

# Gothic Kabbalah and Runic Alchemy



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TRADITION





# Gothic Kabbalah and Runic Alchemy: Johannes Bureus and Gothic Esotericism

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# Table of contents

	Foreword	6
I	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	9
1	Bureus and Gothic esotericism - an introduction	11
1.1	Esoteric concepts	19
1.2	Literature and previous research	20
1.3	Theory and methodology	22
1.4	Bureus and the Renaissance	28
1.4.1	Neoplatonism during the Renaissance	33
2	Esotericism	38
2.1	Bureus esoterism	38
2.2	Esotericism and religious history	39
2.3	Magic in the Renaissance	57
3	Göticism	61
3.1	The perception of runes in the sixteenth century	71
4	Esoteric traditions	75
4.1	Kabbalah	75
4.1.1	Kabbalah origin	78

4.1.2	Definitions of Kabbalah	80
4.1.3	Sefirot and the Tree of Life	81
4.1.4	The twenty-two paths	83
4.2	Alchemy	84
II	BUREUS WORKS	93
5	The Swedish sixteenth century context	94
5.1	Esoteric writings of Bureus	98
6	Bureus' diary	99
7	<i>Adulruna Rediviva</i>	116
7.1	The lying and the falling stone	117
7.2	Wrinkle cross	125
7.3	The king dressed in runes	139
7.4	Adulrunan's innermost hope cage and treasury	140
7.5	The three crowns	145
8	<i>Cabbalistica</i> : The esoteric notes of Bureus	148
9	<i>Nymäre Wijstor</i> : Esoteric motifs in Bureus fish collection	167
10	<i>North Land Lion's Ride</i>	177
10.1	Lower Azara: the period from 136 to 1369	182
10.2	The other Azara: The time of Jan Huss and Luther prominent	193
10.3	Hekal, the upper ledge	202
10.4	Adytum and the altar of Ariel	206
III	ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS	211
11	Bureu's Gothic Kabbalah and the Western Dutch esotericism	212

12	Adulrunian practice in comparison with the magic of the Renaissance	220
13	Runes as divine emblems	223
13.1	The meaning of runes	229
13.1.1	The feeder fifteen	230
13.1.2	The birth fifteen	232
13.1.3	Foster fifths	233
14	The savior's garden and the trolls in the wilderness: The runes as a map of a dualistic world	236
14.1	The motif with the garden	241
15	The Lion of the North: Bureus and the alchemical eschatology	244
15.1	<i>The eschatological structure of the North Land Lion's Ride</i>	250
15.2	Apocalyptic alchemy	251
16	Esoteric Gothicism after Bureus	255
16.1	Georg Stiernhielm's Gothic Neoplatonism	255
16.2	Olof Rudbeck and Atlantic Gothic runology	258
16.3	Johan Göransson's religious runology	259
16.4	Initiatory Gothicism of the Manheim Federation	260
16.5	The Swedish Kabbalah after Bureus	262
16.6	The transmission of a Gothic esotericism	266
IV	SUMMARY	271
17	A summary of Bureus' esoteric projects	272
	Bibliography	276
	List of sources	284



# Foreword

Writing a doctoral thesis on Swedish sixteenth-century cabala is hardly the most social activity one can engage in. Despite this, there have been a number of people who in different ways have shown a great interest in my work with Johannes Bureu's esoteric ideas and who have been valuable support in the process. First and foremost, I would like to extend special thanks to the following three: Per-Arne Berglie who gave me the opportunity to write this thesis at the Department of History of Religions in Stockholm and who ensured that there were financial possibilities to complete the project two years ahead of schedule; Erik af Edholm who has been my supervisor and contributed with invaluable views and with his never-ending knowledge given me the opportunity to both broaden and deepen the thesis; Susanna Åkerman who over the years has been something of an informal mentor in my Bureus research and always generously shared her enormous knowledge.

Peter Jackson, who joined our department during my time as a PhD student, has provided me with valuable articles and made possible the timing of my thesis defense, which I greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank Mattias Gardell, who has always inspired me and with whom I share an interest in the field of neo-paganism. I would also like to thank the participants of the senior seminar for rewarding seminars and fun post-seminars. A special thought is of course directed to those of you who have also worked in various ways with Western esotericism, such as Per Faxneld (whom I first got to know outside the academy through our interest in Metal) and Peter Åkerbäck (whom I sometimes also meet at Gotlands Gilles' very esoteric meetings where we throw warp and drink Gotlandic

dricke). Among scholars outside Sweden, I would like to make special mention of Stephen E. Flowers, who has contributed knowledge of runes and Nordic languages, and Boaz Huss, who has helped me translate Hebrew sentences in Bureus and to clarify some of the kabbalistic reasoning. Many thanks to Tina Amirante for her help with the Latin.

Mathias von Wachenfeldt at Linköping Diocesan Library has helped me to get Bureu's manuscripts on a CD, which was a time-consuming job. Kjell Lekeby, archivist at the Swedish Masonic Order has assisted me with texts and valuable knowledge. I would also like to thank research colleagues in and outside Stockholm who share my focus on esotericism and related areas, such as Henrik Bogdan, Alberto Brandi, Mattias Fyhr, Kennet Granholm, Fredrik Gregorius, Eva Kingsepp, Michael Moynihan and Stefan Stenudd. There are countless names I would like to add, and those of you who think I should have mentioned you, I apologize for the lack of space in the gratitude list. During my doctoral studies, the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation provided a travel grant that made it easier for me to present my research to colleagues abroad.

I would like to thank Malin for her great commitment to the work on the thesis and for our constantly fun and interesting conversations on the topics that interest us both. My family, my mother, father and sister, have supported me in every way in my work and so have my friends, where I send a special thought to Tommie Eriks- son and Christofer Johnsson who not only have a great interest in Bureus but also, together with me, have translated his texts into music. Timo Ketola has been responsible for the typography of the thesis with dedication and attention to detail. I also send my best wishes to my versatile colleagues at VRG.





## Introduction and background





*Johannes Bureus. Portrait signed J. L. 1627 (Gripsholm)*



# 1 Bureus and Gothic esotericism - an introduction

Johan Bure, or Johannes Bureus as he is best known, was born on March 25, 1568 at Berga, Åkerby's vicarage in Uppsala diocese. His father was Thomas Mathiæ, a vicar who originated from Finnish Nyland. His mother was Magdalena, daughter of the priest Andreas Olai, who carried out the Reformation in Västerbotten and then became provost of Skellefteå. Since Bureus worked for the king and devoted himself to learned professions, he was to be known as Johannes Thomæ Agrivillensis Bureus, but did not actually belong to the Bureus or Bure family in the strict sense, but took the name after his grandmother, who belonged to it. His real name was Johan Thomasson and he often chose to call himself Johan Bure instead of Bureus, as he was skeptical about the influence of Latin on Swedish culture, despite his good knowledge of Latin. However, Bureus is the name under which he has gone down in history. Bureus inherited his love of education from his parents and his father owned a large library. Johan was the youngest of five siblings and had four sisters, Christina, Birgitta, Sara and Margareta, who all died as children or at a young age.

The fact that Bureus was born and grew up in the Uppland region, which is full of rune stones and ancient monuments, together with the scholarly and religious upbringing he received, would shape his future interests. Bureus's world of thought is difficult to understand without knowing the importance Uppsala and its surroundings had for him. The

The mysticism to which he devoted his life was not only an international, European mysticism, but also a *Kabbalah upsalica*, deeply rooted in a mythical experience of the area around Uppsala.

At the age of nine he was sent to school in Uppsala and at the age of fifteen he was sent to school in Stockholm. Already in 1584, at the age of sixteen, he knew Hebrew (Hildebrand 1910: 11). Throughout his life, Bureus cultivated a great interest in languages, with a good knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, German, Finnish and even some Abyssinian languages and Chinese. At the age of twenty, he completed his studies and in 1590 was appointed to the chancellery of John III. Bureus was a man of many talents who, in addition to his impressive knowledge of languages and literature, was also a skilled artist, engraver and typographer, and he created, among other things, the seal of Uppsala University (Berg 1971: 5). The role he is best known for by posterity is as a pioneering archaeologist. He was Sweden's first national antiquarian and teacher to first Gustav II Adolf and later his daughter Queen Kristina. Bureus also worked for Axel Oxenstierna, to whom he dedicated one of his writings.

In a note under a picture of a rune stone, Bureus indicates the time of his beginning rune research, when he writes "Denna lärde migh först läsa runor 1594 widh lagh" (Svärdström 1936: 7). Johannes Bureus's work has been crucial for the systematization of a Swedish grammar (Lindroth 1911: 1ff). He was also the great pioneer of rune research and the one who innovated the Gothic tanks in a very personal way. In 1599 he completed the first printed work on runes. It was a large copper engraving in folio format called *Runakänslanes lärospan*, which has also been called "Bureus's great runic tablet". At the time, the word 'feeling' also meant knowledge. In it, Bureus had depicted several rune stones and shown different types of rune lines with the runes' phonetic values. Bureus's rune art was considered so important that the Swedish king forbade him to go abroad because ancient history would be lost if anything happened to Bureus. Bureus believed that Christianity and Latin had supplanted the runes and he wanted to make an attempt to reintroduce knowledge of them. Bureus had a *Runa ABC book* published.

One of Bureus' greatest achievements in the early days of runology was his extensive mapping of rune stones. He would manage to treat 663 rune stones. That is about a quarter of those we know today (Frängsmyr 2000: 84)

Johannes Bureus developed a runology that both remained within the realm of linguistic research and slipped into deep esoteric speculations. For Bureus, these were not two separate areas, but in Bureus' worldview the whole universe is fundamentally linguistic and pan- semiotic, filled with signs. Bureus, who lived in Uppsala, was inspired by Kabbalah and alchemy and read Agrippa, Paracelsus, Reuchlin and other great names in occultism. Through a comparison with the Kabbalah, he was convinced that the runes also had different dimensions, partly as writing signs, but also as esoteric and magical symbols. He developed a Gothic Kabbalah which he called *Kabala Upsalica*. The secret dimension of the runes he called adulrunes or noble runes. He also constructed a symbol he called *the Adulruna*, which is meant to serve as a map of the universe and human evolution through different levels of existence. The Adulruna functions both as a symbol for man and for the universe, for both the microcosm and the macrocosm. According to Bureus himself, his system is a synthesis of theosophy, alchemy, kabbalah, magic and astronomy, the latter in the form we would call astrology today.

We know from Bureus's diary that in 1591 he read the magical book *Arbatel de magia veterum* and through it became interested in Kabbalah and magic (Bureus in Klemming 1880: 13). Whether Bureus knew anyone who introduced him to esoteric studies is uncertain. We know that his father-in-law was accused of spreading knowledge of witchcraft, but whether this was a true accusation in these times of witch trials is difficult to assess. If so, it would seem to have been a more popular type of magic that left no trace in the written texts. From Bureus's diary we know that a Lars in Ärentuna had a book on runic magic and this could possibly be a source of Bureus's interest in this area, but this is also unclear. The author Kjell Lekeby, whose books *I lejonets hjärta: drottning Kristina och stjärntydarna* (2001) and

*King Christina: The Queen Who Wanted to Change Her Sex* (2000) has described esotericism during this period and put forward the idea that the natural philosopher and astrologer Sigfrid Aron Forsius (1550-1624) could have introduced Bureus to esoteric teachings. This is a reasonable idea since Forsius and Bureus moved in the same circles and Forsius was a slightly older follower of Paracelsus, a thinker who would later play a decisive influence on Bureus. Bureus's diary mentions a master Sigfrid or Aronus in 1624, which could refer to Sigfrid Aron Forsius. Hjalmar Holmquist writes in the section on Forsius in *the history of the Church of Sweden* that it may also be the case that Forsius conveyed information about Rosicrucian material to Sweden via Bureus (Holmquist 1938: 70)

With Bureus, the myths of Gothicism were to be reinterpreted so that they did not exclusively emphasize the history of the empire, but were placed within a Kabbalistic and alchemical mysticism in which they were included as motifs for an individual path of enlightenment. In Bureus's work, the older Gothicism and his research into runes and languages were mixed with his interest in esoteric speculation.

With the birth of Gothic runology during the Swedish period of great power, one could speak of a kind of rebirth for the runes. They were used by many Swedish officers during the Thirty Years' War to encode messages (Enoksen 1998: 20). What is central to Bureus's Gothic rune research is that the runes do not stop at being archaic writing signs that prove the literary abilities of the ancient Norse, but that they were primarily symbols of an individual initiation and enlightenment path where the adept reaches contact with God. Bureus's esoteric runic research became known abroad and he received several visits from distant guests who wanted to be taught the secrets of the adult runes.

Bureus married Magdalena Mårtens-son Bång, born in Uppsala on April 14, 1572, on August 22, 1591. Her father was implicated in a witchcraft trial and beheaded on charges of teaching witchcraft. Magdalena and Johannes Bureus had eight children, but five of them died before they reached adulthood. The eldest daughter Magdalena married but died young, and the son Johannes died at the age of twenty-two as a soldier in Prussia. The daughter Catharina survived




and had five children with the antiquarian Johan Henrik Axehjelm, and she was known to be a learned woman. Bureus' wife died as early as 1626, which he notes with great sadness in his diary. Bureus himself was eighty-four years old, an unusually high age for that time, and died on October 22, 1652 on his farm in Vårdsätra, in Bondkyrka parish outside Uppsala. The farm is still there today, albeit rebuilt several times. It is located at Vårdsätraviken and despite rebuilding mainly in the seventeenth century, the foundation is from the sixteenth century. Vårdsätra farm played an important role for Bureus and he sometimes retreated here to escape the world in times of plague, but also for periods of contemplation. For the last five years of his life, Bureus suffered from severe gout in his hands and feet, which limited his writing. Johan- nes Bureus is buried in Almunge Church outside Uppsala.

His successors as National Antiquaries, Stiernhielm and Verelius, would take up some of Bureus' ideas. At the same time, they distanced themselves from his most occult and kabbalistic speculations (Lindroth 1975: 161). The ideas of which he was probably most proud and which he elaborated in several editions of *Adulruna Rediviva* do not seem to have won any major followers. The ideas were perhaps so personal, elusive and occult that they had difficulty in being widely disseminated. At the same time, this is somewhat strange since several mystics after Bureus seem to have developed similar ideas independently of him, regardless of whether we are talking about Johan Göransson's Gothic runic mysticism in the seventeenth century or the Manhem Association's Gothic initiation degrees. Despite several similarities, these seem to have developed their systems without the influence of Bureus. However, we know that Bureus would exert a significant influence on sixteenth-century Gothic greats such as Georg Stiernhielm and Olof Rudbeck.

In approaching Bureus's thoughts, I have tried to base myself mainly on the source material preserved at the Royal Library in Stockholm, *Carolina Rediviva* in Uppsala and Linköping Abbey Library. The most important source material is the printed texts *Nordlandalejonsens rytande* and *Nymäre Wijsor*, and the unprinted collection of notes *Cabbalistica*, and perhaps above all the six manuscripts of Bureus's esoteric writing *Adulruna Redi-*

viva. Four of these are in the Royal Library in Stockholm and

Den Svenska  
**A B C Boken**  
 På thet enfalligeste så ståle / at de  
 vanlige bokstavarne læmpa sig ef-  
 ter Runerne / asahprirmix  
 medh wår "xf:yp'pro-  
 nunct8L!OnL.



Widoms början san / är wist Guds  
 alwara fruchtan:  
 Wis migh wisan man / dån i yngstone  
 racadhe tuchtan.

Trykt i Upsala / af Estil Magnusson /  
 år / 1624.

two are at Carolina Rediviva in Uppsala. Bureus wrote down seven versions of *Adulruna Rediviva*, one of which disappeared from the Royal Library in 1812. The Royal Library also holds the manuscript *Antiquitates Scanziana*, which is partly similar in content to *Adulruna Rediviva*. *Antiquitates Scanziana* is more extensive and contains a considerable amount of valuable information about Bureus' esoteric thoughts. Bureus' *runic writings* mainly describe the linguistic meaning of the runes, but also reveal some esoteric ideas. Printed texts such as *the Runa ABC book*, *Runa Redux*, and apocalyptic writings such as *Nordlandalejonens rytande* provide an insight into Bureus' thoughts as he wished to present them to a wider audience. The collection of notes *Cabbalistica*, kept in Linköping Diocesan Library, reveals much of his own references and the esoteric thoughts that characterized his work. In Linköping, there is also the linguistic *On the Origin of Languages*, which describes his mystical view of language. Two tools that have been indispensable in my study of Bureus are a sketchbook and a calculator. Only by drawing Bureus's hermetic symbols and calculating his kabbalistic numerical values have his thoughts become reasonably comprehensible.

The Bureus texts at the center of the thesis are the two most complete, namely *Adulruna Rediviva* and *Nordlanda lion's roar*. The former is a Neoplatonic colored ontology and also a manual for a runic alchemical transmutation through seven steps. The roaring of the northern lions is a Protestant, Kabbalistically interpreted, apocalypse. I also discuss the printed *Nymäre Wijsor* and the manuscript *Cabbalistica*, as well as Bureus's diary entries. Bureus's other writings are included as a basis for mapping his world of thought, but are not individually analyzed since they do not express a Gothic esoterism in the same way.

As the multifaceted person Bureus was, one can approach him in several ways and focus on different aspects of his work. This thesis focuses on Bureus' esoteric thinking and how it is reflected in his worldview and view of religion and history. Bureus is part of the esoteric current of ideas that the thesis also intends to describe. To understand a historical person

like Bureus, requires knowledge of the currents of thought in which he was involved and the authors he read. Reading the authors Bureus read such as Ficino, Pico, Reuchlin, Paracelsus, Agrippa, as well as alchemical works such as *Turba Philosophorum* or Kabbalist core texts such as *Sefer Yetzirah* is necessary to understand Bureus' world of thought. In addition to esotericism, Bureus is influenced by and an active participant in Götticism. To complete the picture of the Gothic ideas, I have also looked at writings by Stiernhielm, such as a manuscript by him that also has the word Adalruna in the title, but which has a different content than Bureus' writing. Works by later Rudbeckians such as Erik Julius Björner and Johan Göransson have also been of interest, such as Göransson's *Is atlinga* (1747), as well as writings from the younger Gothic period such as Carl Jonas Love Almqvist's description of the degrees of the Manhem League. Towards the end of the thesis, I intend to discuss whether Bureus had an influence on esotericism in Sweden, on kabbalistic and runic mystical currents, and if so, to what extent. A number of discourses meet in Bureus in a way reminiscent of other thinkers and ideologues. He is ideologically linked to the great names of Renaissance esotericism, and he expresses the emblematic worldview that was embodied in books, images and music during the Baroque period. Bureus managed and developed a research tradition that began during the Vasa period and he would in turn lay the foundation for Swedish archaeology.

The aim of the thesis is to map the history of ideas, and secondarily to analyze and reconstruct Bureus' esoteric world of thought based on the writings and esoteric fragments he left behind, and to examine the esoteric traditions that influenced him, in which Kabbalah and alchemy played a particularly significant role. In the perennialist spirit of the Renaissance, Bureus tried to bring together ideas from his own Christian religion with concepts from Judaism and Islam. The unifying framework for Bureus' project, however, is Gothicism and the emerging Protestant Swedish empire's polemic against the Pope and the imperial power. Bureus' thought belongs to Western esotericism, but it is conveniently specified as a "Gothic esotericism" in which the national claims

runs like a red thread through the esoteric speculations. My thesis is that Bureus' world of thought is logical and natural if we examine the context in which he finds himself. By placing Bureus in the history of ideas and reading the texts he himself read, his seemingly eccentric ideological creation will appear as a logical consequence of the worlds of thought in which he moved and which merged in his thinking. I will conclude by discussing the apocalyptic context, the emblematics in relation to Bureus' view of runes, and whether a Gothic esotericism emerged after Bureus. Based on the criteria for Western esotericism formulated by Antoine Faivre, I argue that Bureus' thought is best characterized as a Gothic esotericism.

### *1.1 Esoteric concepts*

In describing Bureus's thought, I will use concepts taken from him. Some of these concepts have a specific and non-typical meaning for him, while others are characteristic of esotericism. A concept found in Gnostic and Neoplatonic literature is *ascension*, ascending, and this is also a concept of central importance for Bureus. Ascension stands in contrast to *descent*. There are a number of connotations in Bureus's use of ascension, which makes it appropriate to use in the interpretation of his texts. The concept of ascension also corresponds to ideas that are central to Western esotericism, as Antoine Faivre has shown in his third criterion for what he considers to be included in the concept of "Western esotericism". We will return to these criteria later. The idea that there are intermediate worlds through which the adept passes in his spiritual development is a recurring motif in esotericism and we find these ideas in Neoplatonists, Gnostics and Hermetics, as well as in Kabbalah, alchemy and initiatory movements. The possibility of ascension through higher and higher degrees of enlightenment is a fundamental idea for the use of initiations in esoteric movements. Esoteric initiations are based on the idea that the various

degrees correspond in some way to a spiritual ascent. Ascension and initiation both provide parallel access to levels that are not available to just anyone. There are, of course, initiations in non-esoteric contexts, such as various men's clubs. György E. Szönyi, in *John Dee's occultism: Magical exaltation through powerful signs* (2004), argues that the related concept of magical exaltation, as well as Latin expressions such as *elastus*, *elevatio*, *exultatio*, *furor*, *illuminatio*, *inspiratio*, form the ideological basis of Renaissance magic (Szönyi 2004: 36). My intention is to be clear when the concepts are taken from Bureus or the esoteric world of thought and when I use scientific concepts and definitions. For this reason, a brief discussion of *emic* and *etic concepts* in esotericism research follows later.

## 1.2 Literature and previous research

In addition to the source material, I have benefited from the limited but valuable secondary literature on Bureus. This includes Hans Hildebrand's biography of Bureus from 1910, Sten Lindroth's classical dissertation from 1943 entitled *Paracelsism in Sweden to the middle of the 17th century*, and Susanna Åkerman's dissertation *Rose Cross over the Baltic* (1998). Susanna Åkerman has written a number of scholarly articles on Bureus and the period in which he lived. She is currently working on a book about Queen Kristina's interest in heremeticism.

Bureus has also been recognized for his contribution as a linguist, as in Hjalmar Lindroth's *J. Th. Bureus, Den svenska grammatikens fader* (1911). In his role as a typographer, Bureus is described in *De yverbörnes typografi* by Nils Nordqvist (1964). Henrik Schück's *Kgl. vitterhets, historie och antikvitets akademien. Its history and prehistory*, a work in eight volumes published between 1932 and 1944, contains detailed descriptions of Bureus's work as an archaeologist and is still considered a standard work in the field. Bureus is mentioned in more popular scientific contexts, such as in Sten Lindroth's collection of essays *Fru Lusta och Fru Dygd*

(1957) and Mats G. Larsson's *Sveahövdingens budskap* (2000). *Lychnos 1959* contains an article by Henrik Sandblad on Bureus' apocalyptic speculations. Henrik Sandblad's *De eskatologiska föreställningarna i Sverige under reformation och motreformation* (*The eschatological conceptions in Sweden during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation*) from 1942 has formed the basis for the discussions on eschatology at this time. In Björn Andersson's dissertation *Runor, magi, ideologi. En idéhistorisk studie* (1997), which focuses on Sigurd Agrell, contains a chapter on Bureus that seems to be based mainly on Lindroth's thesis. Stephen E. Flowers has written a short pamphlet on Bureus based almost entirely on Hildebrand, and Flowers repeats some mistakes Hildebrand made in his Bureus biography. Bureus appears in a literary context in Erik Lundberg's *Vid språkets rötter* (1994). Axel Friberg's *Den svenske Herkules: Studier i Stiernhielms diktning* (1943) deals with Bureus in some detail, focusing on his influence on Stiernhielm. Bureus has a natural place in great power studies such as Axel Strindberg's *Bon- denöd och stormaktsdröm: Studier över skedet 1630-1718*, which was published in 1937 and provides a socio-economic analysis of great power politics and propaganda. The Gothic antiquarian project is studied in Johanna Widenberg's doctoral thesis *Fäderneslandets antikviteter: ethno-territorial history and integration efforts in the Swedish state's antiquarian activities ca 1600-1720*, from 2006. The archaeological-historical perspective is described in detail in Ola W. Jensen's dissertation *Forntid i historien* from 2002 and in the discussion of Bureus' apocalyptic view of history I take Jensen's study as a starting point. Most studies in which Bureus is included focus on the Swedish period of great power and Gothic archaeology, while this thesis emphasizes esotericism and Bureus' esoteric production.

A classic study of the eschatological and esoteric thought of Gothicism is Johan Nordström's *De yverbornes ö* from 1934, which is an important source for research on Bureus, Stiernhielm and Gothic esotericism. Johan Nordström also published Stiernhielm's philosophical fragments with a detailed introduction to Stiernhielm's esoteric thought. Mats Malm's dissertation *Minerva's apple. On poetic vision, interpretation and imagery in Nordic Gothicism*



which was published in 1996, is a further contribution to research on Gothicism. Ingmar Stenroth published *The Myth of the Goths* in 2002 and deals with both Swedish and foreign Gothicism from antiquity to Romanticism. In 2002, Gunnar Eriksson published the major biography *Rudbeck 1630-1702: Life, Learning, Dream in Baroque Sweden*. The historian Claes Annerstedt published a five-volume *history of Uppsala University* between 1877 and 1914, the first part of which describes in detail the academic activities in Uppsala during the sixteenth century. Bureus and the Rosicrucian ideas are also discussed by Hjalmar Holmquist in *History of the Church of Sweden* from 1938.

In discussing esotericism, I have taken Antoine Faivre and his criteria as a starting point. These have formed the basis of academic research on esotericism, although there has been a great deal of criticism of them. In the chapter on esotericism, I also refer to other leading researchers in the scientific research on esotericism, including Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Olav Hammer, György E. Szönyi, Arthur Versluis, Håkan Håkansson and Henrik Bogdan to name a few. For comparing alchemical images with Bureu's illustrations, Adam McLean's website [www.alchemywebsite.com](http://www.alchemywebsite.com) has been very helpful. Professor Boaz Huss has assisted me with notes and articles that helped me to interpret Bureu's Hebrew Kabbalistic commentaries. To survey magical and esoteric literature, I have been helped by Jean-Pierre Coumont's *Demonology And Witchcraft. An Annotated Bibliography* (2004), which catalogs virtually all European literature on magic, witches and demons from the fourteenth century to the present day and includes authors such as Agrippa.

### *1.3 Theory and methodology*

Esoteric subjects have often been viewed by science in terms of typological models in which occult and magical thinking is described as something that exists in all times and cultures and which stands in opposition to scientific thinking. In the field of Western esotericism, these typological approaches to esotericism, occultism



and magic have been abandoned in favor of a historical approach where esoteric traditions are not judged qualitatively, normatively or on the basis of truth claims, but are studied historically based on their time and context. In order to frame what can be called esoteric, certain definitions and criteria have been created as tools.

By abandoning early dichotomies between occult and magical thinking on the one hand and scientific thinking on the other, studying these subjects has become less taboo. Even though historians of ideas such as Johan Nordström put forward the idea as early as the 1930s that esoteric traditions such as alchemy were not opposed to science, but on the contrary contributed to its emergence, we still encounter a generalized typological approach to occultism and magic, where the terms are used to denote something negative. In June 1982, Brian Vickers organized a symposium on science and the occult which resulted in the anthology *Occult And Scientific Mentalities in the Renaissance* (1984) where Vicker in "Analogy versus identity: the rejection of occult symbolism, 1580-1680" explains that:

In the scientific tradition, I hold, a clear distinction is made between words and things and between literal and metaphorical language. The occult tradition does not recognize this distinction: Words are treated as if they are equivalent to things and can be substituted for them. Manipulate the one and you manipulate the other. Analogies, instead of being, as they are in the scientific tradition, explanatory devices subordinate to argument and proof, or heuristic tools to make models that can be tested, corrected, and abandoned if necessary, are, instead, modes of conceiving relationships in the universe that reify, rigidify, and ultimately comes to dominate thought. One no longer uses analogies: one is used by them (Vickers 1984: 95).

Early definitions of a subject such as magic, which is usually included in esotericism, were based on an evolutionist and positivist approach in which magic was man's first tentative attempt to understand causal relationships in life, albeit with erroneous conclusions. After the magic phase came religion, which was social and moral in nature, but still based on an erroneous perception of

reality. The final phase was contemporary science which, according to this approach, drew correct conclusions about existence and causation. Religious evolutionist theories were largely scrapped in the nineteenth century because the empirical evidence did not support them, but curiously they have been revived again, albeit outside the realm of religious scientists. Anti-religious naturalists such as zoologist Richard Dawkins have gained a lot of attention with their criticism of religion in books such as *The God Delusion* from 2006. However, there are some fundamental problems with the arguments of Dawkins and his followers.

To begin with, religion is not necessarily monotheistic, but may involve, as in Hinduism, a myriad of gods or, in some religions, no god at all. The next false premise is that religion is always authoritarian and conservative, which is not the case. Religious positions have motivated rebellions, struggles for social improvement and, not least, research. It was with a hermetically religious worldview that Giordano Bruno stood up to the Church, proclaimed heliocentrism and was burned at the stake in Campo di Fiori in 1600. In *Guide To the Study of Religion* (2006) edited by Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon, Rodney Stark emphasizes the rationality of religious man and tongue-in-cheek polemicalizes against Marx by calling religion an "amphetamine of the people" (Stark 2004: 251). A categorical rejection of religion or magic as an evolutionary relic does not lead us to new knowledge about religion or magical beliefs. Dawkins' theories have no clear support among scholars of religion because they suffer from a lack of anchoring in field research of real existing religion. Not least the narrow monotheistic perspective reveals a dichotomy that is a hundred or two hundred years old. Religions should be examined, explored and criticized like any other ideology or worldview, but evolutionary theories about the emergence of the image of God are speculation. Whether there is one god, several gods, goddesses, or no god at all is in some ways irrelevant from the perspective of religious history, as is whether magical practice works.

When I intend to describe Bureu's texts, I start from a descriptive, historical perspective and will not put his

esoteric writing in relation to his, what we today would consider, scientific work, in linguistics, folklore and archaeology. I focus on the esoteric thoughts based on the historical context of ideas in which he moved. A point of departure in the history of ideas is appropriate when describing Bureu's texts, since it is ideas and not practices that we primarily encounter in his writings. The ideas in the majority of Bureu's texts are fragmentary and often difficult to interpret for a contemporary reader. For this reason, the reading must be done with a hermeneutic approach where the context gives us access to the interpretation of the individual text. In other words, in order to approach Bureu's thought, I have moved, on the basis of the hermeneutic circle, to use Dilthey's term, between the alternating detail on the one hand and the whole and the context on the other. As far as possible, I want to let Bureu's texts speak as independently as possible, but at the same time an active contextualizing and interpreting is necessary to make the texts comprehensible, or as Arthur Versluis writes in the article "Methods in the Study of Esotericism", part two:

All scholarship, after all, is a kind of translation. To translate a work, one has to do more than simply convey the literal meaning of what is there, even though the literal meaning is of course important. But in a good translation, there is something more: the translator enters into the work itself through translating it (Versluis 2002).

Versluis argues that the researcher must introduce a dimension of sympathetic understanding for a good interpretation to be possible:

There is something mysterious about this process; it is a kind of shared consciousness through the medium of written language. This process takes place in literary translation, but it is even more evident in esoteric works that were written precisely in order to share a particular dimension of consciousness or process of inner awakening (Versluis 2002).

In my view, it is true that complex and obscure texts such as the esoteric ones are difficult to interpret unless one tries to think from the author's perspective and thus

reach an understanding from the inside, before stepping out and objectively describing the ideas and content. In my opinion, this is not necessarily a mystical process as Versluis suggests, but is done by trying to familiarize oneself as carefully as possible with the context and the author's world of thought as well as the time in which he lived. One of the keys is to try to read as much as possible of what the author read, as well as to familiarize oneself with the discourses that characterized his thinking, in Bureus's case esoteric ones such as Kabbalah and alchemy.

The history of ideas is often defined as the reading of texts through other texts, where the historian of ideas moves from text to text, often in a non-chronological way. In this thesis I could have studied Bureus on a broader level of history of ideas, history of science or sixteenth-century history, focusing on his roles as teacher to Gustav II Adolf and his daughter Kristina, his linguistic writings and the context of the Thirty Years' War, but I choose to limit myself to his writings in the fields of esotericism, which are quite extensive. Nevertheless, it is inevitable and necessary to occasionally touch on the other contexts in order to understand the esoteric writings. The study of esotericism is part of the history of religion and consequently this is a treatise on the history of religion, using the method of the history of ideas.

In the history of ideas, empirical material produced through observations or experiments plays a subordinate role, and the central issue is not whether a theory can be verified or falsified according to Popper's criteria, but whether it can give us a better and increased understanding of a text. The historian of ideas Olausson points out that a theory is not consumed because it has been shown to be false:

but precisely because it has led the researchers to a deeper interpretation. The text being interpreted is not in any way forfeited; it is always waiting for new readings that provide other and fruitful perspectives (Olausson 1994: 13).

Olausson divides the analysis of texts into the following elements, which have served as a guide during the writing of this work:

1. Level of the text

- a) determination of the text
  - b) analysis of the basic conceptual structure of the text
  - c) description of the text
  - d) ideanalysis
2. Individual level
- a) personality
  - b) formation process
  - c) occupation
  - d) social positions, etc.
- 3) Intellectual context
- a) contemporary intellectual context - interlocutors and opponents - descriptions in synthetic form
  - b) historical intellectual context descriptions in synthetic form
- 4) Socio-economic context
- a) social construction of groups of scholars and intellectuals
  - b) the division of society into classes and strata
  - c) type of society, conflicts and development dynamics

Although these four levels have guided my analysis of Bureus and Gothic esotericism, the last and fourth levels have been subordinate to the other three. The focus is on the first and third levels. My approach is to analyze the texts and illustrations from the inside, focusing on ideas, motifs and references.

My ambition is firstly to map the history of ideas, and secondly to analyze and reconstruct Bureus' esoteric world of thought on the basis of the writings and esoteric fragments he left behind. Like all human beings, Bureus underwent major changes in his thought during his life, and the closest we can find to a system in his thinking is in the six available manuscripts of the *Adulruna Rediviva*, written over a period of almost forty years with surprisingly similar content. By reading Bureu's diary entries, we can follow his intellectual development over the years and thus gain an insight into the context of the esoteric writings in Bureu's life. In order to reconstruct Bureu's world of thought, I will approach the esoteric texts

he refers to and place them in relation to Bureus and the esoteric context. I will also delve into a couple of the most central esoteric traditions, or discourses if one prefers to call them that, which form the cornerstones of Bureus' thought, namely Kabbalah and alchemy. In addition, I intend to frame Bureus' thought by discussing the epoch in which he operates and the Gothic project of which he was one of the foremost exponents, as well as placing him in a broader esoteric discourse.

#### *1.4 Bureus and the Renaissance*

In terms of period, Bureus is situated between the Renaissance and the Baroque, and there are characteristic features from both these eras in his production. In Sweden, the Baroque is associated with the period of Swedish great power, and Bureus was involved in the events surrounding its creation and how it was shaped culturally and ideologically. However, he is primarily associated with the ideas usually attributed to the Renaissance. The perennialism that emerged during the Renaissance is a central idea for Bureus and justifies the inclusion in his writings of Thor, Odin and Frey among the biblical figures. We find several references to the great names of the Renaissance, such as Pico della Mirandola.

The Renaissance as a concept was coined in the fifteenth century by the artist and historian Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) of Florence, a city that can be considered something of a hub for this era, especially if we consider the development of esotericism (Goodrick-Clarke 2008: 35). As an epochal concept, it was first used in 1855 by the French historian Jules Michelet, but the concept had its major breakthrough with the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt's influential work *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860), which since its publication has helped to shape our understanding of the epoch. Burckhardt argued that during this period man developed his individuality and became self-aware, which is reflected in Renaissance art and humanist philosophy. The Renaissance ideal

Burckhardt contrasts this with the Middle Ages, which, according to this view, would have been characterized by faith, childish prejudices and illusions. Burckhardt argues that the modern individual was born in Italy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the book's view of history breathes of the Hegelianism, liberalism and optimism of its time.

Burckhardt's picture of the era has met with great resistance, and many historians have questioned the book's theses on the birth of the individual and the bright view of these centuries. The historian Michael Nordberg, whose book *Den dynamiska medeltiden (The Dynamic Middle Ages)* revalued the Middle Ages, contrary to popular belief, published his book *Renässansmänniskan: 1400-talets Italien - myter och verklighet (Renaissance Man: 15th Century Italy - Myths and Reality)* in 1993, in which he continues the project of questioning the images of a dark Middle Ages and a bright Renaissance. Nordberg is Sweden's foremost critic of Burckhardt's image of the Renaissance, an image that still largely characterizes our perceptions today. In *Renässansmänniskan*, Nordberg shows that this was a time when the Church still struck superstitious fear into the large number of people. The reason and humanism that Burckhardt attributes to the era was reserved for the elite and did not improve the conditions of research or the standard of living of ordinary people. Nordberg paints a bleak picture of a time full of disease, war and social misery. Early in the book, Nordberg states that various airy generalizations, such as that the Renaissance was characterized by individualism, a sense of reality, a critical mind, freedom from authority, and an absence of religious feeling, have become commonplace in the view of the Renaissance. Nordberg regrets that:

Countless people have labored with the abstraction of the "Renaissance man" - an intellectual construct that has never existed in the mind (...). This construction seems to assume that during the entire "epoch" there was only one kind of human being, monolithically complete and in possession of the aforementioned characteristics, invented in the nineteenth century, fully characterized by the "Renaissance mentality" - which never existed (Nordberg 1993: 16).

