

Book Reviews

The Compass of Light, Vol. III: The Sense of Direction in The Great Invocation, by Starling David Hunter, III. 144 pages.

Download from <http://tinyurl.com/thegreatinvocation/>.

More than half a century has passed since the Great Invocation was given to the world as the prayer and mantra for the new world religion—a religion of self–forgetfulness, harmlessness, and service. The three Divine aspects that this prayer’s words refer to—Light, Love, and Power—are nowadays invoked solemnly all over the world by millions of human beings from all paths of life who use it as their daily source of inspiration, force, and horizon.

Undoubtedly, the Great Invocation is for many a compass giving a sense of direction to our human and spiritual lives. Such is precisely the central, significant discovery that the author makes in *The Compass of Light, Volume III*. This is the latest sequel in a series of books released yearly since 2006. The reader may remember that volume I, which was reviewed in *The Esoteric Quarterly* in Winter 2007, analyzed 24 figures of speech (addition, omission, and change). Volume II studied the etymology of each word used in the Invocation and demonstrated that many of them were either related by, or shared, the same roots. These first two volumes nicely demonstrated that the Great Invocation expresses—and veils—a potentially infinite number of meanings and powers. With his first research work, the author concludes that this multiplicity of meanings is achieved with such sophistication, and in such a condensed yet perfect fashion, that we may have only begun to unfold the tremendous implications of reciting this Invocation. In this new volume, Hunter goes further into the Tibetan’s exhortation to meditate on the significance of the Great Invocation’s “amazing” words, and suggests three conclusions. First, the main underlying, abstract idea is indeed embodied in the wording of the Invocation and can be accessed with study and medita-

tion. Second, the formula of the Invocation embodies the sense of *direction*. Third, its symbol is a compass composed of light.

When interviewed, Hunter clarified that this is an ongoing project that will comprise, in total, five volumes. The fourth volume will address the matter of polysemy and sentence structure, while the fifth volume will examine the strictly grammatical properties of the Invocation. Further, Hunter has already written more than twenty essays on the Great Invocation, which are accessible through the webpage.

Clearly, the implications of Hunter’s fine study are multiple. Chief among them is polysemy itself, or the capacity of words to have multiple meanings. In social sciences and the humanities, this has been a central, indeed revolutionary, concept behind every single contemporary research paradigm. It implies the idea that human beings have agency, or the power to read and remake the meaning of every event or circumstance affecting us. The Great Invocation may, therefore, be read as an invitation to meditate upon, evoke, re-create, and distribute all of its related and meaningful forms for the purpose of serving the world.

We are told that the Great Invocation is recited by aspirants, disciples, Initiates, Masters, and even the Christ, and that it means different things to each group. In fact, a second conclusion of the book is that this Invocation is indeed a divine masterpiece, of such perfection and complexity that no human mind could indeed completely unfold it in one lifetime. A third conclusion, related to the previous one, is that the wording of the Invocation should not be changed. The reader is, in this regard, invited to read the fine perspectives Hunter has to offer regarding the thorny subject of translations and rewording of the Great Invocation. A final, yet crucial, conclusion is that this Invocation strongly reorients the human Soul. This is a true compass of Light Divine showing us the right

direction. A fine, thorough, and scientific study no student of the Ageless Wisdom should miss.

Miguel Malagrecia

***The Magus of Freemasonry*, by Tobias Churton.** Inner Traditions, 2006. Paperback, 303 pages. US\$16.95.

By the end of the 17th century, the Royal Society of London was already a bastion of reductionist science, insisting on rigorous application of the scientific method and the highest standards of empirical support for scientific theory. For the past 300 years the Society's fellows, individually and sometimes collectively, have thundered against "superstition" and "pseudoscience"—notably esotericism. However, such restrictive attitudes were rare when the Royal Society was first established, in 1660. Indeed, the founding fellows included men who represented the epitome of Renaissance "natural philosophy," comfortably combining mathematics or the hard sciences with magic, alchemy, and astrology.

One of those founding fellows was Elias Ashmole, whose biography is the subject of this review. In *The Magus of Freemasonry*, Churton gives us a delightful portrait of a man whose mindset spanned the ages. Professionally, Ashmole was a lawyer and antiquarian. He amassed a huge collection of historical artifacts, now housed at the museum named for him in Oxford—the first public museum in the world. But his greater passion was esoteric studies. The numerous letters he wrote to associates and his detailed diary entries provide invaluable insights into the life of a man of affairs in the 17th century.

