



Live Like a Tree Walking!

by Kzwleh Elagabalus

***"Thought is the negation of knowledge.  
Be thy busyness with action only.  
Purge thyself of belief:  
live like a tree walking!  
Take no thought of good or evil.  
Become self-active causality by Unity of thine, I and  
Self."  
-Austin Osman Spare: Aphorism I; The Focus of Life***

In 1890, James George Frazer, an English Sociologist and Anthropologist, published "The Golden Bough", an anthropological investigation on the links between Magic, Folklore, Religion and Science in different cultures from all continents. Although the book had the typical rationalist point of view that most positivist English scientists of the time had, it contained an invaluable description of many magical practices in several different cultures, and it became a must read for every occultist at the beginning of the 20th century. So it's possible to assume that Austin Spare read it.

"The Golden Bough" contains a chapter about the Arboreal Cults which offers several insights about the ideas which predominate in all rites devoted to the trees. In some cultures the predominating conception about Arboreal Spirits is that the Spirit is incorporated in the tree: it animates the tree and dies when the tree dies; although some other cultures consider that the tree is not the body of the Spirit, but its residence and the Spirit can enter and leave the tree according to its own will. After this introduction, Frazer deepens in the Arboreal Cults and concludes that these Spirits have regency on the weather, the rain, the reproduction of the cattle, the fertility of the harvests, human procreation; that is to say: they have regency on procreation. Therefore, the Spirits of the trees have a transcendental role in several rites which are practiced to guarantee the abundance of human, animal or vegetal procreation.

There are several cases in which the Arboreal Spirit is simultaneously symbolized under a vegetal and a human form, one placed next to the other, expressing a continuum between them, as if one was the explanation of the other. In fact, most Arboreal Cultures represent the Spirit of the tree under a human form; and each Spring Solstice a procession headed by a person dressed as a tree (i.e: covered with leaves and branches) is made. This person receives the name of the tree during the ceremony, there's no distinction between the person and the tree. The tree-man or the tree-woman doesn't represent the tree, but they **are** the tree during the procession, and therefore their Spirit is the Arboreal Spirit, the producer of all fertility and procreation. This "walking tree" generally crosses the village and receives different gifts from its inhabitants and these offerings are related to the entities in which procreation should be manifested.

The Zos Kia Cultus, as it was defined by AOS, is a cult devoted to the body as a whole, or Zos, this Total body includes both the physical and the mental aspects of the body (i.e., the mind itself); on the other hand, it's a cult to the Kia, the name which AOS used arbitrarily <sup>(1)</sup> to define the "Atmospheric I", that which is *neither one thing - nor another one* (the "Neither-Neither"), or as AOS said: "*the absolute freedom which being free is mighty enough to be reality*". Zos is the active aspect, that which can also be called the Will; Kia is the passive aspect, the imagination where all dreams and possibilities reside.

Nevertheless the Zos Kia Cultus is not a dual system, but a system based on an extreme monism; Zos and Kia are united by means of the New Sexuality, that is called "New" because it remains always identical to itself, without ever mutating. The New Sexuality is not the immutable law, but the absolute absence of law, the great emptiness. It's not a dual sexuality, but the monism of the great emptiness of that which is neither-neither.

The New Sexuality is the encounter of Zos and Kia, an encounter which is manifested in the Death Posture; the state of supreme union in which all dualism is transcended. The transcendence of all dualism doesn't happen by means of uniting opposites, but by its negation, the emptiness. If we remember another phrase of AOS: "*There is neither thou nor I nor a third person - losing this consciousness by unity of I and Self; there would be no limit to consciousness in sexuality. Isolation in ecstasy, the final inducement, is enough -But, procreate thou alone!*" <sup>(2)</sup>, then it's not hard to understand why Austin Spare felt inspired by the Arboreal Cult and the rites of the "man-tree" or the "tree walking".

Returning for a second to Frazer's Golden Bough, we'll remember the three examples that the book offers about how the Cult to the trees is manifested:

- a) an animism in which trees are inhabited by a Spirit whose function is to induce/guarantee procreation.
- b) a reciprocity in which a man placed next to a tree serves so that each one explains reciprocally the other.
- c) like rites of fertility in which a disguised man transforms himself into a tree and his Spirit becomes the Arboreal Spirit, producer of fertility. And thus he walks across the village to scatter procreation.

Of course, these three cases never occur in an isolated way, in all Arboreal Cults the three forms are present in a greater or smaller way. A tree exists in a constant Death Posture, in permanent contact with the Arboreal Spirit, the Kia; it's the perfect symbol for the New Sexuality. It's possible to say that the body of a tree (its trunk, branches, leaves, etc) is Zos and the Arboreal Spirit is Kia: a Spirit that although "inhabits" the tree, also exceeds it -if that was not the case, it wouldn't make sense to invoke it to induce the procreation of anything different from the tree itself. Indeed, the Arboreal Spirit is the "Atmospheric I" of the tree, which is and is not in the tree... or more precisely, is neither within, nor without the tree.

Now it's easier to understand those words from The Focus of Life: "*Live like a tree walking!*" and "*Procreate thou alone!*". Those "men-tree", possessed by the Arboreal Spirit (the "Atmospheric I") walking across the village in order to cast procreation among all things are a perfect allegory for the Zos Kia Cultus: the ecstatic satisfaction of the ecstasy which is cast upon all things as procreation.

Kzwleh Elagabalus - 11/06/00

**NOTES:**

- (1) Some authors consider that "Kia" is not an arbitrary name, but a transliteration of Qoph Yod Aleph, which equals 111
- (2) Aphorism I, The Focus of Life

