

12/9/00 Saturday's Rock, Aesklepios, the Folly Master

The *sêma* (grave marker), unearthed in the ancient Attic *deme* of Myrrhinous, is unique among Grecian artifacts in that it portrays, not a human being, but a dog, presumably the theomorph of Artemis (Selene). This life-sized statue dating from about the middle of the fourth century, is exceptionally well preserved, and is both incised and painted in such a precise fashion that it is clearly intended to be the portrait of an actual animal, and not a mere archetypal generalization. She (the dog) possesses withered dugs and an exquisitely preserved muzzle, painted in a flecked manner to suggest grizzle. These characteristics, along with the sag of the skin around the eyes and one tattered, drooping ear suggest an older animal, possibly a beloved household companion. The *sêma's* inscription gives credence to this hypothesis.

'I, Dexikleia (famous sheep herder), have entered *Gaia* at this sacred spot to prepare a way for my household (*oikos*). I am called fame-strong (*kleisthenes*) and great fame (*megakles*) because of my devotion and sagacity in service. The reader of this inscription is blessed by the Goddess to bruit my renown.'

The dog is in a sitting posture, as if on guard, and is also unusual in that she has three front legs, two resting on the earth, and one (the duplicate left) raised as in supplication or greeting. Between her front paws lies a naked infant — a girl — no doubt a reference to the Athenian practice of exposing unwanted female progeny. That the babe too is being honored, also unusual, there is no doubt, since her head is adorned by a diadem (*stephane*) composed of a string of pearls surmounted by lotus flowers. She holds a similar blossom in her tiny, dimpled left hand. This ornamentation of the child recalls the *sêma* of *koure* erected two centuries earlier at the time of the tyrant Peisistratos and discovered in the same area. This suggests to some that the *sêma* is “an homage” to those monuments of the earlier period, and was intended to trade on their fame.

Richard Wunsch
Attican Funerary Statuary
trans. Blasius Jorg Erhardt
(description of a work in a private
German collection, presumed to have
been destroyed by the Allied
firebombing of Hamburg in July of
1943)

A Sojourn to Epidaurous, in which arrogance is exposed

I am an Athenian Citizen, Theopompus by name, a father and an esteemed member of one of the city's most ancient and venerable demes. By occupation I am a maskmaker and actor for a theater troupe. I mention this because the epiphanies, which led first to my disease and later to my cure, seem to be intricately involved in the aspects of my art. Every year at the Hekatombaion, the Panathenaia festival culminates in a competition of

plays, the execution of which may laud the performers with honors or tar them with ignominy. Preparations, adjustments and arguments concerning the details of performance all boil at a feverish pitch until the sacred time arrives. At the revelation, all of these contentions shoot skyward like a hot fountain from the bosom of Gaia, resolving themselves in the airy spectacle of the performance. It is a time of great anxiety and great exaltation. The polis, at this year's festival, granted our play the ivy wreath in the category of tragedy, and for a few days following, maskmakers, actors, designers, singers, poets, musicians and the whole company of thespians restored themselves through feasting and celebration, toasting Dionysus, and thanking him for his favors.

I believe my illness began at a symposium of this sort while I was foolishly regaling my fellows with an account of my recent triumph. I was perhaps too much under the influence of the Chthonian Reveler's vine spirits and was exuberantly reenacting my performance, strutting about on the highest buskins and gesturing magnificently. Desiring to complete the effect, I asked my slave, Diodotos, to fetch me the white-haired mask denoting the most elevated persona of the tragedy. But the rascal returned with the flat-nosed mask of the meanest messenger, and my companions, perhaps already amused by my profane exertions, burst into rude laughter. Immediately, I was inundated by an influx of choler. I cursed Diodotos for his crafty satire, and while lunging to strike him for his insolence, I tripped on my own buskins, falling and biting my tongue. The Erinyes promptly avenged my impetuosity. Remorse filled and cooled my distended veins. For although Diodotos was no more than a Sythian slave, he was a very able assistant and a member of my household, almost as valued as Dexikleia, my beloved dog.

