

*Occult Astrology  
predates modern Astronomy.*



## *Abstract and train of thoughts*<sup>1</sup>

### **Occult Astrology predates modern Astronomy.**

Astrology existed before astronomy, and Astronomus was the title of the highest hierophant in Egypt.	4
Among the stars and constellations, the planets alone had a right to the title of Theoi (Gods), i.e., to run or to circulate.	4
The angels worshipped in the Church of Rome are none else than their “Seven Planets,” the Dhyani-Chohans of Buddhistic Esoteric Philosophy, or the Kumaras, the mind-born sons of Brahmā.	6
There are seven Kumaras, four exoteric and three secret. They are all “Virgin Gods,” who remain eternally pure and innocent, and decline to create progeny. In their primitive aspect, these Aryan seven mind-born sons are not the regents of the planets, but dwell far beyond the planetary region.	6
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<sup>1</sup> Frontispiece by Courtney Autumn Martin.

**There are no proofs of the existence in space of intelligent supramundane beings.**

Occultism has a strange theory of its own with regard to Neptune. 13

We lift our diminished heads and look heavenward: worlds, suns, and stars, the shining myriads of the heavenly hosts, remind the poet of an infinite, shoreless ocean, whereon move swiftly numberless squadrons of ships, millions upon millions of cruisers, large and small, crossing each other, whirling and gyrating in every direction. 14

But there are no proofs of the existence and presence in space of intelligent Supramundane Beings, of either Gods or Angels. It is the behaviour of the stars and planets themselves that has to be analysed, and inferences be drawn therefrom. 15

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## Occult Astrology predates modern Astronomy.

**Astrology existed before astronomy, and Astronomus was the title of the highest hierophant in Egypt.**

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PAGAN SIDEREAL WORSHIP, OR ASTROLOGY) XIV pp. 326-33.

**T**HE THERAPHIM OF ABRAM'S FATHER, *Terah*, the “maker of images,” and the Kabeiric Gods are directly connected with ancient Sabæan worship or Astrolatry. *Chiun*, or the god *Khīyūn*, worshipped by the Jews in the wilderness, is Saturn and Śiva, later on called Jehovah. Astrology existed before astronomy, and *Astronomus* was the title of the highest hierophant in Egypt.<sup>1</sup> One of the names of the Jewish Jehovah, “Sabaōth,” or the “Lord of Hosts” (*Tsabaōth*), belongs to the Chaldæan Sabæans (or *Tsabæans*), and has for its root the word *tsaba*, meaning a “car,” a “ship,” and “an army”; Sabaōth thus meaning literally the *army of the ship*, the *crew*, or a *naval host*, the sky being metaphorically referred to as the “upper ocean” in the doctrine.

In his interesting volumes, Lacour explains that all such words as:

. . . the celestial armies or the hosts of heaven, signify not only the totality of the heavenly constellations, but also the Aleim on whom they are dependent; the *aleitzbaout* are the forces of the constellations, the *potencies* that maintain them in their order; the Yahve-Tzbaout signifies Him, the supreme chief of those celestial bodies.<sup>2</sup>

In his collectivity, as the chief “Order of Spirits,” not a chief Spirit.

**Among the stars and constellations, the planets alone had a right to the title of Theoi (Gods), i.e., to run or to circulate.**

The Sabæans having worshipped in the *graven* images only the celestial hosts — angels and gods whose habitations were the planets, never in truth worshipped the stars. For on Plato's authority,<sup>3</sup> we know that among the stars and constellations, the planets alone had a right to the title of *theoi* (Gods), as that name was derived from the verb *θεειν*, to run or to circulate. Selden also tells us that they were likewise called: → [327]

<sup>1</sup> When the hierophant took his last degree, he emerged from the sacred recess called *Manneras* and was given the golden *Tau*, the Egyptian Cross, which was subsequently placed on his breast, and buried with him.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in: de Mirville, *Des Esprits*, Vol. IV, p. 4. Pierre Lacour, *Aeloim, ou Les dieux de Moïse*, tome II, p. 96

<sup>3</sup> *Cratylus*, 397d

θεοὶ βουλευαῖοι (Gods-Councillors) and ραβδοφόροι (*lictors*) as they (the planets) were present at the sun's consistory,<sup>1</sup> *solis consistorio adstantes*.<sup>2</sup>

Says the learned Cedrenus:

The sceptres the seven presiding angels were armed with, explain these names of Rhabdophoroi and lictors given to them.<sup>3</sup>

