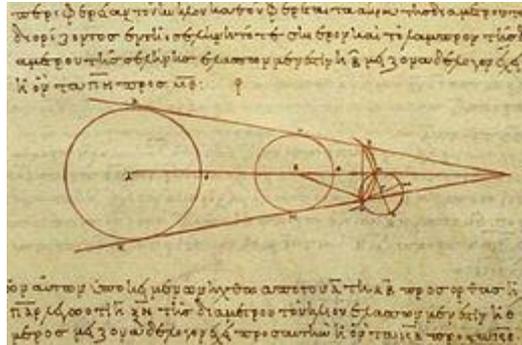


# THE OCCULT HISTORY OF OCCULTISM

Today many dismiss Occultism as an erroneous superstition, yet Theurgy and sorcery were once recognized in law.



Above: Aristarchus's 3rd-century BC calculations on the relative sizes of (from left) the Sun, Earth and Moon, from a 10th-century AD {Greek copy}. *Aristarchus of Samos* was the first to propose the universe is heliocentric {270 B.C}. Historians often refer to him as the ancient Copernicus.

According to H.P.B's *Theosophical glossary*; *Iamblichus (Gr.)*. Was a great theurgist, mystic, and writer of the third and fourth centuries, a Neo-Platonist and philosopher, born at Chalcis in Cœle-Syria. Correct biographies of him have never existed because of the hatred of the Christians; but that which has been gathered of his life in isolated fragments from works by impartial pagan and independent writers shows how excellent and holy was his moral character, and how great his learning. He may be called the founder of theurgic magic among the Neo-Platonists and the reviver of the practical mysteries outside of temple or fane. His school was at first distinct from that of Plotinus and Porphyry, who were strongly against ceremonial magic and practical theurgy as dangerous, though later he convinced Porphyry of its advisability on some occasions, and both master and pupil firmly believed in theurgy and magic, of which the former is principally the highest and most efficient mode of communication with one's Higher Ego, through the medium of one's astral body. Theurgic is *benevolent* magic, and it becomes goëtic, or dark and evil, only when it is used for necromancy or selfish purposes; but such dark magic has never been practised by any theurgist or philosopher, whose name has descended to us unspotted by any evil deed. So much was Porphyry (who became the teacher of Iamblichus in Neo-Platonic philosophy) convinced of this, that though he himself never practised theurgy, yet he gave instructions for the acquirement of this sacred science. Thus he says in one of his writings, "Whosoever is acquainted with the nature of *divinely luminous appearances* - ασματα) knows also on what account it is requisite to abstain from all birds (and animal food) and especially for him who hastens to be liberated from terrestrial concerns and to be established with the celestial gods "(See *Select Works* by T. Taylor, p. 159.) Moreover, the same Porphyry mentions in his *Life of Plotinus* a priest of Egypt, who, "at the request of a certain friend of Plotinus, exhibited to him, in the temple of Isis at Rome, the familiar *daimon* of that philosopher". In other words, he produced the theurgic invocation (see "Theurgist") by which Egyptian Hierophant or

Indian Mahâtma, of old, could clothe their own or any other person's astral *double* with the appearance of its Higher EGO, or what Bulwer Lytton terms the "Luminous Self", the *Augoeides*, and confabulate with It. This is what Iamblichus and many others, including the mediæval Rosicrucians, meant by *union with Deity*. Iamblichus wrote many books but only a few of his works are extant, such as his "Egyptian Mysteries" and a treatise "On Dæmons", in which he speaks very severely against any intercourse with them. He was a biographer of Pythagoras and deeply versed in the system of the latter, and was also learned in the Chaldean Mysteries.

### 'THE GROTTO OF ZARATHUSTRA'

REF: SECRET DOCTRINE VOL.:I, P. 464-465.

Tradition points to a grotto, a vast cave in the deserts of Central Asia, where into light pours through its four seemingly natural apertures or clefts placed crossways at the four cardinal points of the place. From noon till an hour before sunset that light streams in, of four different colours, as averred — red, blue, orange-gold, and white — owing to some either natural or artificially prepared conditions of vegetation and soil. The light converges in the centre around a pillar of white marble with a globe upon it, which represents our earth. It is named the "grotto of Zarathustra."

