

## Dualism in Western Thinking



**Fourth Paper - now another number!**

**Eremiados Lodge Members**



Dualism in Western Thinking; Fourth Paper Eremiados Lodge

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### ***Fourth - Dualism in Western Thinking***

Until the middle of the 20th century, hardly anyone outside of the educated upper and middle classes had studied the mysteries. Those who did investigate the mysteries, either in terms of Gnosticism, mystical Christianity or High Magic would have received the standard education as a boy of any reasonably well off person.

Notice that very few women received the same standard of education as men before the 20th century. Until well into the 20th century, it could be assumed that any young man who had gone to a public school or university knew some Latin and Greek. In addition, that he had a general knowledge of the history and legends of

the ancient world. He probably had some acquaintance with the Greek philosophers. Even if he had not studied for the Church, it can be assumed that everyone who went to any kind of school would be familiar with the stories and teachings of the Bible. Likely also that they would have had some knowledge of the northern and Celtic legends as well. Most educated people knew a little French, German and Italian, even if they were not fluent.

During the 20th century, several kinds of change have taken place in education. Firstly, education has been extended to all classes of society. Secondly, it is no longer assumed that everyone attending a school, in any European countries, was a Christian. Thirdly, the basic approach to education has shifted, from a general preparation, which theoretically provided the tools with which anyone might go on to study anything that interested them, to a more specifically technical approach.

The assumption (not always correct) of what is often termed a classical education was that the pupil would not later have to earn a living. The basic assumption of all modern education is that, as soon as the student leaves school or university, enter employment, and that their education should have, to some extent at least, prepared them for gainful employment.

Therefore, a teacher of anything to do with philosophy, religion, mysticism or magic can no longer assume what this classical knowledge. As could, for an example, the founders of the 'Order of the Golden Dawn' were able in 1887 to assume that their neophytes already knew.

Hence, we will continue the Philosophy of the Order series in this and the next lesson, on the subject of Dualism within Western thought. So that you can be supplied, information on topics broadly related to the Qabalah that it could no longer be assumed members have already studied.

### **Dualism in the Ancient World**

Dualism is a term used for three different systems of thought.

One may be called *Cosmic Dualism*, is derived from the Zoroastrian. Zoroastrianism is the religion founded by the Persian prophet Zearathustra (Zoroaster) who lived circa 630-553 b.c. Its modern descendant is Parseeism in India, although Parsees are no longer dualists. In Zoroastrian there is the belief in two essentially equal and opposing gods, in conflict with each other: Abriman, God and cause of all evil and wickedness; and Ormazd, God of all good and righteousness. The present age is under Abriman, and is therefore essentially evil. The future age of righteousness will be under Ormazd. Those who resist the god of evil in this age will be recompensed in a future age under the god of good. *Abriman* is also known as *Angra Mainyu*, Evil Spirit; and Ormazd is also called by the name Ahura-Mazda, Wise Lord. These two gods are frequently referred to as the God of Darkness and the God of Light.

Two; There is another kind of dualism, sometimes called *Metaphysical Dualism*. It appears in the Orphic and Pythagorean religions of ancient Greece, as well as in the philosophical teachings of Plato and later philosophers influenced by Plato. It is also prominent in the writings of the Gnostic sects of the first few centuries of the Common Era (Ce.)

According to this kind of dualism, the essential natures of the body and the spirit are quite incompatible. The body was believed to be inferior to the spirit, which was pre-existent in heaven before it entered the body at conception or birth. The body is regarded as a prison house and sepulchre of the spirit, defiling it as well as it

imprisoning it. Salvation consisted of affecting the permanent release of the spirit from the body. This could be accomplished partly by mortifying the body and depriving it through ascetic practices and rigorous disciplines. Through mystical and religious rites – this is the idea of where a ceremonial initiation comes in. Numerous formula and incarnations in the physical world were regarded as necessary before the soul to progress upwards towards the Higher worlds. This sort of thinking also found its way into some of the Golden Dawn material.

The aim that eventually the spirit would be permanently freed from attachment to the physical; and thus are able to dwell forever in the heavenly spiritual realms of Goodness & Light. Associated with this point of view of Matter is in itself imperfect. If not totally evil, while only the World of Spirit was perfect and good.

### **Desionic Dualism of Sion (The Guardians of Grace)**

There is a third and much lesser known form of dualism generally known only to initiates of this Order. To my knowledge, this sort of dualism is not found anywhere else in any other writings. We call this type of dualism **Desionic Dualism** and is the type taught by the Guardians of Grace and Blessing.

According to this kind of dualism, the essential natures of the body and the spirit are two parts of the whole - the outer and inner. Though each are in a sense incompatible to each other, need each other in order to manifest the third we call Soul.

The Soul, being the progeny of the Two when they exist in union is greater than both. Neither the body nor the spirit is considered inferior to each. As both Spirit and Matter have aspects of them, which are lacking, though found in each other. When conjoined they exist for the greater manifestation of Life, Life and Love.