The bit tongue developed an abscess, which no herb or incantation could relieve. Daily the lacuna whitened and the organ grew more imponderable. It garbled my speech, a symptom intolerable for an actor, and reduced me to an infantile condition, slobbering and inarticulate, unable to take any but mashed or liquid sustenance. I drank heavily, attempting to drown my despair with uncut wine.

Days passed without respite, and then one night, in the midst of a petulant fever, I awoke from a fitful sleep and a harrowing dream.

I dreamt I was in a waste landscape, a desert as dry as bones, alone, and lost in the grip of a parching heat. Here and there a few desiccated plants lay shriveled on the sand or collapsed against the furnaces of boulders. My tongue was swollen with thirst and lacerated by pain as if it were crawling with stinging ants. I knew that the specter of death was growing in my heart. And then I saw her — the speckled bitch, not black, not white, but ragged of coat, both wild and tame together, her nose to the ground as if she searched for water. Desperate, stumbling, I followed as best I could, until the dog reached an opening in the earth, where she descended with a sucking sound. The ants descended with her following the scent trail left by their companions back into the mound. A wind, like a vacuum, grabbed my encumbering elegant white chiton. I clawed at the scorching sands to remain above ground, but the vacuous maw, like the mouth of Tartarus, pulled me down. I woke up howling and drooling in my fear, consumed with

terror of the dark-faced Lord. That day, I resolved to make a pilgrimage to the Aesklepion at Epidauros.

The preparations and journey were arduous, but uneventful, the chief inconvenience being the cramped quarters on shipboard and the necessity of keeping intimate contact with diseased supplicants, which included, not only women, but disgusting sorcerers — the peddlers of human organs and exposed female fetuses. The deck of the old merchantman also reeked from the crush of sacrificial and provender animals, as well as many slaves. The Etesian winds were blowing hard, and the old sow of the merchantman struggled and heaved through the deep swells, while stinging breakers showered those on deck with the salty-spume of Poseidon. Our progress was nauseatingly slow. All the various perverse conditions of the voyage, and especially the cramping of an Athenian citizen with these hoards of disreputables, added to the discomfort of my affliction, and multiplied my anxieties.

I disembarked at Hermione, a small harbor tucked at the foot of a wooded steep below the sanctuary. There, the supplicants were met by a novice who guided us up the path of a deep ravine. This climb proved laborious for the sickly pilgrims, plus our difficulties were compounded by the necessity of having to carry, drag or drive the pigs, goats, dogs or fowl intended for the blessing of the vates' knife. Often we were forced to stop beside the cataract's stream to refresh ourselves with drink from the divine waters. Our guide advised us to keep a wary eye for snakes, which in that region were known, not only to infest the ground, but also to dangle from the overarching trees. He assured us that most of these serpents were not venomous, but the supplicants nevertheless stepped carefully and craned their heads to peer into the threatening wind-tossed canopy. Our climb was accompanied by much rustling in the foliage, which the novice explained as the movements of feral sheep, goats, dogs, and such like creatures, who, over the years, had escaped the altar's sacrificial stone, and now haunted the island's wilds. Thus, as we labored towards the sanctuary, we constantly felt the stare of inhuman eyes. At eventide, we arrived at the Katagogian, the sanctuary's hostel, and rested there in the shadow of Mount Kynortion. The novice explained to us that the Mountain's name partook of two meanings: "dog" and "ascent." I wanted to question him further about this, but the condition of my tongue and my slobbering, slurred speech shamed me to silence. I also had a professional curiosity concerning the magnificent theater, which I saw looming above the hostel and located only a few steps up the mountain, but I was too exhausted from my journey to satisfy this interest. In any case, our respite was brief, for we were soon visited by the hierophant, who, in a kindly but firm manner, informed us that we must proceed to the thelos before nightfall and offer our sacrifices to the God.

