. When Cagliostro was invited to live in the Cardinal's palace, malicious tongues began to wag, and the rumor spread that His Holiness was spending a fortune upon his new friend. The Baronesse d'Oberkirch repeated the gossip to the Cardinal, who vehemently asserted that "Cagliostro is a most extraordinary, a most sublime man, whose knowledge is equalled only by his goodness. What alms he gives! What good he does! I can assure you that *he has never asked for nor received anything from me!*"

After leaving Strasbourg, Cagliostro went to Bordeaux and Lyons, where Saint-Martin had formerly lived. These cities welcomed him as a new prophet, and many influential men and women were initiated into his Egyptian Rite. In Lyons his Rite was so highly acclaimed that a special Temple was built for its observance, which later became the Mother Lodge of Egyptian Masonry.

Cagliostro settled in Paris in 1785, and his house on the Rue St. Claude became the talk of the town. The entrance hall was adorned with a black marble slab upon which was engraved Pope's Universal Prayer. Statuettes of Isis, Anubis and Apis stood along the walls, which were covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics, and the two lackeys were clothed like Egyptian slaves as they appear on the monuments of Thebes. Cagliostro received his guests in a black silk robe and an Arabian turban made of cloth of gold and sparkling with jewels. He had a striking countenance with "eyes of fire which burned to the bottom of the soul." Cardinal de Rohan confessed that when he first saw Cagliostro he found a dignity so imposing that he was penetrated with awe. According to Georgel, Cagliostro "lived in the greatest affluence, giving much to the needy and seeking no favors from the rich," although no one seemed to know the source of his income. His friends addressed him as "Grand Master," and busts of *le divin Cagliostro* adorned the salons of his admirers.

Shortly after Cagliostro's arrival in Paris he was invited to membership in the Philalethès, a Rite founded in 1773 in the Loge des Amis Réunis. The Mother Lodge was a Theosophical organization founded by Savalette des Langes, whose manuscripts, after his death, passed to the Philosophical Scottish Rite. Cagliostro joined the Philalethians hoping to infuse some Theosophical principles into their Rite. There are many landmarks in Cagliostro's biographies showing that he



taught the doctrine of the "principles" in man and the presence of the indwelling God, and there seems to be no doubt that he served the Masters of a Fraternity he would not -- could not -- name. This fact is admitted by Kenneth Mackenzie:

*"It is a rule recognized amongst adepts -- in fact, a stringent obligation -- that they shall not reveal the identity of their preceptors and initiators; and if that rule was applicable in times before Cagliostro, so it was in his own time. He was sent, in accordance with occult discipline, to rove about Europe, and we have before seen him under the protection of the Knights and Order of Malta; he completes his course by going to Paris and London, and there he was initiated into Masonry. (Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia, p. 99)."*

In Cagliostro's letter to the Philalethians he assured them that the "unknown Grand Master of true Masonry" had cast his eyes upon them, as he wished to prove to them "the original dignity of man, his powers and destiny . . . of which true Masonry gives the symbols and indicates the real road." When the Philalethians refused his help, Cagliostro replied: "We have offered you the truth; you have disdained it. We have offered it for the sake of itself, and you have refused it in consequence of your love of forms." Cagliostro's own Egyptian Rite, however, flourished from the moment he reached Paris. One of the first persons to be initiated was the young Marquis de Lafayette, already a high Mason and the leader of the pre-Revolutionary period in France. Cagliostro

also acted as delegate to the two great Masonic conventions which took place in Wilhelmsbad and Paris in 1782 and 1785.

On August 23, 1785, Cagliostro was accused of complicity in the "Diamond Necklace Affair" and sent to the Bastille. After being imprisoned for nine months he was honorably acquitted, but at the same time (as the Queen was implicated in the scandal) he was asked to leave France. Upon his arrival in England he was accused by the French spy Morande of being the notorious Giuseppe Balsamo. Cagliostro refuted Morande's accusation in an Open Letter to the English People. Morande was forced to retract his statements and apologize to his readers. Nevertheless for the past 150 years historians have continued to confound Cagliostro with Giuseppe Balsamo.

Broken-hearted by the loss of his good name, Cagliostro left England. After years of wandering he arrived in Rome in the spring of 1789. Making one last desperate effort to revive his Egyptian Rite, he was prevailed upon to initiate two men, who proved to be spies of the Inquisition. On the evening of December 27, 1789, he was arrested and thrown into a dungeon in the Castle of St. Angelo. Shortly afterward he was sentenced to death, the sole charge against him being that he was a Mason, and therefore engaged in unlawful studies. As an instance of the hatred of the Papal government for Freemasonry, part of Cagliostro's sentence, issued on March 21, 1791, is worth quoting:

*"Giuseppe Balsamo, convicted of many*



*crimes, and of having incurred the censures and penalties pronounced against heretics, has been found guilty and condemned to the said censures and penalties as decreed by the Apostolic laws of Clement XII and Benedict XIV, against all persons who in any manner whatever favor or form societies and conventicles of Freemasonry, as well as by the edict of the Council of State against all persons convicted of this crime in Rome or in any other place in the dominions of the Pope."*

During his imprisonment Cagliostro's private papers, family relics, diplomas from foreign Courts, his Masonic regalia and even his manuscript on Egyptian Masonry were publicly burned in the Piazza della Minerva. While the condemned Occultist was awaiting his fate, a mysterious stranger demanded an audience with the Pope. He was received, and immediately thereafter Cagliostro's death sentence was changed to life imprisonment in the Castle of St. Leo, located on the frontiers of Tuscany. This Castle stands on the summit of an enormous rock with almost perpendicular sides. Cagliostro was pulled up the side of the mountain in a basket and incarcerated in a dungeon. Here he languished for three years, writing a sentence every day on the walls of his living tomb. The last entry bears the date of March 6, 1795. Exactly seven months later, on October 6, the Paris Moniteur contained a small paragraph announcing that "it is reported

in Rome that the famous Cagliostro is dead."

If this statement was true, and Cagliostro actually did die in the Castle of St. Leo, why are tourists shown the little square hole in the Castle of St. Angelo in Rome where he is said to have expired? After his supposed death it was whispered that Cagliostro had escaped from his dungeon in some miraculous manner, thus forcing his jailers to spread the news of his death. H.P.B. says that "having made a series of mistakes, more or less fatal, he was recalled." His downfall, she declared, was due to his weakness for an unworthy woman and to his possession of certain secrets of nature which he refused to divulge to the Church.

A century and a half have passed since then, and modern Masons, although describing Cagliostro as "a Masonic martyr" (a change of heart due principally, it seems, to the influence of Trowbridge's book), also write of him as a "medium" who perhaps resorted to trickery and employed the devices of a mountebank. (See The New Age, XXVII, Nos. 5 and 6.) How long will thoughtless people continue to defame the good names of the living and mar the memory of the dead by repeating slanders and calumnies? H.P.B. declared that Cagliostro's justification must take place in this century -- a task in which Theosophists can do their part.



V. Illus.  
Bro. ANNIE BESANT, 33°  
Vice President, Grand  
Master of the Supreme  
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ZEN.

of SYDNEY, 10th January 1921 (E. V.)

Monsieur Jean Erigaud

V. Illus. and Rt. Rev. Sir,

I beg to express to you my very hearty thanks for the great honour which you have conferred upon me in raising me to the 95° of the Ancient Order of Memphis-Mizraim. If any information can be given to me as to the duties and responsibilities attached to the position of so exalted a Degree, I shall be very glad to have it, so that I may show myself worthy of the honour conferred upon me. I have at present but very little information as to the history of this Ancient Rite; can you add to your kindness by telling me of any books which I may buy on the subject, either in English, French or Latin?