When included under the arts and sciences of the fourth race, the Atlanteans, the phenomenal manifestation of the four elements, justly attributed by the believers in Cosmic gods to the intelligent interference of the latter, assumed a scientific character. The *magic* of the ancient priests consisted, in those days, in addressing *their gods in their own language*. "The speech of the men of the earth cannot reach the Lords. Each must be addressed in the language of his respective element" — is a sentence which will be shown pregnant with meaning. "*The Book of Rules*" cited adds as an explanation of the nature of that *Element-language*: "It is composed of *sounds*, not words; of sounds, numbers and figures. He who knows how to blend the three, will call forth the response of the superintending Power" (the regent-god of the specific element needed).

Thus this "language" is that of *incantations* or of MANTRAS, as they are called in India, sound being *the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which opens the door of communication between Mortals and the Immortals*. He who believes in the words and teachings of St. Paul, has no right to pick out from the latter those sentences only that he chooses to accept, to the rejection of others; and St. Paul teaches most undeniably the existence of cosmic gods and their presence among us. Paganism preached a dual and simultaneous evolution: "creation" — "*spiritualem ac mundanum*," as the Roman Church has it — ages before the advent of that Roman Church. Exoteric phraseology has changed little with respect to divine hierarchies since the most palmy days of Paganism, or "Idolatry." Names alone have changed,

along with claims which have now become false pretences. For when Plato put in the mouth of the Highest Principle — "Father AETHER" or Jupiter — these words, for instance: "The gods of the gods of whom I am the *maker (opifex)* as I am the father of all their works (*operumque parens*)"; he knew the spirit of this sentence as fully, we suspect, as St. Paul did, when saying: "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many and lords many," . . . etc. (1 Cor. viii. 5.)\* Both knew the sense and the meaning of what they put forward in such guarded terms.

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## HYPATIA THE LAST OF THE NEOPLATONISTS OF



## ALEXANDRIA

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Alexandria was destined to be the focus of the triumphs and tragedies of the late classical world, a microcosm of the intense striving of the human soul amidst the titanic forces of cyclic history. Alexandria housed the world's greatest library and the Museum. The Pharos, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, lit the way into her harbours. Cleopatra, like the Ptolemies before her, made Alexandria her capital, enchanting those around her and continuing to fascinate for over twenty centuries. Alexandria became the crossroads of the world, drawing together the cultures, religions and philosophies of Greece and Rome, Palestine and Persia, Africa and Arabia, and laying the groundwork for new levels of tolerance. One can learn much about human nature by contemplating the history of this unique city, struggling to be a cosmopolis in a world of increasing separatists and religionists.

By the end of the first century, the elements that would form the pivot upon which subsequent Western history would turn were all present in Alexandria. **Apollonius of Tyana** had taught there and reformed the priestly activities of Egyptian, Greek and Roman religion. There **Philo Judaeus** had reinterpreted Mosaic philosophy and the religion of the Torah in the light of his profound metaphysical mysticism. Buddhist monks had preached the message of **Shakyamuni** within its gates, and the *Gospel according to John* was probably written in the city. Though the great library had been ravaged by fire when Julius Caesar first entered Alexandria, it remained the centre of Mediterranean scholarship, and the Museum associated with it emerged as an international university that supported scientific experimentation and mathematical philosophy. **Ammonius Saccas** entered this arena of brilliant intellectual activity and diverse spiritual loyalties to offer a philosophical basis for human solidarity within a context of individual freedom and collective growth. His Eclectic Philosophy, which he named *Theosophia*, pointed to the universal unity of all religions and philosophies, taught the method of analogy and correspondence, and used the **Pythagorean/Platonic** method to urge disciples towards higher truths through self-devised and self-induced efforts. Ammonius stood outside the Museum as a true philosophical revolutionary, drawing his disciples from those who found their traditional education lacking in spiritual

vitality. His closest disciples were not encouraged to remain in Alexandria to found a school or establish a lineage. Rather, they journeyed abroad to transmit his method and translate it into the philosophies and religions of the Roman empire. **Plotinus** founded a centre in Rome that would eventually reinvigorate the Athenian Academy through **Proclus**, whose teachers, **Plutarch** and **Syrianus**, followed the doctrines of **Iamblichus** as he had learnt them from **Porphyry**, [a student of Plotinus]. **Origen** brought the analogical method and secret doctrines of Ammonius into the Christian community just as it was institutionalizing itself as the Church of Rome. **Longinus** brought the spirit of his work into politics, government and diplomacy. Thus Ammonius left a numinous impression rather than a crystallized institution, and that mark made itself felt with increasing force in the Museum. It eventually sponsored the Alexandrian Academy which became an independent school under **Theon** and his daughter, **Hypatia**.

