Ancient Civilizations: Legacy Overview

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Introductory Notes

1. In brief, the essence of a civilization***Σ1*** might be defined as the system–creating knowledge that has been amassed because of actualization of a set of the particular patterns of knowledge creation, accumulation, consuming–learning, transfer, and embodiment into

a/ knowledge at different levels of complexity, which sustains life of the entire civilization (super–system) as the wholeness of its (sub)systems (e.g., empires, states, nations, and other establishments) and each of subsystems' components (social, political, religious, and other establishments)

b/ interconnections among people, among people and their establishments, and among the people's establishments

c/ manipulating the world of the matter: manufacturing, construction, etc.

The cluster of ancient civilizations created the framework, within which the current philosophical, religious, social, and political doctrines evolved. The main purpose of this paper is analysis of the legacy of the ancient civilizations–creators of knowledge that have contributed into the framework, on which the current – Western – civilization has been built.

Deciphering the myths, symbols, religious, philosophical, and political doctrines, and other means of knowledge transfer left by the ancient civilizations might allow restoration of the knowledge, which determined the destiny of the vanished predecessors. Restoration of such knowledge could open the following possibilities:

a/ comprehension of the Past of the preceding civilizations, the Present and the Future of the contemporary civilization and, probably, the features and the Future of the consequent (if any) civilizations

b/ analysis of the accumulated knowledge and consequences of its embodiment into establishments, with which the vanished civilizations attempted to maintain existence, secure survival, and accomplish expansion; results of such an analysis might facilitate prevention of the processes that triggered collapse of the predecessors

c/ understanding of the reasons of collapse of the predecessors

d/ creation of systems/establishments, which would be protected from collapse until their purposes are accomplished.

The optimal results of creation such a knowledge would include a possibility to reverse processes of degeneration and collapse of current life–maintaining establishments – social, political, religious, and other institutions, with which a civilization (and any of its components – society, state, empire, etc.) attempts to survive and to achieve its purposes.

2. Each human mind is born into the three–dimensional ***κοσμος***:

God, the Almighty Omnipotent Holy Spirit; His law–energy–power creates
and controls life at each level discernible by a human being
⇓
man – the unity of spirit–heart–soul (energy), mind–intelligence (information), and body–flesh (matter)
⇓
the world – manifestation of the energy embodied into the information, the matter, and their derivatives

Knowledge of the three–dimensional κοσμος — ***God ⇒ man ⇒ world*** — is the essence of the human mind. Without knowledge of the higher and lower levels–dimensions–realms, man is not able to survive and to accomplish the purposes for the sake of which he lives:

— the mind must know God the Creator Whose will/law controls human life and the world accommodating human existence

— the mind must know the world, which accommodates human existence

— the mind must know own nature – firstly, the terms and conditions of own survival in relation to the will/law of God the Creator and in accordance with the laws controlling existence of the world of the matter.

Consequently, the entirety of human knowledge might be seen as the outcome of the framework that accommodates life of the human intelligence/reasoning. From a practical point of view, such a framework is a motherboard on which the human mind assembles its creations, for instance, such as a particular civilization (or a particular set of civilizations) and its (sub)systems (kingdoms, states, empires and their subsystems – societies, social, political, religious, and other establishments).

In general, the framework includes three interconnected domains/realms with different levels of complexity:

The Source: theology – knowledge of God and His law
⇓
The General Derivative:
philosophy – mainly as knowledge of the nature, therefore, the laws that control the world
(the systems laws, which control the world of the matter and the realm of human creations;
the systems laws are the derivatives of the laws on which the universe is built)
and manifestations of these laws that the observer can use as indicators
of particular stages of development–evolution, stagnation, degeneration, collapse, and ruin
⇓
The Second Level Derivative:
practical sciences based on philosophical doctrines that that sustain human existence;
especially, the general systems theory and its applications,
including the systems logic that deals with the systems, which compose the realm of human creations
(e.g., political, social, and other establishments)

The pool/net of two kinds of the human minds determines destiny of a civilization:

1/ the minds capable of creating knowledge adequate to the actuality **[[***the truth***]]**

2/ the minds capable of creating knowledge inadequate to the actuality **[[***the false knowledge, figments of imagination***]]**.

Embodiment of the created knowledge into the systems that are intended to sustain survival and growth–development–optimization–evolution defines the particular pattern of

either expansion–evolution of a civilization, if knowledge is adequate to the actuality
or collapse–ruin of a civilization, if knowledge is false

For such minds, philosophy***Σ2*** refers to the realm of knowledge at two levels of complexity:

1/ theoretical – summary of assumptions concerning the nature of the world and the purposes of men: the foundation, on which the mind creates thoughts, defines purposes, arranges them into political, social, military and other doctrines, and embodies them into establishments, with which it expects to secure and to optimize own existence (such establishments might include civilizations, cultures, states, societies, social, political, research institutions, systems of defense, etc.)

2/ practical – the set of tools, techniques, criteria, and rules of creation and interpretation of knowledge of the world of the matter and organization of human life within it, which the mind employs in its efforts to survive, to accomplish own purposes, to actualize own nature, and to evolve through

– expansion of knowledge of the world that accommodates its existence

– application of this knowledge for facilitation and enrichment of own life, improvement of well–being of human societies, firstly, by preventing untimely collapse and disintegration of the systems/establishments created to accomplish the purposes of survival, development, and optimization.

From another angle of consideration, it might be said that

a/ philosophy that sustains a reality/system/establishment – civilization, state, political, social, and any other system – determines and discloses the essence and destiny of the reality/system/establishment

b/ philosophy behind the created systems defines the destiny of their creators and those who these creations might influence or control

c/ philosophy of a particular mind reveals its potency defined in the terms of knowledge of the actuality/truth:

- either its development as an ability to perceive/create adequate knowledge of the actuality/truth
- or degeneration as an inability to perceive/create adequate knowledge of the actuality/truth.

Consequently, philosophy defines the potency, limitations, and end – either achievement of the purpose or collapse because of impossibility to achieve the purpose – of the mind's creations.

The next derivative (from the realm of the practical sciences) is the systems logic, or the logic of complex systems***Σ3***. From the practical point of view (e.g., for the observer whose purpose is analysis of a particular establishment: evaluation of its past and present, and comprehension, design, or alteration of its future), systems logic is the set of the working techniques, which sustains the entire cycle of cognitive activities starting with the acceptance of a theological concept and finishing with the application of the laws of reasoning toward analysis of effectiveness of the routine and strategic decisions and their expected and actual outcome.

As of today, civilization might be seen as the most interesting subject of consideration for the observer, because it is the most common complex system that accommodates actualization and testing of a particular set of the patterns of knowledge creation, accumulation, learning, distribution, transmitting, and embodying. In general, a civilization

a/ describes the maximal creative and destructive potency developed by the human mind

b/ sustains a particular phase/cycle of either development/evolution or degeneration/perversion of the human mind

c/ tests efficiency of establishments that sustain life–cycle of the civilization and accommodate either evolution (firstly, as the well–being) or anti–evolution/degeneration (firstly, as insufficiency, corruption, and misery) of human beings for the sake of whom, presumably, the civilization, as well as any other establishment within it, has been initiated and developed.

The essence of a civilization***Σ1*** might be defined as the system–creating knowledge that has been amassed because of actualization of a set of the particular patterns of knowledge creation, accumulation, consuming–learning, transfer, and embodiment into

a/ knowledge at different levels of complexity, which sustains life of the entire civilization (super–system) as the wholeness of its (sub)systems (e.g., empires, states, nations, and other establishments) and each of subsystems' components (social, political, religious, and other establishments)

b/ interconnections among people, among people and their establishments, and among the people's establishments

c/ manipulating the world of the matter **[[***for example, manufacturing, construction, and other fruits of the technical progress as actualization of abilities to organize and facilitate labor, to modify environment and conditions of existence, and to advance in manipulation with knowledge: its creation, dissemination/intra–system circulation, learning, accumulation, preservation, and transmitting***]]**.

The cluster of ancient civilizations created the framework, within which the current philosophical, religious, social, and political doctrines evolved. The philosophical, religious, and political doctrines developed within this framework became the foundation of the contemporary civilization, and this foundation looks like a mosaic: along with the knowledge of the actuality, it includes

— bits and pieces of doctrines and thoughts, whose origin might be traced to the Chaldeans

— religions and cults, which are rooted in the Minoan myths interpreted and modified by the Orphics

— social and political utopia of Plato

— doctrines of Aristotle (mostly, elaborations of Plato's utopia for practical use)

— Stoic doctrines embodied into the set of political, military, social, and religious institutions, which is known as the Roman Empire and which still serves as a model for those who aspire to achieve the absolute power and world–wide domination

— and the others.

The legacy of the ancient civilizations–creators of knowledge that have contributed into the framework, on which the current – Western – civilization has been built, includes the myths, symbols, religious, philosophical, and political doctrines, and other means of knowledge transfer. Deciphering and restoration of the knowledge, which determined the destiny of the vanished predecessors could open the following possibilities:

a/ comprehension of the Past of the preceding civilizations, the Present and the Future of the contemporary civilization and, probably, the features and the Future of the consequent (if any) civilizations

b/ understanding of the reasons of collapse of the predecessors; for instance, the patterns of knowledge creation and their embodiment into social and political establishment, which might initiate the processes of collapse similar to those that ruined the previous civilization

c/ analysis of the accumulated knowledge **[[***especially, theological concepts behind the religious beliefs, philosophical, social and political concepts***]]** and consequences of its embodiment into establishments, with which the vanished civilizations attempted to maintain existence, secure survival, and accomplish expansion; results of such an analysis might facilitate prevention of the processes that triggered collapse of the predecessors

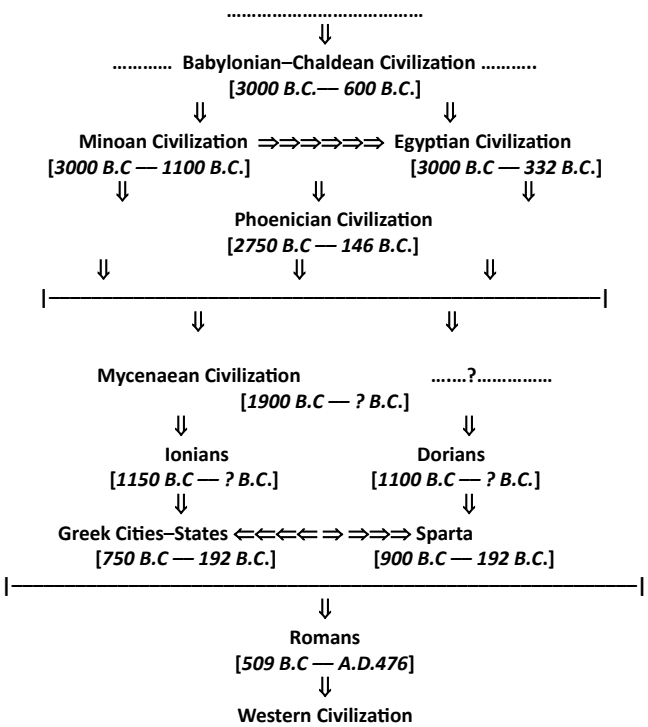
d/ creation of the systems/establishments, which would be protected from collapse until their purposes are accomplished.

In addition, the results of creation such a knowledge would be advanced possibilities for the system designers; for instance,

a/ a possibility to reverse processes of degeneration and collapse of current life–maintaining establishments – social, political, religious, and other institutions, with which any civilization (and any of its components – society, state, empire, etc.) attempts to survive and to achieve its purposes

b/ increased capabilities to manipulate the adversaries with targeted knowledge, which might initiate collapse of their life–sustaining establishments.

The cluster of civilizations–creators of the domain of knowledge, on which the contemporary Western civilization materialized, includes



The cluster of ancient civilizations in the Mediterranean region and Middle East has the same root – the Babylon before language confusion {*Genesis 11:1–9*}, the same source of theological and philosophical knowledge – imagination***Σ4***, the same patterns of life–defining relations, and the same three domains for application of philosophy:

human being ⇐ ⇒ deities
⇑
⇓
human being ⇐ ⇒ human beings
⇑
⇓
human being ⇐ ⇒ human establishments

All of them are the creation of the philosophizing – *dreaming* – mind that lives by imagination instead of the actuality.

In all of them, the mythical thinking stipulated and shaped the actuality – political, social, and cultural life. Their essence has been embodied into the shared imaginary worlds of heathenism – the mythical and symbolic religions, cults, and doctrines concerning the entire cosmos, deities, men, and creations of men. All of them contributed into the imaginary world of false assumptions that became the cradle of the descendants – the framework of knowledge on which the following civilizations have been built.

All of them have the same

working tools – imagination*Σ4*, and the logic of insufficiency/simplification, or the logic of death*Σ5*
⇓ ⇑
patterns of creation–transmitting–embodiment of knowledge
⇓
destiny: they all reached the peak of power and prosperity, and they all vanished

The ancient systems of thought developed by the priests–diviners of the Chaldean, Egyptian and Minoan civilizations and their adaptations by Pythagoras (582–500 B.C.), Xenophanes of Colophon (570–480(?) B.C.), Anaxagoras (500(?)–428 B.C.), Protagoras (480–410 B.C.), Parmenides (~450 B.C.), and Socrates (469–399 B.C.), shaped the outlook of Plato (427–347 B.C.).

Plato interpreted and generalized assumptions of the previous generations of thinkers; upon the generalized summary, he created the imaginary world of philosophical, political, and social utopia, which underlies the contemporary political, social, and religious institutions.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) fashioned dreams of Plato into the forms suitable for implementation into political establishments; his writings still serve as the manuals for philosophers, politicians, and Western theologians; some of researchers who realized the magnitude of Aristotle's input into the contemporary civilization refer to it as to the Aristotelian civilization.

The builders of the Roman Empire supplemented Aristotelian pragmatic doctrines with the Stoicism – a concoction of ideas of the Orphics, Socrates and some other (pre–Socratic) ancient thinkers modified for justification of a particular purpose: creation of the world–wide empire, which would establish the Roman laws, virtues, ideals, and the order within the inhabited world and illuminate its dwellers.

In summary, the works of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics absorbed the majority of assumptions and ideas that compose philosophical, religious, political, logical, ethical, and other doctrines created by the ancient civilizations of the Mediterranean region and Middle East; they still serve as the general foundation on which the contemporary political, religious, educational, and research establishments work.

The Babylonian/Chaldean civilization (~3000 B.C. until the sixth century B.C.) became the golden head of the ancient empires; it accumulated the knowledge, which determined the long–lasted supremacy, power, glory, unrivaled might and unprecedented wealth of the Babylonian kingdoms and empires.

The Chaldean priests invented divination, magic and sorcery, ritual arts, astronomy and astrology; they planted the root from which all heathen religious beliefs, philosophical, political, social, and cultural assumptions evolved. They designed rituals of worship and divination by ascribing a/ the meaning of worship and veneration of deities and b/ the means, through which the "will of gods" can be learnt and accomplished, to

1/ particular actions, e.g., kneeling before the statue or at the Moon–rise, wearing special garments, feast or deprivation of food, order of movements of priest–sacrificer during sacrifice, temple dance movements, preparation of special food

2/ particular settings, within which the ritual movement should be performed, for instance, before the stone tables–altars on which victims must be killed–sacrificed, in special buildings–temples, before trees, on the tops of mountains, etc.

So, actions of men with material objects and with other living beings became the confirmation of existence of non–existing deities–figments of imagination, the means to cognize their will and to change their attitude toward men, for instance, to placate deities with sacrifices and to avert their wrath, which otherwise could result in disasters, earthquakes, famine, defeat by enemy, plague, unknown disease, etc.

Rituals, which were performed with the seen/perceivable material objects as the means to influence behavior of the unseen/unperceivable deities, and human sacrifices, which denigrated human being to the slave of beasts **[[***and therefore, substituted the figments of imagination for knowledge of the original human nature***]]**, resulted in establishment of belief into the eternal indestructible and uncreated matter – source of origin of gods, animals, men, and everything else.

It means that the Chaldeans planted the root of deification of the matter, because they accepted the matter as the means to influence the spirit, for instance, to sacrifice a visible–perceivable–living being for appeasement of an invisible deity.

The core of the knowledge, which later was named *philosophy*, came into existence when the Chaldean imagination began

– to accept the manifestations of the matter and the material objects as the means of cognition of the invisible world of the deities

– to apply the assumptions concerning the invisible world of the deities toward the world of men.

The main pattern of knowledge creation, which defines the overall legacy of the Chaldeans, is modification of knowledge of the invisible deities according to the purposes of manipulation with the material things within the world of the matter, or in the contemporary terms, the interactive heathen theology.

Acceptance of the Chaldean pattern of knowledge creation (and even its embodiments, such as religious beliefs and philosophical doctrines created by the Chaldeans) by a particular civilization, empire, nation, state, or an influential thinker initiated two simultaneous processes:

1/ adaptation and modification of theological knowledge and its derivatives; this process culminated in creation of the imaginary world tailored to the local customs, and national, state, and cultural purposes and features

2/ embodiment of the created imaginary world into the religious, political, and cultural establishments, which have the purposes to sustain and protect own existence and to impose own world on other nations, states, and their institutions.

The Minoan Legacy

The Minoan civilization (Crete) [data sources: Cicero III.xxiii. 58; Homer *The Iliad*; *The Odyssey*; Durant 5–23; Evans 287, 298–299; Graves 1:41, 87–95, 103, 107–114, 119–120, 127–130; 181, 183, 198–199, 232, 236–237, 279, 293–298, 302–311, 316; 2:151, 366; 2:367; Hall (2005) 13; Herodotus 72–73; James 41–45, 54–55, 82–85, 89, 99–106; Kishlansky, Geary, O'Brien 38; Ventris 303, 311; *The Sunset Knowledge*; etc.] originated before 3000 B.C., reached the peak of unprecedented for its time power and influence in 1600 B.C., and disappeared about 1100 B.C.

During their time–range, the Minoans defined and controlled the entirety of the political, social, and commercial affairs of the Mediterranean nations. All heathen cults, religious and philosophical doctrines, which have evolved within the Mediterranean region, carry their part of the Minoan heritage, and the most elaborated hierarchies of deities are rooted in the Minoan myths. The Minoans developed the sophisticated system of writing; the Minoan hieroglyphs formed many Mediterranean alphabets, including the Phoenician and the early Egyptian. The simplified version of the Minoan hieroglyphs became the Greek alphabet, and, in the seventeenth century B.C., the Egyptians developed their alphabet in the likeness of Minoan hieroglyphs [e.g., in: Graves 1:183].

Some researchers notice the similarities of the Vedas, the Upanishads, Orphism, Pythagorean teaching, and Eleusinian mysteries [e.g., Sherrard 83–84], which prompt the inference: all of them have the same source of origin.

The names mentioned in the Greek myths and the names from the Minoan tablets coincide. Today, the Minoan mythology still lives under the name of the Greek mythology. With the Minoan language, the Ionians re–told and eventually wrote down the poems of Homer: *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Ultimately, the Minoan–Ionian language was developed into the Koine, the common Greek, with which the New Testament was written down.

The female deity dominated the Minoan pantheon of gods. The name of the main Minoan island – Crete came from ***κρατεια*** which is the derivative of ***κρατω*** (rule) and ***κρατος*** (power, state) and which might be interpreted as "the ruling power/goddess." The main Minoan deity was the goddess symbolized by a serpent and double axe: a symbol of dualism (the creative and destructive power emanating from one source) and a symbol of waxing and waning moon. On survived sculptures, figurines, and bas–reliefs Minoan goddess holds a snake (or two in both hands) and the venomous vipers coil her body; sometimes, she is surrounded with bull/cow's horns, doves, and lions. Her worshipers ascribed to her the power over good and evil, life and death; her cult included the death and fertility rites, which demand

– human and animal sacrifices

– ritual intercourse of humans with animals (for the heathens, this act symbolizes the fusion of the bestial deities and men).

There is an opinion that the double axe was an instrument of sacrifice; other symbols of the goddess include shield, cross, and swastika (often depicted on the forehead of the bulls and the figurines of the goddesses) [e.g., in: Durant 14].

The Minoans ascribed to their goddess with snakes the authority over life and death in all ancient divisions of the Universe: the Earth (mountains), vegetation (trees and crops), animal (the wild beasts), and human (the living and the dead) domains. The Minoan goddess with snakes became the Greek Rhea – mother of gods or the "great goddess," Phrygian "great mother Cybele," Roman "great mother," etc.; her functions and features originated the flock of local deities.

From the Minoan centers of divination in Delos and Pharos (the Cretan islands), the Mediterranean nations received oracular edicts, which, in fact, were the orders and directives: they conveyed the rules and terms of survival and the guidance for development of the local establishments, which were communicated as the will of deities. The Minoans arranged the famous Delphi oracle's service: they built the shrine, where the priestess of Python the "sacred" serpent uttered her predictions. However, later, with advancement of patriarchate model of the society, the Apollo's cult prevailed: according to the myth, Apollo killed Python, violated the Python's priestess, and assumed the duties of the main sponsor of divination.

From the capital situated in the main island (Crete) and guarded by the powerful fleet, the Minoan chief priests who also were the "sacred" kings controlled the Mediterranean nations and actualized their conquests. The commercial, trade, and other communications of the Minoans were fast and effective; they reached as far as the lands later known as India and China.

The remnants of the Cretan palaces reveal the high quality and comfort of daily life; the island had paved streets and water pipelines; the survived wall paintings and artifacts unveil the unique sense of beauty and the sophisticated fine arts.

After destruction of the island center, the survived part of Minoan population spread over Cyprus, Aegean Islands, Palestine, Egypt, Attica, Euboea, West Coast of Turkey (Ionia), Southern Italy, and other lands. The nations, which were established or conquered by the Minoans, and among which the Minoans settled

(and among which they eventually disappeared as the distinct group, although there is a belief that all royal dynasties and priesthood of the Mediterranean region had the Minoan blood), assumed and modified the legacy of the Minoans according to own level of development and own purposes. The Mycenaean civilization became the direct heir. Some researchers trace the influence of the Minoans on the Indus and Chinese civilizations.

The essence of the Minoan civilization was encrypted into the myths. Deciphering the myths and symbols of the Minoans would allow comprehension of the knowledge, which determined historical development of all those who accepted the legacy of the Minoans.

Obviously, the main point of interest should be the rationale behind Minoans' justification of the manner of life, their outlook, and the world which they built and into which they embodied their dreams, expectations, and vision of the actuality.

The mythical founder of the Minoan civilization is a son of Zeus and Europe. Zeus assumed an image of a white bull, kidnapped Europe, and brought her to Crete, where she born him a son – Minos. After Minos' death, Zeus made him one of the Judges of the Dead in Hades. In the eyes of the believers, this appointment would definitely confirm the power of Cretan priests–kings over the living and over the dead. This particular myth became the root of belief in the absolute power of an earthly ruler as the power to influence the world of deities and to determine the destiny of a human being after physical death.

When Minos ascended the Cretan throne, he asked Poseidon to send a bull for sacrifice. Yet, when the beautiful white bull emerged from the sea, Minos decided to keep it in his herds and sacrificed another animal. Later, Poseidon avenged the broken promise: he imposed on Minos' wife Pasiphae unnatural lust to the spared bull. According to the myth, Daedalus was moved by the suffering of the Minos' wife; he assisted her in making her dream come true***Σ6.***

The same Daedalus built a special palace – the Labyrinth, in which Minos hid his dishonor along with his infamous wife, with the monster she delivered, and with Daedalus and Daedalus' son Icarus. In his anger and shame, Minos began to sacrifice humans to Minotaur, yet, his female subjects, which always and in all civilizations, follow the example of the ruler's wives and concubines, began to imitate the Pasiphae's passion in relations to any of the available (and sometimes deified) beasts. Probably, that is how the rites of the goddess with snakes were implemented.

Daedalus constructed artificial wings and eventually fled the Labyrinth with his son, Icarus. Icarus obsessed with pride flew too high and too close to the Sun. The Sun melted wax, which connected Icarus' wings, and he perished in the sea, most likely as the punishment for "scientific inquiries" of his father. Consequently, the ancient inhabitants of Palestine (some sources identify them with the Phoenicians) made the annual sacrifice to the Sun by burning a boy who wore the eagle's wings.

Traditionally, all Cretan kings received the name of "Minos" and their subjects were called "Minoans." Probably, that is why some authors assume that "Minos" is a title of a "sacred" king, not a traditional royal name. The ritual of ascension to the throne included marriage of the Sun–king wearing the bull mask with the Moon–priestess wearing the horns of a cow. Obviously, bovid animals had a particular significance for the Minoans:

1/ Minos was a son of the main Greek deity (Zeus) who assumed the image of a bull, and after an intercourse with the bull, Pasiphae delivered the monster Minotaur: half–bull and half–man with a head of a bull, and with lower part of man's body. For the Minoans, such a composition of Minotaur signified the supremacy of the bestial deities over the man and a possibility of unification of the "divine" nature of the beast with the human nature

2/ the Moon–priestess wore the horns of a cow

3/ Minos sacrificed boys to the Minotaur, and Minotaur became the symbol of death for the world, which worshipped death.

The similarities of the Minoan white bull–Zeus and Moon–cow can be found

– in Egyptian religion: the white bull Apis was connected with deities of fertility and the dead; it was a sacred animal of Osiris – the main deity of the underworld; the Egyptians also had the cult of Serapis – a combination of Osiris with Apis (Serapis could be an Egyptian version of the Minoan Minotaur)

– in the Indo–Iranian mythology (the cosmic bull, whose blood gives fertility)

– in the mysterious cult of Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull and holding the double axe. This cult, which the Roman soldiers brought in Rome along with other fruits of their conquests, could also have the roots in the cult of an ancient Vedic deity Shiva the Bull Rider – embodiment of death, destroyer, and creator; other sources either assert that Jupiter Dolichenus originated from the Hittite deity of fertility or associate it with the main Zoroastrian deity Ahura Mazda

– in the cult of Istar (Akkadia) also known as Astarte (Western Asia), Inanna (Sumeria), Ashtoreth (the nations, which surrounded Israel), Isis/Hathor (Egypt; in Egypt, Hathor was identified with a cow), Aphrodite (Greece), Hera (Greece; Hera's sacred animal was a cow), Juno (Roman version of Hera), and the others.

The horns of bull and serpent were common attributes of deities of nations leaving in vast space from Mediterranean to Mesopotamia: original image of Dionysus was horned serpent; the Mesopotamian bas–relief (Paris, Louvre) portrays Naram–Suen the king in Mesopotamia (descendant of Sargon – founder of Akkadian dynasty, twenty–third century B.C.) with the crown similar to those of Egyptian pharaohs, yet carrying the horns as attributes of deity.

Although the different nations had the different (local) versions of the female deity and worshipped them as the queen of the universe, goddess of death, war, love, fertility, weather, etc., the vast majority of the Mediterranean–Asian cults of death were connected with the bull, cow, and serpent, and their rites included mandatory human and animal sacrifices.