With many thanks and all heartiest good wishes,

I am ever,

Yours obediently and fraternally,

+ C. W. Leadbeater



# Who was Darbhagiri Nath?

By Julian Ochoa

In the early days of the theosophical society there were many members that participated in the creation of the society, and many also participated in the editing of Blavatsky's books, but the more mysterious of the early members mentioned in the different historical books of the society are the people mentioned in the Mahatma letters, Blavatsky's Letters to A.P. Sinnett, The Letters of The Masters of The Wisdom and her accounts of all the people she met throughout her travels. The focus of this paper will be on one particular person that is mentioned by Blavatsky in one of her letters to A.P. Sinnett, letter number 110. His name is Darbhagiri Nath. Darbhagiri Nath is also mentioned in several of the Mahatma Letters sent to M. K.H. and M.D.K. The importance that is attributed to Darbhagiri Nath is because he is mentioned in relation to a visit made by a mysterious personage to the prison cell of Count Cagliostro in the Forte Di San

Leo.

On an unexpected night of the 27th December of 1789 in Rome Italy, Count Alessandro Cagliostro was ambushed in his own apartment by officers of the Holy Office of the Vatican. He was dragged into a prison cell and on the 7th of April 1791 he was sentenced to death by the Holy Inquisition. He was sentenced for heretical activities such as promoting Freemasonry not long after his Egyptian Rite manuals were destroyed.<sup>1</sup> After the fateful decision to execute Cagliostro, a mysterious man visited the Vatican, who with a simple word was allowed to have an audience with the pope, immediately after the death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Cagliostro was transferred to Tuscany to serve the rest of his sentence in the papal prison of San Leo. The identity of the man that visited the pope on behalf of Cagliostro is not known

1 Cooper, R.L.D. & Faulks, P. (2008), "The Masonic Magician, The Life and Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite," Watkins Publishing London, pg:60-61.



until today.<sup>2</sup> Once installed in the cells of San Leo, Cagliostro had two mysterious visitors, the prison authorities could not ascertain who these men were and used all the means necessary to discover who these men were but they could never find out who they were or what these men and Cagliostro spoke about.<sup>3</sup> According to Vatican statements Cagliostro died on the 28th of August 1795 and was buried at 11 pm.<sup>4</sup>

Blavatsky in her essay "Was Cagliostro a Charlatan," for Lucifer Magazine in 1890 says the following about Cagliostro's death:

*"But yet-a query! Was Cagliostro dead and buried indeed in 1795, at St. Leo? And if so, why should the custodians at the Castle of St. Angelo of Rome show innocent tourists the little square hole in which Cagliostro is said to have been confined and "died"? Why such uncertainty or-imposition, and such disagreement in the legend? Then there are Masons who to this day tell strange stories in Italy. Some say that Cagliostro escaped in an unaccountable way from his aerial prison, and thus forced his jailors to spread the news of his death and burial. Others maintain that he not only escaped, but, thanks to the Elixir of Life, still lives on, though over twice three score and ten years old!"*

Cagliostro's last months on earth were a mystery as much as his entire life.

Nevertheless, Blavatsky sheds light on who can possibly have been one of the mysterious visitors to his prison cell in San Leo. The following is the fragment of the letter that sheds light on this event, (letter 110 Letters from H.P.B to A.P.Sinnett):

*"Am I greater, or in any way better, than were St. Germain, and Cagliostro, Giordano Bruno and Paracelsus, and so many many other martyrs whose names appear in the Encyclopedias of the 19th cent. over the meritorious titles of charlatans and impostors? It shall be the Karma of the blind and wicked judges—not mine. In Rome, Darbagiri Nath went to the prison of Cagliostro at the Fort Sant Angelo, and remained in the terrible hole for more than an hour. What he did there, would give Mr. Hodgson the ground work for another scientific Report if he could only investigate the fact."*

This sheds light on one of the mysterious visitors to Cagliostro's prison cell. From this fragment, arises the question: Who is Darbagiri Nath?

It is important to remember that this mysterious visit to Cagliostro in his prison cell happened between 1791 and 1795. And the letters from Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett, were written between 1880 and 1888. Therefore, this account about Darbagiri Nath was a 100 year old story when Blavatsky narrated it in her letter to A.P. Sinnett. The Mahatma Letters contain

2 Ibid, pg:77.

3 Ibid, pg: 80.

4 Ibid, pg: 83.



more information on who Darbagari Nath was. It is possible that there were several people that used the name of Darbagari Nath as a sort of title or pseudonym, and that all these people were at least Chelas of the same Masters that Cagliostro served.

The following information on Darbagiri Nath is quoted in Theosophy Wiki:

*“Dharbagiri Nath is a mystical name that was used by both an accepted chela, Gwala K. Deb, and a probationary chela, Babaji. In Letter 16 of the Letters from the Masters of Wisdom First Series, this name refers to Babaji.” From: C. Jinarajadasa, Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom, First Series (Adyar, Chennai, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 2011), 147-148.<sup>5</sup>*

Theosophy Wiki provides the following information about Gwala K. Deb:

*“Gwala K. Deb was an accepted chela of M.K.H., whose mystical name was Dharbagiri Nath. He was a brother chela of Chandra Cusha. In 1882 he was 30 years of age. In 1886 Madam Blavatsky wrote to Mr. Sinnett that he had been “with Master KH for the last 13 or 14 years”.*

*He was mentioned in Mahatma Letter No. 65 as a person who could convey papers from Sinnett and Hume to the Mahatmas. In Mahatma Letter No. 53, Madame Blavatsky describes him in this way:*

*I have now with me Deb; Deb “Shortridg”*

*as we call him, who looks a boy of 12, though is past 30 and more. An ideal little face with small cut delicate features, pearly teeth, long hair, almond cut eyes and a Chinese-tartar purple cap on the top of his head. He is my “heir of Salvation” and I have work to do with him. I cannot leave him and have no right to, now. I have to make over my work to him. He is my right hand (and K.H.’s left one) — at imposture and false pretence.*

*In late 1882, Deb, who lived in Darjeeling, was to travel to Simla to deliver a letter from Master K.H. to Mr. Sinnett. However, since Deb was at the time in Tibet undergoing certain occult training, he was unable to go in his physical body. Babaji (a probationary chela) allowed him to use his own body for the occasion. This, later lead the latter to impersonate deb on occasions, which produced considerable confusion among members.<sup>6</sup>*

In The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, Transcribed by T. Barker, second and revised edition In letter 110 and 111 Darbhagiri Nath is mentioned in both letters:

The following is Letter 110 received in Simla, October 7 1882:

*“My dear friend —  
May I trouble you to hand the enclosed Rs. 50 to Darbhagiri Nath when you see him? The little man is in trouble but has to be remonstrated; and the best punishment for*

5 Theosophy Wiki, (2019), “Dharbagiri Nath,” Theosophy Wiki Website: [https://theosophy.wiki/en/Dharbagiri\\_Nath](https://theosophy.wiki/en/Dharbagiri_Nath) (2023).  
6 Theosophy Wiki, (2022), “Gwala K. Deb,” Theosophy Wiki Website: [https://theosophy.wiki/en/Gwala\\_K\\_Deb](https://theosophy.wiki/en/Gwala_K_Deb) (2023).



*an accepted chela is to receive the reproof through a "lay" one. On his way from Ghoom to Bengal through imprudence and indiscretion he lost money, and, instead of addressing himself directly to me he tried to dodge the "Master's eye" and called upon a probationary chela upon whom he has not the slightest claim to help him out of his difficulty. So please tell him that Ram S. Gargya has not received his telegram from Burdwan but that it went direct into the hands of the Lama who notified me of it. Let him be more prudent in future. You now see the danger in allowing young chelas out of sight even for a few days. Money losses are nothing, but it is the results involved and the temptation that are terrible. My friend, I am afraid you too, have been again imprudent. I have a letter from Col. Chesney — very polite and quite diplomatic. Several such messages may do for an excellent refrigerator."*<sup>7</sup>

*Yours,  
K. H.*

Letter No. 111, Received Simla, October 2, 1882:

*"My dear friend,*

*The present will be delivered at your house by Darbhagiri Nath, a young Chela of mine, and his brother Chela, Chandra Cusho. They are forbidden to enter anyone's house without being invited to do so. Therefore, I pray you to pardon our savage customs and, at the same time to humour them by sending them an invitation*

*in your name, either now — if you can receive them privately and without risking their meeting at your place with any stranger; or — at any other time during the evening, or late at night.*

*I have not the slightest objection to Mrs. S. your lady seeing either of them; but I pray her not to address them, since they are forbidden by our religious laws to speak with any lady — their mothers and sisters excepted — and that she would otherwise greatly embarrass them. I pray her to do so in my name, and for my sake. I trust also to your friendship that none but you will speak with them. They have their mission and*

*beyond that they must not go (1) to deliver into your hands my "answers to the famous contradictions" and (2) to interview Mr. Fern. If you have an answer for me, Darbhagiri Nath will come for it whenever you are ready. I also entreat you most earnestly not to inflict upon them Mr. Hume. Do not think of what has happened until everything is explained. Ever yours,  
K. H.*

*P.S. They are also forbidden to shake hands with any man or woman i.e. to touch anyone; but you can invite my little man to come and talk with you as much as you like provided you are discreet."*<sup>8</sup>

The website CWL World Reprinted an article from the Theosophist where

<sup>7</sup> Barker, A.T., (2021), "The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett," Theosophical University Press, Second and Revised Edition, (2021), pg:445.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pg:446-447.



