



**Communion With The Goddess
Initiation and the Mysteries
By: Lawrence Durdin-Robertson**

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COMMUNION WITH THE GODDESS
THE MANUAL OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF ISIS
INITIATION AND THE MYSTERIES

by

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Priest of Isis

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CHALDAEA

Chaldean: ISHTAR (Dr. Esther Harding) "It seems to have been quite a general custom for the moon goddess to be served by virgin priestesses, who were hierodules. . In the temples of Ishtar, they were called the Joy-maidens, and the term Ishtaritu, used to describe them, is the equivalent of the Greek hierodule meaning (holy) prostitutes. In some places there priestesses had sexual congress only with the man who impersonated the god, like the Vestal Virgins who were considered to be the wives of the kings. But more often the (hieros gamos, holy marriage) could take place with any male worshipper or initiate who sought for union with the goddess. A (hieros gamos) of this kind probably formed part of the initiation of men to the mysteries of the goddess". (Frankfort) "It may well be that only those kings were deified who had been commanded by a goddess to share her couch. In a general way the kings who use the divine determinative before their names belong to the same period as the texts mentioning the marriage of kings and goddesses." The some author quotes a deification ritual in which the king Lipit-ishtar is identified with the god Urash as a preliminary to his marriage to the goddess Ishtar.

EGYPT

Egyptian: ISIS and NEPHTHYS (Margreet Meijer, in 'The Theosophist', April 1976):

In the Book of the Coming Forth by Day we find a symbolic representation of such an inner journey..

"On either side of this symbolic representation of the sevenfold man we see the figures of Isis and Nephthys..

"The candidate prays Isis to help him and protect him with her words of power, as she once stood by Osiris. Isis is the great mother-goddess Nature, of whom we only perceive the many-coloured veil.. The full initiate.. can see all things as they essentially are; he has lifted the veil of Isis and sees the great goddess face to face. He knows all the laws of nature and no longer violates them; therefore she is willing to co-operate with him as with her brother..

"Nephthys is on even deeper mystery than Isis: Isis is veiled, Nephthys 'hides what is hidden'; Isis is nature, life in manifestation, Nephthys is that which has not yet come about.. Nephthys is a deeply hidden, but beneficent goddess; she is dusk and twilight..

"Towards the end of the book we find another highly interesting picture, the scene of a chamber of initiation. In the centre we see on the couch the 'mummified body' of the candidate, who is seemingly dead. . He is guarded by Anubis, god of the nether-world and initiator into the mysteries of life and death. At the candidate's feet kneels Isis, behind her burns a flame. At his head kneels Nephthys, behind her another flame. There are other symbolic figures in the room. The goddesses and the other figures address the candidate, who is now considered to be an 'Osiris', one who is victorious. The goddesses call him 'Brother'..

"Isis speaks as follows: 'I have come to be a protector unto thee. I waft unto thee air for thy nostrils.., have made whole thy lungs. I have made thee like unto a god.. Thou hast been made victorious and thou art mighty to prevail with the gods'. And Nephthys says: 'I have gone round about to protect thee, brother Osiris. I have come to be a protector unto thee. My strength shall be behind thee... for ever..

"Osiris is often preceded by Isis and followed by Nephthys and obviously the same holds good for the candidate for initiation. Nephthys, the deeply mysterious goddess, stands behind him with her powers of protection. Isis kneels at his feet and Nephthys at his head, so that when the candidate is raised by the initiator Anubis, Isis will stand in front of him and Nephthys behind him. In the same manner we often find Isis at the foot and Nephthys at the head of sarcophagi, kneeling or standing, their arms stretched out in protection.

"The flames of fire that burn in the Initiation-chamber also speak to the candidate. The flame of Isis says: 'I protect thee with this flame, and I drive away the foe. I embrace Osiris Ani, who is triumphant in peace and in justice and truth.'" And the flame of Nephthys says: 'I have come to hew in pieces. I am not hewn in pieces, nor will I suffer thee to be hewn in pieces. I have come to do violence, but I will not let violence be done unto thee, for I am protecting thee.' In another version of the same text the flame of Isis is made to say: 'I surround with sand the hidden tomb and drive away the violent one there from. I lighten the valley or the tomb, I cast light therein, I traverse the ways and I protect Osiris.'

"The writer of the book we are discussing here is Ani therefore he is addressed as 'Osiris Ani'.."

(Dr. Esther Harding) "In the Text of Teta (Book of the Dead) describing his initiation, it is said to him, 'Hail, hail, rise up, thou Teta..' The deceased then united with the Goddess Nut, who is the Mother Goddess. 'He smelleth the air of Isis.' Henceforth he is able to enjoy union with a celestial counterpart..

"We have some record of these mysteries both in the Isis and Osiris of Plutarch.. and a further rather veiled account of such an initiation in the 'Golden Ass' of Apuleius.

"It is interesting to note that in the Hellenistic period the initiation was called the Mysteries of Isis. The moon goddess has by this time entirely replaced the moon god as giver of immortality. For although the object of the rite was that the initiate might 'become' Osiris, he was raised from the dead by the magic power of the goddess and the rites were called by her name and were performed in the Isium, which was her shrine." (Pousontas) "About forty stades distant from Asclepius is a precinct and shrine holy to Isis, the holiest of all those made by the Greeks for the Egyptian goddess. For the Tithoreans think it wrong to dwell about it, and no one may enter the shrine except those whom Isis herself has honoured by inviting them in dreams.. They say that once a profane man, who was not one of those descending into the shrine, when the pyre began to burn, entered the shrine to satisfy his rash inquisitiveness. It is said that everywhere he saw ghosts, and on returning to Tithorea and telling what he had seen, he departed this life." (Juvenal) "Three times in the depths of winter, the devotee of Isis will dive into the chilly waters of the Tiber, and shivering with cold, will drag herself around the temple upon her bleeding knees; if the goddess commands, she will go to the outskirts of Egypt to take water from the Nile and empty it within the adytum." (Cumont) on the Oriental religions in Rome: "The emotions excited by these religions and the consolations offered strongly attracted the women, who were the most fervent and generous followers and most passionate propagandists of the religions of Isis and Cybele." (id.) on the spread of the Oriental cults at about the time of Augustus: "there set in that great movement of conversion that soon established the worship of Isis and Serapis from the outskirts of the Sahara to the vallum of Britain, and the mountains of Asturias to the mouths of the Danube." (id.) "Isis and Serapis, Cybele and Attis. . were honoured by brotherhoods of believers as far as the limits of Germany." (Neumann) "In Apuleius, the initiate into the mysteries of Isis must pass through the twelve hours of the night, corresponding to the Egyptian conception of the underworld journey of the sun bark.. Similarly, in an early Egyptian text, the 'Chapters of the Secret Pylons', the soul must pass through twenty-one gates of the underworld. In contrast to the path of the sun, this points to an older moon symbolism. . The seven dwellings of the underworld are seven aspects of the Feminine, to whose sphere belongs Osiris." (Apuleius, based on the translation by Graves) Lucius Apuleius describes his initiation:

"Thereafter I devoted my whole time to attendance on the Goddess, encouraged by these tokens (i.e. the fulfilment of a dream) to hope for even greater marks of her favour, and my desire for taking holy orders increased. I frequently spoke of it to the Chief Priest, begging him to initiate me into the mysteries of the holy night. He was a grave man remarkable for the strict observance of his religious duties, and checked my restlessness.. He explained that a day on which a postulant might be initiated was always indicated by signs from the Goddess herself and that it was she who chose the initiating priest and announced how the incidental expenses of the ceremony were to be paid. In his view I ought to wait with attentive patience and avoid the two extremes of too much eagerness and obstinacy: being neither unresponsive when called nor importunate while awaiting my call. The gates of the Underworld and the guardianship of life are in her hands..

"He said, in fact, that I must be content to await definite orders, but agreed that I had been pre-ordained for the service of the Goddess by clear marks of her favour. Meanwhile I must abstain from forbidden food as the priests did, so that when the time came for me to partake of their most holy mysteries I could enter the adytum with unflinching steps.

"I accepted his advice and learned to be patient, taking part in the daily services of the temple as calmly and quietly as I knew how, intent on pleasing the Goddess. Nor did I have a troublesome and disappointing probation. Soon after this she gave me proof of her grace in a midnight vision in which I was plainly told that the day for which I longed, the day on which my greatest wish would be granted, had come at last. I learned that she had

ordered the Chief Priest Mithras, whose destiny was linked with mine by planetary sympathy, to officiate at my initiation.

"These orders and certain others given me at the same time so gladdened me that rose before dawn. . just as he was coming out, greeted him and was about to beg him more earnestly than ever to allow me to be initiated as a privilege that was my entitlement, when he first spoke: 'Dear Lucius,' he said, 'how blessed you are that the great Goddesses has graciously deigned to honour you in this way. There is no time to waste. The day for which you prayed so earnestly has dawned. The many-named Goddess orders me to initiate you into her holy mysteries.'

"He took me by the hand and led me courteously to the doors of the vast temple.. he went to the adytum and took out two or three books written in characters unknown to me: some of them animal hieroglyphics, some of them ordinary letters, having their tops and tails wreathed in knots or rounded like wheels or tangled together like vine tendrils. From these books he read me instructions for providing the necessary clothes and accessories for my initiation.

"I at once went to my friends the priests and asked them to buy part of what I needed, sparing no expense: the rest I went to buy myself.

"In due course the Chief Priest summoned me.. and brought me back to the temple and placed me at the very feet of the Goddess. It was now early afternoon. He gave certain orders too holy to be spoken above a whisper."

"There then followed a preparation lasting ten days. I obeyed his instructions in all reverence and at last the day came for taking my vows. As evening approached a crowd of priests came flocking to me from all directions, each one giving me congratulatory gifts, as the ancient custom is. Then the Chief Priest invested me in a new linen garment and led me by the hand into the inner recesses of the adytum itself. I have no doubt, curious reader, that you are eager to know what happened when I entered.

"However, not wishing to leave you, if you are religiously inclined, in a state of tortured suspense, I will recall as much as I may.. I approached the very gates of death and put one foot on Prosperine's threshold, yet was I permitted to return, rapt through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining as if it were noon; I entered the presence of the deities of the under-world and the deities of the upper-world, stood near and honoured them.

"The solemn rites ended at dawn and emerged from the adytum wearing twelve different stoles, certainly a most holy costume. . the Chief Priest ordered me to mount the wooden pulpit which stood in the middle of the temple, immediately in front of the Goddess's image. .

"The curtains were pulled aside and I was suddenly exposed to the gaze of the crowd, That day was the happiest of my initiation.. Further rites and ceremonies were performed on the third day, including a hallowed breakfast, and these ended the proceedings. However, I remained for some days longer in the temple enjoying the.. pleasure of contemplating the Goddess's statue..

"At length the Goddess advised me to return home. I had thanked her not so much as she deserved but as much as I could." On the Eucharist of Isis: (Larson) "The Eucharist of Isis consisted of the bread which she had given mankind and the milk which had flowed from her bosom: the chalice from which the initiate drank this potion was a cup formed in the shape of a woman's breast." (id.) on Isis in the Orphic rites: "In the villa of the mysteries at Pompeii was found a series of seven frescoes describing the Orphic liturgy of initiation. . in the fourth, the communion is celebrated, in which the kid, one of the symbols of Dionysius, receives milk, the eucharist of Isis." KHOEMNIS. (Gdss. Chald.) The initiation ritual is described in "The Secret Doctrine". According to this account, the neophyte is required to undergo a twelve hour vigil. During this time the goddess Khoemnis appears in response 'to his ardent fancy'; she thereupon bewitches and allures him. The Egyptian hierophant is described as invoking Chemnu, the 'lovely spectre'. NEITH ('Historian's History of the World': Persia) "At first Cambyses tried to win over his new subjects by complying with their customs.. He gave orders for the evacuation of the great temple of Nit, where Persian soldiers were installed to the great distress of the devotees, and repaired the harm they had done at his own expense. His zeal even led him to receive instruction in the Egyptian religion, and to be initiated in the mysteries of the goddess by the priest Uzaharrasenti." NUT (Massey) in an account of the Eucharistic aspect of Nut: "The Fig-Tree in Egypt was a figure of the Lady of Heaven, who is portrayed as the Tree of Life and

Knowledge in the act of feeding souls. She literally gives her body as the Bread and her blood as the Wine of life. In the later Ptolemeian times this tree was assigned to Sophia; which shows the link between Egypt and Greece.”