Spirit and matter are both timeless yet incomplete by themselves. Spirit requires Matter to manifest form and substance. Matter on the other needs Spirit to manifest form and design. The mystery being that by the union of Spirit and Flesh Living Souls are born. Though initially Living Souls are born into a nursery (or womb) of holographic manifestation.

Eventually Living Souls of this third manifestation grow higher than both combined. Very slowly as individuals Awaken to the falseness of the holographic illusion, the developing god-Soul matures to claim the kingdoms, inheritance and ability of all spheres of Spirit and Matter.

The human body and physical universal is regarded as an essential nursery to house the spirit and developing Soul. Either dependent upon Grace, the soul becomes defiled, ceasing to exist; or it grows and rises above binds, and the illusion, which imprison the Soul to Matter. Salvation, liberation consisted of affecting the permanent freedom of choice releasing of the Soul from necessary existence within the corpus-body and the false holographic world. This, the Soul becomes One, Gods.

### **Judah**

If In the early period of Judaism, before the fall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the exile of most of their populations to Babylonia, there is no trace of dualism. The Lord יהוה is the One Creator and Governor of the world and of humankind. The One God is responsible for all evil as well as of all good. If Satan was mentioned at all, he is the agent of God, and neither the equal nor the opponent of God.

After the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, set free from exile by Cyrus the Persian

(conqueror of Babylon) the influence of Persian dualism on the Jewish religion is apparent. Satan has become more than the tempter of humankind. Who previously tested humankind's faith in the Lord on behalf of the Lord. Satan has become the opponent of God, the oppressor of humankind and the prime cause of all evil and wickedness.

Accompanying the growth of a dualistic point of view in Judaism 'was the belief that this world, this age, would be brought to an end at Armageddon. Armageddon is the final conflict between God and his hosts (armies) of angels and Satan and his hosts of fallen angels.

This sort of dualism was never as strong as it was in Zoroastrianism. The Lord **יהוה** is always One God; and the One God is always supreme and in control. Satan and evil exist only because God has permitted it to do so. Just for a while and for his own purposes.

While Cosmic Dualism did have some influence on later orthodox Judaism, Metaphysical Dualism had virtually no impact, except among some of the Jews living Alexandria in Egypt. Jews of Alexandria became more Greek than Jewish in their language, life-style and beliefs.

Among orthodox Jewish sects, there was never any downgrading of the physical in comparison with the spiritual. They believed that since the Lord **יהוה** was all powerful and wise, the world that had been created by God with all its contents (including the human body) must also be good and designed for humankind's use and enjoyment. The only trace of dualism is the presence in human kind of two impulses or tendencies, one towards good and one towards evil. It was necessary to believe in, (if the Jews were to believe as they did) that human beings were not machines but rather free beings, who were given choice to choose, to follow, one path or the other.

Asceticism has always been the exception rather than general rule in Judaism. The Dead Sea sect, known as the Essenes whose library was discovered in 1947, hidden in a cave in the mountains was most unusual in its emphasis on ascetic practices and rigorous discipline. Including the virtual separation of the sexes from each other and celibacy. Only one Essene sect believes in marriage and then only strict conditions.

Like Judaism, Christianity believed in only one God. However, it also inherited from Judaism its modified form of Cosmic Dualism. There remained the general belief in Satan as the independent personification of evil, the enemy of both God and humankind. As in Judaism, in only one book of the Scriptures does Cosmic Dualism predominate, in the visionary Revelation to John the Gnostic. In which there are parallels in many ways to the Jewish Book of Daniel. Both were written in times of severe persecution of their religions, Daniel under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and Revelation under Nero and his successors. Both Daniel and John use imagery and terms strikingly similar to those of earlier Persian Zoroastrian writings.

Unlike Judaism, the Christian Scriptures also included some metaphysical dualism, at its strongest in the letters of Paul - who never met Jesus personally. For Paul, the fleshly body with its desires was evil and the cause of both sin and death. While Paul believed in the resurrection, he differed from the idea of a spiritual body, for a physical resurrection of a new-body. Knowingly he realised that Jesus' own resurrection was not ghostly but rather a physical body of higher and godlike refinement.

However, it is difficult to find any kind of asceticism in the life and teaching of the

Jesus Christ (Rabbi Yeshua' ben-Miriam) as recorded in the New Testament. There is virtually no trace of dualism in the Gospel. Even the accounts of the temptations of Yeshua' by Satan in the wilderness do not require any belief in Satan as more than the Adversary depicted in the Old Testament Book of Job. Satan is one of the servants of the Lord יהוה who task it was to put Jesus and Job to the test.

Moreover; in the Gospels of the Christian New Testament, there are vivid contrasts drawn between the Rabbi Yeshua' and his immediate forerunner, John the Baptist. John is an ascetic who spent all his adult life living in the wilderness, until he appeared to proclaim his message of repentance from sin. He wears rough clothes and lives on locusts and wild honey.

