

HAMAZAR HAMA ASHO BEM!  
YAZDAN MITHRA

MITHRAISM  
MITHRAEUM JAPAN



Ten Bull Pictures and  
Roman Mysteries of Mithras  
in the Light of Simorgh

A Comparative Study of Simorghian Tradition

يزدان میترا

ONE FORCE, ONE JUSTICE, MAY WE BE!

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## Preface

Simordhian Mithra came to Japan via the Central Asia in syncretism with Roman Mithras. The transcription of his name in Chinese character is “弥勒”, which Japanese Miroku, Korean Mireuk, Chinese pronounce Milo (Mi-lə). He is not only a deity of Buddhism but also Milo-ism (China), Shintô (Japan) and Shugen-dô (Japan). His veneration took root so firm in the East Asia that in some sects he is Lord God (God Most High). (Tojo. *An Introduction to the Simorghian Culture and Mithraism in the East Asia*).

The myth of Roman Mithras contains three episodes about the bull. (1) pursuit of the bull, (2) slaying the bull and (3) sacred meal with Sol. They are so important that many bas-reliefs and statues were made. Miroku also has a famous bull story. It is called “Ten Bull Pictures 十牛図”, widely used among Zen Buddhism even in today.

This article is a brief introduction of Ten Bull Pictures for researchers, revivalists and practitioners of the Simorghian culture and Mithraism (Mehrparasti).

### 1. Terminology

Definitions of technical terms used in this article are introduced.

### 2. Ten Bull Pictures

The origin and meditation of Ten Bull Pictures are surveyed.

### 3. Relation to the Simorghian Culture

Ten Bull Pictures

### 4. Roman Mysteries of Mithras

Appendix 1: Roman Mysteries of Mithras on the Tree of Life

Appendix 2: List of Technical Terms

## 1. Terminology

Before giving explanation about each picture of Ten Bull Pictures, it would be necessary to give clear definition of technical terms which will be used in the explanations.

Table 1 shows correspondence among technical terms of Theosophy, Buddhism and Sufism. In the explanation, technical terms of Theosophy are used for the convenience of the western readers.

Table 1. Mystic Bodies

Theosophy	Buddhism	Persian Sufism
Logos	Arayashiki 阿頼耶識 Âlaya-vijñâna	Hakk
Monad	Arayashiki 阿頼耶識 Âlaya-vijñâna	'Aql
Âtmic body	Manashiki 末那識 Manas-vijnâna	Soul at peace (Nafs-e mutma'inna)
Buddhic body	Sikiun 識蘊 Vijnâna	Soul of the Friend of God (Nafs-e qudsî)
Mental body	Sôun 想蘊 Samjâ Gyôun 行蘊 Samskâra	Human soul (Nafs-e insânî) Rational soul (Nafs-e nâtiqa)
Astral body	Jyu'un 受蘊 Vedanâ	Animal soul (Nafs-e heiwânî)
Etheric body & Physical body	Seiki 生氣 Purâna & Shikiun 色蘊 Vijnapti	Vegetable soul (Nafs-e nabâtî) Nature (Tabî'at)

### Logos

It is Universal Spirit (Spirit of God). It is the supreme Root of all beings. There is no individuality in it, no "I" nor "You".

### Monad

It is the first emanation (differentiation) of Logos. It dwells in Âkâsha. For Âkâsha is the lower part of Logos, when monad dissolves into Âkâsha, the seeker becomes one with the Universal Spirit. Famous Persian mystic Mansur al-Hallaj (ca. 858-922) said "Ana al-Haqq" (I am Universal Spirit) to express this mystic union with Universal Spirit (Rûmî. *Fî-hi Ma Fî-hi*, 52).

### Âtmic body

It is the highest part of a human being and the root of individuality. It generates I-ness (ego) in a human being. The annihilation of I-ness is called fanâ' in Sufism. It occurs in the 8<sup>th</sup> stage of Ten Bull Pictures.

### Buddhic body

It is the second highest part of a human being. It is the source of love, compassion and intuition. It is sometimes symbolized by the moon.

## Mental body

It is the dwelling place of human consciousness. Human consciousness descends to the astral body when he becomes intoxicated. It ascends to the upper bodies when he purifies himself and practices meditation.

## Astral body

It is also called animal soul. It is the source of passion and emotional turmoil, which pollute neighboring two mystic bodies (mental body and ether body). When the seeker succeeds in pacifying his astral body, two things occur. (1) Mental body and ether body are released from astral pollution (his passion and emotional turmoil). (2) His consciousness is released from astral pollution and gains power to ascend to the higher bodies (planes).

## Ether body and physical body

Etheric body forms and sustains the physical body by providing it with the vital energy. When the vital energy is exhausted, man can't maintain his physical body to die.

## Other technical terms

Fanâ, bakâ, namu (nama), zikr, Tosotsuten, mir, etc are explained in the commentaries to the pictures.

## 2. Ten Bull Pictures 十牛圖

### The Meaning of the Name

Jû 十 means ten, gyû 牛 means the bull, zu 圖 means painting, therefore Jûgyûzu 十牛圖 means Ten Bull Paintings. Jûgyûzu is a set of ten pictures which represents the path to enlightenment in Zen Buddhism 禪宗.

### Origin

The earliest Jûgyûzu was made in Sui 宋 dynasty (960-1279). There are many Jûgyûzus, however, Kakuan (Kou-an) 廓庵's one is the most famous. Kakuan 廓庵 (fl. 1150) was born in He-chuan 合川 of Kansu 甘肅省. Kansu was a stronghold of Manichaeism. He lived in Hunan 湖南省.

