

## THE STORY OF PYTHAGORAS, THE INITIATE

FIRST OF ALL, ALLOW ME TO PLACE US IN SPACE AND TIME. WE ARE IN ANCIENT GREECE, AT THE END OF THE VII CENTURY B.C.E. THE ORPHIC MYSTERIES HAVE ALREADY DISAPPEARED, BUT PYTHAGORAS AND PLATO WILL TALK OF ORPHEUS AS A DIVINE MAN. THE PRIESTS OF DELPHI ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE BRIBED BY POWERFUL POLITICIANS. THE MYSTERIES HAVE BECOME CORRUPT. IN DIFFERENT PLACES TYRANNIES, MILITARY ARISTOCRACIES OR ANARCHICAL DEMOCRACIES HAVE REPLACED THE OLD AGRICULTURAL ROYALTY OF THE PRIESTS.

LEGISLATORS, POETS AND PHILOSOPHERS BEGIN TO APPEAR, AND GREECE BEGINS ITS 3 CENTURIES OF GREATNESS AND GLORY (THE VI, V, AND IV B.C.E.) WHICH GAVE LIGHT TO THE WHOLE WORLD. THE PERIOD ENDS FIRST UNDER THE BLOWS OF NEIGHBOURING MACEDONIA, AND LATER UNDER THE HARSH HAND OF ROME.

MANY GREAT MEN BROUGHT ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF GREECE. AMONG THEM THE SEVEN WISE MEN: THALES OF MILETUS (PHYSICIST), SOLON OF ATHENS (LEGISLATOR), AND OTHERS LIKE BIAS OF PRIENE, CHILON OF SPARTA, CLEON THE ATHENIAN, PERIANDER THE CORINTHIAN AND PYTHOS FROM LESBOS. HOWEVER, THE GREATEST OF THE GREAT, THE SUPREME MIND AND INTELLIGENCE, WAS PYTHAGORAS. ALTHOUGH A HISTORICAL CHARACTER, HE HAS COME DOWN TO US IN ALMOST LEGENDARY FORM. IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE AND MANY MEMBERS OF HIS SCHOOL WERE MURDERED AND THAT THE FEW PYTHAGOREANS WHO MANAGED TO ESCAPE TO GREECE SAVED THE MASTER'S DOCTRINE. THE ESSENCE OF HIS TEACHINGS HAS REACHED US THROUGH

FRAGMENTS OF PYTHAGOREAN WRITERS, THROUGH PLATO'S TIMAEUS (WHICH APPEARS TO CONTAIN THE COSMOGONY OF PYTHAGORAS) AND MENTIONS BY ARISTOTLE, MOSTLY IN HIS "METAPHYSICS". THE FIVE VOLUMES OF THE LETTERS OF MARSILIO FICINO (CHANCELLOR OF THE PLATONIC ACADEMY IN FLORENCE AT THE TIME OF THE MEDICI FAMILY IN THE XV CENTURY) CONTAIN MANY REFERENCES TO PYTHAGORAS AND THE PYTHAGOREANS. THERE IS A "LIFE OF PYTHAGORAS" BY PORPHYRY AND ANOTHER BY DIOGENES LAERCIUS AND A BOOK BY THE FRENCHMAN EMILE SHURÈ "LES GRANDES INICIÈS" THAT TALKS OF PYTHAGORAS AMONG OTHERS. WE HAVE "THE GOLDEN VERSES" OF THE PYTHAGOREANS AND THE COMMENTARIES OF HIEROCLES ON THESE. FINALLY, THERE IS A BOOK BY RAGON "PHILOSOPHICAL COURSE IN ANCIENT AND MODERN INITIATIONS". FROM ALL THESE SOURCES AND FROM SEVERAL OTHERS I HAVE BEEN ABUNDANTLY NOURISHED.