On the other hand, Yeshua" participates in the normal life of his fellow Jews. Receiving a religious education and likely trained as a carpenter. According to the Gospels, his first miracle involves providing wine for a wedding-feast at which he and his family are guests. Throughout his life, much of his teaching was done at meals at which he was a guest. Much of his imagery and parables are drawn from every day activities in the world.

Yeshua" was himself very conscious of the difference between his Cousin John's lifestyle and teachings and his own. Yeshua" is reported as saying, *"John came, neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He is possessed.' The Son of Man comes eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! He is a glutton and a wine-drinker, the friend of tax-gatherers and sinners.'*

John the Baptist taught his followers to fast, but the disciples of Yeshua" were not taught to fast. When he was questioned about this, Yeshua" replied, *"Do you expect the friends of the bridegroom to fast while he is still with them. When he is taken from them, that will be the time for them to fast."*

In his use of the metaphor 'Bridegroom' for himself in this and other places, Yeshua" uses language that implicitly approves marriage. At a higher level, Spirit and Mater marriage is one of synergy where two realms of Life conjoin together in marriage. There is nothing in the Christian Scriptures to suggest that Yeshua" had never been married, nor is there anything to suggest that he had been married, there is some evidence to support his being married in apologia literature. Also given Jewish custom that he was a Rabbi; and that Jewish custom required Rabbis to be married men then we can consider the probably that Jesus was in fact married in human-life. Further, there have always been very strong social pressures on Jewish men to marry and have children, even when their inclinations were otherwise. If Yeshua" did marry, then this would be long before he began his public ministry at the age of approximately 30 years. There is no advocacy of celibacy in the New Testament. While Eunuchs are given spiritual consideration and importance, Eunuch are neither heterosexual nor homosexual, both closer spiritually speaking to the androgyny state of higher human evolutionary existence. They most certainly are not necessary chaste. The monastic way of life and celibate clergy did not become prominent in Christianity for a couple of hundred years. Both Paul and Peter were married men. Although Jesus out-rightly condemns demands for celibacy as demonic; the monastic way of life became established in Church. Where it continued to dominate theological practice until the end of the 15th century, and still dominate much of it especially Catholicism, even since the Protestant Reformation.

Outside of mainstream Christianity in its early years were many unorthodox sects. The most notable of these can be loosely grouped under the name of Gnosticism. Christian Gnostics were dualistic in both senses of the word. This is clearly shown in Gnostic writings, such as those found at Nag Hammadi in Egypt in 1347. The

world of matter was regarded as inherently limiting, an illusion created by an inferior or evil creator god but the realm of spirit was regarded as good. Human beings having a pre-existent soul, which is inherently perfect, but which has been trapped, imprisoned and defiled by being born into a material body. Gnostics believed that redemption could be achieved through ascetic practices and mystical initiation rituals that included, in Gnosticism, the reception of a secret and saving Knowledge, or Gnosis.

The Gnostic sects gradually died out, and their writings were either lost or destroyed, especially after the establishment of orthodox Christianity as the sole official religion of the Roman Empire in the 4th century CE. Gnostic beliefs did survive among pockets of unorthodoxy, principally in Asia Minor. From there, they penetrated into Eastern Europe, especially into what is now known as Bulgaria in the Balkans.

By the 12th century CE, they were known as Bogomils and were sufficiently widespread in the Balkans to become the official religion of Bosnia during the reign of *Ban Kuhin* (1180-1204). The Bogomils were the principal source of the beliefs of the major sect of Dualists in Western Europe ever to emerge — the Cathars. Catharism was the most powerful of the anti-Roman religious movements in the 12th and 13th centuries. Cathars first appeared in Western Europe in about 1140, and last Cathars of southern France were burnt at the stake in 1323/24ish.



The idea of withdrawal from the temptations of the world as ideal Christian life did not become a principal strand of Christianity before the 4th century.

At first, recluses lived alone as anchorites' or hermits; but gradually communities of monks developed. Until by about 1000 CE, the religious orders were playing major roles in Christianity in both the East and the West. From quite early on in the history of the Christian Church, the clergy were usually celibate, i.e., they abstained from either marriage or sex. While to those few that wish celibacy are blessed if given in free will. The demands for chastity by the church upon a Priest not wanted of a person by the Spirit negate the blessing will only those who are called may receive. The demands of celibacy are contrary to the teachings of Christ and in fact contrary to the example of that most of its

founders. For example, Peter, was - known to have been married and that nowhere in the Christian Scriptures is marriage forbidden.

However, it was not until the 11th century CE that celibacy was made compulsory for all clergy in the Western Church, although married clergy such as existing with the Guardians were comparatively rare by then. In the Eastern Church, married men may be made priests, but priests who are single may not marry. No married man may become a bishop, so that bishops have usually been drawn from among the monastic clergy who are always celibate.