Darbhagiri Nath is mentioned.

*interest, and died a few years later.]”<sup>9</sup>*

*“In an article entitled ‘Two Letters of H.P.B.,’ originally published in The Theosophist, February 1927, and reproduced below, C. Jinarajadasa presents the transcript of Madame Blavatsky’s letter to C. W. Leadbeater, written on 23 June 1886, while he was residing in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). (CWL World)”*

*“[The first of these two letters gives a brief insight into one of the many “situations” in the early days of the T.S. After the Missionary attack on H.P.B. in 1884, she left Adyar with “Bawajee”, Dr. Franz Hartmann and Miss Mary Flynn on March 30, 1885. “Bawajee” was a familiar name for S. Krishnamachari, a young Tamil Brahmin of Tanjore. Bawajee was sent to assist H.P.B., but he got his head turned by the adulation given to him by his western admirers. Finally, he suffered from such an excessive “swelled head” that he considered himself superior to H.P.B. An interesting fact about Bawajee was the use of his body for a while by another and more advanced chela of the Master K.H., by name Darbhagiri Nath. It was Darbhagiri Nath in his own body who had been with the Master in Tibet; later, on the strength of having given his body for a while to Darbhagiri Nath, Bawajee claimed that he had been in Tibet. After Bawajee returned to India, he lost his Theosophical*

Even though Blavatsky mentioned Darbhagiri Nath as having visited Cagliostro at the San Leo prison cell, based on the letters of the Masters of Wisdom, Darbhagiri Nath was a mystical name used by different Chelas and other servants of the Masters of the wisdom, it is possible that the Darbhagiri Nath that visited Cagliostro was using that “Mystical name,” was somebody else and their real identity has remained secret.

From a theosophical perspective this indicates that Cagliostro was, if not a Chela of one of the Masters, he was at least at their service. According to the Theosophical Glossary, Chela means: “A disciple, the pupil of a Guru or Sage, the follower of some adept of a school of philosophy.”<sup>10</sup> Isabel Cooper-Oakley said in her biography of Comte De St. Germain that Cagliostro was his pupil.<sup>11</sup> Cooper-Oakley mentions that Cagliostro was initiated by Comte de St. Germain into a Templar order.<sup>12</sup> Blavatsky said of Comte De St. Germain was certainly the greatest Oriental Adept Europe has seen during the last centuries. But Europe knew him not.<sup>13</sup> The Theosophical glossary defines the word Adept : “ “He who has obtained.” In Occultism one who has reached the stage of Initiation, and become a Master in the

9 CWL, (2023), “CWL receives his third letter from Master K.H.,” CWL World Website: [http://www.cwlworld.info/CWL\\_receives\\_his\\_third\\_letter\\_from\\_Master\\_K.H..pdf](http://www.cwlworld.info/CWL_receives_his_third_letter_from_Master_K.H..pdf) (2023), pg:1.

10 Blavatsky, H.P., (1892), “The Theosophical Glossary,” The Theosophical Publishing House, London (Theosophy trust 2006) pg: 74.

11 Cooper-Oakley, I., (1912), “Comte De St. Germain,” Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. Pg:47.

12 Ibid, pg:131.

13 Blavatsky, H.P., (1892), “The Theosophical Glossary,” The Theosophical Publishing House, London (Theosophy trust 2006) pg:284.



science of Esoteric philosophy.”<sup>14</sup>

Whoever Darbhagiri Nath was around the time of Cagliostro`s last days at San Leo`s Prison, was most likely a Chela of the Easter Brotherhood. What this proves is that even in his last days on earth Cagliostro was not forsaken by the Adepts. And that his trials

in his last incarnation as Cagliostro have taken him to greater heights, we can only speculate who this great soul will be next.







# The Mysterious Life and Transitions of The Cagliostro Jewel

By Nell C. Taylor

Imagine a silver and gold pendant shaped as a jeweled compass, surmounted by an emerald-studded crown, carrying between the arms of the compass a cross of rubies above a gold and silver pelican feeding its young in a nest. Imagine further that the gem stones in the emblem are living galvanometers responding to the vital vibrations of its owner. Such is a description of the mysterious 18th Degree Rosicrucian Jewel, formerly belonging to Cagliostro, but in recent times worn by H.P. Blavatsky. Set with yellow, green, white and red gems, the pure white stones "had the occult property of changing their color to a dark green and sometimes muddy brown, when she was out of health."<sup>1</sup>

What do we know about the history of

this remarkable jewel?<sup>2</sup> Is it valuable because of the precious gems and metals comprising it? Is it coveted for its astonishing occult properties, or as a talisman? For its association with the Rosicrucians? With Cagliostro? With H.P.B? Perhaps all of these. But what is certain, and what is important is that the jewel is a historical landmark and belongs in the archives of the Theosophical Society.

H.P.B. wrote in her diary of 1878, on 2 December, "Found the Rosy Cross Jewel missing from the bureau drawer. Know who took it. It will come back."<sup>3</sup>

And it did come back. The adept Serapis refers to it in a brief note to Olcott, "The lost one is restored in its proper place. The

\* The author gratefully acknowledges her indebtedness to Joseph E. Ross for the use of his unique archives and for his valuable comments and suggestions during the preparation of this article.

1 Henry Steel Olcott. Old Diary Leaves, Fourth Series, 1887–1892. Vol. IV (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1910), 395.

2 In the terminology of Masonic and other secret orders, the symbol representing a stage, de-gree, or function of an office is called a "Jewel," whether or not it contains one or more precious gems.

3 Boris de Zirkoff, comp., H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: Volume 1. 1874–1878. Second ed. (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1977), 425.







The familiar pelican of the Rose Croix degree, feeding its young from its own breast, is in reality a phoenix, a fact which can be confirmed by an examination of the head of the bird. . . . the head of the phoenix being far more like that of an eagle than of a pelican. In the Mysteries it was customary to refer to initiates as phoenixes or men who had been born again for just as physical birth gives man consciousness in the physical world, so the neophyte, after nine degrees in the womb of the Mysteries, was born into a consciousness of the spiritual world.<sup>9</sup>

H.P.B. devotes considerable attention to the meanings of the cross and circle.<sup>10</sup> The compass, being the instrument for constructing a circle, symbolizes the abstract Deity—thus, the rationale for including it in the 18th Degree Jewel. The equal-armed cross of rubies, represents man in incarnation, enclosed within the arms of the compass—the cross representing man’s divine aspect, the rose color, the symbol of Nature and virgin Earth, the celestial mother and nourisher of man.<sup>11</sup> Above the compass is the crown, emblem of royalty, shedding its beneficent aura over all the symbols

of the Jewel. In Oriental scriptures, the highest spiritual teachings are called “the Royal Secret Doctrine.”<sup>12</sup>

### Who Was Cagliostro?

For readers unacquainted with the history of the Rosicrucians or Cagliostro, the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross, H.P.B. says, was founded in the mid-thirteenth century by a German knight named Rosencranz.<sup>13</sup> As the Christian religion is divided into various sects, so the Rosicrucian sect subsequently gave birth to other Cabalistic branches of Masonry.