ALLOW ME TO TELL THE STORY OF PYTHAGORAS, WHOSE LIFE COINCIDED WITH ALMOST ALL THE VI CENTURY B.C.E. AS I IMAGINE IT TOLD BY HIMSELF, AND RECENTLY FOUND BURIED IN THE TOWN OF CROTONA IN THE GULF OF TARANTO IN THE SOUTH OF ITALY. LET US SUPPOSE THAT THE WRITINGS HAVE REACHED MY HANDS AND THAT I HAVE SUCCEEDED IN TRANSLATING THEM. THIS IS WHAT THEY SAY:

### I. PYTHAGORAS

I DO NOT KNOW IF, OR BY WHOM, THESE WRITINGS OF MINE WILL BE FOUND. ALL I KNOW IS THAT I NEED TO WRITE FOR READERS OF FUTURE TIMES. GENERALLY A MAN IS JUDGED BY WHAT IS SAID OF HIM. I WISH TO BE JUDGED BY WHAT I SAY OF MYSELF AND FOR THIS REASON I AM WRITING MY MEMOIRS.

I WAS BORN IN THE PHOENICIAN CITY OF SIDON. AT A VERY EARLY AGE I WAS TAKEN TO THE COUNTRY OF MY FATHER, SAMOS, A QUIET ISLAND IN THE EEGEAN SEA. MY FATHER WAS MNESARCUS, A VERY SUCCESSFUL RING MERCHANT WHO MADE A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY. HE LOVED PLEASURE BUT HE ALSO LOVED VIRTUE. MY BELIEF IS THAT PLEASURE IS MORTAL WHEREAS VIRTUE IS IMMORTAL. MY MOTHER WAS PARTHENIS, OF THE LINEAGE OF ANCEO, FOUNDER OF SAMOS IN THE DISTANT PAST.

MY PARENTS HAD CONSULTED THE FAMOUS ORACLE OR PYTHONESS OF DELPHI AND WERE PROMISED A SON THAT WOULD BE USEFUL TO ALL MEN IN ALL TIMES. I GREW UP AND MY PARENTS ALLOWED ME TO STUDY IN VARIOUS CITIES OF GREATER GREECE, WITH THE WISEST TEACHER OF THOSE TIMES. STUDY BROADENED MY HORIZONS BUT NONE OF THESE WISE MEN SATISFIED ME. THEIR TEACHINGS WERE CONTRADICTORY, AND I WAS SEEKING, FROM AN EARLY AGE, THE UNITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF ALL THINGS.

I REALISED THAT THERE WERE THREE WORLDS. THE EARTH, THE SKY, AND MANKIND IN THE MIDDLE. IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT THE SECRET OF THE COSMOS MUST BE IN THE SYNTHESIS OF THOSE THREE WORLDS. WHEN I SAW AN EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE ABOVE THE ENTRANCE TO A TEMPLE (LIKE THE LETTER DELTA OF OUR ALPHABET) MY EYES WERE OPENED TO THE TRIPLE NATURE OF MAN AND OF THE UNIVERSE, CROWNED BY THE DIVINE UNITY. I REALISED THAT UNITY BELONGS TO AND LEADS TO GOOD, DIVERSITY TO EVIL.

I DECIDED TO TRAVEL TO EGYPT TO BE INITIATED IN THE MYSTERIES OF DIOSPOLI AND HAD AN INITIATION THAT LASTED 25 YEARS UNDER THE HIGH PRIEST SANCHIS. I WAS PUT THROUGH ALL KINDS OF TRIALS, TEMPTATIONS,

FEARS AND ECSTASIES. I LIVED MY APPARENT DEATH FOLLOWED BY MY RESURRECTION. THE PRIESTS, BY NOW CONVINCED OF MY PURITY AND MY DESIRE TO LEARN, OPENED ALL THE DOORS TO THEIR KNOWLEDGE.

THE STRONG DISCIPLINE TO WHICH I HAD SUBMITTED MYSELF TAUGHT ME THE ENORMOUS POTENTIAL OF THE HUMAN WILL. AMONG OTHER SCIENCES I STUDIED THE SCIENCE OF NUMBERS, THE SACRED MATHEMATICS. LATER I OBTAINED SOME FAME FOR HAVING DERIVED A THEOREM STATING THAT THE SQUARE OF THE HYPOTENUSE OF A RIGHT-ANGLED TRIANGLE WAS EQUAL TO THE SUM OF THE SQUARES OF THE TWO OTHER SIDES. TO ME THE RIGHT ANGLE WAS ALWAYS A VERY POWERFUL SYMBOL.

