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The Valentinian Gnosis

Of Jules DOINEL

For my brothers and sisters of the Gnostic church scattered throughout the darkness of this Hylic world.

I

I shall tackle the subject of the Gnosis of Valentinus.

It is a complete Gnosis. I approach it with faith, enthusiasm and trembling because I feel that the hour has come when the long silent, long hidden, long persecuted Doctrine is going to thrust upon the people of the end of this century its beneficial and liberating clarity.

I thank Papis for having allowed l'*Initiation* to receive this Gnostic message. The day is not far off when I will be able to publicly expose, with the help of the Holy Eons, before all men of good will in the great and noble city of Paris, the gospel for which the martyrs, Apostles, doctors and initiates lived, fought, suffered, and cried. A gospel for which their blood was spilled, from the time of Simon Magus to the glorious Albigenians.

Our era is indeed privileged. It is witness to the renaissance of Kabbalah, Theosophy, initiation, astrology, and the occult Sciences. It is contributing to an extraordinary awakening. An entire constellation of eminent spirits is resplendent in its psychic sky. Magazines, newspapers and books, shine the light of the Orient upon our western earth. The absolute appears. Is it not right that the Gnosis, which radiated for several centuries and nearly died out, reappear in the firmament of souls? I am only a voice proclaiming it, a voice that won't resound in the desert. May all profane depart. We cast not the pearls of Ophir before the ignorant Hylics.

II

The principle of Gnosis is thus:

THE ABSOLUTE EMANATES DIVINE FORCES THAT ARE ITS HYPOSTASIS. THESE EMANATIONS ARE PROJECTED BY COUPLES (SYZYGIES) IN HIERARCHICALLY DECREASING SETS, THESE ARE AEONS.

In the beginning was SILENCE, the eternal Eon, source of all the Eons, the invisible Silence, the unnamed, the ineffable, the abyss; vulgar language calls it God.

Principle and reason, infinite, enveloped in itself, acting not. But in its inviolate silence were two "generators", the male principle and the female principle, the one, male, the illuminator from on High, the other, female, the illuminator from Below. These two principles contained the root, the source of Being, or, rather, were themselves the root and the source.

The ABYSS (Buthor), enveloping itself, contemplated itself with its eternal spouse, THOUGHT (Ennoia). Silent like Him, Ennoia received, in this inexpressible embrace, the fertile, divine germ of the Emanations. It is by Ennoia that the abyss would generate. Because it was love, and love longs for growth. And there is no love that does not desire something to love.

III

The ABYSS wanted, therefore, to expand, and with Thought it emanated INTELLIGENCE, the eon Noûs, the firstborn (Monogênes), the only one capable of understanding the scope of its Dream. It is the first of the Eons, it is male, and it is by him that God is revealed. The act that emanates it also emanates, at the same time, its companion, its parent, absolute TRUTH (Alêtheia), the female Eon next to the male Eon, subjectivity next to objectivity. This is how the first Tetrad is constituted.

- 1-2. Sigê - Ennoia (Silence and Thought)
- 3-4. Noûs - Alêtheia (Intelligence and Truth)

This first tetrad is the interior manifestation of the absolute.

The Eons, which came out of God, emanated in their turn, as did God. Noûs and Alêtheia engendered SPEECH and LIFE (Logos and Zôé). Logos and Zôé emanated HUMAN ESSENCE (Anthropos) and ASSEMBLY (Ecclesia). One must know that Anthropos is the Man of which our Humanity is only a distant copy, and that Ecclesia is the entire Cosmos. Anthropos, male, and Ecclesia, female, are the two archetypes of the world of intelligence and matter. It is the second tetrad.

- 5-6. Logos - Zôé
- 7-8. Anthropos - Ecclêsia.

With the first tetrad, this second tetrad constitutes the Ogdoad that condenses the ineffable beauties of the ONE, of the ABSOLUTE.