Reduced to its simplest expression and popular meaning, this is of course fetish worship. Yet esoteric Astrolatry was not at all the worship of idols, since under the names of "Councillors" and "Lictors," present at the "Sun's consistory," it was not the planets in their material bodies that were meant, but their Regents or "Souls" (Spirits). If the prayer "Our Father in heaven," or "Saint" so-and-so in "Heaven" is not an idolatrous invocation, then "Our Father in Mercury," or "Our Lady in Venus," "Queen of Heaven," etc., is no more so; for it is precisely the same thing, the name making no difference in the act. The word used in the Christian prayers, "in heaven" cannot mean anything abstract. A dwelling — whether of Gods, angels or Saints (every one of these being anthropomorphic individualities and beings) — must necessarily mean a locality, some defined spot in that "heaven"; hence it is quite immaterial for purposes of worship whether that spot be considered as "heaven" in general, meaning nowhere in particular, or in the Sun, Moon or Jupiter.

The argument is futile that there were

. . . two deities, and two distinct hierarchies or *tsabas* in heaven, in the ancient world as in our modern times . . . the one, the living God and his host, and the other, *Satan*, Lucifer with his councillors and lictors, or the *fallen* angels.

Our opponents say that it is the latter which Plato with the whole of antiquity worshipped, and which two-thirds of humanity worship to this day. "The whole question is to know how to discern between the two." [328]

Protestant Christians fail to find any mention of angels in the *Pentateuch*, we may therefore leave them aside. The Roman Catholics and the Kabbalists find such mention; the former, because they have accepted Jewish angelology, without suspecting that the "tsabæan Hosts" were colonists and settlers on Judæan territory from the lands of the Gentiles; the latter, because they accepted the bulk of the Secret Doctrine, keeping the kernel for themselves and leaving the husks to the unwary.

Cornelius à Lapidè points out and proves the meaning of the word *tsaba* in the first verse of Chapter ii of *Genesis*; and he does so correctly, guided, as he probably was, by learned Kabbalists. The Protestants are certainly wrong in their contention, for angels are mentioned in the *Pentateuch* under the word *tsaba*, which means "hosts" of angels. In the *Vulgate* the word is translated *ornatus*, meaning the "sidereal army," the *ornament* also of the sky — kabbalistically. The biblical scholars of the Protestant Church, and the *savants* among the materialists, who failed to find "angels" mentioned by Moses, have thus committed a serious error. For the verse reads: →

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<sup>1</sup> [assembly]

<sup>2</sup> [John Selden, *De Diis Syriis*, Prolegomena, ch. iii, as quoted by de Mirville, *op. cit.*, p. 6]

<sup>3</sup> De Mirville, *op. cit.*, p. 7

Thus the heaven and the earth were finished and all the host of them,<sup>1</sup> the “host” meaning “the army of stars and angels”; the last two words being, it seems, convertible terms in Church phraseology. Cornelius à Lapide is cited as an authority for this; he says that:

*Tsaba* does not mean *either one* or the other but “*the one and the other*,” or both, *siderum ac angelorum*.<sup>2</sup>

**The angels worshipped in the Church of Rome are none else than their “Seven Planets,” the Dhyani-Chohans of Buddhistic Esoteric Philosophy, or the Kumaras, the mind-born sons of Brahmā.**

**There are seven Kumaras, four exoteric and three secret. They are all “Virgin Gods,” who remain eternally pure and innocent, and decline to create progeny. In their primitive aspect, these Aryan seven mind-born sons are not the regents of the planets, but dwell far beyond the planetary region.**

If the Roman Catholics are right on this point, so are the Occultists when they claim that the angels worshipped in the Church of Rome are none else than their “Seven Planets,” the Dhyāni-Chohans of Buddhistic Esoteric Philosophy, or the Kumāras, “the mind-born sons of Brahmā,” known under the patronymic of Vaidhātra. The identity between the Kumāras, the Builders or cosmic Dhyāni-Chohans, and the Seven Angels [329] of the Stars, will be found without one single flaw if their respective biographies are studied, and especially the characteristics of their chiefs, Sanat-Kumāra (Sanat-Sujāta), and Michael the Archangel. Together with the Kabirim (Planets), the name of the above in Chaldæa, they were all “*divine Powers*” (Forces). Fürst says that the name Kabeiroi was used to denote the *seven* sons of קדיש, meaning Father Sadic, Cain, or Jupiter, or again of Jehovah. There are seven Kumāras — four exoteric and three secret — the names of the former being found in the *Sāṅkhya-Bhāshya*, by Gaudapādāchārya.<sup>3</sup> They are all “Virgin Gods,” who remain eternally pure and innocent and decline to create progeny. In their primitive aspect, these Aryan seven “mind-born sons” of God are not the regents of the planets, but dwell far beyond the planetary region. But the same mysterious transference from one character or dignity to another is found in the Christian Angel-scheme.

