

THE SPHINX, THE PYRAMIDS, AND THEIR SIGNIFICATION

by

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Translated from the French by

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occulte, 5th ed., pp. 168-175.

The Sphinx

Religions succeed each other on the Earth, generations pass and the latest come to believe that they, in their arrogance, can defy the knowledge of antiquity. Above every sect, above every quarrel, above every error stands the immobile Sphinx which responds with a troubling: Who am I? to the ignorants who blaspheme knowledge.

Temples can be destroyed, books can disappear without the high knowledge acquired by the ancients being forgotten. The Sphinx remains and it suffices.

Symbol of Unity, it sums up in itself forms most strange, the one to the other.

Symbol of Truth, it shows the reason for all errors in its very contrasts.

Symbol of the Absolute, it manifests the mysterious Quaternary.

My religion alone is true, cries the fanatical Christian.

Yours is the work of an imposter, mine alone comes from God, responds the Jew.

All of your holy books are copies of our Revelation, exclaims the Hindu.

All religions are falsehoods, nothing exists outside of Matter, the principles of every cult come from the contemplation of the stars, Science alone is true, asserts the modern scholar.

And the Sphinx stands above every dispute, immobile, summary of the Unity of all the cults, from all the Sciences.

It shows to the Christian the Angel, the Eagle, the Lion and the Bull which accompany the evangelists; the Jew recognizes here the dream of the Jew Ezekiel; the Hindus, the secrets of Adda Nari, and the scholar becomes scornful when he discovers beneath all these symbols the laws of the four elementary forces: Magnetism, Electricity, Heat, and Light.

Indecisive on his march in life, the future initiate interrogates the Sphinx and the Sphinx speaks:

"Look at me, said he, I have a human head in which sits Knowledge, as it indicates to you the adornments of the initiate who decorated it.

Knowledge conducts my progress in life, but, alone, it is a weak comfort. I have claws of a lion on my four limbs; I am armed for action, I seat myself on the right and on the left, in front and behind, nothing resists the Daring conducted by Knowledge.

But these paws are so solid because they are grafted on my Bull's flanks. When once I have embarked upon an action, I pursue my goal laboriously, with the patience of the ox who traces the furrow.

In moments of failure, when discouragement is close to overwhelming me, when my head no longer feels strong enough to direct my being, I stir my Eagle's wings. I elevate myself into the realm of intuition, I read in the Heart of the World the secrets of the Universal Life, then I return to continue my work in silence."

My head recommends to you to Know.
 My claws " " to Dare.
 My flanks " " to Will.
 My wings " " to Keep Silent.

Follow my counsels and life will appear just and beautiful.

"The brow of man of the Sphinx speaks of intelligence
 Its breasts of love, its claws of combat
 Its wings are Faith, Dream, and Hope
 And its Bull's flanks the work here below.

If you know to work, to believe, to love, to defend yourself,
 If by base needs you are not chained,
 If your heart knows to will and spirit to comprehend,
 King of Thebes, salut, behold you are crowned!"

Head
 Wings
 Flanks
 Paws Paws

In this symbol of the Sphinx, two great oppositions are shown:

In front: the Head (Knowledge) opposed to the Paws (Daring).

Behind: The Flanks (Work) likewise opposed to the Paws (Daring).

Between the two: Exists Intuition (Wings) which regulate them.

Daring in its action (Forelegs) will act in an efficient manner of Knowledge always dominates it enough to guide (Head) it.

Daring in studies (Hindlegs) will be crowned with success if it allows itself to be led by Work and Perseverance.

Finally, excess in Action or in Study (Bull's Flanks) ought to be tempered by the use of the imagination (Eagle's wings).

Another opposition appears, that of the Summit and the Base harmonized by the Middle.

Summit - Head Wings
 Middle - Bull's flanks
 Base - Forelegs Hindlegs

Above sits Knowledge and Imagination, below practice, practice in Knowledge (Forelegs), practice in imagination (Hindlegs).