Hebrew-Greek: CHARIS (Gdss. Chald.) “Etymology: Gk. Charis, n, fem. (L.S.) inter alia; favour, peace, beauty, kindness, goodwill, gratification, delight; Charis, pr. n. sg. n. of wife of Hephaistos; Charites, pr. n. pl. the Graces; cf. Gk. eucharis, pleasing, charming, winning, agreeable, pleasant; and Gk. eucharistia, n. fem. thanks, gratitude, (see below).

“In the doctrine of Marcus, Charis is described as being greater than all things. According to Massey, Marcus spoke of the ‘blood of Charis’ and taught that ‘the Eucharist was a celebration of Charis.’” Hebrew-Greek: CHAVAH, EVE (Clement of Alexandria). “But what if I were to recount the mysteries for you?.. wreathed with snakes.. shouting the name of Eva.. At any rate, according to the true Hebrew speech, the word ‘hevia’ with an aspirate means the female snake”. (Butterworth) “Clement catches at a slight verbal resemblance as affording some support for his idea that there is a connection between Eve and the Bacchic serpent. Elsewhere he gives the Hebrew derivation, Eve=Life (see Genesis iii, 20)”. (Brown, Driver and Briggs) “Chavah, noun, proper. fem. life.. Noldeke, who suggests serpent as possible meaning..” (L.S.) “Euoi, Bacchanalian exclamation. Lat. evoe, like eva, evan.”

INDIA

Indian: DEVI-KALI (a priest of Kali, quoted by Daraul).

“The whole initiation-ceremonies of the cult are now exposed:

“... the applicant is taken to a small room, where four teachers explain that Kali is the Great Mother who represents all mothers, the wife, the sister.. A man is not complete until he has experienced femininity in all aspects of relationship, in physical touch, and also within himself. The goddess must possess him. This continues for sixteen days, during which he is taught and repeats until he knows by heart the prayers to the goddess. Eventually he is to say and to believe: ‘I belong to Kali, and am returning to her..’ “

At a later stage the guru says, “ ‘Bhowani! O Great Mother of all the World, we are your followers and slaves. Deign to accept this, your humble worshipper.. Prosper him in all his undertakings; for you prosper us all and you in your constructive aspect preside over every undertaking, large and small. He is ready. . If you agree, give us a sign. Give us a sign.’

“When the omen has been seen, all cry: ‘We thank you, Mother, Devi, Bhowani!’

“The initiate now bathes in running water, repeating to himself ‘Bhowani is Life. Bhowani is Death. Bhowani is All.’ He is taken after a further four days to a huge feast, where he is handed jasmine flowers (yellow is the Kali colour) and sprayed with rose water. Naked girls.. (are) swaying before him.. Now he takes the oath by which he binds himself for ever to the service of the goddess..”

On the Eucharist of Kali (id.) “Now the wine is (hallowed,) according to what the purpose of the rite is. The primary purpose is ecstasy and the secondary. . may be almost anything. For rites involving the use of money, a gold pot is used; for freedom, silver; for happiness, copper; food or works of construction base alloy.. stone, power.

“The Ritual combines, it will be seen, that of religion and magic. Kali is asked to perform a service for the worshipper, as well as being herself done honour to by those who are dedicated to her cult.

“the Guru fills the container with wine and intones the mystical words: ‘Um Mum Kum Jum Rum: Give power to this wine and convert it into divine nourishment.’

“Four bowls of wine are drunk by each participant, one with each course. After this sexual intercourse is necessary.”

“This worship of Kali may take place by the initiated, led by the priest and it is not unusual for it to be celebrated on Wednesday evening. “ Note: Wednesday is holy to Kali. (id.) “Kalipuja (Kali-worship) gives. . an idea of how intoxicating true communion with the divine could be. For this reason, according to the priest, it is not uncommon

for mass orgies to be held in the early stages of initiation.. so that they (i.e. the worshippers) may get a glimpse of the physical reflection of the true ecstasy which comes with acceptance by Kali. .”

Malayan: THE FEMALE SPECTRES (Oesterreich cited by Andrews) from an account of the initiation of a poyang or magician: “The spectres of two beautiful women will next present themselves, and the novice will be cast into a deep trance, during which the initiation is presumed to be perfected. These aerial ladies thenceforward become. . familiar spirits. . by whose invisible agency the secrets of nature, the hidden treasures of the earth are opened to him.” SHAKTI, SACTI, (Hargrave, Jennings) from an account of the Purnabisheka, or Full Initiation: “The Sacti is impersonated by a naked girl to whom offerings are made.. Here follows the chanting of the Muntrus. . and the performance of the mudra, or gesticulations with the fingers. The whole service terminates with orgies amongst the votaries of a very licentious description. This ceremony is entitled the Sri Chakra, or Purnabisheka, The Ring or ‘Full Initiation’. This method of adoring the Sacti is unquestionably acknowledged by the texts regarded by the Vanis as authorities for the (orgies) practised.” (Arthur Avalon, Sir John Woodroffe) “Woman must be recognized as the image of the Shakti, the Great Mother, and worshipped with the symbolic elements. Wine signifies the power (shakti) which produces all fiery elements.. Thus there is offered to the Great Mother the restless life of Her Universe.” (Gdss. Ind.): “The most occult of all the Shakti ceremonies are performed in the arcane rites of the Tribadic Mysteries. Those who are initiated into these know the secret of creation and birth. They know that all creation originates from Femina Tribas; they know that all birth is therefore essentially parthenogenetic.” TARA, Stellar Goddess (Mme. Blavatsky) “Tara is.. the personification of the powers of one initiated into Gupta Vidya (Secret Knowledge).” Nepalese: THE LIVING GODDESS (Powell) “In Katmandu there is a ‘Temple of the Living Goddess’ wherein resides a young and virginal girl of Brahmin caste, enshrined for a set time so that the Newari Hindoos and Tibetans can worship her in the flesh, generally making offerings of flowers, lighted butter lamps and money. At a certain festival she is brought forth again to the door of the temple where flower petals drop from her open hands and rakshi (a sweet fruit wine) pours from her mouth throughout the day, making drunk and merry many of her followers below. After this ceremony she is replaced by a new maiden and steps out into the world again to lead an ordinary life.”

TIBET

Tibetan: a DAKINI (Lady Yeshey Tshogyal) from the chapter, “Padma’s Initiation by a Dakini”:

“Padma’s next teacher was an ordained dakini, who dwelt in a sandalwood garden, in the midst of a cemetery.. When he arrived at the door of the palace he found it closed. Then there appeared a servant woman carrying water into the palace, and Padma sat in meditation.. she cut open her breast, and exhibited in the upper portion of it the forty-two Peaceful Deities and the lower portion of it the fifty-eight Wrathful Deities. Addressing Padma, she said, ‘.look at me; hast thou not faith in me?’ Padma bowed down before her, made apology, and requested the teachings he sought. She replied, ‘I am only a maid-servant. Come inside’.

“Upon entering the palace, Padma beheld the dakini enthroned on a sun and moon throne, holding in her hands a double-drum and a . . cup, and surrounded by thirty-two dakinis making.. offerings to her. Padma made obeisance to the enthroned dakini. . and begged her to teach him both esoterically and exoterically. The one hundred Peaceful and Wrathful Deities then appeared over-head. ‘Behold’, said the dakini, ‘the Deities. Now take initiation’. And Padma responded. ‘Inasmuch as all the Buddhas throughout the aeons have had gurus, accept me as thy disciple’.

“Then the dakini absorbed all the Deities into her body. She transformed Padma into the syllable Hum. The Hum rested on her lips.. Then she swallowed the Hum.. When the Hum reached the region of the Kundalini, she conferred upon him initiation of body, speech and mind..”.

The Tibetan SARASVATI (Gdss. Ind.) In the Biography of Padma Buddha it is recorded that he came to Tibet; here he met the King, Thi-Srong-Detsan. “Then Padma meditated for one day, and initiated the King of Tibet into the Doctrine of Sarasvati.” According to Evans-Wentz the Doctrine of Sarasvati, called after this goddess, is concerned with secret Tantric traditions.”

PERSIA

Persian: ANAHITA (Plutarch) from the Life of Artaxerxes II, Mnemon: "It was not long after the decease of Darius that the King, his successor, went to Pasargadae, to have the ceremony of his inauguration consummated by the Persian priests. There is a temple dedicated to a warlike goddess, whom one may liken to Athena, into which when the royal person to be initiated has passed, he must strip himself of his own robe, and put on that which Cyrus the first wore before he was king; then having devoured a flail of figs, he must eat turpentine and drink a cup of sour milk. To which if they add any other rites, it is unknown to any but those that are present at them." (Duchesne-Guillemin) in an account of the Sassanid period: "Narseh.. Elsewhere he declares himself, on the monument of Paikuli, an adorer of Anahit; and it is him probably whom one can recognize on a relief at Naqs i Rostam, standing beside Anahit (crenellated crown, a little pail). from whom he receives investiture." ARMAITI (Duchesne-Guillemin) from a description of an initiation rite: "The priest then recites and the candidate repeats after him, a formula of homage to the feminine archangel Armaiti, who has her place here not as 'purity of thought'.. but rather as mistress of the earth.."

ASIA MINOR

Of Asia Minor: CYBELE (Cumont) "The votaries of Cybele began at a very remote period to practice 'mysteries' in which the initiates were made acquainted by degrees, with a wisdom that was always considered divine, but underwent peculiar variations in the course of time." (id.) "It is very probable that (Judaism) influenced the cult of Cybele also, although in this case the influence cannot be discerned with the same degree of certainty. The religion of the Great Mother did not receive rejuvenating germs from Palestine only, but it was greatly changed after the gods of more distant Persia came and joined it. In the ancient religion of the Achemenides, Mithra, the genius of light was coupled with Anahita, the Goddess of the fertilizing waters. In Asia Minor the latter was assimilated with the fecund Great Mother, worshipped all over the peninsula and when.. the mysteries of Mithra spread over the Latin provinces, its votaries built their dedicated crypts in the shadow of the temples of the Magna Mater." (Callimachus) "It were better for me. . . tossing my hair, to honour Cybele, to the sound of the Phrygian flute or in trailing robe, alas to mourn Adonis, the slave of the Goddess (i.e. Aphrodite)". Note by Trypanis: "Ecstatic states, inducing prophetic rapture and insensibility to pain, were characteristic of the worship of Cybele.."

(Cumont) "The first Oriental religion adopted by the Romans was that of the goddess of Phrygia whom the people of Pessinus and Mount Ida worshipped and who received the name of Magna Mater deum Ida in the Occident. Its history in Italy covers six centuries and we can trace each phase of the transformation that changed it in the course of time from a collection of very primitive nature beliefs into a system of spiritualized mysteries.. It contained primitive usages of the religion of Anatolia, some of which have survived to this day. ." (Clement of Alexandria) "The mysteries of Demeter commemorate the amorous embraces of Zeus with his mother Demeter.. The same rites are performed in honour of Attis and Cybele and the Corybantes by the Phrygians.. If I go on further to quote the symbols of initiation into this mystery.. 'I ate from the drum; I drank from the cymbal; I carried the holy dish; I went into the bridal chamber (pastos)'." (note by Butterworth) "Compare this formula of the Phrygian with that of the Eleusinian Mysteries." (Firmicus Maternus) "In a certain temple, as in the inner parts . . he says 'I ate from the drum; drank from the cymbal, and learnt thoroughly the secrets of religion..' " note: the drum and cymbals are attributes of Cybele. (Dr. Esther Harding) from a description of the symbolism of the dish or vessel mentioned in the formula of the Mysteries of Cybele: "The vase or vessel represented the womb of the Great Mother, giver of all life and increase, and was frequently used as a symbol or emblem of the goddess herself. The Virgin Mary for instance is called the Holy Vase.. Isis was symbolized by a vase of water ". (id.) "And the confession ends with the statement: 'I have entered into the bridal chamber.' This was evidently a deeply significant experience. The concreteness with which it was enacted may repel our curious morality. . but we cannot fail to appreciate the sincerity of those who took part in the ceremonial. To them it was in very truth a hieros gamos (a holy marriage) . ." (O.C. D. Walton) "Cybele.. A belief in immortality was perhaps part of the cult from early times, and the after-life may at first have been thought of as a reunion with Mother Earth."