**Archangel Michael is called “the invincible virgin combatant” as he “refused to create,” which would connect him with both Sanat Sujata and the Kumara who is the God of War called in the Hindu system the “eternal celibate” and “the virgin warrior.” He is the Aryan St. Michael.**

The “Seven Spirits of the Presence” attend perpetually on God, and yet we find them under the same names of Mikael, Gabriel, Raphael, etc., as “Star-regents” or the informing deities of the seven planets. Suffice it to say that the Archangel Michael is

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<sup>1</sup> *Genesis* ii, 1

<sup>2</sup> [stars and angels]

<sup>3</sup> The three secret names are “Sana, Sanat-Sujāta, and Kapila”; while the four exoteric Gods are called Sanat-Kumāra, Sanandana, Sanaka, and Sanātana. [See pp. 3 & 188 in the *Sāṅkhya Karik* with *Bhāshya* of Gaudapādā, translated by H.T. Colebrooke & H.H. Wilson. The 1887 ed. has been reprinted by the Indological Book House, Varanasi, India, in 1978. — *Dara Eklund*.]

called “the invincible virgin combatant” as he “refused to create,” which would connect him with both Sanat Sujāta and the Kumāra who is the God of War.<sup>1</sup>

The above has to be demonstrated by a few quotations. Commenting upon St. John’s “Seven Golden Candlesticks,” Cornelius à Lapide says:

These seven lights relate to the seven branches of the candlestick by which were represented the seven [principal] planets in the temples of Moses and Solomon . . . or, better still, to the seven principal Spirits, commissioned to watch over the salvation of men and churches.<sup>2</sup> [330]

St. Jerome says:

In truth the candlestick with the seven branches was the type of the world and its planets.<sup>3</sup>

St. Thomas Aquinas, the great Roman Catholic doctor writes:

I do not remember having ever met in the works of saints or philosophers a denial that the planets are guided by spiritual beings. . . . It seems to me that it may be proved to demonstration that the celestial bodies are guided by some intelligence, either directly by God, or by the mediation of angels. But the latter opinion seems to be far more consonant with the order of things asserted by St. Denys to be without exception, that everything on earth is, as a rule, governed by God through intermediary agencies.<sup>4</sup>

**The Seven Rectors, the planets including the sun, are the co-workers of the Unknown, represented by the Demiourgos — commissioned to create and contain Cosmos — our planetary world. They represent “the circle of the celestial worlds.”**

And now let the reader recall what the Pagans say of this. All the classical authors and philosophers who have treated the subject, repeat with Hermes Trismegistus, that the seven Rectors — the planets including the sun — were the associates, or the co-workers, of the Unknown All represented by the Demiourgos — commissioned to contain the Cosmos — our planetary world — within seven circles. Plutarch shows them representing “the circle of the celestial worlds.” Again, Denys of Thracia and the learned Clement of Alexandria both describe the Rectors as being shown in the Egyptian temples in the shape of mysterious wheels or spheres always in motion, which made the Initiates affirm that the problem of perpetual motion [331] had been solved

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<sup>1</sup> Another Kumāra, the “God of War,” is called in the Hindu system the “eternal celibate” — “the virgin warrior.” He is the Āryan St. Michael.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentarius in Acta Apostolorum, Epistolas Canonicas et Apocalypsin* (Antwerp 627), ch. iv, as quoted by de Mirville, in *Des Esprits*, Vol. IV, p. 28

<sup>3</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*, Bk. V, ch. vi

<sup>4</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ*. We give the original:

“Cœlestia corpora moveri a spiritali creatura, a *nemine* sanctorum vel philosophorum negatum, legisse me memini. (opusculum X, article iii) . . . Mihi autem videtur, quod demonstrative probari posset, quod ab aliquo intellectu corpora cœlestia moveantur, vel a Deo immediate, vel a mediantibus angelis. Sed quod mediantibus angelis ea moveat, congruit rerum ordine, quem Dionysis infallibilem asserit, ut inferiora a Deo per media secundum cursum communem administrentur.” (opusculum II, article ii)

And if so, and God *never* meddles with the once for ever established laws of Nature leaving it to his administrators, why should their being called Gods by the “heathen” be deemed idolatrous?

by the celestial wheels in the Initiation Adyta.<sup>1</sup> This doctrine of Hermes was that of Pythagoras and of Orpheus before him. It is called by Proclus “the God-given” doctrine. Iamblichus speaks of it with the greatest reverence.