The surviving myths and references to the rites of the Minoan goddess with snakes/the Moon–goddess (as well as the rites similar to those of the Minoans, especially, Phrygian and other local versions of female deity in Asia Minor, North Africa, and continental Greece) describe the wild rites and orgies during which women intoxicated themselves by wine and narcotic substances. Then, with frenetic dances, women entered into a state of frenzy intended to transform them into the wild she–brutes that copulated with humans and animals and killed humans and animals. These rites were intended to confirm unity of life (identified with the sex) with death.

The sexual promiscuity of the priestesses and their consequent insanity and degeneration (and consequent insanity and degeneration of their children) contributed into ultimate enthronement of the patriarchal social and political order and establishment of the male deity as the head of hierarchy. The myth of Orpheus sustains an assumption that the rituals of "sacred" prostitution were instituted in an attempt to control bestial lechery, which women developed through imitation of the beasts during the wild rites of female deities. Probably, men assumed that this kind of "service" to the deities did not threaten survival of the society and even had an appearance of the sanctioned piety, because "sacred" prostitution and sodomy practiced at temples as the rites of worship.

It looks like the Minoans recognized the logical connection between following the law as the essence of the nature, and continuing existence of any system, which is an embodiment of the law. They comprehended the law as the life and death condition; death was the main deity and the main law of the Minoan world.

In the symbolic form, the Minoan law of death became the inexorable Fate of ancient Greek tragedies: the ancient gods, especially as embodiments of the forces of the Nature, along with their mortal authors were subjects to Fate – the destiny.

The Minoan priests–kings invented the sophisticated rituals of human sacrifices; during one of them, which was intended to prevent the earthquakes and volcanic eruptions and to secure plentiful harvest, the bulls killed leaping dancers.

The bones of sacrificed children discovered at the Knossos' palace signify that the slices of flesh were removed from the bodies. This finding corroborates the ancient myth of Zagreus, a son of Zeus and Persephone (the ancient version of Dionysus) who was killed and his flesh was devoured (by the Titans – embodiments of the earth powers): each year, a boy–surrogate for Minos the Bull–king was sacrificed and the priests along with members of the royal elite ate raw flesh of the sacrificed child. Later, this rite was performed in the ninth year of king's rule (in the year of the hundredth lunation). Probably, insufficiency of boys caused such modification, although the surrounding nations were under the obligation to send young boys and girls from the noble families as a particular tribute to the Minoan rulers (boys were sacrificed to the Minotaur and other idols; girls were trained to become the leaping dancers).

In other Mediterranean and Asia Minor lands, the human sacrifices accompanied all main festivities. For instance,

– at the dawn of the next day after Babylonian New Year, a boy was sacrificed

– in Greece, boys and girls wearing ivy and corn wreaths were killed at the harvest orgies: during special autumn orgies, the priestess of Moon–goddess tore children and animals to pieces

– the priestess dressed as mares devoured the sacred king (or his substitute) at the end of his reign.

Seemingly, for the Minoans, death was the supreme power whose authority even deities could not diminish: the Minoans invented the death of gods. They

believed that their Zeus (son of the goddess with snakes; he also assumed the bull's image) died; they venerated his grave (on Mt. Iouktas), from which he rose to become the deity of vegetation and fertilizing rain.

Many centuries later, the mythology of the Northern barbarian tribes (the ancestors of the Teutonic race) became the culmination of the myths concerning "the mortal god" of the Minoans and the woman's authority over death. The Northern world is the world of death under the power of female deity: Freya – deity of love and beauty – is a personification of death. Ultimately, death will overcome gods: they are doomed to die in the final battle with the giants – embodiments of the powers of earth. The mortals are destined to fight along with their gods and to die with them. Finally, the serpent will destroy the Earth, because it incessantly gnaws the root of the tree, which sustains the Universe and penetrates all worlds: deities, men, and giants. Only one myth in the Elder Edda provides the glimpse of hope: after death of gods and men and after destruction of the present Earth under the black Sun, the new Earth and new Heavens ruled by "the One Beyond the Reach of Evil" will come to existence [Hamilton 300–302, 311–313]. Again, all the key–players are present: the tree, the serpent, woman, and death. This myth contributed to the foundation of the Nietzsche's mythical philosophy – the component of neo–pagan cult, on which Nazism was developed.

This myth also explains why the ancient heathens ascribed to death the absolute power over life: they knew the reason of their misery. The serpent that gnaws the root of the tree sustaining the Universe (the tree of life), can be identified with the ancient beast of the Genesis, which tempted woman, triggered their exile from the original world, doomed mankind to death, and eventually, will be destroyed along with the world {*Genesis 3:1–24; 2 Peter 3:7, 10–13; Revelation 20:2, 10*}, in which death and its preliminary stage – corruption – are the actuality.

The Minoans had the cult of a sacred tree: they worshipped a myrtle tree, which for them was the tree of death, because Artemis the Hanged One and Ariadne (a daughter of Pasiphae; Ariadne was deified and worshiped as one of the Cretan goddesses) hanged themselves on a tree, probably, as a part of death rites. The rites of the tree of death included hanging of wooden or clay dolls with pierced limbs. The Phoenicians (the Phoenician civilization was the Minoan sister–civilization) modified this ritual: the Minoan myrtle tree became the wooden cross of the Phoenicians on which they initially crucified victims–substitutes for their rulers; later crucifixion became the main form of capital punishment for unsuccessful generals, prisoners of war, and criminals.

The Egyptians carried hanged puppets during the Dionysian festivals. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians borrowed this ritual from the Phoenicians.

It looks like all three civilizations follow the Babylonian tradition, which connects the tree with death: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil produced the fruit, which delivered suffering and death to humankind {*Genesis 2:9, 16–17; 3:2–20*}. The memory of the fruit of this tree (apple or pomegranate according to the climate and conditions of a particular land) underlies the Greek mythology; for instance,

— the golden apple from the Garden of Hesperides – the Sunset/Far West gardens (the gardens of death), which were guarded by Ladon the serpent that has an ability to speak. Red apple was also an attribute of Aphrodite (originally, the goddess of death and fertility) and a symbol of king's death; red apples were distributed to the population before the rites, especially, when the king had to be sacrificed after one hundred cycles of moon, in the ninth year after the king's enthronement (with time, the "sacred" kings learned to avoid such a destiny by sacrificing the substitute – prisoner of war or one of subjects, sometimes, own child; after a special ritual of "re–birth," they continued their rule)

— Hera the wife of Zeus (Hera originally was the goddess of death) held in her hand a pomegranate – the fruit of death: a pomegranate tree sprang from the blood of Dionysus, son of Zeus when the Titans tore his body apart according to order of Hera who intended to revenge Zeus' infidelity with murder of his son

— Cora/Persephone (a daughter of Demeter – the goddess of fertility and agriculture) had to stay at Tartarus (the realm of the dead) at least three months (winter, when trees and fields are fruitless), because in the gardens of Tartarus, she had eaten food of the dead – pomegranate seeds. Cora received the name Persephone the queen of Tartarus after Hades, the main deity of underworld, kidnapped Cora, became her husband, and Zeus decided do not break the marriage.

For the Minoans, who shed blood of humans and animals in abundance, the color of blood – red – became the color of death. Consequently, many Mediterranean nations held the taboo on the red–colored food, which they sacrificed to the dead.

[[*An interesting detail: the bolshevist and communist countries, which became the slaughterhouses for the significant part of their population, have red–colored flags and symbols.***]]**

The connection between the goddess with snakes and Eve is evident: those who established the Minoan civilization remembered the initial connection to God–Creator and the Eve's role in destiny of men {*Genesis 3:1–24*}. The ancient myths concerning the tree and fruits of death (especially the apple from the Garden of Hesperides guarded by the snake who could speak) reveal how the imagination interprets prehistoric memory of the evil, which caused expulsion from the Paradise and brought death to mankind. The Phoenicians embellished this interpretation with the logical conclusion: they began to decorate the tree of death with the fruits of the ultimate evil – humans dying in agony.

In general, the Minoan civilization is death–oriented; it embodies delusion and suffering of the mind, which accepted death as the reality of existence and worships death as to the main deity. The Minoan beliefs reflect the worst assumptions and associations the human mind ever was able to produce: dualism with such logical conclusions as the cult of death, supremacy of the beasts over humans, and necessity of the human sacrifice as the means to avert the anger of deified beasts.

From another angle of consideration, dualism embodied in image of the goddess with snakes that holds the power over life and death, reflects the merge of two opposite visions of woman –

—— life, because of a body capable of reproduction (in the Minoan system of beliefs, an ability of reproduction is the power over life)

—— death, because of the mind, which lusts after the knowledge of good and evil and believes that this knowledge opens the way to become deity (that is the origin of death).

The logical consequences of such a vision include

a/ deification of the matter, e.g., Aristotle's doctrine of the eternal uncreated and indestructible matter, which produced materialism

b/ misogyny, e.g., Plato's social and political utopias, in which women are deprived of family life, motherhood, and even forbidden to deliver a child without permission of the authorities, and Aristotle's *Oeconomics*, which places women at the level of slaves and animals.

Seemingly, the Minoan civilization was merciful to woman. Men's imagination (wounded by pride, defiant, and fixed on non–acceptance of God's punishment for disobedience) transformed the disobedience of woman seduced by the serpent into the reason for her deification. The woman who was deceived, exiled, and condemned to pain of childbirth, to slavery, and to death, became the goddess, which holds the snakes, thus, logically, should have the power over the main animal deity (the serpent). Women were given some liberties; they could appear at public events, possess wealth, influence decisions of kings, rule with kings (for instance, as chief–priestesses), and kill and devour the king (or his substitute) in the year of the hundredth lunation, etc.

However, this apparent humanity resulted in the most inhumane beliefs and actions: the Minoans

1/ put to death the fruit of a woman's body (a child) as the sacrifice intended to appease deified beasts and to empower men

2/ defiled woman's body by bestiality rites.

Although the Minoan civilization became the logically complete reality of ultimate perversion with its inseparable companions – slavery and death of reason, the following generations imitated the Minoan arts and life–style, envied unmatched (for their times) wealth of the Minoans and their supremacy over the entire Mediterranean region, and incorporated their outlook and beliefs into own theological and philosophical doctrines.

The belief that human sacrifice would please the deity is the most terrifying inheritance of the Minoans. This belief could be born only within the heathen world without true knowledge of God. The ability to sacrifice a human being (especially, a child) demands the perverted values, which, along with absence of humanity, usually accompany degeneration of human nature and decay of the intellect. Sacrifice of a child for the sake of the others is the reality of societies, which consist from the beings that are lower than animals, because animals (including predators) protect life of their offspring even until own death.

The myth of Pasiphae reflects another deadly legacy of the Minoans: they used for deification of beasts the remnants of primeval knowledge of the mysteries of creation {*in particular, that a human body, all living creatures, and the entire Universe have the same source of origin, although they are different compositions–variations of the matter created by God, and therefore, exist at the different levels of complexity, which must not be intermingled – Genesis 1:1–27;*

2:7; 3:20; Leviticus 19:19; 1 Corinthians 15:39–41}. They recognized supremacy of the beasts over the humans, and then, assumed a possibility of unification of humans with beasts with the purpose of "elevating" human nature at the level of animal nature.

As it happens with all religions and all societies, which they control, the religious beliefs penetrated daily life and shaped overall development of the heathen societies. For instance, deification of beasts and worship through perverted sexual rites became the part of daily life. This can be confirmed by the following events:

– in fifteenth century B.C., Moses defines perverted sexual rites (including copulation with ***τετραπουν*** – four–footed animal, cattle, beast, brute) practiced by the heathen native nations as abomination to God; the laws of Moses established capital punishment for those who follow the heathen perversion {*Leviticus 18:22–30*}

– in A.D. first century, St. Peter the Apostle and St. Paul the Apostle mention "unlawful idolatries" (***αθεμιτοις ειδωλολατρειαις***), deification of beasts (including ***τετραποδων και ερπετων*** – four–footed animals and reptiles), and consequent "dishonorable passions" (***εις παθη ατιμιας***) and uncleanness of the heathens, which the followers of Lord Jesus Christ must avoid {*1 Peter 4:3–5; Romans 1:18–32*}

– in A.D. second century, Apuleius described two trivial episodes: a rich woman with lust to the beast of burden (an ass), and a female criminal condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts, yet, before, to be mated with the beast of burden (an ass) in the sight of the Corinthian population, at the arena [Apuleius].

The next part of deadly legacy of the Minoan civilization is the assumption of complete dependence of human being on their imaginary "gods:" a human being is an absolute slave of the deities, which in fact, are the products of human imagination. This attitude penetrates all myths inherited from the Minoans and underlies Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, which the learned Greeks (for instance, such as Alexander of Macedonia) knew by heart. Homer portrays the humans as the puppets of deities: the deities originate thoughts and control actions of men; the entire Universe is a big arena on which the humans live and die for amusement of deities. Later, Aristotle would define slavery as the "universal" order of the ***κοσμος*** and assert slavery as the "natural" foundation of human societies and all political, social, and religious institutions.

If to accept the actuality – that all heathen deities are figments of human imagination, the Minoan civilization reveals itself as the greatest tragedy of mankind: the Minoan world is the realm of death in which phantasms rule the actuality and the lifeless idols are fed with human blood. This realm man created for himself with the logic of insufficiency – the logic of death***Σ5,*** with which he attempted to materialize his vision of gods – created the idols, and then, began worship own figments of imagination and creations of own hands.

In this realm, man cognized the ultimate evil: slavery of the mind, that is the death of reason following to the restricted perception (the material things only) and acceptance of the material things as the deities. In this realm of death, man lives by the law of death: he is born by a slave, lives as a slave, procreates slaves, and dies as a slave.

The consequent civilizations, which absorbed the Minoan legacy, also became embodiments of the law of death, firstly, because they are fruits of the dreaming mind poisoned by false knowledge, living by phantasms, and therefore, incapable of free thinking.

From such a point of view, the Socrates' definition of slavery as the death of reason

— becomes almost improbable insight into the essence of the heathenism; improbable because it is professed by man who is not supposed to know the truth, which makes men free, and who chose to die as a slave under the power of the laws, created by the society of slaves to control the slaves

— looks like a myth – one more utopia born by Plato's mind, which imagined freedom in the same fashion as it imagined the realm of deities full of forms–ideas whose thoughts and deeds Plato the philosopher "knew" and made known for his followers.

The Minoan civilization left the logically complete imaginary world of death, which, although imaginary, is sustained with blood of real living human beings. In this world, the main deity is death, and its embodiments – deified living beasts and graven images inspired by the beasts – are fed with human flesh and blood. The Minoan system of beliefs discloses the logic of death and facilitates understanding of the heathenism as the realm of death, in which a human being passes through all stages of death of body and intelligence/reason: corruption, perversion, and physical death – either as a victim sacrificed to idols or as a degenerated being incapable of life.

The logical foundation on which the Minoans' beliefs evolved and their civilization reached its summit and destruction, includes

— assumption of a possibility of cognition of the nature of things by their material parameters and manifestations; otherwise, the belief in deified beasts and sacrifices before the stone/gold/wooden statues would not be possible

— assumption of a possibility to define the nature of things by the parameters and manifestations of the matter; otherwise, the Minoans, for instance, would not practice magic and observe the rituals and rites of worship during which humans wore the masks and skins of beasts and presented themselves as embodiments of their bestial deities.

The Minoans' legacy includes the following features and traits (***1*** *through* ***9***); some of them still might be traced in the life of contemporary societies.

1. Deification of the evil by accepting dualism as the belief that the good and the evil have the same source of origin and that the good and the evil are the universal and equal forces, which define the fate of the entire Universe and the fate of each creature within the Universe.

2. Deification of death by belief in the absolute power of death, even over the main male deity, and by establishing the all–inclusive cult of all–powerful and all–controlling death with the mandatory rites of human and animal sacrifice.

3. Denigration of man.

4. Deification of the beasts and worship of the beasts with the consequent

– assumption of the supremacy of animal nature and recognition of superiority of the beasts over the humans

– admission of a possibility of sexual unity of humans with the beasts for the sake of unification of human and animal natures because of assumption that human and animal "flesh" are compatible, and fusion of the human body and body of an animal would elevate the human nature at the higher level – the level of beasts. The practical inferences from this assumption include cannibalism and sodomy. The logic behind this assumption:

blood of humans and blood of animals has the same color and sustains life of flesh of humans and animals

⇓

humans eat animals and live; animals eat humans and live; animals eat animals and live;
so, humans can eat humans and live;

⇓

therefore,

⇓

if every kind of flesh prolongs existence of another kind of flesh, all kinds of flesh are the same,
or at least, are compatible

Following this logic, Hippocrates (~460–377? B.C.) – "the Father of Medicine," began to practice vivisection of animals with the consequent expansion of his observations on humans. Since, even today, the medical and biological sciences follow his example. Annually, the legions of laboratory rodents and other animals end their existence in tortures and suffering, because researchers use them for experiments intended to study and influence the human nature under the assumption of a possibility to find in animals the causes of incurable human diseases. In fact, this practice is the present–day form of sacrifice on the altar of false beliefs and a confirmation that the contemporary science is the direct heir of the heathen death– and idol–worshipers. Also, it has the same effect that all pagan rites of worship have: nothing good, healthy, and helpful for human beings.

For instance, although rodents and other laboratory animals and their transgenic modifications provide plenty of "discoveries" for the researchers, although

they became the model for studying humans, although they are used for development and testing medical drugs intended for treatment of humans,

— none of the official purposes of the research (e.g., eradication of cancer and other lethal diseases) has been achieved

— many drugs have side effects, which are worst than the original disease

— the overall physical and mental health of the population might be evaluated by the enormous spending on health–related products and services as well as by the deterioration of quality of life, social instability, drug and other addictions, crimes, suicides, and other problems of the contemporary societies.

It looks like blind acceptance of the heathen beliefs and their derivative – heathen philosophy, fear deeply engraved with thousands of years of human sacrifices, and centuries–old traditions have deprived the contemporary inquiring mind of the ability of comprehension the human nature and recognition of human dignity. The mind of some researchers became incapable of logical thinking and therefore, understanding that animals, fish, birds, and humans have different "flesh" because they exist at the different levels of complexity, have different purposes and different places within the realm of the living. Therefore, any combination or mingling of human and "other flesh" is unnatural and will not result in true knowledge of the original nature – of humans as well as of animals.

5. Identification of the prime deity with the serpent and other beasts or identification of the serpent as the attribute/companion of the main deity, therefore, making improbable reconciliation with God for those who accept any part of the Minoan legacy.

6. Belief in a possibility to appease the deities with death of living beings – humans (children, women, and men) and animals.

7. Unification of the religious and secular authority in a person of "sacred" king–priest, who expanded his power over the realm of the dead, therefore became a prototype of the deified ruler who is presumed to possess the absolute power over body, mind, and soul of his subjects **[[***e.g., such as Egyptian pharaoh, the pope, etc.***]]**.

8. Creation of false knowledge – myths and oracles (precursor of propaganda) – as the means to sustain the social and political stability, and as the means to influence by false knowledge (usually, tailored to the local conditions and terms of existence) the actions of the subordinated (conquered) nations and the next targets (independent nations) in quest for expansion of domination.

9. Use of artificially evoked state of frenzy (insanity) with the purpose to over–stimulate imagination, which became the source of knowledge of the realm of gods, the realm of men, and the realm of animals. Divination is based on the artificially evoked (and afterward inherited) insanity or at least deep mental disorder, because only insanity and deep mental disorder would allow admission of beliefs and practices, which are incompatible with the human nature and irrational; for instance, such as belief in a possibility of self–identification with the beasts and such expressions of this belief, for instance, as devouring of raw human and animal flesh and sodomy.

Will Durant refers to the Minoan civilization as to "the first link in the European chain" [Durant 21], although the insufficient knowledge of the Past enshrouds the actual beginning of this chain. If to see the Minoan civilization as the beginning, one thing is certain: mankind began its ascent to humanity from the very depth of bestiality.

However, any analysis, any consideration, any search for anything valuable in the heathen past of mankind should be conducted with the comprehensive understanding that any ritual, any belief, any assumption, any rite, any cult, any religion, which either demands human sacrifice or denigrates the human nature, is not able to contain any humane doctrine, to produce any humane thought, and to contain any truth concerning God and man, whichever symbolic–mystical–philosophical–etc. interpretations are provided. Probably, such understanding might be seen as the best part of the Minoan legacy.

After the Minoans vanished, the priests, diviners, and philosophers of the consequent civilizations began to re–tell the Minoan myths and rituals with the language of philosophical symbols and infuse humane ethical concepts into them. The modified Minoan myths formed the foundation of the secret mystical teachings that use the symbols of the material world to describe the spiritual life of soul. The Orphism, which underlies Plato's "secret and sacred knowledge" of the consummated philosopher and his social and political utopia, Aristotle's "eternal indestructible matter," which became the core of his theological, philosophical, and political concepts, philosophical and theological doctrines of the Stoics, Gnostics, Manicheans – all of them have their piece of the Minoan legacy. Through them, the Minoans continue to influence life of the current civilization. For instance, from the Aristotelian concept of eternal deified matter, the materialism sprang with such its fruits, for instance, as Marxism and Marxist dialectics.

Although technical attributes, clothing, customs, manner of life and communication, and other features of daily life changed with time, for all consequent civilizations, which assumed the Minoan legacy, especially the Minoan logic, the ancient evil continued to work: during the next five thousand years, each new generation created a new circle of Inferno on the Minoan foundation.

Phoenician Civilization

The Phoenician civilization [sources in: Graves; James; Markoe; Polybius; Servadio; *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*; *The Sunset Knowledge*; and the others] emerged about 2750 B.C., when Tyre was founded; and ended in 146 B.C., when the Romans destroyed Carthage and spread salt on its grounds to make the soil barren and to prevent re–population of the land; the peak of wealth and prosperity lasted from twelfth to fifth centuries B.C.

The Phoenician civilization shares the roots with the Minoan civilization. If to follow the myth, the Phoenician civilization might be called the sister–civilization of the Minoans: Phoenix (an eponymous ancestor of the Phoenicians in the Greek mythology) was a brother of Cadmus and Europe who was kidnapped by Zeus and delivered his son Minos. "Phoenix" means "red," and for the ancient pagans, red was the color of death: the myth defines the particular expectations concerning the Phoenician world.

According to the Septuagint {*Genesis 9:20–27; 10:6, 15–20*}, Sidon, a son of Canaan, became an ancestor of the Sidonians, who later were called the Phoenicians. Canaan, a son of Ham and grandson of Noah, was cursed for the sin of Ham against his father, Noah: he was destined to become slave to his brothers and relatives. Definitely, the curse of Noah has the meaning deeper than physical slavery, because, after the Minoan civilization collapsed, the Sidonians/Phoenicians assumed the power over the sea and became the richest nation of the Mediterranean region.

From the land of Canaan, the Phoenicians spread all over the Mediterranean: they settled in Northern Africa and colonized Anatolia, Levant, Cyprus, and other islands. Their skills in naval expeditions, trade, wood and ivory carving, manufacturing of dyed clothing, embroidery, gold, metal, and glass works were unsurpassed in their times. The survived gold and bronze statutes, and figurines made of ivory and precious stones illustrate the outstanding craftsmanship. King Solomon employed the subjects of Hiram the king of Tyre to make artifacts of gold, silver and other metal and fabrics and carving works for the temple in Jerusalem {*2 Chronicles 2:1, 3–14*}.

However, the figurines and statues identified as images of the Phoenician deities have vicious and ugly faces and malformed bodies; the craftsmen either lost the sense of beauty, which was the feature of the Minoan sister–civilization, or reserved it for other craft works; probably, they ascribed to their idols the corruption and loathsome inner essence of their contemporaries.

Contrary to the archeological evidence [e.g., in: James 43;], some researchers assert that it was the Phoenicians who invented the alphabet and writings [e.g., in: Servadio 3, 75]. So, logical expectations should be discovery of plenty of Phoenician texts. Yet, besides business and temple records and inscriptions on tombs, this civilization left practically nothing: there are no written documents, tablets, scrolls, scripts, etc., which would reveal the foundation of cultural and intellectual life. After the Punic wars and destruction of Carthage by the Romans in the second century B.C., the Phoenicians' cultural and intellectual life perished; with time, they were almost forgotten. The references to them might be found only in the Holy Scriptures***Σ7***, the Assyrian chronicles, and few works of the Greek and Roman authors – the scarce and hostile mentions left by the Hebrew Prophets and priests, scribes, and philosophers of the Mediterranean nations, with which the Phoenicians conducted commerce, waged wars, and among which they lived and vanished. Probably, the adverse silence of the Past explains why

the published studies of the Phoenician civilization are less numerous than those of their ancient Greek and Egyptian counterparts. Still, there is another language – the language of deeds and interactions with the neighboring nations, which might convey the essence of the lost civilization.

In their time, the Phoenicians were famous for their divination, magic, maledictions, and superstition; they were known as the corrupt, brutal, and conniving people. The morals and ethics of their rulers might be inferred from the Bible's description of Jezebel the Phoenician princess. Jezebel was the wife of Achaab the king; she re–introduced the cult of Baal in the Promised Land and became the most hatred woman in the history of Israel. The corruption of Jezebel was so terrible and inconsistent with human nature that after her death, she was deprived from natural burial. As Elias the prophet foretold, her flesh was eaten by ***κυνες*Σ8** – tamed beasts {*3 Kings 20:1–24; 4 Kings 9:6–10, 30–37*}, which, as dogs, consumed waste and dead flesh.

The Phoenicians invented the capital punishment by crucifixion***Σ9***; – the ultimate evil of inhumanity, hopelessness, and agonizing death; they crucified their military leaders who lost their battles, some prisoners of war, and the criminals who "did not deserve" to be burned in the belly of their bull–headed deity.

The Phoenicians employed paid mercenaries for the land wars, yet, only the Phoenicians could be sailors, enroll in the naval troops, and become generals and other military leaders. They were the most skilled and ruthless kidnappers, slave–traders, pirates, and merchants. The ancient hypocrites held the Phoenicians responsible for introduction of luxury and greed into the post–Minoan Greece and the consequent corruption and decay of the ancient Greek political and social institutions.

The works of the Greek and Latin authors allow conclusion that the Phoenician civilization had the unique political structure: it was the conglomerate of independent, yet, similar cities–states and their colonies, which spread all over the Mediterranean shores. The Phoenician cities–states were the self–sufficient and self–reproducing systems; nevertheless, the colonies sent their tribute to the mother–cities – initially, to Sidon and Tyre, then (after Alexander of Macedonia conquered Sidon and Tyre in 332 and 330 B.C.) to Carthage.

From all strategies, which might be found in the history of mankind, the aggressively seeking total domination power and wealth Phoenicians developed the most successful strategy of expansion and assimilation of other nations.

Phoenician civilization was spread by human "cells" – the families, which carried the seed of civilization – religious beliefs and outlook; slowly, yet irreversibly, it assimilated–consumed the Mediterranean nations. The newcomers built settlements in new lands, began trade and manufacturing, penetrated all circles of the societies, and exploited all opportunities of influence they could find. Ultimately, the rooted families established the bases – the centers, which sustained the further expansion and assimilation, and the new wave of migrants moved to other lands.