GREECE

Greek: APHRODITE. (Lempriere) "Aphrodisia.. Festivals in honour of Venus, celebrated in different parts of Greece, but chiefly in Cyprus.. All those that were initiated offered a piece of money to Venus as a harlot, and received as a mark of the favours of the goddess, a measure of salt.. They were celebrated at Corinth by harlots, and in every part of Greece they were much frequented (Strabo Athenodorus)." (Larson) in an account of the Aphrodite-Adonis cult: "There can be no doubt that each initiate became a member of the cult through intimacy with the (holy) temple personnel." prps. Greek-Phoenician or Greek-Phrygian, AXIEROS, AXIOKERSA, THE CABIRIAN NYMPHS, CABIRO, DEMETER. (Rose) 'There were two male powers Axiokersos and.. Kadmilos or Kasmilos; also two females of whom we hear rather less, Axieros and Axiokersa.'" (Lempriere) "Cabira, a wife of Vulcan." (Kerenyi cited by Neumann) "The classical mythographic tradition, which purposely avoids clarity in its statements about mystery gods, calls the primordial mother of the Cabiri Cabiro and also speaks of three 'Cabirian nymphs'. In Thebes the Great Goddess is named Demeter Cabiria, which betokens her relation to the realm of the dead and also to the Cabiri. In all these manifestations she is the primordial feminine source. ." (Neumann) "these mysteries (i.e. of the Cabiri) would then be offshoots of much older matriarchal mysteries of the Great Mother. ." (Graves) in an account of the Argonauts: ". . and that same night they sailed for Samothrace, where they were duly initiated into the mysteries of Persephone and her servants the Cabeiri, who save sailors from shipwrecks" (Enc. Brit.) "Cabiria, festivals in honour of the Cabeiri.. All who were initiated into the mysteries of these gods were thought to be secured thereby from storms at sea, and all other dangers. The ceremony of initiation was performed by placing the candidate, crowned with olive branches, and girded about the loins with a purple riband, on a kind of throne, about which the priests and persons before initiated danced." notes: thread, string etc. in rituals, are often used to symbolize the umbilical cord; and great value is placed by sailors on the caul, which is seen as giving protection. (Cicero) "and I pass over Samothrace and those 'occult mysteries which throngs of worshippers at dead of night do celebrate.'" note by Rackham: "Probably from the Philoctetes of Attius." (Enc. Brit.) "The Samothracian mysteries, instituted in honour of the Cabiri were supposed to confer much the same blessings with the Eleusinian." (Grote) "Through Jason Demeter becomes connected with the mysteries of Samothrace, through Persephone, with those of Eleusis. The former connection it is difficult to follow out in detail, but the latter is explained and traced in its origin in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter." (id.) Grote speaks of the allusion by Kallimachus to a "priestess, who passed from the service of Demeter to that of the Kabeiri, then to that of Cybele, having the superintendence of many young women." (Mme. Blavatsky) "Kabiri, as a name is derived from (Semitic) Habir, great, and also from Venus, this Goddess being called to the present day, Kabar, as is also her star." (id.) on the Mysteries of Samothrace: "Diodorus, of Sicily, Herodotus and Sanchoniathon, the Phoenician - the oldest of historians - tell us that these Mysteries originated in the night of time.. One of the best proofs of it we find in a most remarkable picture in Raoul-Rochette's 'Monuments d'Antiquites Figures,' in which, like the 'erect-haired Pan' all the figures have their hair streaming out in every direction - except the central figure of Kabeirian Demeter, from whom the power issues and one other, a kneeling man." (see Ennemoser: 'History of Magic', vol. ii, and Schweigger: 'Introduction to Mythology through Natural History') (Gdss. Chald.) "The Cabirian Mysteries, the Cabiria, have always been regarded as being of a most occult nature. Herodotus records how the Persian King, Cambyses, during his madness, went into the Cabirian temple at Memphis. According to the tradition based on this account, and recorded in 'The Secret Doctrine', he saw a man with a woman standing on the top of her head before him. Mme. Blavatsky compares this with an engraving connected with the Kabalah and the Zohar, showing a black woman reversed with her legs extending beyond the shoulders of a male figure. DEMETER, The Thesmophoria (Seyffert) "Thesmophoria: A festival of Demeter as the foundress of agriculture and the civic rite of marriage, celebrated in many parts of Greece, but especially at Athens from 9th to 13th of Pyanepsion, the beginning of November, and only by married women.. Two of the wealthiest and most distinguished women were chosen out of every district to preside over the festivals; their duty was to perform the holy functions in the name of the others, and to prepare the festal meal for the women of their own district. Even the priestess who had the chief conduct of the whole festival had to be a married woman. On the first day of the feast the women went in procession, amid wanton jibes and jests to the deme of Halimus, on the promontory of Colias, where nightly celebrations were held in the temple of Demeter and her daughter Core.. On the last day, on which Demeter was invoked under the name of Kalligeneia (or goddess of fair children) a feast was held amid mimic dances and games, which probably referred to the mythical stories of the goddess and her daughter."

(Nilsson, O.C.D.) "a woman's festival of Demeter. . The women (men being strictly excluded) erected bowers with couches of plants and sat on the ground.. the chief purpose of the festival was to promote the fertility of the corn which was about to be sown.." (Lempriere) "Thesmophoria, a surname of Ceres as law-giver. . The Thesmophoria were instituted by Triptolemus or according to some, by Orpheus, or the Danaids. It was usual to jest at one another, as the goddess Ceres had been made to smile by a merry expression when she was sad and melancholy for the recent loss of her daughter Proserpine. Three days were required for the preparation, and upon the 11th of the month called Pyanepsion, the women went to Eleusis carrying books on their heads, in which the laws which the goddess had invented were contained. There were some (offerings) of a mysterious nature, and all persons whose offence was small were released from confinement. Such as were initiated at Eleusis assisted at the Thesmophoria." (Neumann) "In the Syracusan Thesmophoria, the participants carried mylloi, cakes, made of honey and sesame in the shape of the female sex organ." note: Greek, myllos, membra muliebria. (Aristophanes) from the Thesmophoriazusae: "Scene II. The Forecourt of the Temple of Demeter Thesmophorus. The background now represents the facade of the temple. Women pour into the forecourt and gather around about the altar to deposit their offerings.." (Apollodorus) Demeter's search for Persephone: "And first she sat down on the rock which has been called Laughless after her, beside what is called the Well of the Fair Dances." (note by Frazer: "In the course of the modern excavations.. at Eleusis, the Well of the Fair Dances was discovered just outside the wall of the (holy) precinct. It is carefully built of octagonal stones, and the mouth is surrounded by concentric circles, round which the women of Eleusis probably tripped in the dance. In antiquity solemn oaths were sworn by the water of the well." Alciphron, iii, 69) "thereupon she made her way to Celeus, who at that time reigned over the Eleusinians, Some women were in the house, and when they bade her sit down beside them, a certain old crone, lambe, joked the goddess and made her smile. For that reason they say that the women break jests at the Thesmophoria." (note by Frazer: "The jests seem to have been obscene in form." Diodorus Siculus, V. 4.6) ".. at the Thesmophoria rites were performed to ensure the fertility of the fields, and the lewd words of the women may have been thought to quicken the seed by sympathetic magic." (Ovid) "The pious matrons were celebrating the annual Festival of Ceres, where robed in white, they offer garlands made with ears of corn, as the first fruits of their harvest, and for nine nights. . Cenchreis, wife of the King (i .e. Cinyras) was absent on this occasion, and attended the mysterious rites." note: Lempriere regards this festival as the Thesmophoria. (Perpetual Festival Calendar, Shrine of Wisdom, Fintry, Surrey) "September 26th. First day of Thesmophoria, lasting until 30th, the Mysteries next in importance to Eleusinian; for women only." DEMETER and PERSEPHONE (KORE), The Eleusinian Mysteries. From early and middle Classical accounts: (Homeric Hymns, To Demeter) comment on the following passage by Evelyn-White: "An act of communion - the drinking of the potion (Kykeon) here described - was one of the most important pieces of ritual in the Eleusinian mysteries.." text of the passage: "But Demeter, bringer of seasons and giver of perfect gifts would not sit down.. until careful lambe placed a jointed seat for her and threw over it a silvery fleece.. A long time she sat upon the stool without speaking because of her sorrow, and greeted no one by word or sign, but rested, never smiling and tasting neither food nor drink, because she pined with longing for her deep-bosomed daughter, until careful lambe - who pleased her moods in aftertime also - moved the holy lady with many a quip and jest to smile and laugh and cheer her heart. Then Metaneira filled a cup with sweet wine and offered it to her; but she refused it, for she said it was not lawful for her to drink red wine, but bade them mix meal and water with soft mint and give her to drink. And Metaneira mixed the draught and gave it to the goddess as she bade, So the great queen Deo received it to observe the rite." (id.) "Thus she went, and to the kings who deal justice, Triptolemus and Diocles, the horse-driver, and to doughty Eumolpus and Celeus, leader of the people, she showed the conduct of her rites, and taught them all her mysteries, to Triptolemus and Polyxeinus and Diocles also, - awful mysteries which no one may in any way transgress. . Happy is he among men upon earth who has seen these mysteries; but he who is uninitiated and who has no part in them, never has lot of like good things once he is dead, down in the darkness and gloom." (Pindar) on the Eleusinian Mysteries: "Blessed is he who hath seen these things before he goeth beneath the hollow earth; for he understandeth the end of mortal life, and the beginning (of a new life) divinely given." (Isocrates, cited in Enc. Brit.) "Ceres bestowed upon the Athenians two gifts of the greatest importance; the fruits of the earth.. and the teletae (i.e. the full initiations, the Mysteries), for they who partake of these entertain more pleasant hopes both at the end of life, and eternity afterwards." (Aristides cited in Enc. Brit.) on the Eleusinian Mysteries: "The initiated were not only often rescued from many hardships in their lifetime, but at death

entertained hopes.. (of) a more happy condition,” (id.) the author calls Eleusis “a kind of temple of the whole earth and of all that man beholds done in the most dreadful and the most exhilarating manner. In what other place have the records of fable sung of things more marvellous? Or in what region upon earth have the objects presented to the eye borne a more exact resemblance to the sounds which strike the ear? What objects of sight have the numberless generations of men and women beheld comparable to these exhibitions in the ineffable mysteries?” (Sophocles) “Thrice blessed are those among men, who, after beholding these rites, go down to Hades. Only for them is there life.. .” (Aristophanes) the Chorus of the Initiated:

“Let us to flowery meads repair, with deathless roses blooming,
Whose balmy sweets impregn the air, both hill and dales perfuming.
Since fate benign our choir has joined, we’ll trip in mystic measure;
In sweetest harmony combined we’ll quaff full draughts of pleasure.
For us alone the power of day a milder light dispenses;
And sheds benign a mellow ray to cheer our ravished senses:
For we beheld the mystic show and braved Eleusis’ dangers.
We do and know the deeds we owe to neighbours, friends and strangers.”

