

EXAMINATIONS OF THE GOLDEN VERSES

Antoine Fabre d'Olivet, translated by Nayán Louise Redfield (1917), and adapted for modern readers.

Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1767–1825) was a French author, poet, and composer whose Biblical and philosophical hermeneutics influenced many students of esotericism such as Eliphas Lévi and Gerard Encausse (Papus). Among his best known works today is his research on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras. His interest in Pythagoras and the resulting works began a revival of Neopythagoreanism that would later influence many esoteric scholars and practitioners.

The ancients had the habit of comparing with gold all that they deemed without defects and pre-eminently beautiful. Thus, they understood the *Golden Age* to be the age of virtues and of happiness; and the *Golden Verses* were the verses wherein was concealed the most pure doctrine.¹ They constantly attributed these verses to Pythagoras, not that they believed that this philosopher had himself composed them, but because they knew that his disciple, whose work they were, had revealed the exact doctrine of his master and had based them all upon maxims issued from his mouth!²

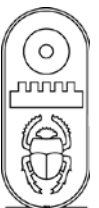
This disciple, commendable through his learning, and especially through his devotion to the precepts of Pythagoras, was called Lysis.³ After the death of Pythagoras, and while his enemies, momentarily triumphant, had raised at Crotona and at Metapontum that terrible persecution which cost the lives of so great a number of Pythagoreans, crushed beneath the debris of their burned school, or constrained to die of hunger in the temple of the Muses,⁴ Lysis, happily escaped from these disasters. He retired into Greece, where, wishing to spread the sect of Pythagoras

to whose principles calumnies had been attached, he felt it necessary to set up a sort of formulary which would contain the basis of morals and the principal rules of conduct given by this celebrated sage.



Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1799)

It is to this generous movement that we owe the philosophical verses that I have essayed to translate into French. These verses, called *golden* for the reason I have given, contain the sentiments of Pythagoras and are all that remain to us—that are really authentic—concerning one of the greatest individuals of antiquity. Hierocles, who has transmitted them to us with a long and masterly commentary, assures us that they do not contain, as one might believe, the sentiment of one in particular, but the doctrine of all the sacred corps of Pythagoreans and the voice of all the assemblies.⁵ He adds that there existed a law which prescribed that each person, every morning upon rising and every evening upon retiring, should read these verses as the oracles of the Pythagorean school. One sees, in reality, by many passages from Cicero, Horace, Seneca, and other writers worthy of belief, that this law was still vigorously executed in their time.⁶



We know by the testimony of Galen in his treatise on *The Understanding and the Cure of the Maladies of the Soul*, that he himself read every day, morning and evening, the Verses of Pythagoras; and that, after having read them, he recited them by heart. However, I must not neglect to say that Lysis, who is the author of them, obtained so much celebrity in Greece that he was honored as the master and friend of Epaminondas.⁷ If his name has not been attached to this work, it is because in the epoch when he wrote it, the ancient custom still existed of considering *things* and not individuals: it was with the doctrine of Pythagoras that one was concerned, and not with the talent of Lysis, which had made the doctrine known. The disciples of a great man had no other name than his. All their works were attributed to him. This is a sufficiently important observation to make and which explains how Vyasa in India, Hermes in Egypt, and Orpheus in Greece, have been the supposed authors of such a multitude of books that the lives of many people would not even suffice to read them.

Preparation

Render to the Immortal Gods the consecrated cult; Guard then thy faith

Pythagoras begins his teaching, nevertheless, by laying down a principle of universal tolerance. He commands his disciples to follow the cult established by the laws, whatever this cult may be, and to adore the gods of their country, whatever these gods may be; enjoining them only, to guard afterwards their faith—that is, to remain inwardly faithful to his doctrine, and never to divulge the mysteries. Lysis, in writing these opening lines, adroitly conceals herein a double meaning. By the first he commended, as I have said, tolerance and reserve for the Pythagorean, and, following the example of the Egyptian priests, established two doctrines, the one apparent and vulgar, conformable to the law; the other mysterious



Pythagoras performing vibration experiments by hitting bells with a hammer, from the Boethius manuscript, "Boethius, Pythagoras, Plato and Nichomachus" ca. 1130, Cambridge University Library 2.3.12, fol. 61v.

and secret, analogous to the faith; by the second meaning, he reassures the suspicious people of Greece, who, according to the slanders which were in circulation, might have feared that the new sect would attack the sanctity of their gods. This tolerance on the one hand, and this reserve on the other, were no more than what they would be today.