Celibacy, in itself, does not necessarily imply a dualistic view of the universe. It is possible for someone, for religious or magical, to decide not to get involved in sexual activity or marriage simply because they want to concentrate all their energies into some other activities.

However, monastics have usually banded together into secluded communities, under vows of celibacy, in order to be free of worldly concerns and to be able to come closer to their spiritual ideals without the contamination of the world or the flesh.

Even though the dualism may not be official, it is there. The monastics of medical Christianity were called the Spiritual Clergy, while parish priests were called Secular Clergy. Monastics dedicated completely too prayer, meditation and contemplation. And in theory, were totally unconcerned with wealth, power or privilege. They were held to be closer to the Christian ideas and thus closer to God himself than the ordinary human being that was usually immersed in the worldly business of making a living. Peter and Paul both largely supported themselves through their own efforts, to supplement their witness and teaching. Supposedly, they were also closer to God than ordinary clergy involved in the business of running a parish.

In theory, the pious lives and the more effective prayers and ceremonies of the monastics lifted up the whole of society. While this is true, it only remains so while the monks themselves are pure. Hence generous gifts of land and wealth were made to the monastic orders, in return for which their prayers would be offered on behalf of the donors.

It is against this background of veneration of those who had the dedication and spirituality to give up the world and its lusts on behalf of their fellow human beings. We must see the enormous hatred and contempt by the common people towards the religious orders which arose; as they were seen to be as wealthy, greedy and lustful as the Lords and Barons outside of their monastery walls.

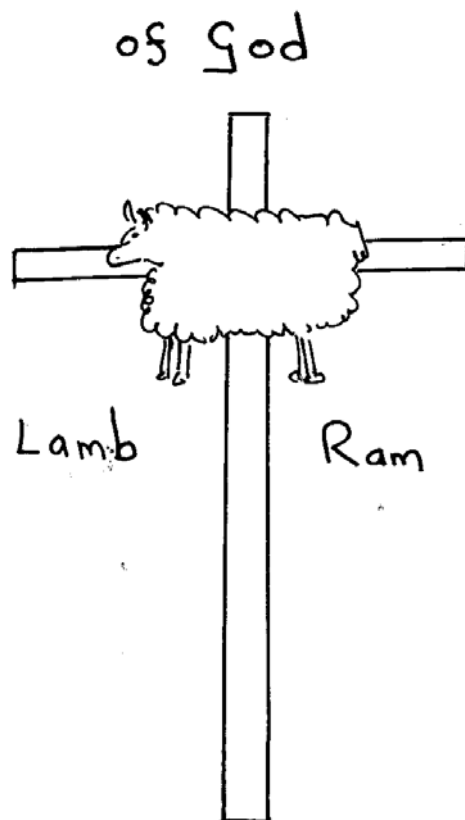
### Some more of our legendary history

Most of us have some familiarity with the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.

Not so many people know that there was nearly a Reformation in the **12th century**, just as radical and far-reaching, in which the formally the Cathars were deeply involved. And also in an insignificant way, so was this Order, when we began as working class Christians (and a few nobles and Muslims) living in Southern France holding too some unusual religious beliefs that also included the Divinity of Mary Magdalene within our teachings and those of Pope Joan.

According to our traditions, the families of the Guardians had existed generations as '*Knowers of the Secret King*' we were not really a society as such - but rather a group of families who worked in the quiet, attending the flock.

Though having links to the Templars/Cathars of that time, we adopted the name of Guardians of Grace, Blessing and Sustenance, having measures as a password to our '*Secret Society*'. For we



wished to distance and isolate themselves from those who sought power, privilege and wealth above all else. Reportedly, without the stabilizing influence of the Guardian society, (some of whom were clergy); those who had seized power and wealth soon began to fight amongst themselves. There was a ferment of demands for religious reforms, most of which were reactions against the increasing wealth and secular power of the Church and its monastic orders. These demands often arose among the working classes, but they were by no means confined to them. The Cathars in particular had strong support for a long time from nobles of great power and influence in Europe and especially southern France.

The Christianity of the primitive Church of the first hundred years after the death of Jesus changed into something very different over the following Thousand years or so.

This Society was also concerned that the sense of great joy and inward freedom which the early Christians derived from their possession of the Good News (and which they could all read for themselves in their own language) had been lost. That the people's sense of Union with the resurrected Christ; now had long since been overlaid by feelings of terror and estrangement. Christ was Judge and Supreme Overlord, ruling through his appointed regents, as a King or Emperor ruled through the barons and other nobles who owed him feudal loyalty.

Much against the protest of the Guardians, the custom of prayer was changed so that the people during their prayers no longer stood with arms upraised and turned towards Christ the 'Risen Sun'. Standing facing God as freeman beloved of God, but were forced to kneel with folded hands in the attitude of serfs.

Formerly the priest had celebrated the Mass facing towards the people as proof of his accessibility and the accessibility of the God - whom he represented. Now the priest turned his back on the people. Finally, the Mass and the Scriptures were in a language, which was not theirs, but reserved for the clergy and the monastics.