(Socrates quoted by Plato) “the sages who introduced the teleae (i.e. the Mysteries) had positively affirmed, that whatever soul should arrive in the infernal mansions unhallowed and uninitiated, should lie there.. but that he who arrives there after initiation and purification will dwell with the Deities.” (Plato) on the Epopeteia, the final grade of initiation, at the Eleusinian mysteries “.. being initiated in those mysteries, which it is lawful to call the most blessed of all mysteries we were freed from the molestations of evils which otherwise await us in a future period of time. Likewise, in consequence of this divine initiation, we became spectators of entire, simple, immovable, and blessed visions, resident in a pure light.” (Pericles, quoted in Enc. Brit.) “I am convinced that the deities of Eleusis inspired me with this sentiment and that this stratagem was suggested by the principles of the mystic rites.” (Cicero) “I say nothing of the holy and awe- inspiring fane of Eleusis, ‘where tribes from earth’s remotest confines seek Initiation’ ...since such mysteries when interpreted and rationalized prove to have to do more with natural science than with theology.” (id.) “There is nothing more important to me; for your Athenians kept on following many strange and religious matters. There is, then, nothing better than these mysteries which have mellowed and improved us from terrible crudity to the level of humanity; and hence we have known from the very beginning of things, as they are called, the holiness of life. But let us not only take life happily; let us also be even more hopeful for death.” (Ovid) on Demeter’s search: “Again, when the approach of Day had extinguished the stars, she ran in quest of her daughter from the rising to the setting sun. Spent with toil she had contracted a thirst, nor had any springs washed her mouth; when by chance, she perceived a cottage covered with straw, and knocked at the little door: an old woman came out and saw the Goddess and gave her, as she was asking some water, a pleasant drink drawn from parched barley.” (Antoninus Liberalis) “At the time when Demeter wandered through the whole earth in search of her daughter, she stopped in Attica. Her mouth had become dry through the great heat when Misme received her and gave her a drink of water with which she had mixed pennyroyal and barley-meal. Demeter, being thirsty, drank this brew in a single draught.” (note by Papatomopoulos: “as to the drinking of the cyceon, this was one of the essential rites of the Eleusinian mysteries, and it has been attributed to Demeter by means of this aetiological myth of the thirsting Goddess.”) (Rose) “Kykeon, a mixture of water, meal and pennyroyal.. the drink was a very old fashioned preparation of wheat- or barley-meal, a kind of thin porridge or frumety, and was ceremonially used in the Mysteries. For lambe the Orphic tradition substitutes Baubo, and attributes to her gestures, to our ideas highly obscene (see frag. 215 Abel, 52 Kern) which no doubt were of magical value.” (Pausanias) “Celaea is some five stades distant from the city (i.e. Phlius, near Corinth) and here they celebrate the mysteries in honour of Demeter, not every year but every fourth year. The initiating priest (hierophantes) is not appointed for life, but at each celebration they elect a fresh one, who takes, if he cares to do so, a wife.. the actual celebration is modelled on the Eleusinian rites. The Phliasiens themselves admit that they copy the ‘performance’ at Eleusis.” (id.) “The Eleusinians have .. a well called Callichorum (Lovely Dance) where first the women of the Eleusinians danced and sang in praise of the goddess.. My dream forbade the description of the things within the wall of the holy place, and the uninitiated are of course not permitted to learn that which they are prevented from seeing.” (id.) “The people of Pheneus have also a fane of Demeter, surnamed

Eleusinian, and they perform a ritual to the goddess.. Beside the fane of the Eleusinian has been set up Petroma, as it is called, consisting of two large stones fitted one to the other. When every other year they celebrate what they call the Greater Rites, they open these stones. They take from out these writings, that refer to the rites, read them in the hearing of the initiated and return them on the same night. Most Pheneatians, too, I know, take an oath by the Petroma in the most important affairs. On the top is a sphere with a mask inside of Demeter Cidaria..” note: (L.S.) “cidaris, a Persian head-dress.. an Arcadian dance” (id.) “Those who the Pheneatians say, gave the goddess a welcome, Trisaulas and Damitholis, had a temple of Demeter Thesmia (Law Goddess) built under Mount Cyllene, and they established for her rites also, which they celebrate even to this day.” (id.) “For the Greeks of an earlier period looked upon the Eleusinian mysteries as being as much more reverential than all other religious acts as deities are greater than heroes.” (id.) in an allusion to another daughter of Demeter: “This Despoina (the Mistress) the Arcadians worship more than any other deity.. Despoina is her surname among the many.. But whereas the real name of Kore (the Maid) is Persephone as Homer and Pamphos before him say in their poems, the real name of Despoina I am afraid to write to the uninitiated.” (Philostratus) from the Life of Apollonius of Tyana: “Apollonius said that he would join them (i.e. his followers) later on and urged them to attend at once to the rites of religion for that he himself would be initiated. But the hierophant was not disposed to admit him to the rites, for he said that he would never initiate a wizard and charlatan, nor open the Eleusinian rite to a man who dabbled in impure rites. Thereupon Apollonius, fully equal to the occasion, said: ‘You have not yet mentioned the chief of my offence, which is that knowing, as I do, more about the initiatory rite than you do yourself, I have nevertheless come for initiation to you, as if you were wiser than I am.’ The bystanders applauded these words, and deemed that he had answered with vigour and like himself; and thereupon the hierophant, since he saw that his exclusion of Apollonius was not by any means popular with the crowd, changed his tone and said: ‘Be thou initiated, for thou seemest to be some wise man that has come here.’ But Apollonius replied: ‘I will be initiated at another time, and it is so and so, mentioning a name, who will initiate me’. Herein he showed his gift of prevision, for he glanced at the hierophant who succeeded the one he addressed, and presided over the temple four years later.. At Athens he was initiated and by the same hierophant of whom he had delivered a prophecy to his predecessor.” From later Classical accounts of the Eleusinian Mysteries: (Clement of Alexandria) on the Eleusinian narration: “It tells how Demeter, wandering through Eleusis, which is part of Attica, in search of her daughter the Maiden (Kore) becomes exhausted and sits down at a well in deep distress. This display of grief is forbidden up to the present day, to those who are initiated. At that time Eleusis was inhabited by aborigines, whose names were Baubo, Dysaulas, Triptolemus and also Eumolpus and Eubouleus.. But to continue: for I will not forbear to tell the rest of the story. Baubo, having received Demeter as a guest, offers her a draught of wine and meal. She declines to take it, being unwilling to drink on account of her mourning. Baubo is deeply hurt, thinking she has been slighted, and thereupon uncovers her secret parts and exhibits them to the goddess. Demeter is pleased at the sight, and now at last receives the draught, delighted with the spectacle. These are the secret mysteries of the Athenians. These are also the subjects of Orpheus’ poems.. I will quote you the very line of Orpheus.. ‘This said, she drew aside her robes, and displayed all of her body unveiled; child Iacchus was there, and laughing, plunged his hand below her breasts. Then smiled the goddess, in her heart she smiled, and drank the draught from out the glancing cup.’ And the formula of the Eleusinian mysteries is as follows: ‘I fasted; I drank the draught; I took from the chest; having done my task, I placed in the basket, and from the basket into the chest.’ (notes on this passage by Butterworth: “The Greek word Kykeon represents a mixed wine composed of barley-meal, grated cheese and Pramnian wine. The same word is used for the draught mentioned in the formula of the Eleusinian mysteries. It seems fairly clear that some of the worshippers’ acts are symbolic imitations of what the goddess is supposed to have done.”) Consider too, the contents of the mystic chests.. Are they not sesame cakes, pyramid and spherical cakes, cakes with many navels... Are they not also pomegranates, fig branches, fennel stalks, ivy leaves, round cakes and poppies? These are their holy things. In addition, there are the ineffable symbols of Ge Themis, marjoram, a lamp, a sword, and a woman’s comb (kteis) which is a euphemistic expression used in the mysteries for a woman’s secret parts.” (Cyprian of Antioch cited by Mme. Blavatsky) the author describes how, before reaching the age of ten, he was taken to Athens: “I was permitted likewise to penetrate the mysteries of Ceres lamenting her daughter, and I also become the guardian of the Dragon in the Temple of Pallas. Ascending after that to the summit of Mount Olympus, the Seat of the Deities, as it is called, there too I was initiated into the sense, and the real meaning of their speeches and clamorous

manifestations (Strepituum). It was there that I was made to see in imagination (phantasia) those trees and all those herbs which operate such prodigies... and I saw their dances.. I heard their singing. I saw finally, for forty consecutive days, the phalanx of Gods and Goddess, sending from Olympus, as though they were Kings, spirits to represent them on earth and act in their name among all the nations. At that time I lived entirely on fruit, eaten only after sunset, the virtues of which were explained to me.” (Arnobius, cited by Larson) the holy formula by which the mystae become full initiates : “I have fasted, and drunk the draught: I have taken out of the mystic cist, and put into the wicker basket; I have received again, and transferred to the little chest.” (Porphyry) “The priestesses of Demeter too, as the initiates of the earth goddess, were called bees by the ancients and Kore herself was called the Honey-sweet.” (Iamblicus cited by Mme. Blavatsky) Iamblicus states that one purpose of the Exhibitions in the Mysteries was the “vanquishing all evil thought, through the awful holiness with which these rites were accompanied.” (Stobaeus, cited in Enc. Brit.) on the Eleusinian Mysteries: “Towards the end of the celebrations, the whole scene is terrible; all is trembling, shuddering, sweat and astonishment. Many horrible spectres are seen and strange cries uttered. Light succeeds darkness; and again the blackest darkness the most glaring light. Now appear open plains, flowery meads, and waving groves; where are seen dances and choruses; and various holy phantasies enchant the sight. Melodious notes are heard from far, with all the sublime symphony of the hallowed hymns. The pupil now is completely perfect, is initiated, becomes free, released and walks about with a crown on his head, and is admitted to bear a part in the holy rites.” (Julian) “I was saying that we ought not to suppose that the ancients appointed the season of the rites irrationally, but rather as far as possible with plausible and true grounds of reason; and indeed a proof of this is that the goddess herself chose as her province the cycle of the equinox. For the most holy and secret Mysteries of Deo (i.e. Demeter) and the Maiden (Kore) are celebrated when the sun is in the sign of Libra, and this is quite natural. . the most important ceremonies of the Mysteries are performed, for our protection and salvation.” note by Cave Wright: “The Eleusinian Mysteries of Demeter and Persephone; the lesser were celebrated in February, the greater in September.” (Gibbon) on Julian: “He obtained the privilege of a solemn initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis. . and such was the zeal of Julian, that he afterwards invited the Eleusinian pontiff to the court of Gaul, for the sole purpose of consummating, by mystic rites, (his great work) . . In the caverns of Ephesus and Eleusis, the mind of Julian was penetrated with sincere, deep, and unalterable enthusiasm.. and while the occupations of war, of government and of study, seemed to claim the whole measure of his time, a stated portion of the hours of the night was invariably reserved for the exercise of private devotion.” Julian also makes an allusion to the “ribald language like a woman from a cart”. Cave Wright sees this as a proverbial reference to the free language permitted to the women who rode in wagons in the Eleusinian processions. (Libanius) on the Emperor Julian: “He it was who divided his life into preoccupation for the state and devotion to the altars, associating with deities in countless initiations, mourning for our insulted temples.. He restored the ruined temples to their places, and he restored their ritual to them and all other.. and renewed the festivals that had fallen into abeyance.” (Gibbon, based on Zosimus’ History) on the religious policy of the Emperor Valentinian: “But the most honourable circumstance of the character of Valentinian, is the firm and temperate impartiality which he uniformly preserved in an age of religious contention.. he immediately admitted the petition of Proartaxatus, proconsul of Achaia, who represented, that the life of the Greeks would become dreary and comfortless, if they were deprived of the invaluable blessing of the Eleusinian mysteries. Philosophy alone can boast (and perhaps it is no more than the boast of philosophy), that her gentle hand is able to eradicate from the human mind the latent and deadly principle of fanaticism.” (Text cited by Cumont) in a note by Cumont: “The wife of Prartaxatus, after praising his career and talents in his epitaph, adds: ‘but these things are small: you, a pious initiate (mystes) of the holy mystery grasp arcanelly the discoveries of the mind, and manifoldly learned, you cultivate the divine numen’.” From general accounts of the Eleusinian Mysteries (Enc. Brit.) “The person who was to be initiated in the lesser mysteries, as well as the greater, was according to the original institution, to be a person of unblemished moral character..

“The candidate was then purified by bathing in the river Ilyssus, by aspersions with salt water or salt, with laurel, barley, and passing through the fire: all which rites were attended with incantations and other usages..

“All these ceremonies duly performed, the candidate was carried into the hail appointed for the purpose of initiation. There he was taught the first elements of those arcana which were afterwards to be more fully and more clearly revealed in the more august mysteries of Eleusis. The pupils at Agrae were called Mystae, which may

intimate probationers; whereas those of Eleusis were denominated Epoptae, importing that they saw as they were seen.

“Some days before the commencement of the festival, the praecones, or public criers, invited all the initiated, and all the pretenders to that honour, to attend the festival, with clean hands and a pure heart..

“This festival was observed in the month Boedromion or September, and continued nine days from the 15th to the 23rd. During that time it was unlawful to arrest any man..

“On the evening of the 15th day of the month Boedromion the initiations commenced.. all the most solemn rites of the Pagan superstitions were performed during the night.

“On this day there was a solemn cavalcade of Athenian matrons from Athens to Eleusis, in carriages drawn by oxen. In this procession the ladies used to rally one another in pretty loose terms, in imitations, we suppose of the Isiac procession described by Herodotus.. The most remarkable object in this procession was the Mundus Cereris (W.R. “the mystical casket of Ceres”) contained in a small coffer or basket. This was carried by a select company of Athenian matrons who, from their office, were styled Camphorae. In this coffer were lodged the comb of Ceres, her mirror, a serpentine figure, some wheat and barley.. and perhaps some other articles which we have not been able to discover. The procession ended at the temple, where this charge was deposited with the greatest solemnity..