After partaking of a bitter libation, we entered the temple furtively, subdued by its sacred pall. The porch was faced so that the dying light illuminated the enthroned statue of the healer, who presided, solemn and bearded, on a floor of black Eleusinian stone. The aspect of the temple was grave, dark. Below our feet, we could hear the gurgling of a spring, which seemed ominous, rather than healing, like the last flow of blood from the sacrifice. As a maskmaker, I noticed that the locks and beard of the God were carved in the Dionysian fashion. The observation filled me with wonder, since I had always

believed that Aesklepios was a noted son of Apollo. The visage, too, might have been the effigy of Zeus himself, except that it was not so severe, but rather looked upward, with eyes unfocused, as if blurred by an inward gaze. The expression was one of an exquisitely poised stasis, and its arrested movement projected the impression of a powerful emotion, an emotion that one could almost call "suffering," if suffering were possible for a God. His face lacked the calm of the Olympians, and seemed instead to be assailed by mortal pangs, as if human anguish impaled him, inciting his compassion to assuage it. Another aspect of the monument also goaded my curiosity, and that was the presence of a small, hooded figure standing near the God, as if to offer council or convey to him the requests of supplicants. As I looked down at this mysterious little carving, I spied a strange object on the marble tile, as perfect as a seed, but molded from some kind of metal that I had never seen before. For some reason, I felt compelled to pick up this object and as I wrapped my hand around it, clenching in fear for the coming ordeal, it imparted to me a strange sort of comfort. It was as if this bizarre amulet were attached to a strand of wool that pulled me through my present illness and wound me round the distaff of the future. While I pondered all of these things, the bitter aftertaste of the libation had made me even more acutely aware of my lacerated tongue. I was beginning to feel a vivid strangeness creeping over all of my senses, so that I marveled greatly that the sanctuary had been able to inoculate me with its powerful influence in such a narrow span of time.

We did not remain long before the God, but surrendered our sacrificial offerings to the vates, and were led solemnly, but expeditiously to the thelos. This sacred feature is a kind of rotunda circled by a labyrinth. On our way, the hierophant recited some of the words carved into the stone tablets expounding the glories of the God's cures. The exterior of the rotunda is painted in bright colors, but inside, the base of the circular walls was black marble, although these surfaces too were adorned with enigmatic painted images. As we circled the labyrinth, I noticed the form of a weeping Eros, whose forsaken bow and lyre lay broken at his feet. Another painting depicted a manish-looking and drunken woman swilling an inebriant from a transparent glass vessel. There were other pictures too, but I scarcely perceived them, except to note that their sequence, as we moved into the labyrinth proper, heightened my sense of mystery and awe. Then the labyrinth demanded my full attention. It was cunningly constructed of concentric circles, which were connected by openings that forced the supplicant to traverse each loop completely as he traveled towards the center. Nearer the center, it became darker, as the already dimming light drained from the blackened stones. I felt that I was not only going *in*, but also *down*. I saw a carving of a staff wound round by a snake, and remembered the warnings in the ravine. I also saw a pedestal sculpted like a tree stump, where a mouse sat perched above the strewn bodies of plague victims. I was terrified that the God would appear in one of his animal forms, as a snake, or a rat, or a wolf, and as I drew closer to the center, I thought I could hear quiet weeping, and then a sound which seemed like some ghoulish combination of hissing and growling and gnawing. My heart pounded furiously and my tongue burned with such an excruciating fever that I fainted from exhaustion and sheer terror.