There are earlier versions consisting of five or eight pictures in which the bull is black at the beginning, becomes progressively whiter and finally disappears altogether. This last stage is shown as an empty circle. But Kakuan, feeling this to be incomplete, added two more pictures beyond the circle to make it clear that the Zen man of the highest spiritual development lives in the mundane world of form and diversity and mingles with the utmost freedom among ordinary men, whom he inspires with his compassion and radiance like Miroku. (Nakamura et al. ed. *Iwanami's Dictionary of Buddhism*, p391;

Fischer-Schreiber, Ingrid et al. *The Shambhala Dictionary of Buddhism and Zen*, p106-107)

Considering in these facts, there seems to be no denying the influence of Persian culture (Mithraism) in Ten Bull Pictures.

## The Story and the Commentaries

The story is cited from Ueda & Yanagida's *Ten Bull Pictures*. The commentaries are added by the author.

### (1) Seeking for the Bull 尋牛



#### Title

Jin 尋 means to seek, gyû 牛 means bull, therefore jingyû 尋牛 means to seek for the bull.

#### Picture

The first picture shows a shepherd boy seeking for his lost bull.

#### Commentary

The boy is the symbol of a soul (consciousness) who begins to tread his self-seeking path. The lost bull is the symbol of his astral body.

### (2) Finding the Footprints 見跡



#### Title

Ken 見 means to find, seki 跡 means footprint, therefore kenseki 見跡 means to find footprints (of the bull).

#### Picture

The shepherd boy is at a loss in the wilderness. A thick mist covered everything. He prays Miroku 弥勒 for protection and guide, repeating "Namu Miroku-butsu 南無弥勒仏\*".

#### Commentary

Footprints are the symbol of scriptures and commentaries. The thick mist is the symbol of the barzakh (veil) which covers the bull.

The seeker reads many books. The more he read, the more his knowledge becomes rich. But he can't apply his abundant knowledge to his specific situation. He is so depressed that he prays Miroku (Mithras) for protection and guidance. By saying "Namu Miroku-butsu 南無弥勒仏" repeatedly, his

consciousness recovers its stability. The origin of repeating the phrase is Iranian zikr.

\*Namu Miroku-butsu 南無弥勒仏: Namu 南無 is transcription of Persian word “nama”, which means “homage to”. It is widely used among Mahayana Buddhism. Miroku 弥勒 means Mithras, butsu 仏 means Buddha. Therefore it means “Homage to Buddha Mithra”.

### (3) Seeing the Bull 見牛



#### Title

Ken 見 means to see, gyû 牛 means the bull, therefore kengyû 見牛 means to see the bull.

#### Picture

The shepherd boy sees the tail and the hind legs of the bull. He is running after the bull, but still can't see the whole bull.

#### Commentary

This situation is the symbol of the seeker who got a clue to what he should do. During pursuit of the bull, he gradually recognizes he must catch the bull and tame it, but he forebodings it would be a tough work.

### (4) Finding the Bull 得牛



#### Title

Toku 得 means to catch, gyû 牛 means the bull, therefore tokugyû 得牛 means to catch the bull.

#### Picture

The shepherd boy is catching the bull. The bull doesn't follow his order. The bull resist violently against the boy. The struggle continues.

#### Commentary

This situation is the symbol of the seeker who is trying to pacify and tame his astral body. By pacifying his astral body, his passions and emotional turmoil will cease.

(5) Taming the Bull 牧牛



Title

Boku 牧 means to tame, gyû 牛 means the bull, therefore bokugyû 牧牛 means to tame the bull.

Picture

The shepherd boy successfully tamed the bull. The bull obediently follows the boy.

Commentary

This situation is the symbol of the seeker who succeeded in pacifying his astral body. His astral body is in perfect accordance with his mental body now.

(6) Returning Home Riding the Bull 騎牛歸家



Title

Ki 騎 means to ride, gyû 牛 means the bull, ki 歸 means to return, ka 家 means home, therefore kigyûkika 騎牛歸家 means to return to home riding on the bull.

Picture

The shepherd boy returns to his home, riding on the back of the bull. He is playing the flute victoriously.

Commentary

This situation is the symbol of the seeker who succeeded in purification of his astral body. Riding on the bull is a symbolic expression of perfect accordance with his astral body.

By the pacification of his astral body, his ether body is also purified.

Returning home playing the flute is a symbolic expression of the end of the first half of meditation. The objective of the first half of meditation is to develop and purify his buddhic, mental, astral and ether body.

### (7) Forgetting the Bull 忘牛存人



#### Title

Bô 忘 means to forget, gyû 牛 means the bull, zon 存 means to exist, nin 人 means person, therefore bôgyûzon'nin 忘牛存人 means that a person exists forgetting the bull.

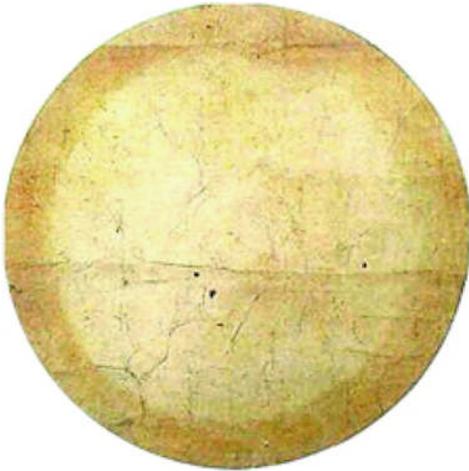
#### Picture

The shepherd boy returns to his daily life (the mundane world) and forgets the bull. The moon, taking bull's place, begins to attract his consciousness. He raises his gaze upward toward the moon for the first time since he started his self-seeking.