The overall process of Phoenician expansion reminds the spread of cancer through metastasis: self–reproducing systems (carcinogenic cells) root themselves into the tissues and blood vessels' walls and modify them; then, they begin to extract and consume the resources of the host for own development; then, they produce new active cells carrying the attacking DNA. These killers penetrate other organs and tissues; eventually, they transform the normal flesh of the host into the malignant tumor – conglomerate of the perverted/modified cells transformed by the attackers and living by death of the host.

Polybius left a description of Carthage – the main Phoenician center in the time of its decline, not long before the ultimate destruction; he writes that the original Phoenician political institutions were similar to those of Sparta and Rome, yet, they became corrupted. For instance, the politicians obtain offices with open bribery (the Romans punished by death such entrepreneurial efforts). The ordinary people have the "supreme" influence on the state affairs; such kind of democracy Polybius considers as one of the reason of decline, because in Rome, "the best men" made the state decisions.

It looks like the Phoenicians were business people indeed: they transferred to their deity the periodical duties of their sacred king (to be murdered and sacrificed). Probably, because the permanent political structures had to pursue enrichment and expansion of the settlements without interruptions and complications, which are inevitable for the establishments undergoing frequent replacements of leaders. As the matter of fact, the Phoenicians had the most advanced (for their times) social and political order tailored to the purposes of expansion and accumulation of wealth.

Two political institutions were responsible for life–maintenance in their settlements: the Senate and the People's Assembly (the ancient republican style). The municipalities with the annually elected officials supervised the cities.

The Phoenician women had the right to own and to bequest the property; the slaves were allowed to marry, to offer sacrifices, and to buy own freedom.

The Phoenicians had lunar calendar; the main festivities with human and animal sacrifices were connected with phases of vegetation e.g., harvest, and New Year. As the Minoans, they believed in death of the deities. Josephus and Lucian [ref. in: Markoe 117–120] describe the annual celebrations in Tyre and Byblos: the priests burned a male deity in effigy and then, celebrated its re–birth through marriage with Astarte, which absorbed many features of the Minoan goddess with snakes. This rite symbolized the yearly cycle of vegetation and restoration of the cosmic order.

The Phoenicians' religion might be interpreted as the cult of fire: they ascribed to fire the power of purification. The rite of burning people as sacrifice to their deities was intended to purify the population and the land. The human sacrifice was maintained "by decree of the people." Suicide by jumping into the pyre was recognized as the road to immortality. Those who died by ordinary death were condemned to the realm of eternal fog ruled by the goddess of darkness indifferent to suffering and prayers of men; in this world of eternal alienation, the dead had to wander alone in the fog: unable to perceive anything and unable to find the way to light.

Two main rites characterized the essence of the Phoenicians' civilization for the contemporaries – other Mediterranean nations: death and prostitution.

The Phoenicians burned their children (especially the first–born fruits of "sacred" prostitution) as the sacrifice to the male deity, and condemned their daughters to prostitution as the sacrifice to the female deity; the male prostitution also was the part of the Phoenician reality. The temples provided the permanent (living and working at the temple premises) female and male prostitutes as the part of the overall religious service to the society.

The special group of population – professional clergy headed by the king (chief–priest) and queen (chief–priestess) – performed the service of deities, offered sacrifices, and oversaw the population. The temple personnel included priests, permanent male and female prostitutes, butchers, and "sacrificer."

In fact, the "sacrificer" was an executioner: he cut throat to the victims, drained blood, and put the victims into the hands of the idol from which they felt into the blazing furnace hidden in the idol's belly. Sometimes, the sacrificers placed the victims with bound feet and faces covered with special masks at the open brazier under the hands of the idol and cremated victims in the sight of the worshippers. Cleitarchus describes the idol with the hands outstretched over a brazier, on which a child was burnt. When Ezekiel the prophet conveys the warning of the Lord concerning destruction of the Ammonites (who had the rites similar to Phoenician rites), he describes the common rite of human sacrifice: they are the food of the fire and their blood remains on the ground {*Ezekiel 21:28–32*}.

The Phoenician pantheon included idols adopted from the Greeks, the Egyptians, and other surrounding nations; two main deities led the hierarchy of idols in all cities and settlements:

– Moloch or Baal, the male flesh–thirsty deity of fire and drought; it was made as a bronze statue of man with the head of a bull (similar to the Minoan Minotaur) and outstretched hands; the sacrifices – children, adults, and animals were placed into the hands of the idol and rolled down, into the blazing fire burning within the belly of statue

– Astarte/Balaat/Tanit, the female deity of life, death, fertility, earth, and underworld; as soon as girls reached the child–bearing age, they had to become the temporary prostitutes at Astarte' temple and to sell their virginity as the sacrifice to Astarte; only after they performed their service (and the priests of Astarte received payment) they were allowed to return home and to be given into marriage.

The ruins of temples and chapels do not contain images/statutes of Phoenician deities: there are empty thrones and the betyls – standing stones or "divine markers." Some architectural details are covered with images of the "sacred" serpents and solar disks. Some researchers ascribe to the Phoenician religion aniconic tradition, as in Byblos [Markoe 125]. However, the assumption of aniconism cannot be reconciled with the sacrificial rites performed before the bronze statues of Baal/Moloch; also figurines of lesser deities survived. Probably, the empty thrones in the temples, as well as the exceptional place of the fire in the system of beliefs, might be interpreted as the remnants of the memory of God Who has no image and form; in this case, the statutes Baal/Moloch in the places of sacrifice could symbolize the ruthless earthly powers over the cursed men.

The following examples illustrate the Phoenician piety [Servadio 97; Markoe 66; Diodorus; also ref. in: Markoe 133]:

— when the Greek army threatened Carthage, the noble families sacrificed own children in an attempt to secure survival of the city: in 306 B.C., two hundred children, and in 310 B.C., five hundred children were burned – almost all new generation of the Carthage "nobility" was exterminated by own parents who explained the siege of their city with the wrath of their deity, because previously, instead of their own children, they sacrificed children purchased from the poor

— after one of the victories, three thousand prisoners of war were burned as the token of appreciation for the assumed assistance of the deity.

Archeological excavations at the place where Carthage was situated led the archeologists to conclusion that sacrifices of children increased in the last centuries before ultimate destruction: if in the seventh century B.C., animal sacrifices prevailed (an animal could be substituted for a child), three centuries later, burials contain mostly bones of children. According to an estimate [Markoe 135], in the fourth–third centuries B.C., it was about twenty thousand urns with the remains of burned infants. Obviously, the Phoenicians made the significant "progress": the increase of victims reflects the accelerated self–annihilation.

The philosophical foundation of the Phoenician civilization and the rationale behind the Phoenician religion cannot be found in the written documents – they did not survive. Seemingly, there is no information sufficient for understanding why their beliefs, which other nations held to be inhumane and repulsive, attracted even the Israelites who already were given the Law and knowledge of God and who were well informed of the Canaanites' genealogy and the curse of Noah***Σ7***.

However, history of the Phoenicians provides some clues concerning the logic behind their religion:

— they identified their main deity with fire

— their inferno was the eternal blinding impenetrable fog

— they have a particular attraction to maledictions.

The belief in a possibility to purify the people and the land by burning human sacrifices – especially, the first–born – might be interpreted as an attempt to erase the curse of Noah {*Genesis 9; 10*}. Noah cursed Canaan for the sin of his father – Ham; Sidon – the first–born son of cursed Canaan became the ancestor of the Phoenicians who sacrificed children as atonement for the sins of the parents. The particular attraction to maledictions suggests that, definitely, the Phoenicians knew the burden of the curse. The belief in the realm of fog and alienation, which expects all who died by natural death, allows assumption that mothers of sacrificed children could find at least some comfort by imagining that their children who "passed the fire" are given the Eternal Bliss.

There is no reasonable explanation of "sacred" prostitution besides

1/ the referred above assumption of an attempt to curb and control the rites of the female deity, which the Phoenicians could borrow from the Minoans

2/ the blame put on Eve for the original sin and consequent suffering of mankind {*Genesis 3*}.

Another detail also should be considered, if comprehension of the ancients' logic is wanted. The ancient tradition ascribes to the first–born child a particular significance as to the heir and main descendant of the family's legacy. For the Phoenicians, however, the first–born children were the carriers of the curse. Probably, they condemned their daughters to the "sacred" prostitution in attempt to transfer the burden of the curse upon the descendants of the unknown men. So, the first–born were not welcome in the husband's household. From such a point of view, the inhumane ritual served appeasement of blood–thirsty deity and purification of the land and society, as well as preservation of familial inheritance, yet, it imposed the unspeakable humiliation and suffering on woman.

The Holy Scriptures provide an explanation of the Phoenician history: the Book of Wisdom refers to the native inhabitants of the Promised Land (including, mainly, the descendants of Canaan) as to the cursed from the beginning, merciless murderers of children and devourers of human flesh, as to those with the inborn malice who would not change their thinking, and who, in their self–deceit, worship the loathsome beasts {*Wisdom 12:3–24*}. Obviously, the curse of Canaan included the curse of enslavement to corrupted imagination: his descendants made idols and worshiped ruthless deities–figments of own imagination by sacrificing living human being.

Wherever the Phoenicians settled, they carried with them their religious rites: it means that they burned their children and condemned their daughters to prostitution voluntarily. Obviously, the Phoenician priests had developed means of persuasion and abilities to make their beliefs logically justified and acceptable for the mass population. For instance, although the Roman Empire destroyed the Phoenician civilization and abolished the inhumane religion in the second century B.C., still, four centuries later, in A.D. second century, the population of Northern Africa (Tunisia) secretly continued ritual infant sacrifices [Tertullian ref. in: Markoe 136].

Indeed, the curse of Noah entailed the worst kind of slavery – the slavery of the mind incapable of free thinking, therefore, incapable of discrimination between good and evil: the descendents of Ham lived and died in the darkness of inhumane religion of self–annihilation, which even during the ruthless times of heathenism made them the subject of hatred and aversion.

On the other hand, this aversion does not seem to be logical: the Phoenicians achieved the completion consistent with the essence of the cults practiced by other nations. In particular, all surrounding nations offered human sacrifices – men, women, children – to their idols. The Phoenicians included own infants in a pool of sacrificial offerings (along, for instance, with the state offerings in a case of prisoners of war) and allowed families to make their decisions: ultimately, a family decided would it sacrifice a particular child, would it offer an animal instead of a child, or would it buy a child of a poor family to sacrifice instead of one of their own. Probably, the difference was in something else; perhaps, only in details: pious worshipers from other nations offered other people's children; the pious Phoenicians offered their own children (at least, delivered by women who were the members of the family). It means that – if to assume that a civilization is the particular manner of life based on the particular imaginary world – ultimately, the family was the seed of the Phoenician civilization as well as the main carrier of the curse of Canaan.

The Phoenician civilization became one of the greatest achievements in the unending spiral of the anti–evolution: it has a particular significance, because it reveals the potency of evil imagination and its power over the actuality of the societies, which are not protected by true knowledge of God and ideals of humanity that knowledge of true God opens.

The prophecy of Ezekiel the prophet concerning the Ammonites describes also the destiny of Phoenicians. Destiny of Phoenicians was similar to the fate of their human sacrifices: they were given into the hands of the cruel people proficient in destruction **[[***the Macedonians and the Romans***]]**, they became the food of the fire, their blood remained on the ground, and there would be no memory about them {*Ezekiel 21:31–32*}. Indeed, the Phoenicians' fate is obliteration; their main cities were demolished by Alexander of Macedonia (who slaughtered the population of Tyre in 332, and Sidon in 330 B.C.) and by the Roman Empire during the Punic wars (Carthage in 146 B.C.); the majority of population was exterminated.

The Phoenician civilization was condemned to the destruction and oblivion not only because it was the competitor, and therefore, the enemy of Rome: the Phoenicians were doomed because of the scale of evil they cognized and embodied into their religion, culture, and daily life and because of their inability to survive, which is an inseparable companion of the impaired by corruption and debilitated by evil reasoning. The available descriptions of the deeds of the Phoenicians allow conclusion that their knowledge of evil was absolute as much as it is possible for human mind to reach the absolute knowledge, and this evil was embodied into life of a family, which is the foundation and the pledge of survival of the society, state, and civilization.

Somehow, by intuition or by the memories, which their ancestor Ham brought from the pre–Flood world, the Phoenicians have penetrated the essence of evil: they created the patterns and strategies that still are unsurpassed by intensity of evil. Probably, that is why they invented the crucifixion***Σ9*** – the ultimate rejection of the value of human life and irreconcilable rebellion against God the Creator of life. However, the crucifixion also reflects death of the human soul – enslaved and debilitated by evil and agonizing under the curse of sin.

It might be inferred that the Phoenician civilization knew the phenomenon, which initiates collapse of human establishments – the philosophizing or dreaming mind: the destiny of the Phoenicians illustrates its consequences. The philosophizing mind makes own logic universal, imposes own perception of the world on the realms of which it knows nothing, and with fantasies–figments of imagination influences actions of the living. For instance, it creates the inferno and the paradise of the after–life according to reflections of life within the visible world of the matter **[[***e.g., the contemporary spiritual successors of the Phoenician civilization in the Middle East still crucify the people and send suicide–bombers to kill in the name of their religion; as the reward, they promise that the murderers*

– the deceived slaves deprived of life and happiness – will be taken in the paradise in which they, annihilated by fire carrying also suffering and death to the others, will have all their earthly desires, including their possession of virgins, fulfilled]].

The Phoenicians built their society as the ultimate embodiment of the evil. Although the Phoenician civilization was condemned to the oblivion because of the scale of evil it cognized and embodied into its religion, culture, and social life, and no written Phoenician legacy exists, the survived memories of the Phoenicians' deeds allow conclusion that their knowledge of evil was absolute as much as it is possible for human mind to reach the absolute knowledge. By their cunningness, corruption, the invention of crucifixion, and by their religion (especially, by the vision of the after–life), the Phoenicians convey essence of their civilization: slavery and death of human reasoning/intelligence debilitated by evil, agonizing under the curse of evil, and deprived of any hope of salvation by the blinding fog of ignorance and slavery.

Egyptian Civilization

The Egyptian civilization [sources in: Chaeremon; Plato *Timaeus*; Gilbert; Graves; Herodotus; Budge (1987) and (1988); *The Sunset Knowledge*; and the others] lasted from 3000 through 332 B.C., when Alexander of Macedonia made Egypt a part of his empire. Although the Egyptian civilization is one of the oldest civilizations, the Europeans discovered it only in the nineteenth century, after the Napoleon's conquests: the Egyptian influence on the Western civilization is not direct. Egyptian knowledge penetrated other sources, mainly, the Greek heathen philosophy, works of the Arabian and Asian authors, which the Crusaders brought in Europe.

Initially, the Egyptians made themselves disciples of the Chaldeans to obtain the access to the astronomical data, because the original Egyptian records had been destroyed by the Nile flood. With time, Egypt became the depository of knowledge for the contemporaries:

– Egyptian priests and scribes of pharaohs recorded information obtained by travelers, warriors, and diplomats [[*for their time, the priests–advisers of pharaohs developed one of the most successful of all known ancient intelligence services*]] and knowledge created by other nations

– the records and writings of the scribes, priests, pharaoh's advisers, etc., which were collected at temples, formed the core of the Alexandrian library that was one of the seven wonders of the Ancient world

– because of relative tolerance to the alien customs and alien gods, which the Egyptians developed during military conquests, religious, political, commercial, and cultural communications, the deserts of Egypt became the refuge for alien thinkers and different–minded identified as the heretics (in the relatively recent Past, among them, for instance, were the Gnostics, the Manicheans, and the Early Christians); the contribution of the different–minded was accessibility to other systems of thoughts.

The survived descriptions of communications among the Chaldean, Egyptian, and Greek priests, mariners, and merchants confirm the mutuality of religious knowledge as well as influence of the Egyptian civilization in other matters (especially, after the Minoan civilization vanished).

For instance, after the Unknown Ages following destruction of the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations, the Greeks found in Egypt the local version of the Minoan legacy – the "old" knowledge that Solon learned from the Egyptian priests. The Egyptian priests wore the garments of the Minoan fashion, which the Orphic initiated also accepted for their rites.

The vine cult and the rites of orgiastic worship as a form of group ecstasy came in Egypt, Pharos [[*Pharos was the Cretan island – the part of the Minoan territories*]], and India from the same source: according to the myth, Dionysus traveled in Egypt, Pharos, and India to enlighten the population.

In addition, Herodotus (480 B.C. – 430~424 B.C) writes that the Dionysian festivals in Egypt and Greece are almost the same and that the Egyptians know almost all Greek gods; so far, he mistakenly ascribes the source of this knowledge to the Phoenicians, because Homer and Hesiod composed their *Theogonies* only four centuries before; Herodotus also asserts that the Greeks know nothing concerning the time and place of origin and the forms of their gods.

However, Herodotus was well known for his inability to differentiate between truth and myth; for his inclination to follow (and to repeat) the popular opinions; the contemporaries granted Herodotus nickname "Father of Lies" mentioned by Plutarch in his work *On the Malice of Herodotus*. Thus, Herodotus' works might serve only as indirect confirmation of the developed connections of the Egyptians and their influence on the ancient world.

The core of the Egyptian civilization consisted from two subsystems: the remnants of true knowledge and its distorted projection – man–made religion crafted with the means of divination [[*see the following subchapter*]] for accomplishment of the definite worldly purposes. True knowledge in a form of secret sacred knowledge was in possession of the information elite: priests and their apprentices – philosophers and the rulers; the myths of man–made religion served as the means to control the population and to maintain social stability.

Two religious systems co–existed in the Ancient Egypt – monotheism and polytheism: monotheism was the secret religion of the elite; polytheism with all the deified beasts and flocks of nation–wide and local deities was reserved for the ordinary people.

Monotheistic religion venerated the Creator of the Universe. Initially, the monotheistic religion carried the remnants of primordial – true – knowledge of God; with time it was modified or distorted according to the delusion of priests–diviners and needs of their apprentices – rulers. Eventually, Egyptian monotheism became focused entirely on the visible celestial body – the Sun, and therefore, became ordinary heathen religion.

Polytheism was a conglomerate of cults of deities created by the Egyptian priests and borrowed from the earlier civilizations; the essence of these cults and their influence on life was the same as in all other ancient civilizations: the imaginary worlds populated with phantasms and figments of human imagination controlled the actuality and stipulated life and death of men. Along with the pure phantasms [[*e.g., invisible gods of the chaos and of the after–life*]], the Egyptian religion included the material objects – the planets and the beasts, and idols – statues and images of mythical derivatives, e.g., such as men–beasts, which focused the mind of the believers on the material objects of worship and facilitated imposing on their mind the particular beliefs. The religious system, designated for the main population supposed to control life of ordinary people, thus

— to facilitate the manageability of the society

— to preserve stability of the social structures

— to prevent dissemination of knowledge, which could lead to freedom of thinking, thus to possibility of unpredictable behavior of the subjects following with social and political instability.

The overall outcome of the Egyptian civilization includes such inventions of the priests–philosophizers as

1/ discovery of chaos, attempts to comprehend its essence, and to imagine (because they created knowledge by divination) the laws, which control it and understanding of which would allow knowledge of the future***Σ10***

2/ the art of creation of the false theological and philosophical knowledge that sustained operation of Egypt social and political establishments, which were intended to keep the population under control

3/ the highly structured, hierarchical, and aimed to be unchangeable society with the deified ruler on the top

4/ two peculiar beliefs: preservation of a body as the condition of the eternal life of the soul and deification of the earthly ruler (pharaoh) who had the power to allow preservation and to authorize destruction of his subject's body, therefore, to decide the eternal destiny of his subject's soul.

The Egyptians not only accepted the Minoan myth of sacred king–priest who became the Judge of the Dead in Hades, which established the belief in the power of Cretan priests–kings over the living and over the dead; the Egyptians made the next step. Through propagation of belief accompanied with specific (magic, sorcery) rituals and rites of worship, they attempted to transform the phantom of absolute power of mortal man over other human beings into the reality. For the purposes of the earthly rulers, it was not enough to keep the subjects in fear of physical death: slaves with religious beliefs into the after–life where is

justice and hope on happiness often preferred death to misery of earthly existence depriving, therefore, the slave–owners of their possession. Consequently, the authority of earthly rulers had to be expanded onto the after–life, so their subjects/slaves had to believe that

1/ there is no limits to the power of their ruler/owner

2/ self–inflicted death as the escape from slavery and inhumane life would not give freedom and restore human dignity in the after–life.

The mythical power of man over the soul of another human being became the essential article of the Egyptian religion, and the unreserved obedience to the deified pharaoh was established as the main condition of eternal life for the pharaoh's subjects. Since, an ability of a ruler/leader to influence the after–life that is to control eternal destiny of a soul became the fundamental assertion of any religion, through which the mortal rulers attempted to usurp the place of God and to exercise the absolute power over the subjects. For instance, thousands of years later, in the papal hierarchical church – the church of Rome, the destiny of human soul was also correlated with the unreserved obedience to deified man (pope)***Σ11***.

Although the ancient Egyptians imagined their civilization as a mighty living pyramid moving through the chaos of times, realms, events, and worlds, in fact, they built the conglomerate of cages organized by a degree of deprivation – deprivation of freedom and deprivation of knowledge of truth. The stratification was accomplished by limitations: what is not allowed to do and what is not allowed to know. Those who learned knowledge forbidden for the group of the society to which they belong, were executed: usually, they were fed to the deified beasts (esp. reptiles) or left to die from thirst and hunger within the statues of sphinxes, which pragmatic priests used as prisons or execution chambers. The status, in which a human being was born or, in some occasions, placed, has a corresponding level within the realm of dead. Therefore, although the Egyptians believed that good behavior improves the quality of the after–life, any initiative to change own status and to obtain additional knowledge with own efforts (behind those allowed within the strictly determined hierarchy) could be interpreted as an attempt to intervene with the will of deities who structured the realms of the living and the dead, and consequently, could be rewarded with disgraceful agonizing death.

As soon as the comprehensive knowledge of the Minoan and Phoenician inventions does not exist, the Egyptian priests–diviners entered the history as the first philosophizing theologians for whom "everything is symbolic" [Chaeremon *Fragment* 15D 27]. With their methods of allegorical interpretation of the myths, the Egyptian priests elaborated the practices of the Minoans and Chaldeans: they learned how to control men through figments of imagination – false knowledge created for deceit and enslaving of the mind.

Through the Orphics, the Egyptian legacy – the database of mythical assumptions and doctrines along with the rules of composition of new "knowledge" and methods of application of figments of imagination for control of religious, social, and political life of the societies – came into possession of the Greeks.

The Main Fruits of the Ancient Philosophical Thought: Philosophizing, Divination, Symbolism, The Orphic Doctrine, Heathenism

The ancient thinkers invented three tools, with which they created knowledge of the imaginary world of cosmos and its divisions: gods, men, perceivable world; these tools are philosophizing, divination, and symbolism. They accepted name *philosophy* for application of these tools and for framework of knowledge, which accommodates their application and development; then, they harvested the fruits – the set of false religions, cults of different idols, philosophical doctrines, ideologies, and other fruits of imagination known under the collective name *heathenism*:

Philosophizing in the temples ⇐ ⇒ **Divination**
⇓ ⇑ ⇓
Symbolism ⇐ ⇑ ⇒ **Logic**
⇓
Philosophy ⇐⇐ ⇒⇒ **Heathenism**

Philosophizing

The Egyptian priests, scribes, and astrologers practiced "*true philosophizing*" [Chaeremon *Fragment 10* 23].

Philosophizing denotes practice of creation of gods with the means of philosophical and logical observation: a philosophizer applies philosophy and logic for creation of theological knowledge. The set of techniques and rules, with which the philosophizing mind creates its deities, is based on philosophical doctrines, logic, symbolism, mathematics (for instance, Pythagoras' numerology and Aristotle's arithmetic–geometric theological assertions), etc. The results are imaginary constructions – mythical knowledge, which its creators identify as theological knowledge. These figments of imagination are intended to become articles of faith, to describe the features of deities, to establish hierarchies of gods, rules and rites of contacts with deities, and determine all other matters that sustain the social, political, and religious establishments and therefore, facilitate control of the population.

In the antiquity, the philosophizers composed the framework for three interactive domains: theology, philosophy, and politics. They believed that these domains provide the entirety of knowledge that sustains the world–order at all levels/realm: deities, men, establishments of men. Consequently, the main output of these domains contained descriptions of the deities, rites of worship, responsibilities of men before deities and rulers – the earthly embodiments of gods, punishment for deviation from the rules of worship and disobedience to the earthly deities, and everything else that the rulers considered as necessary for social and political stability.

The philosophizing mind starts within the world of the matter; then, although it is fed with the images of the matter and has no other knowledge besides the knowledge of the matter, it begin to fantasize about invisible realm of deities, about different gods, and consequently, assumes that it has ascended to the realm of gods. Then, it applies the logic, laws, and knowledge of the dissipating temporal realities of the material Universe for description of the spiritual realm that is uncognizable for the human mind existing within the world of the matter.

When the philosophizer employs philosophy as the means to create theological knowledge, he pursues an irrational goal: philosophy is the product of human reasoning created with logic; logic is a set of rules that defines terms and results of thinking processes; thus, the philosophizing mind cannot operate at the levels of complexity, which exceed the level of human reasoning.

In contemporary terms, the philosophizing mind comprehends philosophy as the "logical faith" [Edman 311]; by application of logic, it creates dream worlds filled with phantasms, empty speculations, and false knowledge and calls the mixture "theology" or "the knowledge of God."

The evolution of the myth about Apollo illustrates the actual value of "theological knowledge" created by the ancient philosophizing minds and implications of such "knowledge."

Apollo was the main deity responsible for knowledge of the future; his priests and priestesses provided oracles and predictions to the ancient Greeks and other nations under the Greek authority or influence. Initially, Apollo was a killer: he murdered deity – Python the serpent. Then, he learned the art of divination from Pan, and subdued the Delphi oracle – former Python's priestess. His consequent actions include cruel murder (Marsyas), bisexual adventures, and an attempt to dethrone his father Zeus. The family roots also are quite remarkable: Apollo's father Zeus – the main god of ancient heathen Greece – violated his mother Rhea (Apollo's grandmother), was constantly unfaithful to his wife Hera, and dethroned his father Chronos (Apollo's grandfather). The Zeus' father Chronos castrated his father Uranus and had an interesting method of self–defense: he swallowed his new–born children [in: Xenophanes of Colophon *Fragment*

12 83; Graves 1:37–39, 53, 76–79]. With an advancement of the Greek philosophical thought, Apollo became a benefactor of the arts and a preacher of two values: "Know thyself!" and "Nothing in excess!" These two slogans are the basis of the ancient Greek ethics – ***σοφροσυνη*** – the *sōphrosynē* concept.

Yet, the history does not support the assumption that the noble ethical concepts ever had any real application within the heathen world: ethics and morality cannot exist within the society whose gods (that are ideals for humans) from the beginning are murderers and adulterers. Homer was the main educator of the ancient Greeks; his *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and *Hymns* provide the full description of gods and their deeds, which even from a point of view of heathen moralists can be characterized as disgraceful subjects of reproach and condemnation [e.g., in: Xenophanes of Colophon *Fragment 11* 23]. Alexander of Macedonia (who, as any learned Greek, knew the Homer's works by heart) carried *Iliad* with him during all his military campaigns, and nobody can prove that the crimes of gods had not inspired the ruthless assassinations, slaying of the prisoners of war, self–deification, pillage, and other crimes committed by Alexander [e.g., in: Curtius 240–241; Justinus 60–62, 68; Paulus Orosius 100–101; Plutarch 259–260, 306–307].