For a long time I sailed underground on a black river, winding through narrow, fetid tunnels. I lay in the bottom of a long boat, carved like a wooden sarcophagus, just wide enough to hold my rigid body. Mosses and serpents dangled overhead from an archway of lush foliage. I was stiff with the rigor of death. My mouth had been sewn shut, and my face had been painted in a barbaric manner, as if I wore the mask of a dog or a wolf. I could feel the layers of the paint insinuating themselves into my flesh. My teeth were growing. My nose was lengthening into a muzzle, and my fingers became clubbed and clawed like paws. Then suddenly I was in a bright room, doing the "dog dance" on the raised altar of the Athenian theater's thyrmele. On the steps, instead of the citizens of the polis, was Diodotos with all the slaves of Athens. They were laughing at my rude antics, and ridiculing me as I sniffed and licked myself. Their faces grew larger and larger as they laughed, their eyes protruding, and their tongues writhing round in their mouths as if transmuted into maddened serpents. Diodotos rushed to the altar, and as the slaves howled their approval, he made me lick his hind parts like a dog.

I must have been carried back to the Katagogian, for when I awakened, it was dawn. A novice had come to attend me. I started to tell him about the dream I had incubated, worried that it was an ill omen, so hideous and humiliating were its images, but as I blurted out my many sorrows, I noticed that I could speak, and that the swelling in my tongue was mercifully residing.

12/30/00 Saturday's Rock, Aesklepios, the Folly Master
Time Closed: 10:29 p.m., C.S.T.

With these important publications, the major pieces of the Greek magical papyri known to this period had become available. It seems to have been a suggestion first made by the great scholar of Greek religion, Albercht Dieterich (1866-1908), that all available papyri should be published in a handy study edition. But this idea developed only gradually after Dieterich began teaching a seminar on the subject of the magical papyri at the University of Heidelberg in 1905.

Today it is astonishing to learn that teaching such a seminar at that time was quite a daring enterprise. Magic was so utterly despised by historians and philologists that the announcement of the seminar did not mention the word "magic" but was simply phrased as "Selected Pieces from the Greek Papyri."

How far the dislike of the magical papyri could go is illustrated by a remark made by Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff: "I once heard a well-known scholar complain that these papyri were found because they deprived antiquity of the noble splendor of classicism."

Dieterich, however was at the edge of a wave of interest generated by the new discipline of the history of religions. His seminar therefore had a surprising attraction for students, some of whom wrote their dissertations on related subjects and became contributors to the study edition. The plan for such a study edition was seriously threatened by Dieterich's sudden death on 6 May 1908, but the

work was taken over by Dieterich's students, foremost of whom was Richard Wunsch, child editor. Adam Abt, Ludwig Fahz, Adolf Erman, Georg Moller, and other contributors stepped in to carry on the work.

When the body of the Material of PGM I — IV (a.k.a. Papyri Graecae Magicae) was almost ready, World War I broke out and interrupted the work. Wunsch, Abt, and Moller were killed in the war. Despite the terrible losses and the desperate economic situation following the war, the publisher, B.G. Teubner of Leipzig, did not give up the project, but decided to start over.