Churton traces Ashmole's growth from an unhappy childhood through his studies at Oxford University to his legal practice in the Middle Temple in London. A staunch royalist, Ashmole fought in the English Civil War on the side of the ill-fated King Charles I. Between skirmishes he read works in mathematics and physics, and these interests led to a lifelong fascination with astrology and alchemy. In 1646 he became a Freemason, at a time when operative, craft Ma-

sonry was slowly giving way to modern speculative Masonry. A diary entry and his "acceptance" certificate, issued by a lodge in Warrington, Lancashire, provide one of the earliest records of speculative Masonic activity in England. He sought to join the Fraternity of the Rose Cross but, like other seekers, was unable to locate them. In 1669, Ashmole received a Doctorate in Medicine from Oxford.

Elias Ashmole's difficult childhood and the political turmoil of his young adult life left a permanent mark, at least indirectly helping to mold his esoteric interests. Moreover, his interest in alchemy—shared by many other prominent people in the 16th and 17th centuries—is well placed by the author in the context of the religious and philosophical movements of the times.

Ashmole knew that success in the alchemical quest—however that was to be defined—demanded moral purity, and he was conscious of his own lapses. He also believed that discovering the Philosopher's Stone was an initiatory secret, passed on from generation to generation in an unbroken lineage. In 1651 he entered into a master-disciple relationship with one William Backhouse, whom he subsequently referred to as "Father." The following year he published his most famous work, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, an extensive compilation of English alchemical texts. Whether Ashmole achieved the "Great Work" is not known; his commitment to secrecy would have precluded any acknowledgement of success—or failure. What we do know is that, from poor origins, he became a wealthy man and generous benefactor to Oxford University and his hometown of Lichfield.

The Magus of Freemasonry, written in a fast-moving journalistic style, is a rare page-turner among biographies. Churton has brought to well-deserved prominence a gentlemen-scholar who made a considerable contribution to 17th-century esotericism. The book is strongly recommended to anyone interested in the history of the western esoteric tradition.

John F. Nash
Johnson City, Tennessee

Cumulative Index for Volumes 1–4

Articles and Papers

		Vol.	No.	Page
Assagioli, Roberto	Balancing and Synthesis of the Opposites	1	1	7
Bakula, Joann S.	Meditating on the Mysteries: Part I “The Ancient Mysteries”	4	1	11
	Meditating on the Mysteries: Part II “The Mysteries, Modern Psychology, and Initiation:	4	1	16
Barrett, Richard	Origins of the Seven-Levels-of- Consciousness Model	2	1	55
Brown, Donna	The Evolutive Function of Love	3	3	9
	Humanity’s Preordained Work: Responsibil- ity to the Subhuman Kingdoms	2	2	31
	The Qabalah and the Aquarian Avatar	1	3	25
	Synthetic Trends	1	2	9
	Will in the Grand Design	4	2	13
Brown, Donna & John Nash	Devas, Nature and Humanity	2	4	51
Chaumette, Yves	Becoming Receptive to Purpose	1	3	47
Deadman, Alison	Letter, Musical Pitch, and Color in the Work of Paul Foster Case	2	2	9
DeMotte, Charles M.	An Historical Perspective on Law and Its Spiritual Impact on Human Consciousness	1	1	35
Detrich, Jan	The Emergence of Pluto in Capricorn: 2008- 2014	4	2	21
	When Heaven and Earth Meet: Saturn- Uranus Opposition 2008 to 2010	4	4	11
Domalske, Barbara	Soul Relationships	1	2	15
Fields, Melessei	Toward Synthesis	1	1	45
Gold, Jeffrey	A Mystical Interpretation of the Binding of Isaac	1	4	25
Hinds, John	The Sacred Rule of Life: The Idea of Hier- archy	1	3	7
Lansdowne, Zachary	The Beasts of Revelation: Glamour and Maya	2	3	35
	The Egyptian Myth of Isis and Osiris	4	2	29
	Hymn of the Bride	4	3	37