Of the life of Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, little is known, but much is presumed. Most of his biographers depict him as quite a scoundrel and connect him with a Giuseppe Balsamo, a native of Sicily. H.P.B. remarks in her article “Was Cagliostro a ‘Charlatan’?” that this was a symbolic name, likely given to him by his adept teacher, as was customary for disciples destined to work in the world.<sup>14</sup> Validity for his title, however, can be traced to a distant relative through his maternal grandmother’s family. Dates of his life are estimated to be 1743 to 1795.

9 Manly P. Hall, *An Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolic Philosophy; Being an interpretation of the secret teachings concealed within the rituals, allegories and mysteries of all ages* (Los Angeles: The Philosophical Research Society, 1977), [Reduced facsimile of 1928 ed.], 39.

10 Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy*, Vol. II, Anthropogenesis (Pasadena, Theosophical University Press, 1988), 54562. Also, Adyar edition, Vol. 4. 4th ed. (Adyar, Madras; Theosophical Publishing House 1938), 115–32.

11 H.P. Blavatsky *Collected Writings* XIV: 292; *The Secret Doctrine*, Adyar ed., V: 293.

12 Bhagavan Das, trans., *Mystic Experiences Tales of Yoga and Vedanta from the Yoga Vasishtha*. Third ed. (Varanasi. The Indian Bookshop, 1959), 36.

“And for the Science was first given to kings, it has come down under the name of Raja-vidya, Raja-guhya, Science of Kings and King of Sciences, the Royal Secret Doctrine.”

13 H.P. Blavatsky *Collected Writings* 1: 104-5.

14 Boris de Zirkoff, comp., *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*: Vol. XII: 1889–1890. (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 79. The entire article (78–88) appeared first in *Lucifer*.



After a somewhat stormy youth, the still young Cagliostro went to Malta and there studied the Mysteries. He always told people he was born in Malta, meaning that he was there born into the spiritual life, there first initiated into magical rites.

Ordinarily he was the most captivating and charming of gentlemen, kind to the afflicted and generous to the indigent. But when hypocrisy goaded him too much, he could exhibit a violent temper.

In the early 1770s, while living in England, Cagliostro and his wife Serafina were very poor, and at first earned their living by selling his drawings. Later they lived in wealth. Cagliostro was reputed to be able to enlarge pearls and to transmute base materials into gem stones and precious metals. In London, he was initiated into Freemasonry in the Scottish rite. Cagliostro travelled to many cities in Europe, some in Russia, in each place establishing Masonic lodges. His powers of healing were spectacular. Wherever he travelled his reputation preceded him, and large crowds sought his drawing room. He never took money for treatment and was persecuted by the medical authorities for practicing medicine without certification. When life became too complicated in one place, he moved to another.

In France, Cagliostro was held in great esteem by many noblemen and royalty. Goethe and Schiller were among his admirers. A scheming Countess de

la Motte implicated him in a scandal involving a diamond necklace allegedly ordered by Marie Antoinette. For this, both Cagliostro and his wife were for a time incarcerated in the Bastille until he could prove their innocence. His indiscretion in demonstrating his alchemical powers—making diamonds and gold “out of nothing”—perhaps, one may surmise, led to these quick karmic results.

Cagliostro was a clairvoyant who predicted many incidents which actually came to pass. Furthermore, other remarkable predictions from mediumistic children he utilized in his masonic lodges also came to pass. Among those attending his meetings were priests and high churchmen, including Cardinal de Rohan, himself of the royal family. But Cagliostro’s being a Mason and an occultist and knowing “many secrets—deadly to the Church of Rome”<sup>15</sup> brought him the persecution of the Jesuits.

He worked, in 1785, in the Lodge of Philalethes along with Mesmer and other professional, literary, legal, financial, and clerical men. He attempted to bring into it the Eastern teaching of the divine and intermediate principles in man. But they refused to give up their traditional forms. He remained a Mason, but created his own ritual in the Egyptian tradition.

A letter of 1789 refers to the Count di Cagliostro and his wife arriving in Italy, having great wealth and being sought by



many for private interviews. In 1790, he, his wife and a Capuchin monk were arrested and brought before the Inquisition. On April 7, 1791, he was condemned to death after a lengthy trial, lengthy because they could find no suitable evidence to prove his guilt. His books and family possessions were burnt in a public square.

As he was about to be turned over to civil authorities, a stranger appeared at the Vatican and demanded a private audience with the Pope, sending him a word instead of a name. He was received immediately by the Pope and shortly after, the Pope commuted the sentence to life imprisonment in the Castle of San Leo. He was reported to have died in prison, but some say he escaped and that the jailors, to save face, had to pretend that he died and was buried below the Castle.

Cagliostro, along with his contemporary, the Count de St. Germain, was believed to have discovered the secret of longevity and thus appeared again in 1861.<sup>16</sup> H.P.B. says, "The Count de Saint-Germain is, until this very time, a living mystery... The countless authorities we have in literature, as well as in oral tradition (which sometimes is the more trustworthy) about this wonderful Count's having been met and recognized in different centuries, is no myth."<sup>17</sup> And quoting Eliphas Levi that "Cagliostro, who died forsaken in the cells

of the Inquisition," H.P.B. in a footnote says, "This is false, and the Abbe Constant (Eliphas Levi) knew it was so."<sup>18</sup>

### Chronology of the Jewel

To outline the transitions of ownership of the Cagliostro Jewel during the past one hundred and more years, we have seen that H.P.B. in 1878 noticed it gone from her bureau drawer, and that it came back to her. How she came to have it initially, Rukmini Arundale, interviewed by Joseph Ross, said, "During the French Revolution, Cagliostro was really very busy and working with the Master, the Prince [Count Saint Germain]. I don't know how H.P.B. got it, but she saw him on the physical plane. He was evidently still living somewhere. So, he gave it to her, for the real Masonic Order is there. And she gave it to Dr. Besant."<sup>19</sup>

Annie Besant said late in 1893 that she saw evidence supporting the rumors that William Q. Judge had forged messages from the Master.<sup>20</sup> In 1894, she issued a "Statement Prepared for the Judicial Committee" containing six charges of untruthfulness in his claimed communications with the Master. Charge III was titled "Deception Practised Toward H.S. Olcott with regard to the Rosicrucian Jewel of H. P. B."<sup>21</sup>

16 H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings 1:161.

17 H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: Vol. 1:109.

18 H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings 1:1 61

19 Rukmini Devi Arundale. Tape-recorded interview. April 8, 1978. Joseph E. Ross private archives.

20 Annie Besant, *The Case Against W. Q. Judge* (Publ. at the offices of the Theosophical Publishing Society 7, Duke St. Adelphi, W.C., 1895), 14.

21 Annie Besant, *The Case Against W. Q. Judge*, 23–26.



Mrs Besant described the Jewel incident in her pamphlet on the case, published in 1895:

... at Colonel Olcott's request she [H.P.B.] lent it to him, and it remained in his possession when H.P.B. finally left India in 1885.

In 1888, when Colonel Olcott came to England, he brought over a number of H.P.B.'s things for her, this Rosicrucian Jewel among them, and handed it over to her at 17, Lansdowne Road. She sometimes wore this Jewel afterwards, and it was among H.P.B.'s things after her death. Mr. Judge saw it among them when he came over to London in May, 1891.

In August, 1891, after Mr. Judge had returned to New York, I received a letter from him, on which was written an order in the Mahatma M's script desiring me to send this Rosicrucian Jewel to Mr. Judge. I accordingly sent the Jewel carefully packed in a sealed packet to New York by Colonel Olcott (the Colonel knowing nothing of the contents of the packet), he handed the packet to Mrs. J.C. Ver Planck, who wrote to me acknowledging the receipt, and said she would lock it away. I also wrote Mr. Judge, telling him that I had sent the Jewel by Colonel Olcott.