The criticism of the Renaissance concept can be divided into a number of points:

1) Continuity with other eras characterizes the period rather than a unique break with the time before. The Renaissance is



not a different time from the Middle Ages, but a natural consequence of the developments that took place during the Middle Ages.

2) The period is too disparate and multifaceted to be summarized in a term like "Renaissance".

3) If we are to speak of a renaissance, we must consider other renaissances, such as the eleventh century when, through Arab intellectuals, Europe came into contact with previously lost ancient texts, and made great strides in art, education and architecture, as the universities and cathedrals built during this time testify.

4) The ideals usually attributed to the Renaissance were, if they existed, the concern of a very small elite.

With these reservations in mind, and in order to avoid the problematic connotations of the Renaissance concept, scholars have suggested replacing the Renaissance as an epochal concept, in whole or in part, with the division of history into centuries, which, despite the alleged origins of the Renaissance in Italy, is the practice in Italian historical research, where instead of the Renaissance, the fourteenth century is simply referred to as *the Quattrocento* and the fifteenth century as *the Cinquecento*. Another option is to refer to the period as the transition from Late Medieval to Early Modern. At the same time, there are researchers who believe that the period is special and despite a striking continuity between the epochs, the historian of ideas Erland Sellberg points out in a critical review of Nordberg's book that:

(...) this does not mean that there cannot also be significant differences. Machiavelli's "The Prince" could not have been written anywhere or at any time, any more than Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's speech on the dignity of man (Sellberg, SvD 931206).

Is Bureus part of a zeitgeist such as that usually attributed to the Renaissance, or could he have existed in any other time or epoch? Aware of the problems of the Renaissance concept and the advantages of dividing history into centuries, I will nevertheless occasionally speak of the Renaissance. When I use the term 'Renaissance', it is in a narrower sense, such as

term for an intellectual, cultural and artistic movement originating in Italy and particularly Florence in the circle of the Platonic Academy. Its humanism, neo-Platonism and Hermetism became an important basis for the Western esotericism that Bureus is strongly influenced by, and part of.

In the study of Western esotericism, the Renaissance plays an important role. Faivre's criteria are based on the esotericism developed during the Renaissance. Renaissance scholar D. P. Walker argues that Ficino is characterized by a strong commitment to distinguish his spiritual magic from the old-fashioned and skeptical demonic magic of the Middle Ages. For Frances Yates, the link between the Renaissance and esotericism is a cornerstone of the thesis that esotericism was a driving force behind the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment. Although many scholars point out the continuity between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, writings such as Pico's *On the Dignity of Man* stand out as characteristic of a Renaissance spirit. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke argues that:

*The Oration* has rightly been regarded as a masterpiece of rhetoric, celebrating the newfound independence and confidence of Renaissance man. Pico's statement marks a sea-change between the medieval mind and the modern mind, the tremendous growth in man's sense of autonomy and dignity which had grown up with humanism (Goodrick-Clarke 2008: 45).

Like Nordberg, however, most researchers have questioned the sharp distinction between Renaissance and medieval magic and pointed to the continuity between the esoteric texts of these eras. The image of a high Renaissance magic in contrast to a low popular medieval magic is criticized. György E. Szönyi points out that Yates underestimates the importance of medieval magic and its influence on Renaissance occultists such as Marsilio Ficino and John Dee (Szönyi 2004: 56). It is reasonable to interpret the emphasis on high, white Renaissance magic as opposed to low, black medieval magic as an emic categorization based on Ficino and the Renaissance thinkers who wanted to legitimize their own practice. When scholars like Frances Yates of the Warburg Institute

transferred this categorization into scientific research, it shows that they are influenced by the definitions of the historical objects, and use these to legitimize the subject as a serious field of research, and in Yates' case, show that esotericism is related to the Enlightenment and progress and not to medieval superstition. Håkan Håkansson points out that Renaissance occultists such as John Dee were influenced by medieval magical manuscripts to a greater extent than is usually stated:

With few exceptions, scholars have hitherto greatly underestimated Dee's knowledge of, and dependency on, medieval ritual magic. This is largely due to a lopsided picture of ritual magic as preliminary demonic or "black" in character, philosophically unsophisticated and practiced by a marginal group of people at the fringe of medieval society and culture. In recent years, however, this picture has slowly begun to change as scholars have started to appreciate the complexity and diversity of ritual magic (Håkansson 2001: 242-243).

Distinctions between high and low magic, black and white magic are moralistic and not very useful as scientific categories. The relationship between low magic and high magic reflects an elitism and a view that there is an essential difference between educated magic and popular magic. The nature of this relationship is usually described in two ways, either that folk magic is an expression of superstition, simplifications and misinterpretations of the higher learned magic, or conversely that folk magic forms the basis and that it is then abstracted and becomes more complex in learned magicians.

In Gothic writers such as Bureus and Rudbeck we find the idea that authentic magic is to be found among the peasants and in those parts of the country most unaffected by time. Bureus' interest in mapping rural thought, and the fact that people around him were accused of witchcraft and possessed books on runic magic, might suggest that he had insights into folk magic, but in most of his writings the influences are almost exclusively scholars from the Western esoteric tradition.

### 1.4.1 Neoplatonism during the Renaissance

Renaissance esotericists started from the myth of an ancient common wisdom that had already existed among the pagan philosophers and was thought to culminate with Plato and his Academy (Leijenhorst 2005: 842). This golden chain of initiated wisdom teachers included Orpheus, Zoroaster, Moses, Hermes Trismegistus and Plato. All these names are thus included in the introduction to the Bureus *Adulruna Rediviva*, where they are presented in accordance with the perennialist belief in a common origin for humanity. The most important work in introducing Renaissance perennialism was *De Perenni Philosophia* by the learned orientalist Agostino Steuco (1497-1548) also known under the Latinized form Augustinus Steuchus (Nordström 1924: XLVI). The basic idea of Steuco's doctrine is that mankind has been in possession of a common philosophical and religious truth since the beginning of time. This primordial truth has been found not only in Christianity, but also in the wisdom teachers of the Indians, the Jews, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians and the Greek philosophers. It was, however, revealed in its final form by Jesus Christ, who thus brought man back to the primordial wisdom which he possessed before he was cast out of the Garden of Eden as a result of the Fall. The ancient wisdom had never been available to all, but only to a few initiated masters of wisdom.

Of the wisdom masters included in the golden chain of initiates, it was in practice Plato who had the greatest impact on Renaissance esotericism. However, as Johan Nordström and others have pointed out, it was a reading of Plato as the Neoplatonists saw it (Nordström 1924: XLV; Leijenhorst 2005: 841). Marsilio Ficino translated Plato's collected works into Latin in 1484 and the influence of this translation on his contemporaries cannot be overestimated. Through Ficino and his followers, Plato's teachings became part of syncretistic perennialism. Ficino's ambition was to show the overlap between Plato and Christianity, thus offering an alternative to the Averroists and Aristotelians. Ficino was particularly influenced by Plotinus and he completed a full translation of his work *The Enneads*. He even considered that

Plotinus was the philosopher who came closest not only to Plato's actual meaning, but also to that of Christianity (Leijenhorst 2005: 841). In his Platonic Academy in Careggi, Ficino gathered philosophers, but also artists and musicians. It was even the case that Neoplatonism during the Renaissance largely engaged people outside the traditional centers of learning, or as Cees Leijenhorst writes in an article on Neoplatonism from the Renaissance onwards:

Neoplatonism remained largely an extra-academic affair. The metaphysical speculations of the Platonists proved to be more attractive to a non-academic public than the strict logic of academic Aristotealism, inspiring musicians, poets and painters as well as statesmen such as Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici (Leijenhorst 2005: 842).

The characteristic feature of the Platonic and especially the Neoplatonic worldview is its hierarchical view of man and the cosmos. This idea is also found in Kabbalah and alchemy, and the hierarchical nature of existence is a cornerstone of Bureu's philosophy. The Neoplatonists developed the hierarchical model of the universe in increasingly complex versions that merged with Kabbalah, alchemy and astrology. The most complex work of this period, which brought together the esoteric traditions of the time into a grand hierarchical synthesis, was Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia*. The Neoplatonists placed the One at the top of the pyramid, or even above the hierarchies of nature. The different levels could then be found as manifestations in different parts of nature, where the sun was the foremost of the planets, which in the human kingdom corresponded to the king, in the plant kingdom to heliotropic plants, in the animal kingdom to the lion, and among metals to gold (Voss 2006: 11). This way of thinking would then be transformed into ritual magic in parts of the esoteric environments of the Renaissance. We find countless variations of the hierarchical models among the esoteric ideologues. The following scheme is included in some editions of the *Sepher Yetzirah* and in Athanasius Kircher's *Oedipus Ægyptiacus* (1653) and the translation below is from William Wynn Westcott (1848-1925) who was involved in the founding of the immensely influential magical order Golden Dawn (Åkerman:

in press):

First Order: Elementary.

1. Chaos, Hyle, The first matter.
2. Formless, void, lifeless.
3. The Abyss.
4. Origin of the Elements.
5. Earth (no seed germs).
6. Water.
7. Air.
8. Fire.
9. Differentiation of qualities.
10. Mixture and combination.

Second Order: Decad of Evolution.

11. Minerals differentiate.
12. Vegetable principles appear.
13. Seeds germinate in moisture.
14. Herbs and Trees.
15. Fructification in vegetable life.
16. Origin of low forms of animal life.
17. Insects and Reptiles appear.
18. Fishes, vertebrate life in the waters.
19. Birds, vertebrate life in the air.
20. Quadrupeds, vertebrate earth animals.

Third Order: Decad of Humanity.

21. Appearance of Man.
22. Material human body.
23. Human Soul conferred.
24. Mystery of Adam and Eve.
25. Complete Man as the Microcosm.
26. Gift of five human faces acting exteriorly.
27. Gift of five powers to the soul.
28. Adam Kadmon, the Heavenly Man.
29. Angelic beings.
30. Man in the image of God.

Fourth Order: World of Spheres.

31. The Moon.
32. Mercury.
33. Venus.
34. Sun.
35. Mars.
36. Jupiter.
37. Saturn.
38. The Firmament.
39. The Primum Mobile.
40. The Empyrean Heaven.

Fifth Order: The Angelic World.

41. Ishim - Sons of Fire.
42. Auphanim - Cherubim.
43. Aralim - Thrones.
44. Chashmalim - Dominions.
45. Seraphim - Virtues.
46. Malakim - Powers.
47. Elohim - Principalities.
48. Beni Elohim - Angels.
49. Cherubim - Arch-angels.

Sixth Order: The Archetype.

50. God. Ain Suph. He Whom no mortal eye hath seen.

In the traditional Neoplatonic and Kabbalistic interpretation of this scheme, the initiatory process or spiritual ascension follows from 1 to 49 and in some cases up to 50 if a unio mystica with God is envisaged. In the nineteenth century, models of the above kind were combined with a kind of spiritual evolutionary theory, in which life gradually progresses from the simple to the complex, from the crude to the refined. Thus, according to Neoplatonic thinking, man is at the halfway point and must evolve onwards and upwards. The planetary correspondences vary in different models, with the Sun and Saturn alternately occupying the highest position. The Sun represents the king, the gold and the light and is thus the given highest

principle, while Renaissance thinkers came to associate Saturn with the intellect and contemplation and consequently with the highest spiritual states. In Bureus, the model thus shifts from placing the Sun as the highest principle and Saturn as one of the dark and evil planets in *the North Land of the Lion's Roar*, to placing Saturn highest in *the Swamp*. Ficino even said that Saturn is the planet of philosophers and Platonic academics and that it is only harmful to people who live a conventional life or to philosophers who do not free themselves from mundane emotions (Voss 2006: 29).

In the Neoplatonists, the cosmic hierarchies also correspond to numerical values in the Kabbalistic spirit with scales from 1 to 50 as above, or 1-28 in Robert Fludd. Bureu's numerical values on the runes in *the Runa ABC book* follow the same scale as we find in Robert Fludd's *Utriusque cosmi... historia*, from 1617-21 (Coulano 1984: 26). In Fludd we also find illustrations of the sun on the horizon that correspond to Bureus' drawings of the rune of Thor (Godwin 1991: 43).



## 2 Esotericism

### 2.1 *Bureau's esotericism*

When we place Bureau's alchemical and kabbalistic speculations in a historical context, it is within the framework of what in academic contexts is usually referred to as "Western esotericism". There are always certain problems and pitfalls associated with placing a historical thinker within the framework of contemporary categories. The risk that we read in ideas that the person did not embrace is ever present as the categorization normally includes certain criteria, into which the research object, in this case Bureau, may only partially fit. At the same time, categories such as "Western esotericism" give us the opportunity to interpret and historically map the ideas we can deduce from Bureau's writings. Not least because most of these are fragmentary, but at the same time filled with the terminology, references and motifs we find in other thinkers who fit into the category "Western esotericism". Initially, we will examine the category "Western esotericism" and see how it can help us and also look at its problems and possible shortcomings, as well as the attempts to complement this categorization, and last but not least how it can be used as a tool when examining Bureau's writings. One of the common objections to the category of Western esotericism is why it should be specifically Western, when similar beliefs are found in other cultures such as India.

## 2.2 *Esotericism and religious history*

Within the history of religion, the study of Western esotericism has emerged as a new field of research and has become one of the most recognized approaches internationally (Bogdan 2002: 75). Research on Western esotericism spans areas such as Kabbalah, alchemy, ritual magic, the Rosicrucian movement, Freemasonry, eighteenth-century occultism and contemporary phenomena such as Satanism, Wicca and the New Age. The concept of Western esotericism is a methodological construct developed by scholars to cover a number of different movements, thinkers and traditions, which, despite great differences, have certain important common denominators. Western esotericism is regarded by some scholars as a third stream of thought alongside Greek rational thought and Judeo-Christian faith, the two great traditions of thought on which Western culture rests (Bogdan 2002: 76). Within Western esotericism there is resistance to both rational thought and dogmatic belief. Man and the universe are viewed holistically as mirror images of each other, which means that man can gain knowledge of God and nature through the study of his own inner self, and also in the other direction, that explorations of nature and theological studies help man to reveal truths about his inner self. Esotericism is further characterized by the fact that this process of knowledge takes place gradually through various stages of initiation. The basic features of Western occultism can be found in Gnosticism and Hermeticism, although the term Western esotericism mainly refers to the ideas that emerged during the Renaissance, when Kabbalah, Neoplatonism, medieval magic and Hermeticism were brought together.

Renaissance thinkers such as Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino were to leave their mark on Western esotericism. Ficino, who in the 1450s was commissioned by Cosimo de' Medici to found a Platonic academy in Florence, was asked by the Medici a decade later to set aside his work and instead devote himself to *the Corpus Hermeticum*. This text had been found in Macedonia and in 1471 the first Latin translation was completed. It was distributed in no less than twenty-five editions up to 1641, counting

all the translations that were made. The mystical author of the text, Hermes Trismegistus, was considered to belong to the distant past and his writings were thought to present *the philosophia perennis*, the eternal philosophy. This *philosophia perennis* had been formulated by all the ancient teachers of wisdom, and the idea of an original doctrine of wisdom made it possible to bring together different traditions and establish correspondences. These ideas were grouped together under the term 'Hermeticism', which is often used as a synonym for esotericism. Antoine Faivre writes that the term 'Hermeticism' can refer to (a) esotericism in general, (b) alchemy and (c) the Greek writings from the beginning of the era attributed to Hermes Trismegistus (the texts known as the 'Hermetica'). Faivre suggests that a new word construction, namely "hermesism", should be used to denote the broader interpretation of hermetism that includes esoterism in its various forms (Faivre 1992: 46).

The esoteric tradition claims to be ancient, or even timeless. Among scholars of religion, there are different views on the history of the esoteric tradition. Olav Hammer points out in his thesis *Claiming Knowledge - Strategies of Epistemology from Theosophy to the New Age*, that there are two main views among historians of religion who have studied the esoteric tradition:

One group may delineate the historical development differently than the adherents would, yet still agree in drawing parallels with older traditions. Not, infrequently, the Esoteric tradition is seen as a modern manifestation of a tradition dating back to renaissance hermetism, or reaching back still further to the Gnostics, or even to pythagoreanism and orphicism. There is a good case to be made for a different view of history, espoused by a second group of scholars, in which such links to pre-modern epochs are seen as more tenuous due to a radical modernization of these earlier traditions (Hammer 2000: 37).

The adjective 'esoteric' dates back to antiquity and was introduced around 166 by Lucian of Samosata. It first referred to aristotelics, but came to be used mainly for the inner teachings of the Pythagoreans. The word 'esoterism' as a noun is of later date. The

was used as a scientific term in Jacques Matter's *Histoire critique du gnosticisme et de son influence* from 1828, and was popularized in 1856 by the Frenchman Eliphas Lévi. The term was introduced into English by the Theosophist A. D. Sinnet in 1883. Lévi also introduced the concept of "occultism", which was probably invented by himself, inspired by Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia* from 1533 (Hanegraaff 1998: 384f). The terms occultism and esoterism have often been used to refer to the same phenomenon, but many scholars have found it fruitful to keep the concepts separate. Wouter J. Hanegraaff argues that the term occultism should be used to denote a specific development in esotericism (Hanegraaff 1998: 385).

The 1923 mastodon *History of Magic & Experimental Science* by Lynn Thorndyke is considered a classic of early research in the field, but the major change in attitude towards esotericism research came with the writings of Frances Yates and the research conducted at the Warburg Institute. This institute, located at the University of London, originated in the famous library of the wealthy Jewish-German art historian and cultural theorist Aby Warburg (1866-1929), which was moved from Hamburg in the 1930s because of the persecution of Jews. The Warburg Institute became perhaps the most important early research environment in esotericism, with pioneering studies by first German-Jewish and then British scholars. Scholars associated with the Institute include Edgar Wind, Ernst Cassirer, Frances Yates and D.P. Walker (Goodrick-Clarke 2008: 4).

A classic definition of esotericism comes from sociologist Edward E. Tiryakian. He defines esoterism as the belief system or theoretical knowledge on which the practices of occultism are based. Occultism is the practice and esoterism the theory. Tiryakian writes:

By esoteric I refer to those religiophilosophic belief systems which underlie occult techniques and practices, that is, it refers to the more comprehensive cognitive mappings of nature and cosmos, the epistemological and ontological reflections of ultimate reality, which map-

pings constitute a stock of knowledge that provides the ground for occult procedures (Tiryakian 1974: 499).

Faivre's method of investigating Western esotericism has become the most widely used in the field and his criteria for Western esotericism can be said to form the basis of the subject and is something virtually all scholars in the field adhere to. Faivre succeeded Francois Secret, who until 1979 held the first chair in the subject, "The History of Esoteric Christianity", established in 1965 at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Sorbonne. When Faivre took up his post, the title of the chair was changed to 'Esoteric and Mystical Currents in the History of Modern and Contemporary Europe'. In 1999, a second chair in the subject was established at the University of Amsterdam, entitled "Hermetic Philosophy and the History of Related Currents", held by Wouter J. Hanegraaff.

Antoine Faivre has adopted Tiryakian's use of the terms, but has pointed out that they contain certain weaknesses as there are practical aspects of esotericism and theoretical aspects of occultism (Ahl- bäck 1998: 166f).

Antoine Faivre writes in his book *Esotericism* that esotericism is not a field like art, philosophy or chemistry, but rather a way of thinking. Faivre explains that:

The diffuse etymological derivation of the word suggests that the key to the symbols, the myths, the reality can only be found through one's own efforts, achieving enlightenment step by step, i.e. by hermeneutic means. There is no ultimate secret if one believes that everything is essentially secret (Faivre 1992: 6).

Faivre believes, however, that six criteria should be met in order to be able to speak fruitfully of something specifically esoteric (among other things to distinguish it from non-esoteric initiations), four of which are the primary ones. The criteria he lists are 1) the correspondences, 2) the living nature, 3) the conceptions and mediations, 4) the transmutation experience, as well as 5) correspondences and 6) transfer (Faivre 1992: 13-19).

1) The correspondences are the idea of hidden connections between the visible and invisible parts of the universe, in

accordance with the Hermetic motto 'as above, so below'. There are connections between minerals, the human body, the planets and all the different parts of the universe. Paracelsus' signature doctrine is an expression of this view of the universe and we shall see how this also characterizes Bureus' reasoning.

2) Living Nature is based on the view that the cosmos is a complex, diverse and hierarchical entity in which nature occupies an important place alongside God and man. Nature is imbued with a light or fire and is rich in potential revelations and should therefore be read like a book. Importantly, however, Faivre argues that since the beginning of the twentieth century, a monistic spiritualism inspired by Eastern mysticism has also emerged, in which nature is disregarded or even denied.

3) Imagination and mediation. Esotericism is distinguished from mysticism by its emphasis on intermediate levels between the earthly and the divine. The doctrine of angels and other intermediate beings becomes important in this context, as does the idea of gurus and initiators. Where mysticism sees the imagination as an obstacle, esotericism sees it as an opportunity for spiritual ascent. Faivre describes it vividly:

In this sense, imagination (*imaginatio* is related to magnet, magia, imago) is a tool for those who wish to gain knowledge of the self, the world and myth. It is the eye of fire that pierces the shell of appearances to reveal meanings, exposing the "connections" that make the invisible visible in order to expand our everyday vision; the "*mundus imaginalis*" to which the fleshly eye has no access (Faivre 1992: 17).

4) The transmutation experience. Without the transmutation experience as an important component, esotericism could be confused with some form of speculative spirituality. The word transmutation comes from alchemy and refers to the transition or transformation from one plane to another, the metamorphosis of the subject to higher levels.

To these four basic components of esotericism, two relative components can be added:

5) There are similarities between the different religions and doctrines, and it is possible to find commonalities that unite them. This idea is also known as *perennialism*.

6) Transfer. Knowledge can or must be transmitted from teacher to pupil according to a given pattern, often through initiations. The conditions for this "second birth" are that a) the teachings are respected and not questioned, because one becomes part of this tradition, and b) that the initiation takes place through a teacher and master.

In his article 'Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion', Faivre emphasizes that:

The best way to locate any of these six components in a discourse, a work, a ritual, etc., is not to look for doctrinal tenets, but to try to find evidence of their presence in concrete manifestations like images, symbolism styles, etc. (Faivre 1992: 62).

Wouter J. Hanegraaff points out that as a scholar of religion it is important to distinguish Faivre's use of the term esoterism from the popular use of the term in the New Age context, where the term esoterism has taken on new meanings. Hanegraaff quotes Christoph Bochinger who describes how the term esoterism has come to be used in the New Age, where it is:

...first and foremost a concept referring to Individualkultur according to the motto: "You have it all inside yourself, check it out!"... Thus Esotericism changed... from a special tradition of knowledge into a special type of "religion", the "journey within"... Similar to the word "spirituality", "esotericism" thus became a surrogate word for "religion", which accentuates its subjective element focused on inner experience (Hanegraaff 1998: 385f).

Hanegraaff has pointed out that a number of changes are taking place as the modern and contemporary esotericisms emerge, complementing Faivre's criteria for esotericism by showing that 1) the correspondences are beginning to be interpreted as causal laws governed by the laws of nature; 2) the Christian tradition is being challenged by Eastern religious traditions, especially by Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as; 3) the influence of nineteenth-century evolutionary theory; 4) the influence of the emerging

psychology, particularly that developed by C. G. Jung, and finally; 5) the influence of the capitalist market economy.

Henrik Bogdan, a scholar of religion, writes in an article on Western esotericism that:

The study of Western esotericism is not only about drawing attention to previously forgotten or repressed aspects of Western culture, or understanding the historical context of modern phenomena such as the New Age, but it is above all about broadening and deepening our knowledge and understanding of Western culture as a whole (...) The study of Western esotericism contributes to a reinterpretation and questioning of the ideas we have about what our culture consists of (Bogdan 2002: 80).

In his doctoral thesis *From Darkness to Light: Western Esoteric Rituals of Initiation* from 2003, Bogdan proposes, based on Faivre's criteria, and the thesis that esoterism is a way of thinking, that esoteric texts can be divided into four main categories:

1) Texts belonging to one (or more) esoteric current(s), in which the constituting components of the esoteric 'form of thought' are explicitly present. These are the texts we normally mean when we talk about esoteric. In these texts we find clear expressions that fit Faivre's criteria;

2) Texts belonging to one (or more) esoteric current(s), in which the constituting components of the esoteric form of thought are implicitly present. These texts do not express the esoteric criteria, but it is evident that the author is based on the esoteric way of thinking. For example, an alchemical recipe may be based on the premise that metals and planets correspond without this being explicitly stated in the text;

3) Texts belonging to one (or more) esoteric current(s), in which the esoteric form of



thought is not present). This category includes texts written in esoteric contexts but without esoteric content, such as organizational questions from societies like the Rosicrucians;

4) Migration of esoteric ideas into non-esoteric materials, which can be references to magic and alchemy in literature, or when someone uses esoteric traditions such as tarot without any underlying esoteric thinking.

If we apply Bogdan's categories to Bureu's material, it is mainly the first and third categories that we see examples of. In manuscripts such as *Cabbalistica* and *Adulruna Rediviva*, the basic components of the esoteric "thought-form" are explicitly present, while Bureu's Rosicrucian texts do not express esoteric thought in the same way, even though they are explicitly based on the Rosicrucian current, which is usually considered esoteric. In *Nord Landa Lejonens Rytande*, the esoteric thought form is mainly implicit.

To Faivre's and Hanegraaff's criteria for esotericism, Bogdan adds two more that he believes should be included as we move forward in time and categorize the modern and contemporary esoteric currents. With Aleister Crowley as the culmination of his will religion *thelema*, esotericism will increasingly emphasize both the individual *experience* as being of central importance, and *the will* as the core of modern esotericism. In line with this, we find in Bureus no clear references to the will in the Nietzschean form adopted by Crowley and which has since become central to many forms of modern and contemporary esotericism, or to experiences of the kind emphasized in the New Age or shamanistic movements. A legitimate question is therefore whether esoterism, as Faivre claims, is a way of thinking that is found in both Renaissance magicians and contemporary occultists. Even among the great esotericists of the Renaissance, there are major differences in interest and focus within the field of esotericism, where, for example, Paracelsus is primarily a natural scientist and physician, while John Dee is primarily a mathematician and language theorist. They partly use the same symbolic language and terminology, but in different areas. The ideological content of esotericism is not infrequently under-

organized the symbolism, emblems and aesthetic expressions that largely characterize esoteric discourse (Bogdan 2003: 23).

In *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (2005), Kocku von Stuckrad, in contrast to Faivre, proposes a discursive definition of esotericism, inspired by Michel Foucault's theories of discourse (Stuckrad 2005: 7). Stuckrad argues that Faivre's model for categorizing esotericism risks becoming ideal-typical and emphasizes that there is no esotericism per se, but that it is a classification tool in the minds of researchers, and that it is therefore actually better to just talk about something as *esoteric*, rather than about *esotericism* (Stuckrad 2005: 9-10). Stuckrad defines discourse as: "the pivotal point of all esoteric traditions are claims to 'real' or absolute knowledge and the means to making this knowledge available" (Stuckrad 2005: 10). According to Stuckrad, this may involve individual spiritual ascent, as in Gnostic and Neoplatonic texts, or initiatory moments in secret societies in the modern period, as well as channeling and communication with spirits in nineteenth-century occultism. Furthermore, Stuckrad argues that what also makes a discourse esoteric is the rhetoric of a hidden truth which can be revealed in the right context and which goes against other interpretations of the universe and history, usually against the truths cherished by the institutionalized majority. In addition, the discourse often includes the idea of a 'chain of initiates' through history with authorities such as Hermes and Zoroaster, as well as the emphasis on individual *experiences* (Stuckrad 2005: 10). Despite its obvious merits, Stuckrad's discursive definition, like Faivre's criteria, risks excluding several forms of contemporary and postmodern groups and individuals that should reasonably be classified as esoteric, such as chaos magic. Chaos magic is relativistic and often opposes claims of: "'real' or absolute knowledge". Chaos magicians are themselves aware of contemporary philosophies and consciously link up with postmodernism's resistance to absolute truths and the great universal stories (Urban 2006: 240-241). Chaos magic is based on a postmodern worldview in which we live in a hyperreality, to use Baudrillard's term, where signs, symbols and simulation create reality instead of reproducing something

real, and where mass media and entertainment have come to define contemporary man, and the world he lives in. In line with this, chaos magic writers reject claims to old unbroken traditions of order and recognize that chaos magic has emerged in its own time, even if they also argue that on a deeper, underlying level they convey an ancient tradition (Carrol 1987: 9).

In relation to religious traditions, Stuckrad's discourses represent the social organization of traditions, opinions and knowledge. Stuckrad emphasizes that the discourse may be common to different religions, but may be interpreted differently depending on religious affiliation. Central to Stuckrad's work is his emphasis on the pluralism of European religious history, arguing that boundaries were often drawn not between Christianity, Judaism and Islam, but between Platonists and Aristotelians, between Scholastics and Nominalists, or literal interpretations of the Bible and mystical and esoteric visions. Stuckrad writes that: "There are intensive exchanges between Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions, which often bear little relation to their original religious purpose" (Stuckrad 2005:7).

While Stuckrad is based on Foucault and his theory of discourse, the American researcher Arthur Versluis takes a more traditionalist perspective in *Magic And Mysticism: An Introduction to Western Esotericism* (2007). Versluis argues that:

in magic and mysticism we see areas of study that by their very nature are not entirely reducible to rationalist discourse and manipulation, but instead border on and open into dimensions of life that remain partially veiled to us unless we enter into them ourselves (...) Esotericism, in other words, border on consciousness studies (Versluis 2007: 5).

Versluis has a background as an esoteric writer with the 1986 book *The Philosophy of Magic* and is one of the leading researchers in the field. He is a professor at Michigan State University and is the founder of the Association for the Study of Esotericism. Versluis emphasizes an inclusivist definition of esotericism and believes that one of the most important tasks in comparative religious history is to compare Western esoteric traditions with those found in

Asia. Versluis counts among the roots of Western esotericism 1) ancient mystery traditions; 2) ancient Greek and Roman magical traditions; 3) Plato and Platonism; 4) Hermeticism; 5) Gnosticism; 6) Jewish mysticism and 7) Christian gnosis, such as Origenes, Clement of Alexandria and Dionysius the Areopagite. Using the terminology of Dionysius the Areopagite as a starting point, Versluis uses the concept of *the via positive*, the path of symbols, and the *via negative*, which denotes the path of negations, or absolute transcendence. Versluis argues that the Western esoteric tradition has mainly moved within the *via positiva* (Versluis 2007: 11). The teachings of Master Eckhart (ca. 1260-ca. 1328), on the other hand, could be seen as examples of *via negativa*. The idea of the positive and negative forms of mysticism is also found in Bureus' *Antiquitates Scanziana*.

Versluis argues for a "sympathetic empiricism" that requires the researcher to enter into an "imaginative participation" in order to understand the content of mysticism and esotericism. He argues that sympathetic empiricism is a third way between the objectification of historiography on the one hand, and the subjectification of phenomenology on the other. Sympathetic empiricism means that the researcher should try to understand from the inside and, so to speak, work from the inside out. In the article "Methods in the Study of Esotericism", part two, Versluis writes:

While I am convinced of the critical importance of historiography in the study of esotericism (and for this reason all of my academic books are firmly grounded in historical method) I do not believe that historiography is adequate in itself to convey the complex, multivalent nature of esoteric thought, traditions, or most of all, experience. Esotericism, given all its varied forms and its inherently multidimensional nature, cannot be conveyed without going beyond purely historical information: at minimum, the study of esotericism, and in particular mysticism, requires some degree of imaginative participation in what one is studying.

Versluis summarizes what is found in all Western esoteric traditions with two points:

1) gnosis or gnostic insight, i.e. knowledge of hidden and invisible realms or aspects of existence (including both cosmological and metaphysical gnosis) and

2) esotericism, meaning that this hidden knowledge is either explicitly restricted to a relatively small group of people, or implicitly self-restricted by virtue of its complexity or subtlety (Versluis 2007: 2).

With Christian theosophy as one of his main areas of specialization, Versluis has written articles on methods of studying esotericism that have been published in the academic online journal *Esoterica*. Versluis has formulated criteria for Christian theosophy that complement the definitions of esotericism, and which are interesting to use in relation to Bureu's work, which could partly be described as Christian theosophical.

Arthur Versluis believes that Christian theosophy contains:

1. Focus upon the figure of divine Wisdom or Sophia, the "mirror of God," generally conceived of as feminine;
2. an insistence upon direct spiritual experience or cognition, meaning both insight into the divine nature of the cosmos and metaphysical or transcendent gnosis;
3. non-sectarianism, and self-identification with the theosophic current;
4. a spiritual leader who guides his or her spiritual circle through letters and spiritual advice.
5. Reference to the works and thought of Jacob Böhme; and perhaps
6. visionary insight into nature and non-physical realms (Versluis 2005-06-11: 2).

According to Versluis, the Western esoteric tradition consists of the twin pairs of magic and mysticism. Like the serpents on Hermes' staff, this pair winds around each other and can sometimes be difficult to distinguish, but roughly speaking, according to Versluis, magic is about cosmological gnosis and worldly ambitions, as well as gaining control over other people and nature, while mysticism is about transcendental gnosis and indulging in the divine (Versluis 2007: 3). A scholar such as György E. Szönyi might object to this, when in his book *John Dee's Occultism: Magical Exal-*

*tation Through Powerful Signs* (2004) argues that the basis of magic is man's deification and exaltation (Szönyi 2004: xiv) and defines magic as: "that type of human action that, exploiting occult knowledge, connects man's intellect with the supernatural and through this connection man tries to exercise his will in the spirit world" (Szönyi 2004: 23).

Versluis would admit that the line between this twin pair in Western esotericism is difficult to draw and illustrates, based on the Kabbalah scholar Moshe Idel's distinction between a *theosophical-theurgical* model on the one hand and a *mystical-magical* one on the other, how mysticism and magic are two extremes of the spectrum but that most historical examples are found in between in a magical-mystical and mystical-magical field (Versluis 2007: 3-4).

In the two-volume *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism* (2005) under the keyword "esotericism", Hanegraaff writes that there are two main approaches in academic research on esotericism. On the one hand, we have the *typological approach* where "esoteric" and "esotericism" usually refer to a particular type of religious activity with certain characteristics. Central to this approach is the idea that esotericism has to do with some kind of "secret" and how these secrets are passed on to a select elite of initiated adepts according to a certain pattern. With the typological approach, esotericism can be used in any religious and cultural context throughout history and around the world, to denote secret knowledge for an elite. In this view, esotericism is the inner mysteries of religions, as opposed to their outer exoteric expressions. The typological approach is the one commonly adopted by esoteric practitioners themselves, as well as by movements such as traditionalism and perennialism. Religionist scholars such as Mircea Eliade and Carl Gustav Jung have adopted this ahistorical view of esotericism. The typological approach is often evaluative, as the esoteric inner side of religion is qualitatively regarded as better than the outer and more superficial form of the relations. This latter perspective is of central importance to the majority of those who see themselves as esotericists.





Bureau's little round table

On the other hand, there is the *historical approach*, which interprets esotericism not from a structural perspective or as a kind of religiosity, but as a designation of specific currents within Western culture that have certain specific similarities and are related historically and ideologically. In order to emphasize the historical perspective, these researchers like to speak of a "Western" esotericism, although the concept of Western in this context can be problematized since large parts of the content of thought have arisen through an interaction with cultural spheres that are not usually included in the Western, such as the Arab and Persian cultures without which alchemy is difficult to imagine. Where to draw the boundaries of Western esotericism is an ongoing discussion. Following Faivre, the occult philosophy of the Renaissance and the revival of Hermeticism are usually regarded as the beginnings of Western esotericism, which has since lived on into the present day via alchemy, Christian Kabbalah, Paracelsism, Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry and Theosophy, with the New Age movement and similar new esoteric currents as recent expressions. If one wants to find expressions of Western esotericism further back in time, Gnosticism, Hermeticism and Neoplatonism are usually counted as early forms. Faivre's criteria have been criticized for being best suited to Renaissance esotericism and the romantic esotericism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and scholars have therefore supplemented Faivre's approach with additions such as Hanegraaff's and Bogdan's criteria for the development of a modern esotericism, or alternative approaches such as Stuckrad's discursive perspective.

In a further discussion, I follow an inclusive approach to what is esotericism, such as Versluis' approach when he explains his approach as:

a new, inclusive one that incorporates many aspects of these other perspectives and draws from a range of disciplines while remaining historically grounded (Versluis 2007: 8).

By arguing, as Hanegraaff does, for an empirical-historical perspective, the boundaries of what should be included in Western esotericism can be expanded to include currents from antiquity



up to the present day. When Bureu's texts are analyzed and interpreted, criteria are sufficient to define the contemporary esoteric context in which he thought. The references to, and similarities with, thinkers and currents in Bureu's own time provide us with sufficient basis for interpreting his texts. In this thesis, I take Antoine Faivre's criteria for esotericism as my starting point. Although they may have their limitations in relation to modern material, they correspond well with the esotericism we find in Bureus.

What we need, however, is to complement our understanding of Bureus's esoteric thinking with the other major discourse in the history of ideas in which he moved, namely Gothicism. We should also problematize the Western in Bureus' "Western esotericism" because he actively sought influences from traditions outside the Western Christian European cultural sphere and wanted to incorporate, in a perennialist spirit, Old Norse material, Jewish Kabbalah and influences from Islam. Bureu's distinctive contribution to European esotericism can best be described as "Gothic esotericism", with the reservation that this label has few other representatives and thus an -ism with few followers.