“In the porch, or outer part of this temple (of Eleusis) the candidates were crowned with garlands of flowers which they called himera, or ‘the desirable’. They were at the same time dressed in new garments, which they continued to wear till they were quite worn out. They then washed their hands in a laver filled with holy water; a ceremony which intimated the purity of their hearts and hands..

“Before the ceremony opened, a book was produced, which contained everything relating to the teletae (i.e. the mystic rites) This was read over in the ears of the mystae; who were ordered to write out a copy of it themselves. This book was kept at Eleusis in a repository, formed by two stones exactly fitted to each other and of a very large size. This repository was called petroma..

“The initiations began with a representation of the wanderings of Ceres, and her bitter and loud lamentations for the loss of her beloved daughter. Upon this occasion no doubt, a figure of that deity was displayed to the mystae while loud lamentations echoed from every corner.. One of the company having kindled a firebrand at the altar and sprung to a certain place in the temple, waving the torch with the utmost fury, a second snatched it from him, roaring and waving it in the same frantic manner; then a third, fourth etc. in the most rapid succession. This was done to imitate Ceres, who was said to have perlustrated the earth with a flaming pine in her hand, which she had lighted at Mount Etna.

“When the pageant of the goddess was supposed to arrive at Eleusis, a solemn pause ensued, and. . questions were put to the mystae. What these questions were, is evident from the answers. ‘I have fasted; I have drunk the liquor; I have taken the contents out of the coffer; and having performed the ceremony, have put them into the hamper: I have taken them out of the hamper and put them again in the coffer’. The meaning of these answers, we conjecture, was this: ‘I have fasted, as Ceres fasted while in search of her daughter; I have drunk off the wort as she drank when given her by Baubo; I have performed what Ceres taught her first disciples to perform, when she committed to them the hamper and coffer.’ After these interrogatories and the suitable responses, the mundus Cereris was displayed before the eyes of the mystae, and the mystagogue or hierophant, or perhaps the herald by his command, read a lecture on the allegorical import of those (holy) symbols. This was heard with the most profound attention and a solemn silence prevailed throughout the fane..

“After the exposition of the mundus Cereris, and the import of her wanderings, many traditions were communicated to the mystae concerning the origin of the universe and the nature of things. The doctrines delivered in the greater mysteries, says Clemens Alexandrinus ‘relate to the nature of the universe. Here all instruction ends. Things are seen as they are; and nature, and the things of nature, are given to be comprehended.’

“The next scene exhibited upon the stage, on this solemn occasion, consisted of the exploits and adventures of the gods, demigods, and heroes, who had, from time to time, been advanced to divine honours.

“But as all the candidates for initiation might not aspire to the rank of heroes and demigods, a more easy and a more attainable mode of conduct, in order to arrive at the palace of happiness, behoved to be opened. Private virtues were inculcated and these too were to meet a condign reward.”

This account then enumerates the phenomena occurring during the mysteries. (see earlier, Stobaeus) “The sight of those appearances was called the Autopsia, or ‘the real presence’; hence those rites were sometimes called Eoptica.

“The Eoptae having sustained all those fiery trials, heard and seen everything requisite, taken upon them the vows and engagements above narrated, and, in a word, having shown themselves good soldiers of Ceres and Proserpine, were now declared ‘perfect men’. They were not only ‘perfect’ but ‘regenerated’ men. They were now crowned with laurel, as was said above and dismissed with two barbarous words, Konx Ompax, of which perhaps the hierophants themselves did not comprehend the import. They had been introduced by the first Egyptian missionaries.. To us the words in question appear to be Syriac, and to signify be vigilant, be innocent.

“Numerous and important were the advantages supposed to redound to the initiated, from their being admitted to partake of the mysteries, both in this life and that which is to come. They were .. even revered by their contemporaries.. they were in reality (dedicated) to Ceres and Proserpine. Secondly, they were obliged by their oaths to practice every virtue, religious, moral, political, public and private. Thirdly, they imagined, that sound advice and happy measures of conduct were suggested to the initiated by the Eleusinian goddesses. Fourthly, the initiated were imagined to be the peculiar wards of the Eleusinian goddesses. These deities were supposed to watch over them, and often to avert impending danger, and to rescue them when beset with troubles.. Fifthly, the happy influences of the teletae, were supposed to administer consolation to the Eoptae, in the hour of dissolution.. Sixthly, after death, in the Elysian fields, they were to enjoy superior degrees of felicity and were to bask in eternal sunshine, to quaff nectar and feast upon ambrosia.

“By the age of Cicero Eleusis was a temple whither all nations resorted to partake of that institution. We find that almost all the great men of Rome were initiated.

“These mysteries, instituted in the reign of Erechtheus, maintained their ground.. near 2000 years.” (Lempdere)
“Persons of both sexes and all ages were initiated of this solemnity and it was looked upon as a heinous crime to neglect this (hollowed) part of religion..

“The greater were celebrated at Eleusis.. In latter times the smaller festivals were preparatory to the greater, and no person could be admitted at Eleusis without a previous purification at Agrae.. A year after the initiations at the lesser mysteries.. they were admitted in the greater.. The way through which they issued from the city was called, Hieria hodos, the holy way..

“On the fourth day they made a solemn procession in which the holy basket of Ceres, was carried about in a hallowed cart, while on every side the people shouted ‘Chaire Demeter, Hail Ceres’. After this followed women called Kisophoroi, who carried baskets, in which was sesamin, carded wool, grains of salt, a serpent, pomegranates, reeds, ivy boughs, certain cakes etc.. They also stopped on a bridge over the Cephisus, where they derided those that passed by. After they had passed this bridge, they entered Eleusis by a place called Mystike Eisodon, the mystical entrance..

“The initiation was performed in the following manner. The candidates, crowned with myrtle, were admitted by night into a place called mystikos sekos, the mystical temple, a vast and stupendous building. As they entered the temple they purified themselves by washing their hands in holy water, and received for admonition that they were to come with a mind pure and undefiled, without which the cleanness of the body would be unacceptable.

“The 9th and last day of the festival was called Plemo Chaoi, earthen vessels, because it was usual to fill two such vessels with wine, one of which being placed towards the east, and the other towards the west, which, after the repetition of some mystical words, were both thrown down, and the wine being spilt on the ground was offered

as a libation.” From an account of the Temple at Eleusis in Enc. Brit. Fourth edition: “The mystic temple at Eleusis was planned by Ictinus, the architect of the Parthenon. Pericles was overseer of the building. It was of the Doric order; the cell so large as to admit the company of a theatre.. The breadth of the cell is about 150 feet; the length, including the pronaos and portico, is 216 feet.. The temple was decastyle, or had 10 columns in the front, which was to the east..

“Wheler saw some large stones carved with wheat-ears and bundles of poppy. Near it is the bust of a colossal statue of excellent workmanship.. the breadth of the shoulders, as measured by Pococke, five feet and a half; and the basket on the head above two feet deep. It probably represented Proserpine.. We saw another pedestal fixed in the some stairs, which lead up to the square tower outside. It belonged to the statue of a lady, who was hierophant or priestess of Proserpine and had covered the altar of the goddess with silver. A well in the village was perhaps that called Callichorus, where the women of Eleusis were accustomed to dance in honour of Ceres. A tradition prevails, that if the broken statue be removed, the fertility of the land will cease. Achmet Aga was fully possessed with this superstition, and declined permitting us to dig or measure there..” (Seyffert) “The events celebrated in the mysteries were the descent of Persephone into the world below, and her return to light and to her mother. The former were celebrated at the greater Eleusinia between autumn and seed-time; the latter in spring at the lesser Eleusinia.

“The Neophyte was proposed for initiation by an Athenian citizen who had himself been initiated.

“The lesser Eleusinia were celebrated in the month Anthesterion, which corresponded to February.. The service was performed at Agrae, a suburb of Athens on the Ilyssus, in the Temple of Demeter and Core and accompanied by mystical rites.

“The great Eleusinia were celebrated in the middle of Boedromion (roughly = September) for a space of probably nine days. The first days were devoted to the preparation for the main festival. . The climax of the whole was the holy drama, a representation of the three goddesses in the worlds above and below. The festival was brought to a close by a libation of water from two vessels in the shape of a top (plemochoe). The water was poured in the direction of east and west with mystical formulae.” (L.S. “Plemochoe, noun fem. an earthen vessel for water. It was used on the last day of the Eleusinian mysteries, which was thence itself called hai plemochoi.”)

“Among the Romans, men.. as, for instance, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius (received) the initiation.”

(id.) “Iambic Poetry.. had long been popularly employed to clothe in a poetic garb the raillery which formed part of the rustic feasts of Demeter. This custom, as well as the application of the word iambus to verses of this kind, was traced to the Thracian maiden Iambe.” note: (L.S.) “Iambus, a metrical foot consisting of a short and a long syllable”. (Neumann) “After Demeter’s search and sorrowful wanderings.. there follows the Heuresis (i.e. the Finding). Suddenly the torches create a sea of light and fire, and the cry is heard: ‘The noble goddess has borne a hallowed child, Brimo has borne Brimos’.” (Rose) on Brimo: “an obscure goddess worshipped, or at least mentioned, at the Eleusinian Mysteries.” From other allusions to the Eleusinian Mysteries: (Grote) “the temple legend of Eleusis (is) set forth at length in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter. It is interesting not less as a picture of the Mater Dolorosa (in the mouth of an Athenian, Demeter and Persephone were always The Mother and Daughter, par excellence) first an agonized sufferer, and then finally glorified - the weal and woe of man depending on her kindly feeling.. The peculiar posset prepared from barley-meal with mint was always tasted by the Mysts (or communicants) after a prescribed fast, as another article of the ceremony. The torch-bearing Hecate received a portion of the worship in the nocturnal ceremonies of the Eleusinia: This too is traced in the Hymn to her kind and affectionate sympathy with the great goddess.” (Mme. Blavatsky) in an account of the bread and wine in the Mystery of the Eucharist: “Godfrey Higgins says that ‘bread and wine were common to many ancient nations.’ Cicero mentions it in his works and wonders at the strangeness of the rite. There had been an esoteric meaning attached to it from the first establishment of the Mysteries, and the Eucharistica is one of the oldest rites of antiquity. With the hierophants.. Ceres was the bread.. meaning regeneration of life from the seed..” (id.) “according to Dollinger, ‘the Eleusinian Mysteries were viewed as the efflorescence of all the Greek religions..’” (id.) “Dr. Warburton remarks: ‘The wisest and best men in the Pagan world are unanimous in this, that the Mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means’. Although persons of both