IV

As their Father, the Eons would emanate, always by syzygy, by couple, by male and female principle. Therefore Logos and Zôé emanated and projected:

- 1-2. Bythios and Mixis
- 3-4. Ageratos and Hénoxis
- 5-6. Autophyès and Hedonê
- 7-8. Akinétos and Synkrisis
- 9-10. Menogenês and Makana

These ten Eons form the Decade.

Anthropos and Ecclesia emanated and projected:

- 1-2. Paraclutos and Pistis
- 3-4. Patricos and Elpis

- 5-6. Mêtricos and Agapê
- 7-8. Aeinous and Sunêsis
- 9-10. Ecclésiasticos and Makaridès
- 11-12. Telêtos and Sophia

These twelve Eons form the Dodedade.

The reunion of the Ogdoad, the Decade and the Dodecade, manifesting in successive degrees and descending from the ABSOLUTE, constitute the FULLNESS, or, in the language of Valentinus, the PLEROMA.

Each of the Eons is a hypostasis of the life of the DIVINE ABYSS, something that reproduces it, a mysterious echelon to ascend to his level. The Ogdoad is on a higher level and the Dodecade on a lower level than the Decade. Valentinus agreed with Paul (Colossians 11:9): " In it lives the PLEROMA of divinity ".

These notions contain the essence of the Theology of the great Valentinus. We must now show with the same simple clarity, and without pomposity, the cosmogony of this doctor of the Gnosis.

V

No Eon emanated out of the abyss knew its essence, its nature. Only, Noûs (intelligence) knew it, being the male principle, issuing forth from it and from Ennoia. " No one, say Matthew and Luke, knows the Father, except the Son ". (Matth. XI:27 & Luke X:22).

This perfect science was the aim of all Eons. They emanated from God, they yearned for Him, they loved Him, they were devoured by an insatiable desire to know Him. Noûs would have communicated this perfect science to them if the eternal SILENCE had allowed it. But it was not permitted.

Following the emanation, and as the emanated Eons moved away from their source, from the foyer of the Infinite, their ignorance of this ineffable mystery grew and their distance increased. Their insatiable desire became real suffering. SOPHIA felt this suffering to an incalculable degree. She was the last Eon of the Dodecade, the farthest from the Father, and for the same reason, the most ignorant of the secret of her Nature. Although united with Thêlétos (will), she could not support her male principle. She thirsted for the ABYSS. She desired to be one with Him. She loved the source of the emanations, the father of the Eons, the first Eon. She wrestled against the impossible. And in the passionate violence of this struggle, she would have gotten lost in the void, if LIMIT, the Eon Horos, had not been sent by SIGE (the Father). Horos made SOPHIA come back within the limits of his nature. Emanated to restore the harmony of the PLEROMA troubled by the languor of Sophia, Horos felt impotent to fulfill his mission, because, in her unspeakable love, Sophia had already ascended the sublime echelon of the FULLNESS.

It was necessary to help Horos. Therefore Noûs emanated a new couple: CHRIST and PNEUMA (the Spirit). These two Eons had to pacify the divine world of the Pleroma.

Christ, appearing to the Eons, explained the expansion of the absolute to them, its laws, its rules, its requirements, its norm. Thanks to him, the Eons understood that the absolute, incomprehensible in itself, can only be discerned and grasped by its manifestations, its emanations, its successive becoming and that its incommunicable essence rested in the eternal SIGÊ (Silence).

After Christ, Pneuma spoke to the Eons and taught them holy resignation and the holy peace of acquiescence.

VI

However, the languor of SOPHIA had not been sterilized. Without the help of her parent WILL, she had given birth by herself, during her unappeased ardor. A female Eon emanated from her desire to unite with the ABYSS.

This Eon, ACHAMOTH, or TERRESTRIAL-SOPHIA, was hurled out upon her birth within the Pleroma, exiled in the chaos, wandering outside the limits of the divine World which mercilessly blocked her from Horos.