*Introduction to the Greek Magical
Papyri*
Hans Dieter Betz, editor

Drei Englischebücher, spines splayed, faces down and backs up, one astraddle another, and each bristling with flurries of ragged linen-bandage markers, lay stacked atop *Herr Doktor* Blasius Erhardt's otherwise obscenely orderly *Scheibetisch*. The arrangement reminded him uneasily of the way he had stacked other things in his work with the *Einsatzgruppen* in the early days of Operation Barbarossa, an analogy which disturbed him. The books were, from bottom to top, deposited like geological or archeological strata, in the order of their publication: Shakespeare's *The Revenge of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, the unwieldy and nearly unreadable *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, by Democritus Junior, a.k.a., Robert Burton and Herman Melville's *Moby Dick or the Whale*. Together, these three formed a little totem of intellectual incongruity. Both on the desk and in Herr Doktor's mind, the brangling precepts of their supposed balms lent *kein* comfort to their obsessive reader. On the contrary, they multiplied his woes. For *Herr Doktor* Blasius Erhardt's ghastly internal experience these days, as the perpetrator of the *Überlag Projekt*, was that of running a gauntlet, both sides of which were manned (metaphorically speaking) by an army of Dominatrix clones, all looking very much like his *Frau und Lebenliebchen*, the intimidating, intoxicating Brünhilde. One line of flog-wielders exhorted him mercilessly to "be a man", exert control, master his will *and* the situation, while the other just as fiercely reminded him of his utter state of depravity, his unpitiable helplessness and his general putridity. Ancient as he was, *Herr Doktor* still had to run this gauntlet, whipped furiously from side to side, so that his miserable condition was reduced to that of being at the center of a wildly virulent oscillation pattern, violently caroming from beating to beating, as a way of ultimately keeping to the straight and narrow. Blasius, a.k.a. *Der Hauptsturmführer*, a.k.a., "*der bösen kleiner Hosenschießer*", was not free a man. On the contrary, as the years advanced without harvesting him, he was daily, hourly rotting down to that most despised of all conditions, that of a *Häftling*. From this imprisonment, two sided and vicious, each day his pen tremblingly made passage across the pages of his *Notizbuch* and spewed out this most odiferous filth. Some malevolent, other-dimensional entity had commanded him to entitle his *Werk* "The Aeskeplios Papers", a manuscript, which the former S.S. officer was both deeply proud and ashamed of. The game, of course, had to be played out to the end, whatever that end might be — the game, that is, of hide and seek, tormentor and tormentee, *Opfer und Täter*, with his vigilant, cruel *Frau* acting the part of Fate, or at

least Fate's bludgeoning executive officer: History. Proofing the pages again, Blasius was both satisfied and terrified that these were the words that he most wanted his wife to read, and that he would most perniciously endeavor to keep her from ever reading. His pet mice, the three Norns — males with female names in *Herr Doktors* odd world — Urð, Verðandi und Skuld, oversaw the *Werk* from their perches on the pencil sharpener, the crystal skull paper weight, and the heavy-duty stapler. *Natürlich*, given free reign of the surface of his *Schreibtisch*, the Norns listened, pleased, when *Herr Doktor* addressed them, somewhat like the protagonist of a Greek drama, might, through his tragic mask, address the chorus. “*Ja*, dis is quite brilliant vhat hast *auf heutenacht kommen, und auch vielleicht* quite mad.” Herr Doktor sniffed the paper, and the chorus, twitching their tiny pink noses, squeaked, “*Schieß*.” “*Ja*,” answered the protagonist, “*Frau Erhardt* will be incensed.” The Norns, sitting upright on their white haunches, groomed themselves happily in obvious, assiduous agreement.

Not all of history is consigned to paper or stone. In the depths of the senses, there are theaters entirely composed of odors — the imprints of molecules drifting around us and through us. These molecules are immortal. They derive from hemp ropes, from oakum comprised of pine sap, from spoiling fish, from damp goat hair, from swine feces, from rat tracks, from vomit, from barley cakes, from saliva, from the musky unguents squeezed from the scent glands of wildcats, from garlic, from tears, from verdigris, from uterine slough, from decaying teeth, from linen, from salt, from dog dander and dog breath, from the floral bouquet of wine in amphorae, from wet wood, from blood, from leather, from sweat, from a young mother's lacteal excretions. These dramatists of odorant pluck cilia and cause oscillations of electrical impulse (read: “gods”) to fire signals through synapses, so that the dark galleries in the *pyriform cortex* begin to ripple with what we aspirants euphemistically refer to as “light.” The necropolis, in the midst of which the brain erupts to life, always molders with these ancient depositories. In these phials of unwritten history, there are myriad nuances, but for the sake of exposition (read: “generalization”) we sort them into fourteen categories, *viz.*, seven primary and seven complex. The seven primary are camphoraceous, pungent, floral, ethereal, mint, musk and putrid. The seven complex are almond, aromatic, aniseed, citric, cedar, garlic and rancid. Imagine a symphony of resonant reeds protruding from trembling water, each reed awaiting the alighting of butterflies, dragonflies, horseflies, houseflies — similarly shaped aerialists provoking similar smells. Will it be fragrant or putrid? Ethereal or resinous? Spicy or burned? The sea voyage, the sanctuary of Epidauros, the houses and the narrow streets of Athens, the night fields of the dead, each *skene* evolves according to the wind, the airborne molecules, and the health and sensitivity of the mucal arena. How different is a man from a woman, a dog from a human, a mammal from an ant! And how multidimensional the dramatic action, each actor both audience and author. And, finally, how arbitrary and falsifying the schema of Aristotle's puny unities. We touch the living centuries with our noses. Certain pheromones contain precise recollections of seemingly ancient histories, the spread of their influence bleeding far into the unfolding future, creating, not a line, but a vapor-cloud, with strata shaped by temperatures, humidity, shifting