I BECAME THE HIGH PRIEST OF ALL EGYPT. SUDDENLY A WAR WITH BABYLONIA AROSE. WE LOST AND I WAS TAKEN TO THAT COUNTRY BY FORCE. THERE I MET CALDEAN PRIESTS, PERSIAN MAGICIANS, PHOENICIAN EXPERTS, AND WISE JEWS. ALL TAUGHT ME AND FROM ALL I LEARNED, SINCE I STAYED IN THAT PLACE FOR 12 YEARS. THE EGYPTIANS SPECIALISED IN GEOMETRY, THE PHOENICIANS IN ARITHMETIC, THE JEWS IN RELIGION AND THE CALDEANS IN THE STUDY OF THE FIRMAMENT. TO BE ABLE TO FINALLY RETURN TO GREECE I NEEDED A SPECIAL PASSPORT, WHICH WAS GIVEN TO ME BY THE KING.

ONCE IN GREECE, I VISITED ALL THE TEMPLES AND FINALLY REACHED DELPHI, WHICH MY PARENTS HAD VISITED SO MANY YEARS BEFORE. ABOVE THE DOORWAY TO THE TEMPLE WAS WRITTEN "GNOTHI SEAUTON" OR "KNOW THYSELF". THIS SAYING BELONGED TO CHILON. I THOUGHT A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE TRUE MEANING OF "GNOTHI SEAUTON". GREEK IS A COMPLEX LANGUAGE WHICH HAS SUBTLETIES NOT SEEN IN THE LANGUAGES OF BARBARIANS. "GNOTHI"

DERIVES FROM THE WORD "GNOSIS" WHICH CAN MEAN KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, REVELATION, PERSPICACITY AND MYSTICAL WISDOM. FOR ME THE MEANING IS "A DIVINE AWARENESS". NO-ONE CAN, NO-ONE SHOULD SPEAK OF THE MYSTERIES IF HE DOES NOT HAVE THAT DIVINE AWARENESS. THE SECOND PART OF THE PHRASE ADDS "AND THOU SHALT KNOW THE UNIVERSE AND THE GODS".

IT WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE FOR A FREE MAN TO LIVE UNDER THE TYRANNY OF POLYCRATES, SO I DECIDED TO LEAVE SAMOS FOR EVER. I WENT TO THE SOUTHERN PART OF ITALY, WHICH IS PART OF GREATER GREECE. ON THE WAY I STOPPED AT THE ISLAND OF CRETE WHERE I PASSED THREE TIMES THROUGH THE PURIFICATION OF THE THREE TIMES THREE RITUAL DAYS.

I REACHED CROTONA, A CITY AT THE END OF THE GULF OF TARANTO. THERE I FOUNDED MY SCHOOL. IN THE TRADITION OF THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS OF INDIA, I ONLY ACCEPTED FOR MY SCHOOL YOUTHS OF GOOD LINEAGE AND EDUCATION. IN SPITE OF THIS IT WAS NECESSARY TO TEACH THEM TO LOVE VIRTUE AND TRUTH. I TAUGHT THEM THAT THE MATTERS OF FRIENDS WERE COMMON TO ALL AND THAT A FRIEND IS A REPLICA OF ONESELF.

THE SENATE OF CROTONA HAD A BUILDING CONSTRUCTED FOR ME IN THE MIDST OF BEAUTIFUL GARDENS PLANTED WITH ACACIAS, LAURELS, IRISES, ROSES AND MANY OTHER TREES, PLANTS AND FLOWERS. THERE WERE ALWAYS BEES IN THE GARDENS. THESE INSECTS ARE FRIENDS TO FLOWERS AND TO MAN, AND A UNIVERSAL EXAMPLE OF COMMUNAL LIFE. THE TOWNSPEOPLE CALLED MY INSTITUTE THE "TEMPLE OF THE MUSES" AND MY HOUSE THE "SANCTUARY OF THE TRUTH". I WAS VERY HARD IN CHOOSING NEW STUDENTS. THESE, ONCE ACCEPTED, SHARED DEBATES, SPORTS, MEALS AND REST PERIODS WITH MORE