In the field of Western esotericism, in the case of Bureus, two traditions are of particular interest because they are the esoteric traditions to which Bureus himself explicitly refers on most occasions, and because they each characterize two main features of esotericism. The two traditions I have in mind are kabbalah and alchemy, and at the risk of generalizing, kabbalah is primarily cosmological, theological and psychological, that is, it focuses on describing the nature of existence, God and man, while alchemy is primarily experimental and focused on the transformation and refinement of man and nature. The examples are many and in Kabbalah there are countless examples of practical application in order to achieve spiritual elevation, just as alchemy is based on cosmological and psychological theories. At least in the form we find them reproduced in Bureus, alchemy and Kabbalah represent this division.

In describing Bureu's Kabbalah, I will not test it against various definitions of Kabbalah, but essentially allow it to represent the

itself, with its similarities and unique features in relation to other Kabbalahs. In other words, I avoid the discussion of whether this Kabbalah is a genuine Kabbalah or not, but generally take an inclusive view of Kabbalah where what is called Kabbalah and has basic family resemblances to other Kabbalahs may well be labeled as Kabbalah. We shall see below that there are many narrower and more delimiting definitions. Kabbalah denotes a multifaceted and sprawling discourse based on Jewish mysticism, with ideas from Greek and Hellenistic philosophy. Kabbalah entered a non-Jewish environment early on and has been embraced there with great enthusiasm. The versatility of Kabbalah and the fluidity of its boundaries with other esotericism is the reason for taking an inclusive view of what can be called Kabbalah, even though in the case of Bureus we encounter a Kabbalah quite different from what we find in *the Zohar* and *Bahir*, or other of the more traditional Kabbalistic texts.

Starting from what an author himself puts into a concept, as in this case Kabbalah, is associated with certain risks. The meaning may be far from a common understanding of the concept, or the scientifically formulated definitions. A freer and more individual use of a concept means that there is a risk of losing inherent connotations and the context surrounding the concept. If by Kabbalah in the narrower sense we mean Jewish tal-mystical speculations in southern France and Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as we encounter in writings such as *the Bahir* and *the Zohar*, then the term Kabbalah itself gives us a broader meaning with a range of implications. If by Kabbalah we also mean what Bureus called Kabbalah, with Gothic runic speculations and Christian apocalyptic, then the meaning of Kabbalah in this case is particularized and specified to the ideas of a single person. This is a recurring problem that the researcher has to deal with. Should a religious scholar tell a person that he or she is actually a Buddhist, when he or she calls himself or herself a Christian, if it turns out that his or her Christianity is essentially similar to what is academically classified as Buddhism, or should the scholar call it Christianity, because the believer calls his or her belief in Buddha, karma, reincarnation, the eightfold path and the four truths Christianity? The historian of ideas Lennart Olaus-

son believes that these are two phenomena that the historian of ideas must keep separate:

One concerns how people characterize themselves, which is of course important to clarify for the historian of ideas. The other concerns what concepts the historian of ideas uses to analyze the phenomena he/she studies. These do not necessarily coincide (...) A striking example of the above was when Marx himself claimed in a specific context that he was not a Marxist (Olausson 1994: 23).

In a discussion of the Swedish historians of ideas Tore Frängsmyr and Sven-Eric Liedman, Olausson argues that the former wants to avoid using concepts that were not used by those who are singled out with their help, while Liedman would argue that the theoretical concepts have the task of helping the researcher to see things in the historical material that are otherwise not visible (Olausson 1994: 25). In an attempt to solve this problem, the concepts of *emic* and *etic* have been developed in social anthropology, where *emic* denotes an understanding from within, more subjective and with the practitioner's conceptual apparatus, while *etic* is from an outside perspective, with an objective ambition and with scientific theoretical concepts.

Especially when we talk about eras such as the Renaissance and the Baroque, into which Bureus is alternately classified, we should consider the implications of the epochal concepts. We know that no fourteenth-century man looked in the mirror and smugly called himself a true Renaissance man, just as probably no sixteenth-century man considered that he lived in a Baroque era.

In addition to the two discourses and contexts of "Western esotericism" and "Gothicism", it is appropriate to place Bureus in terms of epochs, as this can give us another tool with which to interpret him. Bureus is at the same time a representative of the Renaissance with the humanistic ideals of the Renaissance man, and a representative of the Baroque and the concentration of power we experience in Sweden with Gustav II Adolf's successes during the Thirty Years' War and the emergence of the Swedish superpower.

### 2.3 *The magic of the Renaissance*

The Renaissance view of magic is far removed from popular conceptions of magic as a series of techniques to improve everyday life. Renaissance magic cannot be defined in terms of older sociological or positivist interpretations of magic as either an asocial form of religiosity or a prelogical attempt to manipulate life. Renaissance magic was primarily focused on the higher realms and the ability of man to interact with the divine will. Renaissance magic is not the antithesis of religion, but an expression of the religious beliefs of the time. Renaissance magicians came into conflict with the Church because their teachings were sometimes perceived as heretical, but could also be accepted by popes such as Alexander VI, who even filled parts of the Vatican with hermetic and magical paintings (Yates 1964/2002: 122). Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) defined magic as the knowledge of nature, which would seem to support the Nordströmian and Yatesian view that magic was a precursor to the scientific revolution.

According to Karen Silva de Leon-Jones in the book *Giordano Bruno & The Kabbalah: Prophets, Magicians, And Rabbis* (2004), the study of magic involved: 1) the involvement of different cosmologies (e.g. Kabbalah) and 2) scientific studies. Magic was perceived as:

1) Magic is equal to science as both study the structures of the universe,

2) Magic is equal religion as it reveals God in the universe and allows man to communicate with God.

3) Magic is equal to science and religion in that the combination of the two reveals the mysteries of both the universe and the divine (Leon-Jones 1997: 9).

It may be worth adding a brief sociological comment on Renaissance magicians who are popularly lumped together with other practitioners of magic and sorcery such as witches and wise men and women. Sometimes high and low magic are distinguished, with high magic being socially established and godly, with a focus on subservient work with angels and heavenly powers. The low

magic is selfish and goes against nature and God and consequently turns to dark powers such as Lucifer and the demons. This distinction has been maintained by esotericists right up to the present day. Ficino defends magic in *De vita libri tres* by making a clear distinction between natural and demonic magic. Natural magic brings health and prosperity and works through natural and heavenly influences that God put into creation. Natural magic is no stranger than medicine and agriculture, but higher as it unites the heavenly and the earthly. Demonic magic is unnatural and works through a special rite that allows the black magician to gain the favor of demons. This magic was condemned the moment Lucifer was cast out of Heaven.

Simply put, white magic was something practiced by oneself and black magic by others, just as white magic was practiced by those who were not condemned and black magic by those who were accused and burned at the stake. Bureus defended himself vigorously against accusations of being a heretic and engaging in forbidden practices, but people close to him and further away from the king suffered, such as his father-in-law, who was beheaded in Stortorget in Stockholm on charges of teaching witchcraft. In terms of content, there is little to distinguish different forms of magic during this period. The grimoires and books of magic that give examples of demonic magic and those that turn to angels pursue the same things, which can be high and low, such as gaining all the wisdom of the world or winning at games.

Stephen Skinner and David Rankine, who have published Renaissance magical classics in volumes such as *The Goetia of Dr. Rudd: The Angels And Demons of Liber Malorum Spirituum Seu Goetia Lemergeton Claviculu Salomonis* and *Practical Angel Magic of Dr. John Dee's Enochian Tables: Tabularum Bonorum Angelorum Invocationes*, argue that there have long been several misunderstandings about the social status of magicians. They argue that magicians throughout history have not belonged to the marginalized and outcasts, as both witch trials and later dichotomy between scientific and magical thinking would claim, but that magicians, contrary to this view, belonged to the social establishment:

The line of transmission of practical magical methods was through a succession of scholar-magicians, not via the village cunning-man and witch tradition (which uses a different approach), or via secret societies like the Illuminati, Rosicrucianism or Freemasonry (...). Practitioners of ceremonial and angel magic tended to be of one social class, with a disproportionate number of jurists and lords, in other words drawn from the Establishment of the day (Skinner & Rankine 2005: 27).

It is true that magic was mainly transmitted across Europe through the learned environment of people in the universities, near the court or within the church. Although Rosicrucianism was a great source of inspiration for people like Bureus, it functioned as a *reading mystery*, rather than an organized secret society. It is through the transmission of texts and the exchange of ideas between scholars that Renaissance magic is spread and developed. What is of interest in Bureus' diary, however, is that the line between a learned academic magic and a magic practiced on a more popular level is not closed. Bureus refers to runic magical books, which apparently belong to a genre that is usually categorized under folk magic. The high, white, natural magic is an emic definition in its time that legitimizes its own practice, but which is not essentially different from other magic if we look at practice and intentions, although it is of course more complex and intellectual than magic we find among the peasants. White and black magic, high and low magic are thus historical, cultural and not least social categorizations.

The perception of black and white begins to change during the Renaissance in relation to the Middle Ages. The planet Saturn associated with the color black, as well as principles such as age and death, and the state of melancholy, which was seen as outright negative, are valued by some Renaissance magicians, artists and writers, as Frances Yates describes in *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (2001). Bureus ascribes negative qualities to Saturn in *North Landa The Lion's Roar*, while in notes in the 900-page collection *Sumlen* he equates Saturn with the highest spiritual level in a table of correspondence between the planets and the runic signs of his runic ascension ladder (Bureus, F.a. 12, p. 652).

Darkness was used as a metaphor for both God and ultimate evil, for both ignorance and the philosopher's melancholy quest for wisdom. Although darkness was feared, it could also be perceived as a principle representing inspiration and initiation. The English poet George Chapman published a mystical poem in 1594 called *The Shadow of Night* which exalts night as a spiritual principle. Frances Yates writes:

The profound contemplations of the Night are then contrasted with the foolish and pointless activities of the Day. These experiences lead finally to a vision of the moon, rising in magical splendor out of the darkness of the Night (Yates 2001: 157).

In Kabbalah, darkness and night could be associated with the powers of evil, but on a higher level also with the boundless infinity that lies beyond the Tree of Life and which is designated by the negation *Ain* or *Ain Sof*. According to the Kabbalists, this is the real essence of God and, tellingly, the Italian Hermetic Kabbalist Pico della Mirandola equated *Ain Sof* with the Orphic principle of *Nyx* or *Nox* - Night (Blau 1944: 23). This is an idea that we also find in Bureus' *Cabbalistica*.

### 3 Göticism

What is unique about Bureu's approach to the esoteric tradition is that he is situated in the world of Götticism and combines its motifs with those of esotericism. He is also one of the most important ideologists of early Gothicism, formulating ideas that were later developed by Olof Rudbeck, Georg Stiernhielm and other Gothic writers.

Gothicism has been described as one of the most enduring currents in the history of Swedish ideas (Schoug 2008: 18) and is based on an identification between Swedes and the legendary Goths. The concept of Gothicism derives from the word '*got*' and the ideas that existed about the Germanic people the Goths. The word '*got*' can have many original meanings and derives from an Indo-European word *\*gheu* which gave rise to Germanic terms for 'god' and to the Icelandic word for 'geyser' (Watkins 2001). It has been associated with words for 'spring', 'to pour forth', 'to pour up', all of which can give rise to interesting speculations relating to Norse beliefs and practices. The words for götar, gutar (gotlänningar) and goter all go back to a Proto-Germanic word, the root of which is *\*geut-/gaut-/gut-*. The meaning of the root is "the one who pours" and could denote a man with reference to ejaculation. Another interpretation is that it denotes "those who live where water is poured out", i.e. people who live near springs or streams (Nordin 1997: 21). Gotland, for example, would mean "the land of springs" (Stenroth 2002: 53).

Swedish Gothicism has its origins in a church council in Basel in 1434. Representatives of the Christian nations had gathered



to discuss the affairs of the Church. It wasn't long before arguments broke out between the delegates who couldn't agree on where to sit. Everyone wanted to sit on the right side because it was the best, and everyone wanted to be placed as far forward as possible. The smaller nations realized that they had to settle for the less prestigious seats, but the big nations like England and Spain couldn't agree on who deserved the best seat. In the midst of the dispute, Sweden's envoy Nicolaus Ragvaldi suddenly stood up and frankly declared that Sweden deserved the top spot. In a speech that stunned the other delegates, Ragvaldi explained that Sweden had once been the most powerful and important nation of all. After all, Sweden was where the Goths originated. This people had put the world under their feet and all the European nations knew their history well (Malm 1996: 12). The Castilian delegates had used their Gothic origins as an argument to get a good place at the church council (Eriksson 1991: 35). Ragvaldi wanted to remind the assembled that the Goths came from Gotaland, which was in Sweden, and that they had been a powerful people who had defeated Persian kings such as Cyrus and Darius, participated in the Trojan War, made themselves famous for their warrior women, the Amazons, and last but not least, subdued the mighty Roman Empire. He also recalled that the Spanish kings and aristocracy came from the land of the Goths in the north. The Spaniards grumbled and argued that it was better to be descended from the brave emigrants than from the poor souls who stayed behind. Despite his speech, Ragvaldi had to settle for a more modest place at the Church Council, but his speech was to have great significance and be used as diplomatic leverage when the Swedes wanted to assert their historical rights. Over time, the speech became almost a constitutional document and is the most important source of early Swedish Gothicism (Eriksson 1991: 35).

However, this was not news to Ragvaldi. The history of the Goths was well known and accepted. One of the oldest accounts of Swedish history is Ericus Olai's *Chronica regni gothorum* ('History of the Gothic Empire') from the fourteenth century. As the title of the book shows, it was almost a matter of course to talk about

Goths in the context of Swedish history. As early as 1081, Pope Gregory VII used the word *wisi-gothi* to refer to Sweden's "West-Goths" (Nordin 1997: 21). Sweden's connection with the Goths has its most important source in the Roman-Gothic historiographer Jordanes' *Getica*. Jordanes wrote his chronicle of the Goths in 551. Jordanes was of Gothic descent and wanted to emphasize to Roman opinion that the Goths were a people who loved education (Nordström 1934: 100). Not only were they the people who had subjugated Rome, but Jordanes was also keen to show all the good qualities that characterized the Goths. At some point they had emigrated with their king Berig from the island of Scandza, i.e. Scandinavia. They traveled out of Scandinavia on three ships and their crew gave rise to the three tribes of Ostrogoths, Visigoths and Chepids. In some lines often quoted in Gothicism, Jordanes describes the emigration:

It is said that the Goths once emigrated with their king Berig from this island, as from a workshop where people are created, or as from the womb of a people-tribe (Jordanes, Andreas Nordin's translation, 1997: 41).

Jordanes tells of the attack on Italy and the sack of Rome led by the Visigothic king Alaric. He also tells us about the great Ostrogothic ruler Theodoric the Great, as well as the various battles in which the Goths were involved. The Chronicle of Jordan is the most important document for the history of the Goths. However, the Roman historian Tacitus had already written about the Goths, *the Gotones*, in his book *Germania* in 98. The Goths and the Germanic peoples north of Rome are regarded by Tacitus as noble savages with high moral standards and warlike abilities. They are contrasted with a culture-weary and decadent empire like Rome. For Gothic ideologues like Bureus, this message can be translated to their own time and motivate Protestant opposition to the Roman Church. The papacy corresponds to the decadent Roman Empire, while the Protestants in this interpretation correspond to the libertarian Goths. *The polemic against the papacy is at its sharpest in Nord Landa Lejonens Rytande* in particular.

Bureus, Rudbeck and Stiernhielm all use Greek and Roman myths to emphasize the importance of Scandinavia. Both the Greeks and the Romans idealized the barren lands of the north where, in their eyes, people lived a simple but vigorous and free life. They believed that the climate shaped hardy people with superhuman powers (Stenroth 2002: 46f). The Greeks believed that both their gods and they themselves had their original roots in the distant lands of the north. The Greek historian Herodotus believed that the goddess Leto came from the land of the Hyperboreans in the far north and moved to Greece where she gave birth to Artemis and Apollo (Stenroth 2002: 120). This so-called Hyperborean motif, rooted in ancient Greece, is the second most important pillar of Gothicism, alongside the story of the Goths. We can speak of two currents that form the basis of Swedish Gothicism: the myth of the Hyperboreans and the story of the Goths (Eriksson 2002: 263). It is when the Hyperborean motif merges with the story of the Goths that Gothicism becomes particularly interesting for the historian of religion. Gods and other beings become an important element in Gothic speculation. Imported gods and myths became ingredients in Protestant propaganda and were incorporated into the great powers' historiography. In her book *Hyper- boré: Föreställningen om Sveriges plats i världen*, Katarina Schough speaks of three interrelated schools of thought in the rhetoric of Great Sweden. On the one hand, we have the "hyperborean thought figure" that highlights the ancient motifs of the land in the north as peaceful and culturally productive, on the other hand, we have the "Gothic-warrior thought figure" that exalts the warlike Goths. These two figures are harmonized by the overlapping "Atlantic figure" expressed by Rudbeck (Schough 2008: 21-22).

However, early Swedish Gothicism had not come to exploit the opportunity to merge these motifs. Johannes Magnus and his brother Olaus Magnus are among the most important figures in early Swedish Gothicism. Just over a century after Ragval-Di's famous speech, the next important event in the history of Swedish Gothicism took place. In 1554, Johannes Magnus' history of the kings of the Goths and the Swedes, *Historia de Omnibus*

*Gothorum Sueonumque Regibus*. It follows in the footsteps of Ragvaldi and presents Swedish history as something outstanding and magnificent. John Magnus, a Catholic archbishop in exile, was asked many questions in Rome about his homeland. He wanted to tell the story of his country's amazing history and give Sweden a place among the great European nations. Although he took the opportunity to criticize Gustav Vasa, he saw great merit in the book and it spread as the Gothic ideas became increasingly popular. The book was translated into Swedish.

In 1555, his brother Olaus Magnus published a complementary history of the Nordic peoples, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*. Olaus Magnus and his brother saw the rune stones as proof of the age of Swedish culture. While the Romans were still a barbaric and illiterate people, literature and culture flourished in the North. They were convinced that the great rune stones must have been dragged into prehistory by giants, probably sometime before the Fall. The exiled brothers wanted to describe the North after discovering, in discussions with learned men on the continent, that old geographic and ethnological descriptions of the North were inadequate and unsatisfactory. In 1539, Olaus Magnus printed Carta Marina, the first reasonably accurate map of Scandinavia. At the top of the map is the mythical warrior Starkater with a rune tablet under each arm. The runes are of the same type that the brothers published fifteen years later in their "Gothic alphabet", a runic alphabet in abc order with explanatory Latin letters above each rune. Olaus Magnus wrote that the Nordic peoples had had their own language since ancient times and that they wrote to each other on wooden boards, something he claimed was still done during wars when wood held up better than paper and was more accessible. The two brothers honored the land from which they were exiled and in one of the many illustrations

to the book of Olaus Magnus is written in runes "preserve the antiquities" in Latin.

Although it would have been obvious, the Magnus brothers did not connect the story of the Goths with the myths of the Hyperboreans. This is strange since Johannes Magnus was familiar with Jacob Ziegler's book *Schondia* from 1532 where this connection is made (Eriksson 2002: 263). Swedish Gothicism reached its peak in the sixteenth century, when Hyperboreans and Goths were to be linked as a matter of course. Hyperboreans became Goths and Greek myths became Swedish. Although most people regard Olof Rudbeck as the great representative of Gothicism, Johannes Bureus was the most important exponent of Swedish sixteenth-century Gothicism. Many of the motifs developed by Rudbeck can be found in Bureus, albeit in a much more fragmentary form.

Gothicism can be divided into a few main phases. These coincide to a large extent with phases in the history of ideas and literature. In Margaret Clunie Ross and Lars Lönnroth's article "The Old Norse Muse: Report from an International Research Project", in *Myths of the Nordic - Between Romanticism and Politics*, the reception history of Old Norse literature is divided into the following five phases:

1. From the Edda of Snorre to the Edda of Laufas (ca. 1230-1600)
2. Scandinavian Gothicism and Baroque (c. 1600-1750)
3. The Nordic Renaissance and Pre-Romanticism (c. 1750-1800)
4. National Romanticism (c. 1800-1870)
5. The decline of National Romanticism (after about 1870)

The first phase is when we find the early manuscripts linking Sweden and the Swedes with the Goths and also in some contexts with the Hyperboreans. Ragvaldi, Ericus Olai and the Magnus brothers belong to this period.

The second phase is the period that we most strongly associate with Swedish or Scandinavian Gothicism. This period includes Johannes Bureus, Georg Stiernhielm, Olof Verelius, Olof Rudbeck. During this period, the extreme Gothicism developed by Rudbeck, known as Rudbeckianism, emerges. As late

Successors to this period include Erik Björner and Johan Göransson, whom we will meet later.

The third phase is referred to above as the Nordic Renaissance, a term coined by the literary historian Anton Blanck in his book *The Nordic Renaissance in Seventeenth-Century Literature*. Blanck described it as a pre-Romantic literary movement inspired by the Edda poems and Norse mythology, initiated by the Swiss historian Paul-Henri Mallet and developed by Romantic predecessors such as the Englishmen Thomas Percy and Thomas Gray and the German Johann Gottfried Herder. During this phase, the idea of the sublime is developed, which is no longer the same as the classical ideals of the beautiful, but something essentially separate from the beautiful. The sublime is what simultaneously arouses fascination and horror. Myths and archaic and ancient poetry are held up as examples of the sublime. The idea of the sublime becomes an important ingredient in the valorization of the Goths and the Gothic.

The fourth phase, known as National Romanticism, coincides with the younger Gothicism, which has its most important representatives in the circles around the Gothic League and the Manhem League, such as Almqvist, Geijer, Ling, Atterbom and Tegnér.

The fifth phase marks the decline of both the national romance and Gothicism in the forms we found in the early 19th century. What we call Gothicism and Gothic literature and art sometimes coincide, for example in the appreciation of the archaic and sublime. Mattias Fyhr writes in *De mörka labyrinterna: Gothic in literature, film, music and role-playing games* how the view of Gothic, as associated with Goths, national feelings, democracy and architecture, is reflected in Sweden by the interest in the "Gothic" (Fyhr 2003: 35). In many respects, however, these are two separate genres where Gothic is characterized by dark aesthetics and horror romance.

It was not only in Sweden that there was a Gothicism. In most European nations, people wanted to point to a Gothic origin. In addition to Sweden, Gothicism was strong in Spain. Ideas about Gothic origins also flourished in Denmark and England. While Sweden equated Goths with Goths, the Danes pointed to

# Alphabetum Scanzianum ordine proprio.

ƿ	Frey.	F. ƿ/v consona.	1
1	Vr.	h/u. n/v. n/y. n/d.	3
4	Tors.	T / th. p / dh.	5
h	Odhes.	f/d. f/d. h / t / t/d.	7
c	Rydbur.	R / r. h / r / er fin.	9

Y	Kyn.	ƿ / f / c. ƿ / Y / g. ƿ / q.	10
†	Hagball.	H / Gh / Ch.	30
‡	Nadh.	N. f / n fin. f / dn.	50
I	Idher.	I voc. I / j. I / I / e.	70
‡	Æru.	Æ. f / a. ‡ / an.	90

r	Sun.	S pr. f / s. h / f / ss.	100
1	Tidhr.	T. f / tt. f / d.	300
4	Byrghal.	g / b. f / B / p.	500
f	Lagher.	L. f / ll.	700
ψ	Man.	M. ψ / mm.	900

## Ordine Latino.

I. H. ƿ. 1. I. ƿ. ƿ. Y. ‡. I. Y. ƿ. ψ. ‡  
a b b c d e f g g h i k k l m n n

ψ. ‡. B. ƿ. (R. h. ‡. I. 1. 1. h. n. f. J.  
o o p p q r r r s s t u u y z j

ƿ. ‡. I. h. ‡. h. ‡. ‡. ‡. ‡. ‡. ‡.  
v v a a a o o o ch dh gh th



connection between Jutes and Goths. Several peoples have been associated with the Goths. Goths, Guts, Jutes, Goats, Swedes, Scythians and even Celts have been associated with the Goths. The English poems *Beowulf* (c. 700-1000) and *Widsith* (c. 700) have been interpreted as Gothic stories. In England, as in much of Europe, the Goths would become synonymous with the struggle for freedom. Celts and Goths were often equated with each other. The Goths were interpreted as a free and powerful people who were able to crush tyrannical Rome. Ingmar Stenroth writes in his book *The Myth of the Goths: From Antiquity to Romanticism*:

Moral qualities also play a major role in the new way of valuing the Goths. Sweden was one of the few countries in Europe where the quality of life did not take hold in the Middle Ages. The English, who already in the 17th century were keen to promote democracy as a way of life, argued that it was here in the north that the Goths, the champions of freedom, originally lived. It was when the Goths left Scandia that they eventually freed the European peoples from the grip of Roman imperial power, they say (Stenroth 2002: 10).

However, the Goths were not only interpreted in positive terms. For the most part in European history, the Goths would be seen as a dark, dangerous and destructive people. The Goths were barbarians and Gothic was synonymous with something primitive and barbaric. Even the Swedish Gothic writers were sometimes divided on the Goths. The history of the Goths was supposed to demonstrate the nation's glorious and powerful past, but at the same time the Goths were pagans.

The Bible contains prophecies that point to the north as the direction from which evil originates, but also the direction from which God's punishment will come. When the Goths attack Christianized Rome, it is interpreted based on the biblical prophecies. The Goths are perceived both as a manifestation of chaos and the powers of darkness, but also as God's instrument to punish the world and bring judgment. During the Protestant Reformation, the Goths are referred to as the people who punish Rome and the sinful Catholic Church. The Goths and the northern peoples are interpreted by the early church fathers as God's instruments of punishment. Stenroth writes:



Antiquity sees the Roman Empire as the center of the God-given world order, and the Goths' attack on the empire could be perceived as meaning that the final judgment was imminent. Already the Jewish historical critic Josephus, in his *History of the Jews* (80s AD), tries to identify the threat from the barbarian peoples from the north as a confirmation of Ezekiel's prophecy in the Old Testament (Stenroth 2002: 47).

In the third century, the church father Ambrose states that 'Gog iste Gothus est', i.e. the biblical Gog is the same as Gothus. Both Bureus and Rudbeck associate Gog with the Goths. Rudbeck notes that the land of the Goths was in the north and compares it with Greek myths. According to the Greek myths, many helpers traveled to the underworld of Hades and a winter land shrouded in shadowy mists. For Rudbeck, this was of course a description of Scandinavia. When Homer spoke of the "sunless underworld", Rudbeck believes he was referring to the regions north of the Arctic Circle. Homer's "winter region" was none other than the North and the Greek poets' names for its inhabitants were "men of winter" and "Cimmerians". Rudbeck found several examples of the latter word having its root in *Kimmi*, which he found throughout the North, such as Kimme-Lapp- mark, Kimi älv, Kimmernäs and Kimi träsk. According to Rudbeck, the word was derived from an old Swedish word for 'darkness' (King 2005: 96-97). Through a creative reading of the Greek myths, the dark north could be proven to be the original home of the Goths, Atlantis.

Henrik Schück points out in the introduction to *Kgl. vitterhets, histo- rie och antikvitets akademien. Its history and prehistory*, that two historical schools would stand against each other, on the one hand the Gothic with roots in Ragvaldi and the chauvinistic historiography of the Middle Ages and on the other hand the more source-critical Protestant school based on the reformer and humanist Olaus Petri (1493-1552). During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the former dominated through imaginative and dominant figures such as Olof Rudbeck, while Olaus Petri's method would gain strength in the seventeenth century. Schück writes:

For the Enlightenment critique of Rudbeckianism is in fact merely a

new form of St. Peter's Protestant critique. In both cases, it is an simultaneously rationalistic and realistic view of history, which breaks with the fantastic romanticism of the Middle Ages (Schück 1932: 20).

As an ancient scholar, Bureus followed in the footsteps of Olaus Petri, while as a Gothic prophet he preserves the legacy of medieval historical romance and the imaginative Gothicism of John Magnus. Schück argues that Bureus, like Petri, was a conscientious researcher who still grant transcribed, collected and recorded the most reliable material possible, but goes on to note:

But he lacks Olavus Petri's sober understanding, and when it came to criticism, he did not follow the great reformer's ideas. Rather, he may be regarded here as a follower of John Magni. He believed unconditionally in the latter's fantastic fable history and was the first to subscribe to the method (Schück 1932: 95).

### *3.1 The perception of runes in the sixteenth century*

The magical and multifaceted nature of the runes was recognized not only by Bureus but also by other ancient Gothic scholars, including Olof Verelius (1618-1682), who, following the instructions of the Iclander Olof Rugman (1636-1679), compiled a list of the magical uses of the runes. The runes were both target runes, i.e. writing signs, but also magic runes. The magic runes were the magical forms of runes and they could be divided into twenty degrees or alphas of gradually increasing power. In the first degree, each rune was named after what it was supposed to symbolize. For example, the rune  $\Psi$  was called madher, which means 'man' or 'human being'. In the second degree, some character or characteristic was added, as in this example: madher moldar auki, which means: "man is the incarnation of the mole". Degree by degree the meaning of the runes was expanded and already at the seventh degree a scribe's wisdom was needed to understand the meaning, and at these levels there were secretive sorcery runes such as ska- derunas, linrunes, spell runes and so on. According to Verelius, those who were initiated into the highest degrees of runes could use them to

to call up the dead and conjure up spirits (Andersson 1997: 102). A recurring problem for the scholars and ideologists of Gothicism was the approach to the pre-Christian Nordic region. On the one hand, they wanted to exalt Nordic history as ancient and venerable, but on the other hand it was pagan. A common strategy was to claim that they originally had the true faith, but that over time they became misguided and began to worship idols. The view of the runes was mainly positive, although Verelius recalled that some runes had been used in the pagan cult. At the same time, Verelius believed that the missiologists had unnecessarily eradicated the runes because they misunderstood their true meaning. Essentially, they had only been used as writing signs in the service of culture and not as tools of sorcery (Widenberg 2006: 165).

It was not only in Sweden that interest in the runes began to grow. Since Swedish runologists proudly claimed that the runes were the original language of the Swedes, they were upset when the father of Danish runology, Ole Worm (1588-1654), claimed that the runes were of Danish origin. Johannes Bureus wrote jeers about Worm in his *Runa Redux* from 1643. Worm learned to decipher the runes from Bureus' rune tablet and Bureus would never get over the fact that it was the twenty-year younger Worm who would become known in Europe as the discoverer of the runes and the father of rune research. Because Worm had difficulty with the Viking language in which the runes were written, he began corresponding with learned men in Iceland. They turned out to still have great knowledge of the runes and the ancient language. From Thorlákur Skúlason at the bishopric of Hólar, Ole Worm received a runic alphabet and a manuscript of Snorre's Edda, the so-called *Codex Wormius*. Unfortunately, contact with Icelanders became more difficult when the Christian witch trials began to rage on the island. No one wanted to risk their lives by showing themselves to be too knowledgeable about the pagan signs.

Ole Worm published several works on runes. His first book on runes, published in 1626, was called *Fasti Danici* and dealt with a rune calendar from 1328, which he believed was written in Jutland. It has been shown that it originated from Gotland. In his work *runeR, seu Danica Literatura Antiquissima* from 1636, he treats

the runic script in its entirety and publishes the Nordic roundels from the Middle Ages dealing with runic names. In 1643, Ole Worm published his most important work, *Danicorum Monumentorum Libri Sex*, which contained illustrations, translations and interpretations of all known runic inscriptions in Denmark. This work was a milestone for runology and increased interest in this research even outside the Nordic countries. Bureus and the Swedish rune researchers were envious, not least because the difficulty in Sweden to create a similar work is due to the fact that Sweden has many times more rune stones. Bureus wrote the polemical work *Runa Redux*, which attempted to scourge Worm in verse and point out errors in his interpretations, but this work was not widely distributed. Worm also attacked mystical movements such as the Rosicrucians because he considered them a threat to science. *Runa Redux* is based on a Danish rhyme attributed to Valdemar II (1170-1242) that was supposed to contain all the runic characters. Bureus writes: "King Waldmar does as Solomon did before / Where he reveals Wishtena: So does and yet Alrunas friend" (Bureus 1643, ch 3: 5).

As Schück pointed out, Bureus and Worm had rather different starting points depending on their backgrounds. Bureus was a linguist and linguist with a commitment to Kabbalah and linguistic mysticism, while Worm was basically a physician and natural scientist (Schück 1932: 67).

There is a form of runes known as rodless runes or salutation runes, which Bureus uses when he needs versions of the runes to fit into his symmetrical symbols. These greatly reduced rune symbols were for a long time untranslated. In 1674, the astronomer Magnus Celsius succeeded in deciphering these runes by giving them rods and thus figuring out how to read them. Magnus Celsius' son, Olof Celsius (1670-1756), shared his father's interest in the runes and published a treatise in Latin on the runes of Hälsingland, *De Runis Helsingicis*. Olof Celsius ended up in a conflict with the Rudbeckian Erik Julius Björner (1696-1750), who was upset by Celsius' claim that the rune stones were erected by Christians. Björner believed that they were of an older and pagan background. In this debate, Celsius published a new book on the hälsingunas called *De runis Helsingicis observationes quaedam, sive ad Oreadas Hel-*

*singicas*. For reasons of Gothic ideology, Björner was in a bitter feud with less Rudbeckian-minded researchers such as Olof Celsius. Björner could not tolerate their desire to downplay the age of the runes. Many times he had to put up with having his Rudbeckian theories overruled, but sometimes he emerged victorious, as when he was able to prove that the hälsing runes were younger than the ordinary runes and not the other way around as Celsius claimed (Björner 1726: 29-48).

## 4 Esoteric traditions

### 4.1 Kabbalah

Bureus begins *Adulruna Rediviva* by explaining that 'the adulruna is what the Jews call Kabbalah'. Kabbalah research is extensive, but the non-Jewish Kabbalah is not explored to the same extent as the Jewish one. A classic study of non-Jewish Kabbalah is Joseph Leon Blau's *The Christian Interpretation of the Cabala In the Renaissance* from 1944. Kabbalah scholar Joseph Dan published the anthology *The Christian Kabbalah: Jewish Mystical Books And Their Christian Interpreters* in 1998. From Pico onwards, the Christian Kabbalah is not only a Christian Kabbalah, which is the conventional designation, but rather a trans-traditional and syncretistic Kabbalah based on Renaissance perennialism and the idea that religions have a common core back in antiquity. Bureus is an example of this interpretation of the Kabbalah, where the emphasis on the Jewish origin of the Kabbalah is combined with the idea that it is found in Norse and ancient religion, and that it is fundamentally Christian.

Kabbalah is often used as a term for Jewish mysticism. Sometimes the term Kabbalah is used to denote number mysticism and numerological speculation in general, even outside Judaism. It was only in the twelfth century that this Hebrew word, which is often translated as 'tradition', began to be used generally to denote a specific form of mysticism. Within Jewish mysticism, similar

These ideas had previously gone by various names, such as *Chokmah Perimit*, which means 'inner wisdom'. It was with the Jewish mystic Isaac the Blind (c. 1160-1235) from Provence and his disciples that the word Kabbalah consistently became the name for the special Jewish mysticism of speech. However, it was already during the Hellenistic period that the ideas of Kabbalah were established through tracts such as *Sefer Yetzirah*, which were probably written in the third century, while the actual Jewish Kabbalah developed between the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Kabbalistic mysticism is based on the idea that the world is built around mystical and spiritual principles that correspond to mathematical numbers. Since numbers and letters are the same in the Hebrew alphabet, Kabbalists looked for hidden meanings of scriptural passages and names of gods revealed through numerological correspondences. An example of such numerological correspondences was when the Kabbalists calculated the numerical value of the Messiah, whose name is made up of the letters *M.Sh. I.Ch*, which correspond to the numerical values  $40 + 300 + 10 + 8$ , giving the number 358. To their horror, the Kabbalists discovered that the opposite numerical value of the Serpent (Heb. *Nechesh*) in the Garden of Eden, whose name was made up of the letters *N.Ch.Sh* and which corresponds to the numbers  $50 + 8 + 300$  which also gives the number 358. Could it be that the snake was the same as the savior?

Kabbalists were not only concerned with mathematical and numerological speculations. Early on, Kabbalah was divided into two main branches: a *Kabbalah iyyunit*, speculative Kabbalah, and a *Kabbalah ma'asit*, practical Kabbalah. It was in the speculative Kabbalah that numerological speculation was practiced. The practical Kabbalah engaged in prayers and ceremonies. Over time, Kabbalah would be divided into four main schools. It is not a question of different schools, but of different aspects of Kabbalah complementing each other. The four directions were:

- a) Practical Kabbalah
- b) Letter cabbala
- c) Oral Kabbalah
- d) Written Kabbalah

In practical Kabbalah there were spiritual exercises and ceremonies. There was a great deal of magic in practical cabbala, and the more theoretical and philosophical cabbalists regarded practical cabbala with some suspicion. Book-syllable cabbala was concerned with alphabetic mysticism, which in turn was divided into three different parts: *gematria*, *notarikon* and *themura*, based on various forms of numerical, cipher and letter mysticism. Gematria allowed the Kabbalist to calculate the numerical value of different words and was the most important of the three literal mystical methods. The example above of the serpent (*nechesh*) and the Messiah (*messiach*) having the same numerical value is a typical calculation using gematria. Notarikon is based on initials forming words and themura is a system of word ciphers where the letters are reversed. The oral Kabbalah was considered the most sacred and secret and therefore, as the name reveals, was only to be taught orally from teacher to student. The written Kabbalah was based on the Kabbalistic texts such as *the Zohar* and *Bahir*.