**The whole sidereal court of the Babylonian heaven was represented in the temples by globes made of sapphires, supporting golden images of their respective gods.**

Philostratus tells his readers that the whole sidereal court of the Babylonian heaven was represented in the temples,

In globes made of sapphires and supporting the golden images of their respective gods.

**An immense machine, fabricated for King Chosroes in Persia, represented the night sky with the planets and all their revolutions, and with angels presiding over them.**

The temples of Persia were especially famous for these representations. If Cedrenus can be credited,

The Emperor Heraclius on his entry into the city of Bazacum was struck with admiration and wonder before the immense machine fabricated for King Chosroes,<sup>2</sup> which represented the night-sky with the planets and all their revolutions, with the angels presiding over them.<sup>3</sup> [332]

**All the discoveries of modern astronomy, like all the secrets that can be revealed to it in future ages, were contained in the secret observatories and Initiation Halls of the temples of old India and Egypt.**

It was on such “spheres” that Pythagoras studied Astronomy in the *adyta arcana* of the temples to which he had access. And it was there on his Initiation, that the eternal rotation of those spheres — “the mysterious wheels” as they are called by Clement and Denys, and which Plutarch calls “world-wheels” — demonstrated to him the verity of what had been divulged to him, namely, the heliocentric system, the great

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<sup>1</sup> In one of Roger Gougenot Des Mousseaux’s volumes on Demonology (*La magie au dix-neuvième siècle: ses agents, ses vérités, ses mensonges*, Paris 1860 & 1864) the statement of the Abbé Huc is found, and the author testifies to having heard the following story repeatedly from the Abbé himself. In a lamasery of Tibet, the missionary found the following:

It is a simple canvas without the slightest mechanical apparatus attached, as the visitor may prove by examining it at his leisure. It represents a moonlit landscape, but the moon is not at all motionless and dead; quite the reverse, for, according to the Abbé, one would say that our moon herself, or at least her living double, lighted the picture. Each phase, each aspect, each movement of our satellite, is repeated in her *facsimile*, in the movement and progress of the moon in the sacred picture.

“You see this planet in the painting ride as a crescent, or full, shine brightly, pass behind the clouds, peep out or set, in a manner corresponding in the most extraordinary way with the real luminary. It is, in a word, a most perfect and resplendent reproduction of the pale queen of the night, which received the adoration of so many people in the days of old.”

We know from the most reliable sources and numerous eye-witnesses, that such “machines” — not canvas paintings — do exist in certain temples of Tibet; as also the “sidereal wheels” representing the planets, and kept for the same purposes — astrological and magical. Huc’s statement was translated in *Isis Unveiled* [Vol. I, p. 441] from Des Mousseaux’s volume. [*op. cit.*, 1864 ed., pp. 142 *fn.* & 143 *fn.*]

<sup>2</sup> [Khosrow Parviz]

<sup>3</sup> Cedrenus, p. 338 [de Mirville, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 7]. Whether produced by *clockwork or magic* power, such machines — whole celestial spheres with planets rotating — were found in the Sanctuaries, and some exist to this day in Japan, in a secret subterranean temple of the old Mikados, as well as in two other places.



secret of the Adyta. All the discoveries of modern astronomy, like all the secrets that can be revealed to it in future ages, were contained in the secret observatories and Initiation Halls of the temples of old India and Egypt. It is in them that the Chaldaean made his calculations, revealing to the world of the profane no more than it was fit to receive.

**Uranus is a modern name. The ancients had a planet, “a mystery planet,” that they never named and that only the highest Astronomus, the Hierophant, could “confabulate with.” But this seventh planet was not the sun but the hidden Divine Hierophant, who was said to have a crown, and to embrace within its wheel “seventy-seven smaller wheels.”**

We may, and shall be told, no doubt, that Uranus was unknown to the ancients, and that they were forced to reckon the sun amongst the planets and as their chief. How does anyone know? Uranus is a modern *name*; but one thing is certain: the ancients had a planet, “a mystery planet,” that they never named and that the highest Astronomus, the Hierophant, alone could “confabulate with.” But this seventh planet was not the sun, but the hidden Divine Hierophant, who was said to have a crown, and to embrace within its wheel “seventy-seven smaller wheels.” In the archaic secret system of the Hindus, the sun is the visible Logos, “Sūrya”; over him there is another, the divine or heavenly Man — who, after having established the system of the world of matter on the archetype of the Unseen Universe, or Macrocosm, conducted during the Mysteries the heavenly *Rāsa Mandala*; when he was said:

To give with his right foot the impulse to *Tyam* or Bhūmi [Earth] that makes her rotate in a double revolution.