ADVANCED STUDENTS. THESE LISTENED CAREFULLY TO THE NEW ONES AND I WATCHED THEM ALL. THE NEOPHYTE HAD TO SPEND A NIGHT ALONE IN A DEEP CAVE WHICH WAS SAID TO BE FULL OF EVIL SPIRITS FROM THE WORLD OF DARKNESS. EACH ONE WAS CLOSED IN A SMALL CELL WITH WRITING MATERIALS, A LITTLE WATER AND A DIM LIGHT. HE WAS ASKED TO FIND THE MEANING OF ONE OF OUR SYMBOLS. FOR EXAMPLE HE WAS ASKED TO FIND THE MEANING OF A TRIANGLE INSCRIBED IN A CIRCLE. AFTER 12 HOURS THE NEOPHYTE WAS BROUGHT OUT TO EXPLAIN HIS SOLUTION TO THE OTHERS. THESE HAD BEEN TOLD TO LAUGH AT THE NEW STUDENT, TO MOCK HIM AND MAKE FUN OF HIM. THE CANDIDATE EMERGED FROM THE CELL TIRED, NERVOUS AND WITHOUT A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. THE FEW WHO PASSED ALL THESE TESTS WERE SOLEMNLY INITIATED INTO THE FIRST DEGREE AND CONGRATULATED BY THEIR NEW COMPANIONS.

#### FIRST DEGREE (APPRENTICE)

THE RECENTLY INITIATED YOUTH HAD TO SPEND SOME 2 TO 5 YEARS IN THIS DEGREE. HE HAD TO MAINTAIN ABSOLUTE SILENCE AND COULD DISCUSS NOTHING. HE HAD TO LISTEN TO OTHERS WITH RESPECT AND MEDITATE DEEPLY ON ALL HE HEARD. I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT MORAL TEACHING MUST COME BEFORE PHILOSOPHICAL TEACHING. I HAD BEEN A VEGETARIAN FOR MANY YEARS AND ASKED THE STUDENTS ALSO NOT TO EAT MEAT AND TO NOURISH THEMSELVES WITH RAW OR SLIGHTLY COOKED FOODS, WHICH ARE THE HEALTHIEST. MY USUAL BREAKFAST WAS HONEY AND WATER, AND MY MAIN MEAL

WAS MILLET BREAD OR BARLEY CAKE WITH RAW OR SLIGHTLY BOILED VEGETABLES.

I ASKED THE STUDENTS TO LOOK AT THEMSELVES IN A MIRROR IN THE SUNLIGHT, NOT IN THE LAMPLIGHT. THEY HAD TO UNDERSTAND THAT SYMBOLICALLY THE LIGHT OF A LAMP IS LIKE A MIND WITH LITTLE KNOWLEDGE WHILE THE LIGHT OF THE SUN WAS LIKE AN OPEN AND WELL-TRAINED MIND.

WE SHOWED THE NEWLY INITIATED THAT THE GODS, SO DIFFERENT IN APPEARANCE WERE REALLY THE SAME IN EVERY COUNTRY. THEY HAD TO ACCEPT AND RESPECT EVERY RELIGION AND BELIEF, AND THEY HAD TO BELIEVE IN THE UNITY OF ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD AND IN THE UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS. THEY BEGAN TO SEE, ALTHOUGH STILL VERY DIMLY, THE DIVINE "PSYCHE", THE HUMAN SOUL. IN THE DEPTH OF THE MYSTERIES ALL THE GODS WERE REDUCED TO ONE, THE ONE SUPREME GOD. IT WAS NECESSARY THAT THIS BE UNDERSTOOD BY EVERY ONE OF THEM. THEY WERE ALSO TAUGHT THE POWER OF MUSIC (OR HARMONY) AND OF NUMBERS. I MYSELF TOLD THEM THAT NUMBERS CONTAINED THE SECRETS OF ALL THINGS. THIS WAS MY FIRST GREAT LESSON. MY SECOND GREAT LESSON EXPLAINED THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS, SO WRONGLY UNDERSTOOD BY MANY.