*Bahir* is the first major Kabbalistic work. It was written towards the end of the eleventh century and there has been speculation that the author may have been the Kabbalist Isaac the Blind or someone in his circle. Many of the doctrines central to Kabbalah appear for the first time in *Bahir*. Here, for the first time, the most important symbol of Kabbalah, *Otz chiim*, the "Tree of Life", is mentioned.

*The Zohar* is the most important Kabbalistic work. It is a comprehensive and detailed collection of esoteric writings in five parts. Three of these are called *Sefer ha-Zohar al ha-Torah*. The other two parts are called *Tikkunei ha-Zohar* and *Zohar Hadash* respectively. *The Zohar's* main ambition is to provide a mystical interpretation of the Law, the Torah, i.e. the Five Books of Moses. The first three parts in particular are devoted to Torah speculation. In *Tikkunei ha-Zohar* magical elements appear and from here come some influences found in Western magical texts, such as Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia* and the black arts books that eventually appeared and claimed to be written by Solomon himself.



#### 4.1.1 *Origin of Kabbalah*

A legitimate question in identifying Kabbalistic ideas is the extent to which Kabbalah is specifically Jewish. Kabbalah developed in Europe and has its roots in Hellenistic thought. Pre-Kabbalist thought developed in the same environment as Gnostic and Hermetic thought. Kabbalah is strongly influenced by Greek philosophy such as Neoplatonism and Pythagorean mysticism.

The debate about whether Kabbalah is not Jewish is an old one and seems to have been important mainly for non-Jews who want to practice practical Kabbalah or use the ideas of Kabbalah outside the framework of Judaism. Kabbalah originally seems to have had a more universal philosophical character, reminiscent of Hellenistic Talmudic ideas, and not tied to any particular religion. Over time, however, Kabbalah seems to have taken on a more exclusively Jewish character, probably as a result of rising anti-Semitism and the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492.

Already during the Renaissance, a Christian Kabbalah developed, which believed that the teachings of Kabbalah belonged to Christianity rather than Judaism. Florence became a center for the growth of Christian Kabbalah and the Hermeticist Pico della Mirandola has been called the father of Christian Kabbalah. Pico claimed that he found in Kabbalah more of Christianity than the Mosaic religion. Pico claimed that Kabbalah describes the mysteries of the Trinity, the embodiment of the Word, the divinity of the Messiah, as well as reading in Kabbalah about original sin and its atonement through Christ, about the heavenly Jerusalem, the fall of the devils, the order of angels, purgatory and the punishment of hell. Chaim Wirszubski writes in *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter With Jewish Mysticism* that:

Pico viewed Kabbalah from an entirely new standpoint: he is the first Christian who considered Kabbalah to be simultaneously a witness for Christianity and an ally of natural magic (Wirszubski 1989: 151).

Pico died young and perhaps the person who would have the greatest impact on Christian Kabbalah was his German disciple Johann Reuchlin. Soon after meeting Pico, he was inspired to write his first

Kabbalistic work *De verbo mirifico*, "The miraculous word". This word is not the divine name tetragrammaton YHWH, which is central to Jewish Kabbalah, but the pentagrammaton YHSVH, the Hebrew name of Jesus. Shin was for the Christian Kabbalists a symbol of the savior and with his crown-like piety Bureus associated this letter not only with Christ but also with the three crowns of the Swedish coat of arms. The speculations on the pentagrammaton caught Bureus' interest and in *Antiquitates Scanziana* he illustrates a cross consisting of IHVH at each arm of the cross and the letter *Shin* in the middle (Bureus F.a. 3, p. 109), a symbol that also appears in *Sumlen* (Bureus F.a. 12, p. 675).

Reuchlin's influence was very great and he influenced both Erasmus and Luther. The young Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa read Reuchlin and gave a lecture on *De verbo mirifico* in 1509. Agrippa's interest in Kabbalah is reflected in his most important work, *De occulta philosophia*, which brings together Kabbalah and the occult sciences of the time. Agrippa's work was to become a major influence on non-Jewish Kabbalah and Western esotericism is decisively influenced by Agrippa.

The Lutheran theologian Andreas Osiander (1498-1552) played an important role in bringing Kabbalah speculation to the Protestant world. He joined Luther in the 1520s and was one of the leading Hebraists of early Lutheranism. Osiander was strongly influenced by Pico della Mirandola and Reuchlin, and in 1544 published an eschatological work, *Coniecturæ de ultimis temporibus, ac de fine mundi, ex sacris literis*, which is clearly inspired by Pico. In *Coniecturæ*, Osiander calculates that the day of judgment is expected around the year 1656 and this book would be used in Swedish eschatological literature (Sandblad 1942: 78). Pico believed that the Kabbalah contained the tools with which the time of the Last Judgment can be calculated. Pico believed that the end of times would occur around 2000 AD. For Bureus, the Kabbalistic calculations led him to the conclusion that the Day of Judgment would occur in the sixteenth century.

#### 4.1.2 *Definitions of Kabbalah*

How should Kabbalah be defined? According to Kabbalah scholar Lawrence Fine, there are a few different ways to define Kabbalah. Either Kabbalah can be taken to mean all forms of Jewish mysticism. The problem with this definition is that it is non-specific and excludes other possible definitions of Jewish mysticism. Another definition that risks being even broader is to include everything called Kabbalah even outside Jewish mysticism. A narrower scholarly definition is to take Kabbalah to mean the specific literature developed in Provence and northern Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with the books of *Bahir* and *Zohar* as the main sources (Fine 1995: 5). The disadvantage of this definition is that it excludes a vast source of literature both within and outside Judaism, ranging from Christian Kabbalah, later and earlier Jewish Kabbalah, modern Hermetic Kabbalah, and a Kabbalistic Greek Talmudic mysticism. One possible definition of Kabbalah is that the mysticism of the ten primordial principles known as *the sefirot* is a central theme of Kabbalah. In this way, Kabbalah is delimited, while at the same time it can include Christian and Hermetic Kabbalah. Kabbalah scholar Gershom Scholem, in his book *On the Kabbalah And Its Symbolism*, states that:

Most if not all Kabbalistic speculation and doctrine is concerned with the realm of the divine emanations or sefirot, in which God's creative power unfolds (Scholem 1969: 35).

In this thesis, I take an inclusive approach to the kabbalah and do not question that Bureu's Uppsala kabbalah is kabbalah, even if it differs markedly from the kabbalah found in *Bahir* and *Zohar*. The discussion of what is "real" Kabbalah leads to a dead end where ultimately a majority of Kabbalistic literature is not included. Kabbalah professor Joseph Dan objects to scholars having views on what is a true Kabbalah:

The task of the historian of ideas is not to reveal what something 'really' is, but to account for the development of a concept's meanings in different historical and cultural contexts (Dan 2007: 16).

Joseph Dan also highlights that scholars regard each individual Kabbalist as a unique author and that, despite the scientific legitimacy of finding general patterns, it should be made clear that similarities between different Kabbalistic thinkers are often more apparent than actual (Dan 2007: 13).

#### 4.1.3 *Sefirot and the Tree of Life*

The Tree of Life is one of the most important symbols in Western esotericism. It was developed in Kabbalah but can also be associated with Platonism, Gnosticism, alchemy and Hermeticism. The Tree of Life illustrates the relationship of the sefirot to each other, as well as the structure of man and creation. The most common version of the symbol is made up of ten circles, or sefira, connected by twenty-two lines or paths. The circles represent the numbers one to ten and the paths correspond to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Other alphabets have also been linked to the paths, as have the twenty-two tarot cards and various astrological symbols.

There are several different versions of the Tree of Life, the first known illustration coming from Paolo Riccio's *De Porta Lucis R. Josephi Gecatilia*, printed in Ausburg in 1516. It is a translation of the twelfth-century cabbalist Joseph Gikatilla's *Sha'are Orah*. Bureus is based on another version reproduced in Cesare d'Evolis *De diu- inis attributis, quae Sephirot ab Hebraeis nuncupantur* from 1573. The most common form today comes from the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher's *Oedipus Ægyptiacus* from 1652 and it has become the standard version in modern occultist Kabbalah. It is worth noting that these illustrations are rendered by non-Jews, or the Christian convert Riccio. A Jewish version is reproduced in *the Pa'amom ve- Rimmon*, printed in Amsterdam in 1708. This and Kircher's contain the twenty-two paths while Riccio's and d'Evoli's trees have only seven tons of paths.

The term *sefirot* (*sefira* in singular) has many meanings, but can be translated as 'numbers' or 'figures'. These sefirot are ten basic divine numbers. They have a far expanded meaning from just being

something to count on. The sefirot are cosmic principles, divine emanations, worlds and above all attributes of God himself. In the third-century *Sefer Yetzirah*, the sefirot are referred to primarily as numbers, while in the *Bahir* they are also likened to divine attributes such as power, energy, light and wisdom. The sefirot are also called emanations because they radiate and flow out from the divine origin.

The first sefirot represent the first phase of the act of creation and the last sefirot represent the completion and final manifestation. In between are the other sefirot which symbolize different degrees of manifestation. They are different phases of creation which are not transient but continue to exist as separate worlds or sublevels of the created. The complexity of the sefirot concept is revealed by the countless synonyms that have been applied to them. Sefirot have sometimes been called *orot* ('light'), *dibburim* ('utterances'), *kohot* ('powers'), *shemot* ('names') and *marot* ('mirrors'). The ten sefirot are as follows:

1. *Keter*, the Crown. The original principle.
2. *Chokmah*, the Wisdom.
3. *Binah*, the understanding. The intelligence.
4. *Chesed*, Grace. The unifying force.
5. *Din* or *Geburah*, the severity. The judging and dividing power.
6. *Tifareth*, the Beauty. The harmony that balances the grace and the judgmental side.
7. *Netzach*, Seger.
8. *Hod*, the radiance.
9. *Yesod*, the basic choice for the generating forces.
10. *Malkuth*, The Kingdom. The material world.

The ten sefirot are regarded as parts of a mystical organism. In various correspondence tables in Kabbalistic and magical literature, the ten sefirot and the twenty-two paths correspond to everything from stones, plants and colors to gods and cosmic principles. Kabbalists, unlike Neoplatonists, believe that the ten emanations occur within God and represent God's attributes and his commandments. The Neoplatonists instead see the chain of emanations as a descent from a supreme

principle to a minimum. Bureus's interpretation of the Kabbalah thus follows a neo-Platonic thought figure rather than Jewish Kabbalistic.

Bureus describes the ten sefirot in *Cabbalistica*, but was divided on speculation about the sefirot, writing that the ten sefirot are "fantasies nothing else" (Bureus N24: 108).

#### 4.1.4 *The twenty-two paths*

The twenty-two paths linking the various sefirot are usually associated with astronomical and elemental correspondences. According to the Kabbalists, the twenty-two Hebrew letters are filled with hidden meanings. As early as the third century, the *Sefer Yetzirah* described the correspondences of the Hebrew letters. Three letters are called "mothers" and symbolize three primordial elements that are of a higher and more archetypal form than the four elements that make up the material world. The three primordial elements are air, water and fire. Water represents cold and fire represents heat. Air or spirit represents 'abundance', which arises from the balance between heat and cold. Seven letters are called 'double' and represent polarities in life such as wisdom and folly, beauty and ugliness, wealth and poverty. The seven letters are associated with the seven planets. The remaining twelve letters are called 'simple' and correspond to twelve qualities of man such as sight, hearing, smell, speech, taste, intercourse, work, movement, anger, cheerfulness, thought and sleep. The twelve letters correspond to the twelve signs of the zodiac. According to the Kabbalistic interpretation of the Hebrew letters, they are based on three classical magical numbers, namely 3, 7 and 12, which together form the twenty-two paths on the Tree of Life. In *Antiquitates Scanziana*, Bureus explains the meaning of the different letters, starting from *the Sefer Yetzirah*, which he read in Guillaume Postel's translation. In *Antiquitates Scanziana*, the three mother letters become the kabbalistic roots of the Swedish coat of arms and the three crowns (Bureus F. a. 3, p. 95).

## 4.2 Alchemy

The first presentation of alchemy in the thesis serves the purpose of introducing the reader to this discourse, as well as to problematize what has been termed alchemy. The concept of alchemy is a cornerstone of Faivre's criteria of Western esotericism, and what constitutes alchemy is thus of central importance for an understanding of the subject. Bureus used an alchemical symbolic language inspired in particular by Paracelsus and Khunrath and the alchemical idea of transmutation is a basic premise of Bureus' esoteric thinking. From at least the days of Hellenism, alchemy has promised immortality, wisdom and wealth to the adept who succeeds in producing the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone. For although most alchemists have been religious, modestly declaring that they are nature's midwives, helping and speeding up the natural processes that God has put into creation, alchemists sometimes have an even grander ambition. The alchemist imitates God and tries to gain power over life and the basic principles of existence. In the book *Alchemy: The Philosopher's Stone*, Allison Coudert writes about how, despite the warnings of the ancient myths, the alchemists put themselves in the place of the gods:

Despite these warnings, alchemists saw themselves as gods in their own laboratories and tried to imitate the actions of their creator. (...) God was the master alchemist, who created the world by separating, distilling and congealing the elements of chaos. More than one alchemists took literally the pious Christian act of imitatio Dei and repeated the sublime, divine act of creation in the privacy of his own laboratory (Coudert 1980: 80).

The key concept of alchemy is transmutation, or transformation, which usually means a refining process whereby less fine metals are transformed into silver and gold. Throughout the history of alchemy, this has also been linked to the search for the perfect medicine, the elixir of life, as well as the spiritual development of man through different phases. The goal of the alchemists was to produce the Philosopher's Stone, which would contain the essence and life principle, the quintessence, of all beings and things in the world. The Philosopher's Stone, which in fact often

described as a powder, would, according to alchemists, have the ability to turn all metals into gold, as well as to cure all diseases and give a long, or even eternal, life.

European alchemy is based on Aristotle's doctrine of the elements. According to this doctrine, everything in the world is made up of the four elements earth, fire, air and water. All substances are composed of the four elements in different proportions. By returning a substance to its primordial state, the alchemist imagined that the substance could be transformed into another by changing the proportions of the four elements. For example, lead could be transformed into gold. In addition to the four elements, there is a fifth element that corresponds to the principle of life itself. The idea of a fifth element persisted into the nineteenth century and was called the quintessence or ether. In esotericism, the five elements still play a central role today.

Primordial matter was not only the origin but also the goal of alchemical operations. For the alchemists, primordial matter was identified with everything from sulphur, mercury, lead, the fountain of youth, the sky, the mother, the moon, Venus, the philosopher's stone, the original chaos that existed before creation, the dragon and God himself (Eliade 1962/1978: 163). In its original form it was called *prima materia* but when it reached its final form it was *ultima materia*. For the alchemists, the world was sexualized and they interpreted the various substances and metals as embryos in the womb of Mother Earth. The alchemist acts as a midwife who helps the metals to be born. In accordance with Aristotle's teleological doctrine, where everything has a purpose and a goal that it will eventually actualize, the alchemists thought that everything evolved slowly towards perfection. All metals strive to become gold, while man strives for salvation or to become like God. Diseases stem from a lack of perfection and can be cured by the perfect medicine, the elixir of life. Through its operations, alchemy accelerates nature's slow inherent quest for perfection.

The etymology of the word "alchemy" is disputed and a number of different proposals have been put forward over time. Early alchemists traced the word back to mythical heroes or biblical figures (Haage 2005: 16). That the prefix *al-* derives from Arabic is



uncontroversial and several early alchemical works originate from Arabic-speaking countries.

The most accepted theory today is that the word alchemy derives from the Greek verb *cheo* meaning "to pour" and that in the form *chemeia* it would denote "the art of pouring molten metal". It is possible that during the Hellenistic period the word would be associated with *kem*, the Egyptian name for "black" which also denoted Egypt itself (Haage 2005: 17). The idea that the roots of alchemy lie in ancient Egypt has flourished among both practicing alchemists and researchers in the subject.

A commonly held theory is that the word alchemy derives from the ancient Egyptian name for Egypt which was *kem* or *qemt*, meaning 'black' or 'black earth' and denoting the black fertile soil around the Nile. The name of Egypt would be passed on to the Greeks, Romans, Syrians and Arabs in the form *keme* meaning 'black'. Egyptologist E. A. Wallis Budge promoted this theory and believed that alchemy originated in ancient Egypt, describing in his book *Egyptian Magic* (1899/1988) how the Egyptians used mercury to extract gold and silver from ore. They became renowned for their ability to transmute metals and in the process of working the metals with mercury they produced a black powder with magical qualities. The black powder was identified with the black earth of the Nile and was thought to contain the substances of the various metals. According to Budge, the word *khemeia* denoted "the production of the black powder" and with the Arabic prefix *al-* became alchemy, "the black art" The powder was identified with the god Osiris who is killed by his brother Set and then becomes king of the underworld (Budge 1899/1988: 20-21). The allusion of alchemy to Egyptian myths is well documented, and Michael Maier's 1617 work of art, *Atalanta Fugiens*, is a case in point. Among the book's symbol-filled images, emblem number forty-four illustrates Osiris lying in a coffin killed by Set-Typhon, which is interpreted as a phase in the alchemical process.

The earliest alchemical texts include *Physika kai Mystika* written around the second century by Pseudo-Democritus, which already contains metaphors of death and rebirth, and which derives

mar from a copy of Bolos by Mendes from the centuries before the common era. The text deals with *chrysopoeia*, red coloring, and the art of making silver. In addition to a few prayers, the book primarily contains various methods for coloring metals. Together with the Leyden Papyrus, *Physika kai Mystika* belongs to the earliest alchemy, which was primarily practical. It is with the Greek alchemist Zosimos of Panopolis that alchemy took on a more pronounced esoteric orientation. He was mainly active in Alexandria in the third century and combined alchemy with Hermeticism, which has since become something of the philosophical starting point of spiritual alchemy.

It is not easy to define what alchemy is. In his book *The Forge And the Crucible: The Origins And Structures of Alchemy* (originally published in French as *Forgerons et Alchimistes* in 1956), Mircea Eliade argues for a phenomenological approach in which alchemy can be found in all cultures and times. Eliade compares Chinese and Indian alchemy with European alchemy and points out fundamental structural similarities that are also reflected in ancient mythologies, including Norse mythology. Eliade rejects the idea that alchemy was a primitive precursor to experimental science:

It must be emphasized at the outset that alchemy was not, in its origins, an empirical science, a rudimentary chemistry (Eliade 1962/1978: 9).

He argues that only by looking at alchemy from the alchemists' perspective can the researcher gain an insight into its original world of thought. For the alchemist, chemistry was an expression of decline and decay:

From the alchemist's point of view, chemistry represented a "Fall" because it meant the secularization of a sacred science (Eliade 1962/1978: 11).

It is a common belief that alchemy was a precursor to modern chemistry, but research has begun to abandon this positively colored idea, to instead see alchemy as a stream of ideas in itself, which partly coincided with what came to

evolved into modern chemistry, but some of them had completely different objectives, often of a theological, psychological and spiritual nature. Moreover, instead of speaking of one alchemy, it is appropriate to distinguish several alchemies (Principe 2005: 13).

The search for the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life has driven alchemists for centuries in their attempts to explore and manipulate the elements of existence. According to Arthur Versluis, alchemy is a movement that is positioned between the unworldly metaphysical quest for knowledge of mysticism and the world-oriented cosmocentric ambitions of magic (Versluis 2007: 4). With the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, alchemy began to decline and is now often regarded as a primitive pre-science of modern chemistry. However, alchemy began to be revalued by scientists as early as the first half of the twentieth century. As early as the 1930s, historians of ideas such as Johan Nordström argued that alchemy's hands-on experiments paved the way for today's science, an idea that gained even more traction with British researcher Frances Yates' epoch-making studies of esotericism from the 1970s. In his doctoral thesis *Alchemy's Shame: The Expulsion of the Alchemical Tradition from Public Life* from 2002, Carl-Michael Edenborg argues that it was not scientific progress that led to alchemy's decline, but that it was moral arguments, where alchemy's ambitions were considered shameful, that contributed to alchemy's diminished importance. However, alchemy's rich imagery and imaginative emblems have contributed to its survival. From the mid-nineteenth century and with Mary Anne Atwood's (1817-1910) classic *A Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery* of 1850, alchemy's strictly spiritual significance is emphasized, which has contributed to its survival to the present day. Alchemy is seen by modern practitioners as a spiritual art and whether the ancient alchemists succeeded in producing gold is considered of secondary importance, or even irrelevant. With Carl Gustav Jung, alchemy was given a psychological meaning and the Jungian view of alchemy is influential for modern practitioners.

Sometimes alchemy is focused on concrete metal transformation to produce gold, while the alchemy of, for example, Paracelsus is

primarily focused on the production of medicines. For many alchemists, the main goal was not gold but the elixir of life. An alchemist like the Swede August Nordenskjöld (1754-1792) wanted to use alchemy to eradicate the monetary system by creating inflation through goldsmithing. He thus saw it as his task to spread the knowledge of alchemy. Similarly, Christian Johansén, another Swedish alchemist, wanted to use alchemy as a means of subverting society (Edenborg 2002: 133). Some esotericists viewed the material expression of alchemy with its gold-making with scepticism. Instead, they wanted to emphasize the spiritual and theological side of alchemy. *The Fama fraternitatis* criticizes goldsmithing, which is declared to be of little interest to true philosophers. Johannes Bureus, who read the Rosicrucian manuscripts, outlines in his writings a spiritually oriented alchemy. This alchemy is centered on spiritual transmutation or ascension where the practitioner gradually reaches higher levels of enlightenment. This ascension to higher spiritual levels was a central driving force for magicians and esotericists from the Renaissance onwards. Under various names such as *exaltatio*, *elatus*, *elevatio*, *exultatio*, *furor*, *illuminationis*, divine states were sought where the practitioner tried to become like God. György E. Szönyi writes in his 2004 book *John Dee's Occultism: Magical Exaltation Through Powerful Signs* that the ideology of *exaltatio*, the divinization of man, is the intellectual basis of magic (Szönyi 2004: xiv).

The alchemical phases are described with some variation in different alchemical writings. In a few cases, such as *the Rosarium philosophorum* of 1550, it was thought that the process could be carried out in just one operation, but as a rule there were at least seven or more phases. The fourteenth-century alchemist George Ripley describes twelve phases in *Liber duodecim portarum*, included in J. J. Mangetu's *Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa* (1702). The playwright Ben Johnson (1572-1637) describes ten phases in his comedy *The Alchemist* (1612). As a rule, the phases of alchemy were linked to astrology as when the French alchemist describes twelve phases corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac (Coudert 1980: 43). The 1530s alchemical work *Splendor Solis* describes seven phases, a number which we find again in Johann Valentin Andreæ's *Die Chymische*

*Hochzeit des Christian Rosencreutz* from 1616, which describes the path to spiritual enlightenment in alchemical symbolic language. Johannes Bureus' alchemical notes are based on seven phases, which derive from Paracelsus, who we also find under the same name in the same order in the picture "The Adept's Mountain" in Michelspacher's *Die Cabala, Spiegel der Kunst und Natur* published in Ausburg in 1615.

In line with *the philosophia perennis tradition*, alchemy is for Bureus one of several ways of describing an ascension that he also explains with terms from Kabbalah, Neoplatonism and his own hand-crafted runic mysticism. The attempts to mix Kabbalah and alchemy are contemporary with Bureus' writing. The most significant thinker to combine alchemy with Kabbalah is Heinrich Khunrath (1560-1605) of Leipzig, who in *Amphitheatrum Sapientæ Æternæ Solius Veræ, Christiano-Kabalisticum, divino-magicum nec non physico-chymicum tetrinum catholicum* (Hanover, 1609) argues passionately for their compatibility. Khunrath argues that Kabbalah, alchemy and magic must be combined and used together. In *Cabala chymica* (Frankfurt, 1606), Paracelsus' teachings are mixed with magic, Kabbalah and alchemy by the Paracelsist Franz Kieser. Staffan Michelspacher's book reflects the ideas of Agrippa and combines alchemy and Kabbalah in a way that has no connection to a traditional Jewish Kabbalah (Scholem 1994/2006: 87). Georg von Welling (1652-1727) would incorporate elements of a more traditional Jewish Kabbalah into his alchemical speculations in the masterpiece *Opus Mago-Cabbalisticum et Theosophicum*. The source of much of the Christian Kabbalists' knowledge of Jewish Kabbalah was Knorr von Rosenroth's (1631-1689) *Kabbala Denudata, sive Doctrina Hebræorum Transcendentalis et Metaphysica Atque Theologia* (Sulzbach, 1677-78), which contains parts of *the Zohar*. He also published some of the writings of Isaac Luria. Bureus operates in this genre, picking up on ideas circulating in Europe, but adding his own Gothic and runic ideas to the kabbalistic-alchemical themes found in other thinkers of the time.

Gershom Scholem emphasizes the metallurgical aspect of alchemy and uses it as an argument that Kabbalah and alchemy cannot be easily combined, but that they belong to different ideological and historical fields of thought.

traditions (Scholem 1994/2006: 20). Nevertheless, Scholem argues that:

...there is a structural relation between the ascension from the lowest to the highest sefirah and the alchemical steps involved in the refining of the philosophical gold according to a mystical view of the *ars magna* (Scholem 1994/2006: 40-41).

It is this structural similarity that Bureus and the Christian kabbalists seize upon and reinforce by ingeniously demonstrating correspondences that can sometimes seem arbitrary and artificial.



## II Bureus' works





## 5 The Swedish sixteenth century context

When Swedish Gothicism reached its peak during the period of the Great Powers, it lived under different conditions than during the first phase of Gothicism. The older representatives of Gothicism, such as the Magnus brothers, were Catholics and belonged to a circle that was on its way out in the emerging Protestant Sweden. Johannes Bureus belonged to the new era and enjoyed the patronage of the Protestant royal power. The period of great power and the successes of Gustav II Adolf meant that Swedish Gothicism was on the rise and the grandiose claims seemed more reasonable than before. It is above all during this period that we find strong points of contact between Gothicism and esotericism in its various forms.

Throughout the history of Christianity, there have always been groups who claimed that the heavenly existence would be preceded by a thousand-year paradise on earth. The Antichrist would fall at the end of time, but the Church and Christians would emerge victorious and establish a kingdom of glory that would last for a thousand years until the eternal kingdom comes. This *chiasm*, or belief that Christianity would triumph at the end of human existence and prepare the kingdom of heaven, was widespread in the early centuries of Christianity, but was condemned as heretical in the Middle Ages. The great exponent of these ideas was Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202) and his doctrine of the three kingdoms, to which we shall return in Part III.

During the religious upheavals of the fifteenth century, chiasmic ideas were to regain a large following (Nordström 1934: 12). In these circles, the Book of Revelation and other prophecies were studied and signs and astrological predictions were sought. In the

decades around 1600, a number of ideas alongside official Lutheranism. These were various forms of esoteric religiosity that were sometimes compatible with Lutheranism, but often found themselves in completely different contexts. These were neo-Platonic inspired religiosity with points of contact with alchemy and hermetism, which would lead to the emergence of Rosicrucianism. This free spiritualistic and unorthodox religiosity won large followings from all social classes in the Protestant world. Influential thinkers included Valentin Weigel, Johann Arndt, Jacob Böhme and Johan Valentin Andreaë. Their most important common source of inspiration was the fifteenth-century Swiss physician Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, better known as Paracelsus (Nordström 1934: 13).

Paracelsusism was to become an important undercurrent in the Protestant world, but one that was often marginalized. Nonetheless, Paracelsus' ideas had a major impact in several areas. One of the key elements of his mission was to challenge Aristotle and the scholasticism that prevailed in European universities. Paracelsus was a revolutionary thinker who wanted to overthrow scholasticism and replace scholastic rationalism with his natural science, characterized by occultism and empiricism. He has been hailed as the first modern medical theorist, abandoning the old ancient and medieval theories to create a new medical theory based on experimentation and observation (Goodrick-Clarke 2008: 74). However, the scientific and purely empirical side of Paracelsus's work has been questioned by scholars who argue that Paracelsus is not as original and innovative as sometimes claimed (Weeks 1997: 29). Although Paracelsus was a revolutionary personality, he was also part of his time and very much influenced by the ideas of the Middle Ages, as well as by the ideas that spread with the Reformation. Andrew Weeks writes in *Paracelsus: Speculative Theory And the Crisis of the Early Reformation* that

(...) no aspect of his work can be understood rationally without considering his religious-theoretical premises, as conditioned by the crisis of the early Reformation (Weeks 1997: 36).

Paracelsus and his followers considered Aristotle and his logic to be unchristian and they attacked the Christian world's exaltation of this pagan. Instead, they emphasized Plato, Pythagoras, Zoroaster and Hermes Trismegistus (Lindroth 1943: 24). That these should be lesser pagans may seem strange. In *Adulruna Rediviva* Johannes Bureus writes that these old sages, whom we find in Ficino and the other perennialists, belong to the chain of initiates, who possessed the knowledge of the secrets of the adulruna (Hildebrand 1910: 307).

During the reign of Gustav II Adolf, Paracelsism would temporarily gain great influence in Sweden. The king was influenced by Johan Skytte and Johannes Bureus, both opponents of aristotelism. In 1640, Johan Skytte gave an oration to the academic youth in which he praised Gustav II Adolf's exemplary example of opening the university gates wide to the true philosophy of Trismegistus and Theophrastus (Paracelsus) (Nordström 1934: 37). Paracelsism, with its empirical research method, would be important for all the alchemists of the time who tried to make gold from base metals, wanted to produce miracle-working mixtures and find cures for all diseases. Paracelsus believed that alchemy had nothing to do with making gold, but that the purpose of alchemy was to find the secrets of nature and use them to cure diseases. The medical alchemy of conjuring up the healing powers of plants is called 'spagyric alchemy' and has survived in some forms of alternative medicine and herbal remedies. The Paracelsian influence at Uppsala University would mainly characterize physics (natural science) and medicine (Lindroth 1943: 255).

In the early sixteenth century, the occult features of Paracelsism were reinforced and Kabbalistic beliefs would become an important ingredient of the new Paracelsism. Paracelsus himself had not immersed himself in Kabbalah in the same way as Pico della Mirandola, Reuchlin or Agrippa, but his successors such as the Leipzig physician Heinrich Khunrath would help to ensure that Paracelsism became intimately linked to Jewish mysticism. Through Reuchlin and Mirandola, Kabbalah had acquired a Christian flavor, making it more readily accepted in the Christian world. The Paracelsist Crollius believed

that the task of Kabbalah was to show how God rests in the inner man and that knowledge of this means our salvation (Lindroth 1943: 29). Johannes Bureus is an important representative of Paracelsian Kabbalism and the idea of an immanent divine aspect in nature is also found in his work, combined with Norse mythology where Fröja represents this animated nature. The three paracelsistic primal principles of mercury, sulphur and salt are equated by Bureus with Thor, Odin and Fröja.

Perhaps the strongest influence of the esoteric currents in Europe on the Swedish Great Power and Swedish Great Power Gothicism came from a prophecy attributed to Paracelsus. The prophecy proclaims that there are three hidden treasures that will revolutionize the world once they are found. The first would be hidden in Weida in Friuli, the second between Swabia and Bavaria in a place the prophecy does not want to mention because great misfortune could befall the world if the wrong person discovered it. The third treasure would be between Spain and France. These treasures would consist of incredible riches of gold and precious stones, but above all of Paracelsus' writings on the secrets of metal transformation and universal medicine. One day, the prophecy tells us, three men will find these treasures. The first will be thirty-two years old, the second fifty and the third twenty-eight. This would happen when the empire falls. The most influential part of the prophecy tells us that at the same time a yellow lion would come from the North, from the land of midnight, and that this lion, "Der Löwe aus der Mitternacht", would crush the Eagle, that is, the Habsburg emperor. Bureus's apocalyptic work *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* is based on this prophecy.

In reviewing Bureus's most important esoteric writings, we find ourselves at a crossroads of influences. Paracelsism influenced Bureus to the extent that he identified with the Swiss alchemist, but it is not least the Paracelsism formulated by Khunrath that we find in Bureus' texts. In Bureus, Paracelsism and alchemy meet traditions such as Kabbalah and the Neoplatonic philosophy of language. Bureus drew important ideas from the eschatological world of Paracelsism, something we

will return to in the chapter on *the Riding of the Northern Lions* and in the discussion of apocalypticism in Part III. Göticism and the desire to adapt esotericism to Swedish archaeology, with its nationalist ambitions, is the glue that binds together the different esoteric traditions that meet in Bureus' *adulruna*.

### 5.1 *Esoteric writings of Bureus*

In this section we will concentrate on Bureus' esoteric writings and the ideas they express. In working with Bureus' material, I have considered various strategies for mapping and interpreting the texts in a way that does them the most justice. One possibility would have been to start from certain themes in Bureus' esoteric thinking and present these through a comparison between different writings. The disadvantage of this method is that Bureus' thinking undergoes changes, and motifs in the different writings can, despite apparent similarities, express a set of different thoughts, depending on which text one reads. Bureus himself, with his esoteric view of correspondence, certainly considered the writings to be correlated, but I believe that an academic presentation of his writings is best treated separately, especially since I am using a method based on the history of ideas. The study will thus be based on the individual texts, which I will present in a natural sequence from beginning to end, with ongoing comments and analysis of the content. Nevertheless, in the last part of the thesis, I will make some thematic points and try to find patterns in his esoteric writing, such as the description of the meaning of the runes, his apocalyptic alchemy, ontography and the description of being, as well as examine whether Bureus' theoretical esoterism could implicitly contain a practice, similar to that we find in other comparable esotericism at this time.

## 6 Bureus' diary

Bureu's diary gives us an insight into Bureu's life, but also into the times in which he lived. In the diary, we can follow Bureus year by year and often month by month and sometimes day by day, thus following a common thread in his life and intellectual development. In the diary we learn about meetings with dignitaries such as the king, personal joys and sorrows such as the lives of his children and the death of some of his children, when he meets family and friends, and very human notes such as when Bureus complains on September 5, 1604 that he feels bad from the red wine he has drunk. Most of Bureus's diary entries are in the Royal Library, in the collection F.a. 4. which contains loose note sheets and annotated almanacs. Some of Bureu's biographical notes are found elsewhere, such as in *Cabbalistica* and in F.a. 12. *Sumlen*, i.e. Bureu's collection of around 900 pages of antiquarian notes. *Sumlen* is one of the Royal Library's real rarities and the thick bundle barely holds together. The notes are interspersed with Bureus' characteristic drawings.

I have mainly used G. E. Klemming's edition of the diary entries included in *Sammlaren - Skrifter av svenska litteratursällskapet* from 1880 and, to some extent, the edition of parts of *Sumlen* that Klemming published in *Nyare bidrag till kännedom om de svenska länsmålen och svenskt folklif*, from 1886. I have also gone directly to the sources in the collection F.a. 4 at the Royal Library, as well as F.a. 12. The diary is extensive and my ambition is to map the parts of the diary that shed light on Bureus

esoteric world of thought, and to comment on and highlight the references contained in the diary.

As one of the earliest diary entries, Bureus reports the death of his father in 1570, as well as the occurrence of a series of apocalyptic phenomena such as a rain of blood on April 14, 1572. In 1577, Bureus saw a comet in the evening sky, which was interpreted as a sign of iron at the time. An important event for Bureus' emerging esoteric interests was that in 1584 he notes that he learned Hebrew which would help him in his future kabbalistic speculations. Seven years later he announces that: "in summer böriadhe iagh af Arbatel get desire to cabalam". *Arbatel de magia veterum* is a ceremonial magic book originally written in Latin and first published in Basel in 1575. It has been attributed to Agrippa but the author is unknown. The Arbatel is written from a Christian and not a Jewish perspective. Arbatel has had a great influence on later magical writings and with his list of seven Olympian spirits corresponding to the seven planets and numerical values according to a numerological logic where each spirit's number is 7 lower in numerical value than the previous one. These spirits appear in the magical literature of Western esotericism. It is worth noting that *Arbatel de magia veterum* is not, in a stricter application of the term, a Kabbalistic text, but on the contrary lacks all explicit references to traditional Jewish Kabbalah. The book should rather be classified as a Christian magical text with extensive passages on magic, which shows that for a 17th century intellectual like Bureus, Kabbalah could be a general term for number mysticism, here in combination with correspondence teachings with spirits and planets. Kabbalah functions in Bureus' 1591 entry as a synonym for magic. It is also interesting that the spirits in Arbatel do not have names from Jewish or Christian angeology, but names very typical of Arbatel, which means that the influence of the book can easily be traced where these names appear. A further major intellectual advance for Bureus is when, in 1594, he learns to read runes by means of a rune stone in the Gråmunke monastery in Stockholm.

A remarkable passage in the diary of 1598 states that a Nils Masson in Öfvernäs saw a troll struck by lightning (*Torwig-*

gen) on Balungz ridge in Västerås and who lay there for fourteen days, on the hidden side, which is explained to be the right side. The troll was dressed in old clothes, sloppy skirt and wide sleeves. It had no beard, was like a man, with coarse hair like a boar and horns like a two-year-old boar that stood straight up. The troll had nails like a man but long like claws. He asked those who passed by to turn him around and promised a silver treasure for the trouble. We are told that Mr. Johansson from Tillinge turned him around and soon afterwards the troll disappeared. In addition to the folkloric value of the story, it is also interesting from the point of view of Bureus's esoteric worldview, in which trolls are representatives of the dark powers that threaten beyond the boundaries of the human world. On the wreath cross, the word *trul*, meaning 'troll', is formed by the outermost runes on the horizontal arm of the cross. Together, the runes can form a binding rune or symbol of the troll, which Bureus describes as a fork of hell.