#### Commentary

By pacifying his astral body, his consciousness was released from emotional turmoil. It affords his consciousness to ascend to his higher subtle bodies. Forgetting the bull and seeing the moon is a symbolic expression of this situation.

### (8) Forgetting the Person and the Bull 人牛俱忘



#### Title

Nin 人 means a person, gyû 牛 means the bull, gu 俱 means both, bô 忘 means to forget, therefore ningyûgubô 人牛俱忘 means to forget both the person and the bull.

#### Picture

One day, the shepherd boy forgets both himself and the bull.

#### Commentary

This situation is called "fanâ" in Persian sufism. Fanâ means annihilation of the individual ego.

The seeker's consciousness ascends to Tosotsuten 都率天\*. Before entering Tosotsuten, the consciousness of the seeker loses its grip of I-ness. As soon as he loses I-ness, his consciousness dissolves into Universal Spirit (Hakk).

\* fanâ: Its Japanese translation is muka 無化 and/or jigaômetsu 自我消滅. Mu 無 means null, ka 化 means -lify/-lize, therefore muka 無化 means nullify (annihilation). Ji-ga 自 means individual, ga 我 means ego, shô-metsu 消滅 means extinction, therefore jigaômetsu 自我消滅 means extinction of individual ego.

\*Tosotsuten 都率天: Tosotsu 都率 is transcription of Sanskrit "Tusita", which means the Sun

sphere. Ten 天 means heaven (sphere). Therefore Tosotsuten means the Sun sphere.

His consciousness ascends to the Âtmic plane and finally loses its grip of I-ness and melt into âkâsha. This is the fanâ.

#### (9) Returning to the Root 返本還源



##### Title

Hen 返 means to return, bon 本 means the Root (Hakk), gen 還 means to return, gen 源 means the Source (Fountain, Hakk), therefore henbongengen 返本還源 means to return to the Root.

##### Picture

The consciousness of shepherd boy wonders joyously in Universal Spirit. The richness of Universal Spirit is expressed as a beautiful landscape in the picture. For there is no individuality, there is no one in the picture.

##### Commentary

This situation is called “bakâ\*” in Persian sufism. Bakâ means wandering within âkasha.

The seeker enjoys eternal life within âkasha. Monad wanders in âkasha. For there is no individuality, monad and âkasha are one. Monad enjoys mystic unity.

\* bakâ : Its Japanese translation is shôyô 逍遙. Both shô 逍 and yô 遙 means to wander, therefore shôyô 逍遙 means wandering.

#### (10) Entering the Mundane World to Give Hand 入鄼垂手



##### Title

Nit 入 means to enter, ten 鄼 means shop (symbol of the mundane world), sui 垂 means to give, shu 手 means hand, therefore nittensuishu 入鄼垂手 means to enter the mundane world to give hand (to the people).

##### Picture

After returning from bakâ, the shepherd boy finds that he becomes Bu-dai, an avatar of Miroku (Mithra). He goes out to the town and begins to save people.

##### Commentary

The seeker becomes Miroku-tenze 弥勒轉世. Miroku 弥勒 means Mithra, ten 轉 means to reincarnate, ze 世 means the mundane world, therefore Miroku-tenze 弥勒轉世 means Miroku reincarnated in the mundane world. He is a Persian mir (imam).

Bu-dai 布袋 (Hotei) is a Zen monk, said to have lived in the late Tang 唐 (Tô) dynasty

(705-907) (10<sup>th</sup> century). His name comes from his wandering through the towns with a hempen beggar's sack on his back. According to the Chinese legend Bu-dai is an avatar of Milo 弥勒 (Miroku=Mithra). He showed his true image when he died. His wandering preaching reminds us of wandering dervish of Sufism.

### 3. Relation to the Simorghian Culture

#### Simorghian Attestation

Ten Bull Pictures is a Miroku Buddhism version of the Simorghian tradition. It is attested by comparison with the following works which retains the Simorghian tradition:

Avicenna\*'s mystic story "the Recital of Bird"  
Nezâmi-e Ganjavi\*'s poem "Haft Paykar".  
Attâr\*'s best known work "the Conference of the Birds"  
Suhrawardi\*'s mystic story "the Treatise of the Birds"  
Rûmî\*'s *Mathnawi*

\*Avicenna: Latinized name of Ibn Sina, c. 980-1037. Persian polymath, physician and philosopher.

\*Nezâmi-e Ganjavi: 1141-1209. Persian polymath and poet.

\*Attâr: Farîd ud-Dîn 'Attâr, 1145/46- c. 1221. Persian Sufi and mystic poet.

\*Suhrawardi: Shahâb ad-Dîn Yahyâ as-Suhrawardi, 1155-1191. Persian theosophist, philosopher.

\* Rûmî: Mawlânâ Jalâl ad-Dîn Muḥammad Balkhî, 1207-1273. Persian mystic and philosopher.