Nevertheless, the Egyptian invention – philosophizing in temple – became the common practice of creation of fictitious theological knowledge; it was applied by many generations of the theologians, and it still serves the contemporary philosophizers.

There is an opinion: each Greek philosophical system "culminated in theology" and "philosophical theology" of the ancient Greeks became the beginning of the "developing universal theology," which embraced Greek pagan philosophy, "Jewish and other Oriental religions" and Christianity [Jaeger 4, 9]. It looks like with the word "Christianity," the Werner Wilhelm Jaeger refers to Aristotle–Aquinas' political theology – official doctrine of the papal church of Rome. However, Aristotle–Aquinas' political theology has nothing in common with Christian teachings. Christianity is another realm of knowledge, without any relation to heathenism and Greek myths identified as "philosophy"***Σ12***.

In general, philosophizing is possible only through divination: by entering the altered states of mind, in which normal logic of normal reasoning does not work. The mind of the diviner accepts hallucinations and "visions" as the insights; in its delusion, it believes that it penetrated the realm of divine, from which the philosophizer extracts "true knowledge" of the worlds of gods and men.

The philosophizing mind identifies itself, the deities, the terms and necessities of the settings in which it exists, and own desires and purposes with some particular symbols–sets of assumptions expressed with images of the surrounding material world. The mind assumes that it can cognize the divine and describe the divine with the symbols created from images of the material world; then, it accepts phantasms created with own imagination as knowledge of gods, itself, and the world in which it has to live. However, such acceptance of false knowledge means that the mind has perverted own nature and became incapable of discerning truth and false.

Divination

Divination is creation of knowledge by imagining the hidden meaning of the events, underlying connections of the seemingly unrelated phenomena, and the consequences of the events and phenomena; this fruit of the mind is presented as knowledge of the future.

The mind engaged in divination creates a pattern of underlying connections and the set of assumptions based on own interpretation of the current reality. Then, it imagines how this reality can develop or how it can be changed, and which possibilities of its modification can become the reality. Then it identifies figments of own imagination as the vision of the future, revelation of the deities, prophecy, and so on.

If to define making of idols as materialization of gods, divination might be seen as the means of materialization. Through divination, imaginary gods – figments of human imagination receive the forms – perceivable embodiments into the material objects, events, into intentions, purposes, and actions of men. Then, the diviner and his audience ascribe to figments of imagination embodied into material objects an ability to influence the daily life..

In general, divination is the special mode of reasoning, which results in creation of an alternative reality (new dream world) by the means of symbolism, analysis, and logic. The consumers of diviner's products expect to receive advanced knowledge at least either of the future or of the reason for the present significant event. In fact, they receive the diviner's figments of imagination, which they, consequently, embody into their thoughts, words, and actions.

The origin of divination is covered with darkness of the unknown past; neither verbal legend not written evidence revealing the history of divination survived. Seemingly, diviners always had place within all known civilizations, empires, states, societies.

The majority of survived ancient texts describe the main role of priest–diviner as the true communication with gods. For example, in Sumero–Babylonian temples the specialty of *bārū* priests was communication with gods for the sake of knowledge of the future [Haldar 2]. The texts from Mari archives mention individual diviners and official cultic diviners [Huffmon 7, 17] who were organized in special clans/orders **[[***according to some researchers [e.g., Albright ref. in: Haldar 107], Māri, the city on the Middle Euphrates, is the place where the pre–Israelite tribe was formed***]]**.

The ancient diviners pretended to obtain the ability to predict the future by two ways: unintentionally, as the granted above, and as the developed artificially, by the rigorous training, by the specific behavior (e.g., ecstatic dances), or by the specific means (e.g., self–inflicted pain, narcotic substances). They produced their oracles by interpretations of dreams, omens, and signs reflected through the material subjects, which (as they believed) were moved, placed, or shown in particular meaningful order by the mysterious forces–mediators between gods and mortals or by gods themselves. Another type of oracles was communicated during special/altered (or "alternate" [Zinberg in: Marsh 130]) state of the mind: ecstasy, self–identification with deities, or direct communication with them. The altered state was evoked by the smoke of specific herbs, consuming or inhalation of narcotic substances, by ritual behavior, dances, and special mental techniques.

Whatever the cause of the diviner's mental condition was — inherited or developed mental disorder, manner of life, narcotic substances, body movements, self–hypnosis, self–inflicted suffering, special training, different combinations of, for instance, narcotics and ritual dances, or other means, — during the altered state of the mind, diviner conveyed the fruits of own imagination. Unguarded imagination and insanity are the source of oracles and "divine" knowledge of diviners. When forecasts and predictions had the apparent truthfulness, it was either the consequence of the diviner's analytical reasoning or disclosure of the will and realization of the plans of the earthly rulers for whom the diviner worked.

In the Sumero–Babylonian civilization, the temple priests had to learn the secret knowledge and to pass special rites of purification and initiation; their main responsibility was to reveal knowledge of the future as the will of gods. The oil in water, the internal organs of the sacrificed animals, celestial phenomena, different omens (e.g., flight of birds), interpretations of dreams, the images and light "seen" during the ecstasy, etc., served as the means to learn the will of gods.

Divination and soothsaying were customary for the nations in Canaan, Asia Minor, and the Near East [Hölscher ref. in: Haldar 110–111].

Within the Semitic regions, all forecasts were derived by two methods: "technical oracle" methods and the state of ecstasy [e.g., in: Haldar 2–7, 25–27, 30–31, 199].

The ancient Romans – consistently with their practical orientation – eagerly accepted the ancient practices of soothsaying with the material objects. The special priests–augurs became the state officials, and each significant event of the official or social life began with the animal or bird sacrifice and "reading" the future or the will of gods in the internal organs (liver, etc.) of the victims.

Oracles by the "divine" inspiration were the mostly admired and trusted type of forecasts. A prophesying priest and soothsayer were acknowledged as "the man of god" or as "the holy man." However, the descriptions of the behavior of diviners, sibyls, or temple priests and of their behavior at the states of ecstasy and "prophesying" prompt the inference that the diviners experienced or imitated insanity.

For the ancient Greeks, the divination by material items (especially the interpretation of celestial phenomena) was the serious matter, perhaps, in the same degree as today's scientific and weather forecasts. They constructed their astrological predictions upon the observations made by the Assyrians since the beginning of

times and ascribed celestial events to the laws of nature, which they identified with gods. The Greeks employed different methods of divination and applied the "knowledge" obtained during ecstasy or altered states of the mind [e.g.: Bevan 130, 134–141].

In general, there were two main sources of oracles, and two groups of the oracles:

– divination by the material items; the information provided by diviners was their own verbal interpretation of material subjects, omens, and signs; for example, the order of animal's or bird's bones cast by a diviner, or an explanation of the meaning of celestial phenomenon and its connection with the destiny of a ruler

– divination by "inspiration" resulted from "the state of ecstasy"; this type of information usually was presented as the interpretation of direct messages of gods with minimal apparent involvement of diviners; for instance, the special priests, or sometimes the seekers of oracles themselves, interpreted the obscure oracles, which the Delphi priestess uttered after she consumed hallucinogen and reached the altered state of the mind.

The diviners obtained the state of ecstasy with two sets of methods:

– the first set of methods is based on an ability of mind to reach the state of ecstasy, which was expected to activate clairvoyance of diviners and soothsayers (Professor Meek defines soothsaying as an ability to reach the state of ecstasy and to become a shaman [Meek ref. in: Haldar 109])

– the second set included submission to deities who – as the pagans believed – forcefully enter the diviner's body. The ancient Greeks, for instance, believed that Apollo speaks and discloses the divine will through a Delphi priestess by entering into her and taking possession with her body and mind.

When diviners and priests attempted to convince their spectators that gods have entered their bodies and are communicating through them, they manifested the symptoms of insanity (for example, see description of the Sibyl's behavior in *The Aeneid*). The ancient Greeks recognized such madness as the gift of gods and named "prophecy"; they believed also that the senders of "divine" madness or "prophetic" trances were Apollo [[*concerning myth of Apollo, see the previous subchapter – **Philosophizing***]] and Dionysus.

Dionysus – "the god of senses," absorbed the features of different ancient deities of death, insanity, and destruction. Artificially invoked and then (for the next generations) inherited insanity became the distinguishing mark of the cult of death. The Maenad rites vividly illustrate the "divine" madness cultivated by the Dionysus followers. The symptoms of the same insanity can be traced in behavior of Alexander of Macedonia whose mother was the initiated of orgiastic rites of Dionysus [Graves 1:105, 114; Plato *Phaedrus* 244a, c, 265a–b; Plutarch 253–254; Vergil 6:51–58, 84–89].

However, sometimes insanity presented as "possession by gods" was a carefully designed show intended to influence the society and, firstly, its rulers.

The most elaborated rites of divination came from the orgiastic Dionysian cult. Heraclites refers to Dionysus as "the god of death" [Heraclites qtd. in: Bevan 140]. Not only the physical destruction caused by the Maenads could be the source of such a reference: the artificially evoked altered states of the mind, which result in temporary or permanent insanity, spell death of the reason. Perhaps, it is one of the explanations, why the Hebrew Prophets defined divination as abomination, rebellion, and sin against God, because our God is God of wisdom and knowledge, not of ***ακαταστασιας*** – disarray, confusion, chaos {e.g., in: *1 Kings 2:2–3; Proverbs 2:6–16; 1 Corinthians 14:33; Wisdom 7:15–16; 8:17–21;* }.

The source and the place of origin of Dionysian cult remain unknown. Some researchers assert that the ancient Greeks considered the earliest version of orgiastic Dionysian cult as the insult to gods and men, and as the social and political disorder [e.g., Jaeger 57–58]. Another assumption is that this cult was introduced by the tyrants who struggled for power and therefore, needed the deprived of reason and unreservedly obedient human weapon.

If to analyze the essence of the Dionysian rites and the ultimate purpose of their influence on men, the observer can infer that the Dionysian cult spreads the ultimate perversion, which makes normal life of the mind and the body impossible. Destructive impact of the Dionysian cult on humans and human establishments allows inference that this cult is the derivative of the dark clandestine cults, which might be rooted within the remnants of the knowledge created by the evil imagination of the first race of men from which the first Earth was purified with the Flood {in: *Genesis 6:6–8, 12–14*}.

The original Dionysian cult focuses on death and destruction. At the first stage of initiation, orgiastic rituals suppress, then, destroy the inner structures of the consciousness. The resulting impairment of thinking allows repetitive re–programming of the conscience: the initiated become easily managed slaves who are deprived of faculty of deliberation. The second stage involves ritual killings and human sacrifice: the initiated learn to please the deity with death of living beings and to focus own existence on death and destruction of the others. Then, the initiated pass through the selective rites: the followers of the Dionysus are divided into two groups – the elite that would live to spread and administer the cult, and the ordinary initiated who compose the majority of the followers. The majority becomes the ultimate weapon of destruction unreservedly obedient to the elite. The selected part of the ordinary initiated (those who do not fit for the purposes of the elite or are unable to serve the elite's purposes) is allowed to pass into the third stage, which must be completed with ritual suicide as the offering to the deity [*The Sunset Knowledge*].

The main product of the Dionysian cult – unreservedly obedient human weapon – became the irreplaceable asset of any tyrant and of any social and political establishment, which builds own authority and struggles for the absolute power with the means of suppression, deterrent, and enslavement of own subjects and other establishments, nations, or states. Consequently, the traces of Dionysian cult could be found in all heathen concepts and doctrines [[*for instance, from the Manichaeism through Nazism*]] that provide the foundation for the wide range of cults, religions, and establishments which attempt to expand their power and influence through use of the human weapon.

For instance, in the twentieth century, the modernized heathen cult of philosophizing Dionysus provided the foundation for Nietzsche's philosophical doctrine [Nietzsche §292, §295 144, 146]; then, the Nietzsche's doctrine became the part of the Nazi ideology.

If to consider the overall role of the diviners within the ancient society and the consequences of their activities, the observer could identify the main danger of divination in negative influence on the mental health of the society: diviners cultivated insanity as the means to obtain their "knowledge", they spread insanity, moreover, they made it attractive model to imitate.

Usually, the diviners, sibyls, and priests began divination – entered the altered state of mind – with the artificial means. For instance,

– before uttering her oracles, a Delphi priestess inhaled gas from underground of the cave and drunk water from the sacred spring; obviously, there were some chemicals in the gas and water, which facilitated her entry into the altered states of the mind

– at the beginning of their rites and revels, the Maenads intoxicated themselves by wine infused with some herbal substances; during the wild run through forest and mountains, they came into such a rage that they tore to pieces any living being they encountered

– Mesopotamian priests used different alcoholic drinks to evoke the state of ecstasy

– the temple priests (e.g., the Baal's prophets and Sumero–Accadian priests) performed ecstatic dances and cut themselves with knives and lancets until their blood gushed out upon them {see similar practices in: *3 Kings 18:25–28*} [Graves 1:105, 112; Haldar 26}.

The descriptions of experiments conducted in the recent Past with LSD–25, mention visions and illusions similar to those, which ancient pagan diviners had during the altered states of consciousness. The encounters with such visions had led to re–discovery of the world of the ancient "spiritual systems" and placed heathen divination within the focus of contemporary psychological (usually Freud–based or openly atheistic) research.

For example, during the sessions of the LSD–assisted psychotherapy or specific "workshops" [Grof with Hal Zina Bennett 15–17, 110, 154],

– "The Divine had manifested itself ... in a modern laboratory … in a communist country" and had taken over the life of the person (who was under the LSD–25) in the person's "extraordinary encounter" with own "unconscious"

– some patients with various emotional disorders had visions of deities and demons, "past life" experiences, cosmic events, etc.

– a young German woman identified herself with both –"the archetypal great mother goddess" and with the planet Earth

– a professor of philosophy had an encounter with a "council of cosmic elders," who are the guardians of the universal billion–year old knowledge.

The referred above examples point out the danger of artificially evoked altered states of consciousness and visions, which laboratory volunteers or patients with mental disorders experience under the psychotic drugs or as the result of special body–mind techniques. Such visions activate imagination, which substitutes

the phantasms for the real world

⇑

⇓

the death of reason for the life of reason

Also, it is noteworthy, that when the contemporary psychologists, armed with materialistic philosophy and all modern scientific tools and techniques, face the necessity to explain the barren world of psychotic imagination, they are not different from their ancient pagan counterparts.

The Stoics also applied their arithmetical logic, which they define as the laws of reasoning, toward cognition of the future. Their vision of the Universe as an embodiment of the Intelligence led them to the logical inference: the Universe has the fixed order – the Fate. Chrysippus (third century BC) envisions the Fate–destiny as the unchangeable physical order: one thing is always caused by (and is the result of) another, and this interrelation cannot be changed. Such a position discloses the simplified mechanical vision of the world: arithmetical logic is incapable of understanding the laws, which control the phenomena with the complexity exceeding "2+2=4" equation.

In attempt to penetrate the mystery of the future, the Stoics used two kinds of knowledge:

— the knowledge inferred or artificial, received through a synthesis of observation

— conjecture resulted from the logical reasoning and knowledge of diviners, and "natural" knowledge, which the soul receives "from gods."

In some sense, the contemporary analysts and forecasters (who consider the laws of causality, mathematical and other trends as the means to predict the future) follow the practice of the ancient Stoics; consequently, their chances to comprehend the actual future do not differ from those of their ancient counterparts.

Some thinkers of the pagan Antiquity did not share belief in value of the diviner's knowledge. For instance, Cicero wrote that the knowledge collected as the result of constant observation might provide with the understanding of the links between cause and effect and between sign and event; furthermore, such knowledge could be collected without "intervention and aspiration" of deities [Gellius and Cicero ref. and qtd. in: Watson (1966) 58; Cicero *De Divinatione* II.XI.26].

In the Past, the term *divination* embraced different practices and "knowledge"– making tools, including omens, signs, incantation, "communication" with the departed, use of the "elements" (especially, fire) to "purge" people and to "heal" their diseases {e.g., in: *Deuteronomy 18:10–14; Isaiah 2:5–8*}.

The most comprehensive analysis of the diviners and explanation of the danger of divination is in the Holy Scriptures.

Through Moses, God forbade these practices for His chosen people, and the Hebrew Prophets defined the difference between

prophesying as conveying the message of God
and
divination as the abomination to God

The Hebrew Prophets equate diviners and false prophets – "foxes among ruins" who spoke falsehood and "divined a lie"; they name the false prophecy – that is divination used as the source of knowledge of God – as "rebellion against the Lord." In the Holy Scriptures, seeing vanities and prophesying falsehood are mentioned in the context of committing the great oppression by injustice and robbery {e.g., in: *Deuteronomy 18:10–14*; *1 Kings 15:23; Isaiah 2:6; Ezekiel 13:1–6, 9; 22:28–29; Jeremiah 27:9–10; 28:15–16; Zechariah 10:2; Micah 3:11*}:

– Moses warns that God cast out the idol–worshipping nations from the Promised Land because of their abominable practices, which include divination and soothsaying

– Isaiah writes that God rejected His people because they had accepted the diviners from the East and soothsayers like the Philistines

– Samuel correlates the sin of divination with the rebellion against God

– Zechariah describes the diviners as those who lie and provide "empty consolation"

– Ezekiel unifies corrupted ruthless princes who shed blood for profit and take bribes, priests who profane the Law, and false prophets into one group of the criminals sorely oppressing the people with injustice and robbery

– Micah prophesies that Jerusalem will become the place of ruin and desolation, because the prophets prophesy for money, therefore, they are the diviners who lead the people astray from God and toward ruin and death.

The Hebrew Prophets stressed out the very significant distinction between the true prophet–messenger of God and a diviner: the false prophets divine for money or personal gain; they tell whatever the rulers/clients want to hear, and attribute own dreams to the will of God. However, the pseudo–prophets commit crime by prophesying false and unrighteousness; as a result, they become the scornful men moved by the evil spirit – they have night and darkness instead of a vision and prophecy; the destruction awaits those who prefer the comforting lies of pseudo–prophets to the harsh warning of the true prophet {*2 Chronicles 18:4–34; Jeremiah 5:30–31; 6:13; Zephaniah 3:4; Micah 3:5–7*}.

False prophesies of the diviners are the grave danger: although the false prophets pretend to speak on behalf of God, in fact, they convey "false visions" and "devices of their own heart." They have own imagination as the source of visions, dreams, and oracles: they speak on behalf of idols – products of evil imagination and on behalf their corrupted masters – kings and rulers. Consequently, they spread corruption, mislead, deceive, and ruin the people (for example: the king of Babylon stays at the head of two ways, he uses divination, shakes diviner's staffs, questions the carved images, and observes the sacrificed victim in a search of guidance concerning the attack on Jerusalem, yet, he receives emptiness and lies) {*Deuteronomy 18: 20; Jeremiah 14:13–16; 23:13–17, 25–32; Lamentations 2:14; Ezekiel 12:24; 13:2–7; 21:21–22; Micah 3:5; Zechariah 10:2*}.

In summary,

1/ false prophets have imagination as the source of their revelations; their visions are delusive, false, and deceptive

2/ false prophets do not speak the truth; they speak "visions of their own minds... lying dreams" – "the deceit of their own minds," and utter a lying and worthless divination, false and misleading oracles composed by their imagination – they speak of behalf of "other gods"

3/ false prophets fill people with vain expectations; they mislead others by "lies and recklessness"

4/ the false prophets "walk in lies" and do not expose corruption of Israel; their divinations are flattering; they lead people astray, support evildoers, and make those who listen them to forget God.

The people have at least three reasons to denounce false prophets:

a/ the false prophets fabricate and tell lies, while the father of lies was the murderer from the beginning: lies kill all – those who spread lies and those who trust them – the false prophets and diviners serve as the means of destruction

b/ the false prophets obstruct development–evolution of the people needed for the purposes of God; they attempt to interfere with the purposes of God by covering their lies with the name of God, and by disguising their insanity with the references to the revelations and wisdom of God

c/ falsehood of the pseudo–prophets leads people astray, toward ruin, destruction, and defeat by enemies.

In general, the following features constitute the irreconcilable difference between the Hebrew Prophets – the true prophets, and the diviners/soothsayers – the false prophets *{Deuteronomy 18:10–14; Psalm 118:160; Isaiah 61:1; Jeremiah 2:8; 5:30–31; 23:9–32; Ezekiel 11:5; Zechariah 13:3; John 1:9; Acts 16:16–18; 2 Peter 1:3–4; 2:19–21; Revelation 22:16}*:

– the source of knowledge – for the false prophets, it is their imagination; for the Hebrew Prophets – it is God

– the power, which originate the message: the true Prophets speaks by the Spirit of God; the diviner is moved by the evil – he speaks by own evil imagination; according to the prophets and Apostles, false prophets/diviners are possessed by the spirit of divination that is by the evil spirit

– the purpose of knowledge – for the false prophets, it is mostly knowledge of the future – fortune–telling, which is pursued for the sake of the material or political purposes; for the Hebrew Prophets, it is fulfillment of the will of God

– the sanity and the clear consciousness of the Hebrew Prophets during the state of prophesying, and insanity of the false prophets – seers and diviners during the altered states of mind and intentionally evoked insanity

– the motivation: the false prophets divine for money – they sell their lies for the sake of own enrichment and worldly convenience; the true prophets speak the will of God – they are unselfish and impartial; moreover, they encounter persecutions, imprisonments, and death for their loyalty and love to God and for love to the people who they must protect, enlighten, and prepare for the Messiah

– the true prophet is a servant and even a friend of God as Moses is; the prophet speaks by the Holy Spirit; the prophetic world is the lamp, which would shine in the darkness until the bright morning Star – Lord God Jesus Christ – rises in the heart of man; any false prophet is either a heathen (who never knew true God) or an apostate (who rejected true God).

In summary,

a/ divination resulting in lies is abomination to God, "an appalling and horrible thing," the straw, which would be consumed by the fire of the Last Judgment

b/ diviners or false prophets speak on behalf of "other gods"; they invent destructive heresies***Σ13*** and false teachings; because of covetousness, they use others for own gain

c/ divination is the means of destruction.

d/ false assumptions, unclean imagination, intentional deceit, and artificially evoked insanity compose the set of symptoms for identifying a diviner

e/ divination is the name tag for decay and destruction of the mind that already has lost its God – God of wisdom and knowledge.

The referred above texts of the Holy Scriptures, logically, should discourage anyone from seeking advice or guidance from divination; indeed, for any reasonable mind,

— someone's dreams are nothing more than
reflection of someone's cognitive processes

— rods and graven images are nothing more than wood and stone

— the sacrificed victims are nothing more than the dead flesh

Consequently, if rulers, for instance, the rulers of the Babylonian Empire, made their decisions with "knowledge" received through divination, it becomes understandable why the empire eventually collapsed and vanished without a trace.

Eventually, some manifest sides of the "art of divination" have changed: as it is open to the public, apparently, the contemporary diviners use technical devices and the methods of the ancient fortunetellers, which do not demand sacrifices for prediction and appeasement of their idols. At least today, they do not kill publicly to predict the future by observation of the internal organs (liver, etc.) of the victims as their forerunners – augurs of the heathen Antiquity – did. The most popular means of contemporary divination include

– the traditional for the Westerns derivatives of heathen philosophy, such as astrology, numerology, palmistry, interpretation of dreams, "communication" with spirits and with the dead

– tea–leaf reading, *Feng shui*, *I Ching*, and other practices borrowed from the East

– interpretations of the sets of symbols provided, for instance, by tarot cards and runes

– interpretation of images obtained with self–hypnosis (crystals), etc.

Infrequently mentioned contemporary methods of divination include "readings" of texture and cracks of cheese (tyromancy) and layers of an onion (cromniomancy).

Contemporary diviners continue to use tools and auxiliaries (e.g. astrological charts), the definite and limited initial sets of material objects (e.g., strictly defined quantity of tarot cards, runes, signs of Zodiac, etc.), and rules of combination and interpretation. As the result, they produce a combination of images or symbols, and offer their interpretations–fantasies as revelation of the past, explanation of the present, and guidance/design of the future of their clients.

The tools and methods of divination disclose the essence and danger of divination particularly clear: the limited set of symbols selected and defined during the centuries of practice is expected to provide all possible combinations of the possible futures, which might expect the people within the setting in which the diviner operates. The diviner has instantly to analyze and to evaluate the status, expectations, possibilities, and probabilities of development, which might be available for a client, then, to make initial and general suggestions, to wait the reaction of the client, and to proceed with more specified statements tailored in accordance with the client's reaction and expectations revealed with this reaction. In all times, successful diviners (whoever they are: a slave girl who earned money for their masters on the street by alluring the passersby or an astrologer who advised the kings, therefore, should be informed in all state, political, and social issues) had to be shrewd and skilled analysts and psychologists.

Researchers who studied the phenomenon of divination with traditional methods of observation left more questions than answers; for them, the most difficult task is evaluation of the adequacy of knowledge provided by diviners. For instance, why some of the diviners' "predictions" came to fulfillment if in general, nobody can expect truth from dreams, lies, and deceit offered by people with over–stimulated imagination, mental disorder, or with a desire to make living by exploiting the others?

However, the cases when diviners predicted the future might have at least some explanation; for instance,

1/ the remnants of innate ability of comprehension, or the natural faculty of deliberation: the logic of reasoning and its fruit – understanding of the actuality – allows comprehension of the observed phenomenon; then the mind finds its roots in the Past, and extrapolates the pattern of interconnections, causes, and consequences onto the future; for the systems at the lowest levels of complexity it might work, sometimes

2/ in a case of cosmic and natural events, diviners concealed the knowledge of astronomy and observations of the nature behinds the rituals intended to convince their clients either in the divine origin of their own assumptions or in their "possession by gods"

3/ starting with the Minoan civilization, the temples, where the diviners were educated, were the centers of collection of knowledge, which in contemporary terms might be referred as the product of intelligence services: the priests established the hidden nets of the informers who collected information concerning population, rulers, ruler's advisers and relatives, enemies, friends of their kingdoms/empires, and all that was in the focus of their attention and their surveillance: they possessed the databases that allowed them to compile oracles as guidance for the population of countries they controlled or attempted to subdue.

However, in all the times, the diviners negatively influenced the well–being and sometimes destroyed life of their clients, and not only because they are unable to reveal the actual future. The very source of the "art of divination" simultaneously is the main problem: the imagination of one mind limited and restricted by own conditions of existence is expected to decipher and explicate the life–conditions, expectations, and the future of other people sometimes with background, level of development, expectations, and potential, which are incomprehensible for the diviner. With his "guidance" and "revelations," diviner provides the simplified prescription, which intervenes with the client's life and especially, development, and might obstruct the optimization of all establishments, in which the client participates **[[***for instance, the king's/president's astrologer can lead the kingdom/country to ruin by his "predictions," which would initiate the inadequate actions and*

politics of the king/president]].