In April 1600, Bureus tells of a strange dream song which reads as follows:

the glass is unwrapped and hastily turned  
over the bowl is unwrapped as it was in  
the past the bow is unwrapped as it was in  
the past the scabbard is unwrapped as it  
was in the past.

Bureus wrote this type of song with an apocalyptic tone on several occasions, for example in the introduction to *Adulruna Rediviva*, but above all in the book of songs known as *Nymäre Wijisor* from 1637, the contents of which we will look at later. In the same month, on April 18, Bureus notes that nine suns were visible in the sky in Stockholm.

On December 30, 1601, Bureus notes that an old woman told him that she had been guided through both heaven and hell that night and that she was burned at the stake as a result of this confession. It is well known that women were more likely than men to be accused of sorcery and consorting with the evil one. In his thesis *Blåkulla, magi och trolldomsprocesser*, Per-Anders Östling shows that in the Svea Court of Appeal area, women were the accused in 72 percent of cases (Östling 2001: 261). Women



were generally perceived as more sinful, more evil and weaker, more fearful and more emotional and superstitious than the man. Women were associated with sexuality and a strong carnal need, which constantly threatened to lead men astray and threaten the social order of society (Östling 2001: 261-262). Later in the diary, on November 8, 1602, we learn that the woman from Ala in Wassunda was beheaded, but that Bureus's father-in-law Martinis Johannis was also punished after "the quinnis of hell would have confessed to him that he had instructed them".

As an archaeologist, Bureus made progress this year and began interpreting rune stones in the first month of the year, and later in the year was commissioned by the king to participate in the renewal of the Mora stones, the old coronation stones from the Middle Ages. This year, too, omens occur, as when Bureus writes on November 26 that it is said to have rained blood in the courtyard.

In early 1603, the king announces that he does not want Bureus to go abroad because the kingdom's antiquities would be lost if Bureus were to die. Instead, the king wanted Bureus to stay in Strängnäs and study runes and Hebrew. On the same day, January 15, Bureus's father-in-law is beheaded on Stortorget in Stockholm as a result of the accusations against him. Given Bureus's interests in magic and other worlds, it is tempting to imagine that Bureus's father-in-law actually possessed some knowledge that may have been behind the accusations, but we know nothing about that. What is most remarkable is that Bureus managed to escape being tried for heresy.

1603 was a hard year in the country with famine and plague epidemics affecting Uppsala. On April 15, Bureus was sent to the Polish nobleman Viosiolowski to tell him about Sweden's ancient remains and antiquities. We can conclude that it was a wet evening where the Pole offered plenty of refreshments because Bureus tells us that in the evening he spoiled his head with cold after he fell asleep bareheaded after a wine rush.

In the fall of 1604, we find the first alchemical reference in the diary when we learn that on September 5, Bureus receives a powder from Olof Bureus, which he calls *sulphur philosophorum*. This is an alchemical term and denotes a substance that

is part of the process of producing *lapis philosophorum*, the philosopher's stone, which has miraculous properties. Sulphur is one of the basic components of alchemy, along with salt and mercury. A series of alchemical illustrations attributed to George Aurach and dated 1475 describe the different phases of alchemy with images of a bottle inside which the process takes place in twelve stages. The eighth image bears the text sulphur philosophorum and shows a green dragon with red splashes. Sulphur philosophorum is one part of the alchemical process with the salt, *sal philosophorum*, as its counterpart. Sulphur and mercury are the main pairs of opposites in alchemy, which goes back to Jabir's speculations about sulphur and mercury as the basic components of existence, but in Rosicrucian alchemical illustrations and texts we instead find sulphur and salt juxtaposed as complementary pairs of opposites. One example is *Geheime Figuren der Rosenkreuzer* (*Secret Figures of the Rosicrucians*) from 1785, with a symbol-laden illustration of the alchemical process that is certainly much younger than Bureu's writings, but still goes back to the same tradition of mixing Christian Kabbalah, alchemy and Rosicrucian mysticism. However, it is unsafe to draw too many conclusions about what kind of powder Bureus mentions and how he thought of it, based solely on Bureus' diary. He mentions this powder in connection with *purgatz*, a medieval medicine that was supposed to purify the body, but which led to dizziness, vomiting and diarrhea. The word *purgatz* goes back to the Latin *purgatio*, purification, so it is conceivable that the powder could be seen as a purifying sulphur.

On May 1, 1608, Bureus creates what he calls *the Alphabetum vegetabile* or *Quiste Rit*, which involves writing runes and letters on twigs in different positions in a tree-like formation. Instead of writing on a line from one direction to another, this way you can write in all directions in a more multidimensional way than linear writing. This may seem rather impractical and difficult to read, but it suited Bureus' emblematic ambitions where language was used for symbolic purposes. For Bureus, the writing signs, in their inner esoteric form, were not intended to convey everyday knowledge, but were meant to represent the hidden underlying side of existence through emblems and symmetrical compositions. For

Bureus' *Alphabetum vegetabile* was well suited to these purposes. This may seem to be an idiosyncratic whim typical of Bureus, but the engraver and humanist Geoffroy Tory (1480-1533) made similar attempts almost a hundred years before Bureus (Nordqvist 1964: 39).

We get an interesting reference to folk magic and runic magic when Bureus tells us that a Lars in Ärentuna got hold of a book that he in turn got from a Norwegian apprentice who gave tips on how runes could be used for sorcery purposes. For example, if you secretly carved five specific runes on the table in front of you, you won a card game. However, if someone came across the person's runes, their power was nullified. After some conscientious objections, however, the owner of the book burned it because many people were offended by it. A number of magic books have survived that contain descriptions of how to use runes for magical purposes, such as a famous Icelandic black arts book from the fifteenth century, published in Swedish in 1921 by Nat. Lind- qvist. This Icelandic black-arts book contains a number of examples of runes used for magical purposes, such as making friends, making enemies sick to their stomachs, seducing women and other things that the intended reader might covet. We do not know to what extent Bureus took part in a runic magic tradition that existed in this type of magic books. Most indications are that Bureus's runic mysticism mainly has its ideological origins in Renaissance Neoplatonic speculations on language and symbols. It is difficult to trace any roots to an indigenous folk runic magic, but references of this kind show that it is possible that there may be traces of a sixteenth-century runic tradition in Bureus's runic mysticism, although most references point to inspiration from an elite of scholars working in European universities. We can conclude from the sources that Bureus mainly uses motifs from Gothic antiquities and runology in the context of European scholarly esotericism, rather than developing an already existing domestic tradition of runic mysticism.

A remarkable claim comes from February 22, 1612 when Bureus claims to have produced *the tincture*, which in Bureus' runic alchemy corresponds to the highest spiritual level. The tincture is the same as the elixir of life *elixir vitae* and the philosopher's stone *lapis philo-*

*sophorum*. This was the goal of alchemy and countless alchemists struggled bitterly in their laboratories to produce this strange product and it is amazing that Bureus actually claims to have produced it. He writes that:

The tincture is prepared; it has been extracted and prepared from the center of the surface. I found it at 12.00 on February 22, 1612. Here the tinctures of the metals are very noble ("Tinctura producta est, qæ a centro ad superfi- ciem producitur et extrahitur, inveni 12 merid. 22 Feb 1612. Nobilis- simæ hic sunt tincturæ metallorum").

In Bureus' notes in *Cabbalistica* and *Antiquitates Scanziana*, tincture is associated with God and Thor and the highest rune on the cross (thors), as well as with the highest state of Platonic unity. As we have seen, the alchemical terms used by Bureus are included in the same form in the illustration "The Adept's Mountain" in Michelspacher's *Die Cabala, Spiegel der Kunst und Natur* from 1615. This is not the most common order for the phases of alchemy, but we can see from their appearance in these two different contexts that this arrangement was in circulation in the sixteenth century. Bureus probably found this arrangement in Paracelsus' writings where he describes alchemy based on these phases (Paracelsus, Waite's translation 1910: 151).

The next entry in the diary is also related to his alchemical interests. Bureus borrows a copy of the book *Aurora consurgens*, an illustrated alchemical treatise attributed to Thomas Aquinas, but the author is unknown and is now referred to as Pseudo-Thomas. The most famous version dates from the end of the thirteenth century and is in Zurich (Klossowski de Rola 1997: 35). The illustrations include a classic alchemical motif of a hermaphrodite split in two, a man and a woman, by a large black bird, as well as motifs of all sorts of strange creatures whose appearance serves as alchemical rebuses or ciphers, such as a creature with a monkey's head and an eagle's head, a fish with one leg in the mouth of a skull and the other leg a burning broom. *Aurora consurgens* also contains images of symbolic processes taking place inside the alche-

mical glass containers. The author of the document emphasizes the importance of the alchemist's moral and personal qualities, such as being wholesome, humble, holy, chaste, virtuous, faithful, hopeful, merciful, good, patient, moderate, understanding and obedient (Coudert 1980: 84). According to his diary, Bureus's copy comes from a version that Duke Charles would have received from a Jöran Ekhard. In the same note in brackets, Bureus also writes *Aurora Philosophorum*, which is a text by the paracelsist Gerhard Dorn (1520-1584). It is unclear whether he associates these writings with each other, or whether both were included in the copy he had access to.

On June 12, Bureus ponders the hidden meaning of a pair of runes. He writes about the runes **R** and **T** (𐀓 and 𐀚) that they contain double runes within them, which we recognize from speculations in other writings such as *Adulruna Rediviva*. **T** he writes is both the runes 𐀚 and 𐀓 while **R** is 𐀓 and 𐀚, but now they are nothing but **T** and **R**.

In a number of places Bureus mentions Zoroaster, Prometheus and Hercules, as well as a Gether Bactrianus of the goats, which at this time is often interpreted as synonymous with the Goths (Lat. *Gether Bactrianus Getarum ex ipso est 1 Prometheus 3 Zoroaster et 2 Hercules*). The statement alludes to perennialist ideas about the link of knowledge back in history.

In a note from October 14, we see how Bureus wrote ITAB in runes, which are the initials for himself, *Iohannes Thomæ Agri-villensis Bureus*. These initials are often included in Bureus' mystical writings and sometimes he changes the initials so that A stands for Aracelsus, thus an allusion to the fact that he himself was in some way a new Paracelsus or related to him. ITAB could also stand for sentences such as *Insidenti Throno Agnoque Benedictio and Iesu Tua Bonitate Absorbeas*. In the same year, Bureus announces that the new Bible will be printed. It is in this late autumn that Bureus tells in other writings that he and the king were in Dalarna to organize the printing of the Bible and Bureus in Stora Tuna received a revelation of the hidden truth (Bureus F.a. 4).

In 1616, Bureus briefly announces that the king visits a place where a girl had risen from the dead eight days earlier. In May 1617 he tells us

Bureus that he lectured on his mystical text *Buccinam Jubilei ultimi* to the seven students Arv Tiderum, Laur. Amberni Scarinum, Andr. Sven., Andr. Can., Laur. Nic., Jon. Stenon, and Gunn. Isra- elis. We know almost nothing about the reception of Bureus' mysticism, but this information shows that Bureus at least had a small circle of listeners when he presented his texts on mysticism and apocalypticism, which were probably difficult to understand even for his contemporaries.

In a note from 1618, we learn that Bureus was ill one midsummer and was overwhelmed by a strange experience. He had been awake since midnight and suddenly saw how everything that had been and everything that was to come flowed towards him. What was good flowed forth in white and what was evil was black. He tells us that he turned his sapphire blue seal, or signet, in his hand, which led to him "sawing (...) the last withh outsäieligh fågrind in to 3 slogh". This reminds us of ceremonial magical practice from this time, when rings and seals worn by the magician in or on the hand were thought to generate experiences of a similar kind. For example, Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia* describes seals and magic rings in detail.

On July 29, 1619, Bureus tells us that he is planning a book he will call *Maschkilim Jakinn*. The title is Hebrew and the meaning of the words in this context is not entirely clear, but the first word, *maskilim*, roughly means "the wise" or "enlightened" and *Jakin* is one of two pillars that Solomon, according to First Kings 7:15-22, 41-42 and Second Chronicles 3:15-17 and 4:12-13, had erected on either side of the temple entrance. The second pillar is called *Boaz* and these two pillars have had tremendous symbolic significance in Western esotericism, from Kabbalah through Freemasonry to contemporary occultism. *Jakin* roughly means 'He shall make firm' or 'The Lord has made firm'. In *Nymäre Wijzor*, Bureus identifies the pillar *Jakin* with the reformer Jan Huss, while *Boaz* symbolizes Luther. Bureus seems to be in some kind of conflict with influential people who dislike his theories because he first tells them that he wants to teach the truth and the secrets behind Peter and David's whims, but that he has offended important people with his *Buccina* and that they also consider him a lowly person and that his intentions are mere fantasies.

These accusations are not harmless, and the suspicions against Bureus grow over the years. If he had not been close to the king, he would probably have met the fate of his heretic and beheaded father-in-law. It is therefore really bad when we read that the king himself dreams that a Henry Horn comes to the king and that the king takes him for a satan, a devil in other words. The king asks him if he believes in Jesus Christ. Henry Horn replies that he does not because he has had a different vision. The serious thing is that, according to Bureus' diary, the king interprets what Henry Horn says as Bureus' words, thus indirectly associating Bureus with denying Christ, which was the most serious heresy.

On Saturday, July 8, 1621, Duke Carl Philip and the King talk to Bureus for two hours. The Duke wonders if Bureus has drunk away his hour of death, but the King rebukes the Duke and says that he should not make fun of an old man. Bureus, says the king, will not go to hell more than once, whereupon Bureus defends himself by saying that "he who builds on Christ can always fall". The king dismissed it by saying that "it is so all chains". The king then went out into the outer chamber, whereupon the duke came up to Bureus behind the door and begged Bureus to mend his ways and renounce his intention. He asked Bureus not to make too much noise about his ideas and Bureus defended himself by saying that he makes no noise while those who judge him are the ones who make the most noise. The Duke becomes even more serious in his questioning and asks if Bureus believes in Christ and if he usually attends communion. Bureus tells the Duke that he does, of course, and that he visits the Eucharist regularly in Uppsala, in Näs and sometimes in Stockholm. In the diary, Bureus worries about how the Duke has allowed himself to be deceived by Bureus' opponents.

During one night in August, Bureus dreams strange dreams of two maids dancing and singing, while in September he is tormented during the night and sings crying in his sleep that all rights are like an unclean garment and that by the grace of God "he is what he is and that the grace of God is not vainly in him".

Bureu's contact with the dream world continues in 1622, but already on January 2 we receive a strange report that the roof of the Ek parsonage is on fire because his wife has asked us to make fire in the name of the evil one. At the end of the same month,



Bureu's wife dreams that the church wall sings that "us for father will he be of his own good will". On June 16, he dreams that he has four keys, two of which he gives to an Anders Haraldson. He ends the note with "ARI was everything to me". It is unclear whether he is using a notarial symbol that denotes the initials in some sense, or whether he is referring to Ariel, which he often wrote in capital letters and which is the lion angel he identified himself with. Three days later he writes that fauns come with goats' feet and that the cage (presumably himself) behaves like a pope. The contact with mythological phenomena continues the same year when he notes that on five days in October there were lights on his farm Vårdsätra outside Uppsala that resembled the flight of a dragon. As a final note in 1622, Bureus writes that God sent seven angels that year to drive the devils from the earth.

In June of the following summer, Bureus announces that the plague is again raging. He writes that in the midst of this he is working on an *astrolabe*, which is an astronomical instrument that can determine the positions of celestial bodies and thereby calculate the time of day, as well as determining longitude. They have been used in astrology in particular from ancient times onwards, and we can assume that this was Bureus' main use of the astrolabe. He calculates longitude and latitude on his VRNA, which is a system of magic squares that we recognize from a number of occult traditions around the world. A selection of squares with different letters form formulas. Often there are numerological elements and letter mysticism mixed with spells and names of gods and spirits. We find these around the Islamic world and in Arabic and Turkish spell books. Best known in Europe is the influential Kabbalist-colored magic book *Abramelin's Book*, which contains Kabbalist magic, the ceremony of invoking the holy guardian angel and magic squares. The most famous of all magic squares is *the Sator Arepo Tenet Opera Rotas square*, which appears in a number of magic books, as well as in a slightly modified version in Abramelin's book. Bureus VRNA or URNA is a Temura-style word game with reversed letters where the letters are the same as in RUNA. The characteristic feature of Bureu's squares is that he also created squares with runes instead of Latin letters.



Later that summer in 1623, Bureus reports that there was a great storm with thunder and rain, and lightning burned two trolls in Denmark. From the context we understand that Bureus means the parish of Denmark outside Uppsala, which is probably not named after the kingdom of Denmark, but after *dan*, which denotes 'marshland' and *land* that denotes 'forest' or 'wilderness'. The parish of Denmark is part of Bureus's own homeland and has more than 1700 ancient remains, including fifteen rune stones. Denmark belonged to Vaksala county in Tiundaland. The trolls were burned by lightning on July 10, and ten days later Bureus and two friends go to the village in Denmark to see the bones of the two trolls killed by lightning, or 'Torelden' as he calls the lightning. Macabrely, Bureus announces that he brought home the bones and blood of the charred trolls.

In 1624, the Thirty Years' War has been going on for six years, and the conflict between Protestants and Papists is part of the political game. Bureus briefly notes that the papist Jören Beer is beheaded on April 19.

The German Rosicrucian Joachim Morsius traveled from his native Hamburg to visit Bureus in July. Morsius stayed for a long time, learning about Bureus' mysticism through texts such as *Buccina Jubilei ultimi* and *Adulruna Rediviva*. They also discussed the Philosopher's Stone and when Morsius returned home he published Paracelsus' Prophecy of the Midnight Lion and the Three Treasures. In the postscript he tells of his meeting with Bureus and mentions Bureus' Rosicrucian writings, as well as that at Bureus' request he revealed Paracelsus' recipe for how to make the Philosopher's Stone (Nordström 1934: 35).

On Christmas night that year, lightning, or *heather fire* as Bureus writes, appeared and a star shone that first resembled the evening star and then the full moon, when it shone into the cottage from the east with the strength of the brightest moonlight.

Early in 1625, Bureus's ambitious project with *the Runa ABC books* began to spread, and the books were distributed to key figures such as bishops and schoolmasters. Bureus also made sure that the poor would receive his book. In Sweden, during the sixteenth century, a policy had been developed to help the poor, not

only with food, but also with education. Bureus's Gothic colleague and successor Olof Rudbeck was in charge of the community in Uppsala, which was located in the basement of the Gustavianum and provided board and lodging for students who would not otherwise have had the opportunity to study at the university. Olof Rudbeck was committed to improving the community and expanding its places so that more poor students would have the opportunity to be educated. The community had many opponents, but Rudbeck was able to justify its existence through tangible achievements in which orphans and children of uneducated peasants made great progress (King 2005: 52-53).

On March 17, Bureus shows an Arabic coin to the king. This is the first reference in the diary to Bureus's interest in Arabic, which would culminate in his attempt to create a runic alphabet based on Arabic script. On May 8, he has the formula "ITABVREA VEOA. VRNA NOGA" with a diamond.

With two illustrations of two comets, a star with a burning sword and two tails and a star with four tails, Bureus comments that the former comet and star were seen in Linköping in 1580 and that the latter was seen in Vadstena in the same year.

Bureus' apocalyptic dreams continued the following year and in January 1626 he dreamt that the Swedish king sounded the timpani and blew the trumpets, after which he read a proclamation against the Danish king. Bureus then dreamt that he was flying high in the air above the four wild animals in the Book of Daniel. This Old Testament book contains apocalyptic visions that are repeated in countless other writings such as the Book of Revelation in the New Testament. In the seventh chapter, four wild beasts were mentioned. The first looked like a lion with eagle wings, the second was like a bear, the third like a leopard with four bird wings on its back and the fourth was terrifying and immensely strong and had ten horns. The four beasts, we are told in the same chapter of the Book of Daniel, represent four kings and four kingdoms appearing on earth. It is not surprising that apocalyptic visions from the Bible would influence the visionary and apocalyptic Bureus.

We learn that on February 27, Bureus sends Paracelsus' prophecy about the three treasures to Bror Andersson, governor of Strömsholm.

Whether this Andersson was part of a circle of Paracelsists around Bureus is unclear. He is not mentioned in Sten Lindroth's *Paracelsism in Sweden to the middle of the 17th century* and he is only briefly mentioned with the diary as a source in Johan Nordström's *De yverbornes ö*. In any case, the diary entry reveals that these writings were being circulated and that Bureus actively wanted to pass them on. From a note in August of the same year, we learn that Bures continued to have contact with Morsius through correspondence.

A book by the ancient writer Apuleius (c. 123-180), a writer of great importance in the esoteric world, fell into the hands of Bureus for seven marks on August 21. Lucius Apuleius Platonius of Madaura is best known for *the Metamorphoses*, also known as *the Golden Donkey*, in Latin *Aureus Asinus*, about a man who is transformed into a donkey and endures severe trials before being transformed back into a human being after an extraordinary vision of the goddess Isis. The highly educated Apuleius was schooled in Carthage and Athens, but moved to Egypt and became increasingly involved in the occult and The Golden Ass has been interpreted as an initiation story. Apuleius was also long credited with the Latin translation of the influential Gnostic text *Asclepius* (Yates 1964: 10).

On August 22, Bureus and his wife celebrate their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary and that night Bureus dreams that he is summoned to the king for a visa. The dream becomes somewhat absurd when he realizes that he has caught himself in front of the king with his arms full of wheat bread and marzipan baked by his daughter and wife.

On August 26, the first cold autumn day of the year, Bureus carves Hebrew letters for the printer Eskil Mattsson. Bureus cries in his sleep on the night of September 14 and asks for forgiveness for Swedish transgressions.

On March 13 the following year, Bureus dreams that he was bound and describes it with a typical notarial pun: I.T.A.BUNDEN. He often plays with his name with different meanings, such as his name alluding to "Buren" or when he describes in *Cab-balistica* the opposition of his surroundings and his eccentric religiosity with the words "Combure säja owe-

When Christ's victory came Bure". He seems to have experienced that his enemies wanted to burn him at the stake (Latin *combure*, from "to burn up") while Christ was calling him to come. He then writes in his diary that he comes to his senses and adds EOA. He writes EOA when he emphasizes occasions of special esoteric significance, which is the Greek *exo oné akonsatou* - 'he who has ears hears' (Åkerman 1998: 60). The following night Bureus dreams of a large and old hazel tree with few nuts but many shoots that have bunches of nuts, of which he picks a bunch the size of a man's head.

There is no doubt that heretics and religious dissidents lived dangerously at this time. On April 28, Bureus notes the beheading of the false prophet Matthias Pfening. With the Counter-Reformation and the Baroque era, persecution of religious dissenters increased and witch burnings spread like an epidemic across Europe. The burning of the Hermeticist Giordano Bruno at the stake on 17 February 1600 in Rome's Campo dei Fiori is highly symbolic. The scientific advances of the 16th century did not prevent Catholics and Protestants alike from murdering religious dissidents. One of the reasons Bruno was burned at the stake was because he defended Copernicus' Heliocene worldview. It is understandable that Bureus was concerned that his enemies wanted him to burn, especially with a father-in-law who had been executed on witchcraft charges.

In the fall of 1627, a strange case of demonic possession and apparent death befell a girl in Kumla, and Bureus became involved in the case. The girl, named Margareta, was possessed, or bewitched as Bureus writes, by seven devil superiors on October 3rd. Hierarchies from Hell named after military or noble ranks are a recurring theme in demonological literature. In classic grimoires such as *The Book of Abramelin* and *Lemegeton: The Lesser Keys of Solomon*, hierarchies corresponding to planets and metals are described in detail according to a traditional occult pattern. In demonological literature, the hellish hierarchies function as dark counterparts to the hierarchies of Heaven, and consequently, on October 22, three super-angels move in and shed light on the Cumlah girl. Despite this, or precisely because of it - which

is not revealed - the girl dies the next day, only to be resurrected and brought back to life the day after. The story does not end there, but the girl dies a second time, on the first of November, and Bureus notes that she 'saw the glory of God'. The girl seems to be resurrected a second time, because nine days later Bureus announces that she dies a third time. Finally, on November 18, no less than seven chief angels come to save Margaret from the devils, and the angels tormented them and 700 other demons with ropes and iron chains. A series of archangels then come to Kumla and speak through Margaret, who acts as a kind of medium. First the archangel Gabriel preaches through her, then Raphael, then Ephrael, and at the beginning of 1628 an archangel named John, from whom Margaret tearfully conveys the words.

During January 1628, Bureus is busy developing writing styles with runes and on the 23rd he is lying in bed thinking about the possibility of creating a rune writing style that will resemble the Arabic writing style: "a Runic current style like the Arabic style".

On February 7, Bureus reflects on the meaning of vowels. In Platonism and Hermeticism, vowels have an important meaning. They represent different degrees of spirituality where A stands highest, while the consonants represent the material plane. Stiernhielm developed speculations on this in his esoteric Gothicism. M was for Stiernhielm the most material, while all vowels were spiritual, with A being the highest and purest vowel and U the closest to matter.

On April 20, Bureus tells us about his toothache, which seems to have been caused by the side effects of some heart medication he was taking. To treat the toothache, he was given *vitrioli spiritu*, which usually means sulphuric acid, so we can only hope that it was well diluted. Sulphuric acid was probably developed by the Arab alchemist Jabir ibn Hayyan (Geber) in the seventh century, but in alchemy vitriol has also had another symbolic meaning as a notary icon for the alchemical motto *Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem*, which means 'Visit the interior of the earth and through purifications you will find the hidden stone'. It is possible that the vitriol Bureus was given for his toothache was not sulphuric acid

without any other form of alchemical decoction. On October 9, he briefly notes that he is discussing alchemy with Crusius junior.

An interesting piece of intellectual history comes from September 6, 1629, when Bureus flees the plague that is raging in Stockholm. With his daughter Karin, he rides from Stockholm to isolate himself on his farm in Vårdsätra and in connection with this inventories a number of books that he lends to a Marcius. The first book he mentions is *Sofia Panacetes*, a Paracelsian manuscript (Åkerman 1998: 163), a book called *Paniglobium*, which could be Isaac Habrecht's (1544-1620) *Planiglobium Celeste & Ter- restre* published in 1628, a year before the entry in Bureus's diary. A planiglobe is a representation of half the globe of the earth or sky on a plane. In addition, there were texts by Paracelsus and a Bernard collected in one volume, as well as a book called *Helsobrunnen*. Finally, he mentions *the Turba Philosophorum*. We know that Bureus read *Turba Philosophorum* as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century (Lindroth 158).

## 7 *Adulruna Rediviva*

*Adulruna Rediviva* is a Neoplatonic-colored ontography of the structure of the world, and also a manual for a runic alchemical transmutation through seven steps, which becomes especially clear if it is interpreted with the help of Bureus' other writings such as *Cabbalistica*.

Bureus recorded seven manuscripts of *the Adulruna Rediviva*. The oldest dates from 1605 and the youngest probably from 1642. One of these Cod. Holm. F.a. 16, disappeared in 1812 and was written in Swedish. It is worth noting that it disappeared during the height of neo-Gothicism. The lost F.a. 16 may have been identical with F.a. 21. On a catalog sheet at the Royal Library from 1864 it is noted that the identity of this manuscript of *Adulruna* is uncertain, but that its chronogram *aDILrVnaMaL* reveals that it was written in 1640. Of the four manuscripts in the Royal Library, two are written in Swedish and two in Latin. Cod. Holm. F.a. 21 and F.a. 23 are written in Latin, while Rål. 9 8° and Rål 6 12° are in Swedish. The two manuscripts Cod. Of Ups. R 551a and R 551b, which are in *Carolina Rediviva* in Uppsala, the former is in Latin and the latter in Swedish. Bureus writes very small and notes biblical passages in the margin, which can be helpful in understanding the biblical references of the arguments.

The different manuscripts vary slightly in content and dedication, but the basic structure and main content are common. *Adulruna Rediviva* consists of the following parts:

First bar: the lying stone

Second bar: the falling stone

Third bar: the Wrinkle Cross

Fourth beam: The royal office of the

shepherd Fifth beam: The treasury of

Adulrunan Sixth beam: The three crowns

First bar: the lying stone, describes the exoteric meaning of the runes. The second bar: the falling stone, places the runes in three crosses of five runes each and describes their spiritual esoteric dimension. So do the third to fifth beams. The rune cross is an arrangement of all the runes in a meaningful cross shape. Its Royal Office is a short section with an illustration and explanation showing a king dressed in runic robes. The Adulruan treasury is the most important part, as it describes the basic structure of Bureus's Gothic Kabbalah. It describes in detail the Platonic origin of the runes from simple geometric figures. The sixth part describes the mythical origins of the three crowns and does not deal with runes.

### *7.1 The lying and the falling stone*

Bureus divides the rune line into three groups, "fifths", of five runes each, the first being called the "birth fifth", the second the "birth fifth" and the last the "foster fifth". The three fifths represent the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as well as spirit, soul and body, and Thor, Odin and Fröja. The horizontal stone carries the runes in their exoteric form, while the falling stone contains their esoteric form.

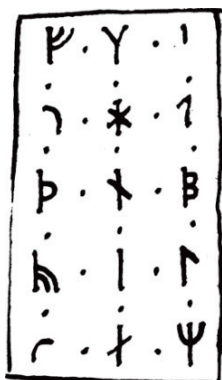
The lying stone represents language in its external form. Based on the statement that "the Word was God" in John 1:1, Bureus describes that scripture and the Son of God are one and the same and that Christ appears as a stone that conveys the message of salvation and enlightenment to man. The stone representing Christ and bearing the mediating language is one of Bureus' most important symbols. In *Antiquitates Scanziana* he identifies this stone with the stone of Israel mentioned in Genesis 49: 24.



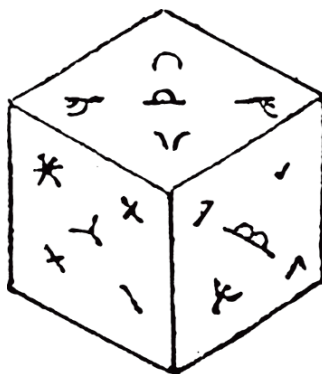
rune stone that is either recumbent or cubic, the latter being called a falling stone. The theme of a cubic stone is a recurring one in esotericism and has become significant in Freemasonry, but has also been identified with *lapis exilis*, the Luciferian stone that falls from Heaven with Lucifer, as described by the medieval poet Wolfram von Eschenbach in *Parzival*, who declares this stone to be the Grail (Eschenbach, in translation by Grunewald 1999: 318). The stone symbolism is also taken from Mark 12:10-11: "The stone that the house builders rejected has become a cornerstone. The Lord has made it so, and marvelous is it in our eyes", which in turn quotes Psalms 118:22-23. Cubic falling stones, identical in shape to the falling stone of Bureus, are found, for example, on Michael Maier's (1568-1622) thirty-sixth alchemical emblem in *the Atalanta Fugiens*.

The recumbent stone represents the runes in their exoteric 'manifest' form. It is flat and square, or rectangular, and shows the runes standing in three vertical rows next to each other. The lying stone represents the "despised manhood of the mediator" and is thus a symbol of man in his corporeal and lower form, but also of the Son of Man Jesus in his mortal body. The fallen stone denotes the 'powerful deity of the mediator' and the esoteric dimension of the runes. The cubic stone falls from heaven to the world of men, where it takes the form of the lying stone. The falling stone is a cube whose three visible sides each bear one of the three fifths. The runes in these fifths are arranged in a cross shape with one rune in the center and two on the sides and one above and one below. The fact that the runes are arranged in the shape of an equal-armed cross shows that they are spiritual esoteric runes and not ordinary writing characters. In Bureus's esotericism, the symbol is a sign of divine origin.

In the first fifteen, the runes Odhen, Thors and Frej are in a row. These runes denote Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, but together Bureus calls these runes TOF and they represent the original Nordic trinity. In the spirit of Gothic, Bureus believed that the original true religion remained untainted longer in the North than in the southern countries. Bureus tries to revalue the old Gothic gods, without risking to be accused of paganism



*The lying stone*



*The falling stone*

judgment. He comes up with an explanation of how the original 'Christian' names for the Trinity became corrupted into idols. After the Norse had worshipped the Trinity under the names of Thor, Odin and Freyr, an Asian soothsayer and wizard eventually entered the North and called himself Odin. His wife called herself Fröja and they claimed that people would worship Thor, Odin and Fröja as gods. They would worship Thor during their lifetime, Fröja in connection with birth and the beginning of life, and Odin in old age and death. With the false Odin, paganism and the worship of wooden beasts began. With this, the people turn away from the true Trinity TOF, and the wisdom of the adulrun was stifled. One strategy that Bureus and his successors in Great Power antiquity would use to explain the pagan practices of the Sveo-Goths was to give their beliefs a euhemeristic explanation. The pagan cult was a misunderstanding in which the ancient ancestors and kings were worshipped as gods (Widenberg 2006: 117).

The rune of Thor does not represent an idol but a divine primordial principle that is the freest and most omnipresent of all things. Bureus explains that the Norse have worshipped Thor since ancient times. According to Bureus, the word 'Tor' is etymologically linked to the Jewish *Torah*, the law in the Pentateuch. Bureus explains that before the linguistic confusion that arose after God crushed

The Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9 had the supreme power of the wise, which is proved by the fact that the divine rune thors and the law, thora, are identical words according to his reasoning (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 53). Thor is a divine principle far from how we think of him today. Bureus sees the original Thor as a hermetic super-god who is immortal and both male and female. This can be historically proven, according to Bureus, by a Thor image in the Old Uppsala Church that is bearded at the top and female at the bottom. This image is now considered to be a badly worn Christ image. Thor corresponds to other sky gods such as Jove, Jupiter and Jehovah. The rune of Thor illustrates an open doorway rising above the horizon and leading to a 'shelter'. Thor is the great inviter and Odin and Fröja are his emissaries. They stand on either side of the door with their hands humbly outstretched beneath the dawn, as Bureus shows in one of his illustrations:



The view of Thor as the central god, with Odin and Seed on either side, comes from Adam of Bremen's descriptions of the temple in Uppsala. It is from Adam of Bremen that Bureus inherited the view that Thor would be the highest god standing in the middle of the triad of gods. Like the Romans, Adam of Bremen made a comparison between the Nordic gods and the more familiar Roman gods. Adam of Bremen writes that "Thor, on the other hand, with his sceptre seems to imitate Jupiter", but it is doubtful that Thor would carry a sceptre as his attribute in Mälardalen was the hammer, which means that we do not know for sure who was enthroned in the high seat in Uppsala (Sundqvist 2007: 122-123).

Bureus alternates between the spellings of the gods and in particular he alternates between letting Frö be the male Freyr, or one of the goddesses Freya or Frigga. With the limited source material on Norse mythology available to Bureus, it is likely that he himself made little distinction between Freyja and

Frigga. With his monistic hermetic and perennialist view, all god names are expressions of the same god. For Bureus, the placement of the gods in the temple in Uppsala is reflected in how the weekdays Wednesday, Thursday and Friday relate to each other.

At Thor's right hand is Odhen, both as a god and as a day of the week, namely the day before Thursday, that is, Wednesday. Odin is, in Bureus' view, the son of Thor. Odin represents fate and divine providence, the originator of all things, but also the destroyer. As the destroyer he is known as Odem.

On Thor's left is Fröja, as well as the day after Thursday, that is, Friday. Fröja was Thor's daughter and Odin's sister. She is the holy woman and corresponds to the holy spirit that hovered over the water in the beginning of Genesis. According to Bureus, she was worshipped in the North as the true spirit of holiness and the giver of all good gifts. This is interesting because the rune is also called *Feh*, which usually denotes wealth, livestock and fortune in interpretations of the runes that we find in the so-called runic songs (Flowers 2002: 15, 21, 25).

Bureus calls the two runic signs below the rune of Thor 'doubts' and likens them to two ram's horns and a *worry* or *uru* in a clockwork. The signs consist of the runes **o** and **r** and together form a word that characterizes the world outside and below the god Thor, namely *or*, i.e. 'worry'. These two runes denote endless movement and expansion, as well as the anxiety and restlessness that characterize human life.

Above Thorsrunan and its horizon, the twins pair up. They have, so to speak, passed through the 'door' illustrated by the rune of Thor. They now form the word 'ro', representing the infinite ron and *unio mystica*, the unfathomable union with the supreme god. Bureus refers to Hermes Trismegistus: 'the choirs of the gods are two, one is theirs that walk, the other theirs that are still, and this is the highest glory of the souls' (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 55). Below and outside the door are thus the two runes u and r in the salutation form that Bureus most often uses on these two. They form the word "ur" or "or" which may denote life, duality/many

fall, movement, unrest, divine action. Above and inside the door they form the word 'ru' or 'ro' which denotes eternity, the hereafter, heaven and God's world, unity, ron and eternity. At the end of the thesis I will discuss Bureus' dualistic approach in more detail.

