

Azoth misc

The Urth list — 6 messages, 4 voices, 11 Feb 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2950>

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jingram — 11 Feb 2002, 09:32

Rostrum's recent post reminded me of another tidbit, which I hope isn't too redundant with long-ago posts . . .

Sepia

[taken from http://azothgallery.com/azoth_defined.html]

AZOTH. In 16 th century portraits painted of Paracelsus, the pommel of his sword, upon which rests his hand, bears the inscription "Azoth." From the poem set beneath a contemporary newspaper "broadside" published of Paracelsus, we may gather that Azoth was the name of a secret medicine, an elixir vitae, i.e. infallible remedy or alexipharmakon (~ counter poison), he kept hidden within his swords pommel. Azoth is also the secret name of Mercurius, extracted from cinnabar, the universal quicksilver medicine which comprised the virtues of all other medicines. Hence, it is also the name for the "philosophers stone." It is spiritus animatus, the animated spirit.

[. . .]

"Concerning the nature of Azoth there is much controversy. Some view it as the invisible, eternal fire; others as electricity; still others as magnetism. Transcendentalists refer to it as the astral light."

Isaac Myer, in a discussion of Ain Soph and Space, says: "The Ain Soph at first was filling All and then made an absolute concentration into Itself which produced the Abyss, Deep, or Space, the Aveer Qadmon or Primitive Air, the Azoth; but this is not considered in the Qabbalah as a perfect void or vacuum, a perfectly empty Space, but is thought as the Waters or Crystalline Chaotic Sea, in which was a certain degree of Light inferior to that by which all the created (worlds and hierarchies) were made." -- Secret Teachings of the Ages, Page Number: CXVII

Alice K. Turner — 12 Feb 2002, 16:30 · follows jingram

From Sepia:

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Thank you for this--it is particularly interesting to me as I have just finished reading THE ABYSS, by Margaret Yourcenar, an account of a fictional 16th c. intellectual/astrologer/philosopher named Zeno, who is clearly based on Paracelsus. I had mildly wondered why the book had that title--it might have been explained somewhere but if so it went right by me. I have also recently read THE CHYMICAL WEDDING, by Lindsay Clarke. which is very much up the same path (though a contemporary novel). so a post like this is a real pleasure.

-alga

Jason Ingram — 14 Feb 2002, 09:28 · follows Alice K. Turner

Alga,

Those titles sound interesting. I've been researching related topics (which are more pertinent to John Crowley, but still relevant to Wolfe), and fictional accounts should help to sustain interest.

One more tangent:

The Abyss also can refer to a barrier between lower and higher Sefiroth, around a 'secret sefira' called Daleth. Serious Kabbalist scholars such as Gershom Scholem tend to denigrate the vision of the Kabbalah developed within Western magical traditions, the source of that use of "the abyss." However, it might relate to Yourcenar's approach.

Sepia

On Tuesday, February 12, 2002, at 08:30 AM, Alice K. Turner wrote:
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-alga

Alice K. Turner — 15 Feb 2002, 03:16 · follows Jason Ingram

From Jason Ingram:

You're right on the money. I borrowed these books from the library (together with Frances Yates's -Theater of the World-) because of the year of researching Crowley I have done with Michael (mantis). But I had read "in" (as Pierce would say) Gershom Scholem's -The Kabbalah-; it is a favorite of Harold Bloom, who is to a degree my guru. Our anthology of essays on Crowley (not just by us but by many others--Bloom introduces it) will come out in April, and had we known you were a devote, we might have pressed you into service to write something. I was turned onto them by a very interesting Crowley essay (which is in our book) by James Hynes, which you can read at <http://bostonreview.mit.edu/BR25.6/hynes.html>.

-alga

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-alga

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Andy Robertson — 15 Feb 2002, 09:04 · follows Alice K. Turner

I am not much up on Kabbalistic themes, but listmembers might find some amusement in my attempts to fuse them with Lovecraft and Elementary Particle Physics, at "Domain Science letters"

<http://home.clara.net/andywrobertson/dslindex.html>

Was Crowley's first novel, "The Deep" a Kabbalistic reference?

hartshorn

----- Original Message -----

From: "Alice K. Turner" <aturner3 at nyc.rr.com>
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(which are more pertinent to John Crowley, but still relevant to
Wolfe), and fictional accounts should help to sustain interest.

Alice K. Turner — 16 Feb 2002, 05:09 · follows Andy Robertson

From: "Andy Robertson" <andywrobertson at clara.co.uk>
Was Crowley's first novel, "The Deep" a Kabbalistic reference?

I don't think so. I don't think he'd gotten interested at that early point--it was long before he knew Bloom. I actually asked him about that title but he was evasive--said something like "That was always the title for me," which threw me off, since I found the title puzzling.

-alga