In general, the essence of divination remains the same as it was in the pagan Antiquity: and the descriptions left by the Hebrew Prophets look like the contemporary analysis. The danger of the divination also remains the same in spite of differences between the contemporary and ancient attributes of daily life: with their "predictions," the diviners offer the false guidance. Consequently, if a contemporary woman accepts the astrologer as her adviser and guide, she is not different from women of the Phoenician civilization, which came into oblivion for the abominable practices, and if a politician or any leader follows the advice, which he or his wife received from astrologer or any other diviner, he leads his country and his subjects to ruin. Yet, the ancient plague of divination noticed by the Hebrew Prophets still hunts the contemporary societies.

In conclusion, the overall analysis of divination leads to the following inferences (1 through 5), which might facilitate comprehension of the danger awaiting those who accept it as the guidance or designate it any place in the process of decision making.

1. Diviners work with the images of the existing – thus, disintegrating – systems: any existing system undergoes manifest or latent processes of disintegration, which are the natural part of existence. The existence within the world of the matter is defined by prevalence of processes: a system apparently "exists" if the processes resulting in actualization of its innate potency (the life–maintaining processes) prevail the processes resulting in disintegration of the material structures composing the system; a system might be classified as dying or disintegrating at the moment when the latent processes of disintegration prevail, therefore, enter the manifest stage.

2. As soon as the diviners work with the images of the dissipating world, they are able to compile only a simplified picture of the world – a model instead of the actuality. It means that they create the simplified, therefore, wrong patterns of the past and the present, which they offer as a prediction and guidance to the future. Design of the future according to the simplified inadequate patterns inferred from the past/present results in degradation instead of development, because the simplified pattern of development (or the decrease of complexity) makes the evolution–optimization impossible

3. Even when the diviners use the wordings from the Scriptures, they pursue the purposes of their masters or their own: they speak on behalf of "other gods" – idols and phantasms created or adopted by their imagination. Consequently, they are not capable of the unbiased comprehensive analysis of the actuality: they lost the ability to create knowledge, which any human establishment needs, if it intends to survive, evolve, and prosper.

4. The essence of diviner's "knowledge" is distorted reflection of the reality supplemented with the diviner's assumptions concerning improvement, modification, or collapse of the existing reality of the diviner's client. As soon as the diviners provide wrong "guidance" and offer inadequate "knowledge," which reflects the deficiency of their reasoning and not the strategy of development necessary for accomplishment of the evolution, they mislead, deceive, and ruin the people.

5. Divination is a deadly dangerous game, because diviners supply programs and scenarios for the false intellectual constructions – the dream worlds based on false knowledge, therefore the knowledge provided by the diviners initiates anti–evolution: degeneration and ultimately, collapse of the establishments/system, which they attempt to guide, to control, and to lead to accomplishment of the purposes.

In the terms of the systems logic, the difference between two phenomena – prophecy as the true vision of the Future and divination as work of human imagination – might be explained

a/ the prophets work with the special form of energy: system–creating knowledge; having being conveyed to the mind of the others, this knowledge acts as a center of organization of chaos: this knowledge becomes the core–seed–main code of a system, which is assembled from the pool of reserves (people, minds, knowledge, lands, material things, and so on): the future

b/ the diviner is unable to work with knowledge at the levels of complexity, at which the mind of the prophet works: the mind of diviner is restricted with images of the material world and is not capable of identifying/discerning its source. Consequently, the future described by the diviner might be likened to the idols accepted as the deities: simplified lifeless construction incapable of conveying the knowledge of actuality and having as much reliability as idols – pieces of lifeless matter – can provide. However, if the mind is unable to come to the knowledge of the actuality/truth, it and its creations are doomed to destructions, because it lives by imagination, and therefore, it is not able to discern the actual threats endangering own survival and survival of its creations (societies, states, etc.).

In the terms of systems logic, divination might be likened to deciphering of the code that initiates collapse and introducing/imposing this code in/unto the system.

If to judge by the history of societies, which employed diviners, implemented their "prophecies," and perished, the diviners are programmers of annihilation: they develop programs of transfer of the already infernal past or present into the most advanced (in the way of corruption) future. Although diviners identified themselves as *prophets*, *seers*, *wizards*, *the men of vision*, etc., an appropriate name for a diviner might be only either *criminal* or *false prophet*.

The philosophizing/divination still sustains creation of idols and idol–worship in the contemporary meaning (ideologies, propaganda, and countless "isms," which serve enslaving of man).

In general,

those who need manipulate life, enslave, and destroy the others always employ philosophizing and divination; it still include the same practices applied by the priests–diviners of the ancient civilizations when they needed

1/ to create idols after own actual or assumed self–image

2/ to ascribe supernatural and spiritual (divine) power to own creation–idol, although it is a figment of imagination composed after likeness of the world of matter

3/ to assert the figments of own imagination and illusions as the spiritual gifts, revelations, and "wisdom" of the imaginary deities

4/ to classify figments of own imagination (including the imaginary "gifts" and "wisdom") as prophecy, new "true religion," or "true philosophy"

5/ to forcefully impose false religion, heathen philosophy, their derivatives – such as ideology, and any false knowledge onto the others.

With time, the rich experience of the diviners and the assumptions that made divination acceptable – especially the notion that the mind might identify the laws, which control particular chains of events, while neither actual source nor the actual laws are known, and therefore, to predict the future by using imagination fed by the images of the material things and events of the past and the present – became the core from which a peculiar kind of new systems evolved: the contemporary analytical services, think–tanks, consulting firms, and other institutions devoted to forecasting and prediction of the future, which serve as the eyes and the ears (sometimes, even as the brains) of those who, in theory, should be responsible for survival and well–being of the nation/state and the life–maintaining establishments. The difference is that

– the ancient diviners covered their purposes with theological assertions and employed religious symbols

– contemporary analysts work within the frameworks based on philosophical, social, and political doctrines, with logic and simplified symbolic languages, e.g., mathematics, which, all, as the general rule, omit any reference to theological knowledge: they do not recognize theology as the basis that is either sustain survival (if true) or initiate collapse (if false) of the nations, states, etc.

Symbolism

Within ancient bodies of knowledge, philosophy and theology were inseparable; symbolism was the common language of the philosophizers and diviners; for them, symbols were the means to "clarify truths, which in their abstract form are incomprehensible" [Hall (2005) 23]. Philosophizing in the temples became the source of symbolical mythic theology.

For the Egyptian priests, symbolism provided an opportunity to interpret their myths according to the purposes and needs of a current pharaoh: symbolism of philosophizing diviners underlies the social and political order of ancient Egypt.

The Egyptian symbolism, as a special mode of thinking, not only sustained religious–political–social pyramid of a particular – Egyptian – civilization; later, it allowed creation of the multitude of heathen religions and cults (including cults of divine emperors, leaders of religious and political establishments, the state, etc.). Symbolic thinking and its fruits – mythical religions – produced the seed, from which political theology, ideologies, and propaganda sprung.

Ancient Greek civilizations accepted symbolism from the Egyptian priests who practiced "true philosophizing" [Chaeremon *Fragment 10* 23]; the common language was the language of symbols.

The Greek philosophers were initiated into the secret mysteries performed at temples [Plato *Letters II:314a–b, VII:341c–d*].

According to Aristotle, the purpose of the initiation was not learning; the initiated had "to put into a certain frame of mind" [Aristotle ref. and qtd. in: Edelstein 106]. The initiation pursued the purposes to disclose the unity of theological knowledge with philosophy and to connect the heavenly and the earthly inhabitants through the elaborated system of symbols: the mythical–symbolic way of thinking was the main result of the initiation.

Although the symbolism was elevated at the rank of religion and even seen as "the means to the end of religion" [Hall (2005) 355], the essence of symbolism is simplification in its complete irrationality.

Such an inference might be confirmed with the referred above assertion that a symbol **[[***in fact, a symbol is a simplified sign that has as much meaning, as the mind of those who created it and who attempt to use it as the means of knowledge transfer, ascribes to it***]]** clarifies the incomprehensible abstract truth [Hall (2005) 23]. If some abstract "truth" is incomprehensible for the human mind, it means that

a/ it does not exist within the world that the human mind was created to dominate and to lead to evolution

b/ therefore, it is not truth and it has no place within the mankind universe

c/ therefore, it has no any meaning and it cannot be conveyed.

In such a case, symbols are the means to transfer false knowledge – figments of imagination created by the dreaming mind.

The Holy Scriptures provide an explanation of symbols **[[***and warning concerning the unreliability of symbols***]]**.

There is a prophecy that God will use parabolas {*Psalm 77(78):2; Matthew 13:10–17, 34–35; Mark 4:11–12; John 6:45; 8:31–32; for instance, "**Ανοιξω εν παραβολαις το στομα μου, φθεγξομαι προβληματα απ αρχης / ερενξομαι κεκρυμμενα απο καταβολαιξ κοσμου**" – I will open My mouth in parabolas, dark issues of the elements / "I will utter things hidden from the foundations of the world"*}.

There also is a description of fulfillment of the prophecy, when Lord God Jesus Christ explains His words:

— His followers receive knowledge of mystery of the Kingdom of God – they are taught by God, therefore, they are enabled to cognize the truth, which sets them free; in other terms, they are enabled to perceive God the Spirit {*John 4:23–24*} Whose Divine Energy creates the matter, and they consider the material things as the derivative of the invisible Source – the Power, the Energy, and the Law of God

— to "the outers" parables (*associated with **φθεγξομαι προβληματα απ αρχης** — dark issues of the elements*) are given, so they see, yet, they do not perceive, they hear, yet, they do not understand; so they would not turn to the truth to be healed and, therefore, forgiven. Their perception is bound by the limits of the material world: they do not perceive God as God the Spirit, they operate with the categories of material things (*dark issues of the elements)*, which made them idol–worshipers and slaves of the matter, and they are not able to comprehend the essence of things by ascending to the knowledge of their Source – God.

In the Old Testament, parable (***παραβολη***) is mentioned in context of humiliation. At the time of revelation of The Ten Commandments, Moses warned his tribesmen that because of the curse, which falls upon those disobedient to the Law (famine, pestilence, destruction, and slaughter by the enemies), the survivors would be carried away and become the parable and a tale for other nations. Then, it was told that against those who devise troubles for the others a parable will be taken up {*Deuteronomy 28:15–37; Micah 2:4*}.

The prophets have seen as the great tragedy the Future, in which the ancient Israel has to become the parable for other nations to which the Law was not given: the other nations would watch humiliation and suffering of the chosen people and use their misery in their tales–parables.

In the New Testament, a parable is associated with "dark issues of the elements," the mysteries of the material foundations of the world; as such, it demands the work of reasoning and imagination as the ability to apply known images of the material things for identification, comprehension, and description of the unknown ones, while their true meaning is not known**.**

Therefore, parable is a story with hidden or symbolical meaning – an allegory, a comparison, the meaning of which the listeners have to infer, yet, their inference might not give the complete and true knowledge **[[***so, they see, yet, do not perceive***]]**, because they have to interpret the symbol according to their own understanding, experience, and overall degree of development, which, still, might not reach the level at which understanding is adequate to the actuality and complete.

A parable, allegory, symbol, and comparison are attempts to convey some generalized knowledge with the simplified objects of the material world; they suggest explanation of a phenomenon by its similarity to other events with already deciphered or commonly accepted meanings, or by its likeness to the commonly known practices and customs. However, likeness and apparent similarity may cover different systems with different sources of their origin, different purposes, different potency, different methods, and different spheres of influence; therefore, the outcome is unpredictable for those who operate with the logic simplification, in this case, at the level of apparent similarity.

Consequently, true understanding cannot be received through parables–allegories–symbols: those outside are given parables, so, seeing they will not perceive and understand, lest they should convert and sins be forgiven to them {*Mark 4:11–12*}. It means that until the mind learns to perceive God and live by Him, it is not empowered to comprehend the true nature of the world, to evolve up to its optimal potency, and to accomplish the purposes for which it has been created {cf. in: *John 15:4–6*}.

Furthermore, in the Holy Scriptures {*Genesis 8:21; Isaiah 6:9–11; Matthew 13:11–17; Mark 4:11–12; John 8:31–37; 17:14–26*}

— understanding and knowledge are linked to forgiveness of sins, sanctification, and love of God, after which the mind comes to cognition of truth

— imagination is linked with evil

— inability to perceive by heart, to convert (to return to the righteousness) and to be forgiven are the consequences of "changes" of the heart **[[***such "changes" are degeneration or perversion of the nature***]]**, when the heart–mind **[[***that by its very nature is the dwelling of the law – Deuteronomy 30:11–14***]]** becomes overburdened or engrossed (***επαχυνθη***) with materialism, therefore, loses its natural inclination to God and focuses on the world of the visible perceivable and destined to destruction matter. Consequently, destruction becomes the natural end for those who live by the destruction: according to the prophet, the blindness of the engrossed heart will be completed with removing of humans and desolation of the land {*Isaiah 6:9–11*}.

In summary,

symbols do not provide the exact and true meaning. A symbol does not contain true knowledge, which is open to understanding **[[***people hear, yet, they do not understand, and people see, yet, they do not perceive – Mark 4:11–12; Isaiah 6:9–10***]]**. The "knowledge," which is transferred through the symbols, allegories,

and other secondary layer of the creations of the mind, lacks complexity of the actuality. Such knowledge is simplified, and the listener has to interpret–supplement this knowledge with own imagination. Besides, only imagination could make sense from something that cannot be understood or perceived in its entirety and at the adequate level of complexity: the meanings of symbols are modified according to the features of their interpreters (e.g., education or illiteracy, conditions of existence, necessities, purposes, expectations, potentials and weaknesses). Therefore, assumptions compiled by operations with symbols and symbolic thinking would lead to degeneration and ultimately, to collapse and destruction as any false knowledge does.

In the religious matters, the richness of imagination***Σ4***, which is necessary for interpretation of symbols, becomes the greatest danger, because symbolic (or allegorical) interpretation similar to the ancient Egyptian philosophizers allows assigning of any meaning to any text according to the morality, outlook, experience, and imagination of an interpreter. However, the sacred religious texts convey the truth, which must remain absolute, if the religion is expected to survive in its original distinctness and purity***Σ14***.

For those who achieved completeness of knowledge and understanding, symbolism might be likened to the language of children and to a whisper in the darkness, which might hint at the road leading either to the light or into the bottomless pit.

The systems concept of knowledge might clarify the danger of symbolism for the mind that searches for true knowledge.

The mind is able to comprehend knowledge at three levels of complexity:

1/ the unity of energy, universal code/pattern of creation, and the creative force – the universal power; this unity is the source of all knowledge within the world of man; this knowledge is the derivative of divine energy that creates life and sustains existence of the universe, and this is knowledge with the level of the highest complexity, which the mind might access

2/ the level of interactions among the energy fields/settings that define creation, existence, and disintegration of the material structures; these levels of lesser complexity are accessible by the mind within the routine daily life

3/ the levels of matter; at these levels of the lowest complexity, the knowledge manifests itself through embodiment into the material structures, which compose the visible (or physical) world of human beings.

Attempts to comprehend or to explain the nature, inner laws, and manifestations of the higher level of complexity with the meanings innate for the lowest levels of complexity cannot be successful: the threshold among levels of complexity is the consequence of the laws on which the Universe is built. All disasters of mankind have their root in the simplification, which is the violation of the systems law of adequate complexity: an attempt to describe the different levels of complexity with the languages and meanings of the lowest level of complexity. Compliance with the law of adequate complexity would preclude mixing the levels of consideration. For instance, philosophy – the fruit of human mind – should never be applied for creation or modification of theological knowledge, which already is complete, because it revealed by God Who is Creator of the human mind.

With the systems terms, the foundation of symbolism might be defined as the belief that there is a similarity among phenomena with the different levels of complexity; this belief results, for instance, in the following assumptions known from the history of human thought and disasters of mankind:

– the nature of God the Spirit might be described with analogies and symbols created because of observation of the material structures – that is the foundation of idol–worship

– the play at the arena for amusement of the spectators might adequately describe the actual life – that is the simplified description of the world, which initiates degeneration of thinking and impairment of knowledge–creating processes

– the imaginary dream world conveys the actuality of existence – that is the shift from the actuality into the dream worlds of false religions and inhumane establishments

– the model is the adequate reflection of the actuality – that is simplification resulting in creation of false knowledge, which might initiate collapse of a system if used to design the system's strategy of survival and evolution/development/expansion

– with simplified symbolic languages (mathematics, algorithms), the observer is able to convey the complexity of the actuality – that is false assumption leading to inability to comprehend the actuality, therefore, inability to survive

– the human nature might be improved and human diseases and disorders might be healed through studies and experiments with animals, creation of chimeras (e.g., such as hybrid of rodent–human, avian–human, vegetable–human cells/tissues/embryos), experiments on chimeras, and application of the results of experiments with chimeras, animals, and non–humans to the human being – that is the false knowledge that transforms the contemporary sciences into enemies of the nature and assassins of mankind.

In summary, symbolism was created because of the logic of simplification; it also might be defined as an application of knowledge of the material structures to the laws, which control the energy–source of the matter.

In particular, the creators of symbols assume that, through simplified signs/myths/other creations of the divining/philosophizing mind, they are able to convey the universal code/law, which might be then decoded/deciphered/comprehended within any time–space–complexity settings. Therefore, those who employ symbolism for creation of theological knowledge produce false knowledge – heresies leading to degeneration and ruin of religious establishments.

For instance, with the Egyptian method of symbolic interpretation of the sacred for them myths, the philosophizing mind of Philo of Alexandria***Σ15*** transformed the Books of Moses into the heathen philosophical treatise – a collection of myths and allegories interpreted with unguarded imagination.

The following example might illustrate the influence of the ancient philosophizers and diviners on the domains of contemporary sciences.

Pythagoras began the obsession with numbers, presumably, in a search for the original language used by mankind before the Babel confusion of languages or in an attempt to find the possibility for all to express the same essence and share the same understanding, or as a demonstration of an ability of the mind to measure the infinite Universe. Eventually, Pythagoras expressed his "knowledge of divine" through numbers and ascribed to the mathematical symbols the ability to carry and to convey the divine power.

At the time of Plato, the philosophizing mind already assumed that only those who learned numbers can understand the divinity.

Then, the consequent generations of philosophers and researchers continued to develop mathematics as the universal language of symbols, which would be sufficient – as they believe – for description of everything. Similarly to recognition of symbolism as the universal religion, Pythagoras' numerology elevated mathematics at the rank of the universal language for the philosophizing theologians and their spiritual descendents – contemporary researchers.

The same belief in the omnipotent power of numbers, which were considered as the key to every truth, unified Pythagoras (582–500 B.C.), Philo of Alexandria (20 B.C.– A.D.50), Augustine (354–430), Boethius (475–525), Roger Bacon (1210/1215?–1294), and Nicolaus of Cusa (1401–1464) with many contemporary researchers. For instance,

– Roger Bacon (1210~1215? – 1294; a Catholic theologian and member of the Franciscan order) characterizes mathematics as the discovery of the saints in the beginning of the world and as one of the Aristotle's essential modes of philosophy. He presumes a great value of mathematics for "the divine science," which investigates "high properties" of God, locates "the roots of wisdom" in the power of mathematics, and concludes with recognition of mathematics as the prior science, without which "nothing magnificent" might be known in other sciences [Bacon 40, 42, 45, 52, 54, 59]. The roots of Roger Bacon's "wisdom," which manifests itself through his attachment to mathematics, are in Pythagorean and Gnostic doctrines, which are heresy for the Christians.

The following Roger Bacon's assumptions illustrate his logic (therefore, reliability of his assertions): he considers all heavenly and celestial objects as the result of efficient cause and the matter in which this efficient cause "operates" through the concurrence of the forces of creation. As soon as the matter receives structure within the time–space, he – following the Aristotelian geometrical "theology" – constructs the chain of arguments [Bacon 56–57]:

no knowledge of heavenly things could exist without geometry

↓

knowledge of "things below" is impossible without knowledge of those above

↓

therefore, no knowledge exists without mathematics

The Bacon's primary assumption is cognizability of supersystem ("celestial things") through the measurements/properties of the matter, which composes the discernible for him Universe. He sees the matter as an embodiment of the cause, and this embodiment of the cause is produced by the forces of creation. Then, he attempts to apply knowledge of the discernible matter (or subsystem) for cognition of the cause (the attribute of the supersystem). However, his starting premise that a system might be cognized with knowledge of its parts violates the systems law and makes the entire concept irrational and false construction. Strangely enough, but the same Roger Bacon's assumption still sustains the contemporary atheistic natural sciences, which advance by "cognizing" the whole (system) through its parts (subsystems)

– Nicolaus of Cusa (1401–1464) follows the opinion of Anicius Manlius Boethius (A.D. 475–525): without knowledge of mathematics, it is "impossible to obtain knowledge of divine things." Furthermore, he writes that according to Pythagoras and "the ancients," knowledge of divine things might be obtained only through mathematical symbols, because "numbers and magnitude" contain all truth [Nicolaus of Cusa 5, 22, 23]. Essentially, such a point of view (recognition of symbols as the attributes of the divinity) is not different from outlook of the ancient king in Mesopotamia (third millennium B.C.) who was depicted as a worshiper to the writing instruments, which were symbols of god Naby

– Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) noticed the effectiveness of the design of Nature and enveloped some of his reflections into "the supreme certainty of mathematics" [da Vinci 84, 86], which, as he assumed, would lead the mind toward comprehensive knowledge

– following Leonardo da Vinci, Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) and Rene Descartes (1596–1650) asserted mathematics as the universal language for the natural sciences dealing with the "sensible nature." Subsequent expectations were the same as in the beginning, for Pythagoras: to have mathematics as the universal science and as "a true philosophy of nature" [in: Maritain 44–45]. Furthermore, mathematics was elevated at the rank of activity [Wittgenstein x 277]

– an attempt to interpret the quantum theory by the terms of known mathematical symbols originated the notion of "undefinable symbols," which are expected to identify relations, not particular meanings [Bohm 163].

Thus, at the particular time–space–complexity point of the Universe, mathematics was unified with the language of symbols, with which researchers and scientists following poets, philosophers, diviners, and philosophizing theologians, describe the essences of their imaginary worlds, and therefore, became the part of heathen religion.

Since, presence of mathematics in the results of any study – from psychiatry through linguistic, from ontology through the theories of business management and analysis of human resources of a corporation – is held as the main evidence of scientific validity.

Such universal application of the language with insufficient level of complexity prompts the question concerning integrity, reliability, and ultimate value of the research and studies, which as any simplified heathen belief is based on irrational assumption of a possibility to define the complexity through simplification, to describe the universality with particularity, and to comprehend the wholeness through its part.

Furthermore, false assumption of universality of mathematics, as any simplified heathen belief, carries the clear and present danger to existence of men.

For instance, *WORLD 2* – the model constructed at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in 1970s, considers mankind from a strictly mathematical point of view. The model asserts necessity to control existence, population, and development of the world with process–reduction, fixed structure of society, "pressure and limited good (scarcity)" as the protective mechanisms of human society [*WORLD 2* ref. in: Bloomfield 40–41, 44–46, 54–55]. Thus, "universal language of mathematics" **[[***which the philosophizing theologians apply toward cognition of God the Creator***]]** offers stagnation and death for reduction of number of human beings as the means to manage life and evolution of mankind.

In conclusion, in relation to theology,

a/ insufficiency of the knowledge begets symbolism, covers it with the name of philosophy – love of wisdom, and ascribes the name of truth to fantasies created by imagination

b/ symbolism results in creation, dissemination, and acceptance of false knowledge, because a symbol conveys the simplified delineation, which can be deciphered and embodied according to the overall development and under conditions that limit the mind of the recipient; a symbol does not convey the true meaning, for instance, the essence of thing/event in its entire complexity; symbolism is a distinguishing feature of those who cannot comprehend the true meaning of the actuality

c/ symbolism is the language of insufficiency and misunderstanding; it is the tool of those who live in darkness, build on the sand, and fail, because they rejected knowledge of God as the true foundation of life, as the only Stone, on which the eternal life of a human being is built *{Psalm 117(118):22; Matthew 7:24–27; 21:42–46; 1 Peter 2:3–10; Isaiah 28:16}*.

In relation to general knowledge, the main vehicle for transfer of symbols and re–creation of symbolic realities of the predecessors is a myth. Usually, a myth conveys the code of the Past: a myth discloses the outlook of its creators, the philosophical foundation on which a particular symbolic world was built. From such a point of view, a myth might be seen as

– the definition of the core of a system – society, civilization, which adopted the myth as an explanation and expression of its essence

– the program of re–creation of the system.

The history of human thought reveals the constant struggle between actuality and knowledge of truth and mythical/dream worlds of symbolism. This struggle grew into the full–fledged war after the Apostles of Lord Jesus Christ – the Word–God – began to preach the Gospels. Eventually, the plague of symbolic–mythical–magical thinking prevailed in the West: it became the foundation of the European civilization and of all religious denominations created by those minds, which imposed own interpretation onto the Holy Scriptures. During centuries, philosophizing theologians***Σ15*** and then, scientists developed plenty of symbolic descriptions and rules of their interpretation; ultimately, they substituted simplified knowledge transferred through imaginary worlds of symbols and their interpretations for truth of the actuality: a symbol received the status of the reality. The foundation of the European civilization became the specific knowledge framework – the all–fitting motherboard, on which any symbolic imaginary world can be built and developed into a new version of the Inferno of false knowledge and denigration of the image of God and its carrier – man.

With the terms of the Plato's cave [in: *Republic* 514a–515c], symbolism might be equated to an attempt to re–create the actuality of the world by a prisoner who at the moment of his birth was confined within the dark underground cave, who is able to see only the shadows on the wall penetrating in his darkness from the world in which he never was admitted, yet who imagines that the shadows of the images are the revelations of the truth – the actuality of the world penetrated by the light. So, even if he hears the sounds of the actual world and if he sees the shadows of things, he does not comprehend their true meaning and does not perceive the actuality.

Such a vision of symbolism has not received the wide recognition: symbolism still sustains thinking of the majority of theologians, philosophers, and researchers who unnoticeably for themselves slid into the shared imaginary worlds, which they identify as philosophy and sciences. Within such dream worlds,

theology degenerates into the description of idols created into the images of beasts

⇑

⇓

philosophy sells false knowledge to the slaves who portray themselves as free thinkers

With its influence on the development of the societies, and especially, sciences, symbolism became a full–fledged companion of Aristotelian dialectics [[*in the domain of philosophy, the Aristotle's dialectics might serve as the adequate description of the logic of simplification, on which the contemporary civilization was founded and with which it is ruining itself*]].

After deprivation of the Absolute Good, which Aristotelian materialism and logic of simplification imposed on the natural sciences, ethics, and politics, there is no any universal (or at least sufficient) foundation for the human reasoning, yet, without the universal foundation, the particular properties become irrational assumptions. It is not a coincidence then, that for the many, symbolism supplanted the natural mode of human thought. Moreover, the process of creation of symbolic worlds became the subject of developmental psychology (founded by Piaget, Werner, and Schachtel) – the tool for studying problems created within the ***man⟺society*** realm. Indeed, to operate with symbols, the mind needs intuition, imagination, and a set of the standards/rules, which regulate comprehension and interpretation of symbols created by the others. So, from a particular point of view, mankind shifted into the imaginary world similar to those simplified schemes known as computer games; it discards the actuality and lives by assumptions and baseless expectations. Otherwise, the enormous reserves would not be spent on the sciences of death and destruction, which produced weapons of mass destruction, on the poisonous medicine and remedies developed on rodents, and other products of the logic of simplification that brought forth the plagues of the contemporary societies, which are beyond the limit of this brief observation.