THE PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL OF THE NEWLY INITIATED YOUTH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE PURIFICATION OF HIS BODY WITH HYGIENE, ABSTINENCE AND DISCIPLINE. THIS ALLOWED THEM TO OVERCOME THEIR CARNAL PASSIONS. ON VERY SPECIAL HOLIDAYS I BROUGHT TOGETHER THE INITIATES OF ALL THE DEGREES AND OF BOTH SEXES. THEY ALL RESPECTED EACH OTHER SINCE ALL BEHAVED LIKE BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

THE CLOTHING OF MY STUDENTS WAS SIMPLE AND ONLY DIFFERED IN COLOUR ACCORDING TO THE DEGREE. THE FIRST DEGREE USED WHITE, THE SECOND LIGHT BLUE, THE THIRD PURPLE AND THE FOURTH SCARLET. TO CLOSE THE CIRCLE I USED THE WHITE CLOTHING OF THE FIRST DEGREE.

### SECOND DEGREE (FELLOW)

WHEN THE MORE ADVANCED STUDENTS TOLD ME THAT AN INITIATE WAS READY, I INVITED HIM TO MY HOUSE AND SOLEMNLY ACCEPTED HIM AMONG MY DISCIPLES. FOR THE NEWLY RAISED THERE BEGAN A TIME OF DIRECT CONTACT WITH ME, IN THE INTERIOR COURTYARD OF MY ROOMS. FOR THIS REASON I CALLED THESE STUDENTS "ESOTERIC" OR THOSE OF THE INSIDE, AS OPPOSED TO THE "EXOTERIC" OR THOSE OF THE OUTSIDE.

NOW THE TRUE INITIATION BEGAN, THROUGH A CORRECT EXPOSITION OF THE OCCULT DOCTRINE FROM ITS BEGINNINGS, WHICH ARE GIVEN IN THE MYSTERIOUS SCIENCE OF NUMBERS, TO THE FINAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE SUPREME AIMS OF THE HUMAN SOUL. THIS INSTRUCTION WAS GENERALLY VEILED IN ALLEGORY AND ILLUSTRATED WITH SYMBOLS.

I HAVE WRITTEN MY DOCTRINE IN A BOOK I HAVE CALLED "HIEROS LOGOS" OR "THE SACRED WORD". I HOPE THIS BOOK HAS REACHED YOU, OH READERS OF THE FUTURE, SINCE I WILL NOT REPEAT HERE ALL THAT IT CONTAINS. HOWEVER I WISH TO UNDERLINE THAT MY SCIENCE OF NUMBERS IS THE SCIENCE OF THE FORCES OF LIFE AND OF THE DIVINE FACULTIES IN ACTION BOTH IN THE WORLD AND IN MAN.



I USED TO TEACH IN THE TEMPLE OF THE MUSES. THIS COURTYARD HAD A SPRING OF FRESH WATER WITH A SMALL PLANTATION OF WHEAT NEARBY. EACH MUSE WAS CUSTODIAN OF A HIDDEN SCIENCE OR OF A SACRED ART. THE THREE SUPERIOR MUSES WERE URANIA (ASTRONOMY AND ASTROLOGY), POLIMNIA (SCIENCE OF THE SOULS-IN-ANOTHER-LIFE AND OF THE DIVINATIONARY ARTS) AND MELPOMANE (SCIENCE OF LIFE AND DEATH). TOGETHER, THESE THREE MADE UP COSMOGONY, OR CELESTIAL PHYSICS. CALLIOPE, CLIO AND EUTERPE PRESIDED THE SCIENCE OF MAN, OR PSYCHOLOGY, WITH ITS CORRESPONDING ARTS OF MEDICINE, MAGIC AND MORALITY. THE LAST GROUP, TERPSYCHORE, ERATO AND THALIA HAD THE TERRESTRIAL PHYSICS OR THE SCIENCE OF STONES, PLANTS AND ANIMALS. FOR ME, THE MUSES ARE TERRESTRIAL IMAGES OF THE DIVINE POWERS. GOD, THE SUBSTANCE THAT CANNOT BE DIVIDED, HAS UNITY AS A NUMBER, SINCE IT CONTAINS INFINITY. HIS NAME IS FATHER AND HIS SIGN IS FIRE, WHICH SYMBOLISES THE SPIRIT, THE ESSENCE OF ALL THINGS.