Contrary to the wishes of Guardians, the growth of popular religious movements in the 12th and 13th centuries had two main underlying causes. First, Christ was no longer directly accessible to the common people. Direct contact with Christ was first the privilege of the monastics. In theory, they alone had both the training and the time to pray properly to God! They were the Spiritual Clergy in contrast with Guardians who were simply the Secular Clergy, the ordinary parish priests and their families (who were usually drawn from the lower classes).

Yet pressures continued and even though the Secular Clergy administered the power of the sacraments, particularly the Mass, which could lead them daily into the presence of Christ, the great Lord of Heaven. And while for a while the Guardians (some of whom were members of the Secular Clergy) had some small place at the Court of the King, it increasingly became albeit a lesser one than the monastics and Princes of the Church.

The common people had no more place within the so-called hierarchy of the Spiritual Kingdom than they had within the court of their Baron or monarch. Their place was only to provide labour and taxes, for both their secular and their spiritual overlords who used the money to destroy the lives of innocent (both in France and abroad) and to build up personal wealth and prestige.

Secondly, the Roman Church's long-standing veto on the translation of the scriptures and other religious texts into the vernacular languages was a most effective means of keeping the common people at arm's length. Whereas, the Greek Church had taken an opposite point of view, and had numerous translations of the Bible to its credit.



There were no official translations of the Christian scriptures into the vernacular languages of Europe. At the same time, many of the people of Europe, especially those around the Mediterranean area, were becomingly increasingly aware of religious outlooks different from the point of view of the Western Church.

Firstly, there had been the rise of Islam, which had swept across the Middle East and northern Africa. In addition, which had ruled the most of Spain from the 8th to the 11th centuries.

Secondly, the Crusades against the Moslems, which had begun at the very end of the 11th century, brought close contact with Eastern Greek Christianity for the first time in hundreds of years. Within a generation families connected to, or known by the early members of the Guardians, begun to express their strong disapproval and disillusionment with the Crusades.

Thirdly, missionaries from the Bogomils of Eastern Europe were moving westwards along the trade routes of the Danube and the Rhine, and they were having a powerful influence and gaining many disciples, everywhere they reached. Bogomil teachings were first introduced into the Rhineland and northern France by merchants and by crusaders returning from the Second Crusade in 1149, but they were followed by Bogomils from Bulgaria and Byzantium, who were allowed to settle along the Rhine. The passage of these so-called heretics into the West came like a triumphal procession and were made Welcome everywhere with a well-nigh incredible enthusiasm. In Cologne, the civil authorities against the preaching of Bernard of Clairvaux supported the Bogomils. Bernard was regarded as the most eloquent champion of Western Christendom. It took only two years for Catharism, which likely the Guardians are descended from, as it became known in Europe, to gain a strong hold on the whole region between the river Rhine and the Pyrenees Mountains on the border of Spain. This area covers all of what we now call France, Belgium and western Germany.

*"The harmony between their lives and their teachings had an intoxicating effect."* All classes of people were taken with the frenzy; all distinctions of rank were forgotten. Cathar adherents (amongst who were the Guardians at this time) included both clergy and women. Europe was flooded with its first Revival movement.

Cathari, in Greek *Katharoi* means The Pure. This title meant for Purity of the Spirit and its liberation from the evil world and from matter was the goal of the Greek mystery religions and of Manichaeism. The chief characteristic of this type of Gnosticism was its confident belief in the power of a pure spirit to attain direct communion with the Godhead. The Manichees were distinguished by their belief in the distinct and unbreakable barrier separating the children of light from the children of darkness. This dualistic doctrine had made its appearance in Bulgaria during the 10th century. Throughout Europe, society was sharply divided. Generally on the one hand, there was a wealthy aristocracy and clergy; and on the other hand peasants and working classes. Later as the Cathar movement, the Cathars officially endorsed this sort of Dualism, the growing discontent of the Crusades, the accumulation of great wealth by the Church and negation of the gospel to the common people, the Guardian clergy then among the Cathars knew without a doubt that they were no longer Cathars.

For we have always acclaimed unity amongst our rituals.

**The Lord Y.H.V.H is our God  
the Lord Y.H.V.H is One**

All ranks of society were represented in Catharism, but the Guardians of Secular Clergy, who were of 'Scriveners and Weavers', were members of those sedentary

trades that formed elite. 'Scriveners and Weavers' did for many years remain a constant element in European non-conformity, as the intelligentsia of the proletariat and the champions of proletarian intellectualism. We also questioned that 'If such simplicity of life was the ideal, then all the ecclesiastical magnificence and aristocratic power and riches are worthless'. Moreover, 'If this world was the sole creation of Satan, then why so many Crusades in which the pure Christian could only expect blood and tears?' In addition, 'Who then is God's Elder son and the brother of Christ!' For Satan was also identified with Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament.