However, some philosophers and researchers discovered the danger of symbolic thinking.

For instance, Ludwig von Bertalanffy (the founder of the general systems theory) acknowledges that philosophy describes "primitive magic" of taking symbols for things as the "realism of concepts" for the real things [von Bertalanffy 46].

Whatever the nature of symbolic activity is, whichever myths the heathen philosophy offers to its consumers, the actuality is that symbolism and "true philosophizing" have penetrated all sciences and thrown the consumers of their discoveries, innovations, and assertions into the constantly unstable world of false knowledge, which is not able to sustain evolution of the human mind and progress of human societies. The contemporary world became the unruly and sometimes even unpredictable stream of collapsing dissipating systems – political, social, religious establishments, which in theory should sustain decent and prosperous life, yet, which, in fact, became the confinements for the people suffering from insufficiencies of all kinds.

The overall picture of the contemporary theological, philosophical, political, and scientific practices suggests the conclusion similar, for instance, to the Socrates' question–guess–inference [Plato *Cratylus* 411d–e; 439a–e; 440a–c; *Theaetetus* 152d–e; 156a–d; 157b–c; 182d–e]: is true knowledge possible, or does man exist within the unhealthy state of unreality? The Socrates' question reveals not only the tragedy of the imaginary world of the heathenism where Socrates has to live and to die; this imaginary world is the contemporary reality as well.

Probably, different minds would give different answers to the Socrates' questions, yet, the actual answer is that within the heathen societies and establishments, the people do live in the imaginary worlds of evil, within the unhealthy state of unreality. Therefore, the value of symbolic worlds might be found only in limited research, for instance, symbols might be helpful in the mental pathology, because they disclose typical patterns of thinking and other features of the degenerating and disintegrating mind of their creators and those who accept them as adequate description of the actuality.

The Orphic Doctrine

So, the Egyptian priests, who fervently philosophized in their temples, elaborated the practices of the Minoans and Chaldeans, and through the Orphics, transferred their legacy into possession of Greek philosophers.

With the knowledge received from the Egyptian diviners, the Orphics compiled the secret doctrine: serpentine theology of the dragon–serpent–beast, which obviously, symbolizes the ancient creature that tempted and deceived Eve {*Genesis 3*}, and which exists within the "absolute everlasting time."

For the beginning, it should be noticed that the initial Orphic construction "absolute everlasting time" is irrational.

Indeed, logically, time and eternity are incompatible: the very meaning of the eternity suggests absence of time. Time is measure at the particular levels of complexity, which are defined as time–space–complexity settings for creation and dissolution of the temporal material structures. The parameters and settings of the infinity are not known – they are defined by other settings at the other levels of complexity to which the mind that exists within the time–space–complexity settings has no access.

However, the Orphics have found use for this "absolute" and "eternal" time: they imagined it as the "perfect wholeness," which issues forth and accommodates interaction of two opposite forces: the passive chaos or infinity and the active whirlwind that fashions chaos into the "cosmic egg." The great serpent encircles and impregnates this egg. The impregnated egg bursts to reveal the Orphics' prime deity – another serpent called "the divine" or "absolute" animal. This "absolute" beast contains all forms of the living creatures, changes its own form according to some "laws," which the heathen myth–makers invented for explanation of the cosmos and the forces of nature, and possesses the absolute power over the worlds of gods, humans, animals, plants, as well as over the Hades – the world of the dead.

Although the original Orphic doctrine was developed on the Minoan mythology, the resourceful minds of the diviners reflected the specifics of their society: decline of the power of woman, establishment of the patriarchal society, and widely spread idol–worship rites, esp. such as homosexuality and bestiality. The result was substitution of the egg, which also is the symbol of the reproductive power, yet, without a direct visible link to woman, for the female deity. The Orphic cosmic egg coiled with the serpent, which brings forth the "absolute animal" invested with snakes and images of the wild beasts, took place of the Minoan goddess coiled with snakes and worshiped as the mistress of the wild beasts.

Invention of the deified universal serpent–beast made possible numerous cults of animals of all kinds and especially, provided the justification of sacrifice of human beings to the beasts, because the ancient diviners characterized the human nature as the inferior to the bestiality of animal "gods." The basic logic of idol–worship is based on the assumption that if the supreme deity is the beast with wings, tails, paws, bull heads, etc., those in the image of beast are the superior creatures.

The Orphics believed that they are the descendants of Orpheus – a priest of the Sun/Apollo and a diviner who practiced arts and who established the mysteries–rites of Apollo in Thrace and of Demeter in Sparta. Orpheus evoked wrath of Dionysus and Aphrodite because he did not participate in Dionysian rites, explained evil of human sacrifice, and propagated homosexuality. Dionysus sent the Maenads in the temple where Orpheus preached to men of Thrace – Maenads' husbands. In the state of frenzy, the Maenads murdered their husbands and tore Orpheus apart –"limb from limb."

Another version of the myth portrays Orpheus as a founder of the Dionysian rites and an earthly embodiment of Dionysus.

In general, the Dionysian rites are the wildest of the known rites practiced by the ancient population of Greece and Middle East; some researchers even find

similarity between the Greek cult of Dionysus and the Thraco–Phrygian cult of Cybele [e.g., in: James 98]: the participants enter the state of frenzy, in fact, insanity, in which they lose any resemblance to a human thinking being.

Orpheus suffered death similar to his deity's adventures: the Maenads tore the body of Orpheus and scattered the pieces of his flesh over the ground as the Titans tore the body of Dionysus the son of Zeus. Dionysus attempted to avoid death by transforming himself into a serpent, then into a lion, then into a bull (such a transformation suggests connection of Dionysus with "divine absolute animal"), yet, the Titans eventually killed him and from his blood the pomegranate tree appears, which became the food of the dead. Orpheus was killed without any transformation, in an image of man.

Eventually, Orpheus was recognized as a founder of the Orphic doctrine. The Minoan rite of devouring a child, as well as other Minoan rites, became the part of initiation rites for the Orphics, yet, after initiation, they were forbidden to eat any meat of any kind. Some sources suggest that the Orphic philosophers devoured a bull–calf, not a boy: the sequence of Dionysus' transformation in the hands of the Titans suggests the eventual substitution (if any) of a bull–calf for a child. However, if to take into consideration the origin of the Orphic doctrine and the logic of death, such a spark of humanity becomes improbable: a bull–calf would not suffice: a sacrificial victim also had to be either a human being or at least a serpent, which was the Orphic prime divine image.

Indeed,

– in Orphic cosmogony, the prime bestial deity – serpent***Σ16*** appears from the cosmic egg coiled and impregnated by the arch–dragon/serpent; the bull is just a part of the whole. Although the set of "sacred" animals–forms manifested within the "absolute animal" (and the before–death transformations of Dionysus) includes a serpent, a lion, a bull, and other wild beasts, each animal is identified with a particular deity and it is not used as a substitution for another animal

– the Orphics have no ground for identification of a bull with their all–inclusive "absolute animal" – it would be degeneration of their pretense on the absolute dominion over the world, which they asserted because of their worship the "absolute" – that is all–inclusive – beast; besides, the original version of Dionysus was a horned serpent, not a bull

– the logic of death, which is based on the over–stimulated imagination and symbolical thinking resulting in particular cruelty of the heathen rites of bestial worship, demands the full completion of evil that only death of a human being could bring

– in the Mediterranean region controlled by the Minoans and their descendants, for the elite/initiated, the rites of cannibalism were the mandatory conclusion of the human sacrifices; without them, the rites of worship (and especially, the mysteries of the initiated) were incomplete

– the Holy Scriptures describe the native inhabitants of the Promised Land as the unholy people who practice sorcery and during their mysteries (orgies) slaughter their children and devour raw human flesh and blood {e.g., *Wisdom 12:3–6*}.

Through the rite of devouring a child, the Orphics expected to be unified with their prime deity and to achieve the divine qualities, therefore, to become deities. Although later the Orphics were recognized as "the most sophisticated and humane philosophers of the pagan Antiquity," their flesh–devouring rites equate them to the primitive cannibals. Even if in the late Antiquity, a bull–calf indeed took the place of a child in the initiation rite, the initiation still meant ritual murder (even if symbolic) of a living human being and devouring of the raw flesh. The Orphics' reality does include human sacrifices and consuming of flesh and blood of the victims; therefore, the Orphic philosophy is inhumane perversion incompatible with the human nature, as well as all heathen doctrines based on the cult of death are inhumane perversion incompatible with human intelligence/reasoning.

Hence,

a/ the Orphics are the same as all other cannibals and pagans

b/ the Orphics' philosophical assumptions do not differentiate from the doctrine of bestiality sustaining the Dionysian rites.

It should be noticed that with development of logic, the Orphic thought came to conclusions that

1) all living creatures are the embodiment of the same "absolute animal"

2) humans are in the last place of the chain of living creatures; therefore, humans have no right to take life of "the highest beings" – animals and beasts.

The latest generations of Orphics, who began to identify themselves with the living deities and advanced in development of logic, excluded killing of animals for consuming of their dead flesh or as sacrifice to gods: indeed, if they are living deities, why they should kill their own creations and consume their remnants, if any contact with blood and flesh is desecration of the divine? Then, they rejected slavery, wars, and suffering of men and animals as the means to establish the prosperous societies and achieve progress in any of human activities: indeed, if they are living deities, the human methods of struggle and achievement of purposes are not efficient and comprehensive, and therefore, are not worthy of gods.

The same assumptions of own deification is behind Orphic concept of spiral evolution **[[***the idea incorporates necessity to imitate the circles of the serpent that coiled the orphic egg***]]**, which explains development as the gradual ascent to the highest ideals of humanity and the openness of ultimate freedom, which can be obtained through knowledge, responsibility, mercy, and good. According to Orphics, deified man receives all these virtues from his bestial gods **[[***again, the compete irrationality of the primary assumption and simplification inseparable from symbolic thinking: how bestial gods might possess any trait of humanity, if they are worshiped with the human sacrifices and bestiality rites?***]]**.

Although the Orphics recognized the concept of reincarnation (symbolized with a wheel), they doubted that a human soul has to repeat the cycles of reincarnation and that the history of mankind is the cycle of continuous returns and repetitions of the same events, therefore, the same mistakes. The Orphics asserted a possibility to break the continuity of birth–death cycles (to break the Orphic egg) and to ascend to the highest level of thinking, knowledge, happiness. The latest modifications of the Orphic doctrine reflect the attempts to re–assemble the preserved pieces of the primordial knowledge of God into the harmony of the heathen beliefs, morality, thinking, morals, actions, and responsibility for thinking and actions, which expected to elevate the heathenism at the level of the true religion **[[***again, the compete irrationality of the primary assumption and simplification inseparable from symbolic thinking: how worship to the bestial gods might ever become the true religion? If the true religion is the complete reflection of the humanity (that is why it is called "true religion": it expresses the essence of man), the bestial gods should be identified with humans, and therefore, there is no boundaries between man and brute***]]**.

Probably, such apparent "humanization" could be the reason why some early Christian theologians mistakenly disregarded the actual connections of the Orphic rites and the rites of death worshipers, and why some researchers still attribute human traits to the Orphic doctrine and revere it as the zenith of the heathen philosophy.

The influence of Orphic doctrine might be traced in all heathen cults and doctrines, which sustain the contemporary atheistic and neo–heathen systems of thought.

Some researchers identify the Orphism as the source of the "divine Muse of Homer" and of the "sublime theology" of Pythagoras and Plato [e.g., Thomas Taylor qtd. and ref. in Hall (2003) 74; also, in: *Sunset Knowledge*].

The Orphic theological assertions did become the foundation of Plato's philosophical doctrine, especially, the concept of forms–ideas–archetypes, with which he apparently, followed Pythagoras [[*Pythagoras was initiated into the Egyptian–Eleusinian–Orphic–other mysteries; he asserted that all material objects have forms as their essence, and attempted to express the essence of divine with numbers*]].

Indeed, if the main – universal or "absolute" – bestial deity contains the forms of wild beasts, why it cannot accommodate the forms of all other creatures and objects, which compose the Universe?

Consequently, if to substitute the philosophical "essence–idea–form" for the Orphic "image," the ultimate meaning of Platonism (recognized as the pinnacle of philosophical thought) is revealed as a set of phantasms – the irrational imaginary world of heathen cults of serpent.

Therefore, the wordings covering the essence of Platonism and issuing doctrines should not conceal the true meaning:

the heathens
(the Minoans, Phoenicians, Orphics, etc.)

⇓

made the imaginary world created and ruled by the crooked serpent
into actuality of their daily life

⇓

worshiped the "divine absolute animal" –
the serpent and the prime derivative/deity conceived by the cosmic arch–serpent/dragon –
by devouring children and by human sacrifices

⇓

assumed that human beings are the beasts made after the image of the bestial deities

The Orphic doctrine [Graves; Hall; *The Sunset Knowledge*] became the foundation not only for the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, and through them, the Western theology (Catholicism); it also sustains Gnosticism***Σ17***, Neo-Platonism, theosophy, and many other cults and assumptions, including those recognized as heresies***Σ13***.

For instance, Manly P. Hall infers supremacy of the "philosophy's God" over "a personal God"; he refers to the Orphic doctrine as to "theology," which cannot be destroyed and which "in a more philosophic era…shall shine forth again with splendor undiminished" [Hall (2005) 218, 224]. Indeed, this "undiminished splendor" of Orphic myths identified as "philosophy" and "theology" still "shines" through the contemporary theological doctrines and sciences***Σ18***.

Manly P. Hall asserts that "the revelations of Orpheus" founder of the Orphism are the source of the Greek mythology **[[***in fact, the Greek myths are the legacy of the Minoans***]]**, which became a source of "sublime philosophy" of Neo–Platonists, which they adopted from Proclus***Σ19***. He ascribes to this philosophy a monotheistic foundation, defines it as "basically a philosophic atheism," and infers that the supreme deity defined with this philosophy is not a personality, but the principle of principles (the monad of the monads in Proclus' terminology) so universal and unlimited that it is incomprehensible [Hall (2005) 217–218]. Then, he correlates Neo–Platonic supreme deity (the principle of principles, or the monad of the monads) to the ancient Egyptian notion of the "threefold darkness" [Hall (2005) 219].

The contemporary version of such universality – the notion of supremacy of philosophy's God over personal God, supremacy of philosophy over theology, and consequent acceptance of "philosophic atheism" issuing from the Orphic serpentine theology as the progenitor of the Greek heathen philosophy can be discerned, for example, in the following assertions:

– leading Catholic theologians Augustine and Thomas Aquinas produced the "new metaphysics" out of the "Greek materials," and opened the possibility "to 'place' God philosophically"; therefore, following their example, the contemporary theologians must become philosophers and apprehend the Gospel through the deepened understanding of the world and man [Fairweather 368–369, 375]

– Catholic who mystically read the Gospel of John in the sense of "the neo–Platonic theologies and the classical love–mystics" have a new opportunity to contemplate "the self as agent" [David Tracy ref. and qtd. in: Coleman 73]

– some theologians "pioneered as prophets" against "the danger of privatization in the Catholic mystical tradition," which should be "the mystical–political": the unity of mystical and prophetical imagination could be "the main Catholic contribution to the prophetic imagination" [Coleman 72–74]

– there is "a danger of relating God and salvation to the existential problem of the person," while salvation is not a private salvation, it is the public matter; consequently, "the deprivatizing of theology is the primary critical task of political theology": the Christian love must be interpreted in its societal dimension, as "the unconditional determination to bring justice, liberty, and peace *to the others*"; therefore, such societal love could demand "actions of a *revolutionary character*" [Metz 258, 260, 266]. This assertion of the contemporary Catholic theologian, Professor of Fundamental Theology Johannes B. Metz introduces the next circle of the spiral **[[***Orphic***]]** evolution of the Aristotle–Aquinas political theology, which is the official doctrine of the papal church of Rome, – "deprivitized" political theology in which the concept of community of salvation supplanted the Christian dogma of personal salvation. In addition, the concept of community of salvation, or "deprivitized" salvation as the public matter, re–iterates also the studies of those medieval theologians who ascribed the notion of impossibility of immortality of individual soul to Averroës (ibn Rushd, 1126–1198) – the Arabic philosopher and commentator of Aristotle's works.

The referred above example illustrate the legacy of the ancient heathens in work: the transformation of Christian teachings into the contemporary version of the heathen philosophical doctrine, in which there is no place for God of the Christians, because philosophizing in the temples is the means with which the Orphics compiled their serpentine theology and because Neo–Platonism has the roots in the Orphism – the cult of the serpent–beast.

In conclusion, in spite of all elated word–pouring of exited admirers of dream worlds created on the basis of the Orphism, it should not be forgotten that in order to practice their "life–oriented" mythical philosophy of "undiminished splendor," the Orphics had to undergo the inhumane rites of initiation (with devouring and consuming raw flesh of a human child), and to worship their serpent–beast/"divine absolute animal," and that is when the actual essence of Orphic doctrine – the conglomerate of false knowledge, death, and perversion – reveals itself.

There is a text in the Holy Scriptures, from which it can be inferred that the actual essence of the Orphic doctrine and issuing cults were well known to the prophets. Isaiah the prophet refers to those who trust in vanities and speak emptiness: they hatched eggs of asp (horned viper), and those who would break their rotten wind–egg of confusion (an addled egg) find basilisk***Σ16*** in it {*Isaiah 59:4–5;* ***Ωα ασπιδων ερρηξαν… και ο μελλων των ωων αυτων φαγειν,συντριψας ουριον, ευρε και εν αυτω βασιλισκον*** *– Isaiah 59:5; basilisk –* ***βασιλισκον*** *– is the mythical derivative of the serpent, the monster with deadly breath and glance, which kill the living beings*}. Isaiah the prophet mentions main components of the Orphic "theology" – snake **[[***asp, or horned viper; the original image of Orphic Dionysus was a horned serpent***]]** and an egg with the serpent within.

Then, Isaiah the prophet reiterates {*Isaiah 59:7–10*} traditional portrayal of heathens deprived of the knowledge of God, therefore, of wisdom and abilities to discern and perceive the essences:

while they wait for light, the darkness is originated over them
{*εγενετο αυτοις σκοτος* – *Isaiah 59:9;*
similar to the punishment by perceivable darkness, which enveloped the Egyptians –
και εγενετο σκοτος γνοφος *– Exodus 10:21***}**

↓

their creations are similar to the spider's web unsuitable for use

↓

they expect enlightenment, yet, walk in perplexity

So, according to Isaiah the prophet, the producers/breakers/consumers of asps' eggs **[[***the Orphics and their followers***]]** are deprived of vision, have no judgment, conceive troubles, bring forth lawlessness, and contemplate murder; they are swift to shed blood; they wait for illumination, yet walk in perplexity; they feel at noon–day as at midnight: they are as the blind who feel the wall.

The profound meaning of Isaiah the prophet's observation become evident if to recall that for the Orphics, the act of breaking the Orphic egg symbolized highest spiritual achievement **[[***spiritual return into the state of absolute, or nirvana of Oriental mysteries – in: Hall (2003) 177***]]**. In its entirety, the prophet's text conveys the essence of heathen "mysteries": they are conceived by death, they are useless, and they culminate in death of those blinded by deceit – those who perceive death as life, figments of imagination created by insanity of philosophizing diviners as spiritual food, and confusion as enlightenment.

In the Holy Scriptures {e.g., in: *Isaiah 2:6–8; Ezekiel 8:4–18; Hosea 4:1–18; 8:1–14; Matthew 3:7–12; 23:27–35; Luke 3:7;* }, description of the idols to which the people and the elders worship in the open and hidden places and the references to "offspring of vipers" confirm that the destructive based on Orphism "knowledge" and issuing cults were in a possession of the learned and educated part of the chosen nation – priests, Pharisees, scribes, Herodians***Σ20***.

Indeed, the Orphic doctrine is lethal as the poison of the venomous viper is: similarly to the snake, which looks in the eyes of its victim and paralyzes it until reaches and consumes victim's defenseless body, the false knowledge paralyzes the mind and keeps it under the spell of death of reason until death of body comes at the allotted time.

The Orphic doctrine sustains Plato's philosophy, which embodied the heathen vision of the Universe and the "ideals of humanity" into the chain of most destructive concepts:

slavery as the natural foundation of the society
⇓
man as a part/property of the community
⇓
supremacy of the good of the community over the good,
happiness, liberties, and interests of a person
⇓
mandatory restriction of the freedom of thought and religion, total surveillance, control,
and regulation of the life of members/citizens
as the means of survival of the "perfect" community–state
⇓
termination of the different–minded
as the legitimate practice of the community–state,
which has to protect itself from the wrath of deities
by expulsion or execution of atheists, followers of another cults,
and different–minded of any kind,
therefore, by sacrificing life and well–being of its members–men
for the sake of the good of men's establishment.

With philosophical doctrines and utopias compiled by Plato and elaborated by his apprentice – Aristotle – for the practical implementation into the social and political establishments, the Orphic doctrine eventually penetrated Western and some Eastern philosophical and theological doctrines with the only exception: the Orthodox Christianity and Christian denominations, which do not tamper with the words of God conveyed by the Gospels, and other Books of the Holy Scriptures, and which do not accept the heathen philosophy as the means to interpret **[[***in fact, to misinterpret***]]** and to modify the words of God.

There are prophecies that eventually, the dragon – the serpent that flees, the crooked serpent **[[*επι τον δρακοντα οφιν φευγοντα, επι τον δρακοντα οφιν σκολιον – Isaiah 27:1 – that is the Orphic arch–serpent, and its derivative, the absolute animal/beast*]]** will be destroyed with the holy and great and mighty Sword that is with the knowledge of the Word–God *{Isaiah 27:1; Revelation 1:13–18; 12:4–10; 18:11–16, 19–21; 20:1–3, 8–10*}.

Until then, the problem of the Present is that the philosophizing theologians and researchers blinded with the heathen philosophy are not able to recognize in this "dragon the crooked serpent" the main deity of the Orphics, and therefore, are not able to comprehend that any doctrine that is based on the heathen philosophy is inhumane: it carries death and destruction – death of human reason/intelligence and destruction of human establishments, especially those intended to sustain survival.

Until such understanding becomes the property of all minds, the Orphic doctrine continues to underlie the entire body of knowledge created upon the heathen Greek philosophy: the core knowledge of the Western civilization.

Heathenism

Heathenism is a collective name for a special body of knowledge that is based upon multi–deity theology, with such objects of worship as idols – deified beasts, snakes, insects, humans, astronomical objects, forces of nature, objects of nature – ocean, sea, rivers, trees, mountains, rocks, man–made stone, wooden, and clay statues, "graven images," human establishments – states, political parties, ideas, doctrines, and other images and hand–made material things – idols***Σ21***.

In general, heathenism is materialization of the ideas of gods, by which a human being lives: heathenism is idolatry. There is a reference to idolatry as to inability to comprehend the difference between symbol and the abstract principle, which the symbol is intended to convey [Hall (2005) 23].

However, such a definition, as well as an attempt to ascribe to a symbol a capacity to convey the knowledge of the abstract principle, reveal 1/ the logic of simplification and 2/ admission of unlimited quantity of deities either in a form of symbols–codes of the abstract principles or any set of figments of imagination identified as "knowledge."

The entire history of human thought is the history of the irreconcilable war between the monotheistic theology **[[***original knowledge of God, then, Judaism based on the Five Books – the Books of Moses, and then, Christianity***]]** and the multi–deity theology, or idol–worship – false religions based on materialization of ideas of gods and supernatural forces.

Heathenism as a body of knowledge is composed by three interactive groups of the figments of human imagination:

1/ myths, false religions and cults created by the diviners, priests philosophizing in the temples, and their apprentices – philosophers

2/ philosophical doctrines created by the philosophizing priests and their apprentices – philosophers who attempted to comprehend the nature of the world through the theological doctrines and then, modified the fantasies of the diviners for practical use by political and other establishments

3/ mythical "theology" for the theaters and circuses [e.g., in: Augustine *The City of God* VI.v–viii, xi] where the mob was entertained with the shows interpreting myths, images of gods, and providing the role models **[[***gods, demigods, heroes, pious and virtuous – from the heathen point of view – men***]]** and approved patterns of behavior. The theater/circus shows were intended to implant unto the mind of the ordinary citizens the beliefs and allowed patterns of thinking and behavior established by the polis/state/empire. Through the entertainment, the people absorbed the beliefs based on religious, philosophical, social, and political doctrines created by the diviners, philosophers, and poets. These beliefs were intended to sustain social and political order, stability, and development of the idol–worshiping societies, states, kingdoms, and empires. The offspring of the mythical "theology" became known as political theologies.

These three groups are referred as interactive, because the ancient priest–diviners, philosophizers, philosophers, poets, and rulers/politicians worked as the choir (or in contemporary terms, as a well–coordinated team):

polis/state/empire rulers/politicians formulated the purposes
↓↑
priests and diviners produced philosophical and political doctrines,
which would sustain accomplishment of the rulers' purposes
↓↑
philosophers modified theology and invented
new deities and corresponding philosophical concepts and doctrines
fitted the purposes of the rulers/politicians
↓↑
poets used creations of the priests and philosophers
and modified the old myths or issued their own myths,
which suited for the public entertainment and education

The ancient Greeks left the most elaborated heathen cults and philosophical doctrines, which still fuel the contemporary philosophical thought, and the Orphic doctrine still is a part of the political, social, and religious foundation of the contemporary societies: its influence can be detected in purposes, policies, and actions of social, political, and religious establishments.

Similarly to the Egyptian priests–diviners philosophizing in temples, the ancient Greek thinkers created and maintained two bodies of knowledge:

1/ for the mass population, the mob; this domain of knowledge was intended to support stability, order, and prosperity of the social and state structures; within the heathen civilization, this knowledge provided the platform for creation and implementation of political theology and its offspring – the set of common simplified symbols, political and social rules intended to fashion common perception, opinion–making, and social behavior (with time and development of the states and their controlling structures, this set evolved into the mass culture and propaganda)

2/ for the ruling elite – the "sacred" knowledge of the initiated (priests, philosophers, and their apprentices – kings and other rulers); this knowledge sustained the systems of control and maintenance of the societies intended to provide the desirable manner of existence for the ruling elite.

The knowledge of the initiated determined the outlook and became the backstage for the vital political decisions made by the ancient rulers – emperors, kings, and their advisers and educators: priests and philosophers. This knowledge included the foundation – philosophical and theological doctrines, and the derivatives – beliefs, customs, morals, laws, rules, practices, methods – intended

a) to protect superiority of the ruling elite, to manipulate the general population, and to sustain the social stability and the political order through establishment of the "absolute" power over the subjects

b) to control the entire society and all social groups (slaves, slave–owners, so–called "free citizens," as well as members of religious and political hierarchies) in the most efficient way – by controlling their religious beliefs, therefore, by controlling their conscience, morality, and behavior

c) to expand the sphere of influence over other nations and to continue the conquest of new territories with the purposes to obtain additional resources – more slaves, more gold, more grain

d) to achieve the ultimate goal – to obtain global power over the world.