If Ammonius represented that to which the Western world should have remained true, Hypatia represented the moment of choice when many would either heed the Eclectic Philosophy or slide towards spiritual ignorance and moral disintegration. Hypatia was born around A.D. 370 in Alexandria. Her father, Theon, held a post at the Museum where he taught mathematics, astronomy and theoretical physics. He personally observed the solar eclipses of 364 and 378 and composed works on astronomy and natural science, including a commentary on the first eleven books of *Ptolemy's Almagest*. His interest in mathematics and astronomy was intimately connected with his study of the writings ascribed to *Hermes Trismegistus*. Although nothing of Theon's writings survived, he was for many years respected for his breadth of learning and mental sharpness. Theon raised Hypatia by himself and was the chief source of her early education which centered on mathematics and astronomy. In the neo-Platonic school established by Ammonius, this rigorous discipline embraced *Euclid's geometry* as well as the symbolic meanings and occult powers of the seven sacred planets and the significance of the zodiac. Hypatia probably had first-hand knowledge of the *Enneads* of Plotinus and the *theurgic doctrines of Iamblichus*, and her understanding of Aristotle was unmatched in her time. Some historians seem to have surmised that Hypatia travelled to Athens for part of her studies, but since she would have been about thirty years of age when Plutarch, the first neo-Platonic successor, took the chair of the Athenian Academy, it is more likely that she mastered the teachings in Alexandria under Theon and others in the Museum.

From the first, Hypatia showed signs of an exceptionally keen intelligence, outshining her co-disciples at the time, grasping the Pythagorean mathematics supporting Platonic philosophy. At the same time, she applied that understanding to ethics and lived in a manner which reflected her total self-confidence and lack of pretence. Having grown up and studied among men, she was at ease in any company. Yet in the spirit of Apollonius, she chose to remain chaste and unmarried for the duration of her life, though many men fell in love with her on sight. All ancient writers agree that as a woman she was beautiful beyond comparison, as if the gods had replicated a fragment of the Golden Age by making her countenance proportionate with her soul. Thus, at a time when women were

discouraged from being independent and prevented from assuming public roles, no one objected when Hypatia was offered the chair of the Alexandrian Academy.

Hypatia gave Alexandrian neo-Platonic philosophy its most brilliant hour. Though she drew to herself devoted disciples, she followed the lead of Ammonius in not establishing a permanent school centered on her. *Synesius* worshipped her, and she warmly supported and counselled him even after he became bishop of Pentapolis. She concentrated her attention on public teaching and exercised an extraordinary influence upon the cultured populace of Alexandria. Amongst close associates and students she used a variety of means to direct their attention to philosophy. Youthful students were drawn to her because of her charm, grace and beauty. Rather than reject them for their mixed motives, she practised therapeutic methods reminiscent of Pythagoras and Apollonius. It was recorded that she calmed one student's emotional fervour by playing music that permanently cleared his mind. She shocked another who idolized her physical beauty by suddenly showing him her own soiled undergarments and pointing to the illusive nature of the physical plane. Yet she cast no one out, but sought to heal the soul and nurture the aspirations of all who came to her.

Hypatia applied the Platonic dialectic to society and science alike, also known as the **dialectical method**, which is a discourse between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject but wishing to establish the truth through reasoned arguments.

The forces of history were strong in Alexandria around the time of Hypatia, which had become a theatre of war for the soul of humanity. When earlier the emperor **Constantine** had made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, he unleashed forces beyond his own reckoning. While this shift of imperial allegiance gave political and financial support to the growing church, in other circumstances it would not have led to cold-hearted dogmatism and ruthless persecution. **Asoka**, upon becoming the Buddhist emperor of India, had proclaimed a policy of universal religious toleration. But Rome could not exercise that option. In legend and in belief embedded deeply in the Roman psyche, Rome had been built upon the direction of the gods. The emperor was *pontifex maximus*, protector of the Vestal Virgins who guarded the altar of Vesta, goddess of the hearth, in the centre of Rome. Rome was powerful because the gods protected it, and therefore the state cult could not be divorced from national loyalty. Once when the Altar of Victory had been removed from the heart of the senate chambers, the senators dropped all the business of the beleaguered Western empire to plead for its return. When permanently removed by order of the Byzantine emperor, senators, including philosophical atheists, travelled to Constantinople to beg, weeping, for its reinstallation on the grounds that by abandoning the gods, the gods would abandon Rome to the forces of chaos. In addition to the traditional assimilation of political loyalty to the state cult, making any form of non-Christian religious commitment treasonous, the church based its institutional consolidation upon particular attitudes towards the concept of divine revelation, the literal interpretation of scripture and loyalty to the hierarchy of bishops. Thus disagreement with the lines laid down by the Roman bishop or the Byzantine

emperor, who retained the title *pontifex maximus*, was declared heresy and attacked mercilessly.