Soon Catharism spread so quickly in Europe during the 12<sup>th</sup> century that its leaders were unable to control it. The Cathars themselves hived off into a number of deviating groups, some of them quite orthodox, merely emphasizing purity and simplicity of life; while others held to the extreme dualism of the Bulgarian Bogomils - with a wide diversity in between.

What was it that so attracted the people of the 12th century to take the teaching of the Cathars with its curious mixture of mainstream Christian and Gnostic elements. Perhaps the idea of 'Purity' held pride of place? It was the fundamental conviction of the Cathars that there was an irreconcilable antithesis between the soul of a pure person and the evil world. The Cathars, i.e., the Pure were required to cleanse the world and themselves of everything un-spiritual; which was often everything material or physical.

The Guardians teach that:

**Just as death feeds the Phoenix that arises out of the Ashes,**

**So too does the Flesh feed the Soul that grows within**

The difficulty of the Cathars interpretation is the many misunderstood half-truths. While initiate is expected to be Holy (Wholeness and Purity) and cleanse themselves, this is done by rising above the lusts and defilements of the World, so that the World itself becomes the Rose of Manifestation symbolically represented by the best of Venus - rather than the manure.

Cathars did not believe that Christ was either God or human. Both Christ and the Virgin Mary were spirits of a high order, their physical bodies while on earth being merely appearances. Christ was a teacher sent by the good God.

Again, the Cathar teachings revealed half-truths from those attempting to reach out to the Higher Truth. It is true that Christ is a spirit of high order, descending upon the Nazarene and giving birth to a Great Soul. However, the scriptures stress his humanity and his suffering, this is central to the gospel message that must be understood if our own divinity is to become complete. As yourself 'How Real is Real?' how real are you really or are we also merely too an appearance.

After the apparent death of Christ and his departure from this world, it was Satan who brought the Church into being, which is the Whore of Babylon, She who sits on the Seven Hills of Rome. The Cathars taught that souls of humans were imprisoned on earth, and they could only be redeemed by complete separation from the physical world, and by acceptance of Gnosis, the Knowledge concerning the True, and Spiritual God. Whereas the Guardians taught that the soul is not imprisoned in the physical world, but rather an embryo developing within the Womb of the Mother. And any that separation from it was only to the extent of a Birth when the fully developed Soul could at will transcend the normal laws of nature.

Yet teachings of the Guardians remained largely unheard and Cathars continued to teach that world is wicked and those who seek to be pure must renounce the flesh

in all its forms, abstaining from marriage as well as from sexual intercourse.

In theory, all the leaders of the Cathars, called The Perfect, practiced severe asceticism, living as nomads, dedicated to poverty and preaching, and wholly without resources. The tales of these so-called Cathar elite fascinated people, and wondered if perhaps 'true monks' had at last appeared to satisfy their yearnings for better examples of the truly Christian life. The Perfects demonstrated what people who lived by 'pure spirit' could achieve.

Behind their public preaching lay a considerable standard of learning, which is more than could be said for most popular Catholic preaching in the medieval era. Furthermore, the Cathars offered both their own literature and translations from the Bible in the vernacular languages. The individual Perfect molded his entire life in accordance with the demands of the spirit, which became his understanding and his will. A consequence of this was that the Perfects acquired the right to bring about their own death by suicide.

The radicalism of Catharism, this Church of the Pure, had an equal appeal for the masses and the educated. The majority of those interested in Catharism were content to lead more or less ordinary lives, looking on the Perfect as their ideal and aspiring to be accepted among the before death.

As it happens, the practices and lifestyles of the Cathars, however different their teachings might have been, reflected very closely those of the primitive Church.

The reaction of both Pope and Emperor was violent. Crusades against the Cathars were raised. Thousands of people were killed between the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 14th century (1324) when the last of the Cathars were burnt at the stake among whom, though not a Cathar and was a member of our Order.

The Cathars may have been the most immediately widespread of the movements for religious reform in Europe, but they were neither the only such movements nor by any means the most enduring. In about the year 1175 Peter Waldo, who according to our traditions was a member of the Guardians, and also a wealthy merchant of Lyons in France, came to the realization that the only way for a Christian was to abandon all his worldly possessions and all thought of power or wealth in order to imitate the life of Christ and his Apostles.

One of the first steps he took was to have the Gospels translated into French and the language of Provence. Shomer Peter believed that he was counteracting the growing influence of the Cathars by presenting Christianity to the people in its original and pure form, as revealed in the Christian Gospels themselves and never intended to begin a new Sect. However, a sect called the Waldensians did form nevertheless by default. The Waldensians were reviled as heretics, persecuted and harassed by the Church, from their beginning in the 12th century right through to the 19th century, when the Church of Rome finally lost its official position in France.

The Waldensians were forced into the position of heresy, but the followers of Francis of Assisi, who held almost identical beliefs and advocated similar practices and lifestyles, were able to remain within the fold of the Church of Rome, as the Franciscans; while Francis has been canonized as a Saint of the Church.