In the second cross-shaped fifth, the "birth fifth", the runes *grace*, *sex* and *ar* (**n**, **k**, **a**) are placed in a row. For Bureus, these form the word "NotAriKon", which denotes the rulership of the Father, God, the three kingdoms. This also corresponds to the three crowns in the Swedish national coat of arms. The word *notarikon* is taken from the Kabbalah, where it denotes one of the Kabbalah's letter ciphers. Sometimes the term is synonymous with the kabbalah itself and Bureus also called his *runkabbala notaricon suetica*. **The n-rune** on the right side stands for "the cross school of grace", **the a-rune** on the left side is "the glory of the promised land". While **the k-rune** represents the government of the kingdom of kyn, which no eye has seen (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 55). **The k-rune** is two-branched at the top, while at the bottom it is like a line: "the one tree of life stands on both sides of the river, which starts from the chair of God". In this form, the rune looks like a **Y** and can be linked to Pythagoras' "Y" which symbolizes human life where the foot illustrates the innocence of the child and the two outstretched arms the choice between good and evil, right and left, virtue and vice.

Bureus develops a reasoning that this fifth contradicts the Israelites' journey through the Red Sea into the desert, through the rocky Jordan and into the Promised Land. The placement of the runes is numbered and represents the adept's metaphorical journey through the desert to the Promised Land, or the journey into Solomon's Temple that forms the structure of *the Lion's Roar of the North*. The wanderer goes first to the entrance 1, then the copper altar 2, into the holy temple 3, and from there to the golden altar 4, into the holy of holies 5.

4

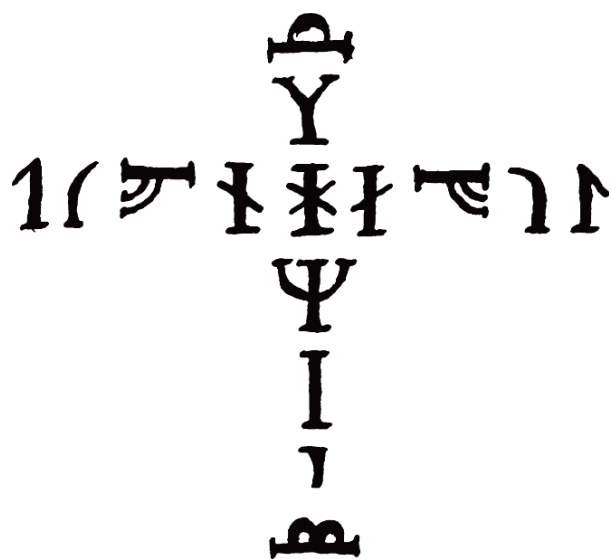
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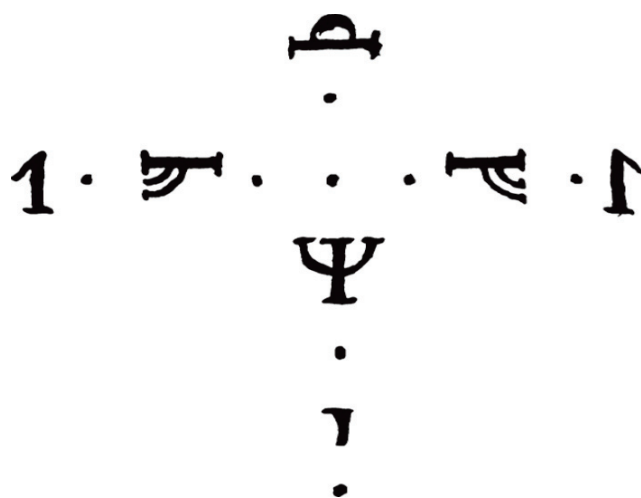
It is also the arduous journey from *Nödedalen* 1 into *Ärevidden* 3, across *Idasund* 2, through *Hagelfors* 4, and to *Kyn- nahöjder* 5. This fifth also corresponds to the priesthood at the n-rune, the lying stone at **the i-rune**, the kingship at **the a-rune**, the falling stone at **the h-rune** and the judgeship at **the k-rune**, i.e. the three functions in the Gothic primeval period together with the falling and the lying stone (Hildebrand 1910: 322).

The third fifth, the foster fifth, can be read in two directions, either 1) horizontally with the runes Tidher, Byrghal and Lagher, or 2) vertically with the runes Man, Byrghal and Sun. The three horizontal runes represent the offices of the three crowns, the priest, the king and the judge, who mediate between Sun, the powers of the sun and sky, and Man, the human being. Byrghal in the middle is the first of these triplets. It represents a queen or king. On the right hand side of the king stands Tidher with his tidemans and priests, on the left hand side stands Lagher with his judges. This division is reminiscent of Kabbalah's two sefiras, Chesed and Geburah, which stand to the right and left of Tifaret respectively. Chesed on the right signifies reconciliation and mercy, while Geburah on the left is the judging power.

The vertical interpretation of this fifth shows Sun, Byrghal and Man. Sun is the sun that lights up the day and Bureus believes that it is therefore called the noblest of all visible things. The Man rune, also called *the moon*, represents the moon, the light of the night. They both represent the celestial world. In the middle is Byrghal, which represents man and the cage in which he is imprisoned. Man sits in the cage of the corporeal and awaits birth, a theme that Bureus develops in poetic form in his songs in *Nymäre Wijsor*. The twins Tidher and Lagher on either side remind man that everything has its time and its law. In *Cabbalistica*, this cross-shaped five illustrates the visible world: Byrghal represents man and the microcosm, Sun represents the archetype, Man stands for the macrocosm, and Tidher and Lagher for the elements. Tidher represents the ascending elements of air and fire, while Lagher stands for the descending elements of earth and water (Bureus N24: 77). Byrghal has the ambiguous role of representing in the horizontal



*Wrinkle cross*



*The shuffle*

The reading of this fifth represents the king, the chief mediator between above and below, but in the vertical reading Byrghal stands for the cage that separates man from the heavenly worlds. This illustrates the ambiguity of Bureus' view of man. Bureus oscillates between a humanistic and positive view of man in line with Renaissance esotericists such as Pico della Mirandola, and a pessimistic view of earthly life and the body, where earthly life is a painful prison that keeps the soul separated from the spirit and God.

The first bar of the *Adulruna Rediviva* is about the lying stone, the despised manhood of the mediator. The second bar deals with the falling stone and the powerful deity of the mediator. The third bar deals with the "shepherd's priesthood" and is based on Bureus's masturbatory cross.

## 7.2 *Wrinkle cross*

The Bureus's runic cross is made up of the fifteen adul runes. Seven runes placed vertically represent the ascent or descent between Heaven and Earth. The two arms of the cross consist of four runes each, which are mirror images of each other. Bureus extracts seven "beauties" or contemplations, which he also calls "flocks", from the wreath cross. These consist of groups of runes or so-called rune shifts. A shift is a row of stones in a wall.

- 1) The triplets of the first fair: one seven-shifter and two four-shifters:
- 2) The triplets of the second beast or flock are 1. the fyrstava shepherd and herdsman, 2. the sjustava flock and 3. the fyrstava herdsman
- 3) Third beauty: niostava fist width and its seustava height.
- 4) Fourth flock (the beauty) of the count of time.
- 5) Fifth flock: Two kingdoms and their rulers.
- 6) Sixth flock: the rods of the embryonic fifth which have been crossed are attached to the sow.
- 7) Seventh flock: Threatening the team leader. The Rune Arrow Bow.

*The first deed* begins with a 'shuffle', i.e. a group of seven runes



from the runic cross. Excluding the middle rune, hagal,

	På	står		märkiandes här	
1	hufvudet	ᚦ	Staf	ᚦ	24 Jovis
2	v. armen	ᚱ		ᚱ	♀ Veneris
3	v. handen	ᚲ		ᚲ	♄ Saturni
4	fötterna	ᚷ		ᚷ	☉ Solis
5	bröstat	ᚹ		ᚹ	☾ Lunæ
6	h. handen	ᚺ		ᚺ	♂ Martis
7	h. armen	ᚸ		ᚸ	♀ Mercurii

*Correspondences of the Sjuskifting*

this shuffle is made up of every other rune on the tricolor. These seven runes correspond to the seven days of the week and the seven planets of alchemy. The change of runes illustrates Christ on the cross, as well as Odin or the mythological figure of Bureus Byrger Tidesson as a cross-bearer. To explain why the third bar of the shepherd's priestly office begins with the wafer cross, Bureus quotes Matthew 16:24 that Christ's followers must take up their cross and deny themselves (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 59). The shroud illustrates the crucifixion of the body and the lower aspects of man, and man must carry his cross every day, Bureus urges.

Bureus explains that Thursday is the holiest day for the northerners. It precedes Sunday for Christians and Saturday for Jews. According to Bureus, Thursday as a holy day arose when King Ninus of Babylon lost his father Bel, who in the chronicles is called Jupiter (Jove, Jehovah = Thor). Thursday became a holy day in memory of his father.

The two 'quadrilaterals' of the first sign are made up of the eight runes that do not make up the body of Byrger or Christ (the sevenfold) and the seven days of the week. Four of these (ᚦ, ᚱ, ᚲ, ᚷ) are on the horizontal line of the cross and form the first of these two quadrilaterals. These runes form the word RUNA (ᚦᚱᚲᚷ). Bureus explains that the word 'runa' means 'finding' and denotes a 'test'. We can add to Bureus that the meaning of the word runa 'secret', 'hidden wisdom' and the like fits well with the meaning he gives to the word. The runes that form the word runa can be set up like a gate. It is



RUNA



AURN



then the gate of grace (Nådth) and honor (Ar) to eternal peace (the runes **r** and **u** or **o** = *peace*). The word "runa" is the gateway to the higher worlds. However, the four runes can be put together in another way to form the word AURN, 'eagle', the two-headed symbol of the Roman Emperor Tiberius' warriors. These befoul, skin, strip and crucify the mediator (Bureus, Rål. 9 8°, p. 61). Bureus writes that the Haghal rune stands in the middle of the crucifixion staves as a slave sold for 30 silver coins. Haghal's number is 30 and symbolizes for Bureus Christ and the Holy Spirit.


The second quadrilateral consists of the four vertical runes which do not denote days of the week or the body of the crucified. These four runes ( **ml\*Y** ) can be read as PIGK<sub>ynd</sub>, *virginis filius*, 'son of the maiden'. The word *pig* corresponds to 'maid', a young woman or virgin. *Kynd* corresponds to the German word for child, *Kind*. This son of the virgin can lead man out of the shackles (Byrghal) through the rune Idher (repentance) and the embrace of grace and honor. The embrace is an expression of the fact that the Haghal rune resembles a union of the Nådth and Ar runes. Through the runes denoting repentance, grace and honor, man can be led by Kyn, the son of the virgin, through the RUNA-gate to the divine Tor.

*The triplets of the Second Beauty or the flock* are called the 'princely shepherd and shepherdess', the 'sevenfold flock' and the 'princely shepherdess'. The fyrstava shepherd or shepherdess is likened to a spiritual sheepfold where the righteous sheep are surrounded by a protective wall of fire. The shepherd is Kris-

tus. This group of runes consists of TOF, the Trinity, and Byrghal, which corresponds to the shepherd's manhood, that is, the corporeal side of Christ. The Odhen rune represents his divine side. TOF is the Trinity and Byrghal is man. Byrghal is likened by its appearance to the breast of the holy virgin with which she nurses the shepherd when he becomes human in the womb. Byrghal can also be likened to a double door that serves as the entrance and exit of the sheep. Byrghal is also the base or foundation on which the congregation rests. The name can then be read as *Bärg-all* (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 63).

The Shustava Earth is based on the five runes in the vertical line between Byrghal and Thors, between Christ as man and God, and the two innermost on the horizontal line: Nādh and Ar. These runes represent **t h e** congregation's union with the spirit of the sevenfold holiness (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 61). These runes are bound together by Bureus in a special symbol or bind-rune that often appears in his writings. The symbol is called *signum foederis*, 'sign of the covenant'. He places this symbol, for example, on the rosary altar he illustrates on the cover of his early pamphlet *Ara Foederis Theraphici*

F. X.R. The runes of this rod can be arranged to form , GÆGHN MIS - *occurrere mihi*, which means: "Go to me", or "Run to meet me" and is Christ's "summons" to mankind. In *Antiquitates Scanziana* he gives John 21:19 as the source of this call (Bureus, F.a. 3, p. 175). In this Bible verse the risen Jesus speaks to Terus and says to the disciple: "Follow me!" These words are the call from above to below where the Logos, the savior, speaks to man. Man or "the called" responds in turn by reading the same runes in the other direction, from bottom to top: , SIM ÄGHN κ(ynd), *simus possessionis filij, quasi unus*, "We are the possession of the Son, as one". As often in Bureus, a rune, in this case Kyn, may denote a whole word: *Kynd*.

The four-staffed shepherd is made up of the four staffs that are excluded on the wreath cross after the seven-staffed flock and the four-staffed shepherd are formed. The runes excluded are , TRUL, that is, trolls, the evil spirits, demons, the spiritual wolves that try to disperse and devour the flock. This corresponds to the forces of chaos. In the beginning



TRUL



LURT

lures them with law and time (ᚠ & ᚠ), then they push the deceived into the abyss with the trident fork (ᚲ). If you read the runes of the prince-emperor in the other direction, you get ᚢᚠᚠ, LURT, which Bureus describes as *defraudatorum symbolum*, "the sign of the deceived" which can be interpreted as the dirt or the turd, LORT. We will later take a closer look at Bureus' ontography where what is inside the Savior's fence belongs to the good and the right side, while what is outside the fence are evil powers that belong to the damned left side. The sheep are the righteous who follow the Shepherd, while the goats are the sinful people. What is outside will fall downwards, while what is inside will rise upwards according to Bureus' gradual ascension. The reasoning about the Shepherd and the sheep comes from Matthew 25:32-34: "And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you blessed of my Father, and possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world'". The trolls and the powers of darkness, on the other hand, will bring the goats into the abyss with the trident.

The third figure describes the horizontal line of the cross, called the 'niostava width', and its vertical line, called the 'sjustava height'. In the center of the cross, at the crossroads of the horizontal and vertical lines, stands the Haghal rune. On the right arm of the niostava are the runes ᚢᚠᚠ, which form NORTH. This denotes

not primarily the cardinal point, but its secret meaning is the Word of the N(eden) and the Word of the N(eden). Reading the runes of the right arm in the opposite direction reveals the word TRON, *fides*, 'faithfulness'. The Tidher rune denotes both the letters **T** and **D**. On the left arm is ᚦᚱᚱᚱ, which gives the word ĀFUL, which is to be interpreted by reading the whole name of the first rune. We then get the word A(r)FUL, which should be interpreted as 'fullness' or in its Adulunic reading stands for 'glorious'. The two arms can be read as 'honor' and 'faithfulness'. The right arm stands for the word of God and the left for the spirit of holiness and "without these two no one can be called or come" explains Bureus (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 66). That he writes that man is to be called and come alludes to the fact that he is called Christ the "Caller". Christ calls people from above, and they must respond and come to God if they want to achieve salvation. From the runes ᚦᚱᚱᚱ on the left arm, one can read LOF, 'love' and 'praise', but Bureus thinks the correct adul rune interpretation should be ᚦᚱᚱᚱ, LYF, which according to him is the old Swedes' word for love, similar to the English *love* and German *Lieb*. If we take the runes from both arms except the innermost (Nādh and Ar), i.e. the entire Niostavid width except the three middle runes (**n**, **h**, **a**), the cross gives us the word TROFUL, 'faithful'. The niostavavid describes various qualities and characteristics required for the ascension and initiatory transmutation illustrated by the vertical 'sjus- tava height'.

The Sjustava elevation, the vertical row of runes of the runic cross, is one of the most important parts of Bureu's adulrhic system. These runes illustrate a seven-step initiation process that can go up (*ascensus*) and down (*descensus*). Bureus explains that the Son of God, Christ/Oden, both descends and is born as a man this way, but also ascends to heaven the same way. The task of the human or adulunic adept is to advance upwards from the lowest rune Byrghal to the highest God-rune Thor. The mediator of this process is Christ or Odin, represented by the rune Haghal. In *Cabbalistica*, this seven-fold path of initiation recurs in several versions. It is linked, for example, to the alchemical process and its seven steps to the elixir (Bureus, N 24, p. 73). In *Antiquitates Scanziana*, the seven runes describe Christ

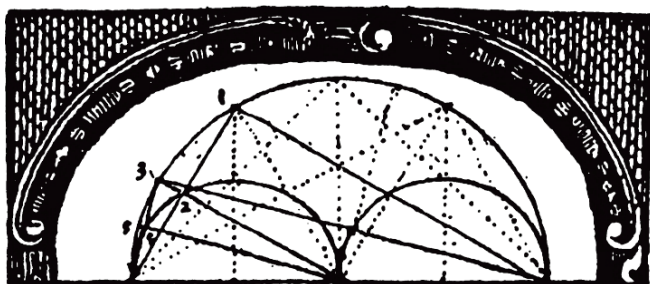
various stages as savior, from begetting to resurrection and his ascension to God (Bureus, F.a. 3, p. 158). While the niostava width illustrates the outstretched arms of the "Collector", Christ/Byrger/Odens, the sjustava height shows his upright body length. Thors is the head and Byrghal the feet. The body in between shows the five runes which also symbolize a ladder, the "five rung ladder", between the divine and the human. The runes are rungs.

These five rungs help Byrghal to climb up to the rune of Thor. This climb is illustrated by Bureus with symbols combining Byrghal with the five runes on the way to Thor. This is the path to the ascent or *ascensus* that is the goal of the rune adept.

Bureus weaves the five runic sticks together to form a symbol that appears frequently in his writings. He calls this symbol the 'arrow' and Bureus links it to the hyperborean Abaris who appears in Greek mythology. This arrow is also a staff or a rune-carved wand that carries mysterious secrets and magical powers (Nordström 1934: 120). The symbolism of the bow and arrow recurs in Bureus, which is derived, among other things, from Genesis 49:24, the same biblical verse that speaks of the stone of Israel and which he considered to describe "the falling stone". The Bible verse begins with the words 'yet his bow remains steadfast, and his hands and arms resilient'. For Bureus, the bow and arrow represent the soul's ambition to hit the target and become one with the spiritual world.

In illustrating the ascent, Bureus shows that the goal is a union of Byrghal and Thor, man and God. It is not a question of a total ascension into God, but man retains his characteristics as Byrghal illustrates, but ascended to a higher level. The symbol of Thor and Byrghal united reappears in various forms in Bureus, but in *Adulruna Rediviva* he shows a special version which: "exhibits the immeasurable power which they receive who are united with God" (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 68).

The descent, *descensus*, is a process that alternates between the descent of God and the manifestation of man in earth life. It begins in the rune of Thor in heaven and is completed in Byrghal



*Thors and Byrghal united*

down on Earth to begin there again as a gradual ascent, to finally reunite with Thors. Byrghal contains two gates, as can be inferred from its appearance. The gates illustrate how God descends into matter to emerge from one gate into the world and then return into another on his way back to the divine plane. For humans, the two gates of Byrghal may symbolize birth and death. The descent begins through the rune of Thor: "the door from which all good gifts come" (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 67). According to Bureus, the runes in the rune ladder describe different levels of descent: the rune of Sex illustrates the highest realm of the Father, while Haghal fulfills the Father's will. Man or Manna is the heavenly bread and Idher stands for the regret that follows the debt. The sun rune represents temptation and Byrghal is the cage in which man is chained and threatened with death. Bureus explains that the person in this cage desires a savior, and this is only doubted by those who do not understand that life is the greatest reward (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 68). The seven rune steps correspond to the Our Father prayer in Matthew 6:9-13.

<i>Thors</i>	"Our Father, hallowed be thy name
<i>Gender</i>	May your kingdom come
<i>Haghal</i>	Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
<i>Man(s)</i>	Give us our daily bread
<i>Idher</i>	Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who owe us
<i>Sun</i>	And lead us not into temptation,
<i>Byrghal</i>	without saving us from the evil one"

In *Cabbalistica*, Bureus makes us aware of a number of other contents and correspondences in this seven-letter ladder between above and below. We will return to this in the section on *Cabbalistica*.

*The Fourth Flock (Beauty)* tells about counting time based on the number mysticism of the runes. The numbers that Bureus attributes to the runes appear in his *Runa ABC book*. The right arm of the rune cross consists of the runes **t, r, o, n**, which have the numerical values 300, 9, 7 and 50, which give the sum 366. Hildebrand has mixed up two variants of the Tyr's rune and given one of them Thor's numerical value. Hildebrand's runes would give the sum 362, although he says after Bureus that the sum is 366. Stephen E. Flowers, who in his book *Johannes Bureus And the Adalruna* interprets Bureus' apocalyptic numerology, repeats Hildebrand's misinterpretation of these runes, but makes an attempt to get the sum to be 366 by mixing up odhen, which has the numerical value 7, with its mirrored twin frey which has the numerical value 1. In addition, he claims that Nâdh has the numerical value 60, which seems to be a stopgap solution that does not originate from Bureus when he gives the runes odd numerical values and Nâdh corresponds to the number 50. According to Bureus, the number 366 corresponds to a solar year, while the rune Haghal in the center of the cross has the numerical value 30 and corresponds to a lunar revolution.

The left arm of the cross consists of the runes **a, f, u, l** which have the numerical values 90, 1, 3 and 700, giving a total of 794. According to Bureus, this corresponds to the years between the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter ('Jovis'). Bureus explains that adalruna in this way shows the year 1648 from the last conjunction (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 69).

The last embrace is thus the birth of Jesus, so here it is a question of a calculation of an apocalyptic event. By the expression "the presence of the bride", Bureus means that the Haghal rune is to be included in the calculation and that "the embrace and the joy double" means that the sum is to be multiplied by two. Saturn and Jupiter's conjunction or "embrace" 794 is added to the Haghal rune number 30 and this is multiplied by two. This gives 1648, a year clearly written out in the



Adulruna texts. To understand the meaning of this year, we have to see what happened on the last arm: a solar year is there extended by one year (366), so we get the real solar year by removing one year ( $366 - 1 = 365$ ). In the same way we have to do with the left arm.

PRIMA  
JUVENUTIS  
CHRISTIANÆ  
INSTITUTIO  
LITERARIA.

Lingua & Characteribus,  
Latinis & Gothicis.



STOCKHOLMIÆ,  
*anno præcedente*

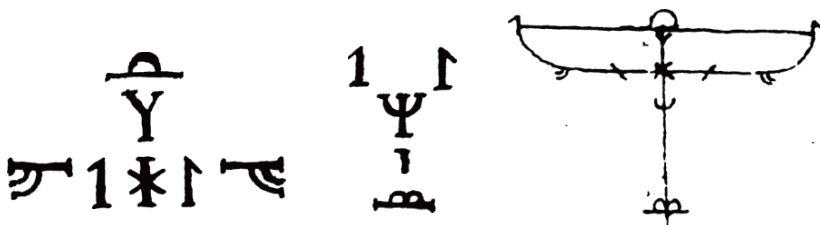
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JVDICIVM,  
Chr. Reusnero impressore.

By removing a year, we get the real meaning, which is 1647. This year has great significance for Bureus, unlike the year 1648, which has no specific meaning, even though it was the year of the Peace of Westphalia. Bureus identifies himself with the lion mentioned in Revelation 5:5, as well as the cherub that appears as a lion at the throne of God in the book of Ezekiel. Bureus similarly identified himself with the Lion of the North, "der Mitternacht Löwe", mentioned in the pseudo-Paracelsian prophecy. Bureus saw himself as the prophet of the new age who would revive the adurine and the old wisdom, or as Sten Lindroth paints it:

After the appearance of the last herald, the lion, the eschatological process is increasingly dramatized. Signs and events begin to accumulate. The third kingdom, Solomon's kingdom, is established in 1641, but greater things happen in 1647, the year of the second coming of the Holy Spirit and the true judgment (Mishpat), when only the righteous will be judged. In this year, the sixth seal of the Book of Revelation will be broken and the sixth bowl will be cast into the Euphrates (Lindroth 1943: 243).

The year of Christ's return is actually 1666, when the first judgment comes that precedes the millennium. That the year 1666 had a special significance we understand from Bureus' speculations about numbers like 666, the number of the wild beast, which he develops in *The Riding of the North Country Lions*. Everything that is to occur in 1666, however, will occur already in 1647 due to the year 1666 being shortened by nineteen years. Bureus gives a number of mysterious and convoluted explanations for this. Bureus explains that in 1647 there will be signs in the moon and the number nineteen has been linked to the moon. In the Nordic calendars that Bureus studied, there was a row of so-called golden numbers that could be used to calculate the exact date of Easter. These calendars were based on the principle that it took nineteen years for the lunar cycles to repeat on exactly the same days. On the rune calendars, Latin numerals were replaced by runes (Enoksen 1998: 159). Bureus himself explains the number nineteen and these runes in *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*:



*Trenne kingdoms and their rulers, the soap fist and the bow and arrow*

For the golden number of the moon is nineteen years, in which are first counted twelve common years and then seven tan years, which most every farmer here in Vpland knows how to have (Bureus 1644: 99)

The number nineteen recurs in Bureu's disciple Georg Stiernhielm. He compares Greek myths about Apollo's return every nineteenth year with the golden numbers found on the rune calendars (Nordström1934: 128).

After 1647/1666, there is a period of bliss lasting six years in which each day is like a thousand years. In the seventh year, 1673, the final judgment occurs. After that, the eternal kingdom of God comes. In the section on *the Riding of the North Country Lions*, we will delve into these arguments, which form the core of the book.

The vertical line of the cross contains the runes **b, s, i, m, h, k, th**, which have the numerical values 500, 100, 70, 900, 30, 10 and 5, giving the sum 1915. Hildebrand has in his interpretation forgotten to write out the royal rune, even though he, following Bureus, arrives at the number 1615. Flowers who follows Hildebrand makes the same mistake, but instead consistently calculates the number 1605 and makes it conveniently related to Bureus writing his first version of *Adul- runa Rediviva*. Flowers writes:

The year 1605 is the year Bure got the idea of the Adalrunor - the idea descended upon him, and with and from this concept, or Word, he spent the rest of his life ascending the ladder of the runes (Flowers 1998: 23).



*Ascensus*



*Abaris' arrow*

This is an innovative and reasonable idea, but it is wrong. Flowers has apparently not noticed Hildebrand's mistake and thus himself forgotten to count the rune **k** and its number 10. In connection with the calculation of the seven-syllable height of the runic cross, a picture of a monument is shown, with a cryptic caption: "thus he sets up for his wife an adulrunakuml". The monument reads 'adulrunakuml', aDVLrVnak- vML. The capital letters denote Latin numerals giving the year 1615, DVLVVML = 500 + 5 + 50 + 5 + 5 + 1000 + 50. On the same hand, Just as we removed the number one on either side of the nine-syllable height, we should, according to Bureus, remove one from the beginning and one from the end of the seven-syllable height. This gives us the year 1613, "when IVDI- CIVM was commonly written" (= 1 + 5 + 500 + 1 + 100 + 1 + 5 + 1000), the day of judgment 1613 (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 70). That was the year Bureus received his enlightenment about the secrets of the adulrine. He was travelling with King Gustav II Adolf in the late autumn of that year to organize the new printing of the Bible. When they were in Tuna on December 5 at 6.22 a.m., Bureus was overwhelmed by *the momentum excitationis*, the moment of rapture. He heard a voice singing: *rIVos IaM CLaVDe pVer sat prata blberVnt*, 'Gosse, clog the gutters, for the meadows have drunk enough'. These words conceal the Latin signs for 1673, when, according to Bureus, the world would end. As Susanna Åkerman has pointed out, these words are found in Virgil (Åkerman 1998: 47). The events of 1613 were to affect Bureus forever, and he was to change his previous views and instead assume the role of an initiate into the

mysteries, a prophet in the midst of a blinded world.

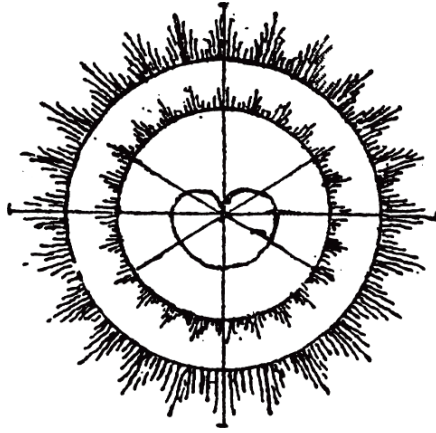
In his own view, Bureus (Byrghal) was united with the divine (Thor) in 1613 through the runic-mystical path of initiation illustrated by the seven-syllabic vertical line of the runic cross. The year 1613 is not randomly chosen by Bureus, but was a year already anticipated. The year 1613 was strategically chosen and Bureus thus places himself in a year that was part of the apocalyptic speculations of the time. Sigfrid Forsius (1550-1624) described the history of the world from creation to 1613 in a small book (Jensen 2002: 90). The astrologer and astronomer Helisaeus Röslin (1544-1616) had, in astro- logical calculations, identified 1613 as the year of IVDICIVM (Åkerman 2002b: 350).

*The fifth flock of the Adulruna Rediviva* shows in an illustration 'trenne richen och dess styrare'. It is based on the runes **t**, **o**, **f** (i.e. the god triad TOF) and **k**, **n**, **e** and **h**. Apart from the illustration, this section contains no further information.

*The sixth flock* shows the rods of the fetal fifth (i.e. the last of the three groups in the adulthood line) which are here called the wound fifth of the crucified. The Sun rune is nailed through both feet, Tidher through the right hand, Lagher through the left, Byrghal has both feet shackled, and the Man rune is at the heart like a plunged spear with a stream of blood from the heart.

*The seventh and last flock* in the third beam of the *Adulruna Rediviva* depicts the 'threatening of the lawgiver'. Here, the rune cross has become a bow with an arrow aimed at its target, which is man/Byrghal, called the enstava target. The top rune Thors is called the enstava string, the niostavavid is called the niostavabow, the five-pole rod has here become Abari's arrow, that is, the five-headed arrow that appeared in many places in Bureus. It is worth noting that the tip of the arrow is made up of the Sun rune, which represents the sun and above all its rays. Abaris captures one of Apollo's arrows, that is, the sun's rays. Abaris' arrow is therefore a ray of the sun or an arrow from Apollo. Apollo himself is the sun and can be linked to the rune of Thor, which Bureus usually likens to a sun on the horizon.





#### 7.4 *Adulrunan's innermost hope cage and treasury*

The fifth bar is devoted to what Bureus calls 'the innermost cage and treasury of the adulrune'. At the center of Bureus' mysticism is this adulrune symbol from which the fifteen runes of the rune line emanate. Bureus calls this symbol the treasury of the adulrune where "the most sacred name of the creator is revealed". The symbol is in the form of a sun cross with three rings inside each other. The two outer rings are geometric circles, while the inner ring is in the shape of a heart. The heart consists of a semicircle as the lower part and, on the upper side, a split circle whose halves lie on top of the lower semicircle and have the shape of a horizontal B. From the second ring inwards, there is an equal-armed cross, which gives the image of the rune Haghal, which is a central adulruna.

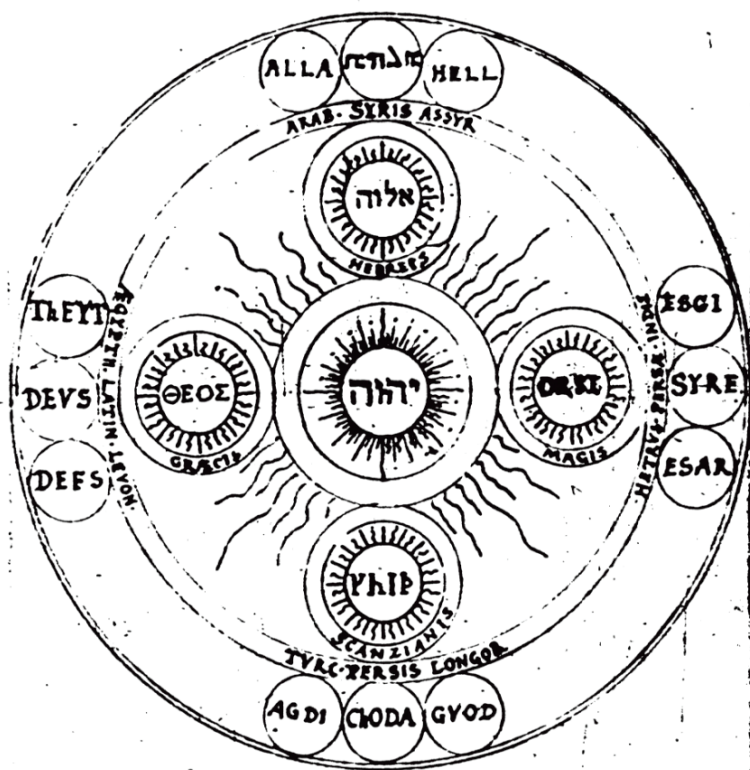
The Adulrune symbol is thus based on an equal-armed cross, a cross and three rings that together illustrate three levels of existence. Bureus was also inspired by John Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica*, which in the same way is a universal symbol that includes other symbols (Åkerman 2000). *The Monas Hieroglyphica* includes the planetary signs. In the Great Adulrune, all fifteen individual runes can be traced and Bureus instructs pedagogically on a system for how this is done. The first group of five runes, the birth fifth, is extracted primarily from the outermost Adulrunan



parts and the outermost ring. The Nativity corresponds to God, the Father, Thor, the Creator, the Nativity. These runes, after being extracted from the Adul rune, become the five largest in size compared to the next ten runes. The next group, the birth fifth, corresponds to the Mediator, the Son, Christ and Odin. These runes are taken from inside the outer circle and from the middle circle and are smaller than the previous ones. The last group, the fetal fifth, is taken from inside the middle circle and from the heart-shaped circle. These last five runes are the smallest. Among these runes is the rune of matter and duality, Byrghal, and this last fifth corresponds to the plane of matter and the physical body, but also to the Holy Spirit and the Seed. The innermost and lowest fifth of the Adul rune represents man's challenge in earth life. From this level, man can begin the ascension towards the higher worlds represented by the two previous fifths. Bureus calls the last fifth the crucified heart. It is only by sacrificing the corpse, the physical body, on the cross, like Christ or Odin, that the human soul can be united with the spirit.

The Trinity reappears in the Bureus adulruna with its three rings, from which the three runic fifths can be derived. The three rings represent spirit, soul and body. The outermost level corresponds to God and the spirit, while the middle one represents the Mediator and the soul. The innermost heart-shaped ring represents the body being crucified.

In the various versions of *the Adulruna Rediviva* and in *the Antiquitates Scanziana*, Bureus describes the emergence of the runes from the archetypal principles of his Adulruna sun cross. He also describes the structure and principles of the adulruna. In *Antiquitates Scanziana* he shows how the sun cross is based on a circle representing *the Theologia negativa*, the knowledge of God that cannot be described in words or concepts. This is the original principle of undifferentiated unity. The cross instead represents the positive and affirming knowledge of God, *Theologia Affirmativa*. This affirmative theology connects Bureus with Paracelsus and his teachings. Bureus identified himself with Paracelsus and Bureus' initials ITAB, which stood for Iohannes Thomæ Agrivillensis Bureus, he signed



From *Antiquitates Scanziana*

also as Iohannes Theophrastus Aracelsus Bureus. The corpse-armed cross corresponded to the sun and its influence, as well as to the presence of the divine. Bureus also explains the structure of the cross. The horizontal line represents the horizon of eternity. In accordance with Platonic tradition, it may represent how the creator divides the world into two parts, separating heaven and earth, spirit and matter. However, the vertical line reunites above and below. The descent of the Son of God (Jesus, Odin, the mediator) unites the two worlds. This thus makes possible the ascent of man.

From the symbol with the circle divided by a horizontal line, Bureus derives the creator's first name, which is GOD and consists of the runes Kōn, Ur and Thors, i.e. **k**, **u** and **th**, which can also be read **G**, **U**, **D**. The runes kōn and ur have given rise to the runes frey and odhen, Bureus illustrates by showing that the former two become the latter two if one adds a line to each rune. Bureus thus finds the word GOD in the original Gothic trinity TOF; Thor, Odin and Frigga. When the solar cross is completed and the vertical line is added, one can find the name of the Gothic tetragrammaton. The vertical line corresponds to the descent of the sun and its appearance as an I could be associated with "Iesus". The Gothic four-syllable tetragrammaton thus becomes GUID. In *Antiquitates Scanziana* he compares the names of the tetragrammaton in different languages. In Latin it is DEUS, in Arabic ALLA, in Hebrew IHVH, etc. (Bureus, F.a. 3, p. 190). In one illustration, however, the Hebrew tetragrammaton IHVH has the most prominent place in the middle of the tetragrammaton of different languages.

The Thor rune represents God the Father, the Ur rune corresponds to the Son, Odin and Christ, the vertical line (similar to the rune **I**) stands for the descent of the Son in human form. The sex rune represents the Holy Spirit. Since Bureus first brings out GOD and then GUID, this Gothic tetragrammaton could be interpreted as God + Son.

In the next level of the Adulruna there is another circle inside the previous one. From this symbol the second name of the creator can be found. From the equal-armed cross with two circles, the runes for the entire first group of runes of Bureus, the birth fifth, i.e. the runes **f**, **u**, are obtained,



*Theology  
negative*



*Theology  
affirmative*



*Horizons*



*Ascension/  
the descent*



*GOD*



*GUID*



*FUTHOR*



*HNKAI*



*STBLM*

**th, o, r.** These runes form the word FUDOR which Bureus interprets as 'Father'. This is the second name of the creator or father and also the first fifteen of three. The runes giving rise to GUID FADER are of equal size.

In the next group, the runes become one step smaller. Now a cross has been added from the second ring inwards. This cross, together with the vertical line of the cross, forms a Haghal rune. This rune associates Bureus with Christ and the Holy Spirit, who is the mediator to reconcile man (Byrghal) with God (Thors). This is also the fifth of the mediator, the fifth of birth, which is symbolized by the three spires expressing the powers of the three crowns. The runes of this fifth are **h, n, k, a, i**. The runes **n, a** and **k** make Bureus represent NotAriKyn (*notarikon*), the Kabbalistic doctrine where initials form a word, such as ITAB.