On February 28th, 380, when Hypatia was a child, the emperor Theodosius 1st issued an edict affirming the *homoiousian doctrine* that God is three persons in one (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) as the official doctrine of the church and the empire. This marked the beginning of unremitting dogmatism and the total severance of man from Christ. Jesus could no longer be considered an exemplary human being divinely inspired, but was declared to be God incarnate, and this compelled the severance of the church from any connection with the Ancient Wisdom embodied in the lineage of Teachers of Humanity. By November, *the followers of Anus*, who believed that Jesus, born as a man, was elevated to total participation in Deity, were expelled from the churches and monasteries of Constantinople. Gregory of Nanzianzus was made bishop, and in 381 the Council of Constantinople declared absolute war on heresy by forbidding all non-Roman church services. Edicts were issued on May 4 and 20, 383, declaring that anyone who reverted to 'heathenism' forfeited all rights to inheritance and the control of his own wealth and property. If his next of kin were not Christian, his wealth reverted to the state. Throughout the Roman Empire, bishops whose characters were an embarrassment even to Christian writers of the time used these edicts to destroy temples, plunder sacred land and launch bloody attacks upon the non-Christian populace. Reports of serious trouble poured into Constantinople from Antioch, Petra, Gaza, Heliopolis and Areopolis, but no attempt was made to ameliorate conditions in the empire.

Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, seized upon the imperial laws as a means to bring together fanatical desert monks and a motley collection of thugs whose religious convictions were dubious, and implemented his exhortations to hate and destroy all things pagan. **Pagan** is defined in H.P.B.'s Theosophical glossary as: - *at first no worse than a dweller in the country or the woods. One far removed from the city temples and therefore unacquainted with the state religion and ceremonies. The word 'heathen' has a similar significance, meaning one who lives in the heaths and in the country. Now however, both terms come to mean idolaters.*

In 391 Theophilus plundered a Dionysian initiation temple and paraded its sacred objects in the streets of Alexandria. An outraged citizenry threw sticks and stones at the perpetrators of this sacrilege and then barricaded themselves in the great temple of Serapis, **the Serapeum**. The Christians attacked the temple and destroyed its shrines, converting the buildings into a church. While magistrates were expected by the emperor to maintain civil order, the imperial government did nothing to defend non-Christian life and property, and the bishops exercised increasing temporal control. Between 407 and 415 the *emperor Arcadius* issued edicts ordering the secularization of all temple objects, the exile of non-Christian priests and the dissolution of all pagan societies.

When Theophilus died on October 15th, 412, his nephew Cyril assumed the office of bishop of Alexandria. He was already a notorious power-seeker who showed his

uncle's unscrupulousness and yet none of his few virtues. Only the dullest minds could fail to see in Hypatia the flaming torch of truth and gentle virtue in this darkness of smouldering emotion. Cyril recognized her superior moral power and knew that she alone represented a real barrier to his ambitions. Because his own life and deeds looked shabby when compared with hers, Cyril agitated publicly against her. The explanations of her horrible death vary with the author, but all agree on the circumstances. Hesychius wrote that she was killed because of her knowledge of astronomy, and another early historian said that she died for her superior wisdom. Since the ruthless policies of the bishops were based upon a dogmatic view of history, Hypatia's knowledge was indeed threatening. She knew that the church, with its growing collection of saints, rituals and relics, drew many of them from the most superstitious elements of the so-called pagan peasantry and uneducated classes. The church rejected the philosophy that could explain and cleanse the Mariolatry stolen from Isis and the astrolatry stolen from Egypto-Babylonian astronomy. Hypatia frightened Cyril because she knew that the Christian claim to exclusiveness in doctrine was a lie, uniqueness in revelation was pretence, and its regenerative power was an inversion of Ancient Magic.