Neither the Waldensians nor the Franciscans were formally dualist. Indeed, the teaching of St Francis himself, whatever compromises were made by those who took control of his Order even before his death, are one of the great glorifications of the Physical World of Material Activities, never surpassed and not even approached, within the Catholic Church at least, before the emergence of Teilhard de Chardin in the 20th century.

The dualism of the Cathars has haunted the Western Church ever since the medieval era. Both within the Catholic Church itself as well as in all the Protestant Churches that arose after the 16th century Lutheran Reformation, to be 'pure in heart' has always been seen in terms of abstinence from the lusts of the flesh and the lures of the world. The very name 'Puritan', borne with such pride by the extremists of the Protestant faith in England and the American colonies, directly echoes the medieval term Cathar, which transliterates the Greek term for 'Pure'!

The Puritans of later eras in Europe have never been theologically dualist, but the separation of matter and spirit, with matter being regarded as intrinsically inferior to the spiritual underlies all their teachings.

When *Francis of Assisi* cheerfully abandoned his wealth and privilege, he did not do it because either having wealth or because the world was evil, but in order to serve the world. While wealth in itself is not evil but a blessing, we must ensure that such wealth is not the progeny of causing hardship to others. Francis took to the road and preached in complete poverty, earning his daily bread by the labour of his hands.

Francis never was a protester; he never preached against anybody, neither the Cathars nor the Waldensians nor the Church nor the Pope in Rome. Francis taught the good news for what it was, a message of joy and love, God dwelling at peace with men, mediated by Christ to his brother men. For Francis, the experience of Christ was something quite concrete. Contemporary medieval society whose daily life was warfare, unrest, tumult, hatred, envy and the lust for power was confronted in Francis with its greatest challenge. Francis did not flee from society, which was essentially the response of the Cathars. Francis knew that in such a world an open heart meant a heart ready to accept the world in its entirety and to transform it by a life of total dedication to selfless service.

Francis spent his last years in the knowledge that his ideals were being mutilated by the very Order which he had founded. He fought, for as long as his health permitted, to see to it that, whatever else had to be compromised, the basic principles of poverty, itinerant preaching, and manual labour were retained, but in the Rule of the Order as finally adopted and approved, they were gone; or altered beyond recognition.

About 35 years after his death in 1226, an official life of St Francis was written by Bonaventura, the then head, of the Franciscan Order, and he attempted to hunt down and destroy all the biographical material which had been written by the personal friends of Francis.

He was largely successful, and it was not until the end of the 19th century that any historically accurate picture of St Francis and his teachings was recovered when manuscripts



hidden by his friends were discovered.

In the Cathars, the Waldensians and the original Franciscans, we have three varying responses to a period of great social disruption. It was in this period that the small group of Guardians living in the south of France had to face the same crises. The response of the early members was different from any of the others, like the Waldensians and the Franciscans; we rejected the Cosmic Dualism of the Cathars. Nevertheless, unlike the Franciscans and (to some extent) the Waldensians they also rejected the implicit dualism underlying a puritanical approach to life. In this, we were closer to the spirit of Francis of Assisi than to that of his Order - once he had lost control of it.

The early Guardians accepted and sanctified the idea of labour for one's living even amongst those who were clergy. We never rejected marriage or sex nor stood in any way of any person wishing a life of celibacy. In this, they were probably closer, spiritually, to our Jewish friends living in Southern France than we were to our fellow Christians.

We have very little factual evidence of the history of the Guardians, for it much later that the Society before they began to regard themselves as distinctively an Order as such, perhaps as late as the 18th century. By then many members and persons connected with the Society in Southern France and later Spain and Germany had branched off and begun Orders of their own. Traditionally we only considered ourselves a Society, a group of families sharing the teachings of Christ and the mysteries of the East and those of the Grail. By studying the traditions of the Order, there are matters which enable us to locate the Guardians in history from time to time.

In **1167**, Nicetas, the bishop of the extreme dualist sect of the Dragovitsans within the Bogomils of the Eastern Church, converted both the Italian and the French Cathars to his own extreme dualism, and at the First Cathar Council, at Toulouse in 1167. This Easterner managed to unite all Western European Catharism under one authority, and persuaded them to accept his own radical brand of dualism,. Catharism from then on, much less Christian and much more Manichean, and was dominated more by the idea of rejecting the world of matter entirely than by the ideal of poverty and the simple apostolic way of life.

The Guardians who adopted the affirmation of the Unity at about that time, while they were still in France and before they had fled to Spain, and where they also forged links with a non-Christian, Middle Eastern religion. But one that was far older than either Christianity or Catharism. Yet we never lost hold of their belief in the essential Unity of all things and the essential oneness of the worlds of matter and of spirit.