		Vol.	No.	Page
Landsdowne (cont.)	Hymn of the Pearl	4	3	21
	The Way of Salvation in the Gnostic Gospel of Truth	4	1	31
Lemaire, Angela	In the Tracks of Hercules	1	3	48
Lindsay, Phillip	Shamballa Comes Full Circle: Part I Brazil and the Sixth Rootrace	4	3	19
	The Subraces of the Fifth Rootrace	3	2	13
	Zodiac and Ray Cycles in Esoteric Astrology: The Beginning of the Age of Aquarius	2	4	15
Lyon, Bruce	The Black Hole God	1	1	27
	The Esoteric Integral	3	3	25
	The Integral Esoteric	3	1	27
	Peace, Jerusalem and Humanity	2	1	9
	Shamballa 2007	3	4	17
	The Third Approach	1	4	9
Malagreca, Miguel	Service: An Essential Factor in Spiritual Growth	4	3	65
Maret, Karl & Lesley Carmack	The Heart Matrix and Esoteric Astrology: An Intuitive Analysis	3	4	9
Meader, William	The Evolution of Consciousness: Two Merge as One	3	2	9
	Intelligent Design: An Esoteric Perspective	2	3	53
	Practical Mysticism: The Way of the Future	3	4	23
	The Sonata of the Master Musician	1	2	19
Mitchell-Moniak, Donna	Going Up to Bethlehem	3	1	9
	The Secret of Translation	2	1	29
	A World of Thought	3	3	15
Mulcahy, Patrick	Kabbalistic Astrology: The YHVH Zodiacal Mandala	2	2	19
Mullin, Patrick	New Thought and Esoteric Healing: Towards a Healthier Tomorrow	4	4	51
Nash, John	Abraham Abulafia and the Ecstatic Kabbalah	4	3	51
	Christianity's Role in a New World Religion	2	2	37
	Discipleship and Disillusionment	2	3	43
	Duality, Good and Evil, and the Approach to Harmony	1	1	15

		Vol.	No.	Page
Nash (cont.)	Esoteric Healing in the Orthodox, Roman and Anglican Churches	3	2	37
	Esoteric Perspectives on the Eucharist	4	2	43
	Hermeticism: The Rise and Fall of an Esoteric System (Part I)	4	4	37
	Origins of the Christian Kabbalah	4	1	43
	The Power and Timelessness of Ritual	3	4	35
	Service Ideals in the Rosicrucian Movement	1	2	33
	The Seven Rays: A Case Study in the Dissemination of Esoteric Knowledge	3	1	33
	The Shekinah: The Indwelling Glory of God	1	4	33
	The Trinity and Its Symbolism	1	3	33
	The World Mother: Teachings of Helena Roerich and Geoffrey Hodson	2	1	35
	(see also Donna Brown & John Nash)			
Newburn, Kathy	The Gentle Voice	2	2	53
	Toward a New Manner of Relationship	3	1	11
Parrish-Harra, Carol	A Way for the Courageous: Agni Yoga	3	2	27
Reigle, David	On the Future Schools of Meditation	2	1	17
	Invoking the Solar Angel: Vajrasattva Meditation in the Ageless Wisdom Tradition	2	3	23
Richmond, Temple	Fixed Stars in Esoteric Astrology	1	2	23
	Affirming Planetary Purpose	1	3	13
	The Role of Alan Leo and Sepharial in the Development of Esoteric Astrology:			
	Part I	1	4	13
	Part II	2	1	47
	Discipleship and Initiation: The Three Stages and Seven Steps to Hierarchy and Beyond:			
	Part I	2	3	9
	Part II	2	4	27
Riddle, Dorothy I.	How Disciples Can Prepare for Transition	4	4	29
	Learning to Work with and Respond to Shamballa Will Energy	4	3	13
	The Will in its Various Forms	3	2	33

		Vol.	No.	Page
Riddle (cont.)	Wise Use of Destructive Energy	4	1	25
Rogers, Kim	The Rise of the “New Religions” in the Western World	3	2	19
Romero de Johnston, Luisa	The Virgo Full Moon	2	4	45
	Freedom and Free Will	3	3	21
Seifer, Nancy	Disciples and the Year 2025	2	4	9
Schaum, Cornelia	The Cross of Life, or the Transformation of the Vertical and the Horizontal (see also Cornelia Völksen)	3	4	27
Stancil, Gerald	A New Science for a New Age	3	3	33
Vieweg, Martin	The Way of the Elder Brother	3	1	19
Völksen, Cornelia	The Usefulness of Our Time (see also Cornelia Schaum)	2	2	53
Watts, Jacqueline	The Mind: Its Nature and Function	2	3	31
“A Subjective Worker”	Symbolism and the Path	2	4	67