What says Hermes again? When explaining Egyptian Cosmology he explains:

Listen, O my son . . . the Power has also formed *seven agents*, who contain within their circles the material world, and whose action is called destiny. . . . When all became subject to man . . . the Seven, willing to favour human intelligence, communicated to him their powers. But as soon as man knew their true essence and his own nature, he desired to penetrate within and beyond the circles and thus break their circumference by usurping the power of him who has dominion over the Fire [Sun] [333] itself; after which, having robbed *one of the Wheels of the Sun* of the sacred fire, he fell into slavery.<sup>1</sup>

**The rapid growth of human intellect has paralysed spiritual perceptions. It is at the expense of wisdom that intellect generally thrives, and mankind is quite unprepared in its present condition to comprehend the awful drama of human disobedience to the laws of Nature and the subsequent “Fall,” as a result.**

It is *not* Prometheus who is meant here. Prometheus is a symbol and a personification of the whole of mankind in relation to an event which occurred during its childhood, so to say — the “Baptism by Fire” — which is a mystery within the great Promethean Mystery, one that may be at present mentioned only in its broad general features. By reason of the extraordinary growth of human intellect and the develop-

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<sup>1</sup> Champollion-Figeac, *Égypte moderne*, p. 142. [Cf. de Mirville, *Des Esprits*, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 11]

ment in our age of the fifth principle (Manas) in man, its rapid progress has paralysed spiritual perceptions. It is at the expense of wisdom that intellect generally lives, and mankind is quite unprepared in its present condition to comprehend the awful drama of human disobedience to the laws of Nature and the subsequent Fall, as a result. It can only be hinted at, in its place.





## There are no proofs of the existence in space of intelligent supramundane beings.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MODERN KABBALISTS IN SCIENCE AND OCCULT ASTRONOMY) XIV, pp. 225-32.

**T**HERE IS A PHYSICAL, AN ASTRAL, AND A SUPER-ASTRAL UNIVERSE in the three chief divisions of the *Kabbalah*; as there are terrestrial, superterrestrial, and spiritual Beings. The “Seven Planetary Spirits” may be ridiculed by Scientists to their hearts’ content, yet the need of intelligent ruling and guiding Forces is so much felt to this day that scientific men and specialists, who will not hear of Occultism or of ancient systems, find themselves obliged to generate in their inner consciousness some kind of semi-mystical system. Metcalfe’s “sun-force” theory, and that of Zaliwsky, a learned Pole, which made Electricity the Universal Force and placed its storehouse in the Sun,<sup>1</sup> were revivals of the Kabbalistic teachings. Zaliwsky tried to prove that Electricity, producing “the most powerful, attractive, calorific, and luminous effects,” was present in the physical constitution of the Sun and explained its peculiarities. This is very near the Occult teaching. It is only by admitting the gaseous nature of the Sun-reflector, and the powerful Magnetism and Electricity of the solar attraction and repulsion, that one can explain:

The evident absence of any waste of power and luminosity in the Sun — inexplicable by the ordinary laws of combustion; and

The behaviour of the planets, so often contradicting every accepted rule of weight and gravity.

And Zaliwsky makes this

solar electricity . . . *differ from anything known on earth.*

Father Secchi<sup>2</sup> may be suspected of having sought to introduce:

*Forces of quite a new order* and quite foreign to gravitation, which he had discovered in Space,<sup>3</sup>

in order to reconcile Astronomy with theological Astronomy. But Nagy, a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, was no cleric, and yet he develops a theory on the necessity of intelligent Forces whose complacency “would lend itself to all [226] the whims of the comets.”

<sup>1</sup> Count Joseph Zaliwsky-Mikorski, *La gravitation par l’électricité* (1858), p. 7, in: de Mirville, *Des Esprits*, Vol. IV, p. 156

<sup>2</sup> [Fr. Angelo Secchi SJ, 1818–1878, Italian astronomer and Director of the Observatory at the Pontifical Gregorian University (then called the Roman College) for 28 years. Secchi was a pioneer in astronomical spectroscopy, and one of the first scientists to state authoritatively that the Sun is a star.]