#### Attâr

In Attâr's poem thirty birds journey through seven valleys to meet Simorgh. Thirty birds are the symbolic expression of seekers. The seven valleys are the symbolic expression of seven spheres. Simorgh is the symbol of Hakk (Universal Spirit). The following citation is the crucial moment of their journey:

A new life flow towards them (thirty birds) from that bright  
Celestial and ever-lasting Light-  
Their souls rose free of all they'd beeb before;  
The past and all its actions are no more.  
Their life came from that close, insistent sun  
And in its vivid rays they shone as one.  
There in the Simorgh's radiant face they saw  
Themselves, the Simorgh of the world –with awe  
They gazed, and dared at last to comprehend  
They were the Simorgh and the journey's end.  
They see the Simorgh –at themselves they stare,

And see a second Simorgh standing there;  
They looked at both and see the two are one,  
That this is that, that this, the goal is won.  
(Attar, *The Conference of the Birds*, p219)

The mystic union with the Simorgh is the same kind of mystic union as Ten Bull Pictures.

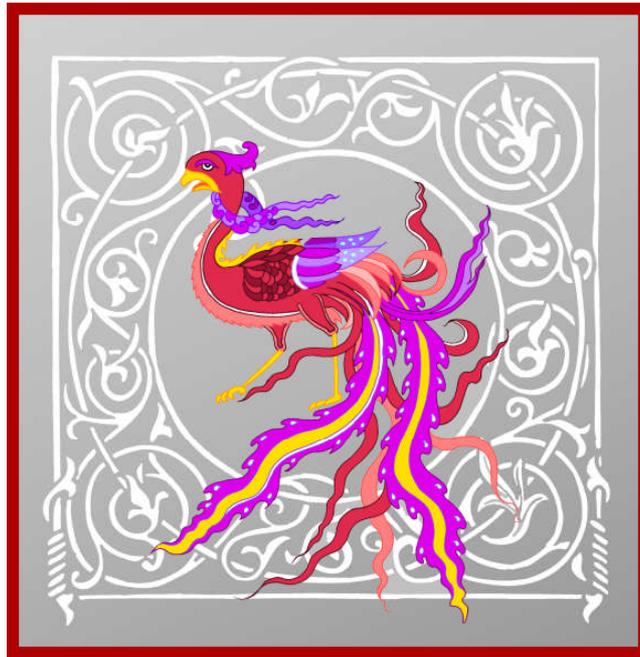


Fig. 3 Simorgh

One of characteristic features of the Simorghian tradition is its symbolism of birds. It is retained in Roman Mithraism. Roman Mithraism put bird name to its lowest and highest initiation ranks. The name of the lowest rank is Corax (Raven), and the name of the highest rank is Aquila (Eagle). The initiate begins his journey as a raven and ends it as an eagle. This scheme is quite parallel with Attâr's poem. Althou birds don't appear in Ten Bull Pictures, the step by step ascension of initiation ranks in Roman Mithraism has great similarity to the meditation steps in Ten Bull Pictures (4. Mysteries of Roman Mithraism).

## Rûmî

In the Rûmî's *Mathnawi* the ascension of a soul is explained as follows:

I died as a mineral and became a plant,  
I died as a plant and rose to an animal,  
I died as animal and I became Adam (Man).  
Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?  
Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar among the angels;  
But even from the state of angel  
I must pass on: all except God doth perish.  
When I have sacrificed my angel-soul,

I shall become what no mind ever conceived.  
 I shall become Non-existence.  
 Non-existence saith to me in organ tones,  
 Verily unto Him we shall return.  
 (Rûmî. *Mathnawi* III, 3901-06; Iqbal. *The Life & Work of Jalaluddin Rumi*, p200)

In the verse the soul ascends by transmigration from a mineral to God (Universal Spirit), via vegetable, animal, human-being and angel. This step by step ascension corresponds seven layers of Table 1.

## 4. Mysteries of Roman Mithraism

### The Correspondence

Although the system of Roman Mithraic initiations is not a system of meditation, there seems to be a sort of correspondence between it and Ten Bull Pictures. The Table 2 shows the result of a consideration on the correspondence. It seems to me the correspondence can't be accidental, for both systems developed from the same Iranian tradition. The following is a speculation on the correspondence.

Table 2. Seven Initiation Ranks of Roman Mithraism

Initiation Ranks	Gigaku Namings	Guardian Planets	Corresponding Ten Bull Pictures	Mysteries
Aquila (Pater)	Gokô 呉公	Saturn	(10)	Major mystery
Heliodromus	Chidô 治道	Sun	(8), (9)	
Perses	Suiko'ô 醉胡王	Moon	(7)	
Leo	Shishi 獅子	Jupiter	(6)	Minor mystery
Miles	Kongô 金剛	Mars	(4), (5)	
Nymph	Gojo 呉女	Venus	(3)	
Corax	Karura 迦楼羅	Mercury	(1), (2)	

### Commentaries

#### Corax

Corax is the first stage of Mithraic initiation. Entering into this stage, the initiate leaves the mundane world and begins his spiritual life under the protection of Mercury. He gains knowledge by reading books and learning under his seniors. This stage corresponds to (1) Seeking for the Bull 尋牛 and (2) Finding the Footprints 見跡 of Ten Bull Pictures.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Corax is called Karura 迦楼羅, which means crow.

\**gigaku* 伎楽: It is a ritual masque of Roman Mithraism. According to *Shokunihongi* 続日本紀\*\* (A Sequel to the History of Japan), Mimashi 味摩之 of Bëkje 百濟\*\* brought *gigaku* from south China district Go 呉 in 612 AD. He organized a group of boys (*gigakudan* 伎楽団) and performed ritual dance in major Buddhist temples. It was incorporated into National

Ritual Institution Utainomainotsukasa 雅樂寮 in 701 AD. (Ogawa. *A Study in Mithraism*, p65)

\*\* *Shokunihongi* 続日本紀: Edited by Sugano Mamichi 菅野真道 and Fujiwarano Tsugutada 藤原繼縄 in 797 AD. 40 vols.