The knowledge of the initiated was unavailable for the general population; it was strictly guarded, especially, in Asian countries. For instance, if an ordinary man even accidentally overheard the conversations of the temple priests or other members of the initiated elite, he was executed without mercy: the hangmen poured the boiling silver into his throat. Consequently, today, without access to the secret archives (if any) there is no possibility to determine its contents. However, many systems of knowledge and methods of their design can be inferred from the results of their application–embodiment into the social or state structures, the laws, politics, and official and actual morals, ethics, myths, fairy tales, pieces of fine and folks art, etc.

The foundation of Greek heathen philosophy includes the remnants of the true knowledge **[[***the primordial knowledge of God–Creator and His creations – man and the Universe, which existed before the Babel confusion of languages***]]** contaminated with the false knowledge born by imagination of priests, philosophers, and diviners during the alternative states of mind – divination, ecstasy, hallucinations, etc. Through philosophical doctrines of Plato and his followers, the imagination of ancient pagans continues to influence the current civilization.

For instance, in the twentieth century, a notion of a philosopher as the dreamer who "dreams extraordinary things" and the modernized heathen cult of philosophizing Dionysus became the foundation for Nietzsche's philosophy and its offspring – Nazi ideology. In 500 B.C., about twenty–five centuries before birth of Nietzsche, Heraclites referred to Dionysus as to "the god of death" [Heraclites qtd. in: Bevan 140; Nietzsche *§292, §295* 144, 146]. The recent Past, – the Nazism and the World War II – illustrates the fruits of the ancient cult of death, which was embodied into philosophical and, then, into political, social, and military doctrines of Nazi Germany.

Philosophers, theologians, and researchers suggest two probable sources of origin for Greek theology and philosophy: revelations of God given through the Hebrew Prophets, and mythological theology of Egypt. In particular, Alexandrian Jewish exegete Aristobulus (100 B.C.) asserts [Aristobulus ref. in: Mansfeld 71–72] that Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, Orpheus, Hesiod, Homer, and some other Greek philosophers and poets derived their knowledge from the Books of Moses***Σ22***. According to Augustine, Plato could learn teachings of the Hebrew Prophets during his journey to Egypt and the Mediterranean [Augustine *The City of God...VIII, XI* 3:51–55]. Yet, Plato writes [Plato *Timaeus* 22a–26a] that Solon learnt the "old" knowledge from the Egyptian priests who preserved all knowledge and called the Greeks "children" because they do not have the old traditions and knowledge of the Past **[[***obviously, the direct link between the Minoans and the Greeks was absent***]]**.

Some contemporary researchers suggest that the Greek philosophers, especially Pythagoras, borrowed their philosophical and theological knowledge from the Magi – the priests of ancient Persian pre–Zoroastrian religion, and the priests of Egypt [e.g., Gilbert 35, 49–50, 66, 77; Ehrhardt 38–39], and even the names of Greek deities and rites of worship have the Egyptian origin [e.g., Burckhardt 333].

To the contrary, initially, the Egyptian priests worshipped the ancient Minoan goddess (probably, the equivalent of the Cretan Moon–Io) who, as they asserted, granted them the alphabet, arts, and sciences. The Egyptian priests received their "old" knowledge from the Minoan civilization – the precursor of the Greek civilizations, which could inherit the system of knowledge that existed before the Babel confusion of languages **[[***see the previous subchapter* ***The Minoan civilization*****]]**. The original knowledge of the pre–Babylonian confusion civilization formed the core of the pre–Platonic Greek philosophy preserved by the mysterious order of the Keepers of Truth, whose influence might be traced in the Chaldean civilization and in the human–oriented philosophical schools of the ancient world [*The Sunset Knowledge*]. It became the sacred knowledge of the Minoans who supplemented it with own assertions created according to "the traditions of men," that is with dreams and beliefs composed by imagination. Then, the Egyptian priests inherited the Minoan mixture and made it the basis for their sacred and secret doctrines.

The concepts of the Minoan civilization penetrated deeply in the very fabric of ancient philosophical thought and shaped the foundation of the chain of civilizations *(including the current Western civilization),* empires, states, and societies, yet, they have the foundation incompatible with original Judaism given by the Five Books of Moses, and Christianity. All the arguments, which connect Moses the prophet and his writings with the Egyptian symbolic mythology, dissipate, if to read the Holy Scriptures. For instance,

1/ in Exodus 33:13–17; 34:9–17, Moses implores God to reveal His ways, so Moses would be able receive the knowledge and to obtain the mercy of God. God answers with a promise to accompany Moses and to allow him entrance into the peace of God under the condition do not worship "strange gods" and to

destroy idols and their worshipers. This text confirms that in the beginning, with all knowledge, which Moses received in Egypt **[[***according to assertions of Philo of Alexandria and his followers***]]**, Moses was ignorant in true knowledge, which opens the way to God

2/ Exodus 32:1–35: while Moses was with God and received the Law written by the fingers of God, the people worshiped the Egyptian idol; they reverted to the Egyptian knowledge, which is the knowledge of the idol–worshipers, consequently, they were found incapable of accepting the true knowledge of God and had to perish. Obviously, the knowledge of the Egyptians is not compatible with the knowledge granted by God, and Philo of Alexandria***Σ15*** had false assumptions and made wrong assertions. As Jaap Mansfeld infers, Philo of Alexandria did for Judaism the same that Chaeremon the Stoic did for the Egyptian mythology – both interpreted their religion with the means of Greek philosophy [Mansfeld 77]. In fact, Philo of Alexandria attempted to "enlighten" his contemporaries with three modifications or substitutions:

a/ to substitute "whoring"/idol–making of philosophizers and diviners **[[***the prophets likened apostasy and conversion into idol–worship to adultery, fornication, and whoring (prostitution)***]]** for traditional Jewish loyalty to God

b/ to substitute the philosophy, traditions and customs of heathens for wisdom revealed through Moses and other prophets of God, therefore, to establish as the norm "freedom" of unguarded heathen idol–making imagination instead of traditional Jewish wisdom of deliberation, which Joseph Blenkinsopp defines as "a deliberate distancing from" and denial of the philosophical speculations concerning the commandments and deeds of God [Blenkinsopp 18], when he interprets the advice of Jesus son of Sirach {in: ***Σοφια Σειραχ*** – *Ecclesiasticus 3:21–24*}

b/ to substitute myths and other fruits of the unguarded, corrupted, and perverted human imagination–author of the multitudes of idols for knowledge of God

3/ the Book of Hosea {*Hosea 11:1–4; 13:2–6*}: the prophet conveys the words of God that He loved His children – Israel – and summoned them from Egypt, yet, they departed from the presence of God and worshipped the idols, while they must have no gods and no savior besides God. Again, the prophet reiterates the incompatibility of Egypt, the land of spiritual slavery, therefore death, with the path of life that ancient Israelites were chosen to claim.

There is a clue to comprehension how the fantasies of the diviners could attract the mind that searches for the truth and meaning of existence. In such a case, the observer might identify the same pattern that determines acceptance of heresies***Σ13*** either by the immature mind incapable of discerning between the good and the evil and between the true knowledge and the false knowledge or by the mind that chooses material things as the meaning of own existence.

In the referred above texts from the Holy Scriptures, the presence or absence of God does not mean the results of physical movement to or away from some point at which man conducts physical rituals of worship – reads the prayer, kneels, etc. The human mind is always before God: until the mind exists, this connection is unbreakable by the very design. The "departure from God" {e.g., in: *Isaiah 59:1–16*}, which the prophets perceived as perplexity, foolishness, and ultimately, death, means change of the focus, when instead of God, the mind accepts the temporal settings, attributes, and fantasies of the material world – for instance, the idols – as the actuality or meaning of the existence.

In addition, there is one more factor that still elevates the heathen philosophy at the rank of the most brilliant achievements of human mind: the richness, elaboration, and the remnants of inner harmony, which is a distinguishing feature of truth, of pre–Plato philosophy confirm that the Egyptian mythological theology and Orphism cannot be the exclusive source of the Greek heathen philosophy. It should be also another source of knowledge, which made the ancient Greek philosophy the most advanced and comprehensive system of thought in the pre–Christian history.

Even in its worst version (that is political–civil theology of theaters manufactured by poets and philosophers for the mass population) the Greek philosophy retains the specific *apparent* life–oriented vision of the world, which still enchants thinkers.

For instance, in the sixth century B.C., the priests of the Apollo's sanctuary in Delphi promoted an idea of necessity to live in harmony with the universal laws that sustain the life of the world, and two greatest poets of ancient Greece – Pindar (522?–443? BC) and Aeschylus (525–456 BC) made their contribution to the theological thought:

– Pindar popularized the Delphi's oracle (which also was used to sustain the main values and to strengthen the unity of the Greek world)

– Aeschylus disclosed some concepts of the mysterious Eleusinian cult: the purpose of each man is to obtain the unity with the Universe and with the people of all races and nations. The unity in harmony activates the inner vision, which allows mind to escape the limits of fate and to become the creator of own destiny and destiny of those who are connected [e.g., in: Sherrard 87–88].

The remnants of true knowledge of God, with which death disguises its presence, explain the attractiveness of Greek heathen philosophy: the illusion of truth and the natural love of the mind to the truth are the reasons why many generations of thinkers perceived dreams of death as the breakthrough of the human intellect into the realm of divine.

In general, the religious and philosophical vision of the ancient Greeks differs from the common mythological religions, especially, from the ancient Egyptian cults, perhaps, in the same degree as the shining air of temples of Greece penetrated with the sunlight differs from the darkness of the secret passages leading into a pharaoh's tomb within a sealed pyramid.

For instance, the Egyptian concept of preservation of dead body (mummification) as the pledge of desirable manner of the eternal life not only enslaved mind and encaged it within the world of the dead matter; it transformed man into a slave who has to serve his earthly gods unreservedly to earn the privilege to continue his service within the eternity.

To the contrary, the Greeks learned to die with a smile, cremated bodies of the fallen heroes **[[***to preserve it from decay inconsistent with the sense of beauty by returning the human body into the energy that had created it***]]**, kept them in memory beautiful and full of life, and allotted them places among the stars and galaxies.

Another example: the pre–Plato thinkers promulgated the ideas of universality and limitless ability of any man to dominate over own destiny, while any Egyptian was born into the strictly structured world in which he has no right to leave/change the assigned to him level of the social and religious hierarchy. Then, Plato's utopia also invented the idea of restriction of the access to knowledge and necessity of strict observation of the assigned social status as the necessary condition of social and political stability.

The developed trade and other lines of communications among the Mediterranean nations provided opportunities to learn knowledge and customs of partners, rivals, and neighbors. In the contemporary terms, it might be said that the Mediterranean region possessed the comprehensive database – alloy of philosophical and theological concepts developed by all nations connected into the inhabited world. In the beginning, this world was dominated by the military and organizational might of the Minoans, and in the end, by the power of Greek philosophizing mind: it was the time of initial tests of globalization.

Greek heathen philosophers had contributed many concepts to this database.

From another side, philosophers, diviners, priests, and poets of other nations derived from the common database the notions intended to enforce the control of the mass population and therefore, to protect the social and state stability.

Therefore, it might be concluded that the overall development of the mind proceeded in two directions:

1. The remnants of true knowledge of God before, throughout, and after the Babel confusion of languages and all consequent divisions, distortions, and modifications were overrun with The Ten Commandments and other ordinances of God: the ancient Israelites became the exclusive keepers of wisdom and knowledge of true God. Even before The Ten Commandments, the Egyptian elite, which took the great pride in own knowledge and asserted itself as the ruler of the universe, has to learn the art of survival from the Hebrew slave***Σ23*** – Joseph the Righteous {*Genesis 37; 39; 40; 41; 42; 43; 44; 45; 46; 47; 48; 49; 50; Psalm 104(105):5–22*}.

Then, wherever God's punishments placed the Israelites, they carried with them their knowledge, which sometimes was accepted by their temporary conquerors and neighbors. Besides, the truth has the special attractiveness: many seekers of the truth openly came to Judea or to the Jews in the quest of wisdom and received knowledge they desired {*Genesis 37:1–35; 39:1–23; 40:1–23; 41:1–57; 47:13–26; 3 Kings 10:1–9; Psalm 104(105):17–22*; *Daniel 5:11–17; John 12:20–24; Acts 8:26–39; 17*}.

2. Gradually, the remnants of true knowledge became increasingly contaminated by polytheism, phantasms, and diviners' figments of imagination. The political purposes, for example, such as the necessity to unify population into establishments capable to protect own manner of existence, starting with protection of life and well–being of its rulers as the main priority, forced the initiated to develop the mythological theology, which accommodated religious and ethical needs of the majority of heathen population and secured social stability of the state.

In the contemporary terms, the mythical theology might be defined as the shared dream world **[[***similar to the contemporary virtual reality***]]**, which distinguishes the particular groups of people and simultaneously confines them within the man–made boundaries of thinking, therefore, preventing them from any possibility of changes of the conditions of their existence and development.

During the period from the sixth to first century B.C., Pythagoras (582–500 B.C.), Xenophanes of Colophon (570–480 (?) B.C.), Anaxagoras (500 (?)–428 B.C.), Protagoras (480–410 B.C.), Parmenides (450 B.C.), and other Orphics' followers created the philosophical concepts and logics, which still serve as the actual basis for many general and specific concepts and definitions of the modern sciences.

Still, the doctrine of Xenophanes of Colophon provides the most convincing and elaborated doctrine of the cosmos among those created during the history of heathen philosophy: his world exists as a static plenum of the One, and nothing that contradicts the One is capable of existence. If to discard the truth that Xenophanes' deity is the Orphic absolute animal – serpent/beast, the observer might even conclude that his poetry includes the remnants of true knowledge of God. Many idealistic and materialistic constructions of Plato, Aristotle, and Stoics have their origin in Xenophanes' verses.

Anaxagoras profoundly influenced the Greek philosophical thought with his vision of the ***Νους*** – the Intelligence, which he adopted from the Orphics. ***Νους*** is the active principle that creates the world from the passive matter **[[***probably, a reference to the whirlwind that moves the surface of the eternal infinite chaos and forms the Orphic egg – the imagined by the Orphics source of the universe that includes the world of men***]]**. This Intelligence controls the universe, penetrates, and orders all things, yet it does not join the material objects; only a human soul is able to be united with the Intelligence [Plato *Cratylus* 413c; Ehrhardt 70, 72–75].

The concept of ***Νους***, which introduces the idea of the intelligent universe as the creation and domain of the universal Intelligence–Reason, resulted in recognition of wisdom and knowledge as the greatest values and the source of power. Consequently, the purpose of human existence was defined as cognition of "the heavens and the whole order of the Universe," or, according to the Aristotle's down–to–earth interpretation, life became valuable "for the sake of some kind of knowledge" [Aristotle *Eudemian Ethics I.v.9* 213].

Pythagoras elaborated the Orphic concept of forms (with which the Orphic arch–serpent is filled) into the entire cosmos: all material objects have forms as their essence. He propagated beliefs into immortality and reincarnation, invented numerology and vegetarianism.

When Pythagoras rejected the Orphic doctrine of spiral evolution **[[***although it followed the circles of the Orphic "crooked dragon," it was impractical for the slavery–based societies, which are not capable of evolution, because slavery is death of reason, not development***]]**, he elaborated the model of a wheel as the natural foundation of the universal order and chained the soul to the cycles of reincarnation. Pythagoras compiled his doctrine as the alloy of the Egyptian mythology, Babylonian astrology, Persian dualism, and Brahmanism [e.g., Sherrard 83–84; *The Sunset Knowledge*].

The Pythagoras' notions provided the foundation for the different secret doctrines of the prominent philosophical schools of the Antiquity, and the Pythagoras' version of the Orphic doctrine became the foundation for the inhumane concepts of Plato and his followers.

For instance, the secret doctrines, which have their source in the Pythagoras' concepts, possess some common traits; for instance, they must be strictly guarded from the majority of population, and they are based on numerology – the simplified description of the world, which ascribes to the numbers – 1, 2, 3, and so on – the potency to symbolize the entire universe, including the supreme deity. Through Philo of Alexandria and his followers, these doctrines crawled into the Judaic world; then, they shaped the Neo–Platonism of Plotinus and Porphyry (the second–third centuries) and eventually, infiltrated works of the Western theologians.

The Greek heathen philosophy, Philo's modifications of Judaism, and the ancient secret doctrines compose the core of the philosophical–theological system, which unified plenty of sects, doctrines, and concepts under the name of Gnosticism***Σ17***.

Gnosticism penetrated doctrines of the philosophizing theologians, including Origen, and originated many heresies, which might be recognized through the inseparable distinctive marks – the contempt of human being, denigration of the human nature, and prohibition to make the core knowledge available for all population.

Another significant concept – the concept of the Middle Way – has the roots in the ancient doctrine of transmutation of the opposites. The assumption of transmutation of the opposites descends from the primordial knowledge about universal complexity of the divine creative energy that originates water as well as fire, the Earth as well as the Sun, the apparent abundance of life at the Earth, as well as the apparent void of the Space, and so on. It states that all is changed with time, and the opposite transforms itself into its opposite: the good becomes the evil, and the evil becomes the good. Thus, to prevent increase of the evil, men must always follow the middle way between the good and the evil [*The Sunset Knowledge*]. The echo of this concept could be found in

the Aristotelian arithmetical ethics
⇓
pseudo–knowledge based on presumption of
unity, struggle, or transformation of the opposites
(for instance, Marxist dialectics)
⇓
the notion of the good as the source of the evil
(for instance, Aquinas' image of his god that is the source of evil*Σ24*)

The practice of deification of a ruler illustrates the work of the doctrine of the opposites: from one side, the ultimate – or absolute – slavery and powerlessness of many; from another side, assertion of the absolute power or deification of one. Still, it fuels the pretence to the absolute power and ability of global domination by man (for instance, the pope) or by establishment (for instance, a world–wide empire).

Within the Greek realm of gods, into which the fruitful imagination of ancient heathens placed ***Νους***, the world soul, forces of nature, trees, rocks, rivers, fate, necessity, transcendent beings, stars, etc., a distinction between deities and men was subtle: any mortal could become a deity. The divine origin, transcendent force, and immortality were accepted as the traditional properties of deities. Ethics and intelligence of men had no significant difference from their deities; the real distinction was in the access to the power and the means to maintain immortality.

For instances, the very cooperative gods of Homer put man at a particular position, in fact, in the center of the cosmos: the weak and limited in his abilities and powers as man is, nevertheless he might be asked to judge gods and even become the immortal himself by his heroic actions or by outwitting his deities.

Initially, the poets deified heroes who possessed extraordinary power of body and soul; later, they reserved the possibility of deification only for the rulers who possessed the power of physical coercion over the others.

Ultimately, the power of physical coercion became the traditional attribute and the main reason for deification of all rulers, for instance, such as Alexander of Macedonia, Roman emperors, popes, party bosses of the totalitarian – e.g., communist and fascist – states, and other leaders of the religious and political establishments. This kind of power is asserted through the suppressive structures, weapons, prisons, rules and laws regulating acquisition and limits of wealth, limits of physical and other freedoms, and punishment for deviations.

Deification of man (especially, the one who has access to the power of coercion or other means to elevate himself over all the others) is the inseparable feature of the heathenism, because it provides the level of psychological comfort necessary for survival and development within the hostile world, which lives without mercy of God.

Within the heathen societies, only few fearless minds realize that something might be impossible **[[***as becoming true deity***]]**, unavoidable **[[***as death***]]**, or unreachable **[[***as immortality of a human body within this time–space–complexity–matter–bounded Universe***]]**. The majority needs at least some portion of psychological comfort, even if it is obtainable only with self–deceit and illusion. Deification of man provides such a comfort: the deified man claims the alliance with gods, believes in own power over the hostile and volatile world, asserts the right of dominion over the others **[[***therefore, releases the others from responsibilities for their thoughts and deeds***]]**, and serves as a role model whose achievements, in theory, anyone could repeat.

However, deification of the one is not possible without belittlement and humiliation of all the others; these two contradictory assumptions are the inseparable features of the same phenomenon: false knowledge of God and its inference – false knowledge of man.

The practice of deification↔belittlement of man illustrates consequences of the false assumption of a possibility of the unity of the opposites; it explains acceptance of ideologies, cults, and contemporary versions of old heathen beliefs. People seek the way to escape from the infernal actuality by creation of imaginary worlds with manageable deities that sometimes are inhumane and cruel, yet always predictable, reliable and comfortable, because of their definiteness. So, if the believers play by the rules, they are entitled to at least some portion of goods, psychological comfort, etc.

The logic of majority arranged into a family–tribe–polis under the authority of father–elders–ruler demanded existence of the main deity responsible for the orderly existence and supervision of all other deities: some remnants of monotheism continued to exist within the heathen societies as the familiar although uncommon phenomenon.

For example,

– Antisthenes (444–365 B.C.) recognized existence of one god in nature [Antisthenes ref. in: Cicero *De Natura Deorum* I.xiii. 32]

– Amenhotep IV, who ruled Egypt in 1374–1358 B.C. [Trager 7–8], attempted to replace Egyptian polytheism with the monotheistic religion of the Sun

– Athenian court's death sentence mentions that Socrates does not recognize gods accepted by the state: he introduces new deities. Indeed, Socrates speaks about the deity, whom Plato and Xenophon, the Socrates' pupils, do not name. Then, Plato's *Letters* contain references concerning the secret knowledge precious like purified gold that should not be revealed to outsiders, and this knowledge is connected with the one – maker of the universe [Plato *Euthyphro* 3b; *Letters II*:314a–b; *VII*:341c–d; Xenophon 68].

As it could be inferred from Plato's social, political, and religious assumptions, the main deity of Plato could be only "the absolute animal" – serpent/beast of the Orphics. However, the Plato's hints on the secret monotheistic doctrine became the argument for acceptance of neo–Platonism by Augustine and the source of heresies, with which Augustine and other lovers of the Plato's fantasies polluted the Western theological thought***Σ25***.

The universality of Greek philosophical thought allowed existence of many theological and philosophical doctrines and assumptions; it preserved the remnants of pre–Plato philosophical and theological knowledge, although Plato–Aristotle's inhumane religious–social–political utopia and founded on it philosophical, theological, and political doctrines gradually made the way into the main doctrines of the Greek heathen philosophy.

In the same time, the Greeks acknowledged existence of the unknown God Who is in no way similar to mortals either in body or in thought, Who perceives everything as the whole and its entirety, Who is eternal and One, Who controls and governs the Universe, which obeys Him "unfailingly and faster than thought" [Xenophanes of Colophon *Fragment 23, 25* 31, 33; Xenophanes of Colophon ref. in: Aristotle *On Xenophanes* 977a; Xenophon 193–194; Cicero III.xxiii. 58; *The Sunset Knowledge*].

So, the question is: who was this main deity within the core of mysterious monotheistic doctrine, which left too many footprints in the concepts of Greek heathen philosophers to be excluded from the spectrum of ancient theological systems? Could it be exclusively the Orphic "absolute" serpent, which they worshiped through the bestial rites similar to those established in honor of Dionysus and Cybele, and which they asserted as the main deity–source of the comprehensive hierarchy of animals, deities, and living beings?

Three facts should be taken into consideration, if the right answer is wanted.

1. True knowledge of God never left the world; otherwise, the world would cease existence. This knowledge was preserved by the Adam's decedents {*Adam's grandson Enos called with hope upon the name of God – Genesis 4:25–26*}; this knowledge survived the Flood, and it was known before revelation of the Law to the chosen nation; it was carried by the priests of the Most High God, and only God Who they served knows His true servants. For instance, the Holy Scriptures have three references to the priests who possessed and guarded it:

— Melchisedek the king of Salem and the priest of the Most High God Who created heaven and earth, blessed Abram and gave him bread and wine {*Genesis 14:18–20*}; therefore,

a/ the knowledge of the Most High God existed

b/ the mysterious unknown priests worshiped true God and kept His knowledge before Moses received the Law

c/ the priest Melchisedek knew the choice of God before the nation, which was destined to receive the Law and to meet the Messiah, learned her high mission

— David speaks of the Lord, the Son of God, Who is given dominion in the day of His power and in the shining splendors of the saints, Who sits on the right hand of the Lord until His enemies are made His footstool – He is the Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek; David, by the Holy Spirit, calls Him *the Lord*, and the Gospels convey the words of Lord God Jesus Christ, which confirm truth of David's vision {*Psalm 109(110):1–4; Matthew 22:42–45; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:40–44*}

— St. Paul the Apostle explains that Lord God Jesus Christ is the High Priest after the order of Melchisedek: He is the Eternal Priest by the power of eternal life *(**ζωης ακαταλυτου*** — life indestructible, indissoluble); the ordinances of men and the laws of the flesh do not determine this priesthood {*Hebrews 5:1–10; 7:1–28*}.

2. From all the nations, which were unified into the inhabited world dominated by the Roman empire, only the Greeks came to the Lord to find in Him the ancient God of their ancestors and to become new carriers of the divine Truth {*John 12:20–23*}: the Greek language (Koine, the modified language of the Minoans) became the language of The New Testament.

3. When St. Paul the Apostle visited Athens and addressed to the Athenians in the middle of the Areopagus, he referred to the altar to the Unknown God Who Athenians worshiped; he explained that this Unknown God is the true God–Creator, for Him we live and move and are, for – as some Greek poets said – we are His offspring {*Acts 17:21–34*}.

Then, could the ancient Greeks be the descendents of "the elder brother" who initially served God {*Luke 15:11–32*} and who preserved at least some remnants of the original knowledge of true God, which originated the best – humane – part of the ancient philosophy? If so, these, even diluted and contaminated with the false assumptions concerning the nature of God and His creations, remnants of true knowledge of God made the ancient philosophical thought fruitful and attractive for all generations of thinkers.

Some heathen philosophers claimed that the Christians assumed the sacred doctrines of the pagan Antiquity. In particular, Celsus (the vehement opponent and critic of Christianity, the second century) in his book ***Αληθης Λογος*** *(True Word,* or *The Word of Truth)* asserts that the "wisest nations and cities and wise men" possessed the true wisdom – knowledge of the ancient Logos, which the Christians made their own. Among the "wisest nations," Celsus lists the Egyptians, Assyrians, Indians, Persians, and inhabitants of the ancient Greek island states. Celsus asserts that the Greeks also assumed wisdom of the others and elaborated it into the valuable practicable knowledge, which they "crystallized" into the Hellenism [Celsus ref. and qtd. in: van Winden 281–283].

Celsus obviously misinterprets the actuality: the original foundation of the ancient doctrines of Egypt and Greece, or the sacred knowledge of old civilizations, contains the distorted fragments of the true knowledge of God.