On September 12th, 1891, Mr. Judge, writing in the train, and dating 'In Wyoming on the R.R.', wrote me: —

"Yes, it is the silver phoenix. I will tell J.C.V.P. to keep the package in my safe."... In October, 1891, when Colonel Olcott was at the house of Dr. J. Anderson, in San Francisco, he was telling Dr. A. about H.P.B.'s Rosicrucian Jewel and the mysterious property possessed by the stones in it, of changing colour with the state of her health. In this connection the Colonel remarked that he had the Jewel at Adyar, and when he got back there would look and see if the stones had changed colour since H.P.B.'s death. Mr. Judge was present at this conversation. On hearing this last remark he said to Colonel Olcott:

"Olcott, the Master tells me to say that He has taken the Jewel away from Adyar, and that when you get back you will find it gone. Let this be a proof to you of the genuineness of the communications that I receive from the Mahatmas."

After his return to Adyar, Colonel Olcott recounted what had occurred to B. Keightly, who thereupon said that he had seen the Colonel give the jewel to H.P.B. in London in 1888 or 1889. His servant Babula corroborated, saying that he had himself put the jewel in the Colonel's trunk."<sup>22</sup>

In the same pamphlet, similar evidence is given in a statement by Bertram Keightley:

... in 1888, I was present in H.P.B.'s room when H.S.O. gave to H.P.B. the Rosicrucian-Jewel..." and that in 1891, "while driving up



to Adyar Headquarters from the harbour on his return H.S.O. related to me his conversation with W.Q.J. in San Francisco... I at once reminded H.S.O. that he had given the Rosicrucian Jewel to H.P.B. as above described in 1888 in London. I was also present when Babula reminded H.S.O. that he (Babula) had himself packed the Jewel in H.S.O.'s trunk when H.S.O. was going to Europe in 1888.<sup>23</sup>

On July 18, 1894, a joint statement by Judge and Olcott give conflicting reports of the incident of 1891:

William Q. Judge & Col. H.S. Olcott hereby together agree in writing that the following states what ...Judge said ...in Oct. 1891 at Dr. Anderson's house.

W.Q. Judge says: "Col. Olcott having stated that the Jewel was at Adyar, I went into my room adjoining. In a few moments I came back to Col. Olcott's room and said to him, 'Col., Master says I may tell you that the Jewel is not at Adyar and you will not find it there.' No more was said and not a single word was uttered by me to the effect that Master had taken the Jewel away."

"Col. Olcott says: 'My recollection of the incident differs from the above. At the same time, as no notes of the conversation were made by me at the time, it is but fair to say that my memory is as likely to have misled me as Mr. Judge's or Dr. Anderson's to have misled them. The scene occurred, to the best of my recollection, in Mr. Judge's bedroom...; the persons present

were Dr. Anderson, Mr. Judge and myself... I described to Dr. Anderson the well-known Rosicrucian jewel... I said that on returning to Adyar I should ...see whether the crystals had resumed their proper hue or perhaps turned black since H.P.B.'s death. Judge, who was standing next me... said, 'Olcott, the Master tells me that you will not find the jewel at Adyar...' ...I should be disposed ...to indicate that the Master had taken it away, but my memory fails me in this respect and I will not venture to say that such words were spoken. The clear impression made on me, however . . . is that Judge was giving me a test of his power to get communications from the Masters; and. ..as soon as I got to Adyar I hunted for the jewel, and then discovered that I had myself taken it to London in 1888 and returned it to H.P.B. herself. [Signed] H.S. Olcott, London 18 July 1894.<sup>24</sup>

In preparation for his defense against charges brought against him to the General Council, Judge telegraphed to Dr. Anderson, June 18, 1894, that one charge was that Judge told Olcott the Master said the Jewel was not at Adyar, and asks Anderson to mail at once an affidavit whether this was true or false. Surprisingly, Anderson's notarized reply stated:

There did not to the best of my recollection and belief, occur in my presence any conversation between them relative to the Rosicrucian jewel of the late Madame H.P. Blavatsky, nor was there in my presence

23 Annie Besant, *The Case Against W. Q. Judge*, 77.

24 Archives, Theosophical Society (Pasadena).



any statements to the effect that "Judge told him (Olcott) Master then said that the Jewel was not at Adyar," as quoted in a telegram hereunto attached, nor was there any reference to said jewel nor to Master in this or any cognate connection.... That the conversation referred to in the telegram hereunto attached did not occur, and that there is no lapse on the part of my memory will be appreciated when I state that this was the first time I had ever had the pleasure of meeting Col. Olcott, and the first time I had ever had the opportunity of conversation with Mr. Judge, and, owing to the prominent connection of both with the Society, I was both attentive and watchful for any hint as to the Society, generally, and any mention of the Masters, particularly, as I was most intensely eager for information concerning the latter. [Signed] Jerome A. Anderson, M.D."<sup>25</sup>

Now follows a gap of nearly three years wherein the writer has not been able to trace the actual location of the Jewel. It is of record that Mr. Judge or Mrs. Ver Planck had it in September 1891. Mrs. Ver Planck wrote to Mrs. Besant, 23 September 1891:

I note your instructions re packet. Mr. Judge has told me to place it, endorsed, in the safe of Mr. Neresheimer, as our own here is used by several persons.

And again on 26 September 1891:

Col. H.S. Olcott handed me the parcel from you, Mr. Neresheimer being present, and as the Col. left the room, & Mr. Neresheimer remained, I put the whole into one of our large linen envelopes, sealed it, and Mr. Neresheimer endorsed it for Mr. Judge & took it at once to his safe. It occurred to me afterwards, that had you been so gracious as to send me a line within the outer envelope addressed to me, I have now to wait till Mr. Judge returns for the contentment of reading it!!"<sup>26</sup>

It is also of record that Colonel Olcott or Mrs. Besant had it in July 1894. The Archivist of the Theosophical Society, Pasadena, California, made a search for any reference in Judge's papers to the return of the Jewel to Mrs. Besant, and reported "for the present... we have no information to send you."<sup>27</sup> No response has been received from Radha Burnier at the Theosophical Society, Adyar, India, regarding anything among Mrs. Besant's or Olcott's papers relating to the return of the Jewel. Perhaps some day a document will be found to clarify this period in the Jewel's chronology.

So, from Judge's or Mrs. Ver Planck's possession, the Jewel came back somehow to Mrs. Besant. C. Jinarajadasa, fourth International President of the Theosophical Society, referred to two paintings of the Cagliostro Jewel:

The first one is painted and signed by John

<sup>25</sup> Letter of Jerome A. Anderson, M.D., "To Whom it May Concern," 18 June 1894, Archives, Theosophical Society (Pasadena).  
<sup>26</sup> Letters to Mrs Besant, 23 September and 26 September 1891. Archives, Theosophical Society (Pasadena).  
<sup>27</sup> Letter from The Archivist of the Theosophical Society (Pasadena), Kirby Van Mater, 6 March 1990.



Varley on July 28, 1894, and is witnessed at back "as being a fair representation" by Mrs. Varley and countersigned with Col. Olcott's signature of the same date. The second painting a week before was painted by Mrs. Isabel Cooper-Oakley and witnessed by H.S. Olcott, G.T. Campbell and A.J. Willson. If H.P.B. gave it to Amma [Mrs. Besant before her death in 1891, it must have been in her possession and she must have lent it to Col. Olcott for the paintings. Furthermore, evidently Col. Olcott was under the impression when he made his will that the jewel was with him in Adyar.<sup>28</sup>

Colonel Olcott's Will,<sup>29</sup> dated Adyar, 11 January 1907, states:

The Rosicrucian jewel and Master M's portrait (painted by Mrs. Jibhart) now loaned to Annie Besant, are to be returned to the curios [sic] at Headquarters after her death.