The Christian religion, exclusive and severe, has changed all our ideas in this respect: by admitting only one sole doctrine in one unique church, this religion has necessarily confused tolerance with indifference or coldness, and reserve with heresy or hypocrisy; but in the spirit of polytheism these same things take on another color. A Christian philosopher could not, without perjuring him- or herself and committing a frightful impiety, bend the knee in China before *Kong-Tse*, nor offer incense to *Chang-Ty* nor to *Tien*; Christian philosophers could neither render, in India, homage to *Krishna*, nor present themselves at Benares as a worshiper

of *Vishnu*. They could not even [At the time when d'Olivet was writing in the late 18th century.—Ed.]—although recognizing the same God as the Jews and Muslims—take part in their ceremonies, or what is still more, worship this God with the Arians, the Lutherans, or Calvinists, if he or she were a Catholic. This belongs to the very essence of their cult.

A Cosmopolitan Philosophy

A Pythagorean philosopher did not recognize in the least these formidable barriers, which hem in the nations, as it were, isolate them, and make them worse than enemies. The gods of the people were in the Pythagoreans' eyes the same gods, and the Pythagoreans' cosmopolitan dogmas condemned no one to eternal damnation. From one end of the earth to the other the Pythagorean could cause incense to rise from the altar of the Divinity, under whatever name, under whatever form it might be worshiped, and render to it the public cult established by the law. And this is the reason. Polytheism was not in their opinion what it has become in ours: namely, an impious and gross idolatry, a cult inspired by the infernal adversary to seduce people and to claim for itself the honors that are due only to the Divinity; it was a particularization of the Universal Being, a personification of its attributes and its faculties.

Before Moses, none of the theocratic legislators had thought it well to present for the adoration of the people, the Supreme God, unique and uncreated in the godhead's unfathomable universality. The Indian Brahmans, who can be considered as the living types of all the sages and of all the pontiffs of the world, never permit themselves, even in this day when their great age has effaced the traces of their ancient science, to utter the name of God, principle of All.⁸

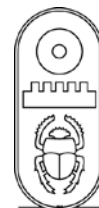
They are content to meditate upon its essence in silence and to offer sacrifices to its most sublime emanations. The Chinese sages act the same with regard to the Primal Cause that must be neither named nor defined;⁹ the followers of Zoroaster, who believe that the two universal principles of good and evil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, emanate from this ineffable Cause, are content to designate it under the name of Eternity.¹⁰ The Egyptians, so celebrated for their wisdom, the extent of their learning, and the multitude of their divine symbols, honored with silence the God, principle and source of all things;¹¹ they never spoke of it, regarding it as inaccessible to all the researches of humanity; and Orpheus, their disciple, first author of the brilliant mythology of the Greeks, Orpheus, who seemed to announce the soul of the World as creator of this same God from which it emanated, said plainly:

“I never see this Being surrounded with a cloud.”¹²

Moses, as I have said, was the first who made a public dogma of the unity of God, and who divulged what, up to that time had been buried in the seclusion of the



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sanctuaries; for the principal tenets of the mysteries, those upon which reposed all others, were the Unity of God and the homogeneity of Nature.¹³ It is true that Moses, in making this disclosure, permitted no definition, no reflection, either upon the essence or upon the nature of this unique Being; this is very remarkable. Before him, in all the known world, and after him (save in Judea, where more than one cloud still darkened the idea of divine Unity, until the establishment of Christianity), the Divinity was considered by the theosophists of all nations, under two relations: primarily as unique, secondarily as infinite; as unique, preserved under the seal of silence to the contemplation and meditation of the sages; as infinite, delivered to the veneration and invocation of the people.

Now the unity of God resides in the Deity's essence, so that the vulgar can never in any way either conceive or understand.

God's infinity consists in the Deity's perfections, faculties, and attributes, of which the vulgar can, according to the measure of their understanding, grasp some feeble emanations, and draw nearer to the Divinity by detaching them from the universality—that is, by particularizing and personifying these qualities. This is the particularization and the personification which constitutes, as I have said, polytheism. The mass of gods which result from polytheism is as infinite as the Divinity itself whence it had birth.