Cyril knew that Hypatia, restricted to giving public lectures on Aristotle and mathematics, met in private with small groups of disciples to study the teachings of Pythagoras and Plato, Ammonius and Plotinus. One afternoon in 415 he came to Hypatia's house and, finding several officers of the guards and prominent patricians gathered around the door, enquired as to the reason. They told him that Hypatia was conducting a philosophical meeting, and Cyril became extremely angry. Then and there he decided that she should die. According to the fifth century historian Socrates, when Hypatia was returning from a ride, a Christian mob attacked her chariot and pulled her from it. Without losing her calm or uttering a word, she was dragged into the Caesarion Church, stripped naked at the altar, and flayed and battered to death with pieces of broken pottery. Her bones were scraped clean with oyster shells and the flesh was burnt to ashes. Thus Hypatia was killed for her nobility, and the light went out of Alexandria. Synesius, her devoted disciple and bishop of Pentapolis, had maintained a lively correspondence with her until the end, and the fact that he died in the same year led more than one ancient author to suspect that his death was the response of a broken heart to the news of her assassination.

With the murder of Hypatia, Alexandria had thrown away the chance for a world built upon human solidarity and universal brotherhood, choosing instead a path of strife that continues to the present day. Plutarch, the successor in Athens, sent **Hierocles** to Alexandria to occupy the chair of the Academy. Though noble and sincere, he was not an original thinker, and he tried to compromise Christianizing the *Platonic Agathon* and the Plotinian One, but even he was flogged in public for his philosophical views. After him **Hermeias** (a student of Syrianus) guided the school towards the study of Aristotle. Olympiodorus held out for the Platonic philosophy, but when he died sometime after 565 the school passed into Christian hands under the Aristotelian commentators Elias and David. Their successor Stephanus moved in 610 to Constantinople to assume the headship of the new Imperial Academy. Though only a shadow of its former glory, *the Alexandrian*

*Academy still continued to house neo-Platonic philosophers until the capture of the city by Islamic Arabs in A.D. 641. This marked the end of public esoteric schools and lectures.* Some noted Theosophists have stated that the Academy's drift away from Hypatia's teaching towards the scholastic philosophy of Aristotle and the intense war on heresy within the church sowed the seeds that sprang up as the religion of Muhammad to terrorize the Christian world with its own tactics, standing as a mirror mocking the unity and benevolence of the so-called 'universal church' built on the blood and bones of those who dared to disagree with it.

Even while struggling to preserve the wisdom of the Academy, Hypatia retained her interest in science and engineering. *Towards the end of her tragic life, she sent Synesius detailed instructions for the construction of an astrolabe and a hydroscope. She is also accredited with the discovery of ellipse movement of the earth used in calculations by astronomers, even to this day.* The death of Hypatia was the end of an age, but her legend and the ideals she represented could not be extinguished. Even in medieval Byzantium she became the model of the well-educated woman, and since the Renaissance she has been celebrated in poems and novels, the shining reminder that each human being is called upon to live a life consecrated to the Divine within. Hypatia remains a Theophanous light in the dim halls of the human odyssey, scattered fragments of which are recorded in the chronicles of history.

Collation by a student

 Recommended viewing AGORA 2009 FULL MOVIE;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS3AbUvVZzs>

From Wikipedia, the free on-line encyclopaedia;

In England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland there has historically been a succession of **Witchcraft Acts** governing witchcraft and providing penalties for its practice.

## **Witchcraft Act 1735**

The Witchcraft Act of 1735 marked a complete reversal in attitudes. Penalties for the practice of witchcraft as traditionally constituted, *which by that time was considered by many influential figures to be an impossible crime*, were replaced by penalties for the pretence of witchcraft. A person who claimed to have the power to call up spirits, or foretell the future, or cast spells, or discover the whereabouts of stolen goods, was to be punished as a vagrant and a con artist, subject to fines and imprisonment. The Act applied to the whole of Great Britain, repealing both the 1563 Scottish Act and the 1604 English Act.

The Witchcraft Act of 1735 remained in force in Britain well into the 20th century, until its eventual repeal with the enactment of the *Fraudulent Mediums Act of 1951*, which was repealed on 26th May 2008 by new *Consumer Protection Regulations* following an EU directive targeting unfair sales and marketing practices.

The **Witchcraft Suppression Act, 1957** of South Africa, which is still in force, was based on the Witchcraft Act 1735.