sexes and all classes were allowed to take part in the Mysteries, and a participation in them was even obligatory, very few indeed attained the.. final initiation in these celebrated rites. The gradation of the Mysteries is given us by Proclus in his fourth book of his Theology of Plato: 'The perfective rite precedes in order the initiation Telete, Muesis and the initiation, Epopteia, or the final apocalypse (revelation)'." (id.) "The Eleusinian Mysteries.. gave their principal features to the Neo-Platonic school of Ammonius Saccas, for the Eclectic System was chiefly characterised by its Theurgy and ecstasis." (Hargrave Jennings) "According to Theodoret, Arnobius and Clemens of Alexandria, the Yoni of the Hindus was the sole object of veneration in the Mysteries of Eleusis (Demosthenes, On the Crown)." (Neumann) "As mysteries, we designate not only the concrete and historical enactment of a mystery festival, as for example, the Eleusinian mysteries, but more generally, a psychic sphere common to all mankind; centred on an archetype, it consists of rites, mysteries, conceptions, usages, and embraces a whole network of unconsciously related symbols." (id.) "In the mysteries of rebirth, the individual is ... immortalized. But this individual is initiated by the spirit mother, as remains evident down to the Eleusinian mysteries." (id.) "Not only in Eleusis but also among the Vestal Virgins of Rome, in Peru, and in Dahomey, the (holy) vessels stand under the specific supervision of the priestesses. This institution is rooted in the fundamental and sociological significance of the pot. It is one of the original symbols of womanhood, while the making and ornamenting of pottery are among the primordial functions of woman." (id.) "Like Gaea, the Greek Earth Mother, she (i.e. the Great Mother) is mistress of the vessel and at the same time the great underworld vessel itself, into which the dead souls enter and out of which they fly up again. The pithos, the great stone jar, served originally for the burial of the dead and thus had the significance of the underworld vessel. According to Jane Harrison every Greek was familiar with the idea 'that the pithos was a grave jar. That from such grave jars souls escaped etc.' The late Eleusinian mysteries are based on this symbolism, which was enriched by the custom of storing grain in subterranean pithoi." (id.) "It is interesting to note that the nude goddess (i.e. in a Chaldean or Syrian zeal) is accompanied by two clothed little girls, while in another instance a little nude daughter goddess stands before the clothed mother goddess. Both examples point to the continuity of the religious relationship, a connection between mother and daughter goddess. Such a connection is evident both here and in Crete, where many seals show 'handmaidens', or more probably daughters, standing beside the Goddess. This relationship assumed its most significant form in the Demeter-Kore mysteries of Eleusis. The Aegean figure showing the mother-daughter genealogy as a female family tree, with the daughter standing on the mother's head, also belongs to this context." (id.) "This unity of Demeter and Kore is the central content of the Eleusinian mysteries. The one essential motif in the Eleusinian mysteries and hence in all matriarchal mysteries is the heuresis of the daughter by the mother, the 'finding again' of Kore by Demeter, the reunion of mother and daughter. Psychologically, this 'finding again' signifies the annulment of the male rape and incursion.. In other words, the nuclear situation of the matriarchal group, the primordial relation of daughter to mother .. is renewed and secured in the mystery." (id.) "The goddesses with the flower and the fruit are scarcely distinguishable from one another.. Demeter and Kore are worshipped in one as 'the Goddesses', and in the pictures where the two appear together, one cannot make out at first which is the mother and which is the daughter - if is only their attributes that make the distinction possible. One is often characterized as a maiden by the flower she bears. The other as the mature goddess by the fruit. In the wonderful relief in which the two look smilingly and knowingly into each other's eyes, both hold flowers." (id.) "For the reascent Kore no longer dwells as before in the earth, or only in the underworld as Persephone but in conjunction with Demeter becomes the Olympian Kore, the immortal and divine principle, the beatific light. Like Demeter herself she becomes the goddess of the three worlds; the earth, the underworld and the heavens." (id.) "And if we consider the awe in which all antiquity stood of these mysteries, it is clear that they must have constituted a genuine mystery experience for men as well as women. . And another essential factor seems to be that in the mysteries, the male was enabled, through his experience of the creatively transforming and rebearing power of the Great Mother to experience himself as her son - i.e. to identify himself with the newborn divine spirit son, and with Triptolemus. ." (Larson) "By the time of Pausanias (at about the time of Antoninus Pius) all Hellos was filled with the statues, altars and temples of Demeter; her festivals were celebrated everywhere; yet Eleusis always remained the centre of her cult. Since it had been accepted since prehistoric times, there was no conflict between Demeter and Olympus; initiation into her ritual was, as it were an extension of the prevailing religion. However, it was a complete and independent worship, and once initiated into it, the votary required no other faith for time or eternity. Countless men and women, craving something more than the Olympians would offer, turned

to Eleusis.. But this involved no special discipline or cataclysmic regeneration and no organization of the initiates into separate communions.. It was only necessary to witness the holy spectacles, partake of certain rites.. and undergo a mystic initiation, possessing a magical efficacy; the (initiate) could then return to his usual pursuits, live his life as before, and yet hope for blessed immortality” (id.) “Hippolytus discusses the manner in which the Noasenes had absorbed various elements from the Eleusinian mystery. And from this we learn that the Lesser Mysteries, those of Kore or Persephone, were of an ethical nature, the sole purpose of which was to make the initiate just, noble, happy and successful in the present life.. In the Greater Mysteries.. he says that at the (central rite) of the ceremony, the initiates are shown ‘an ear of corn in silence reaped’ which was the mystic Eucharist.. That the secret and mysterious baskets, containing the Eleusinian (eucharist), were well known to the ancients, we learn from various sources. In ‘The Golden Ass’ of Apuleius Psyche invokes ‘the secrets of thy basket’ in her prayer to Demeter.” (id.) “Throughout the Greater Mysteries the Initiated were to live for ever.. with the good deity, by becoming the bridegroom of the saviour-goddess. This was the second spiritual birth which probably involved.. a mystery-ritual in which the mystae were wedded to the beneficent Isis-Demeter.. There were certainly similar wedding ceremonies in which male initiates became the mystical bridegrooms of Kore and Demeter.” (Stobart) on the Emperor Augustus: “He himself, like most of the nobles of his day, had received a Greek education.. Besides that, he had been initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries at Athens, and they were probably the most powerful source of inspiration in the Mediterranean world.” (Graves) “on the gold ring from the Acropolis Treasure at Mycenae a seated Demeter gives three poppy-heads to a standing Core. Poppy-seeds were used as a condiment on bread, and poppies are naturally associated with Demeter, since they grow in corn-fields.” (Ashe) “More significant perhaps, was the Goddess’s return in the Mysteries.. Their chief gift was the precious one which the Goddess had offered long ago and her male supplanters, generally speaking, did not, - the overcoming of death. At Eleusis she presided as Demeter or Ceres, the Earth Mother, paired with the maiden Kore, in other words her own younger, virginal aspect.” (Olivia Robertson) “Studying the Eleusinian mysteries of Demeter and Persephone, to me the visions at Lourdes and Fatima are a portrayal of these dramas in actual human history. The Lesser Mystery was shown at Lourdes in the form of a vision of a beautiful maiden appearing in a grotto The young girl who witnessed the visions drew forth a stream of healing waters from the mud. The Great Eleusinian mystery was, I believe, manifested at Fatima. Here we have people seeing a Golden Disc bringing from the sky the apparition of a woman robed in white.. The Lesser Mystery of Lourdes, therefore, portrayed Persephone, Queen of Day and Night, the perfect embodiment of a Divine Idea, in control of the elements of Earth and Water. The Greater Mystery of Fatima illustrated power over the elements of Air and Fire.” (Denning and Phillips) “.. the power of a symbol does not derive from the object or phenomenon as it exists in the outer world, but from the corresponding mental reality. Given a suitable setting, this power can draw from the whole personality. The candidate who entered the Mysteries of Eleusis, had probably many times seen fields of barley or other grain ripening, without being profoundly moved by them: but we have reason to believe that a single ear of barley provided the culminating revelation of these Mysteries, after due preparation, and that the candidate in this decisive moment of vision based an entire conviction thereon It was not the cereal which taught him this, but that which had germinated in the depths of the psyche under the influence of the mystical exercises through which he had lately passed “ (id.) “The chief God-forms of Malkuth are Ceres and Demeter, and those similar Earth Mothers who are found in every cosmogony: gracious and generous goddesses, and withal of high dignity, for they participate in that mystery which is expressed in Qabalistic tradition by the words, ‘Malkuth sitteth upon the throne of Binah.’ Thus the Bride becomes the Supernal Mother: Demeter, Mother of Barley, becomes Mother of the Mysteries.” (Gdss. Ind.) “For this reason the cults of the Arani, the rites of lesbian intercourse, are the most occult and holy of all religious ceremonies. To the initiates of the West these are revealed in the Eleusinian Mysteries of Demeter and Kore.” (Perpetual Festival Calendar, the Shrine of Wisdom, Fintry, Sussex.)

“February 1st. The Lesser Eleusinian Mysteries, First Day.

February 2nd. The Lesser Eleusinian Mysteries, Second Day.

February 3rd. The Lesser Eleusinian Mysteries, Third Day.

September 2nd. The Greater Eleusinian Mysteries, First Day.

September 7th. Eumolpus, reputed founder of Eleusinian Mysteries.

September 9th. Asclepienia , Eleusinian priestess.

September 10th. Last Day of the Eleusinian Mysteries, Day of the Vision of the Shining One.”

HERA (Pausanias) "Fifty stades, I conjecture, from Temenium is Nauplia.. Here, say the Argives, Hera bathes every year and recovers her virginity. This is one of the sayings told as a holy secret at the mysteries which they celebrate in honour of Hera." Greek Mysteries, general: (Julian) in a dissertation on "that department of theology which has to do with initiation and the Mysteries:"

"For nature (physis) loves to hide her secrets, and she does not suffer the hidden truth about the essential nature of the deities to be flung in naked words to the profane. Now there are certain characteristics of ours that derive benefit from the occult and unknown nature, which nourishes not our souls alone but our bodies also, and brings us into the presence of the deities, and this I think often comes about by means of myths; when through riddles and the dramatic setting of myths that knowledge is insinuated into the ears of the multitude who cannot receive divine truths in their present form..

"I mean that the more paradoxical and prodigious the riddle is, the more it seems to warn us not to believe simply the bare words but rather to study diligently the hidden truth, and not to relax our efforts until under the guidance of the deities these hidden things become plain, and so initiate or rather perfect our intelligence. . However, may the deities grant to me and to many of you who have not as yet been initiated into these Mysteries to enjoy the blessings thereof.

"To go back then to what led me say all this. Whatever myths or holy subjects are incongruous in thought, by that very fact they cry aloud, as it were, to study and track down their hidden meaning. And in such myths the incongruous element is even more valuable than the serious and straightforward..

"There then are the reasons why that branch of philosophy which is connected with initiation and the doctrines of the Mysteries ought by all means to be expressed in devout and serious language, while as regards the thought, the narrative may be expounded in a style that has stranger qualities."

ROME

Roman: BONA DEA (Lempriere) "her festivals were celebrated only in the night by the Roman matrons.. and all the statues of the men were carefully covered with a veil where the ceremonies were observed." (Seyffert) "Bona Dea 'the good goddess'. An Italian deity, supposed to preside over the earth, and all the blessings which spring from it.. All kinds of healing plants were preserved in her adytum. She was regarded in Rome as an austere virgin goddess, whose temple men were forbidden to enter. She belonged, accordingly to the circle of deities who were worshipped by the Vestal Virgins. The anniversary of her temple was held on the 1st of May, when prayers were offered up to her for the averting of earthquakes. Besides this, a secret festival was held to her on behalf of the public welfare, in the house of the officiating consul or praetor of the city, by matrons and the Vestal Virgins, on the night of May 3-4. The mistress of the house presided. No man was allowed to be present at this celebration, or even to hear the name of the goddess.. Under the Empire the festival (became) a mystic performance of extravagant character." (Rose) "A very ancient cult, much influenced in later times by the Greek ritual of Damia imported from Tarentum, was that of the Bona Dea.. if wine were present it must be referred to as milk and the vessel which contained it called a honey-jar." (Perpetual Festival Calendar) "December 3rd Bona Dea, the Good Goddess." CERES and PROSERPINA (Lempriere) on the history of the Eleusinian Mysteries: "They were carried from Eleusis to Rome in the age of Adrian, where they were observed with the same ceremonies as before, though, perhaps with more freedom and licentiousness." See Greek: Demeter and Persephone.

GENERAL, EARLIER PERIOD

General; Earlier Period: (Porphyry) from 'The Cave of the Nymphs': "The ancients then, very properly dedicated caves and grottoes to the cosmos taken as a whole and in its parts making earth (ge) a symbol of the matter (hyle) of which the Cosmos consists. (It was on these grounds that some actually equated earth with matter itself) They used caves to represent the Cosmos, which was generated from matter.. Similarly, the Persians call the place a cave where they introduce an initiate to the mysteries, revealing to them the path by which souls descend and go back again.. After Zoroaster others adopted the custom of performing the rites of initiation in caves and grottoes which were either natural or artificial In the same way, too, they dedicated to the nymphs caves and grottoes.. Demeter, in the same way, rears Persephone in a cave among nymphs, and one can find many similar

examples by going through the writings of the theologians.. under these influences, I think, that the Pythagoreans, and Plato after them, called the Cosmos a cave or grotto. For in Empedocles the powers that guide souls say: 'We have arrived here in this covered cave'." (Layard quoted by Neumann) on the connection between the labyrinth and initiation: "According to Layard the main archetypal traits of the labyrinth are as follows:

1. That it has to do with death and rebirth relating either to a life after death or to the mysteries of initiation.
2. That it is almost always connected with a cave (or more rarely a constructed building).
3. That in those cases where the ritual has been preserved the labyrinth itself, or a drawing of it, is invariably situated at the entrance to the cave or dwelling.
4. That the presiding personage, either mythical or actual, is always a woman.
5. That the labyrinth itself is walked through, or the labyrinth design, walked over by men."