I EXPLAINED THAT THE REAL WORLD IS TERNARY. IN THE SAME WAY AS MAN IS MADE OF THREE DIFFERENT BUT FUSED TOGETHER MATERIALS (BODY SOUL AND SPIRIT) THE UNIVERSE IS DIVIDED IN THREE CONCENTRIC PARTS. THESE ARE THE MATERIAL WORLD, THE HUMAN WORLD AND THE DIVINE WORLD. THE UNIVERSAL TERNARY IS CONCENTRATED IN THE UNITY OF GOD. THE HUMAN TERNARY IS CONCENTRATED IN THE CONSCIENCE WHICH BRINGS TOGETHER ALL THE FACULTIES OF THE BODY, THE SOUL AND THE SPIRIT. MAN HOWEVER, SEES GOD AS THOUGH REFLECTED IN THREE MIRRORS.

1. SEEN BY THE INSTINCT AND THE SENSES, GOD IS MULTIPLE AND AS INFINITE AS HIS MANIFESTATIONS. HENCE POLYTHEISM, WITH ITS INFINITE NUMBER OF GODS.

2. SEEN BY THE RATIONAL SOUL, GOD IS DUAL, SPIRIT AND MATTER. HENCE THE DUALISM OF ZOROASTER, THE MANICHAEANS, AND MANY OTHERS.
3. SEEN BY THE PURE INTELLECT GOD IS TERNARY, THAT IS: SPIRIT, BODY AND SOUL. HENCE THE TRINITARY CULTS OF INDIA.

CONCEIVED BY THE WILL, WHICH INCLUDES EVERYTHING, GOD IS UNIQUE. THIS LEADS US TO THE HERMETIC MONOTHEISM OF MOSES, WHICH I HAD LEARNED FROM THE JEWS, AND TO THE FACT THAT THE UNIT IS THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS.

LIKE ALL GREAT MASTERS OF THE ESOTERIC SCIENCES, I GAVE MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE NUMBERS 7 AND 10. SEVEN (THE SUM OF 3 AND 4) REPRESENTS THE UNION OF MAN WITH DIVINITY. IT IS THE NUMBER OF ALL THE GREAT INITIATES I HAVE KNOWN AND REPRESENTS THE LAW OF EVOLUTION OR THE PERFECT BEHAVIOUR OF ALL THINGS IN SEVEN DEGREES. THE NUMBER TEN (SUM OF 1,2,3 AND 4 AND WHICH CONTAINS 7) IS THE PERFECT NUMBER SINCE IT REPRESENTS ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DIVINITY EVOLVED AND REUNITED IN A NEW UNITY. THE NUMBER TEN IS GREAT, WELL FINISHED, UNIVERSAL AGENT AND THE PRINCIPLE OF LIFE FOR THE DIVINE, THE CELESTIAL AND THE HUMAN. WITHOUT TEN, THERE IS NOTHING THAT IS DEFINED, CLEAR AND DIFFERENTIATED. IT IS THE BASIC NUMBER OF KNOWLEDGE AND IS GUIDE AND TEACHER TO THE IGNORANT AND THE DISORIENTED. THE 9 MUSES IN 3 GROUPS OF THREE AND REPRESENTING THE 9 WORLDS, TOGETHER MAKE A SYMPHONIC MIXTURE CALLED MNEMOSINE. MNEMOSINE JOINS WITH HESTIA (THE DIVINE SCIENCE WHICH IS THE CUSTODIAN OF THE PRIMORDIAL FIRE) TO MAKE THE SACRED DECADE.

### THIRD DEGREE (MASTER)

I GAVE THE NEW STUDENT THE PRINCIPLES OF SCIENCE IN ORDER THAT THE FIRST INITIATION COULD REMOVE THE BLINDFOLD THAT COVERED THE EYES OF HIS SPIRIT. LATER I REMOVED THE THIN VEIL OF MYTHOLOGY IN ORDER TO CAST HIM INTO THE INFINITE AND TO BATHE HIM IN THE SUNLIGHT OF INTELLIGENCE.