<sup>3</sup> De Mirville, *op. cit.*, p. 157

He suspects that:

Notwithstanding all the actual researches on the rapidity of light — that *dazzling product of an unknown force* . . . which we see too frequently to understand — *that light is motionless* in reality.<sup>1</sup>

C.E. Love, the well-known railway builder and engineer in France, tired of blind forces, made all the (then) “imponderable agents” — now called “forces” — subordinates of Electricity, and declares the latter to be an

Intelligence — albeit molecular in nature and material.<sup>2</sup>

In the author’s opinion these Forces are atomistic agents, endowed with intelligence, spontaneous will, and motion, and he thus, like the Kabbalists, makes the causal Forces substantial, while the Forces that act on this plane are only the effects of the former, as with him matter is eternal, and the Gods also;<sup>3</sup> so is the Soul likewise, though it has inherent in itself a still higher Soul [Spirit], pre-existent, endowed with memory, and superior to Electric Force; the latter is subservient to the higher Souls, those superior Souls forcing it to act according to the eternal laws. The concept is rather hazy, but is evidently on the Occult lines. Moreover, the system proposed is entirely pantheistic, and is worked out in a purely scientific volume. Monotheists and Roman Catholics fall foul of it, of course; but one who believes in the Planetary Spirits and who endows Nature with living Intelligences, must always expect this.

In this connection, however, it is curious that after the moderns have so laughed at the ignorance of the ancients,

Who, knowing only of seven planets [yet having an ogdoad which *did not* include the earth!], invented therefore seven Spirits to fit in with the number,

Babinet should have vindicated the “superstition” unconsciously [227] to himself. In the *Revue des Deux Mondes*<sup>4</sup> this eminent French Astronomer writes:

The ogdoad of the Ancients included the earth [which is an error] *i.e.*, eight or seven according to whether or not the earth was comprised in the number.

De Mirville assures his readers that:

M. Babinet was telling us but a few days ago that we had in reality only eight big planets, including the earth, and thirty-five small ones between Mars and Jupiter. . . . Herschel offering to call all those beyond the seven primary planets asteroids!<sup>5</sup>

There is a problem to be solved in this connection. How do Astronomers know that Neptune is a planet, or even that it is a body belonging to our system? Being found on the very confines of our Planetary World, so-called, the latter was arbitrarily ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Karoly Nagy, *Mémoire sur le système solaire* (1862), p. 7, in: de Mirville, *Des Esprits*, Vol. IV, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *Éssai sur l'identité des agents producteurs du son, de la lumière, etc.*, p. 15, in: de Mirville, *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> De Mirville, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 158

<sup>4</sup> [May 1855]

<sup>5</sup> In: de Mirville, *Des Esprits, op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 139. [Sir John Frederick William Herschel is being quoted from *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May 1855 issue.]



panded to receive it; but what really mathematical and infallible proof have Astronomers that it is (a) a planet, and (b) one of *our* planets? None at all! It is at such an immeasurable distance from us, the

Apparent diameter of the sun being to Neptune but one-fortieth of the sun's apparent diameter to us,

and it is so dim and hazy when seen through the best telescope that it looks like an astronomical romance to call it one of our planets. Neptune's heat and light are reduced to 1/900 part of the heat and light received by the earth. His motion and that of his satellites have always looked suspicious. They do not agree — in appearance, at least — with those of the other planets. His system is retrograde, etc. But even the latter abnormal fact resulted only in the creation of new hypotheses by our Astronomers, who forthwith suggested a probable overturn of Neptune, his collision with another body, etc. Was Adams' and Leverrier's discovery so welcomed because Neptune was as necessary as was Ether to throw a new glory upon astronomical prevision, upon the certitude of modern scientific data, and principally upon the power of mathematical analysis? It would so appear. [228] A new planet that widens our planetary domain by more than four hundred million leagues is worthy of annexation. Yet, as in the case of terrestrial annexation, scientific authority may be proved "right" only because it has "might." Neptune's motion happens to be dimly perceived: Eureka! it is a planet! A mere motion, however, proves very little. It is now an ascertained fact in Astronomy that there are no absolutely fixed stars in Nature,<sup>1</sup> even though such stars should continue to exist in astronomical parlance, while they have passed from the scientific imagination. Occultism, however, has a strange theory of its own with regard to Neptune.

### **Occultism has a strange theory of its own with regard to Neptune.**

Occultism says that if several hypotheses resting on mere assumption — which have been accepted only because they have been taught by eminent men of learning — are taken away from the Science of Modern Astronomy, to which they serve as props, then even the presumably universal law of gravitation will be found to be contrary to the most ordinary truths of mechanics. And really one can hardly blame Christians — foremost of all the Roman Catholics — however scientific some of these may themselves be, for refusing to quarrel with their Church for the sake of scientific beliefs. Nor can we even blame them for accepting in the secrecy of their hearts — as some of them do — the theological "Virtues" and "Archōns" of Darkness, instead of all the blind forces offered them by Science.