For the Christians, there is nothing to borrow, because they possess the entire body of knowledge in its purity and completeness {*John 1:1–18; 3:16–21; 31–36; 6:63; 10:27–30; 14:6–7, 15–27; 15:1–16; 16:7–15; 17; Acts 17:16–34; Jude; 1 Peter 1:3–25; 2 Peter 1:2–11; Romans 1:16–32; 3:29; 10:11–13; Colossians 2:2–10; 3:9–11; Ephesians 1:3–23; 2:1–22;* 1 *Corinthians 1:18–31; 2 Corinthians 6:14–18; 2 Timothy 2:19*}:

a/ Christians serve true God–Creator of life ——

the heathens worship "the divine absolute animal" the serpent/embodiment of death

b/ Judaism and Christianity are established by God–Creator of life ——

the heathenism is the product of evil imagination, which worships death

c/ the Holy Scriptures convey the revelations of God to His prophets and apostles ——

the heathen theologies are assembled from figments of corrupted human imagination mixed with the bits and pieces of true knowledge

Contrary to Celsus' assertions, the Christian teachings is the gift of the true knowledge of ***Λογος***, the Word–God. Through Lord God Jesus Christ, the original knowledge of the nature of the world and of the nature of man was returned to mankind.

Besides, the heathenism and Christianity are the mutually exclusive systems: the acceptance of knowledge created within the framework of the heathenism transforms a Christian into an idol–worshipper; the knowledge and acceptance of the Christian dogma destroy the heathenism.

The main difference between Christianity and the heathenism is the focus of the mind:

– the mind of the Christian is centered on the unchanging immaterial reality of God–Creator and rejects idols – the material embodiments of the imaginary worlds

– the mind of the idol–worshipper transforms the reality of own existence into the imaginary world and worships own creation. The heathenism as the framework of a particular knowledge was created by the mind, which is deprived of (or rejected) the knowledge of God and which does not have access to the divine energy of creation descending with the ***Λογος***. Such a mind, empowered by own imagination, is a self–consuming entity – a dweller of the beleaguered city: it feeds itself with own limited resources *{eats own flesh – in Isaiah 9:20}*, therefore, it is unable of adequate cognition and creation of adequate knowledge. It deprives other beings of life and other resources, destroys and consumes everything in struggle to prolong own existence. Even if it attempts to create something beneficial for the others, it embodies death into all creations.

From the practical point of view, only ignorance, the misuse of imagination, and unrestrained passions make the heathenism possible.

So, at some moment of the Past, the fruit of human imagination was substituted for the true God. Since, although the substitution was covered with the references to the one almighty deity that "with one thought embraces the entire universe," and so on, this deity is "another god" that exists only in imagination of those who believe in it.

Later, the Orphics inserted their arch–serpent/ethereal dragon into the space allotted for supreme deity. Through the "sublime theology" of Plato [Thomas Taylor qtd. and ref. in Hall (2003) 74] adopted by Augustine of Hippo***Σ25***, and through works of Aristotle the Plato's apprentice adopted by Thomas Aquinas, the Orphic arch–serpent crawled into theological and philosophical doctrines developed by the Western philosophizing theologians. The monotheistic concepts of the ancient Creeks provided the basis for attempts of the philosophizing theologians to "reconcile" heathen philosophy (doctrines of Plato and Aristotle based on the Orphism) with Judaism and Christianity***Σ15***.

However, the Christian Greek theologians recognized the danger of heathen philosophy; following the Apostle's warning {*Colossians 2:8–10}*, they determined that Christian theology and heathen philosophy are irreconcilable***Σ12***.

For instance, contrary to Origen***Σ15***, Theodoret (a bishop of Cyrrhus, Syria, 393–460) argues that the Greek philosophers have very little in common with the truth of the Scriptures: they follow "the paths of falsehood" [Theodoret ref. and qtd. in: Mansfield and Runia 272, 276]. Theodoret's work *Therapy for Greek Diseases or Recognition of the Truth of the Gospel from Hellenic Philosophy* is one of the first serious attempts to purify the Christian Apostolic theology from contamination by the heathenism, which was committed through the wide application of heathen philosophy.

In general, any idea of any compatibility, as well as of any positive connection between Christianity and the heathen doctrines of the "wisest nations," is absurd: just recall such creations of Orphics as the orgiastic Dionysian cult. The only connection between the heathenism and the Holy Scriptures is the crafty brute of Genesis {*Genesis 3:1–14*}, the serpent, which the imagination of Orphics made into their supreme deity.

The question is: how the God's arch–enemy, the crooked dragon–serpent of the Orphics usurped the place of God?

Probably, this question might never be answered.

Probably, at some point of times, the ancient rebels who were unable to heal the pain of deprivation of presence of God and exile from the Paradise, began to worship the serpent, the beast–embodiment of the arch–evil, who was murderer from the beginning {*cf. in: John 8:44*}. They ascribed the attributes of true God to His cursed enemy – the most crafty brute of the Genesis' earth {*Genesis 3:1*}, and began to worship its image: the crooked dragon–serpent.

Then, through the dream worlds of Egyptians, heirs of the Minoans, and the survivors of the collapsed Minoan and other civilizations, the ancient serpent–beast "crystallized" into "the divine absolute animal" of the Orphics as well as into the heads of many other "divine hierarchies": worship to the ancient serpent–beast became the essence – apparent or hidden under the veil of secrecy that only the elite was allowed to penetrate – of religions and cults of the ancient civilizations of Mediterranean, North Africa, and Asia.

If to apply normal – human – logic, it is not possible to find a reasonable explanation how the human ideals could be developed by those who worship the beast, even if they named it "divine absolute animal." The answer might be found only with the logic of death that enters the minds, which are incapable of development and which, consequently, already triggered self–annihilation.

Whatever reasons of such substitution are, the contemporary mind has to deal with the fact that, at some moment of the Past, the fruit of human imagination was substituted for the true God. Since, although the substitution was covered with the references to the one almighty deity, which "with one thought embraces the entire universe," and so on, this deity is "another god" that exists only in imagination of those who believe in it.

If to look from another angle, it should not be forgotten that for the ancient philosophers and educated groups of the society, philosophy was a passion, delight, and the framework for the games of imagination, perhaps, similar to the virtual realities, science fiction movies, novels, computer games, and other shared artificial worlds of the contemporary people. In the Past, philosophy was some kind of password that opened the world of the thinking elite, yet, never the reality of existence. Ancient philosophical games became the source of innumerable theological and philosophical doctrines, sciences, social and political systems, which sustain the reality of anti–evolution based on the logic of death. Perhaps, the destructive influence of heathen philosophy on the following generations of philosophers, politicians, and theologians might be explained with the tragic shift of the realities: the descendents accepted as the reality the dream worlds of games of imagination, with which their ancestors amused and destroyed themselves.

Many authors acknowledge the passion to new knowledge and universality of thinking of the Greeks – citizens of the cosmos without boundaries and limits, and suggest that Greek philosophy had laid the foundation for arts and sciences [e.g., Burckhardt 320; Charron 229; Shipley 190, 327–328].

However, the main achievement of the Greek heathen philosophy is a demonstration of the unsurpassed creative potential of imagination, and some authors recognize that. For instance, Gerard Watson writes that Plato is "a great imaginative writer" who employed imagination to produce his philosophical concepts, and insight – the recognized source of illumination of a philosophical mind – is merely ***φαντασια*** (*fantasia*) [Watson (1988) 208–217; qtd. 213].

Nevertheless, the main legacy of the ancient civilizations of diviners and philosophizers is heathenism. Hosea the prophet grasped the essence of the heathen idol–worshipping society: its ultimate feature is the loss of humaneness and dignity in such a degree that humans become substitutes for animals, and animals are substitutes for humans: *"**Θυδατε ανθρωπους μοσχοι γαρ εκλελοιπασι**"* – "sacrifice humans, for sacrificial bulls have come to end (perished)" {*Hosea 13:2*}.

In conclusion,

it might be said that the heathenism is knowledge composed by the minds, which

—– separated themselves from the Creator

—– live by illusion

—– use imagination to interpret the reality and to arrange their dreams and figments of imagination into that what they present as "knowledge" of God and "knowledge" of the world.

The heathenism as the set of false religions, philosophical doctrines, symbolic realities and systems of knowledge created by the mind deprived of knowledge of God became the main legacy of the ancient civilizations. The multitude of heathen theological and philosophical doctrines invented by philosophizing priests and their apprentices – philosophers defined in the Past and continue to define in the Present creation, time–range of existence, and disintegration of any establishment in the fields of state–politics, society–culture, and religion–morality of the Western civilization, although by their very nature these doctrines are incompatible with monotheistic theology – original Judaism and Christianity.

Under the cover of human ideals and false assumptions, which, in fact, are irreconcilable with the reality of existence, the heathenism penetrates the frameworks of the societies, disables their protective structures, and transforms the social/state/religious establishments into the malignant tumors of evil. Consequently, the heathenism might be likened to the cancer–causing virus, which attacks the immune system of human body and destroys the beings with insufficient self–defense.

Three deadly inventions of philosophizing mind compose the core of heathenism: Orphic doctrine, slavery as the natural order of the universe, and denigration of human nature.

The heathen philosophy justifies slavery of mind and body, admits similarity, and even proclaims superiority of the animal nature over the human nature.

Slavery of the worst kind is the foundation of the heathenism, which deprives man of his similarity to the Creator's image and likeness and subdues him to the evil imagination that recognizes the beast as the main deity. As soon as the human nature is portrayed as inferior in comparison with the bestial "deities," bestialization and inhumane cruelty take the place of virtues and humaneness.

In the temporal perspective, the heathenism is the accelerated decay of the intellect and disintegration of the life–protective structures of the mind, which are responsible for survival of man and human establishments:

the heathenism starts with human imagination

⇓

the heathenism is fed by human blood

⇓

the heathenism progresses through the destruction of men and their creations

As any of processes of collapse, until some point, advancement of the heathenism and its negative influence might be reversed.

The point of no return, or the point at which the mind becomes unable to stop own degeneration and to turn to God, is deification of the idea or the establishment produced by men. For example,

— the pre–Platonic philosophers constructed theological doctrines, which downgraded the concept of invisible uncognizable God to the level of visible celestial objects, forces of nature, and the Universe; still their doctrines preserved some remnants of primordial knowledge and the ideals of humanity

— the Plato's Orphic–based theological and philosophical doctrines and their derivative – social and political utopia [*Republic; Law*] became the next stage: it introduced the concept of "divine philosopher" and prepared the ground for deification of figments of imagination embodied into the men's establishments. With deification of the consummated philosopher, the "perfect community" with the Nocturnal Council as the means to control the beliefs and the manner of life of the ordinary people became the actuality of the heathens **[[***and in the thirteenth century, it was reincarnated as the papal Inquisition***]]**. Yet, although the Plato's utopia propagated the openly perverted "ideals" of the inhumane "perfect community" with the class of guardians deprived of all human attachments and the Nocturnal Council – precursor of the Inquisition, the Plato's followers continued to deceive themselves and their audience with the theoretical speculations concerning the ideals of humanity, which they attribute to Plato's fantasies

— the Aristotle's doctrines deified the matter, perverted the concept of morality by association of the virtues with physical pain or pleasure, and induced the worship to the establishments of men; it asserted slavery as the universal pattern and natural order of the society/state, declared divine origin of the state, and became the foundation for political theology and for ideologies of the totalitarian states.

The results of application of Greek heathen theology and philosophy reveal the danger of the heathenism. The history of mankind became the list of vanished civilizations, states, societies, and religions, which started up with the unreal worlds of heathen philosophy. Each of them, beginning with the empire of Alexander of Macedonia and concluding with the majority of the totalitarian (e.g., Communist, Fascist, and Nazi) states of the twentieth century, had disappeared after causing death and suffering of countless human beings.

Heathenism might be compared with the ancient leprosy – deadly debilitating disease: it destroys the mind by depriving it of the ability to discern the evil and the good. The consequent inability to foresee the results of own words, actions, and creations is the leading reason of collapse and disintegration of life–maintaining social, political, and religious establishments.

Conclusive Remarks

The main legacy of ancient civilizations makes clear that two general frameworks exist, which sustain work of two types of human mind and define created knowledge and its consequences – thoughts, words, and actions of man: one of them is based on the true knowledge of God, another – on the heathenism.

The heathenism is the reality of false knowledge, dream worlds, and dead images, which mind creates from the images of the world of the matter, and which therefore, do not have the adequate complexity necessary to sustain normal mind's functioning. This realm might be likened to the Plato's underground

den/prison masqueraded as a rental shop, in which the confined mind wastes its life–time, resources, and power by playing with games/toys of imagination invented by the others similarly disconnected from the actuality.

The history of implementation of the legacy of the ancient heathens confirms warnings of the Hebrew Prophets: idolatry pollutes the earth and begets the curse, which strikes idol–worshippers with disgrace, madness, premature death, and destruction {*Deuteronomy 11:26–28; 28:1–68; 30:15–20*}.

The legacy of the ancient civilizations formed the framework of knowledge within which the Western civilization came into being. This framework sustains the most dangerous phenomenon: divination as the specific abilities and skills, which are necessary for creation of false knowledge and substitution of figments of imagination for knowledge of the actuality. The fruits of divination are

1/ the heathenism, or idol–worship, especially, the Orphism – doctrine that became the core of the heathenism and carrier of the lethal poison of false knowledge compiled by the serpent–worshipers

2/ the heathen philosophy that

makes possible
a/degeneration – anti–evolution of human beings
↓
b/ pollution and destruction of the world, which was given into men's domain
and which men transformed into giant slaughterhouse for themselves and all living beings in their reach
↓ ↑
c/ re–production of the social, religious, and political systems,
in which a human being is enslaved, denigrated at the levels of animal,
fashioned after the image of the beast, and sacrificed to any of idols invented by his owners

~~~~~~~~~~~

makes impossible
a/ evolution – development of human reason/intelligence
↓
b/ evolution/ development of the world given into the dominion of men and preservation of the nature,
therefore, life of living being that may be affected by actions of men
↓ ↑
c/ human dignity, righteousness, prosperous and rich life appropriate for a human being
created in image and likeness of the Almighty God

In summary, the heathen philosophy is the set of the rules and methods with which the ancient philosophers set up the shared dream world of philosophical and theological games, for instance, such as interactive theology created and modified by philosophers and poets; they also

– elaborated the language – philosophical and theological terms and allowable definitions – and rules of the games, for instance, classic logic, or logic of simplification

– described the settings – the multi–deity world, and the rules of maintenance and preservation **[[***for instance, termination or exclusion of the thinkers who without permission of their teachers and rulers produce concepts, which modify a particular shared world intended to sustain a particular political order; for instance, when they introduce new deities or change the adopted common assumptions about the nature, creation, and structure of the world and their innovations do not sustain existing order or intervene with the purposes of the ruling/controlling group – the destiny of Socrates is the comprehensive example from the Past***]]**

– determined the boundaries of the admissible sets/subsystems *(limited quantity of the cognizable by thought deities with the definite responsibilities for maintenance of the shared world).*

These games – the heathen philosophy – originated the social and political doctrines, which still define the life of contemporary societies, arrangement and functioning of the states, subjects and methods of sciences.

Yet, in all times, there were few thinkers who recognized the danger of the philosophizing imagination. For instance, Cicero (106–43 B.C.) refers to the opinions of philosophers as to "the dreams of madmen," and describes the outpourings of philosophizing–theologizing poets as "absurd." In his understanding, the Egypt mythology is "insane" and the popular beliefs [for instance, the mythical–political–civil theology referred by Augustine in: *The City of God* VI.v–viii, xi] are "a mere mass of inconsistencies sprung from ignorance" [Cicero I.xiii.34, xvi.42–43].

The Greek heathen philosophy also reveals the tragedy of the intellect that is imprisoned in the darkness of false assumptions but still discerns the sparkles of truth as the inhabitants of the Plato's cave, who accept as truth the shadows of the images [Plato *Republic* 514a–515c]. The distinctive feature of such an intellect is cyclic repetition of the same pattern of thinking that reflects an inability to ascend at the higher levels of development–complexity.

For instance,

a/ with the images–shadows of the actuality, the ancient dreamers learned to create the imaginary theological worlds
and to make them the source and foundation of politics,
for instance, such as Aristotle's *Politics*, *The Oeconomica*, and *The Eudemian Ethics*, which still carry his design
[[*elaboration for practical implementation of Orphism–based Plato's utopia – e.g.,see Law, Republic*]]
of social, political, and religious establishments,
which still is the foundation of the contemporary politics, statecraft, and life–maintaining establishments –
for instance, such as societies, states,
and which still provides detail instructions for the contemporary politicians
↓ ↑
b/ in return,
the created by imagination theological assumptions became intertwined with the very fabric of human reasoning,
composed the framework for thinking, influenced–modified philosophy and politics,
and in the consequent cycle, were influenced by modified philosophy and by the results of previous political decisions

Such cyclic inter–influence produced the interactive theology – the fictitious theological system, which responds with the changes of own concepts and even own foundation to development of culture and technical progress and the consequent changes of philosophical and political doctrines.

In general, this pattern reminds the adaptive techniques of chameleon that changes its appearance according to the environment, yet, always is the same animal.

From another angle of consideration, the essence of heathen theology might be inferred from the old saying: the cruel people have cruel gods.

From the point of view of "the ancient initiated" referred by Manly P. Hall, the heathen theology is the realm in which "the living are ruled by the dead" [Hall (2003) 69].

Indeed, the brilliance of the design of the Greek philosophical entertainment conceals the fact that the imaginary theological and philosophical worlds and their derivatives serve the destruction, if they are applied to the actuality of the religious, social, and political life. As the blazing flame attracts a night butterfly, they attract the mind. Similarly to the butterfly perished in the flame, the mind loses itself within the artificial worlds of imagination without the true knowledge of God, and creates the images, concepts, and strategies, which bring destruction instead of expected survival and prosperity.

For instance, Philo of Alexandria's***Σ15*** assumption of identity of two incompatible realities, such as the Judaic theology–monotheism and Greek heathen theology–polytheism, based on unrestricted and unguarded imagination, and the consequences of this assumption provide a typical example how the law of destruction works.

The standard pattern of destruction includes a combination of true and false assertions and an appeal to the logical reasoning: the true assertions make all mixture verisimilar and, with the help of the classic logic **[[***Aristotelian logic or logic of simplification***]]**, facilitate acceptance of the core of destruction under the mask of the secret/sacred truth. The substitution of the false assertions for the truth inevitably ruins the original reality or activates such transformation of the environment, which makes existence of the original reality impossible.

This pattern can be traced in the history of concepts of Origen and his followers – the theologians who had accepted Greek heathen philosophy and logic as the tools for creation of Christian theological knowledge and consequently, incorporated the heathen mythical theology into Western theology and consequently, absorbed practices and methods of the heathen empires into the Western – papal – church's policies.

The irreconcilable difference between Christianity and the heathenism is in the focus of the mind:

— the mind of the Christian is centered on the unchanging immaterial reality of God–Creator and rejects idols of the material imaginary worlds

— the mind of the idol–worshipper transforms the reality of own existence into the imaginary changing and easily modifiable dream world and worships figments of imagination.

The heathen philosophy and Christianity are the mutually exclusive systems: the acceptance of knowledge created within the framework of the heathen philosophy transforms a Christian into an idol–worshipper; the accepted knowledge of the Christian dogma destroys the heathenism.

From the practical point of view, only the misuse of imagination, ignorance, and unrestrained passions make the heathenism possible.

The contemporary mind has to deal with the fact that, at some moment of the Past, the fruit of human imagination was substituted for the true God. Since, although the substitution was covered with the references to the one almighty deity, which "with one thought embraces the entire universe," and so on, this deity is "another god" that exists only in imagination of those who believe in it. The Orphic arch–serpent–crooked–dragon was inserted into the space allotted for supreme deity, and, through the philosophical and theological and social concepts of Plato and Aristotle, crawled into theological and philosophical doctrines developed by the Western philosophizing theologians. Now, the serpentine theology penetrated all spheres of human activities, starting with the logic of reasoning–creation of knowledge, and disguises itself under many masks.

Consequently, the mind that desires to survive and to evolve up to the higher level of knowledge, wisdom, and overall potency according to its nature, has to find decision of some problems, and the main of them is how to discern the essence of religion – is it based on knowledge of the true God or is it the contemporary re–telling of the ancient myths of serpent–worshipers?

The ultimate criterion could be inferred from the postulates of the true religion – the monotheistic Christian theology, the essence of which is love to God and love to the neighbor. The truth can be discerned by the final results of thoughts, words, and actions:

do they carry the good of a human being – a person, an individual, an ordinary man, woman, child
or
for their implementation – for some faceless "common good,"
do they require sacrifice of life, happiness, dignity of human beings?

In general, all is in the ability to discern the good from the evil, starting with the "seed" – the core knowledge, from which the system – a particular present and a particular future of a particular human being – evolves.

How then, to discern the true intentions behind the propaganda slogans, even if, apparently, they do not carry any religious message? Probably, some historical examples would help.

During the eighteenth–nineteenth centuries, the French revolution in the deadly chain of coups d'état began to establish the ideals of liberty, equality, and brotherhood by physical extermination and mass executions, at first, those who ruled before, then, those who executed the previous rulers, and subsequently, the executioners of the executioners.

In the twentieth century, this idea grew up into the unprecedented by their scales persecutions and executions in countries under the Communist and Nazi regimes, which widely applied the experience of predecessors.

In particular, post–1917 Russia, where the Bolsheviks and Communists took the power with the slogans of freedom, equality, and brotherhood, repeated the French pattern:

– in 1917–1929 – mass exterminations of pre–1917 Russia's rulers, aristocracy, priests, researchers, military elite, wealthy merchants, the different–minded, and the followers of all religions

– in 1930s – during the Stalin's "purges" – termination of executors, executioners, and survived fellow terrorists–comrades who realized the Bolshevist revolution and destroyed the Russian Empire in 1917–1920.

Then, the population, which survived the "red terror" of Bolsheviks and then, terror of Leninists–Stalinists, received "liberty, equality, and brotherhood" to experience

a/ slavery of the mind onto which the "ideals" of Marxism–Bolshevism–Leninism were forced, and physical slavery of those deviant thinkers who were imprisoned into forced labor camps

b/ poverty as the only way of existence for the vast majority of population

c/ the cult of criminal personalities – Lenin, Stalin, etc. – as the substitute for the Christianity, which, following Bruno Bauer, was labeled as "the opium of the masses" ["the opium of the people" – Bruno Bauer qtd. in Note: Hitler (1940) 441].

Seemingly, the heathenism acts as the Trojan horse for the social and state systems, which accept it. At first, the heathens seeking access to the power, propagate the unreal dream world of the deities–figments of imagination or their contemporary substitutes (ideologies, state cults, and perverted social beliefs) and deceive the people with its apparently appealing and understandable logic, with the promises of liberty, equality, brotherhood, etc. Then, they deprive the people of the true knowledge of God. After the heathens gained the access to the power of coercion, they force the societies and the states to undergo the betrayal of the same ideals of humanity, which initially served as the lure.

Again, the clue, which facilitates discernment of truth and good from deceit and evil, is in an ability to answer the question: must the particular good of the many be achieved through the evil for some? In other words, the good cannot be accomplished through the evil: no one can buy the good with the price of the evil, although many live with the widely popular misconception that any evil (e.g., death/sacrifice of one human life) is justifiable if it brings good/prosperity to the many.

For instance, in referred above examples of revolutions in France and Russia: the ideals of liberty, equality, brotherhood (and logically and widely expected overall prosperity and happiness) had to be established with beheading of French aristocrats and with Bolshevist terror. The mobs of French and Russia revolutions enthusiastically approved death of those who were their leaders and owners and even participated in mass executions; afterwards, they faced terror

that they unleashed. Concerning promised ideals of liberties, equality, brotherhood, or even basic human right – can anyone name the place in the world, where today, after all massacres and enormous slaughter those who apparently obstructed the road to universal bliss, they exist in their entirety or even in basic form?

Attraction to the world of imagination signifies the deep void within the mind. The closer is the mind to God as to the only focus of all mind's aspirations the more complete becomes existence. If the mind acquired the treasure of life in God, it does not long for the imaginary world of human omnipotence.

The mind, which attempts to evaluate without bias the inheritance of the ancient Greek heathen philosophers–elaborators of imaginative reasoning, should take into consideration the consequences, which implementation of Greek heathen philosophy and especially, Plato's inhumane utopia [*Republic; Law*] supplemented with Aristotle's logic of simplification, had brought to mankind.

It is almost impossible to find in the contemporary mundane philosophical studies interpretations of writings of the Hebrew Prophets concerning arrangement of the cohesive power and circulation of the knowledge of good or at least, concerning the significance of knowledge of the good within any life–oriented establishment. At the same time, many authors corroborate their assertions with the quotation from or interpretation of ancient Greek philosophers.

For instance, analysis of Anaximander and Socrates–Plato, published in 1997, suggests that the inner good of the soul destabilizes authority, power of law and rule: it "undermines every authority" [Ross xiii]. Another researcher infers that the rule–following habit undermines "the conception of truth" and the human nature constrains the rule–following [Barry xiii, 5; Hacking ref. in: Barry 77].

If to recall that Moses defined the heart of man as the place for the law, and that for the Christians, the human heart with the Law–Word of God within it, became the chosen vessel and the temple–dwelling, which belongs to God only {*Deuteronomy 8:1–3; 30:11–14; Psalm 39(40):8; Acts 9:15; 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19–20*}, the referred above assertions concerning the good, the law, the truth, and the human nature lead to the peculiar inference:

either the original human nature with the inner good became incompatible with the world

or

the laws, which originally were intended to pursue the good of man,
shifted their focus and now pursue the evil of man

And indeed, if the good is seen as the antagonist of law, rules, and any authority, it means that the laws, rules, and authorities have lost their meaning and right to exist because they embody the evil and serve the destruction.

However, in theory, law, rules, authority must serve the good because they are intended to guard freedom and well–being of people within any establishment; therefore, in theory, their main meaning is the good of each person and all members of the establishment. This assumption induces the next inference: the conflict between the good *(the good as the essence of the intelligence)* and the evil *(that is the insufficient knowledge of the actuality because of deprivation of good)* initiated by the ancient dreamers and fueled by the philosophizing theologians has reached all levels of the contemporary social and political establishments.

Consequently, the drastic changes of the meaning of the main life–preserving arrangements of the human establishments, such as law, authority, and rules, prompt some questions:

1. Does the good as the essence of knowledge have ceased to exist, and if yes, which name the contemporary philosophy should assume, what is its subject now?

2. Would ever the philosophizing mind be able to understand that the heathen philosophy must be treated with the same precautions with which the deadly poisons are treated, because the ancient philosophers substituted death for life when they accepted Orphism – phantasms of the snake– and death–worshipers – as philosophy – love of wisdom, which preserves life?

3. Would it be ever possible for all minds to discern the insidiousness of ancient slave–owners behind the contemporary slogans of liberty, equality, and other lies, disseminated by the ideologies founded on the doctrines crafted with heathen philosophy?

And one more question, which concludes this brief analysis of deadly legacy of the ancient civilizations: would a human mind of the Present or the Future ever be able to discard the ancient legacy of death and to build new life – its very own creation, not figments of perverted imagination, vanity, uncleanness, and corruption inherited from the generations, which lived by the beliefs composed for deceit and enslaving of human beings that denigrated them at the level of animals set aside for slaughter/sacrifice to the idols?