Each nation, each people, each city adopts at its liking, those of the divine faculties which are best suited to its character and its requirements. These faculties, represented by simulacra, become so many particular gods whose variety of names augments the number still further. Nothing can limit this immense theogony, since the Primal Cause whence it emanates has not done so.



Akhenaten and Nefertiti with Daughters under the Universal Aten, 18th Dynasty. Berlin State Museums

The vulgar, lured by objects which strike their senses, can—and often do—become idolatrous; they can even distinguish these objects of their adoration, one from another, and believe that there really exist as many gods as statues; but the sage, the philosopher, the most ordinary person of letters does not fall into this error. The sage knows, like Plutarch, that different places and names do not make different gods; that the Greeks and Barbarians [non-Greeks], the nations of the North and those of the South, adore the same Divinity;¹⁴ the sage restores easily that infinity of attributes to the unity of the essence, and as the honored remnants of the ancient Sramanas, the priests of the Burmans, still do today, the sage worships God, whatever may be the altar, the temple, and the place where the sage may find him- or herself!¹⁵

This is what was done by the disciples of Pythagoras, according to the commandment of their master; they saw in the gods of the nations, the attributes of the Ineffable Being which were forbidden them to name; they augmented ostensibly and without the slightest reluctance, the number of these attributes of which they recognized the Infinite Cause; they gave homage to the cult consecrated by the law and brought them

all back secretly to the Unity which was the object of their faith.

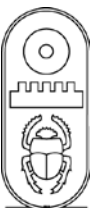
Revere the Memory of the Illustrious Heroes, of Spirits, Demigods. . .

Pythagoras considered the Universe as an animated All, whose members were the divine Intelligences, each ranked according to its perfections, in its proper sphere.¹⁶ He it was who first designated this All, by the Greek word *Kosmos*, in order to express the beauty, order, and regularity which reigned there;¹⁷ the Latins translated this word by *Mundus*, from which has come the French word *monde*. It is from Unity considered as principle of the world, that the name Universe, which we give to it, is derived. Pythagoras establishes Unity as the principle of all things and said that from this Unity sprang an infinite Duality.¹⁸

The essence of this Unity, and the manner in which the Duality that emanated from it was finally brought back again, were the most profound mysteries of his doctrine; the subject sacred to the faith of his disciples and the fundamental points which were forbidden them to reveal. Their explanation was never made in writing; those who appeared worthy of learning them were content to be taught them by



Medieval manuscript of Calcidius's Latin translation of Plato's *Timaeus*, tenth century. In the late sixteenth century, this manuscript belonged to Leiden University professor Daniel Heinsius who gave it to his son Nicholas. Nicholas, whose signature appears on the manuscript, was librarian to Queen Christina of Sweden, whose collection came to the Vatican Library after her death.



word of mouth.¹⁹ When one was forced, by the concatenation of ideas, to mention them in the books of the sect, symbols and ciphers were used, and the language of Numbers employed; and these books, all obscure as they were, were still concealed with the greatest care; by all manner of means they were guarded against falling into profane hands.²⁰

I cannot enter into the discussion of the famous symbol of Pythagoras, *one* and *two*, without exceeding very much the limits that I have set down in these examinations;²¹ let it suffice for me to say, that as he designated God by 1, and Matter by 2, he expressed the Universe by the number 12, which results in the union of the other two. This number is formed by the multiplication of 3 by 4: that is to say, that this philosopher conceived the Universal world as composed of three particular worlds, which, being linked one with the other by means of the four elementary modifications, were developed in twelve concentric spheres.²²

The ineffable Being which filled these twelve spheres without being understood by any one, was God. Pythagoras gave to It, truth for soul and light for body.²³ The Intelligence which peopled the three worlds were, firstly, the immortal gods properly so-called; secondly, the glorified heroes; thirdly, the terrestrial demons. The immortal gods, direct emanations of the uncreated Being and manifestation of Its infinite faculties, were thus named because they could not depart from the divine life—that is, they could never fall away from their Father into oblivion, wandering in the darkness of ignorance and of impiety; whereas the souls of humans, which produced, according to their degree of purity, glorified heroes and terrestrial demons, were able to depart sometimes from the divine life by voluntary drawing away from God; because the death of the intellectual essence, according to Pythagoras and imitated in this by Plato, was only ignorance and impiety.²⁴