HOWEVER, THE SCIENCE OF NUMBERS WAS ONLY THE INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT INITIATION. NOW I HAD TO LOWER THE STUDENT INTO THE BOTTOMLESS DEPTHS OF NATURE. COSMOGONY AND PSYCHOLOGY HAVE TO DO WITH THE GREATEST SECRETS OF LIFE; SECRETS CAREFULLY PROTECTED BY THE OCCULT SCIENCES AND ARTS.

I SAY THAT THE EARTH IS THE REGION OF CORPOREAL LIFE. HERE SOULS INCARNATE AND DISCARNATE, ALWAYS FROM HUMAN TO HUMAN, NOT AS SOME SAY, FROM HUMAN TO ANIMAL OR TO GOD ACCORDING TO ACTIONS IN LIFE. ALWAYS FROM HUMAN TO HUMAN, MORE NOBLE OR LESS NOBLE, BUT HUMAN STILL. THE SPHERE OF THE 6 PLANETS AND THE SUN REPRESENTS THE SEVEN ASCENDING CATEGORIES OF SPIRITS. OLYMPUS IS A SPHERE WHICH TURNS THAT I CALL THE SKY OF THE FIXED STARS, AND WHICH IS SIMILAR TO THE SPHERE OF THE PERFECT SOULS.

TO MY STUDENTS OF THE THIRD DEGREE I EXPLAINED THE DOUBLE MOVEMENT OF THE EARTH. I KNOW THAT THE PLANETS ARE SEPARATED FROM THE SUN, AND CIRCLE AROUND IT. THE PRIESTS OF MEMPHIS HAD TAUGHT ME THIS. I KNOW THAT THE STARS ARE SOLAR SYSTEMS GOVERNED BY LAWS LIKE OURS. I TAUGHT THESE THINGS IN THE STRICTEST OF SECRECY, SINCE IT WOULD HAVE TERRIFIED ORDINARY PEOPLE. THE PLANETS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE SUN AND EACH ONE HAS ITS PARTICULAR SOUL.

THERE ARE FOUR ELEMENTS THAT CONSTITUTE ALL THINGS AND ALL BEINGS. THESE ARE THE FOUR ASCENDING STATES OF MATTER SINCE THE FIRST IS ALMOST ALL MATTER AND THE LAST ALMOST ALL SPIRIT. THEY ARE EARTH, WATER, AIR AND FIRE. THE FIFTH ELEMENT IS THE ETHER THAT PERMEATES EVERYTHING, WHICH IS THE ASTRAL LIGHT, THE SOUL OF THE WORLD.

WHAT I HAD LEARNED IN EGYPT EXPLAINED HOW HUMANKIND WAS FORMED AND HOW THE DIFFERENT RACES SUFFERED THROUGH THE MANY CATAclysms THAT THE EARTH HAS GONE THROUGH. BUT I KNOW THAT THE ETERNAL PROBLEM, THE ETERNAL MYSTERY IS THAT OF THE HUMAN SOUL WHICH SAYS TO ITSELF "I AM NOT FROM HERE. I AM GOING ELSEWHERE. BUT WHERE WILL I GO?"

FINALLY I EXPLAINED TO THE STUDENTS THAT THE SECRET OF THE WISE INITIATES WAS ENCLOSED IN THE PHRASE "KNOW THYSELF AND THOU SHALT KNOW THE UNIVERSE AND THE GODS". MY WORDS MADE MATTER BECOME LIGHT, MADE THINGS OF THE EARTH BECOME TRANSPARENT AND THOSE OF THE HEAVENS VISIBLE TO THE EYES OF THE SPIRIT. I TOLD THE STUDENTS THE STORY OF PSYCHE, THE STORY OF THE HUMAN SOUL – SMALL SPARK OF THE SOUL OF THE UNIVERSE. I SYMBOLISED PSYCHE AS A PASSING BREEZE, AS A SEED, AS A BIRD FLYING IN A STORM". WHEN ONE DIES, IF THE SOUL IS NOT PURE IT

INCARNATES AGAIN, BUT IF IT IS PURE IT REACHES ITS OWN WORLD AND JOINS ALL ITS COMPANIONS. THOSE THAT UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER EVENTUALLY JOIN EACH OTHER.