winds. Thus, the adepts say that the bulb of olfaction is the book of time, of evolution and of dreams. From this book, the scripts for the theater are composed: multivalent, cross-specied, subtle, gross and all-enveloping.

A few adepts travel (read: “ascend,” or “float”) even as high as El-Pof (read: “lateral postero-orbital frontal cortex, a.k.a. L-POF”). Here, they stir the cauldron of odors into a funnel, lines of force known to humans as narration, but often laughingly referred to by the adepts as confabulation. This ability of the adepts to change cloud to line is called “transduction,” although it must also be noted that the process flows two ways. In “reverse-transduction” the line of the narration begins to stretch, tangle, knot, snap or dissolve. Metaphors abound and the story line turns to mist, the reader (read: “you”) becoming — if you’ll pardon the pun — “mystified.” This is an old routine, the vaudeville of the cosmos in which the same gags are used time and again with the same results. Call it reflex. Call it conditioning. But the adepts are able to create certain artistic effects with this mystification, and can unfold the most moving panoramas from even the grossest simplifications (read: “Aristotle’s unities”). It is their skill in snapping alternately from line to cloud, from cloud to line, which allows the adepts to keep the wayward human consciousness supple — cynics say “helpless,” saints say “unevolved.” However unfortunate the results of this madness, without it, in their disconnected state, the human would otherwise stiffen to rigor mortis, to stone, a common characteristic of human cultures infected as they are with family and cultural values, religion, nationalism and politics. No, the adepts, for all of the seeming bizarreness of their methodologies, justify their manipulations on the grounds that it is better for humans to be entranced by deception than to remain inert. How else can you explain why you (read: “the wayward”) fly down dark tunnels chasing a fading light?

But simplifications are in order (read: “distortions”).

Imagine a dark landscape in which a small flame suddenly flares. After a time, another light is born, then another, and still others, all seemingly coming to life in a random manner. But like accumulating fractals, the lights begin to form a pattern surrounding an ever-brightening void. The lights, at last, create an understanding. You long for narrative. You want to walk with one light — the single conjunction “and,” down the serpentine darkness of a single tunnel, a beginning, a middle and an end, the sophomoric dramatic unities (un)scrupulously observed.

- ° The time — fourth century B.C.E.
- ° The place — Athens, Epidaurus, Attica, the Saronic gulf
- ° The *dramatis personae* — Theopompus, the Maskmaker/Thespian; Diodotos, the male slave; Eileithyia, the wife; Litae, the female slave; Dexikleia, the dog; sundry gods, animals, citizens, *metoikoi*, *xenoi*, sorceresses, hierophants, novices, vates, soldiers, sailors, heavenly bodies, winds, stones, seas
- ° The action — ????????

Scene one: Satirized, Theopompus attempts to strike his slave, Diodotos. Failing, he falls, sustains a tongue injury, despairs, travels to Epidauros, incubates a dream and appears to be healed.