Never can there be intervention of any sort in the marshalling and the regular precession of the celestial bodies! The law of gravitation is the law of laws; who

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<sup>1</sup> If, as Sir John Herschel thought, the so-called fixed stars have resulted from, and owe their origin to nebular combustion, they cannot be fixed any more than is our sun, which was believed to be motionless and is now found to rotate around its axis every twenty-five days. As the fixed star nearest to the sun, however, is eight-thousand times farther away from him than is Neptune, the illusions furnished by the telescopes must be also eight-thousand times as great. We will therefore leave the question at rest, repeating only what Alfred Maury said in his work (Louis Ferdinand Alfred Maury, *La Terre et l'Homme*, etc., published in 1858):

"It is utterly impossible, so far, to decide anything concerning Neptune's constitution, analogy alone authorizing us to ascribe to him a rotary motion like that of other planets."

(In: de Mirville, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 140)

ever witnessed a stone rising in the air against gravitation? The permanence of the universal law is shown in the behaviour of the [229] sidereal worlds and globes eternally faithful to their primitive orbits; never wandering beyond their respective paths. Nor is there any intervention needed, as it could only be disastrous. Whether the first sidereal incipient rotation took place owing to an intercosmic chance, or to the spontaneous development of latent primordial forces; or again, whether that impulse was given once for all by God or Gods — it does not make the slightest difference. At this stage of cosmic evolution no intervention, superior or inferior, is admissible. Were any to take place, the universal clock-work would stop, and Kosmos would fall into pieces.

**We lift our diminished heads and look heavenward: worlds, suns, and stars, the shining myriads of the heavenly hosts, remind the poet of an infinite, shoreless ocean, whereon move swiftly numberless squadrons of ships, millions upon millions of cruisers, large and small, crossing each other, whirling and gyrating in every direction.**

Such are stray sentences, pearls of wisdom, fallen from time to time from scientific lips, and now chosen at random to illustrate a query. We lift our diminished heads and look heavenward. Such seems to be the fact: worlds, suns, and stars, the shining myriads of the heavenly hosts, remind the Poet of an infinite, shoreless ocean, whereon move swiftly numberless squadrons of ships, millions upon millions of cruisers, large and small, crossing each other, whirling and gyrating in every direction; and Science teaches us, that though they be without rudder or compass or any beacon to guide them, they are nevertheless secure from collision — almost secure, at any rate, save in chance accidents — as the whole celestial machine is built upon and guided by an immutable, albeit blind, law, and by constant and accelerating force or forces. “Built upon” by whom? “By self-evolution,” is the answer. Moreover, as dynamics teach that:

A body in motion tends to continue in the same state of relative rest or motion unless acted upon by some external force,

this force has to be regarded as self-generated — even if not eternal, since this would amount to the recognition of perpetual motion — and so well self-calculated and self-adjusted as to last from the beginning to the end of Kosmos. But “self-generation” has still to generate from something, generation *ex nihilo* being as contrary to reason as it is to Science. Thus we are placed once more between the horns of a dilemma: are we to believe in perpetual motion or in self-generation *ex nihilo*? And if in neither, who or what is that something, which first produced that force or those forces?

There are such things in mechanics as superior levers, which give the impulse and act upon secondary or inferior levers. The former, however, need an impulse and occasional renovation, [230] otherwise they would themselves very soon stop and fall back into their original status. What is the external force which puts and retains them in motion? Another dilemma!

As to the law of cosmical *non-intervention*, it could be justified only in one case, namely, if the celestial mechanism were perfect; but it is not. The so-called unalterable motions of celestial bodies alter and change incessantly; they are very often dis-

turbed, and the wheels of even the sidereal locomotive itself occasionally jump off their invisible rails, as may be easily proved.

Otherwise why should Laplace speak of the probable occurrence at some future time of an out-and-out reform in the arrangement of the planets?<sup>1</sup>

Or Lagrange<sup>2</sup> maintain the gradual narrowing of the orbits?

Or our modern Astronomers, again, declare that the fuel in the sun is slowly disappearing?

If the laws and forces which govern the behaviour of the celestial bodies are immutable, such modifications and wearing-out of substance or fuel, of force and fluids, would be impossible; yet they are not denied. Therefore one has to suppose that such modifications will have to rely upon the laws of forces, which will have to self-regenerate themselves once more on such occasions, thus producing an astral antinomy, and a kind of physical palinomy, since, as Laplace says, one would then see fluids disobeying themselves and reacting in a way contrary to all their attributes and properties.<sup>3</sup>

Newton felt very uncomfortable about the moon. Her behaviour in progressively narrowing the circumference of her orbit around the earth made him nervous, lest it should end one day in our satellite falling upon the earth. The world, he confessed, needed repairing, and that very often.<sup>4</sup> In this he was corroborated by Herschel. He speaks of real and quite considerable deviations, besides those which are only apparent, [231] but gets some consolation from his conviction that somebody or something will probably see to things.