It must be observed that in my translation I have not rendered the Greek word *daimones* by the word *demons*, but by that of *spirits*, on account of the evil meaning that Christianity has attached to it...²⁵

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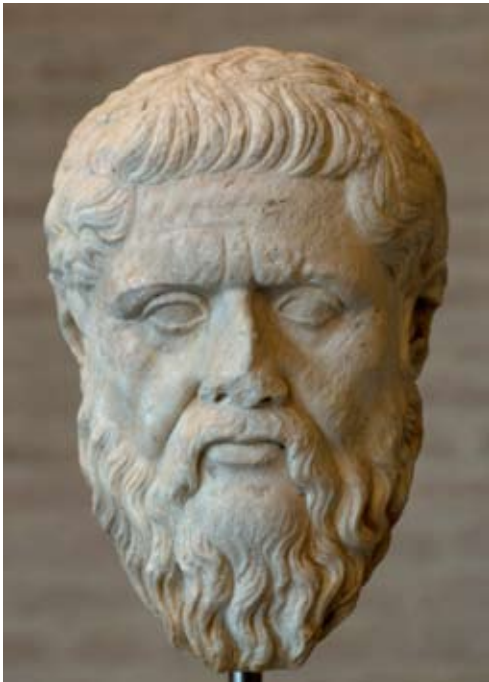
The Three Worlds

This application of the number 12 to the Universe is not at all an arbitrary invention of Pythagoras; it was common to the Chaldeans, to the Egyptians from whom he had received it, and to the principal peoples of the earth:²⁶ it gave rise to the institution of the zodiac, whose division into twelve asterisms has been found everywhere existent from time immemorial.²⁷ The distinction of the three worlds and their development into a number, more or less great, of concentric spheres inhabited by intelligences of different degrees of purity, were also known before Pythagoras, who in this only spread the doctrine which he had received at Tyre, at Memphis, and at Babylon.²⁸ This doctrine was that of the Indians.

One finds still today among the Burmans, the division of all the created beings established in three classes, each of which contains a certain number of species, from the material beings to the spiritual, from the sentient to the intelligible.²⁹ The Brahmans, who count fifteen spheres in the universe,³⁰ appear to unite the three primordial worlds with the twelve concentric spheres which result from their development. Zoroaster,

who admitted the dogma of the three worlds, limited the inferior world to the vortex of the moon. There, according to him, the empire of evil and of matter comes to an end.³¹ This idea thus conceived has been general; it was that of all the ancient philosophers,³² and what is very remarkable, is that it has been adopted by the Christian theosophists who certainly were not sufficiently learned to act through imitation.³³

The followers of Basil, those of Valentine, and all the Gnostics have imbibed from this source the system of emanations that has enjoyed such a great renown in the school of Alexandria. According to this system, the Absolute Unity, or God, was conceived as the spiritual Soul of the Universe, the Principle of existence, the Light of lights; it was believed that this creative Unity, inaccessible to the understanding even, produced by emanation a diffusion of light which, proceeding from the center to the circumference, losing insensibly its splendor and its purity in proportion as it receded from its source,



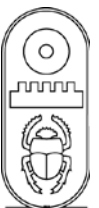
Head of Plato, Roman copy of Greek original which was exposed in the Academy after the death of the philosopher (348 BCE). Glyptothek, Munich, Germany. Photo © 2007 Bibi Saint-Pol/Wikimedia Commons.

ended by being absorbed in the confines of darkness; so that its divergent rays, becoming less and less spiritual and, moreover, repulsed by the darkness, were condensed in commingling with it, and, taking a material shape, formed all the kinds of beings that the world contains. Thus was admitted, between the Supreme Being and humanity, an incalculable chain of intermediary beings whose perfections decreased proportionately with their alienation from the Creative Principle.