Book Reviews

	Vol.	No.	Page
<i>Agni: Way of Fire</i> , by Bruce Lyon	1	4	53
<i>Astrology Illumined: Revealing Soul Through Astrology</i> , by Donna Mitchell-Moniak & Sara Traub	3	4	55
<i>The Book of Abramelin: A New Translation</i> , by Geog Dehn (ed.) & Steven Guth (transl.)	3	2	51
<i>Brain and Belief</i> , by John J. McGraw	1	2	45
<i>The Burning Bush</i> , by Edward Reaugh Smith	1	1	46
<i>Christianity: The One, the Many</i> , by John F. Nash	4	3	68
<i>The Compass of Light, Vol. I: Figures of Speech in the Great Invocation</i> , by Starling David Hunter III	3	1	53
<i>The Compass of Light, Vol. III: The Sense of Direction in the Great Invocation</i> , by Starling David Hunter III	4	4	61
<i>Extraordinary Times, Extraordinary Beings</i> , Wayne S. Peterson	4	2	57
<i>Francis Yates and the Hermetic Tradition</i> , by Marjorie G. Jones	4	3	67
<i>Freemasonry and Ritual Work. The Misraim Service: Texts and Documents from the Cognitive-Ritual Section of the Esoteric School 1904-</i>	4	1	60

	Vol.	No.	Page
<i>1919</i> , by Rudolf Steiner and others			
<i>The Gentle Art of Blessing</i> , by Pierre Pradervand	1	4	53
<i>Going Deeper</i> , by Jean-Claude Koven	1	1	47
<i>The Heart of Islam</i> , by Seyyed Hossein Nasr	3	1	52
<i>The Hidden Heart of the Cosmos: Humanity and the New Story</i> , by Brian Swimme	4	1	59
<i>Hidden Riches</i> , by Désirée Hirst	2	2	54
<i>How Wide the Heart: The Roots of Peace in Palestine & Israel</i> , by Mark & Ana Pogačnik	4	1	59
<i>The Living Word of Kuan Yin</i> , by Hope Bradford & Lena Lees	3	3	40
<i>Magic in the World</i> , by Donna Mitchell-Moniak	2	1	57
<i>The Magic of Consciousness Workshops</i> , by Glen Knappe	2	1	57
<i>The Magus of Freemasonry</i> , by Tobias Churton	4	4	62
<i>Meditation: The Royal Road to the Soul</i> , by Niels Brønsted	1	2	43
<i>Meditations on Planets in Signs</i> , by James Davis	2	4	73
<i>Planetary Awakening</i> , by Kathy Newburn	3	4	55
<i>Peace Means Action</i> , by Yves Chaumette	1	1	47
<i>Psychosynthesis: A Psychology of Spirit</i> , by John Firman & Ann Gila	3	3	38
<i>Quest for the Soul</i> , by John Nash	1	2	43
<i>Raising Lazarus: Integral Healing in Orthodox Christianity</i> , by Stephen Muse (ed.)	3	2	52
<i>The Return of the Perennial Philosophy</i> , by John Holman	4	2	58
<i>Spiritual Symbolism of the Wizard of Oz</i> , by Javier J. Farias	2	3	58
<i>Sword of Shamballa</i> , by Barbara Domalske	2	3	56
<i>The Revelation of Saint John</i> , by Zachary Lansdowne	2	4	73
<i>The Roman Cult of Mithras</i> , by Manfred Clauss	1	3	51
<i>Sophia Sutras: Introducing Mother Wisdom</i> , by Carol Parrish-Harra	3	1	51
<i>The Sophia Teachings</i> , by Robert Powell	1	3	52
<i>The Soul and Its Destiny</i> , by John Nash	1	2	45
<i>Universe in a Single Atom, The</i> , by the Dalai Lama	2	3	55
<i>Working with the Will</i> , by Bruce Lyon	3	3	37

Poems

	Vol.	No.	Page
<i>The Choice of Simplicity</i> , by Linda "Tiger" Francis	4	3	7

	Vol.	No.	Page
<i>The Soul Quest</i> , by Linda “Tiger” Francis	4	1	8
<i>Angelic Origin</i> , by David Harrington	4	2	7
<i>The Tiny Seed</i> , by David Harrington	3	3	8
<i>Revelation of Beauty and Joy</i> , by Chuck Heinrichs	2	4	75
<i>The Deathless</i> , by Bruce Lyon	4	2	7
<i>Last Confession</i> , by Bruce Lyon	4	4	7
<i>Welcome to My World</i> , by Shannon Paul Stokely	3	4	8

Festival Talks

	Vol.	No.	Page			
Wesak Festival			<i>The Externalization and the Three Planetary Centers</i> , by Frank Hilton	1	4	45
			<i>The Sevenfold Purpose of Sanat Kumara</i> , by John Cobb	3	3	44
Easter Festival			<i>The Life That Conquers Death</i> , by Luisa Romero de Johnston	1	4	41
			<i>Renewal and Recreation</i> , by Jillian Somerwill	3	3	42
Goodwill Festival			<i>Christ and Humanity</i> , by John Nash	1	4	50
			<i>Goodwill as the Agent of Change</i> , by Dorothy Riddle	3	3	48