"This group of archetypal symbols is completed by 'the moon'. Layard tells us that this ritual figure consists of two moons turned toward one another like the lips of a mouth and is identical with the figure of 'the way', which the devouring female draws as a test for the dead man. In other words, the terrible gullet of death or the devouring womb that he must pass through consists of two crescent moons that are everywhere connected with the great dark Goddess of the night..

"The fact that in Malekula the female dolmens belong to the old matriarchal stratum of cult and ritual . . confirms the ubiquity of the archetypal symbolism.

"The underworld, like the unconscious, is always 'symbolically feminine as the vessel that sucks in'.. the Devil - like Mephisto in Goethe's 'Faust' - stands in a sonlike dependency to the 'Devil's grandmother', whose matriarchal shape is still barely visible in the background." note: see Renaissance: The Mothers. (G.N. Russell) on the secrets of the Labyrinth: "Following these clues we read of initiates to the Eleusinian Mysteries walking through our labyrinth. . In the Indian, Persian Mysteries etc. we read that initiates were led through seven interconnected channels, caves or rooms .. and looking of our labyrinth we see that it embraces seven concentric circles all interlinked. . "(Dr. Esther Harding) "The Moon Goddess was attended primarily by priestesses; but she also had priests attached to her temple. Like the priestesses they also took upon themselves vows which were not required of the ordinary man, nor even of the initiate who was not a priest. The ordinary man resorted to the temple of the goddess to take part in the hieros gamos (i.e. holy marriage) perhaps once in his life, at his initiation." (Cumont) "All the Oriental religions assumed the form of mysteries.. In their initiation they (i.e. the dignitaries) receive the revelation of an esoteric doctrine strengthened by their fervour. What was the Theology they learned?.. All writers agree with Firmicus that the pagans worshipped the elementa. Under this term were included not only the four simple substances which by their opposition and blending caused all phenomena of the visible world, but also the stars and in general the elements of all celestial and earthly bodies.

"We therefore may in a certain sense speak of the return of paganism to nature worship; but must this transformation be regarded as a retrogression towards a barbarous past..? If so, we should be deceived by appearances. Religions do not fall back into infancy as they grow old.."

THE CELTIC COUNTRIES

Celtic, General (Mme. Blavatsky) "The Druidical Circles, the Dolmens, are all the work of initiated Priest Architects." (Dr. Esther Harding) "The Grail is a mysterious symbol. . The chalice containing blood is the . . cauldron of the Celtic moon goddess. To drink from that vessel bestows regeneration, renewal, perhaps immortality. As stone, the Grail is obviously a symbol for the Moon Mother herself, who, in many ancient religions . . was worshipped under the form of a stone or cone. As food-bearing dish, the Grail is the symbol of the Goddess of Agriculture and of Plenty. In the Celtic version, the Fisher King, guardian of the Grail, suffers perpetual sickness, being neither dead nor alive, but suspended in a half state between life and death; until the mystery of the Grail should be revealed to a mortal man.. Then the Fisher King will be restored to life and the Wastelands will be fertile once more.

"Such is the legend of the Grail and as Jessie Weston points out it is clearly the story of an initiation. The ordeal always requires that the hero shall ask a certain question: namely 'What do these things mean and whom do they

serve?' Failure to do so means that the mysteries continue in their eternal round, but no one is served thereby, and the lands remain waste. But if the question is asked and the meaning is made conscious, then the spell is broken, the king is healed and peace and plenty are restored to the lands.

"There is a very interesting variant of these archetypal happenings recorded in the story of Isis, when Maneros, the Fisher, falls into the sea and is drowned.. Maneros fell overboard because of his inability to endure the sight of Isis' grief over the dead Osiris; he could not stand the 'awe of the goddess'." (Neumann) on the symbolism of vessels: "The other series, deriving from the breasts of the woman vessel, consists of the symbolic vessel, bowl, goblet, chalice, grail. It combines the elementary character of containing with that of nourishing. The fact that these symbols are open in character and form. . accent the motif of giving, donating.."

AMERICA

South American: (Neumann) "The matriarchal epoch was a source of totemism, and exogamy and taboo as well as the principle of initiation seemed to have belonged originally to the central institutions of the female group. One indication of this is that many female mysteries were taken over by the men.. We even have traditions - among the primitive aborigines of Tierra del Fuego, for example - to the effect that the earliest mysteries were mysteries of the moon goddess.."

AUSTRALIA

Australian: KIALWADI (Roslyn Poignant) The author, having recounted the tradition concerning the swallowing of the children by Kalwadi, goes on to state: "It is the invalidating myth of the highest revelatory ceremony of the Murinbata called the Punj. The young neophytes approach this with fear and awe because they believe they are about to be swallowed and vomited up by the Old Woman. In these mysteries Kalwadi's voice is the sound of the Swinging bullroarer.. They are transformed by the experience and emerge. . to a new adult role in society."

THE MIDDLE AGES

Medieval or earlier: DIANA (Invocation quoted by Leland):

"I drink, and yet it is not wine I drink,
I drink the blood of Diana,
Since from wine it has changed into her blood
And spread itself through all my growing vines..
If drinking from this horn I drink the blood -
The blood of great Diana - by her aid -
If I do kiss my hand to the new moon,
Praying the Queen that she may guard my grapes..
Until the wine is made - may it be good.."

THE RENAISSANCE

Renaissance: ISIS (Gdss. Chald.) "The uninterrupted worship of Isis through the ages, by certain occultists and esoteric schools, is suggested in the Trinosophia. Here St. Germain includes a drawing which Hall interprets as follows: 'The female figure is Isis in her role of Initiatrix. She is Nature, and her black skirt is the corporeal world by which part of her body is concealed. The table upheld by the Sun and Moon and at the base of which burns the everlasting fire, is the world. The objects lying upon it, or held by Isis, are three of the suit symbols which appear upon Tarot cards. . The Hebrew characters in the panel above the head of Isis are translated: On account of distress they shall cling to the Bestower'." (Harmsworth Encyclopaedia) "Cagliostro, Alessandro .. In London he established a cult of freemasonry (Egyptian) but had to flee to Paris. Here he revived his Egyptian cult, adding the lodge 'Isis'. "(Mackenzie) "Cagliostro's Egyptian rite..; was received enthusiastically in France. Soon he had installed himself as . . Priest of a Temple of Isis in the Rue de la Soudiere in Paris.. He declared apparently an Egyptian precedent, that women might be admitted to the mysteries of the pyramids, and in due course Mme. de Lamballe and other ladies from the higher ranks of French society were admitted. . amidst the oriental luxury of the temple of Isis." (id.) the author alludes to "Remy de Gourmont, a cabalist and an occultist, learned in the

history of Asiatic religions and philosophies, fascinated by the veil of Isis, initiated by .. personal experiences..”
The Countess Cagliostro, a priestess of Isis, performed initiations. THE MOTHERS (Goethe):

“Mephistopheles: Yet there’s a way.
Faust: Speak, nor delay thy history.
Meph: Unwillingly I reveal a loftier mystery -
In solitude are throned the Goddesses,
No space around them, Place and Time still less
Only to speak of them embarrasses.
They are THE MOTHERS!
Faust: (terrified) Mothers!
Meph: Hast thou dread?
Faust: The Mothers! The Mothers! - a strange word is said.
Meph: It is so. Goddesses, unknown to you,
The Mortals, - named by us unwillingly.
Delve in the deepest depths must thou, to reach them.
‘Tis thine own fault that we for help beseech them.
Faust: Where is the way?
Meph: No way! - To the Unreachable,
Ne’er to be trodden! A way to the Unbeseechable
Ne’er to be besought! Art thou prepared?
There are no locks, no latches to be lifted;
Through endless solitudes shalt thou be drifted.
Hast thou through solitudes and deserts fared
Faust: I think ‘twere best to spare such speeches.
They smell too strongly of the witches
Meph: Descend, then! ..
At last a blazing tripod tells thee this
That there the utterly deepest bottom is..”

(Eckermann quoted by Bayard-Taylor) Goethe’s response to Eckermann’s questions about the Mothers: “He, however, according to his usual habit, assumed a mysterious air, looking at me with wide-open eyes and repeating the words ‘The Mothers! Mothers! It sounds so singular’. .. I can only betray so much’, he then said, ‘that in reading Plutarch, I found that in Grecian antiquity the Mothers are spoken of as Goddesses..You may take this manuscript home with you. Study it carefully and see what success you will have with it’.” (Bayard Taylor) “Eckermann, after taking home Goethe’s manuscript and duly pondering over it, evolved out of his inmost consciousness the discovery that the Mothers are the ‘creating and sustaining principle, from which everything proceeds that has life and form on the surface of the earth.’ Koestlin says.. ‘They are Goddesses, who preside over the eternal metamorphoses of things, of all that already exists.’ Duentzer calls the Mothers the ‘primitive forms (or ideas) of things — Urbilder der Dinge..’ Deycks sees in the Mothers, as in the matrices (i.e. of Paracelsus) ‘the elemental or original material of all forms.’ Reimer’s view is substantially the same, - ‘they are the elements from, which spring all that is corporeal as well as all that is intellectual.’ The realm where the Mothers dwell is visible to the secret vision of the Poet and the Artist.” PALLAS. The Order of the Helmet, also known as The Order of Pallas is closely associated with the Italian Renaissance. The symbol of this Order is the figure of a woman wearing a helmet and holding a spear. The Order soon extended its influence to Britain and Ireland, where its membership is believed to have included Dr. Dee, Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Bacon and the ninth Earl of Northumberland, “Henry the Wizard”. In these countries the Order was centred around the ‘Virgin Queen’, Elizabeth I, through whom the Goddess was seen to be manifest in the form of Gloriana, the Faerie Queene, Diana and Belpheobe. It seems probable that Edmund Spenser and the Earl of Desmond were at least associated with the Order. In Ireland Raleigh was particularly connected with Youghal and also Castle Matrix, Co. Limerick (formerly Matres, derived from the Celtic Mother Goddesses) where Raleigh and Spenser first met.

THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL

The Romantic Revival: AIMA ELOHIM (Golden Dawn Rituals, Torrens) "Practicus Ritual.. Before you is represented the symbolism of the Garden of Eden. At the summit is the supernal Eden, containing the three Supernal Sephiroth, summed up and contained in Aima Elohim, the Mother Supernal (note: Hebrew, aima, mother) the woman of the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, crowned with the Sun and with the Moon under her feet, and upon her head the Crown of Twelve Stars.. " ANAEL (id.) "Practicus Ritual.. The right-hand figures below is Anael the Ruler of the Astral Light. She is also Axiokersa the third Kabir, Ceres and Persephone, Isis and Nephthys. She, therefore is represented in duplicated form and rising from the waters. Around these figures dart flashes of lightning. AXIOKERSA (Golden Dawn, Regardie) "Practicus Ritual . .

Hierophant:. . Take in your right hand the Pyramid of Flame, and follow your guide, Axiokersa, the Kabir, who leads you through the Path of Fire. Hegemon: Axiokersa, the Third Kabir spoke to Kasmillos, the Candidate, and said: I am the right basal angle of the Triangle of Flame. I am the Fire astral and fluid, winding and coruscating through the Firmament. I am the Life of Beings, the vital heat of existence. By what symbol doth thou seek to pass me?