All the philosophers and all the sectarians who admired this spiritual hierarchy considered, under the relations peculiar to them, the different beings of which it was composed. The Persian magians who saw there genii, more or less perfect, gave them names relative to their perfections, and later made use of these same names to evoke them: from this came the Persian magic, which the Jews, having received by tradition during their captivity in Babylon, called *Kabbala*.³⁴ This magic became mixed with astrology among the Chaldeans, who regarded the stars as animated beings belonging to the universal chain of divine emanations; in Egypt, it became linked with the mysteries of Nature, and was enclosed in the sanctuaries, where it was taught by the priests under the safeguard of symbols and hieroglyphics.

Pythagoras, in conceiving this spiritual hierarchy as a geometrical progression, considered the beings which compose it under harmonious relations, and based, by analogy, the laws of the universe upon those of music. He called the movement of the celestial spheres, harmony, and made use of numbers to express the faculties of different beings, their relations and their influences. Hierocles mentions a sacred book attributed to this philosopher, in which he called the divinity, the Number of numbers.³⁵

Plato, who, some centuries later, regarded these same beings as ideas and types, sought to penetrate their nature and



to subjugate them by dialectics and the force of thought. Synesius, who united the doctrine of Pythagoras to that of Plato, sometimes called God, the Number of numbers, and sometimes the Idea of ideas.³⁶ The Gnostics gave to the intermediary beings the name of Eons.³⁷ This name, which signifies, in Egyptian, a principle of the will, being developed by an inherent, plastic faculty, is applied in Greek to a term of infinite duration.³⁸ One finds in Hermes Trismegistus the origin of this change of meaning. This ancient sage remarks that the two faculties, the two virtues of God, are the understanding and the soul, and that the two virtues of the Eon are perpetuity and immortality. The essence of God, he said again, is the good and the beautiful, beatitude and wisdom; the essence of Eon, is being always the same.³⁹

But, not content with assimilating beings of the celestial hierarchy to ideas, to numbers, or to the plastic principle of the will, there were philosophers who preferred to designate them by the name of Words. Plutarch said on one occasion that words, ideas, and divine emanations reside in heaven and in the stars.⁴⁰ Philo gives in more than one instance the name of word to angels; and Clement of Alexandria relates that the Valentinians often called their Eons thus.⁴¹ According to Beausobre, the philosophers and theologians, seeking for terms in which to express incorporeal substances, designated them by some one of their attributes or by some one of their operations, naming them *Spirits*, on account of the subtlety of their substance; *Intelligences*, on account of the thought; *Words*, on account of the reason; *Angels*, on account of their services; *Eons*, on account of their manner of subsisting, always equal, without change and without alteration.⁴² Pythagoras called them Gods, Heroes, Demons,⁴³ relative to their respective elevation and the harmonious position of the three worlds which they inhabit. This

cosmogonic ternary joined with Creative Unity, constitutes the famous Quaternary, or Sacred Tetrad, the subject of which will be taken up further on.⁴⁴



ENDNOTES

¹ Hierocles of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Golden Verses*, Preface.

² Johann Albert Fabricius, *Bibliotheca græca*, 460; Dacier, André, "Remarks on the Commentary of Hierocles," *The Life of Pythagoras, with his Symbols and Golden verses. Together with the life of Hierocles, and his commentaries upon the verses* (London: Printed for J. Tonson, 1707).

³ Iamblichus, *The Life of Pythagoras*, chaps. 30 and 33; Plutarch., *On the Daimon of Socrates*.

⁴ Plutarch, *De Repug. stoïc.*; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, l:8, sec 39; Polybius, *The Histories*, l:2.; Justin the Philosopher (Martyr), *Apology*, l:20, chap. 4; Gerardus Johannes Vossius, *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis*, 2 vols., chap. 6. (Hagae-Comitis: Apud Adrianum Vlacq, 1658).

⁵ Hierocles, *Commentary*, "Commentary on verse 71."

⁶ See Dacier.

⁷ Plutarch, *On the Daimon of Socrates*; Claudius Ælianus, *Varia Historia*, l:2, chap. 7.

⁸ *Asiatic Researches, or Transactions of the Society* (Calcutta), vol. 3, 371-374.

⁹ Antoine Gaubil, S.J., *Mémoire concernant les Chinois* (1791), vol. 2, 26.

¹⁰ "Note on Boun-Dehesh," *Eulma Eslam*, 344.