\*\*Bëkje 百濟: See Tojo. *An Introduction to the Simorghian Culture and Mithraism in the East Asia*

## Nymph

The initiate in Nymph becomes a bride of Mithras. His consciousness gains stability by becoming a bride of Mithras. He is requested to practice celibacy under the protection of Venus. Having a certain period without sexual involvement will make his consciousness stable enough to resist any kind of sexual passions. This is the preparation stage for Miles. This stage corresponds to (3) Seeing the Bull 見牛 of Ten Bull Pictures. Becoming a bride of Mithras is equivalent to the homage to Miroku.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Nymph is called Gojo 呉女, which means Persian woman (girl). Go 呉 is equivalent to ko 胡, and means Persian. Jo 女 means woman and/or maid. It is a name reflecting the meaning of Nymph (bride of Mithras). In *Gigaku Pater* 呉公 and Nymph 呉女 make a pair: Persian Lord (Mir) and Persian maid, Mithras and his male bride.

## Miles

The initiate in Miles is requested to prove his warrior quality in the initiation rite. Meditations like “taming the bull”, “descent to Hade (Underworld)”, “slaying the dragon” seem to have the equivalent function to the rite of Miles.

In the meditation, the initiate descends into Hades (Underworld) under the protection of Mars. For his consciousness is stable, he can overcome any kind of spell and the dragon, when he encounters it in Hades. A spiritual warrior overcomes his astral body which is symbolized by a bull in Ten Bull Pictures. This stage corresponds to (4) Finding the Bull 得牛 and (5) Taming the Bull 牧牛 of Ten Bull Pictures.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Miles is called Kongô 金剛. Kongô means Deva king, who is the conqueror of death and the keeper of the gate to the Heaven.

## Leo

The initiate in Leo gains body of fire and becomes immortal under the protection of Jupiter. The immortality is the reward for the initiate who succeeded to prove his warrior quality by a certain heroic act (such as taming the bull or slaying the dragon) in his journey. This stage corresponds to (6) Returning Home Riding the Bull 騎牛帰家 of Ten Bull Pictures.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Leo is called Shishi 獅子, which means lion. Shishi is also called Shôsha 笑者, Shôsha 勝者 and Kôsha 輝者. Shô 笑 means laughing, sha 者 means one (man), shô 勝 means victory and kô 輝 means shining, therefore Shôsha 笑者 means the laughing one, Shôsha 勝者 means the victor, Kôsha 輝者 means the shining one.

## Perses

The initiate becomes Perses. Perses is a son of Perseus (=Mithras). Becoming a son of Mithras is a proof of his consciousness being raised into buddhic plane. This stage corresponds to (7) Forgetting the Bull 忘牛存人 of Ten Bull Pictures.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Perses is called Suiko'ô 醉胡王, which means intoxicated Persian king.

Sui 酔 means intoxicated, ko 胡 means Persian and ô 王 means king. Suiko 酔胡 (Intoxicated Persian) reminds us of famous Persian mystic-poet Hâfez.

### Heliodromus

The initiate is allowed to have an experience of mystic union with Mithras through fanâ and bakâ under the protection of Sol. In the meditation the initiate rides on a chariot of Sol drawn by four white horses. Sol the driver of the chariot takes him to the Sun, where he meets Mithras in the majestic radiance. This stage corresponds to (8) Forgetting the Person and the Bull 人牛俱忘 and (9) Returning to the Root 返本還源 of Ten Bull Pictures.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Heliodromus called Chidô 治道, which is a name reflecting the meaning of Heliodromus.

### Aquila (Pater)

Aquila is the highest stage of Mithraic initiations. Those who succeeded to attain mystic union with Mithras become Perseus, namely a magus. Another name for a magus is mir (Miroku-tenze 弥勒転世). This stage corresponds to (10) Entering the Mundane World to Give Hand 入鄺垂手 of Ten Bull Pictures.

In *gigaku* 伎楽, Pater is called Gokô 呉公, which means magi. Go 呉 is equivalent to ko 胡, and means Persian. Kô 公 means lord. Therefore Gokô 呉公 means lord of Persian, namely mir.

### Remark

By reading the meditations introduced in chapter 8 (p105-144) and a commentary on Mithra and the ox (p80-81) in *The Mysteries of Mithras* (Nabarz), readers will get a more general view of Mithraic tradition.

### Consideration on the Structure

It is possible to divide Ten Bull Pictures into two parts, the minor and the major mystery (Table A1). The minor mystery consists of picture (1) to (7). Its objective is to gain sound soul and body by developing and purifying buddhic, mental, astral and ether body. The major mystery consists of (8) to (10). Its objective is to ascend to the Sun sphere (Tusita heaven) to meet with Miroku in order to be in mystic union with Him.

The same structure can be found in Mithraic initiations of Roman Mithraism. The lower four ranks correspond to the minor mystery of Ten Bull Pictures, the upper three ranks to the major mystery of it. Table 2 shows detailed correspondence. Those who succeeded in the major mystery become magi in Roman Mithraism, Miroku-tenze (mir) in Ten Bull Pictures.