Jinarajadasa wanted to have a bust made of Mrs. Besant, not when she was old but in the year 1902. He wrote to Rukmini Arundale:

. . . in the year 1902 ... a photograph of her [Besant was taken in Florence by an Italian painter... In this photograph Amma [Besant] is wearing H.P.B.'s Rosicrucian Jewel. You will recall my sending you the

part of the Will of Colonel Olcott where he leaves the Jewel to the Society. It is now with you and you said sometime you would return it. I presume Amma herself did not recall this clause in the Colonel's Will, so that when she made her own Will... she did not mention the jewel... I presume it is locked up with your other jewels ...and if so I would like you to hand the jewel over to me and take a receipt from me. I can then see to the cast being made for the bust and that the jewel is placed in Amma's safe in her room."<sup>30</sup>

Mrs Arundale recounted how the Jewel came to her:

And one day, Dr. Besant called Dr. Arundale over to her room and invited me also to come. Then she put this around his neck and said, "I want you to wear this." Then, next minute she smiled at me and she said, "Of course, it's also for Rukmini." She said, "And so she can wear it any time." So I kept it."<sup>31</sup>

When Jinarajadasa insisted on her returning it because Colonel Olcott wrote in his Will that the Jewel should go to the Society after his death, Rukmini Arundale said to him:

"How can that be true? Because, here Dr. Besant gave it directly to us, and how could he have said that in his will? And

28 Letter from C. Jinarajadasa to Srimati Rukmini Devi Arundale, 2 June 1948. Joseph E. Ross private archives.

29 Copy of Colonel Olcott's will, dated 11 January 1907, certified by T.S. (Adyar) Treasurer A.J. Hamerster, Adyar, 20 October 1933, that this is a true copy of the original Will and Codicil deposited in the Registry of the High Court at Madras, certified by the 2nd Assistant Register, 24 April 1912. Joseph E. Ross private archives.

30 Letter from C. Jinarajadasa to Rukmini Devi Arundale, 26 May 1948. Joseph E. Ross private archives.

31 Arundale, Rukmini Devi. Tape-recorded interview, 8 April 1978. Joseph E. Ross private archives.



she said H.P.B. gave it. She couldn't have told an untruth." And then he looked still further and discovered that this was worn by Dr. Besant before Colonel Olcott died. 1902, and Colonel Olcott died in 1907. So then, he wrote to me saying, "You are quite right. So Colonel Olcott must have made a mistake." He [Olcott] probably thought, having seen this rare thing, "You see, we don't know what will happen. It should go to the Society." But not meaning that legally it was his property, he must have put it that way.<sup>32</sup>

Rukmini Arundale responded to Jinarajadasa's letter, saying:

Two years ago I started travelling by aeroplanes, and at the suggestion and with the help of Henry Hotchener I made a will. Knowing the value of the Cagliostro jewel I have left it to the Theosophical

Society at my death with many other valuable possessions."<sup>33</sup>

The fascinating Cagliostro Rosicrucian Jewel no doubt is, or was, a highly magnetized object. It's significance when worn by a person of the 18th Degree may not be so much in the attainment of occult status as in the work the wearer is intended to do. Seven people have possessed it since Cagliostro—HPB, bringer of light; Olcott, spreader of light; Besant, expositor of light; Ver Planck, keeper of light; Judge, counsellor of light; George and Rukmini Arundale, devotee and transformer of light. All these have made significant contributions to the theosophical movement. Whether or not the Cagliostro Jewel is destined to further assist humanity's evolution remains to be seen.

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32 Arundale, Rukmini Devi. Tape-recorded interview, 8 April 1978.

33 Letter from Rukmini Devi Arundale to C. Jinarajadasa, 28 June 1948. Copy in Joseph E. Ross private archives.







# H.P.B. Rose Croix Jewel

By Julian Ochoa

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Famous occultists have always been known to have talismans, jewels, rings and necklaces that give them power, or a particular status based on its symbolism. In modern occult circles, the most famous jewels that have captivated audiences interested in such topics, are those that the historical Freemason, Count Cagliostro possessed. Count Cagliostro was an 18th Century figure, he was famous for his mysterious origins, his masonic activities, his connections to the 18th century European Royalty, and for his dealings with notable people like Benjamin Franklin, Louis Claude de St. Martin, and other occult adepts known in masonic circles as the Unknown Superiors. Cagliostro was registered to have passed away at the fortress of St. Leo in 1791 after having been tried by the Holy Inquisition. His legacy was that of mystery, and awe, on the other hand, his detractors ensured

his name would remain for ever tainted with misinformation. Cagliostro has been loved by many and has also been an object of laughter. What many people does not know, is that he left not only a Freemasonic Egyptian Ritual which has now been republished in the book the Masonic Magician, by Philippa Faulks and Robert L.D. Cooper, but he has also left artefacts which are held in different private estates and museums. The most famous of his artefacts, are the scarab ring, which is kept in a museum in London, the second one is the Kabbalistic knife which was sold in an auction in 2003 and the last of his known artefacts is the Cagliostro Jewel, which was given to H.P. Blavatsky by one of her Masters. The Cagliostro Jewel has a story of its own, and it is this jewel which this paper will focus on.

The journey of the Cagliostro jewel as it is known at present started with Blavatsky. A more recent owner of the jewel, Rukmini Arundale, was recorded saying that Blavatsky received the jewel directly



from Cagliostro's Master, The Prince.<sup>1</sup> Another way by which Blavatsky could have received the jewel was through a connection to her Master, in the letters from Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett, Blavatsky mentions that a disciple of her Master visited Count Cagliostro at the fortress of St. Angelo in Italy; the fortress of St. Angelo is where it is said Cagliostro Passed away in solitary confinement. One of the Master's Disciple, Darbargiri Nath, visited Cagliostro for about an hour.<sup>2</sup> Until Blavatsky's recounting of this story, it was unknown by The Vatican authorities who this visitor was, Dadrbaghiri Nath is still unknown outside theosophical circles.

Upon the death of Blavatsky in 1891, the Cagliostro jewel passed into the custody of Col. Henry S. Olcott, President-Founder of the Theosophical Society. He allowed Annie Besant to wear the Jewel. There are some photographs of Mrs Besant wearing the jewel. However, Col. Olcott stipulated in his Will that the Cagliostro Jewel should be returned to the TS Museum at Adyar upon her death. When George Arundale was writing the book The Lotus Fire, Arundale asked Dr. Besant, if he could borrow the Jewel so that its influence may help him in writing the book. When Dr Besant died, in 1933, George Arundale still had in his possession the Jewel, which, after his death in 1945, passed into the hands of his wife, Rukmini Devi Arundale. Various Presidents of the TS, including C. Jinarajadasa, N. Sri Ram and John Coats,

had written letters to Mrs Arundale, on behalf of the General Council of the TS, requesting her to return the Jewel to the TS Museum at Adyar, as was determined in Col. Olcott's Will. Mrs Arundale claimed that Dr Besant had gifted the Jewel to her. She kept the jewel until her passing in 1986. In 1992, Pedro Oliveira, then International Secretary of The Theosophical Society, obtained the jewel from the Kalakshetra Foundation in Chennai. Mr. Oliveira wrote the following statement regarding the return of the Jewel to the Theosophical Society:

*"The Cagliostro Jewel Returns to Adyar*

*In March 1992 I went to live at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras (now Chennai), India. There I worked as international Secretary until October 1996.*

*Some time after my arrival I was asked to seek an appointment with Mr K. Shankara Menon, then President of Kalakshetra - College of Fine Arts, in order to request that the Cagliostro Jewel be returned to the Society, as Col. Olcott, our President-Founder, had bequeathed it in his will to the TS.*

*Early in July 1992 I went to Kalakshetra campus in Tiruvanmiyur, near Adyar, and met Mr Shankara Menon, who welcomed me as a gentleman. He told me there was*

1 Taylor, Nell C. "The Mysterious Life And Transitions Of The Cagliostro Jewel," Theosophical History a Quarterly Journal of Research, Vol. 3 No. 3, (July 1990) pg. 82.

2 Barker, A.T. "The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett," T. Fisher UNWIN LTD, LONDON, (1925), pg:78.



*a dispute about the jewel and that it had been kept in a bank safe. But he said he would give it to me to be returned to the Theosophical Society. He then asked me to bring to him a formal letter of request. In the meantime he would see that the jewel was brought from its safe to him.*

*On 17 July 1992 I went again to Kalakshetra, this time with a formal letter of request, written in the letterhead of the TS. Once more Mr Shankara Menon gently welcomed me. He showed me the case containing the jewel and opened it. I could then ascertain that the jewel was inside. He then dictated a receipt, with a copy, to his secretary. I signed the receipt and he gave me the jewel, after which I thanked him on behalf of the Theosophical Society. I went back to the International Headquarters and handed over the jewel to the person in charge of the Museum and Archives."*

The Cagliostro Jewel symbolises the Freemasonic 18° of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, also known as the Rose Croix degree, the jewel is composed of the Rose Croix symbol of the Pelican feeding its babies, symbolizing Jesus sacrificing himself for God and Humanity, The cross is also represented in the jewel symbolising the Christian and Universal aspects of the Rose Croix degree, The

Compasses is the instrument, of the Master of the Temple with which he designs the perfect temple.<sup>3</sup>

In conclusion the Cagliostro jewel is a relic of the Freemasonic and Theosophical world. Not only did Cagliostro leave a legacy in the masonic mythos, Blavatsky mentioned him several times in her writings and inherited his jewel which today is kept in theosophical hands as it was intended the moment the jewel was given to her.