¹¹ Porphyry, *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, chap. 12, trans. Thomas Taylor, (London: John M. Watkins, 1917), 31. Available at http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/porphyry_cave_of_nymphs_02_translation.htm.

¹² Auton d' ek horao peri gar nephos eseriktai. See Dacier.

¹³ Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*; Photios., *Bibliotheca*, 259; Macrobius, *Commentary on Cicero's Dream of Scipio*, l:1., chap. 6, also l:2, chap. 12; Augustine., *On the City of God*, l:, chaps. 9 and 11; Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel*, l:3, chap. 9; Lactantius, "On the False Worship of the Gods" in *The Divine Institutes*, l:1, chaps. 6 and 7; Plotinus, *Enneads*, 3:l.2.

¹⁴ Plutarch., “On Isis and Osiris,” chap. 67, translated in Charles William King, *Plutarch’s Morals: Theosophical Essays* (London: G. Bell, 1898 [1908]), 57. Available at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/plu/plu/pte04.htm>.

¹⁵ The priests of the Burmans, called *Rahans*, but whose generic name is that of *Sramana*, whence came to them that of *Sramaneras*, which the ancients gave them, carry the spirit of tolerance as far as possible. They visit with the same devotion pagodas, mosques, and churches; never does one see them being persecuted, nor persecuting others in the cause of religion. The Brahmans, Moslems, and Christians occupy important posts among them without their being scandalized. They regard all humans as brothers and sisters. (*Asiatic Researches, or Transactions of the Society*, (Calcutta), vol. 6, 274-279). The Brahmans are of the same mind. One reads these wonderful words in the *Bhagavad Gita*: “A great diversity of cults, similar as to substance but varying in forms, are manifested by the will of the Supreme Being. Some follow one cult, others attach themselves to another: all of these worshipers are purified from their offences by their particular cult. . . . God is the gift of charity, God is the offering, God is the fire upon the altar; it is God even, who makes the sacrifice, and God will be obtained by those who make God the sole object of their labors” (Chapter 4).

¹⁶ Hierocles, *Commentary*, 5:1.

¹⁷ The Greek word *kosmos* expresses a thing put in order, arranged according to a fixed and regular principle. Its primitive root is in the Phoenician *aôsh* a principle Being, *the fire*. The Latin word *mundus* renders the Greek sense very imperfectly. It signifies exactly, that which is made neat and clean by means of water. Its nearest root is *unda*, and its remotest root is found in the Phoenician *aôd*, an emanation, a vapor, a source. One can see, according to this etymology, that the Greeks drew the idea of order and beauty from fire, and the Latins from water.

¹⁸ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, l:8 sec. 25; Plutar., *De Decret. philos.*, 2, chap. 6; Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Mathematicians*, 10, sec. 249; Stobaeus., *Physical Extracts*, 468.

¹⁹ Plutarch, “Life of Numa Pompilius” in *Parallel Lives*. Available at [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives_\(Dryden_translation\)/Numa_Pompilius](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives_(Dryden_translation)/Numa_Pompilius).

²⁰ Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras.*, chaps. 28, 32, 35.

²¹ Er, duo. The symbol of Fo-Hi, so celebrated among the Chinese, is the same and is expressed by a whole line — 1, and a broken line — — 2. I shall make myself better understood upon this subject, in speaking as I intend to do upon music and upon what the ancients understood by the language of numbers.

²² Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*; Photios., *Bibliotheca*, 259.

²³ See Dacier, *Life of Pythagoras*.

²⁴ Hierocles, *Commentary*, vol. 1.

²⁵ It must be remarked that the word *Diw*, which is also Persian, was alike applied in Persia to the Divine Intellegence, before Zoroaster had changed the signification of it by the establishment of a new doctrine, which, replacing the Diws by the Iseds, deprived them of the dominion of heaven, and represented them as demons of the earth. See Anquetil Duperron, *Vendidad-Sadè*, 133, *Boun-Dehesh*, 355. It is thus that Christianity has changed the sense of the Greek word *Daimon*, and rendered it synonymous with the devil; whereas it signified in its principle, divine spirit and genius.