The last group, the amniotic fifth, consists of the runes **s, t, b, l, m**, and these form the symbol of a crucified heart that is pierced by three nails. This represents Christ on the cross. By placing a reclining Byrghal on top of the Man rune, a heart-shaped symbol is created. The one that looks like a heart crucified on a T. The rune Tidher corresponds to the nail in the right arm and the rune Lagher corresponds to the nail in the left. The sun rune in its simple hanging form enters from above, between the two halves of the Byrghal. The sun rune corresponds to the nail through the feet. This runic pentacle represents matter, flesh and blood and consists of smaller runes than the previous groups.

The three basic symbols of the Adulrunan are the sun cross with two rings, the three spires and the cross

attach the heart with three nails. These three basic symbols each represent a runic element. In addition, these are preceded by the simple sun cross with a ring, which stands for the Gothic tetragrammaton GUID.

GUID	Solar cross, tetragrammaton.
FUTHOR	The solar cross with two rings (sun & moon), the nativity, "Father". The divine world. Thor.
HNKAI	The three spires, the nativity, the mediator, the son. Odin.
STBLM	The crucified heart pierced by three nails, the fetal fifth. Matter. Frigga/Frej/Fröja.

### 7.5 *The three crowns*

The sixth bar of the *Adulruna Rediviva* is about the three crowns, 'the shield of the oldest Svearike'. The number three is a sacred and magical number for Bureus and recurs in various contexts in his philosophy. In the chapter on the three crowns, Bureus explains that the Swedes were originally ruled by the eldest among them, who was called the ancestor. Over time, the population grew and the task of the ancestor became too heavy, so he appointed a high priest and a judge to take over some of his duties. He himself was called 'drotte' and was the most senior of these three. The Svearike was also divided into three kingdoms and, on the advice of the mythical Byrger Tidesson, the king or drotte gave each kingdom a crown and the three crowns would become the coat of arms of the whole of Sweden.

The so-called folkland is a collective name for Tiundaland, Attundaland and Fjärdundaland in Uppland. These were judicial districts. They were merged into a single legislative saga when the Uppland Act was issued in 1296. The origins and development of the folklands before 1296 are shrouded in mystery, but their existence is known from the millennium. The names of the three folklands suggest that at their inception they comprised ten (Tiundaland), eight (Attundaland) and four (Fjärdundaland) so-called hundaren, i.e. hereditary or legal areas.

councils. Even around 1300, the inner parts of Gästrik-land were counted as Tiundaland. The word *folk* in folkland seems to have originally meant 'warrior group'. Folklanden were, prior to the creation of the Uppland Act, independent lawman's dioceses, which also had a religious function. According to Bureus, Byrger Tidesson was lagman in Tiundaland.

The Younger West Götaland Act claimed that the Swedes had the right to choose the king of the kingdom. According to the Uppland Act, this right belonged to the three folklands. The Södermana Act states that the election should take place at Mora ting. Magnus Eriksson's law of the land states that the lawmen from all the kingdom's lagsagor should elect the king at Mora ting. At Mora äng in Lagga parish, about 10 km south-east of Uppsala, on the border between Attundaland and Tiundaland, the election of kings took place during Mora ting, when the people chose their king. On Mora meadow there was a tribute stone for the Swedish kings in the Middle Ages. It has been called the Mora Stone. The exact location of the tribute stone is now unknown. It was probably removed already in the late Middle Ages. However, it must have been in the vicinity of a house built in 1770, where eight whole or fragmentary stones are stored today. The Mora Stone depicted the three crowns. A classic drawing by Schefferus shows the Mora Stones, where one of the cracked stones bears the symbol of the three crowns (Schück 1930: 27).

According to Stephen E. Flowers, the three crowns could symbolize three functions in contemporary society: the king, the judge and the priest (Flowers 1998: 24). For Bureus, the three crowns are by no means only associated with worldly affairs. They are very much symbols of the metaphysical and esoteric reality. Bureus, who in *Antiquitates Scanziana* analyzes the *Sefer Yetzirah* and its reasoning about three mother letters, seven double and twelve single letters, brings these kabbalistic reasonings into the interpretation of the three crowns. The three Hebrew mother letters *Alef*, *Shin* and *Mem*, according to the *Sefer Yetzirah*, represent the three primordial elements of air, fire and water, as well as spirit, soul and body. Bureus illustrates how these three Kabbalistic mother letters correspond to the three crowns (Bureus, F.a. 3, p. 95).

In several illustrations, the three crowns crown the wreath.

From the chapter on the Three Kingdoms and their rulers in *Adulruna Rediviva* we conclude that the three kingdoms symbolized by the three crowns ultimately derive from the Gothic trinity TOF, so that the three crowns crown Thor, Odin and Frigga. The national coat of arms of Sweden would thus derive from this Gothic trinity.

## 8 *Cabbalistica*: The esoteric notes of Bureus

*Cabbalistica* is a collection of Bureus' esoteric notes comprising 217 leaves, mostly written in Latin and bound in one volume in the Linköping Diocesan Library. In this collection of manuscripts, we can find the seeds of the reasoning that was later systematized and further developed in *Adulruna Rediviva* and *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*. In addition, there are arguments in *Cabbalistica* that complement our understanding of how Bureus conceived his *Adulruna* esotericism. Bureus refers to other philosophers and esotericists from Plato to Cornelius Agrippa, as well as to esoteric traditions such as Kabbalah and alchemy, and pairs these traditions with the adulrines and their function as steps in an ascent to the divine. The rendering of the content of *Cabbalistica* tends to repeat what we partly find in *Adulruna Rediviva* and *North Landa The Lion's Roar*. In addition, it can sometimes appear fragmentary, which reflects the nature of the collection.

*The Cabbalistica* is a valuable source of Bureus' thought, not least because it is at times personal, impulsive and sketchy, but also because we can trace his own references. Not infrequently we see in the form of a note in the margin or as a caption how he refers to the great authorities of Western esotericism. In addition to ancient and late antique thinkers such as Plato and Plotinus, we find references to central Hermetic texts such as *Asclepius* and *Poi- mandres*, as well as key texts in alchemy such as *Turba Philosop-*



*horum* and *Aurora Consurgens*. Bureus provides numerous references to the heavyweights of Renaissance esotericism, Agrippa and Paracelsus. We also find references to Christian Kabbalists such as Pico and Reuchlin, Jewish philosophers such as Levi ben Gershom, as well as the famous Paracelsist Heinrich Khunrath and his *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*. Bureus refers to John Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica* and Guillaume Postel's translation of *Sefer Yetzi-rah*. Among Bureus' illustrations in *the Cabbalistica* are motifs from Helisaeus Röslin's *De Opere Dei Creationis, seu, de mundo hypothesen*, from 1597, as well as Cesare d'Evoli's version of the kabbalistic tree from *De diuinis attributis, quae Sephirot ab Hebraeis nuncupantur* from 1573 and one of Khunrath's illustrations of the universal medicine Azoth. We also encounter references to the predecessors of Gothicism such as Olaus Magnus.

A number of mythological figures recur in *the Cabbalistica*, including Hermes Trismegistus, Zalmoxis and Abaris. These three are mentioned by Pico in *On the Dignity of Man*. Bureus believed that these three were of Gothic origin (Friberg 1945: 124). Hermes Trismegistus is the mythical author of the Hermetic texts and was regarded by the Renaissance Hermeticists as a disciple of Moses and teacher of Pythagoras and Plato. Zalmoxis and Abaris are both said to have been followers of Pythagoras. Zalmoxis, is a legendary religious reformer who was given god status and surrounded by some sort of cult where followers thought they could achieve immortality through him. Abaris is a sorcerer in Greek mythology. He was also a priest of Apollo who was given a golden arrow with miraculous powers by the god Apollo. With this arrow, Abaris could fly, become invisible, give oracle answers, cure illnesses and move at lightning speed between different places. Abaris was a figure that other Gothic writers also became interested in, not least because Abaris was nicknamed the Hyperborean. Hercules also appears several times in Bureus' Kabbalistic speculations. Bureus derives Hercules' name from the Swedish in a Gothic spirit. According to Bureus, Hercules' name derives from *här kull*, which in old Swedish would mean 'commander'. Olof Rudbeck would take these speculations to their extreme and argued that Hercules was like Plato

mentions as being close to ancient Atlantis, was not Gibraltar as often assumed, but place names in Skåne. With this type of etymological reasoning, Rudbeck thought he proved that Atlantis was in Sweden.

*Cabbalistica* opens with the dramatic words that summarize Bureu's thoughts on his experience in Tuna in 1613, when he gained prophetic powers:

This book is mostly (fantasies)  
 Colligeret for than jagh  
 1613 gained  
 knowledge of the  
 hidden truth  
 The one no Author could utter.

Bureus explains the relationship between the runes and the adulas by comparing them to the difference between the Talmud and the Kabbalah. One represents the exoteric truth, while the other represents the esoteric. In *the Cabbalistica* the meaning of the initiatory sevenfold ascent is developed. It contrasts with the alchemical process of making the tincture or elixir of life.

<i>Calcinatio</i>	𐀀	Byrghal
<i>Sublimatio</i>	ᶘ	Sun
<i>Solutio</i>	ᶙ	Idher
<i>Putrefaction</i>	ᶚ	Man
<i>Distillation</i>	✱	Haghal
<i>Coagulatio</i>	Y	Sex
<i>Tinctura</i>	𐀁	Thors

Bureus ascribes a Paracelsian origin to the above process (Bureus, N 24, p. 73). Alchemy works with a number of different steps in the process, and the above-mentioned order is the same we find in the picture "The Adept's Mountain" in Michelspacher's *Die Cabala, Spiegel der Kunst und Natur* from 1615. On the same page in *Cabbalistica*, the alchemical process is numbered: 1. *sublimatio*, 2. *descensio*, 3. *dis- tillatio*, 4. *calcinatio*, 5. *solutio*, 6. *coagulatio*, 8. *cæratio*, 7. *fixio*.

Why seven comes before eight is not entirely clear. Since it is a manuscript, it may be a mistake. Adulr- nic and hermetic meanings in the reversal cannot be ruled out either.

In the *Cabbalistica*, we are also given descriptions of a path towards ever greater enlightenment, which the runes illustrate. The Shustava elevation, the vertical division of runes on the runic cross, is a hermetic path to enlightenment. The adept rises above the darkness of ignorance *tene- bræ* (𐌖) through *splendor* (𐌺), *lumen* (𐌽), *lux* (𐌿), *luminaræ* (𐌶) and *modus entis* (𐌿) to *principium absolutæ primum* (𐌺). The seven runes are on a two-point scale where the three lowest (Byrghal, Sun and Idher) belong to evil and the four highest (Man, Haghal, Kön and Thors) to good (Bureus, N24, p. 47). A division between an evil lower and incipient part and an upper benevolent part is repeated in *the North Landa Lion's Rytande* description of the two evil planets Saturn and Mars, which initiate the eschatological process, while the following planets are benevolent. The Shustava Hill also describes man and his constitution. In the table below, Bureus starts from the other side than in the list of the alchemical process (Bureus N 24, p. 53):

6-1: Unum  
 5-2: Human  
 4-3: Ratio  
 3-4: Opinio  
 2-5: Nature  
 1-6: Corpus  
 Byrghal

In *Cabbalistica*, Bureus also places seven sciences in accordance with the hierarchical order of the seven-syllable height.

𐌺 *theosophia*  
 𐌿 *cabala*  
 𐌶 *hyperphysico*  
 𐌿 *physico-agria*  
 | *physico-chemia*  
 𐌺 *physico-medicia*  
 𐌖 *physica*

Quinta Consideratio  
animum inveniende

Byrd  
Loft

an 6<sup>ae</sup>  
19 Octob.  
1623  
N.E.S.

Byrd  
Loft

at hac.

Brach. dext. 1. 7 + \* anon { 366  
30

Ante Chr̄m natum 3960

Corpus m 114 \* Y 1615  
\* Y

Post Chr̄m na. 1666

Brach. sinistr. \* 30

+ PNT 794 maxima conjunctio  
Signum, 517

1094

1000 Apoc.

94 Apoc.

h 7 dies primordij Ot̄sinī fati?

12 h + \* 3960

G 114 \* Y 1615 praetinita

FOR 45 praefinita 1666

114 \* Y 1615

114 \* Y 1615

114 \* Y 1615

114 \* Y 1615

Bureus gives different names and meanings to different versions of the wreath. In addition to representing the staff of the shepherd and the arrow of Abari, it is also an image of the lyre of Orpheus. In Greek mythology, Orpheus is the son of the sun god Apollo and represents the art of music. He was a central figure for Ficino, who, in the Pythagorean spirit, considered music to be a fundamental principle of the universe. He created and performed astrological music and he used to sing and play with friends on an instrument he called *the lyra orphica* (Walker 1958/2003: 19). Bureus was inspired by Ficino's theories on the lyre of Orpheus and the musical dimension of the universe, which is particularly evident in his writing of *Nymäre Wijsor*.

*Cabbalistica* is filled with almost innumerable constellations in which Bureus works with the number three and its meaning. He sets up a *Triplex Natura*, consisting of three levels, the corporeal, the spiritual and the intellectual, with the corporeal at the bottom, the soul or life force as the middle level and the spirit or intellect at the top. This is consistent with his change of the hierarchical triad SAL; soul, spirit, corporeal; to a line-up with the spirit at the top. Bureus' threefold description of existence is illustrated with a triangle, but also with the Kyn rune, which corresponds to the Pythagorean Y (Bureus N24, p. 53). The three lines of the Y symbol represent body, soul and spirit, but also the choice that the soul must make between body and spirit. That is why this rune is at the top of the Bureus rune staff, the shepherd's staff, and the Abari arrow, which consist of the five runes between Byrghal and Thor. The Pythagorean Y symbolizes during this time the choice between the path to damnation or salvation, the choice between the body or the spirit. If the Soul chooses correctly, it gains access to the sunlit gate of the Thor rune. We find the same theme in Stiernhielm's *Hercules*, where the choice is between Virtue and Vice.

Bureus also illustrates how the Gothic trinity TOF, Thor, Odin and Frey, represents the three levels, as well as three aspects of the alchemical process, *essentia*, *potentia* and *actio*, where the essence corresponds to Thor and the highest plane, the power corresponds to Odin and the action to Frey (Bureus N24, p. 54). The three aspects also correspond to the qualities of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit respectively. He compares in a good

perennialist spirit Zoroaster and Plato and says that in the former we find the principles of the Trinity represented by the Magi at the top, Mithra in the middle and Ariman at the bottom, while in the latter these correspond to God, Spirit and Soul, as well as to ideas, reason and the generative power. Later in the *Cabbalistica* he describes a female trinity consisting of Diana at the top, Persephone in the middle and then Minerva (Bureus N24, p. 59). Bureus refers to both Plotinus and Agrippa in his presentation of different triads of existence (Bureus N24, p. 64). Bureus further sketches Agrippa's division that we find in *De occulta philosophia*, which is divided according to the three worlds: the natural and elementary world; the celestial and mathematical world, and the intellectual world at the top. He refers a few pages later to Paracelsus' three basic components salt, sulphur and mercury, where salt is at the bottom and Bureus notes that it corresponds to the body and the element earth. The sulphur corresponds to the soul and to water distilled in the alchemical process, while the mercury corresponds to the spirit and the element of air (Bureus N24, p. 67). Salt, sulphur and mercury also correspond to the three worlds, the angelic world, the ethereal world and the elemental world, i.e. nature.

The *ascent* and *descent* go through seven steps along the vertical line of the rune cross, but also via three steps through the three worlds. At the bottom in both cases is the rune of matter Byrghal, but the ascent goes through the Sun rune and the Lagher rune, while the descent goes through Tidher, which is the mirror image of Lagher, via the man rune corresponding to the moon, back to Byrghal. It is a circular process that Bureus reproduces with these runes placed in a cross formation we find in *Adulruna Rediviva*.

In a series of alchemical and astrological notes, we see how he imagines that seven of the adulruns correspond to the seven planets as follows:

Sun - Sun/Sol (S)  
 Moon - Man (M)  
 Mercury - Byrghal (B)  
 Venus - Ar (A)

Mars - Tidher (T)  
Jupiter - Nådth (N)  
Saturn - Lagher (N)

He places the sound values of the runes in brackets. Bureus places the planetary runes in a circle around Mercury/Byrghal, illustrating how this represents man, but also the Hermetic magician (Bureus N24, p. 74). The runes for Mercury, the sun and the moon form a central planetary triad, representing the seed and generative power of Mercury, with the sun as a symbol for man and the moon for woman. The three planetary runes can be interchanged with the runes of TOF and we understand that Mercury, the Sun and the Moon are planetary manifestations of the Gothic Trinity. In addition, Mercury, the Sun and the Moon correspond with Mars, Venus and Jupiter. The correspondence table could thus be represented as follows:

Thor = Sun = Jupiter  
Odhen = Mercury = Mars  
Frey = Moon = Venus

Thors is also associated with the planet Saturn in the rune of Thors, and a little further down is linked to Mercury. A few pages later in *the Cabbalistica*, Bureus shows that Thor and Jupiter are synonymous, as are Odin and Mercury and Frey and Minerva. Sometimes Bureus replaces Frey with a female equivalent, in the form of goddesses such as Frigg, Freya or Minerva.

For Bureus, his great symbol Adulruna corresponds to the alchemical furnace *athanor*, in which the alchemical process took place through various processes of heating (Bureus N24, p. 75). Bureus counts three stages as the most important of alchemy, which correspond to the three levels of the adulrine, the solar cross with two rings, the three spires and the crucified heart with three spikes, and thus also the entire futhar with its three fifths. The three great alchemical phases, according to this analogy, are: 1) *Separatio*, 2) *Coagulatio* and 3) *Fixatio*. It is in connection with these arguments that Bureus notes that he actually succeeded in producing the tincture of alchemy, already on February 22, 1612 (Bureus N24, p. 75).

Bureus fills a whole page in *Cabbalistica* with a table of correspondences, sometimes difficult to interpret, which gives us information about how he sees the alchemical process (Bureus N24, p. 76). As a heading he has Mercury, the Moon and the Sun, and places under these a number of correspondences, most of which come from alchemy. In a reduced form, the list of correspondences looks like the one below:

Mercury - Luna - Sol  
Albedo - Nigredo - Rubedo  
Sons - Mother - Father  
Cain - Eve - Adam  
West - North and South - East  
Hermaphrodite - Woman - Man

In addition, he places three of the four temperaments into which Hippocrates (460 BC-370 BC) and Galenos (129-199) divided the human mind according to the doctrine of humoral pathology. The four states of mind were sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic, each of which, according to this doctrine, was associated with a different bodily fluid. The sanguine temperament was linked to the blood, the choleric to the yellow bile, the melancholic to the black bile and the phlegmatic to phlegm. According to Bureu's table, the phlegmatic belongs to the first group headed by Mercury, the blood and sanguine to the middle group, and the choleric to the last, ruled by the sun. The fact that the fourth, melancholic, temperament is not included in the table can be interpreted as an analogy with the fact that the cardinal point north is not included but only west, south and east, which can be seen as a reverse journey for the sun from west to east, from darkness to light. North, which represents total darkness, when the sun is not visible at all, is not included and thus not the melancholic temperament. Bureus notes that the process goes from darkness to light. The accustomed alchemical reader will notice that he reverses the classical three phases of the alchemical process, which are usually *nigredo*, *albedo* and *rubedo*, the black, white and red phases. It is also particularly strange because he uses the sun symbolism with the journey from the darkness of the evening, which should then be *nigredo*, to midday where *albedo*



would fit perfectly, in destination towards the golden dawn usually illustrated by the red phase, *rubedo*. However, I will stay away from correcting Bureus.

Bureus places four esoteric sciences in a cross formation around Theosophy, which is in the center. Above it is kabbalah, below astronomy, on the west side magic and on the right alchemy (Bureus N24, p. 79). Based on a comparative interpretation, Bureus places magic on the left because it corresponds to the rune Tidher and the descent, which can be seen as a manifestation of the magician's powers. The magician, according to Renaissance magic as we know it from Ficino, for example, is taught to control the natural forces of the universe and create positive influences in his environment. The magician is thus related to the physician. The fact that alchemy is on the right may be due to the fact that the alchemical process is a refinement of matter from the lower to the higher, and thus corresponds to the Lagher rune and ascension. Kabbalah is at the top because it concerns the highest world, which is in line with Agrippa's division in *De occulta philosophia*. Astronomy concerns the visible world and perhaps that is why Bureus places it at the bottom. In another version, however, the various sciences are placed differently with kabbalah in the middle and magic and alchemy placed in reverse than above. This version is more sketchy, however, and the first version seems more complete. Several pages are devoted to numerological speculations and sketches, some of which reappear in a more systematized form in *Adulruna Rediviva* and in *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*. Bureus calculates the numerical values of Thor, Odin and Frey and concludes that their numbers are 111, 107 and 103, which together add up to 366, all the days of the year if you subtract one, according to Bureus's Adulrunian logic where you often have to subtract one for the real numerical value to appear. He calculates the number for GUID, which according to him is the Gothic name for God, and gets it to first 88, and then 888, which is Jesus' number according to traditional number mysticism. Bureus sets up his runic cross and shows how the different arms and runes are to be calculated (Bureus N24, p. 83). The vertical line is added up to 1615, which gives the year 1613, since one should subtract one from each side, as he announced in

*Adulruna Rediviva*. Bureus also shows how the shepherd's staff, based on the runes of the runic cross, corresponds to the caduceus staff of Hermes with its two serpents.

Bureus outlines the meaning of the different letters of the Hebrew alphabet and refers to Reuchlin. Like *the Sefer Yetzirah*, Bureus attributes elemental qualities to the three "mothers" of the Hebrew alphabet, which are the letters *Alef*, *Mem* and *Shin*. *Alef*, the first letter is associated with air, *Mem* with water and *Shin* with fire (Bureus N24, p. 102). He equates these letters with the father, mother and son, and also the Gothic trinity TOF. A whole page later in the *Cabbalistica* is devoted to describing the ten sefirot (Bureus N24, p. 108). He also gives them planetary attributes, which he seems to have pondered over since the notes give them alternating different correspondences. In a sketchy depiction of the tree of life, Bureus shows that the Moon belongs to Malkuth, Mercury to Yesod, Venus to Hod, Jupiter to Netzach, the Sun to Tifaret, Mars to Geburah and Saturn to Chesed. The tree of life model is taken from Cesare d'Evoli's *De divinis attributis sephirot ab hebraeis nuncupata*, from 1573. A developed version of this is found in Athanasius Kircher's (1602-1680) *Oedipus Ægyptiacus* (1653-5), which had an enormous influence on Christian Kabbalah and became the dominant version in Kabbalah from the eighteenth century onwards. While Cesare d'Evoli's and Bureu's version has seventeen paths connecting the ten sefirot, the Kirchers have the twenty-two that are standard in contemporary Kabbalah. On the same page of *Cabbalistica* he illustrates his adulruna monument which, like the Kabbalistic tree, describes a path of ascent from the material to the spiritual planes.

In an esoteric word game, Bureus experiments with words that arise if the letters in Thor's name are reversed. The letters TOR can become ORT, TRO, ROT, Bureus experiments. There are also puns with Odin's name, where he places the letter *e* inside an *o* so that "Odin" can be read as "the oath" (Bureus N24, p. 114).

In an illustration of the temple, which he describes in detail in *North Landa, the Lion's Roar* in *Cabbalistica* also describes the education

the path of going from school to the academy as a canon, then becoming a magister and finally gaining access to the theological sciences in the heart of the temple (Bureus N24, pp. 131-132). Bureus also lets three runes denote the spheres of power in the kingdom. These are the saving religious power illustrated by the Tidher rune, the ruling royal power symbolized by Byrghal and the judging power illustrated by Lagher. Long before eccentric rune mystics in interwar Germany began to practice runic yoga and runic mudras, where the body and fingers are shaped to resemble runes, Bureus illustrates how the fingers can mimic runes, using the Thor rune as his example. In further explanations of the symbolism of the runes, we learn that the Sun rune represents the day, while the triune Man rune represents *nox*, the night. An inverted black rune of Thor represents the nameless En Sof of the Kabbalists (Bureus N24, p. 138). This reminds us that beyond the highest sephira Kether, Kabbalah places something even greater that cannot be explained and delineated in words, and is therefore called *En Sof*, "The Unspeakable". For Pico, this corresponds to the night, *the Nox*, which is beyond the visible and the nameable. For Bureus, this principle corresponds to *theologia negativa*, the knowledge of God that cannot be understood by concepts. Theology has been working with these ideas since its beginnings and they were developed by, among others, Master Eckhart (ca. 1260-ca. 1328). Beyond Thor's gate, we can thus conclude that, by analogy with Kabbalah, it is possible to take a step further into *En Sof*, or *Nox*.

Bureus reproduces parts of Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia* and lists the angels corresponding to the seven planets and the seven metals of alchemy (Bureus N24, p. 144). He mentions them in the order we recognize from Agrippa, beginning with Zaphkiel, Zadkiel, Camael, Raphael, Haniel, Michael and finally Gabriel. Before these he also mentions the angel Raziel who is one of the more mystical beings of Kabbalah. Raziel is an archangel whose name means 'the home of God' and who is at the center of the Jewish magical scripture *Sefer Raziel HaMalach*. In connection with the representation of certain passages in Agrippa, Bureus draws a pentagram, which is a cen-

tral occult symbol, which is otherwise conspicuous by its absence in Bureus. In a table, Bureus makes comparisons between Greek and Kabbalistic entities. Following Pico, he equates the Kabbalah En Sof with the Greek Nox. He argues that the evil principle Zamael of the Kabbalists corresponds to the Greek Typhon. A few pages later, Bureus compares his symbol The Falling Stone, the cube with a jerky cross that appears in *Aduluna Rediviva*, with the stone Abadir, which in Greek mythology was a wrapped stone that Rhea tricked Kronos into believing was Zeus.

Bureus works with the Kabbalistic system *aiq bekr*, "the nine chambers", which has been used to create seals (Bureus N24, p. 149). The Hebrew letters are placed in nine chambers, with three squares at the top, three in the middle and three at the bottom. From this, a form of stylized letters can be derived from a word or a name, by seeing the position of the Hebrew letter in the nine chambers. Once the new letters have been picked out, they are bound together to form a seal representing a spirit, demon or angel. Agrippa, who presents this system, uses the archangel Michael as an example, while Bureus works with the Hebrew word *beyeshuati*, "in my salvation", taken from the Psalms. From this word he works out its *aiq bekr* letters and creates a seal. We can see from this example that Bureus was experimenting with practical Kabbalah and seal magic in the wake of Agrippa. In later times, seal magic has become very central and the example reveals a practical side of the Gothic Kabbalah, which otherwise is mainly based on theoretical speculations and analogies.

Towards the end of *the Cabbalistica*, Bureus presents a version of the wafer cross with Hebrew letters (Bureus N24, p. 171). On the horizontal arm of the cross we find the seven letters *Bet Yud Shin Vav Ain Taf Yod*, which form the word *beyeshuati*. The vertical line of the cross has the same letters but in a different order - *Yod Shin Ain Vav Bet Taf Yod* - which can mean *yesha*, 'salvation' and *biti*, 'my daughter'. A Latin explanation with the words *filia mea* and *salus* next to it shows that this is the meaning he has in mind.

Based on Khunrath's *Amphitheatrum Sapientiæ Æternæ*, Bureus sketches the tabernacle and its esoteric significance.

dation. To this, he weaves in thoughts about the inner and outer essence of existence, which for Bureus is reflected in Sweden's coat of arms. The shield with the cross represents the outer and lower part of existence, while the three crowns represent the higher world. Similarly, he places himself in a higher and lower form. He includes these Platonic and alchemical correspondences in the higher and lower:

The Invisible - The Visible

Form - Matter

Wisdom - Beauty

King - Throne

Adam - Eve

Pyramid - Cube

Soul - Body

Author - Reader

Preacher - Listener

Sun - Moon

Solve - Coagula

Sulfur - Salt

With some symbols, such as Thors and Byrghal united, Bureus shows that these dualities are to be united. We identify several alchemical concepts such as *solve et coagula*, denoting dissolution and union, which are two of the recurrent elements of the alchemical process.

Bureus connects the name of Zoroaster with the god Thor and gives what he believes to be the original form, namely Thorfaster. He reproduces what he sees as the Zoroastrian trinity of Ohrmuzd, Ahriman and Mithra, the former representing the high and good, Ahriman the evil and Mithra acting as the mediator. On the same page he mentions IAO, the Greek and Gnostic version of YHWH, who was associated by the Gnostics with Abraxas and the seven-headed dragon. There is no indication that Bureus has adopted a Gnostic negative view of IAO, but sees it as a synonym for the god he invokes.

With creative word transformation, Bureus weaves his name into Upp- sala. He shows how Uppsala can be called Ubirsala, which is supposed to mean Upper Sala, and gets his name into the complicated formula SVED DEVS VBSAL LASBV VRBI VBIR BVRI VBIRSALA. Bureu's Kabbalah as we meet it in *Cabbalistica* is not only connected with the great names in Western esotericism, but is also at times very self-reflective.

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Pages 163-166:

Four pages from *Cabbalistica*, the first with Eric Benzelius' signature at the bottom.



21

Kon ar mup (fauyfir.)

1513 file Ringkaps

1609, 10  
11, 12

Om ingu Aitgor Rind jippa

12 April

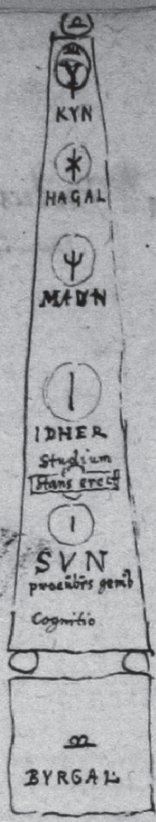
2 anken

Nº XVIII.

Ernie Benzoni



Omni no,  
hoc mom  
mentum  
Dum  
3 Martij 1617  
fama muniting



videt Rodig. lib. 2. c. 2.  
Sibyll. oracula

Sed cum Graeci.

αρχιφολαξ 1782 con  
Cyprianus Luthers.

Primum ex adu. rarissimis natu. lib.  
Rodig. 7: 25. Cultum absolutum ex  
milla ex parte cognoscitur 5 max  
verbis p. fici.

Sun - Primum, infans, nosse oportet  
eum ipsum qui colitur designamus.  
max. q. nalis ut cultu. hinc adhibe  
ma. sic. m. c. s. s.

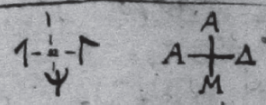
Per - Secundo loco summam, exercitatione  
vini. f. m. Casitana, integritate, m. h.  
m. i. t. a. l. e.

Y Contactus iam angustior q. divina  
rentiam fore attingimus

\* 4° divinum vestibulum rigntimur  
am.

Y Postremo unitate aia mae ppa  
unitati divina insinamus  
atq. connectimus.

22 Apr.



Adam microcosmos ad ex. pl. macrocosm  
Ανατολή - ortus - 1 } Cardines  
Δύσις - occasus - 1 } celi  
Αρχος - Aquilo - Ψ } apogonum  
Μεσημβρία - M.C. - 1  
Mesurapeta  
microcosmi macrocosmi.  
Sympathea.

Sibyll. orac. lib. 2.

3 Ανατολίη τε Δύσις τε, Μεσημβρία τε,  
καὶ Ἀρχος.

1 Αυτος δὴ θεὸς ἐὼς ὁ πλάσεας ΤΕΤΡΑ  
ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΝ ἈΔΑΜ  
2 Τον πρῶτον πλάσαντα καὶ ουνοῦ  
πληρώσαντα.







# Aruna nomina DEVS

Trism: Eten patrum hoc illi opus est.

V: 7. Huius est essentia, universa concipitur  
et Coram.

Tit  
Tit Sanig

Lin ——— Sanig

il

lesta  
migh

ps. 43.

כיש ואתי

psal. 70 Ego sum in val. alpe  
fuerit alij  
G. nani. Gignere lof

2	3	4
1	2	3
8	1	2

4	3	2
3	2	1
2	1	3

5	4	3
4	3	2
3	2	1



LEFJNLU

FLONL

20

7

## 9 *Nymäre Wijsor*: Esoteric motifs in Bureu's song collection

Bureus was a typical Renaissance man, although the term is a recent construction. In addition to science, language, literature, religion and mysticism, he was a prominent typographer and is responsible for the Uppsala University seal, which has been recognized in smaller works such as *De yverbores typografi* (1964) by Nils Nordqvist and *Johannes Bureus och universitetets sigill* (1971) by Fredrik Berg. He also wrote songs and poetry. In 1637, Bureus's collection of songs *Nymäre Wijsor* was printed. The word *nymäre* can have a number of meanings such as 1) novelty; 2) something new, unusual, peculiar, 3) tale, legend, general topic of conversation, and 4) fable, poem (Dahlgren 1961: 588). All of these meanings fit Bureu's collection of songs and its intention is to proclaim the words of the Bible. As in most of Bureu's writings, the margins are full of references to biblical texts. The songs are mainly traditionally religious, edifying in nature, retelling the stories of the Bible, but some passages and phrases reflect Bureu's esoteric worldview and the influence of Kabbalistic and alchemical writers. The songs are twelve in number, which, given Bureu's numerological obsession, is probably no coincidence. The number twelve recurs constantly in esotericism as the number of the zodiac, which also corresponds to the hours of the day (12 x 2) and various spirit constellations. The songs have titles such as "A Student's Song", "On the Creation of the World", "On the Inner Man", "On the State of this Time", "The Last Days" and "The Torment". The third song in *Nymäre Wijsor* tells of humanity's

The threefold nature of chance, which is a characteristic theme of esotericism and is found as its third criterion in Faivre.

I want to paint what Moses  
Harligh wrote about the  
Three Parts of Man when it  
was first created.  
The highest was a Spirit  
Godh to his beloved cup:  
To the gods of the second:  
Last Man and Qwinno Krop.

According to Bureus, the whole of creation, both the world and mankind, is structured on three main levels. This idea is common in Hermeticism and Neoplatonism. There is a divine level and a material level. In between there is a medial level which has been called the astral level or world spirit. A recurring theme in Bureus is this trinity. In addition to the Creator and the created, there is also the creation itself. To this level belongs the "mediator" who corresponds to the son, Jesus, but also Odin and the mythical Byrger Tidesson. The universe consists of three books written by God. The first book is the Word of God which can be interpreted both as the Bible but also the mystical word John describes in chapter 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was near God, and God was the Word". The second book was the macrocosm, nature and the world around man. The third book was the microcosm, man and his inner self. The world was created in three main parts: heaven, earth and sea. With regard to heaven and earth in particular, Bureus is careful not to confuse these with the ordinary heaven or the material earth. The first and lowest of the parts of the world was the sea. It exists in the beginning as an original abyss. From the sea, which corresponds to the principle of corporeality, the visible mind-world arises. The second and middle world was the earth, but an incorporeal earth of a higher nature corresponding to paradise and the Garden of Delights. The third level is heaven, which is the divine world and should not be confused with the ordinary sky. Bureus believed that man was similarly a *Homo Triplex*, with a threefold



you nature. He drew biblical support for the idea that man consisted of two higher parts in addition to the physical body from Hebrews 4:12, which describes how God separates soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and reveals the intent and thoughts of the heart. He pointed out that the initials for the trinity of man built the word for the Paracelsian principle of salt, which in Latin is *sal*, but which in Bureus forms the notarial formula SAL - Siel (soul), Anda and Lekamen. The formula SAL recurs in Bureus:

**S** *Siel*, an image of the likeness of God. *Homo spiritualis*

**A** *Spirit*, the sum of all human faculties, a medium of which reason is a part. *Homo rationalis*.

**L** *Lekamen*, matter, human flesh and blood. *Homo carnalis*.

There was disagreement among occultists as to whether the spirit or the soul was the highest substance of man. Pico believed that it was the soul that is the divine part of the human being, while the spirit corresponds to the astral world that connects the highest divine world and the physical reality (Friberg 1945: 128). For most esotericists, however, the soul was seen as the intermediate level and the spirit as the highest. Before Bureus's enlightenment in 1613, he believed that the soul was superior to the spirit, but after his experiences in Tuna, he thought he knew better and he looked back on his previous beliefs and changed them. He confesses that he had previously lived in ignorance when he believed that the soul was above the spirit (Lindroth 1943: 197).

Bureus explains that the body is earthly, heavy and downward, while the spirit is divine and 'most lofty'. Body and spirit are united through the intermediary of the soul. The soul is the soul of the body, but the body of the spirit. The soul is a she, while the spirit and matter are he, who like two suitors woo the soul. Bureus tells us that the Spirit and the Soul are betrothed and that the Spirit will make the Soul its bride and queen, but the Body sneaks up on it like a cunning seducer and tries to drag the Soul down into its dark ball (Lindroth 1943: 195).

In *Nymäre Wijsor*, Bureus describes his view of the components of the human being and how these are associated with women and men respectively:

Our Siel has Brudakynne,  
and the nature of the man of the Spirit (Bureus 1637: Song III:4).