Our acceptance of the Spiritual Sun and the Sun beyond the Sun as the Source of All That Is did not prevent us from holding on to the Affirmation of the Unity. We cannot be sure at what point the Guardians became Qabalists. We do know that, from after the time they rescued Abraham Abulafia from prison in Italy (1282), that we were definitely Qabalists. His description of us as Masters of Knowledge does imply that our earlier members were already sufficiently studied in Qabalism for him to accept them as pupils.

The Ancient Affirmation of the Unity of the Guardians still recited at the ceremonies of the Order today is:

**Hear, all you nations: The Lord is our God! The Lord is One!**

However, traditionally it is chanted since the 12th century as thus:

V: Shema " 'goyim: 'Adonal ~Elohenu! 'Adonai Achadh.

R: Adonai 'Elohenu! 'Adonai 'Achadh.

The Guardians makes a number of points. Firstly, who is affirmed to be One is Y.H.V.H which has usually been transliterated into European languages as Yahweh, Jehovah or similar - even though the name has no pronunciation, and according to the Qabalah of the Guardians is not a name, but a title in code. This is the Name of God that the Cathars said was the name of the Evil One who created this evil world of matter and who was the enemy of the good God who is Pure Spirit.

In this we simply say that there are mysteries within mysteries. Remember that Christ himself also did not deny such a charge when made by the Priests but instead answered them with a riddle. We make it clear that we worship הוהי who within the mysteries is the Divine Hermaphrodite and the parent of humankind - though as an Order we tend emphasis upon the Feminine. הוהי is the creator of the universe as our God and the God is One not two.

As you will later see when you study the ancient rituals of the Guardians, in order to emphasize the Unity, the chant is sung on one note throughout; but in almost every place in the rituals, it is sung as a responsory. The key clause: *The Lord is or God. The Lord is One* is actually chanted twice, which might seem to be a ritual contradiction of unity. This in itself is also a mystery.

However, for clues sake of the mystery hinted at above. The purpose of the chant lead by the celebrant and repeated by all the people is to affirm that the higher World, the more spiritual world (outside of this world of material manifestation) is a Unity; but so is also the lower World of Matter!

### **And both together are also a Unity**

The call of the World of Spirit to acknowledge the Unity of All is responded to by the World of Matter, the people in their physical and spiritual bodies.

The Guardians not only reject Cosmic Dualism, we also reject the metaphysical dualism, which over-values the spirit and denigrates the body. The Guardians do not believe that it is necessary or even desirable to withdraw from the World in order to live the life of the Spirit. For a silent monk in a cave can be as just or more unholy as a hooligan in a bar.

As the Society grew, some time in our early history we began to use the name Guardians, Shomerim, which also means Watchmen, from which we adopted the motto, taken from Nehemiah 4.16: By night, watch; by work. This means that the Order believes that all spiritual teachers (just as did Francis of Assissi) should support themselves by the work of their own hands.

The Guardians affirms the worth of the body, for it is the vehicle of the Spirit and the machine whereby we elevate our consciousness and by which the divine Soul within grows.

Sexual activity is not singled out for ritual purposes, but it is honored as a means whereby any couple in love can experience an Unity, in the here and now.

We glorify the material world, by which we mean we make it glorious by our life of Community, Compassion and Cooperation. We live and grow in this life by the Power of Shekinah the Holy Spirit, who dwells within this Physical World of Material Activities. The myth of Jesus Christ is the supreme affirmation of the Divinity of the Flesh, for it states that even God Most High has shared in this physical life, living a



full human life, not as a ghostly apparition, but as flesh and blood. Also because it is from this lowly human flesh and blood that comes a new body - a new Soul. This new Soul has the power to transcend the limitations of this world. An immortal Soul a synoptic union between the Spirit and the Flesh

### **Dualism in the modern era**

Apart from a few eccentrics, cosmic dualism does not play any role in modern Western thinking within modern thought. However, not in religion but in secular philosophy, Descartes in the 17th century was responsible for the widespread adoption of what amounts to metaphysical dualism, teaching that mind and body are two separate things, perhaps interacting but never to be reconciled completely. Cartesian dualism paved the way for a 20th century attempt to resolve this dualism of body and mind, which has achieved a oneness by rejecting the existence or at least the importance, of the mind in the scheme of things. It is known as Mechanism or Behaviorism. Of less general significance, but influencing much esoteric and New Age thought, has been what can be called a theosophical resolution of Cartesian dualism, which achieves a metaphysical unity only by rejecting the importance or even the reality of the body - a sort of behaviorism in reverse.

Even though it now rarely surfaces formally as a metaphysical or religious doctrine, metaphysical dualism underlies or has affected much of the belief and practice of Western Christianity and philosophy.' It is only by constant vigilance on our own words and thinking, that we too do not fall into dualism, and thus divide that which is indivisible.

**All is One**

**Body and Spirit are One — and both are divine**

### **Footnote:**

Please let New Zion Inc at [newzioninc@snap.net.nz](mailto:newzioninc@snap.net.nz) know if you desire the password for another paper.

[May Light, Life and Love Crown Thy Work](#)