²⁶ Timaeus of Locri, *Fragments*, chap. 3; *Edit. de Batteux*, sec. 8; Diodorus Siculus, *Historical Library* l:2; Herodotus, *Histories*, l:2, chap. 4; Thomas Hyde, *Historia religionis veterum Persarum*, chap. 19 (Oxford: Sheldon Theater, 1700); Plato, *Timaeus, Phaedrus, The Laws*, etc.

²⁷ Jean Sylvain Bailly, *Histoire de l’astronomie ancienne depuis son origine jusqu’à l’établissement de l’école d’Alexandrie*, 1, sec. 10, (Paris: Chez les Frères Debure, 1775).

²⁸ Pythagoras, at an early age, was taken to Tyre by Mnesarchus, his father, in order to study there the doctrine of the Phoenicians; later he visited Egypt, Arabia, and Babylon, in which last city he remained twelve years. It was while there that he had frequent conferences concerning the principle of things with a very learned magian who Porphyry names Zabratos; Plutarch, Zaratas; and Theodoret, Zaradas. (Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras*) Plutarch is inclined to believe that this magian is the same as Zardusht, or Zoroaster, and the chronology is not here entirely contrary. (Plutarch, “On the Birth of the Spirit in Timaeus” in the *Moralia*, Book 13, no. 70; Hyde, chap. 24, 309, and chap. 31, 379.)

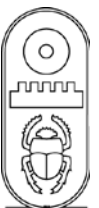
²⁹ *Asiatic Researches, or Transactions of the Society* (Calcutta), vol. 6, 174.

³⁰ John Zephaniah Holwell, *Interesting Historical Events, Relative to the Provinces of Bengal, and the Empire of Indostan* (London: Printed for T. Becket and P.A. Hondt, 1766-71), chap.4, sec. 5.

³¹ Isaac de Beausobre, *Histoire Critique de Manichée et du Manichéisme* (New York: Garland, 1984), chap. 1, 164.

³² Macrobius, *Commentary on Cicero’s Dream*, l:1, chap. 2.

³³ Jacob Böhme, *Six Theosophic Points and Other Writings*, trans. John Rolleston Earle (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1920), chap. 2.



³⁴ The word קבל signifies, in Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldean that which is anterior, that which one receives from the ancients by tradition.

³⁵ *Golden Verses of Pythagoras*, verse 48.

³⁶ Synesius of Cyrene, *Hymnes* (Paris: Éditions du Bateau Ivre, 1947), Hymn 3, verse 174; Hymn 4, verse 68. Available in translations by A. Fitzgerald at www.livius.org/su-sz/synesius/synesius_hymn_3.html and www.livius.org/su-sz/synesius/synesius_hymn_4.html.

³⁷ Beausobre, *Histoire Critique*, chap. 1, 572.

³⁸ The word *Eon*, in Greek, is derived from the Egyptian or Phoenician *ai*, a principle of will, a central point of development, and *ion*, the generative faculty. This last word has signified, in a restricted sense, a dove, and has been the symbol of Venus. It is the famous *Yoni* of the Indians and even the *Yn* of the Chinese—that is to say, the plastic nature of the Universe. From there, originated the name of *Ionia*, given to Greece.

³⁹ *The Corpus Hermeticum*, chap. 11.

⁴⁰ Plutarch cited by Denis Pétau, S.J., “Notes on Synesius” in *Synesii episcopi Cyrenensis opera*, new ed. (1633), 42.

⁴¹ Clement of Alexandria, *Eclog. Theod.*, sec. 30.

⁴² Beausobre, *Histoire Critique*, chap. 1, 572.

⁴³ Gods, Heroes, and Demons signify in the Greek words *Theos*, *Heroes*, *Daimon* (θεός, Ἡρώες, Δαίμων) whence they are derived, the Principle-Beings attained to perfection; the ruling Principle-Beings; Terrestrial Existences. The word *Theos* is formed from the word אויש (*aôs*), a Principle-Being, preceded by the *bemantique* letter ת (*th*), which is the sign of perfection. The word *Heroes* is composed of the same word אויש (*aôs*), preceded by the word הרה (*herr*), expressing all that rules. The word *Daimon* comes from the ancient word Δῆμ, land, united with the word ὄν, existence.

⁴⁴ The complete text of Fabre d’Olivet’s *Examinations of the Golden Verses* may be found at the Sacred Texts Website, www.sacred-texts.com/cla/ogv/index.htm.