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# The Rite of Memphis

By The V. Ulls. Bro. C. Jinarajadasa, 33°

On December 23, 1942, in London there passed to the Grand Lodge above a Grand Inspector-General of our Order, the V. Ills. Bro. Reginald Gambier Macbean, 33°. But what is strange is that this Bro. was not initiated in any Lodge of our Order, but joined our Order after he had received the 33° from our Supreme council in Paris.

Bro. Macbean was in the British Consular Service and was for many years Vice-Consul in Genoa, and later Consul at Palermo. King Edward VII made him M.V.O. – Member of the Victorian Order. During the Period as Consul of Palermo, Bro. Macbean joined Freemasonry as a member of the Rite of Memphis, whose Sanctuary was at Palermo. This is a rite concerning which is much scepticism among Masonic Historians. Nevertheless it is well known that when Cagliostro was in London he established a Lodge of the Egyptian Rite in London. The paternity of

the Sanctuary at Palermo is derived from Egypt, and Bro. Macbean once published a long memorandum concerning the Rite, its origin in the Middle Ages, and its various ramifications. Garibaldi, who was well known as a Mason (he was initiated at Montevideo) accepted honorary membership of the Sanctuary of the Rite of Memphis at Palermo, the only one then at the time. I was myself admitted to the Rite at Palermo in 1923 and was consecrated with a sword which was Garibaldi's, a treasure of the Sanctuary. In England, the Grand Master of the Rite was Bro. Yarker.

This Rite is divided into 97 degrees, the first three of which are the same as in ordinary Masonry. In all the other degrees up to the 95th, to which I was admitted, the words and signs are mostly different. All cover the same ethical ground as in Co-Freemasonry, though the degrees



are divided differently, and some of them definitely bring in teachings from Zoroastrianism and the Vedas. But this Rite is particularly distinguished by the fact that it states openly that its highest degree, the 97th is held only by the "invisible head." The Grand Master of the Rite on earth holds only up to the 96th degree.

Bro. Macbean was admitted to Lodge "Rigeneratori" of Palermo and received the first three degrees in 1904. That same year some months later he received its 12th degree. On August 18, 1905, he was admitted to degrees 30-90; on January 1, 1906, to degrees 33-95.

The sanctuary at Palermo was never very strong and made no attempt to proselytize. As there seemed the possibility, owing to the death or removal of several of the senior members, that the Rite might be extinguished, or that some unscrupulous brethren might forge a patent and start the Rite elsewhere (such things had been known to occur), the brethren at Palermo invited Bro. Macbean, whom they knew well, not only in his official capacity as British Consul but as a gentleman of honour, to accept the vacant post of Grand Master. Bro. Macbean was installed Grand Master on July 12, 1921.

The Supreme Council of International Co-Freemasonry in Paris had no formal "fraternal relations" with the Rite of Memphis so far as I know, though it knew the history of the Sanctuary of Palermo, and its affiliations with the Grand Orient

of Egypt. When the Sanctuary decided to elect Bro. Macbean as its Grand Master, and even some months before his formal induction into that office, the Supreme Council conferred on March 28, 1921, the Degree of Grand Inspector-General on Bro. Macbean.

On retiring from service, Bro. Macbean became a member of various Lodges and Chapters of our obedience such as Isis Mark Lodge and St. Albans, Chapter No. 5, In England. During the period he lived at the Theosophical Headquarters at Adyar as Treasurer of The Society, he joined in April, 1926, the Lodge Rising Sun of India No. 107, and also that same year the R.C. Chapter Loyalty No. 4 during the time that I was M.W.S. The following year he was admitted to H.R.A., and into the chairs of the three Principals, and acted as H., with the V. Ills. Bro. Leadbeater, 33°, as Z., and V. Ills. Bro. G.S. Arundale, 33°, as J., at the Consecration of Chapter Herakles No. 10. In 1927 he acted as I.P.M. at the consecration of the Lodge Shri Vasanta. In 1930, when Bro. Macbean felt that owing to the age he could take a little part in Masonic work, he resigned from the Lodges and Chapters to which he belonged, and destroyed all papers.

As mentioned above, Bro. Macbean became Grand Master of the Rite of Memphis in 1921. Soon after, laws were enacted by Mussolini against all forms of Masonry in Italy, and the Sanctuary at Palermo decided to lower its columns, rather than carry on clandestinely against the law. But before doing so, and in order to safeguard



the future of the Rite, the Sanctuary, by a formal patent, attested by all officers transferred all rights and privileges of the Rite of Memphis to five brethren, C.W. Leadbeater, J.I. Wedgwood, G.S. Arundale, O. Kollerstorm and C. Jinarajadasa. Bro. Leadbeater was a member of the Rite in France, and Bro. Wedgwood had, I believe, received it with the Rite of Mizraim from Bro. Yarker in England. In the patent, these five brethren were given full freedom to re-open and work the Rite when and where and how they might decide upon. It seems somewhat strange that the name of the V. Ills. Bro. Annie Besant, 33°, does not appear as one of those to whom the privilege of carrying on the Rite was conferred. Bro. Macbean and several of the Sanctuary were her devoted followers, and she had already been admitted to honorary membership of the Sanctuary, and they would have liked to give her distinction. But Bro. Macbean explained

to me his anxiety that there should be no challenge possible concerning the validity of the transfer of the Rite by the patent, and how this challenge might occur if a woman had been named in the patent, since it had never been the tradition of the Sanctuary at Palermo to admit women into Freemasonry, till Bro. Besant from the group to whom the Rite of Memphis was transferred.

There is a Sanctuary of the Rite of Memphis and Mizraim, with several lodges, in Argentina, with headquarters in a fine temple at Rosario. Its charter is not from Palermo, but from a certain Bro. Pessina, of Naples, who claimed to be Hierophant of the Rite in Italy, a claim challenged by Bro. Yarker. Lately the Sanctuary has created Lodges exclusively of women, but it has not admitted them into Freemasonry, but only into a Rite of Adoption.







# The Magic Flute

By I. M. Oderberg

The year 1991 marks the bicentenary of the death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in Vienna on December 5, 1791. During the current year numerous tributes have been paid to his remarkable genius; here we shall focus upon his masterpiece and last completed composition, *The Magic Flute*. While his libretto has been derided until recently as "childish" and unworthy of the superb musical score, Goethe remarked that "More knowledge is required to understand the value of this libretto than to mock it!" (*The Magic Flute, Masonic Opera: An Interpretation of the Libretto and the Music*, by Jacques Chailley, a composer as well as an eminent professor of music, provides the well-researched material that does justice to both the music and libretto, illuminating the whole opera with his knowledge of the music of the latter part of the 18th century, and the currents of ideas circulating through the courts of Europe and among scholars). To shed light on Mozart's intention we need to examine the opera against the background of Masonic ideas, symbols,

and ritual connected with the process of initiation, a word much bruited abroad those days, and misunderstood then as it is in our own time.

During the period of Mozart's lifetime, Masonry was prominent in Viennese society. Mozart himself was eleven years of age when he composed a song set to a Masonic text for his physician, a Mason who, treating the boy for smallpox, had saved him from being pockmarked. When he was twelve, Mozart also composed *Bastien and Bastienne*, a small work still performed occasionally; its first performance was in the gardens of Dr. Anton Mesmer, whose theory of animal magnetism was libeled by Parisian medical opponents as "quackery." Dr. Mesmer is today best known for "mesmerism," quite often misrepresented as being the same as hypnosis.