Theoreticus: By the symbol of the Pyramid of Flame." BINAH (id.) from magical formulae of Neophyte Grade: "Now rehearse an invocation of all the Divine Names of Binah, that thou mayest retain the Shroud of Darkness under thy own proper control and guidance" THE GREAT GODDESS and NATURE (id.) "Practicus Ritual.. Hierophant: And the Great Goddess bringeth forth the vast sun and the brilliant Moon and wide Air, and the Lunar Course and the South Pole. She collected it, receiving the Melody of the Aether and of the Sun and of the Moon, and of whatsoever is contained in air. Unwearied doth Nature rule over the Worlds and Works, so that the Period of all things may be accomplished. And above the shoulders of the Great Goddess, is Nature in her vastness exalted." HATHOR (id.) "Philosophus Ritual.. The Priestess with the mask of Athor spoke and said: I am the Ruler of Mist and Cloud, wrapping the Earth as it were with a Garment, floating and hovering between Earth and Heaven. I am the Giver of the mist-veil of Autumn, the successor of dew-clad Night." ISIS and NEPHTHYS (Golden Dawn Rituals, Torrens) "The Grade of the Neophyte.. This is the order of the circumambulation.. first cometh Anubis the Watcher of the Gods; next Themis, the Goddess of the Hall of Truth; then Horus; then the remaining members in order of precedence; and lastly, the Goddess of the scales of the Balance, as though a vast wheel were revolving.. On this wheel the ascending side commenceth from below the pillar of Nephthys and the descending side from below the pillar of Isis.. " (id.) "And as the badge is placed upon him (i.e. the candidate) it is as though the two Great Goddesses, Isis and Nephthys, in the place of the columns, stretched forth their wings over the form of Osiris to restore him again to life." (id.) Theoreticus Ritual: "Hierophant: These ideas are symbolically resumed in the representation of the twenty-first key of the Tarot, the Universe, before you. Within the oval formed of the seventy-two Circles is a female form, nude, save for a scarf which floats round her. She is crowned with the lunar crescent of Isis and holds in each hand a wand. . She is the Bride of the Apocalypse, the Qabalistic Queen of the Canticles; the Egyptian Isis of Nature, now shown partly unveiled. The Great Feminine Kerubic Angel, Sandolphon, on the left hand of the Mercy Seat of the Ark. The Wands are the directing forces of the positive and negative currents. The Seven-Pointed Star, a Heptagram, alludes to the seven Palaces of Assiah.. She is the synthesis of the 32nd Path.." (id.) "Philosophus Ritual.. Hierophant: The priestess with the mask of Isis spoke and said: 'I am the rain of Heaven ascending upon the Earth, bearing with it the fructifying and germinating power. I am the plenteous yielder of the harvest. I am the cherisher of Life'.. The priestess with the mask of Nephthys spoke and said: 'I am the dew, descending noiseless and silent, germinating the Earth with countless diamonds of dew, bearing down the influence from above in the solemn darkness of Night.' " (id.) Philosophus Ritual: "On this Tablet is shown the meaning of the symbol of Venus. . It embraces the whole Sephiroth and is therefore a fitting symbol of the Isis of Nature." (Golden Dawn, Regardie) Adeptus Minor Ritual. The following invocation is made: "Chief: Virgo Isis, Mighty Mother." (id.) from the Symbolism of the Admission of the Candidate: "The Step (1) The foot is advanced about six inches.. put forward and taking a hesitating step in darkness - the left foot, to represent the power of Isis or the beginning of action rather than Nephthys as the end thereof." (Golden Dawn Rituals, Torrens) "Thus as far as the veils of Nephthys and Isis, called Paroketh, do we go in the Outer Order." (id.) on the Three Chiefs: "their seats are before the veil (Paroketh) which is divided into two parts at the point of rending, as though it answered unto the veils of Isis and Nephthys impenetrable except to the

initiate.” (id.) from list of members of the Order.. “Mathers, Mrs. Mina.. wrote the introduction to her husband’s ‘Qabaiah Unveiled’. With him performed the Mysteries of Isis at the Bodiniere Theatre in Paris.” (id.) “Yeats, William Butler.. author, Imperator of the Isis-Urania Temple for some two years.” (Daraul) “there have been in the past few decades quite a number of new cults, claiming ancient origins.. Egypt is a prolific source of these bodies. Originally started for Westerners attracted to the Pyramids, the Order of Isis is a good example. It became more democratized during and after the Second World War, when many young soldiers of Allied armies were enrolled, Sons and daughters of Isis, inducted with the strictest secrecy..” MALKUTH (Golden Dawn Rituals, Torrens) “The Neophyte Grade: This grade was the entry into the black portion of Malkuth, or the lowest Sefhira. The ceremony introduced the Neophyte to the qualities of this state..” (id.) “The reception.. (takes) place in the black portion of Malkuth; when it is finished the candidate is conducted to the Altar, the citrine portion of Malkuth.” (id.) “Zelator Ritual: The Pentagram in the centre is the representation of the letter He, which is the symbol of Malkah (i.e. Hebrew: Queen) the Bride . . and of the Alchemical Queen. The whole figure represents the Rose of Creation and is a synthesis of the visible universe..” (id.) “Hierophant: In the 1 = 10 Grade of Zelator the mystic symbolism of the tenth Sefhira, Malkuth, is shown with which this grade is especially connected.: Among other mystic titles Malkuth has that of Shaar the Gate, which by Metathesis makes Ashur, meaning the number ten. It is also called in Chaldaic, Thora, the Gate.. It is also the Gate of the Garden of Eden and the Superior Mother.. “ SANDOLOPHON (id) “Zelator Ritual.. Hierophant: But the Great Angel Sandolophon spake and said: I am the Reconciler for Earth, and the Soul of the Celestial therein.. I am the left hand Kerub of the Ark and the feminine power..” SOTHIS (Golden Dawn, Regardie) “Philosophus Ritual.. Hierophant: Before you upon the Altar is the 17th Key of the Tarot.. In the Egyptian sense it is Sirius, the Dog-Star, the Star of Isis-Sothis. Around it are the Stars of the Seven Planets each with its sevenfold counterchanged operation. The nude female figure with the Star of the Heptagram on her brow is the synthesis of Isis, of Nephthys, and of Athor. She also represents the planet Venus.. She is Aima, Tebunah, the Great Supernal Mother - Aima Elohim, pouring upon the Earth the waters of creation which unite and form a river at her feet, the river going forth from the Supernal Eden which floweth and faileth not. Note well, that in this key she is completely unveiled.”

GENERAL, LATER PERIOD

General, later period: (P.G. Bowen) on the Arch-adept: “Thence he evokes the Power-of-the Soul in the Being of the All-Mother and All-Lover, and she turns in shining beauty to embrace him, and yields her secret treasures to his will.” (from an account of an Initiation experience):

(The Phase of Awakening)

“Among the first signs that one is entering into a new state of consciousness is the onset of certain experiences of an unusual nature. These are both bodily and mental, and do not appear to occur in any definite order.

“Instances will be given first of these new bodily experiences.

“Sometimes there is the feeling of being, as it were, electric. This may vary from a sensation of slight tingling to that of a violent electric shock throughout the body.

“There is sometimes the feeling of lightness, almost of weightlessness and buoyancy.

“The sense of vision also becomes affected. Colours are very vivid. Grass appears especially a brilliant green. In portraits or photographs of people, the figures seem to stand out of the frame and to be almost alive.

“The sense of hearing is also sometimes affected.. The voice of some people take on a bell like quality.

“One also becomes aware of telepathic answers and comments both auditory and visual, given to one’s thoughts by one’s environment; so these are given by the words of the people around or by a piece of writing or a symbol..

“Also there is presented again to the mind some of the more important religious doctrines which had at any time of one’s life entered the consciousness..

“It can be seen therefore that this is a period in which many of the bodily and mental functions are greatly enhanced..

“Where help is perhaps most necessary is when one is confronted with religious teachings. The best course is to regard with great caution any religious doctrines either orthodox or unorthodox which one does not intuitively know to be true. This is difficult, because as has been mentioned before, religion is seen to be a subject of urgent interest, and one is impatient to study it. Nevertheless, it is better to have patience, knowing that in its own time the true religion, including the theology of this realm of consciousness will be revealed to one. Following this principle one will find that there is no reason for religious doctrines to monopolize the attention.

(The Phase of Religious Sensitivity)

“The main feature of this phase lies in the intellectual and emotional realm, namely, in religion. It is now that a definite pattern of the religion of this new state of consciousness begins to emerge.

“At first one finds oneself questioning the male emphasis laid on the Godhead by much religious teaching both orthodox and unorthodox, but especially by the more modern religions of the West. One begins to feel, for instance, that the doctrine of the Trinity lacks a female element .. One finds this being replaced in the mind by one which is more balanced, as for instance, the Egyptian Isis, Osiris and Horus.

“Gradually a further change takes place. Instead of a male-female equality, the female aspect begins to predominate. Thus Osiris is not seen as a father; parenthood is focused on Isis the Mother.

“More or less concurrently with this one finds presented to the mind what is, according to much current religious teaching, an unusual view of the place of women in religious ritual. One finds, for instance, reminders being given of statements to the effect that all women are born priestesses; and one feels that its parallel cannot always be said of men. One finds also an increasing importance being attached to the woman’s monthly cycle; one sees it as closely linked with her role as priestess.

“Religious ritual correspondingly changes its aspect. Instead, as is so usual, of men taking the active part, the position is now reversed. It is women who really take the active part in the realm of religion. That is not to say that men have no place; they do in fact play an important part, and one that needs a definite standard of ethical education; their roles, however, unlike that of women, is passive.

(The Phase of the New Birth)

“Until now there has been, except for the telepathic link before mentioned, an apparently almost complete separation between one’s inner thoughts and the outer events which are taking place around one.

“From now on, however, the two begin to merge. The telepathic link between inside and outside becomes greatly strengthened. The most mundane details of life take on a religious significance, and the performance of them becomes an act of profound importance.

“In spite of the fact, however, that paranormal experiences are now far more frequent than they were in the phase described earlier, the attention is directed not so much to their strangeness as towards trying to discover what they have to teach.

“Gradually the outer events seem to take over an increasingly greater control of one’s thoughts, and there is a feeling of being a passive participant in what is going on. That is not to say that one’s reason or conscience or will is in any way overridden in fact the reverse is the case; one’s reason and conscience decide that this is the only course, and one’s will chooses to have it so.

“Events from now on follow a definite sequence. First one becomes aware, although daily routine still follows the normal pattern, of an emphasis on what can be described as the accompaniments of infancy; women appear in the role of ‘nannies’...

(The Phase of the Divine Presence)

“This phase, though the vital one, can be described very briefly.

“One of the signs that one is approaching the basic initiation is the growing awareness of the telepathic link between oneself and all the human race. An essential difference, however, is intuitively felt between one’s link with men and one’s link with women. There may arise the feeling of a certain degree of opposition on the part of men, though this is impotent in deflecting the course of events now taking place.

“The basic initiation is reached when one has full consciousness of the telepathic link between oneself and all women. One now knows the situation which really lies ‘behind the scenes’, that women hold supreme control, a control that is all-wise and all-loving as well as all-powerful. Nothing can alter it; it is absolute.

“One’s reaction at this point can be described in one word - obedience. Yet, though complete, this obedience is in no way forced upon one; it comes naturally. To quote again words from a former chapter; one’s reason and conscience decide that this is good and one’s will chooses to accept it.

(The Phase of Sensitivity to Symbols)

“After this period of the revelation, there follows one in which there is a great sensitivity to symbols.. Some symbols are now seen as appropriate and others as inappropriate, though to the mundane consciousness no such sensitivity is felt. The reason for this lies in the fact to which attention has already been drawn, namely that in this state of consciousness religion holds a dominant position and hence there is great significance attached to those symbols connected with it.

“There is, at first, a sense of isolation, in view of the fact that the new theology presented may seem out of keeping with one’s former views; for even though its truth is known intuitively there is still a feeling of need for support from other quarters. One soon finds, however, that the new theology and cosmology have behind them support from the facts of Nature. One sees Nature presenting an analogy to the Creation period of history in the smaller scale picture of a mother giving birth to a baby. It might be argued that the analogy should be carried back to the time of conception, where scientific reasoning might show that man has a part to play at least in the first stage of that process. The fact is, however, that Nature prefers to draw her analogies from facts that are readily observable, rather than from those which are inferred. In this case, therefore, the appropriate analogy would be the situation existing either at the time of birth, or perhaps of quickening. In neither of these does the act of man form a part. In other words, in the analogy of Nature, a woman can give life to a man, but a man cannot give life to a woman - this supporting the theology and cosmology found in this realm of consciousness.

“There is also in the state of widened consciousness a realization of the need for an intellectual understanding of those symbols which, as before mentioned, have such a powerful emotional effect. Applying the intellect to this problem leads to valuable and interesting conclusions.

(The Phase of Adjustment)

“Here then we can find the basis of hope for the future: the conviction that as the enthroned Goddess attains her true place in our consciousness, so shall we experience the ideal life.”

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Enc. Brit.:	Encyclopaedia Britannica, 4th Edition.
Gdss. Chald.:	“The Goddesses of Chaldaeae, Syria and Egypt” by the author.
Gdss. Ind.:	“The Goddesses of India, Tibet. China and Japan” by the author.
L.S.:	Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon
O.C.D.:	The Oxford Classical Dictionary
S.D.:	“The Secret Doctrine” by Helen Blavatsky
W.R.:	White and Riddle, Latin-English Dictionary

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