Theory ought always to rule and conduct the practice, the one who wishes to discover the Truths of Nature only through material existence, is like a man who wished to do without his head in order to put his limbs in action.

No Theory without Practice.

No Practice without Theory.

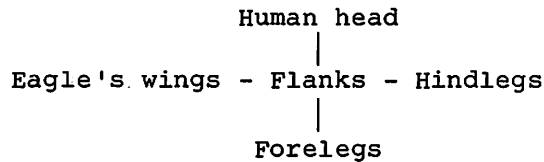
<u>No Theory</u>		<u>Without Work</u>
<u>No Practice</u>		

Here again is what the Sphinx tells us.

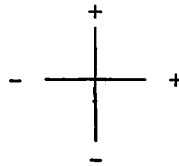
Let us summarize all this in a figure according to the indications that we have just discovered.

In front		Human head	= Active +
+		Forelegs	= Passive -
Behind		Eagle's wings	= Active +
-		Hindlegs	= Passive -
Middle		Between the two uniting them	= Neutral ∞
∞		we see the Bull's flanks	

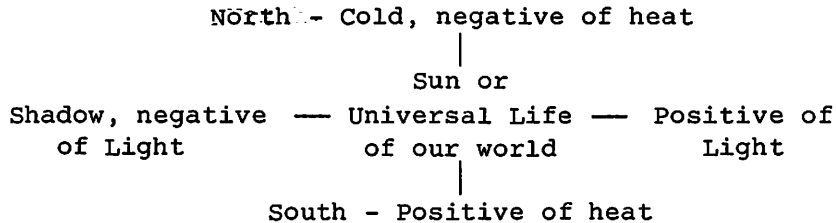
We will indicate the front of the Sphinx active by a vertical bar. The rear passive by a horizontal bar, and we obtain the following figure:



Or in short:



This last figure indicates to us the laws of the elementary forces emanated from the universal Force:



The Pyramids

The Sphinx is not the only symbolic monument that Egypt has bequeathed to us.

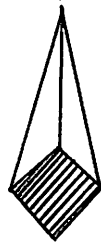
Traces of the ancient centers of initiations still exist in the Pyramids.

"Opposite Cairo, the Giza plateau, which stands out as a spar from the lybic chain, three monuments still endure on the left bank of the Nile which have defied the action of Time and men: these are the Pyramids.

These three masses, with square bases, slightly unequal in granduer, form by their respective positions a triangle whose face looks North, another the

West and the third the East. The greatest, situated at the angle of the North and towards the Delta, symbolizes the force of Nature; the second, erected to the South-West, at an arrow's distance from the door of the first, is the symbol of Movement; and the last, built to the South-East of the latter at a stone's throw distance from the second, symbolizes Time. To the South of this last, at a mediocre distance, on a line which extends from the East to the West, stand three other pyramids forming less considerable masses and near which is heaped up innumerable colossal stones that one could consider as ruins of a seventh pyramid. It is indeed permitted to suppose that the Egyptians had wanted to represent by seven points or conoid flammiformes, the seven planetary worlds whose spirits rule our universe and of which Hermes was the Revealer." (Christian, Hist. de la Magie, pp. 99 and 100.)

Each pyramid is constructed on a square base, symbolizing by this: matter, form, sign, and adaptation.



The elevation of each of the sides is Ternary and symbolizes the idea, the theory.

What does this supremacy of the Ternary over the Quaternary mean?

The Ternary rules the Quaternary, that is to say:

Idea - Sign
Spirit - Matter
Theory - Practice

The whole of the Pyramid is formed of 4 and 3, that is to say of 7, symbol of marriage between the Idea and the Sign, between the Spirit and Matter, between Theory and Practice, this is the Realization.

At the top of the Pyramid we find a mathematical point (its summit) from where starts four ideas (four triangles). These four ideas come to be based upon a unique form (the base) and by this shows their solidarity.

We find in the study of these pyramids, the mysterious Tetragram.

Footnotes

1) Eliphas Levi, Fables et Symboles.