Many of Mozart's early contacts were Masons, some of them close friends. Others were members of Illuminati circles



flourishing at the time. In Paris, the Comte de Cagliostro — not a charlatan as certain vested interests to this day would have us believe — tried to purify the existing Masonic lodges in France, and finally set up his own “Egyptian Rite” which admitted women as well as men in a kind of “Adoption” adjunct. Some suggest that Mozart knew Cagliostro and that the name Sarastro, given by the composer to the High Priest of Isis and Osiris, was an allusion to Cagliostro. More generally, however, the name is thought to have been derived from that of Zoroaster or Zarathustra, a reformer of the ancient Persian religion.

The story of *The Magic Flute* deals with the entry into a course of spiritual development by Prince Tamino, son of a king who evidently had some acquaintance with the training since he had spoken to Tamino rather often about Queen of the Night, leaving Tamino with “unbounded admiration” for her. That Tamino is attired in Japanese clothing already introduces an Oriental note. The beginning of the opera indicates the preparatory labor that Tamino and Pamina — the leading feminine character — must perform on the threshold of their initiation. As for Papageno, a Birdcatcher, standing for average humanity, and his later companion Papagena, they undergo corresponding mini-trials, “but in a tone of comedy.”

The action opens in a wild, mountainous place where Tamino is pursued by a serpent. He loses consciousness, a

symbolic death, a “rehearsal” of the final initiation, itself the conscious experience of what actually occurs unconsciously to us during the death process. This was an open hint of what was understood to have anciently taken place in the Greater Mysteries during initiation. The candidate who was successful “returned” to self-consciousness aware of all that had happened, and from then onward could speak — if he would — of the experience with the “authority” of direct knowledge. Only those candidates capable of coping with the enormous stress involved as the soul is freed from the entranced body, and can endure being aware of what takes place after a normal death, were allowed to even attempt the trials.

Tamino’s encounter with the serpent is resolved by three veiled ladies — Messengers of Queen of the Night who symbolizes “Nature still virgin and uncultivated” — who kill the monster. Papageno enters and takes credit for saving the prince, only to be punished by the Messengers. His mouth is padlocked to prevent him from chattering (his name aptly means a parrot). Shown a portrait of Pamina, the Queen’s daughter who has been kidnapped, Tamino promises to free her. The Messengers give him a magic flute, and Papageno a set of magic bells. (Some have translated the word *zauber* to mean “enchanted,” but it is the flute that creates “magic” in the sense of enchantment. This fits in with Wieland’s view that its purpose was “to smooth out the difficulties of the mission.” Possibly there is an esoteric meaning which obviously would not be



defined. Similarly with Papageno's "bells" which in the score are called *stromento d'acciajo* [or steel instrument]. Perhaps it was intended to cause amusement, as a sort of counterpoint to the magic flute [pp. 123-5].)

Later, the prince, guided by three boys, comes to three temples marked Temple of Wisdom, Temple of Reason, and Temple of Nature. Tamino learns that Sarastro is not the malevolent being he had been told of. He finds Papageno, who is with Pamina. Monostatos, an evil Moor who covets Pamina, chases them, but Papageno's magic bells force him to flee.

Sarastro then enters with his retinue. He punishes the Moor for his misdeeds and, after having seen Tamino and Pamina united, separates them so that they each can triumph over their trials. Tamino and Papageno are led to the crypts of the temple, where they are subjected to various temptations that they must overcome in silence. Tamino obeys, but Papageno finds it almost impossible to remain silent.

Meanwhile, Queen of the Night gives Pamina a dagger with which to kill Sarastro. Monostatos tries to seduce Pamina and snatches the dagger, threatening her with it. But Sarastro appears and drives him off. Pamina overcomes her despair and sets off to join Tamino. As Papageno remains attached to worldly pleasures, Sarastro gives him a companion of his own kind: Papagena. Finally, in the temple crypts, Tamino, accompanied by Pamina, passes

through the trial of Fire and Water\*: he is worthy to win his beloved. The powers of Night are vanquished.

\*Reminiscent of the biblical reference to baptism by water and by fire, the latter standing for the full awakening of Mind.

What does it all mean? What is the main theme of the opera? Surely, it refers to the transmutation of character from raw material to enlightenment, the process of our maturation into full humanhood. Tamino has had to pass through various trials including the preliminary testing of his courage, humane qualities, and intuition. At that point his motives in seeking initiation are examined. Finally, achieving his goal, he is united with Pamina who, having passed through her own testing, also has attained enlightenment. On one level, these characters represent various aspects of human nature playing out a drama that takes place within each of us.

We should now look at what some symbols mean in the context of the opera: for instance, Ingmar Bergman's film version included compasses among the stage decor. The compass is the now well-known symbol of the Masonic "Grand Architect" of the Universe, usually interpreted as God, a personalized image for the great creative intelligences rendered in the Qabbalistic view of Genesis by the plural word *Elohim*.

The serpent in pursuit of Tamino is none other than the biblical serpent who tempted Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit



of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, in order to acquire self-consciousness and thereby the awesome capacity to choose their (our) own course of thinking, speaking, and acting: our own course of living. In their study of Mozart, Jean and Brigitte Massin wrote:

A young, idle aristocrat is out hunting and finds himself disarmed by the sudden irruption of his blindest vital instinct (the symbolism of the serpent did not wait for Jung, but was established in that sense in all hieroglyphic traditions). The first awakening is of love. To the cries of alarm that he had emitted when alone and face to face with himself, the answer is the call to emerge from himself . . . — Cited in Chailley, p. 119.

This may serve modern psychological theory, but it is inadequate from a theosophical perspective, which suggests that *The Magic Flute* and other works arising out of man's higher nature, introduce us into the mysteries of the cosmos and ourselves as integral parts of it. Sarastro, in this context, as High Priest and Grand Hierophant, is the initiator and revealer of the Mysteries which had a meaning in the old days far different from that held by some today. The Hierophant was the chief interpreter of the sacred knowledge. The solemnity of the initiation scene in the pyramid is evident, especially to those who seek to enter the spirit of it. The impact of the final scene is profound when the "wedding" of Tamino and Pamina is seen as a consummation indeed, the union of the higher and lower selves in

each human being.

The effect upon us is due on the one hand to the sublime music, and on the other to Mozart's interpretation of the libretto — for he not only tried to penetrate into its essence, but also edited Schikaneder's text (as others have done since the first performance so that the question sometimes is asked: "Which libretto?"). In other words, the moving effect of the opera as a whole is due to the magical blend of rich, philosophic ideas and Mozart's music.

To single out one or two symbols in the opera: the flute is "magic in the sense it creates magic." Pamina reveals its origin later in the opera: it did not come from Queen of the Night but from her consort, the former Grand Hierophant — a "Priest-King" reminiscent of Hermes Trismegistus — predecessor of Sarastro.

The opera's main characters are associated with the Sun and Moon and the four Elements of antiquity: Fire, Air, Water, and Earth. These are the *subtle essences* of the elements out of which our physical world and cosmos were formed — not to be confused with the common elements with which we are familiar. We can picture Tamino and Papageno on a vertical line descending from Sarastro/Sun, while Pamina and Monostatos are descended from the Queen of the Night/Moon. In a horizontal alignment Fire (Tamino) warms Water (Pamina) out of its frozen state; while Air (Papageno) lightens the heavy aspect of Earth (Monostatos).



An intimate relationship or kind of dialogue between each person and the opera is needed to probe into the meanings of its symbols and even of the stage decor. That is when the real magic of understanding emerges within oneself: born in the heart, in the center of one's being. The result will vary with each individual, with the meaning unfolding more and more deeply each time such communion is established.



"I am not of any time or of any place; beyond time and space my spiritual being lives an external existence. I turn my thoughts back over the ages and I project my spirit towards an existence far beyond which you perceive, I become what I choose to be. Participating consciously in the Absolute Being, I arrange my actions according to what is at hand. My name defines my actions because I am free. My country is wherever my feet stand at the moment. Put yesterday behind you if you dare, like the forgotten ancestors who came before you, give no thought to the morrow and the illusionary hope of greatness will never be yours, I will be what I am."

*Le comte de Cayliostro*





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