## Appendix 1: Roman Mysteries of Mithra on the Tree of Life

### Mapping onto the Tree of Life

We can reconfirm and gain more deep understanding about the structure of the Roman Mysteries of Mithra, when we map Mithraic initiation ranks and mystic bodies onto the Tree of Life of Qabbalah. Fig. 1 is the result of mapping using planets as keys. Table 3 shows correspondence in detail.

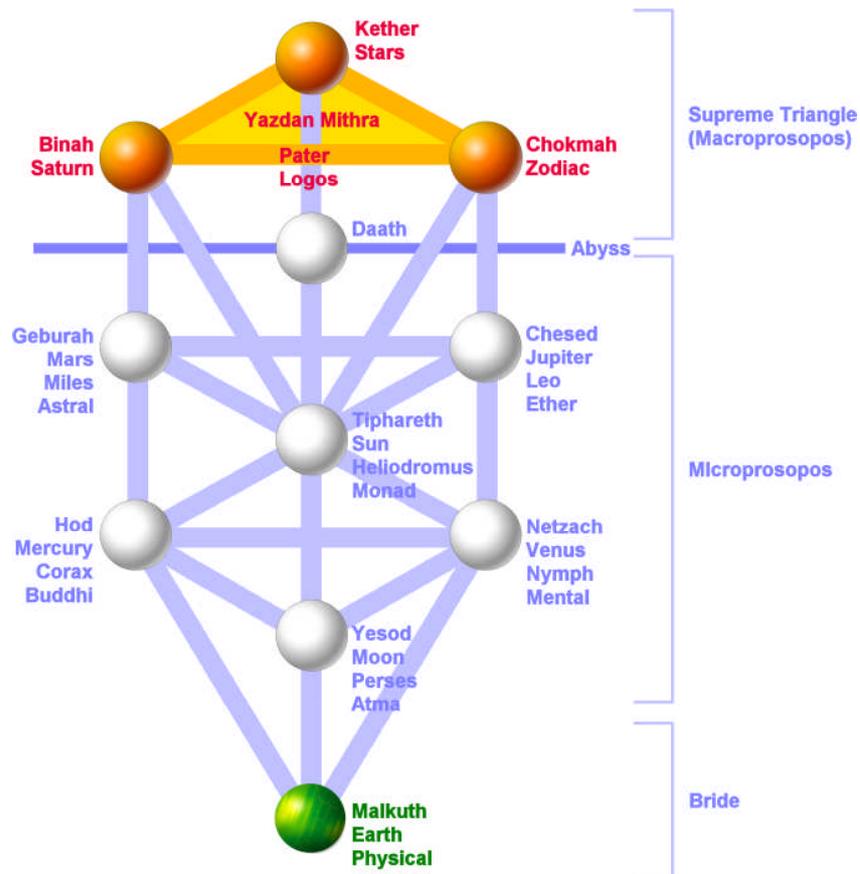


Fig 1. Tree of Life

Table 3. Tree of Life

Four Worlds*	Sephiroth	Stellar Bodies	Mithraic Initiation Ranks	Mystic Bodies	Mithraic Deities	
Atziloth	Kether	Stars	Pater (Aquila)	Logos	Mithra	Godhead
Briah	Chokmah	Zodiac			Cautes	
	Binah	Saturn			Cautopates	
Yetzirah	Chesed	Jupiter	Leo	Ether	Jupiter	Seven week-day gods*
	Geburah	Mars	Miles	Astral	Mars	
	Tiphareth	Sun	Heliodromus	Monad	Sol	
	Netzach	Venus	Nymph	Buddhic	Venus	
	Hod	Mercury	Corax	Mental	Mercury	
	Yesod	Moon	Perses	Atmic	Luna	
Asiah	Malkuth	Earth		Physical	Man	Man

### Note on Table 3

\*Four Worlds: Mathers. *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, plate IV, between p30 and p31; Blavatsky. *The Secret Doctrine* vol. 1, p200

\*Seven week-day gods: Saturnus (Binah) represents Godhead and belongs to Seven week-day gods. They mediate the Godhead and man.

## The Left and Right Pillars –Four Lower Ranks

At first glance we can find that the lower four ranks are mapped onto the left and right pillars symmetrically, upper three ranks onto the central pillar. It is this structure that is the Qabbalistic expression of Mithraic initiations.

### Corax and Nymph

On the tree of life Hod-Corax is paired with Netzach-Nymph at the base of the left and right pillars.

The initiate develops his mental body in Corax, his buddhic body in Nymph. His mental body develops its intellectual and analytical function by reading books and learning under his seniors. His buddhic body develops its synthetic function of love by becoming a bride of Mithras in Nymph. The initiate gains the necessary power to overcome and tame his astral body in Miles.

### Miles and Leo

On the tree of life Geburah-Miles is paired with Chesed-Leo at the middle of the left and right pillars.

The initiate conquers to tame his astral body after a long and tough struggle in Miles. He purifies his ether body in Leo. The purification of ether body is easy for the source of pollution (astral body) was already purified.

## The Central Pillar –Three Upper Ranks

After making sound basis for ascending by developing and purifying buddhic, mental, astral and ether body keeping symmetry in the lower four ranks, the initiate raises his consciousness to the monadic plane to meet with Mithras (Yazdan\* Mithra). His consciousness ascends from Yesod (Peres) to the supreme triangle (Keter-Chokmah-Binah: Pater) via Tiphereth (Heliodromus). Before going over the abyss, his consciousness leaves its grip of I-ness to enter into fanâ (mystic union with Mithras).