**But there are no proofs of the existence and presence in space of intelligent Supramundane Beings, of either Gods or Angels. It is the behaviour of the stars and planets themselves that has to be analysed, and inferences be drawn therefrom.**

We may be answered that the personal beliefs of some pious Astronomers, however great they may be as scientific characters, are no proofs of the actual existence and presence in space of intelligent supramundane Beings, of either Gods or Angels. It is the behaviour of the stars and planets themselves that has to be analysed and inferences must be drawn therefrom. Renan<sup>5</sup> asserts that nothing that we know of the sidereal bodies warrants the idea of the presence of any Intelligence, whether internal or external to them.

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<sup>1</sup> [See Pierre-Simon Marquis de Laplace's *Exposition du système du monde*, Paris (1796), pp. 206, 282-83. For an English edition consult Vol. I, pp. 249-51, of *The System of the World* translated by J. Pond, 2-vols., London: R. Phillips, 1809]

<sup>2</sup> [Joseph-Louis Lagrange, 1736-1813, Italian Enlightenment Era mathematician and astronomer. He made significant contributions to the fields of analysis, number theory, and both classical and celestial mechanics.]

<sup>3</sup> [*op. cit.*, pp. 351-52]

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Sir John Herschel in *Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*, p. 165; de Mirville, *Des Esprits*, Vol. IV, p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> [Joseph Ernest Renan, 1823-1892, French expert of Semitic languages and civilizations, philosopher, biblical scholar and critic, and historian of religion. He is best known for his influential and pioneering historical works on the origins of Early Christianity, and his political theories, especially concerning nationalism and national identity.]

Let us see, says Reynaud, if this is a fact, or only one more empty scientific assumption.

The orbits traversed by the planets are far from being immutable. They are, on the contrary, subject to perpetual mutation in position, as in form. Elongations, contractions, and orbital widenings, oscillations from right to left, slackening and quickening of speed . . . and all this on a plane which seems to vacillate.<sup>1</sup>

As is very pertinently observed by des Mousseux:

Here is a path having little of the mathematical and mechanical precision claimed for it; for we know of no clock which, having gone slow for several minutes should catch up the right time *of itself* and *without the turn of a key*.

So much for blind law and force. As for the physical impossibility — a miracle indeed in the sight of Science — of a stone raised in the air against the law of gravitation, this is what Babinet — the deadliest enemy and opponent of the phenomena of levitation<sup>2</sup> — says:

Everyone knows the theory of *bolides*<sup>3</sup> [meteors] and aerolites<sup>4</sup> . . . . In Connecticut an immense aerolite was seen [a mass of eighteen hundred feet in diameter], bombarding a whole American zone and returning to the spot [in mid-air] from which it had started.<sup>5</sup>

Thus we find in both of the cases above cited — that of self-correcting planets and of meteors of gigantic size flying back [232] into the air — a “blind force” regulating and resisting the natural tendencies of “blind matter,” and even occasionally repairing its mistakes and correcting its failures. This is far more miraculous and even “extravagant,” one would say, than any “Angel-guided” Element.

Bold is he who laughs at the idea of von Haller, who declares that:

The stars are perhaps an abode of glorious Spirits; as here Vice reigns, there is Virtue Master.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Jean Ernest Reynaud, *Terre et ciel* (1854), p. 28, quoted by de Mirville, *ibid*.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by François Arago.

<sup>3</sup> [*Βολίδες* are extremely bright meteors, or “shooting stars, vaporising upon reaching the earth’s atmosphere.]

<sup>4</sup> [*Αερολίθοι* are small asteroids surviving their fiery passage through the earth’s atmosphere.]

<sup>5</sup> *Œuvres d’Arago*, Vol. I, p. 219; quoted by de Mirville, Vol. III, p. 462.

<sup>6</sup> “*Die Sterne sind vielleicht ein Sitz verklarter Geister, Wie hier das Laster herrscht, ist dort die Tugend Meister.*” [From Albrecht von Haller’s poem “Über den Ursprung des Übels,” p. 148, in the 1768 ed. of *Versuch Schweizerischer Gedichte* in Göttingen, Germany, by Verlag Abram Vandenhoeck sel. Witwe, Universitätsbuchhandlung]



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