Achamoth, while falling from the Pleroma, had a brief vision of the ineffable Light that delighted her. This feeling of the fall, the torturing thought of her isolation pursued her in her exile. These beautiful verses of the esoteric poet Lamartine could apply to her:

*All mundane life was like exile from Eden,
When God banished her from the heavenly garden;
The fatal Limits were measured by eye,
At the forbidden gates, where she sat to cry.
In the immortal sojourn, she heard come from above,
An harmonious sigh of eternal love*

Often this unfortunate emanation hurled herself upon the confines of the Fullness. Horos repulsed her, as the archangel with the flaming sword in the Bible repulsed Adam and Eve from the resplendent doors of Paradise.

Then, Achamoth writhed in the emptiness and cried:

*Limited in nature, in wishes unbound,
Man remembers the Heavens, as a god fallen to ground.*

From these sacred tears were born the humid element. Matter came out of this August sadness.

Then, Horos took mercy upon Achamoth. He emanated the Aeon JESUS to comfort her, so she became his companion and he made a reflection of the Pleroma to shine upon her.

Thus redeemed and rehabilitated, Achamoth emanated three elements, the Pneumatic, the Psychic and the Hylic. Of these three elements she formed the DEMIURGE, unconscious worker of the worlds below.

VII

The DEMIURGE, which contained a reflection of the Pleroma and a natural element, separates the hylic principle from the psychic principle, primitively disconcerted in the chaos, and created six worlds governed by six Aeons. These six worlds are the spheres of heaven, the six-fold zone of the Firmament.

With the hylic principle, the Demiurge organized the material world: "This world exists in God, said Valentinus, like a stain on a white tunic." The Aeon of this material world is Satan, also called the Archon of this world by Saint Paul. Satan is born of matter, at the same time as his entourage of perverse spirits.

Soon the Demiurge wanted to fight Satan's spitefulness. He opposed an adversary, Man.

Man's soul is formed from a ray of the psychic principle, his body from a hylic fragment of matter. Then Achamoth instilled within man a pneumatic seed. Hence man's triple nature.

The Demiurge was jealous of his own work when he saw that Man was ennobled by a pneumatic seed; a spark of the Pleroma. To take vengeance, he imposed upon Man the obligation to abstain from the savory fruit of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Man disobeyed this law, rebelled against the Demiurge and was chased out of Paradise. A triple hylic envelope poisoned his soul. The Demiurge submitted him to the hungers of the senses and gave him a taste for pleasures in order to choke the seed of light within him, the pneumatic clarity that had given to him by Achamoth.

Achamoth, the beneficent and soft, pathetic and maternal Achamoth, " salt of the earth " and " light of the world ", then gave GRACE to Man, the invisible assistance which allows him to resist the base sexual desires.

Men are divided into three classes:

- The Pneumatics or Gnostics, superior spirits and initiates, who follow the light of Achamoth;
- The Psychics, floating between light and darkness, between Achamoth and the Demiurge;
- The Hylics, subjects of Satan, whose soul is material and will be annihilated.

SETH, ABEL and CAIN represent these three categories.

VIII

Redemption according to Valentinus remains to be shown.

Our world, that of Men, was redeemed by the Eon JESUS. He came via the immaculate channel of the Eon that we named Mary. The Aeon JESUS is not material. He is formed of a psychic principle borrowed from the Demiurge and an astral body. JESUS is animated by CHRIST, who left the Pleroma, came to rest on him, and who communicated to him absolute power over Satan's world.

His teaching redeemed and redeems still the Pneumatics. At the time of the Passion, Christos, the impassable Eon, sustained and fortified him. The Cross (Stauros), which became the line separating the Pneumatics from other men, is the sacred symbol of Gnosis.

This is, in its entirety, the doctrine of Valentinus. It answers all difficulties. The absolute never appeared more luminously than in this admirable epic that happens successively in the three worlds. There is still the topic of Gnostic morals. It is sufficient to say that it proclaims the innocence of God from evil, sorrow and injustice.

The origin of Evil will provide us material for another survey.

May the Eon that accompanies each of us enlighten us, illuminate us, and purify us.