\*Yazdan: It means “God Most High” in Persian.

## Mithraic Godhead on the Tree of Life

### Godhead 1: Mithras, Cautes and Cautopates

This idea is inspired by the Godhead (main three deities) of Jôdokyô 浄土教\* (Pure Land Buddhism). The Godhead comprise Amitâbha (or Amitâyus), Avalokiteśvara and Mahâsthâmaprâpta. Avalokiteśvara stands on the right of Amitâbha, Mahâsthâmaprâpta on

the left. Their Persian name is known from Manichaean text (Klimkeit, Hans-Joachim. *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, p5; Lieu, Samuel N. C. *Manichaeism in Central Asia & China*, p70-71).

Mithra, Sraosha and Rashnu appears in a group as three Judges in the Zurwanite Bundahishn (Zaehner. *Zurvan A Zoroastrian Dilemma*, p317).

Considering in these points, it seems that Kether symbolizes Mithras, Chokmah Cautes, Binah-Catopates. Cautes stands at the top of Pillar of Mercy, Cautopates stands at the top of Pillar of Severity.

Ain Soph (the Limitless) symbolizes infinite Zurwan. Man knows it in the mystic union with Mithras.

Table 4. Godhead of Pure Land Buddhism

Pure Land Buddhism		Persian
Sanskrit	Japanese	
Amitâyus	Muryôju 無量寿	Zurwan
Amitâbha	Amida 阿弥陀	Mithra and/or Ahura Mazda
Avalokiteśvara	Kannon 觀音	Sraosha
Mahâsthâmaprâpta	Daiseishi 大勢至	Rashnu

There are two merits in this idea:

- (1) It has compatibility with Mithraic tradition in Jôdokyô (Pure Land Buddhism).
- (2) It can map Mithras, Cautes, Cautopates and the seven week-day gods on the Tree of Life keeping consistency.

\*Jôdokyô 浄土教: Jô 浄 means pure, do 土 means land, kyô 教 means teaching, therefore Jôdokyô means Teaching of Pure Land, namely Pure Land Buddhism.

#### Note 1

Amitâbha rides on a peacock. Yezidi's Melek Tawus (Azazel) has a halo of unfolded peacock tail feathers. His title means "Peacock King" in Kurdish.

#### Note 2

Metatron (Methratton, Mithraton, Mittron), who is likely to be Jewish Mithras, is the lord of Briah (World of Creation), presiding over Kether (Mathers. *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, plate IV, between p30 and p31).

### Godhead 2: Zurwan, Mithras and Az

This idea is inspired by Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2 (p567, p507-508) and *Collected Writings*, vol. 3 (p464) and Fig. 2.

Mithras is depicted as a youth entwined by a snake surrounded by the zodiac. His name is divided into two parts, namely Mithr(a) and As(Az). Chokmah symbolizes Mithr(a) surrounded by the Zodiac. Binah symbolizes As (Az) the snake entwining Mithr(a). Therefore Chokmah-Binah symbolizes Mithr(a)-As the God entwined by a snake surrounded by the Zodiac. Kether is the symbol of Zurwan (Ain Soph), which man can know in the mystic union with Mithras. This idea is full of rich imagery.

Nabarz's meditation for Pater would help you to understand bakâ in Zurwan (Nabarz. *The Mysteries of Mithras*, p137-144).



Fig. 2 Mithras entwined by a snake surrounded by the Zodiac  
(From *The Mysteries of Mithra*, by Frantz Cumont)

### Godhead 3: Manichaeism System

In Manichaeism Kether symbolizes Wâxš zîndag (the Great Spirit), who is the spirit of Zurwan. Chokmah symbolizes Mihryazd (Father of Life, the Living Spirit). Binah symbolizes Zindagân Mâdar (Mother of Life) and Šahrbed (Šahrevar, Xšathra).

Table 5 Manichaeism Deities mapped onto the sephiroth

Sephiroth	Planet	Manichaeism
Kether	Stars	Wâxš zîndag (the Great Spirit, the Spirit of Zurwan)
Chokmah	Zodiac	Mihryazd (The Living Spirit, Father of Life) and Xrôštâg Yazd (Sraosha)*1
Binah	Saturn	Zindagân Mâdar (Mother of Life)*2 and Azdegaryazd (Rashnu)*3 and Šahrbed (Šahrevar, Xšathra)*4
Chesed	Jupiter	Dahibed (Vahman)*4
Geburah	Mars	Wisbed (Bahrâm)*4
Tiphereth	Sun	Mihryazd (The Third Messenger)
Netzach	Venus	Zandbed (Ârmaiti)*4
Hod	Mercury	Mânbed (Tîr)*4
Yesod	Moon	Xradêšahr (Jesus the Splendour) and Kanîg rôšn (Maiden of Light, Amurdâd)*4
Malkuth	Earth	Ohrmizd (particles of Light)

\*1: In Manichaeism myth Xrôštâg Yazd (Sraosha) is closely linked to Mihryazd (M98/991; Klimkeit. *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, p340-341, p227).

\*2: She is the mother of Ohrmizd (Ahura Mazda) (ibid. p224, 227)

\*3: In Manichaeism myth Azdegaryazd (Rashnu) is closely linked to Mother of Life (ibid, p340-341, p227).

\*4: see Bivar. *The Personalities of Mithra in Archaeology and Literature*, p27

Microprosopos symbolizes Mihryazd's sons (Šahrbed, Dahibed, Wisbed, Zandbed, Mânbed). Xradêšahr (Jesus the Splendour) and Kanîg rôšn (Maiden of Light) are the syzygy gods emanated from Mihryazd (the Third Messenger).