#### FOURTH DEGREE (PERFECT MASTER)

HERE THE STUDENT HAD TO BE ABLE TO JOIN TOGETHER THREE PERFECTIONS: TRUTH IN THE INTELLECT, VIRTUE IN THE SOUL AND PURITY IN THE BODY.

THESE TEACHINGS CONTAIN SECRETS SO DANGEROUS THAT I CANNOT EXPLAIN THEM HERE AND I WILL ALLOW ORAL TRADITION TO TAKE THEM TO THE FUTURE. MY DISCIPLES HAVE ALWAYS GIVEN ME GLORY, AND I KNOW THE TRADITIONS WILL NOT BE LOST.

I WANT TO CONTINUE WITH THE STORY OF MY LIFE. AMONG THE WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED MY TEACHINGS THERE WAS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL OF 17, CALLED TEANO, DAUGHTER OF BRONTINO OF CROTONA, OF CRETAN LINEAGE. I WAS OVER 60 YEARS OLD, BUT MY PURE LIFE DEDICATED ONLY TO MY SCHOOL, HAD KEPT ME STRONG AND VIRILE. ONE AFTERNOON TEANO APPEARED AS I WAS MEDITATING IN THE GARDENS. WE TALKED. HER WORDS MOVED ME. WE WERE MARRIED AND OUR UNION WAS PERFECT. SHE GAVE ME TWO SONS, AND A DAUGHTER.

I HAVE LIVED IN CROTONA FOR 30 YEARS. I HAVE WORKED TO IMPROVE THE POLITICAL SYSTEM. THIS CITY HAD A "COUNCIL OF 1000" SELECTED FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FAMILIES. I MADE A "COUNCIL OF 300", SUPERIOR TO THE COUNCIL OF 1000, AND SELECTED BY THIS BUT ONLY FROM AMONG MY INITIATES. THUS WE WERE ABLE TO INFILTRATE DEMOCRATIC IDEAS

INTO THE GOVERNMENT. I AM THE LEADER OF THE UPPER COUNCIL, AND WE ARE ALL SWORN TO SILENCE.

MY IDEAS HAVE SPREAD ALL OVER THE ITALIAN PARTS OF GREATER GREECE. WE HAVE BROUGHT DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM TO THE CITIES OF SIBARIS, CATANIA, REGGIO, HIMERA, ACRAGANTE AND MANY MORE.

NOW I AM OVER 90 YEARS OLD, AN AGE REACHED BY FEW IN THESE DAYS. REACTION TO MY TEACHINGS HAS ARISEN. A MAN CALLED CILON, THAT I HAD NOT ADMITTED TO THE SCHOOL BECAUSE OF HIS VIOLENT TEMPER, HAS STARTED TO RAISE THE PEOPLE AGAINST ME BY READING PIECES OF MY BOOK "THE SACRED WORD" IN PUBLIC PLACES.

OUT OF CONTEXT, THE PHRASES GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT I WISH TO BECOME THE TYRANT OF CROTONA. CILON CANNOT CONTROL HIS ANGER AND PLOTS AGAINST US. TONIGHT 40 OF THE 300 ARE GATHERED AT THE HOUSE OF MILON THE ATHLETE, WHO IS ABSENT. MY FRIENDS TALK WHILE I WRITE. A MOB HAS JUST SET THE HOUSE ON FIRE, SO I MUST END QUICKLY IN ORDER TO BURY THESE WRITINGS IN A SAFE PLACE BEFORE THE MOB BREAKS IN.

I BELIEVE WE WILL ALL DIE TONIGHT. TOMORROW THE DOORWAY OF THE HOUSE WILL BE COVERED WITH BLACK FABRICS. I HOPE I HAVE ACCUMULATED SUFFICIENT MERIT SO MY SOUL NEED NOT RETURN TO EARTH.

I HOPE THESE WRITINGS WILL BE FOUND BY ONE BELONGING TO AN INITIATIC SCHOOL SINCE HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WILL BETTER UNDERSTAND MY WORDS YHAN OTHERS.

BROTHERS OF THE FUTURE, I, PYTHAGORAS, YOUR ANCIENT BROTHER  
SALUTE YOU.

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