Scene two: Following scent trails, ants invade the *oikos* of Theopompus, prompting the master of the house to berate and assault his wife, Eileithyia. The male slave, Diodotos, intervenes, and is in turn assaulted. In response, Diodotos soliloquizes, casts dispersions against his master, rages against the laws which have enslaved him and spurns Dexikleia's, the dog's, and Litae's, the female slave's, attempts to comfort him. *Erinyes* approach threateningly. Diodotos dreams of Eileithyia.

The possible scenes that might follow — the receding lights beckoning ahead in the dark tunnel — are potentially vast, although not infinite, in number. For the purposes of illustration, we postulate a few — a) Diodotos and Eileithyia plot revenge against Theopompus. b) Theopompus meets his homosexual lover, wherein he, passive, suffers a beating, ironically replicating the fate he has imposed upon his wife and slave. c) Theopompus escalates the violence in his household, murders his slave. Flees the vengeance inflicted upon him by the *erinyes*, entangles his fate with sorrow. d) Various gods or goddesses intervene to exacerbate or resolve the situation.

Following these expectations with the eyes alone, one ignores the scent-cloud of possibilities, pursues the action down narrowing galleries, and is, at last, deceived. Any plot line might generate any number of bifurcations. Diodotos might be sold to work in the silver mines, or might be fated to row below decks in a *merchantman*. Eileithyia might bare her spouse a son, whose real father would be Diodotos, an Athenian citizen thus issuing from a slave. Theopompus's lacerated tongue might be a venereal affliction, with which he would infect his wife and lover. Madness could swallow all the sexual partners. Diodotos might murder Theopompus, escape or be brought to justice. Litae might be raped by her master and bare a child. Any reasonably imaginative (note the eye-term) propagator might create any number of requisite plot twists and turns, always following the one light, always moving from darkness into the light, always seeking a single flow of time, always in search of the end. But the nose says otherwise. It follows an intuition. It eschews this mad desire of the eyes to throttle awareness and mesmerize it. The El-Pof (read: "shapers of life") are not deceived by the tunnels' twists and turns, however novel or engrossing. They annihilate the tyranny of the "and," that false white light in the chromatic sprawl of the mind. What does it matter if the parallel lights are stalked, if the tunnels connect in a final dénouement, if the bifurcations resolve fulfillingly, it would all, in the end, be false, all relegated to the enslavement of a causal conjunction.

It is therefore the intention of the adepts to expand, and perhaps even obliterate the theater of the eyes, and project from a unified line (read: "generalizations,

distortions and deletions”) the cloud of eternal mystification. The true stalkers (read: “aspirants”) wander, like fools in love, at night, in the necropolis, placing their magical scripts under moldering *samoi*. It is dark here, sometimes the light of the moon casts a silvery ghost. They write their curses on squares of lead, and place them near fissures, depressions, clefts. The earth is one’s guide, however, not the heavens — the earth and its odors. Words waft from the nether kingdom of the dead.

. . . Aesklepios is like a magnet, which always turns its negative pole to the positive pole of the viewer.

These sorrows and these aspirations are available to humans, but do not come from a human world.

. . . eventually you will have to weigh every conceivable alternative . . .

Do you (read: “we”) not notice the sprouting of new fires? The adepts perpetuate the numinosum, and as that *Homo sapiens ferus*, Carl Jung, once said, in a flash of intuitional insight (read: “in-smell), “the numinosum as a dynamic energy is not caused by an act of will. On the contrary, it seizes and controls one and is experienced as a quality belonging to a specific object, or as an influence of an invisible presence.”

Close your eyes, smell the thing in your hand, it is the book of who you are, the healing presence of infinite, vaporous time.

Brünhilde Erhardt wrinkled her wizened pink nose as she held her husband’s manuscript to her face. “Pah! He haas rubbed someting on it, dhe *Jüdische* scum, life unfit for life. Vell, my noxious little *Schatz*, ve vill haf a little game of mummy and embalmer, and vee shall see who is dhe scheiß maker and the who is dhe scheiß eater!”