The Godhead comprises Wâxš zîndag (the Great Spirit), Mihryazd (Father of Life) and Zindagân Mâdar (Mother of Life). It (the Godhead) emanates a spirit (of Love) on the Sun (Tiphereth). This spirit is called the Sun God Mithra (the Third Messenger).

Manichaeism system covers both Godhead 1 and 2. If we choose Wâxš zîndag, Mihryazd and Zindagân Mâdar as Godhead, then it corresponds to Godhead 2. In Both mapping Kether is the symbol of Zurvan. Chokmah is the symbol of Mithra. Binah is the symbol of female principle (Az in Godhead 2, Mother of Life in Godhead 3). If we choose Wâxš zîndag, Xrôštâg Yazd (Sraosha) and Azdegaryazd (Rashnu) as Godhead, then it corresponds to Godhead 1.

## Appendix 2: List of Technical Terms

Latin & Sanskrit	Japanese (Pronunciation)	Chinese (Pronunciation)	Literal Expression	Persian
Adamas	Kômashôshi		降魔勝使	Wisbed (Bahrâm)
Âlaya-vijñâna	Arayashiki		阿頼耶識	Hakk
Amitâbha	Amida		阿弥陀	Mithra and/or Ahura Mazda
Amitâyus	Muryôju		無量寿	Zurwan
annihilation	Muka, jigashômetzu		無化, 自我消滅	fanâ
Atlas	Jizômeishi		地藏明使	Mânbed (Tîr)
Avalokiteśvara	Kannon	Kwan-yin	觀音	Sraosha
avatar of Mithra	Miroku-tenze	Mi-lo-zhuan-shi	弥勒転世	mir (imam)
	Bêkje, Kudara		百濟	
bull	ushi, gyû	niu	牛	gav
Corax	Karura		迦楼羅	
Entering the Mundane World to Give Hand	nittensuishu		入鄺垂手	
Father of Life	Seimeinochichi		生命の父	Mihryazd
Finding the Bull	tokugyû		得牛	
Finding the Footprints	kenseki		見跡	
Forgetting the Bull	bôgyûzon'nin		忘牛存人	
Forgetting the Person and the Bull	ningyûgubô		人牛俱忘	fanâ
Fountain	gen		源	Hakk
	Fujiwarano Tsugu- tada		藤原継縄	
	gigaku		伎楽	
	gigakudan		伎楽団	
Gloriosus Rex	Saikômeishi		催光明使	Zandbed (Ârmaiti)
Great Spirit, the	Ôinarurei		大いなる靈	Wâxš zîndag
		He-chuan	合川	
Heliodromus	Chidô		治道	
	Hotei	Bu-dai	布袋	
		Hunan	湖南省	
	Kakuan (fl. 1150)	Kou-an	廓庵	
		Kansu	甘肅省	
Jesus the Splendour	Kagayaku-Iesu		輝くイエス	Xradêšahr
Kephalaia	Shoshô		諸章	Kephalaia
Leo	Shishi		獅子	
Leo (Laughing one)	Shôsha		笑者	
Leo (Victor)	Shôsha		勝者	
Leo (Shining one)	Kôsha		輝者	

Living Spirit, the		Ikerurei	生ける霊	Mihryazd
Mahâsthâmaprâpta	Daiseishi		大勢至	Rashnu
Maiden of Light	Hikari-no-otome		光の乙女	Kanîg rôšn
Manas-vijnâana	Manashiki		末那識	'aql
Miles	Kongô		金剛	
	Mimashi		味摩之	
Mithra	Miroku	Milo	弥勒	Mehr
Mother of Life	Seimeinohaha		生命の母	Zindagân Mâdar
	namu	namo	南無	nama
National Ritual Organ	Utainomainotsu-kasa		雅楽寮	
Nymph	Gojo		呉女	
Pater	Gokô		呉公	
Perses	Suiko'ô		醉胡王	
purâna	seiki		生氣	tabî'a
Pure Land Buddhism	Jôdokyô		浄土教	
Returning Home Riding the Bull	kigyûkika		騎牛帰家	
Returning to the Root	henbongengen		返本還源	bakâ
Rex Honoris	Jittendaiô		十天大王	Šahrbed (Šahrevar, Xšathra)
Root	ben (moto)	ben	本	Hakk
Samjâ	Sôun		想蘊	
Samskâra	Gyôun		行蘊	
Seeking for the Bull	jingyû		尋牛	
Seeing the Bull	kengyû		見牛	
Sequel to the History of Japan, A	Shokunihongi		続日本紀	
Shâbhuragân	Nishûkyô		二宗経	Shâbhuragân
Splenditenens	Jisemeishi		持世明使	Dahibed (Vahman)
	Sugano Mamichi		菅野真道	
Sun sphere (Tusita)	Tosotsuten		都率天	
Taming the Bull	bokugyû		牧牛	
Ten Bull Pictures	jûgyûzu		十牛図	
Third Messenger, the	Daisannoshisha		第三の使者	Mihryazd
	Tô (705-907)	Tang	唐	
Tusita	Tosotsuten		都率天	
Universal Spirit	Tenshin	Tien-zhen	天真	Hakk
Vedanâ	Jyû'un		受蘊	
Vijnâna	Sikiun		識蘊	
Vijnapti	Shikiun		色蘊	
wandering in Hakk	shôyô		逍遥	bakâ
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