
The Fragmentation of Being and the Path Beyond the Void

Speculations in an Emergent Onto-Mythology

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This book is dedicated to my guide and teacher

Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Murabit.

This book is the result of many years study and reflection. It is a speculative journey. An intellectual journey started the moment I met Shaykh Abd al-Qadir. It was his own intellectual voyage of discovery that inspired me and gave me a model for my own efforts. If I learned to reflect from Shaykh Abd al-Qadir, then I learned how to experience life from Abd al-Aziz Redpath who has been a constant inspiration to me. They have tapped into a source of wonder and plumbed its depths. My own efforts around the shore of this pure source though meagre have convinced me that the unfolding light of enlightenment still shines brightly in these dark times. It is only for our own flaws that this possibility is not realized. May Allah have mercy on us and cover our flaws with His perfection.

I would also like to mention Hamza ben Yusuf Hanson, Hakim Archelleta, Omar ben Halim, Abd al-Hai Moore, Anas Coburn, Abdullah Luongo, Abd al-Razak Goodall, Bilal Bourhani and all the many others who have been my friends and mentors. May Allah bless them.

Finally, I would like to mention my son Shuaib Ibrahim Palmer who died in 1990 at eight years old. From him I learned the greatest lesson of my life -- a knowledge of the meaning of death. May Allah reunite us in the next world.

I heard the Shaykh -- may Allah profit us by him! speak and say that one of the Shaykhs who was a gnostic of Allah ta'ala used to recite to a group of his students about wisdom. For 40 years, he only recited its branches with them. After 40 years, the students asked him to guide them to the reality of wisdom, and they urged him to do that. He answered them about that and said, "Tomorrow, Allah willing, I will guide you to news and eye-witnessing about what you seek." In the morning, they came to him for that and knocked on his door. He came out to them, and he had a small child in his hand. They asked him to do what he had promised them. He said to them, "Yes. Look at this son of mine." They looked at him. He said to them, "His gnosis is what you seek from me." In that hour, some of them had the door opened for them, i.e. to understand the words of the Shaykh, and some of them did not recognize the words of the Shaykh and were increased in alienation by his words.

THE MEANING OF MAN

by Sidi Ali al-Jamal

page 158.

What a difference between one who proceeds *from* God
in his argumentation
and the one who proceeds inferentially *to* Him!
He who has Him as his starting-point knows the Real
as It is,
and proves any matter by reference to the Existence of its
Origin.
But inferential argumentation
comes from the absence of union with Him.
Otherwise, when was it that he became absence
that one has to proceed inferentially to Him?
Or when was it that He became distant
that created things themselves will unite us to Him?¹

Ibn 'Ata' Illah

1. THE BOOK OF WISDOM translated by Victor Danner [NY: Paulist Press 1978] (slightly modified)

OEDIPUS

Fear, a long dark dragon in the night

ASTYMEDUSA

Describe it to me. Let us look.
It's daylight now. Like what?

OEDIPUS

It is the labyrinth of Minos.
And then another hidden one.
And then a form obscure, cold
And inescapable. It is as if
Here are men and women, passions,
Plague and death. And yet,
Moving and thrusting into time lie
Ancient cthonic powers that force
Us into acts we do not understand.
It is as if soon we will have done
What we did not do. Spoken
What never came from silence.
It is as if - as if -

ASTYMEDUSA

As if?¹

ASTYMEDUSA

No We will unknot the knotted,
Count them one by one to read
The pattern of this tapestry.
My mother, Hippodamia, knew
What lies behind these things.
When, playing at her knee, spinning,
She used to talk of another world
Of heros, Titans, supermen.
Pelops, my father she named the last
Of the initiates of the gods.
In those days boys came to manhood
In the Andria of the gods
Servant lovers they were passed
Through test and terror until
Their lord declared them men.
Sons were sent to other lands
To come back, brutal, fearless
Burned, by the knowledge of being man.
Themselves possessed, they learned
Possession, tenderness with women.
The line was crossed, and they
Returned, taught warriors ready
To pass on in turn the initiation
Of what made a hero wild and free.²

1. Ian Dallas *Oedipus and Dionysus* (London: Curzon Distribuiton; 1992), pages 38-39

2. *ibid.* page 42