The soul is a bride whose favor the body and spirit fight for. The fact that the words spirit and body in Swedish are masculine while soul is feminine proved to Bureus that Swedish originally expresses the esoteric truths (Friberg 1945: 133). Bureus has taken over the allegory of the soul and the spirit as bride and groom from the church father Origen (ca. 185-ca. 254), who explained that the human being consists of spirit and soul, where the spirit is called man and the soul woman. Bureus develops this allegory and writes about how the bride allows herself to be deceived into the matter of the body, which is called an unchaste man:

Now it was not long before  
a man of peace came with  
his companions, and with a  
bullet he took away the  
curl, and put it into the  
earth, then dark and then  
ugly,  
Och görän skam ther medh (Bureus 1637: song III:2).

When Bureus speaks of the flesh as a commoner and the spirit as nobility, this is in line with how Georg Stiernhielm would later use the concepts in his *Hercules* poem, where man is placed between Virtue and Vice. The nobility referred to is a nobility that man wins in the realm of the spirit (Friberg 1945: 139). The soul is faced with a decisive choice and must turn to the spirit and not to the flesh if it wants to achieve salvation and bliss. If she goes to Jesus, who rules over the realms of the spirit, the soul will be like a queen who lives without lack in bliss, but if she chooses the flesh, she loses the chance of joy and must instead face the Devil.

If the soul go in to the  
Spirit, which is Jesus  
Christ, she shall be a  
queen without want. But  
if she goes out to the  
flesh, Then she has lost  
her joy, And is found in  
the Devil's meeting.

Then she will have to bite the qvist (Bureus 1637: song III:8).

A small but significant detail in Bureus's formulation reveals something central to his worldview. If the soul goes to the spirit, it goes "in to the spirit", but if it goes to the flesh, it is "out to the flesh". When she seeks in, it is also a journey upwards where she meets Jesus, while if she seeks out, it is at the same time a journey downwards into the abyss to the Devil. This ontography reappears when Bureus explains the wreath symbol and allows the troll's world to be in the outer areas outside the savior's enclosure within which people should stay if they are not to be plunged into the abyss, pressed down by the fork of hell that the troll truss illustrates. This worldview fits into Mircea Eliade's scheme where the movement inwards towards the center also leads upwards towards the sacred, while the movement outwards leads to the profane, or carnal as Bureus would call it. For Eliade, all sanctified areas coincide with the center of the world (Eliade 1969/2002: 27). In the final part of the thesis, I will analyze Bureus' worldview based on this dualistic ontography.

Bureus conveys the Spirit's own words in the fifth song of *Nymäre Wijzor*. Among other things, the Spirit tells us that the god Hermes saw his light and that he - the Spirit - is called both *nus* and *mens*. *Nus*, or *Nous* as it is often transcribed, in Greek denotes consciousness or the intellect. In Plato, *nous* corresponds to the rational side of the individual human soul and the only fully immortal part of the soul. This view is consistent with Bureus' description of the Spirit as inherent in the soul:

Out the Spirit is then the highest of the hws  
As the soul is the nest of the Spirit (Bureus 1637: Song v:11).

The second name of the spirit in the song, *mens*, is Latin and has a similar meaning to *nous*. The spirit tries to rebuke the soul and set it on the right path and release it from its captivity in the flesh, but some souls do not even realize that they are trapped and do not listen to the wise counsel of the spirit, and for them things go badly:

Then the seals will obey our  
advice, for the meat has trapped  
them:  
The tänkia ey there even upå  
Out they shall go (Bureus 1637: song v:14).

In the sixth song, 'On the State of the Thenna Tyden', Bureus sings of the Paracelsian Northland lion and connects this lion with the visions in the Book of Revelation. The lion that appears in Revelation chapter 14 stands on Mount Zion with the one hundred and forty-four thousand elect who are redeemed from the earth.

The voice of the man  
who wrote the book has  
Then can be found in the  
text  
Johannis apparent (Bureus 1637: song vi:8).

Bureus's song has many references to the Book of Revelation in the margin. A recurring symbol in Bureus is the lion carrying a book, which, in addition to being the Bible, may represent his own adul- ronic wisdom. In "Om thenna Tydens tilstånd" it is the Northland lion that carries the book:

A lion of Norlanden  
Thet carries a ypnad  
Book Ther in hwilas  
his spirit  
Which makes the writing wise (Bureus 1637: Song vi:6).

The song gradually takes on the form of a prophecy, and Bureus adds a series of dates in the margins of the text, including 1674, the year in which the Kingdom of God will come after the final judgment, which will take place in 1673.

The eighth song "Om yterste Tiden" in *Nymäre Wijsor*



contains a similar apocalyptic theme with several references to the Book of Revelation, as well as the Book of Daniel in the Old Testament. In the song, Bureus refers to the year 1647, which is central to his apocalypticism. Together with the year 1666, 1647 is the beginning of a time of bliss. In a mysterious way, Bureus thinks that the years 1647 and 1666 are connected and denote the same thing, which I will explain later. By subtracting the number nineteen, a number that Bureus connects with the moon and the nineteen runes on the rune calendars, 1666 becomes the year 1647. The year 1666 is of course significant because 666 is the number of the apocalyptic wild beast in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. In the song, Bureus describes how the beast ravages the world before he is finally bound in the abyss:

he is not yet bound as  
many have thought  
He is still raging, but the dog  
wants to be lowered into the  
abyss where he has offended.  
For he now knows that  
hwadh in his bowl is bestowed (Bureus 1637: Song VIII:8).

The song continues with the beast being bound in the ball in the underworld, that is, the abyss. The ball is the word Bureus uses in an earlier song in *Nymäre Wijsor* to refer to the body that threatens to lure the spiritual bride into its dark ball in the underworld.

When you put your toe in  
the bandolier, and you put  
your nose in the ball, you  
bring home the treasure  
from the land.  
Six hundred and sixty-six (Bureus 1637: Song VIII:10).

The earth ball and the cage are two of Bureu's symbols for the body and the material world. The image of the soul as a bride, the spirit as the bridegroom, and the body as a cunning seducer trying to plunge the soul into perdition recurs in almost half of *Nymäre Wijsor's* texts. Bureus is aware that he is repeating his theme and begins the ninth song "Om Inra Menniskiones fruchter" with

the words: "I enjoy the Old Subject/And make a Wise New One" and then repeats the admonitory theme of how the soul must seek upwards towards Jesus and the Spirit. Bureus invites the reader to identify with the nightingale who sits in a cage, but who by trusting in the dove - the Spirit - finds comfort (*hugswalar*) and fears nothing, neither hunger nor bad weather, nor *jam* and *urine*, as Bureus writes, which are sixteenth-century Swedish synonyms (Bureus 1637: song IX:12). Scholars such as Wouter J. Hanegraaff and Henrik Bogdan have emphasized the centrality of the will in modern Western esotericism, but Bureus' sixteenth-century esotericism equates the will with desire and the body. Only if man subdues the will will he escape his imprisonment in the cage, but if he gives in to the will he will remain in the cage for a long time. Bureus therefore invites the reader to:

War wiligh wilian kuwa

Thus the hour is made long (Bureus 1637: Song VIII:12).

The eleventh song is *Nymäre Wijsor's* longest, and the margins are filled with notes on the Bible and examples of numerological calculations, apocalyptic predictions and Bureus Kabbalism. A recurring theme in the text is the vision in the book of Ezekiel of the throne of God in the form of a chariot surrounded by four cherubim, which have the faces of a man, a bull, a lion and an eagle. These cherubim have been identified in Christian speculation with the four apostles, and the visions in Ezekiel have been significant in both Jewish Kabbalah and Christian esotericism. Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism grew out of speculation about the visions of Ezekiel. The divine throne chariot, *the merkaba*, was the motif around which the oldest Jewish mysticism took shape (Scholem 1992: 68-69). Jewish mystics sought to behold the throne chariot of God, as well as the halls of heaven, *hechaloth*, which became the theme of the earliest Jewish mystery literature, of which the Book of Hanuk is among the oldest and most influential. An early writing on the fringes of *Merkaba mysticism* and an important precursor to the Kabbalistic texts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries is the modest *Sefer Yetzirah*. For Kabbalah and Western esotericism in general

As a whole, it has played a crucial role. It describes the foundations of the mysticism of numbers and letters that will capture the interest of both Jewish and non-Jewish Kabbalists. We know that as early as 1610 Bureus read the French esotericist Guillaume Postel's (1510-1581) translation of *Sefer Yetzirah*, which was published in 1552 (Åkerman 1998: 51), so it is likely that ideas from early Jewish mysticism found their way into Bureus' esoteric writings, such as *Nymäre Wijsor*. In the eleventh song, Bureus describes the key figures who drive humanity forward towards the Kingdom of God, each corresponding to one of the four appearances of the cherubim.

The first he mentions is Jan Huss (1372-1415), the great Czech reformer who turned against those parts of the Roman Catholic Church's teachings that he felt were unsupported by the Bible, resulting in his burning at the stake on charges of heresy. Huss was to have a major impact on Martin Luther and the Protestant movement. In the song, Bureus calls him 'a burning light'. After him came Martin Luther, only to be replaced in Bureus's time by the third key figure in history, namely himself. In his book *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* from 1644 he develops this theme, but it is interesting to note that Bureus clearly alludes to himself as the Northland lion in *Nymäre Wijsor*:

A Lion of Norway

(...)

like a Tordon thet Ryter

(Yes Sin the hores still

here) The end time withh

progresses

Which bears the name of John (Bureus 1637: song XI:15).

He goes on to describe Solomon's temple and its innermost treasure chamber, or *fatebur* as he writes, and weaves in the biblical theme of the land flowing with milk and honey, writing the Hebrew word for milk, *Ha.La.Bi*, in the text with the Hebrew letters in the margin. The poem tells us that these three syllables - HLB - are *notarial icons* for the three great preachers of God's word in history, and it is not difficult to conclude from the context that he means Huss, Luther and none other than himself, Bureus.

He explicitly mentions Kabbalah in the song and the text is filled with number mysticism such as important years in Bureu's apocalyptic such as 1674 and numbers such as 666, 777 and 888 where the number of the beast is the lowest and the number of Jesus the highest. In the last song, "The Torment", the apocalypticism continues and Huss is identified with the cherub that has a human form, while Luther is the bull. Bureu's time is associated with the lion, and the period from 1647 onwards is finally depicted in the guise of the eagle, and it is the time of the Spirit. The last words of the song are characteristic of the whole book and of Bureu's choice of symbolic language. Once again we meet the bride - the Soul - and the contradiction between being led into the Lord's chamber or ending up outside among the powers of matter and darkness:

But the bride may be led  
in the most beautiful  
chamber in the right way.  
Though the gold is  
hidden in the snow,  
there is no telling what  
she may do:  
Nor hwadh wailing and torment  
Then sheep that uthe stands (Bureus 1637: song XII:12).

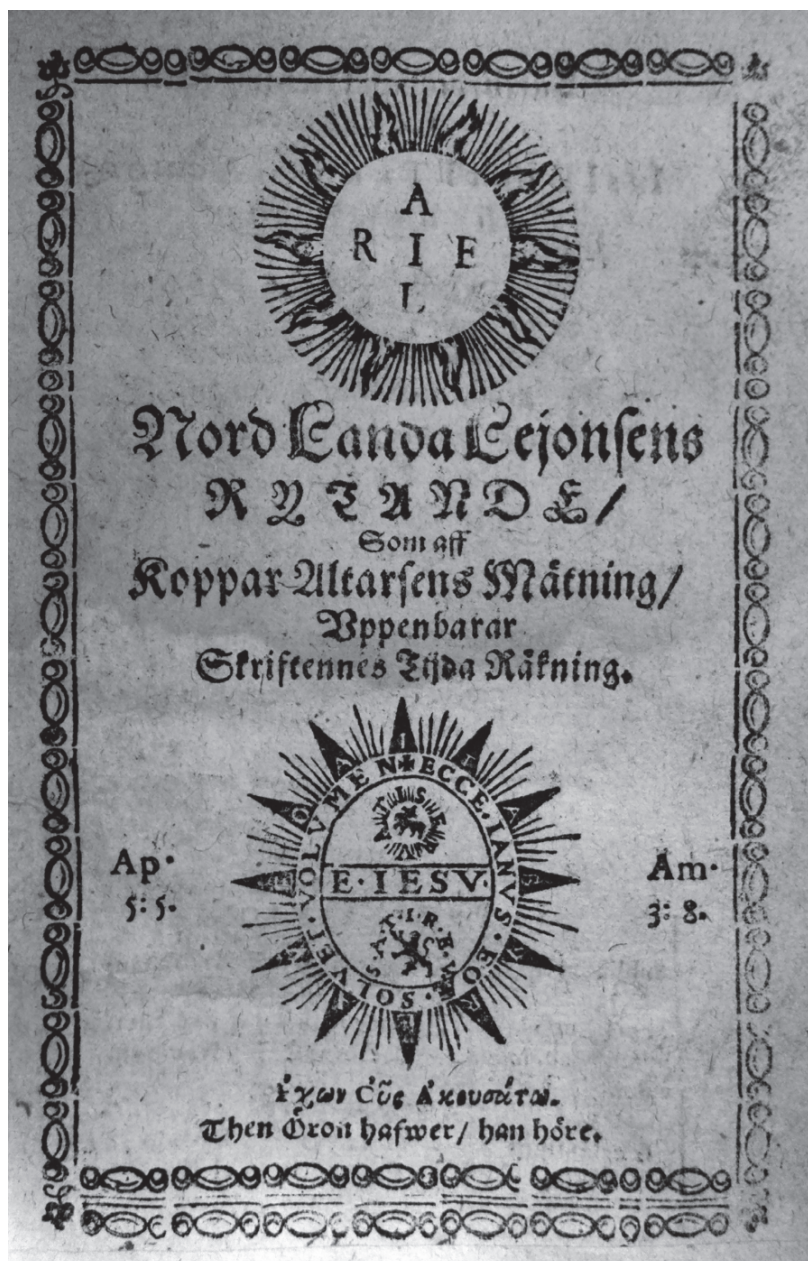
The last three pages of *Nymäre Wjsor* consist of a page of numero- logical calculations of apocalyptic numbers and years, in which Bureus uses not only Hebrew letters and the numbers with which they are associated, but also Greek, thus also working with a Greek kabbalistic system. The penultimate page ends with a blazing sun which reads: *Infidenti Throno Agnoque Benedictio*, i.e. a motto based on letters with the same initials as himself: ITAB. At the very end of the book, Bureus has added an errata list.

## 10 *North Land Lion's Ride*

Bureu's thinking could be classified as the apocalyptic view of history that, according to archaeologist Ola W. Jensen, characterized the Christian early modern way of looking at history. From this perspective, history is a devolution, a reverse evolution, which goes from an ideal past towards increasingly worse times (Jensen 2002: 67-80). At the same time, Bureus is optimistic and, by comparing history to the alchemical ascension, the decline is reversed thanks to Jan Huss in the thirteenth century and not least with himself, who from 1613 proclaims the coming judgment, but also the impending kingdom of God. The apocalyptic view of history is ambivalent, because on the one hand everything is steadily deteriorating, but on the other hand the culmination of this change, in the form of the apocalypse, will lead to the Kingdom of God. Jensen describes this duality:

On the one hand, the birth of Christ was seen as history's turn for the better, while at the same time the whole of history since the Fall was experienced as a steady process towards the worse (Jensen 2002: 75).

*Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande, som aff koppar altarsens mätning, vpenbarar skriftennes tijda räkning*, printed in 1644, is Bureus's great apocalyptic work and perhaps the most comprehensive work based on the Paracelsian lion prophecy. It is a pro-testamentary, kabbalistically interpreted, apocalypse of 143 pages. The first page is crowned by a blazing sun of the same kind that ends *Nymåre Wijisor*, and this time with a word that alludes to himself, namely ARIEL, the lion angel with which he identified himself. At the bottom, it is exhorted in the words of the Bible that: "Then



Opening page of the Nordlanda Lion's Ride



Ears hafwer / He hears". The book is dedicated to Queen Christina. In this book, Bureus is completely absorbed in the role of prophet and initially lets Jesus himself set the tone of the book:

I JESUS have the keys of death and hell. I send my Angel to signify this Thetta in the Parables (Bureus 1644).

Bureus sometimes leaves it deliberately vague whether what is said comes from John Bureus, John of Revelation, Jesus or Ariel, or whether all these speak with one tongue through him. The book explains that:

For the title of this book is as follows: Thetta JESUCHRISTJ Revelation then GODS hafwer gifted him to announce his Servanthood / what within a short time shall happen: And hafwer denoted and sent withh his ANGEL to his Servant JOHAnnem (Bureus 1644).

We understand that Bureus communicates Jesus' words through the angel Ariel. This angel appears as a lion and is for Bureus the same as one of the cherubim at the throne chariot of God. He makes it quite clear to the reader that it is he, Bureus, who is the northern lion whose roar is heard throughout the book. It is not a cheerful message that the book conveys, but Bureus speaks with the admonishing thunderous voice of a prophet. He informs the reader that in 1600 a nobleman heard the following song:

The fire is extinguished, /  
which was kindled before; /  
all things have come to an end.  
The bow is cut off/ as if it were spent/  
All things now have an end.  
The bowl is printed / as it was in the past:  
All things now have an end.  
The glass has been thinned / and hastily  
reversed All things now have an end  
(Bureus 1644).

Bureus then explains that the Lord does nothing without first revealing his secrets to his servants the prophets. He then conveys on one page a key to the Kabbalah, with the numerical values of the Hebrew letters together with the corresponding

Greek letters, which again gives us an example of Bureus's ambition to transfer Kabbalah to other languages. Next comes a biblical key with numerical values for first the Latin alphabet, numbers 1 to 23, immediately followed by the Greek alphabet from 24 to 47, and finally the Hebrew alphabet from 48 to 74, which is the last number in this key. Beneath this key is Bureus' central formula, which he heard the angels sing during his revelation in Mora in 1613: *CLaVDIte IaM rIVos pVer sat prata blberVnt*, which contains the number 1674, the year of the beginning of the Kingdom of God.

This is followed by a list of errata, and then the book itself begins with the flaming capital letters KERVBINIAN at the top, and below that the heading THE TIME LINE. The book's apocalyptic roar is not to be expected, but the first chapter contains kabbalistic speculations on the Hebrew word *mispat*, which means 'judgment' or 'justice', and which recurs in the Bible, for example in the book of Job. For Bureus, this concept is obviously linked to *Judicium*, which denotes the year 1613, but which is also the Latin name for 'judgment'. *Mispat* denotes above all divine justice (Huber- man Scholnick 1982: 521). Bureus explains that the word for judgment *mispat* begins with the death letter *Mem*, which introduces the word for death *maveth* (Bureus 1644: 1). Speculation about the letter *Mem* is common in Kabbalistic literature, which explains, among other things, that Satan was originally an angel named Sael, but when he broke with God, the death letter *Mem* was attached to his name and he became an angel of death - Samael.

The apocalyptic chapters in *The Lion's Roar of the North* are dated with alternating *Anno Mundi* (Year of the World), counting the time from when it was believed that the earth was created according to the Bible, *Anno Christi*, counting from the birth of Jesus, the Passion, which he counts from Jesus' crucifixion, the Year of the Law, counting from when Moses received the Torah, as well as the Year of the Flood, after when the Flood was thought to have taken place. The book is an account of what happens in different years from these events in world history. *The Riding of the Northern Lions* has the character of a countdown to Judgment Day, where the reader starts backwards in history and moves forward page by page. Just as Bureus quickly switches between different alphabets when practicing his letter



and number mysticism, he switches rapidly between these different forms of timekeeping, which makes the text confusing, even for his contemporaries. It is therefore not so simple that years in the sixteenth century necessarily mean what the reader first thinks, but it can have other symbolic meanings, or denote years at completely different times in history, in cases where Bureus has jumped to another kind of timekeeping. An example is when, in the section on the times of Revelation, he writes, among other things, the year 1642. The attentive reader will see that this is the year of the Law and not *Anno Christi*, i.e. our usual era, but year 136 according to our usual era, since next to *Anno Mundi* (year 4096) Bureus writes the year according to *Anno Christi* (Bureus 1644: 5).

The second letter of the word *mishpat* is *Shin*, and is called by Bureus both for the second seed of God's word and for a rod of hell used by Saul while he was a Pharisee under the law, and had not yet received Jesus (Bureus 1644: 2). The letter *Shin* is central in Christian Kabbalah as it was already inserted by Reuchlin in the middle of the tetragrammaton IHWH so that it became IHSWH and thus denoted not only God, but also God's son Jesus.

In good Gothic spirit, Bureus weaves himself and Sweden into the apocalyptic speculations, such as the discourses on the three kingdoms, which for him also means the three kingdoms that since Gustav Wasa in the 1540s were ruled by the king of Sweden, with the royal title "Sveriges, Götis och Vendes konungh". As in most of his writings, he refers to biblical passages in the margins, and the Book of Revelation has an obvious special place. Through *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* we hear what John predicted and it is unclear whether it is John attributed to the Book of Revelation, or John Bureus, who is referred to. It is clear that Bureus himself leaves it ambiguous and that he identifies himself with the author of Revelation (Bureus 1644: 5).

We are introduced to a Burean correspondence theory, in which he describes the basic levels of creation: heaven, earth and sea. In the heavens, these are represented by the sun, moon and stars, while on earth they are represented by gold, silver and copper. In nature, they are represented by olive trees, fig trees and vine trees. On the dining table, they are represented by olives,

grain and wine. On the human body, they are eyes, hands and feet (Bureus 1644: 6-7). Correspondences between different parts of the universe are a characteristic feature of esotericism, especially of Renaissance natural magic, as exemplified by Agrippa's magnum opus *De occulta philosophia*. As is well known, Faivre sets it up as one of the four criteria for what is the Western esoteric way of thinking. *The Lion of North Landa* thus gives us the following series of correspondences:

Sky, earth, sea  
Gold, silver, copper  
Olive trees, fig trees, vine trees  
Olive, grain, wine  
Eyes, hands, feet

#### *10.1 Lower Azara: the period from 136 to 1369*

The book then leads us on to a digression on the Kabbalistic mysticism surrounding the Temple in Jerusalem, the Ark of the Covenant, as well as the descriptions of God's throne chariot in Ezekiel. The section takes off with the title: "The Measurement of the Copper Altar of Ariels" where he describes its three levels or ledges, *pallets* as Bureus writes. The lowest and middle ones are both called AZARA and exist in two versions, the one belonging to the outer courtyard of the temple being two cubits high, while the AZARA belonging to the inner courtyard is four cubits high. The highest ledge is called HAREL, which Bureus explains means 'mountain of God' and belongs to the temple and is also four cubits high, but two cubits narrower. The word *hekal* or *haichal* denotes the middle part of the temple in Jerusalem which contained a number of sacred objects such as *the menorah*, the golden seven-armed candlestick. At the far end of the temple was *the Kadosh Hakadashim*, the Holy of Holies, with the Ark of the Covenant. The altar itself at the far end is called, Bureus tells us, Ariel, the Lion of God, a figure with which he identified himself. It is 12 cubits high and 12 cubits wide. Bureus admits that the Bible does not mention the altar's dimensions, but reveals that he managed to calculate its height, concluding that the altar, together with *the pallets* or ledges, must rise twenty-two cubits above the ground to correspond with

the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. It was also twenty-two oxen that Solomon had sacrificed in the temple. He was not shy in proclaiming to the reader that he had revealed secrets hitherto hidden from all mankind.

The three ledges in the temple represent the three kingdoms of Christ, Bureus explains, and then weaves together the description of the temple with God's throne, or *chair* as he writes. It is guarded by four cherubim, which are the same that guard Eden since the people were driven from it. Three of the cherubim are also there for the sake of the fourth, who is their master. We remember from *Nymäre Wijisor* how Bureus identified Jan Huss with the cherub in human form, Martin Luther with it in bull form, himself as the third in lion form and finally the Spirit or Jesus as the eagle. Jesus, or the Lamb as he is also called, sits on the throne and is an embodiment of the Word, the Holy Scripture. Bureus's speculation on Jesus as the Word, which is based on the first chapter of the Gospel of John, recurs in all his esoteric writings and is interwoven with the three-world theory that is central to his work. Jesus, like Odin, is the Mediator and the Word, *logos* in Greek, between the upper and the lower. Around the throne of the Lamb, with reference to Revelation 11:16-18, are twenty-four chairs for the twenty-four elders, and these represent the letters of the new covenant. We see here how Bureus connects the Old Covenant with the Hebrew and the New Covenant with the twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet (Bureus 1644: 10). With Jesus, the Hebrew Kabbalah becomes a Greek, New Testament and Christian Kabbalah, in line with the theories of Pico and Reuchlin. The fact that Bureus and his runic kabbalistic theories do not identify these twenty-four letters with the runes in the 24-type older futhark is due to the fact that at that time the runes in this had not been identified, but were based on the 16-type younger futhark.

The Trinity recurs in constantly new constellations and versions. Bureus, in writing *The Lion's Ride of Nord Landa*, has decided that the threefold nature of man is spirit, soul and body, in the order mentioned, and not soul, spirit and body, as he previously thought. He speaks of the cherubic man who carries the principles of the cherubim within him, the human cube corresponding to

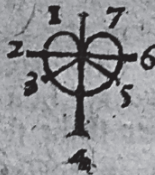
Thenne processen lärde Paulus vthi Ro.8:29.  
paradys för ånhan så stref.

Swilka han (Gudh) hafwer föresedt /  
them hafwer han bestård /  
Swilka han hafwer bestård /them haf-  
wer han och kallat /  
Swilka han hafwer kallat / them haf-  
wer han och Retsfärdigat /  
Swilka han hafwer Retsfärdigat / them  
har han och giordt herliga.

Sår synes at Kallelsen är nederste  
Trappan.

Then som thetta icke förstår / huru wil  
han vtydha Vppenbarelsens Bok :

1 Ex centro :



7 in centro.

Then som icke hafwer kunskap om Mens  
nissionnes Sons Tectn som i Skriftennes  
Zimmel / Mat. 24: 30. vppenbaras stulle/  
Nemliga/ hans blodiga Zierta/ sampt medh  
Korset och Spikarna/ genom hwilket alt als  
le Sin Insignen äro allena så wäl kunniga  
som vplösta : Huru kan han hela Bokena  
rätteliga vtydha :

Vp. 4:12.  
11:12.

At Christi Kors hafwer Myklarna til  
Döden och Helwetet/witnar sielwa Namnet/  
sweges, Crux. Kors. Then första Stas  
wen 5 merker 6. then andre a 1 / v 400/  
B iij 5 100/

the principle that supports the Spirit, which is the Eagle, while the Ox is the two-headed soul that can be made to go either way, to salvation or destruction, while the Lion is the animated body that tames death. He is clear about the hierarchies in creation and in the threefold nature of cherubic man, but says with surprising antinomianism that "Now John seems to go against it / for he puts the untamed lion closest to Paradise and the eagle closest to Hell" (Bureus 1644: 12). The fact that Bureus in other contexts warns against the Eagle as the Habsburg Catholic emperor and praises the Protestant lion may explain this willingness to go against the grain, but other more purely esoteric interpretations are also possible. Reversing processes, not least in contexts where the body and soul are mentioned, is in line with esoteric practice during the Renaissance, as well as in esotericism in a broad sense, where the descending *desensus* of creation is to be turned into an ascending one, *ascensus*. In the discussion of the cherubic forms, Bureus tells us that the abyss does not have a face. He also refers to the abyss by its Hebrew name *tehom*, which appears already in Genesis 1:2: "The earth was desolate and empty, the depths were covered with darkness...", where the original word for 'depth' is *tehom*. These first lines of Genesis are the subject of intense speculation in *Bahir* where the words for 'desolate' and 'empty', *tohu* and *bohu*, are two primordial principles.

The book then continues with a journey through the ages, passing chapter by chapter through each of Christ's three kingdoms and the various parts of Solomon's Temple. The first chapter, in this journey through the ages and the temple, is written with a contemporary emphasis:

AZARA  
 thet nidra /  
 Ariel's bottom stool  
 Here begins the first kingdom  
 of Christ /  
 which is similar to Saul's.  
 When the outer courtyard of  
 the temple was gifted to  
 paganism to be trampled.



The lower azara represents the first period of Christianity between 136 and 1396. The latter is the year of Jan Hus' appearance and preaching, and is recurrent in Bureus' theories of the phases of Christianity. The years between these dates are 1260 in number, Bureus states, and what the Book of Revelation speaks of in chapter 11:2: "But the outer court of the temple you shall leave alone and not measure, for it has been given to the Gentiles, and the holy city shall be trampled by them for 42 months" (Bureus 1644: 14-15). According to apocalyptic speculation, the twelve months correspond to 1260 days, which in turn actually denote years. Bureus believes that this is the time when the papacy rules over Christianity. The papacy, he argues, is an extension of paganism and thus what is meant in Revelation by the temple being given to the pagans. With Jan Huss, this domination is broken and humanity can walk deeper into the temple on the way to the holy of holies.

According to Bureus, the transformation from the old to the new is described in the New Testament, in the Synoptics (Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke), when Jesus goes up Mount Tibor, the mountain of glory, and meets the Old Testament figures Moses and Elijah. Bureus tells us how Moses dies and Elijah is taken up to heaven. This, as well as the death and resurrection of the Savior, is proof that man is leaving the old covenant with the Law, and following the Gospels instead. The old disappears, while the new shall endure, or as Bureus himself writes:

The law kills and the Gospel makes alive / therefore says the Mediator  
/ I was dead / and I live forever / the game is over and the news is out  
(Bureus 1644: 15).

The idea that Torah, the Law, was something that stands in the way of human salvation is not an idea with exclusively Christian origins, but has also existed within Judaism, and became something that not least the Kabbalists speculated about where the two trees in the Garden of Eden represent two different forms of Torah. The ordinary Torah that Jews follow belongs to the tree of knowledge and represents laws, restrictions and the precepts of tradition. The Tree of Life represents a utopian Torah as yet unknown to man, pulsating with the

unlimited energy. In the Messianic Age, the old Torah will be replaced by this new Torah from the Tree of Life. For the Kabbalists, these two types of Torah corresponded to the two pairs of tablets given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai. When Moses comes down with the first pair of tablets of the law, he finds that the Israelites have begun to worship the pagan golden calf. This represents a fall from grace and Moses drops the first Torah tablets and they crumble. These first tablets were a Torah of freedom. Moses returns to the mountain and receives a new pair of tablets which, for the Kabbalists, represented the second Torah characterized by the tree of knowledge. It is the Torah of the Laws that the sinful Israeli people proved to need. The fact that Exodus explicitly tells us that the new tablets would contain the same words as the previous ones was not taken into account by the Kabbalists.

The idea of two kinds of Torah was appealing to Radical Kabbalists like Nathan of Gaza and Cardozo. They believed that there was an outer Torah that was veiled with the Mosaic laws and rules. The veiled state of the Torah corresponds to the need of the human couple to dress after the Fall. The return to the original Torah, with which the tree of life is associated, implies a return to the naked paradisiacal state in Eden. The clothing, like the Torah's veils of law and tradition, is an expression of the separation of the parts from the unity. When the original unity is achieved, man returns to the naked state when he is not separated from the environment of creation. In these thoughts is the seed of a Kabbalistic antinomism. The true inner Torah beyond the veils represented the original perfected state. What is true in the outer Torah could be false and meaningless in the inner. For the vast majority of Kabbalists, the idea of another utopian Torah seems to have remained on an ideal plane. A few heretics interpreted it as a legitimization for antinomian practice. Bureu's speculations about the inhibiting effect of the Law and the hopes of a coming paradisiacal age do not originate exclusively from Christian ideas, but also from Jewish speculation and mysticism.

After the antinomian accounts of the Law, *the Lion of North Landa* continues to deal with this world and wildlife.

the animal. The material world is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. It is called Sodom because of its sinfulness and Egypt because here men live in captivity and bondage. The Beast, whose number is 666, constantly threatens to rise from the abyss and win people over to his side and then kill them (Bureus 1644: 16-17). Surprisingly, Bureus argues that it is the first Christian emperor Constantine who is the apocalyptic beast: 'The beast is Constantinus (the most all theology praises for a right Christian)' (Bureus 1644: 16). Few figures and few speeches have been surrounded by as much speculation as the apocalyptic beast and its speech 666. The Book of Revelation can be interpreted in a variety of ways, ranging from a historicist or preterist way where the content is placed in historical events, but also symbolic and idealistic interpretations are common where the motifs in the text are seen as eternal symbols of the struggle between evil and good. However, it is likely that John of Patmos, who lived in present-day Turkey, was referring to Rome when the text was written, and that it can be seen as a codified resistance writing against the Roman Empire (Barry 1999: 143). The seven heads of the wild animal refer to the seven previous emperors of Rome and the seventh head, which is mortally wounded but healed, alludes to the legend of the resurrected Nero, *Nero redivivus*. Scholars now tend to agree that the number 666 refers to the Emperor Nero, based on a Hebrew number mysticism of his name, which in Hebrew is *NRUN QSR*, which numerologically gives the number 666 (Barry 1999: 144-145). In the versions originating from the Eastern Roman Empire, the number is 666, but in Western Europe and Armenia, versions of the Book of Revelation have been found that instead give 616, which the runologist Sigurd Agrell argues would be the original number of the beast (Agrell 1927: 19).

In parts, *The Lion's Roar of Nord Landa* is very close to the Book of Revelation and retells its content. The reader is shown how the seal of the apocalypse is broken and how tribulations seek the earth. Death Thanatos ravages Europe and hell follows in his wake:

his name was Thanatos / Death / and hell followed him. And power was given to him over the host of the earth (Europa) to



die with sword / and with hunger / and with the death of the earth's will.

An eagle, identified with the fourth cherub, flies through the heavens and calls out in a loud voice: "We / We / We / them that boo on Earth" (Bureus 1644: 18). These three woes proclaimed by the eagle are specified as 3 x 3 woes which he partly names even in Hebrew:

Abomination / Pit and Snare. Pachad, Pachath, Pach  
Skörl / Regret and Evil. Shoa, Hova, Raga.  
Debt / temptation and evil.

If we look at the Hebrew meaning of 'pit' and 'snare', *pac-hath* and *pach*, they refer to animal traps, and we understand that in these last days man is caught like animals. The first three calamities are taken from Isaiah's description of God's judgment on the earth in 24:17: "Peril, pitfall and snare await you who dwell on the earth". *Skörl*, which in sixteenth-century Swedish means 'noise, whine, tumble, tumult' (Dahlgren 1961: 760) are tribulations that Bureus also takes from Isaiah, in chapter 47:11. The last trials Bureus has taken from the prayer Our Father in Matthew 6:12. The misfortunes do not end with these, but we read further that the well of the abyss opens and smoke rises as from a furnace and the sun is darkened. Locusts and scorpions ravage and demons haunt the people. The lord of evil is an angel of the abyss: "Hafwandes en Konnung öfwer sigh / an Angel out of the Abyss / whose Name in Hebrew is ABADDON, but in Greek he has the Name APOLTON" (Bureus 1644: 19). Here Bureus reproduces almost verbatim the ninth chapter of the Book of Revelation, which describes the events when the fifth trumpet sounds. Then Bureus comes up with an innovation when he has Jesus announce that: "I have the keys to heaven and death" and we then see an illustration of this key which is the innermost version of Bureus' *adulruna* symbol which resembles a cross and a heart (Bureus 1644: 21). This crucified heart is the key to death and hell and thus also to salvation and eternal life. Through darkness and the underworld, man can be saved and gain eternal life, and the way there is illustrated, according to Bureus, by this symbol. He explains

that anyone who does not understand this key cannot interpret Revelation, which in practice means that Bureus indirectly lets us understand that no one before him can have fully understood Revelation because it is he who found this key.

The Adulruna symbol is not only a key but also a map of the process of reaching paradise. In seven steps, the adept walks towards paradise, or into the temple towards the Holy of Holies. From St. Paul in Romans 8:29 he takes the description of this process:

Whom he (God) hath ordained / them  
hath he pruned /  
Whom he hath pruned / them hath he  
and called /  
Whom he hath called / them hath  
he and justified /  
Whom he has justified / them  
he has made glorious (Bureus 1644: 21)

Adulrunan with the crucified heart has the number 777 as his number. Bureus counts on mystical meanings in the number 777, which he realizes corresponds to the name of Cain's righteous descendant Mathusael, in whose name the Hebrew death letter *mem* is the first letter. The number 777 is thus related to: "Maveth, mors / Dödhen: sceol, Helwetet / Infernus" (Bureus 1644: 22). If one removes the heart from the cross, the sign is transformed into the sign of the wilderness and gets the numerological value 666. Bureus thus means that the cross without the heart, or Jesus, is the sign of the beast. This is a provocative conclusion, but logical based on Bureus' speculations, as the cross was the Romans' instrument of torture on which Jesus would have been hung. As is well known, the Romans are associated in these contexts with the Beast 666.

Bureus expands on these theories by comparing the two wild animals in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation with the two men who appear in the tenth chapter of First Samuel, when Saul is anointed king by Samuel during the royal election at Mizpah. According to Bureus, one of these men is called Thanatos and the other is called Sheol, Death and Hell, and they make a covenant with each other. In

Just as "the well" and "the abyss" are two expressions of the same thing, Death and Hell are the same, and their keys are accordingly two, and the Star as they are usually called is twofold. The number two has traditionally been associated in numerological mysticism with evil. One of the beasts rises from the sea and the other from the earth. The two beasts also correspond to the two Leviathan snakes from Isaiah 27:1, the swift snake and the ring-landed snake. One is Gog, this other Magog, the first being paganism and the emperor Hadrian and the second the papacy and the emperor Constantine (Bureus 1644: 23). The twofold nature of evil is as follows:

Thanatos - Scheol

Death - Hell

The Well - The Abyss

The beast with seven heads and ten horns - The beast with two horns and speech like a dragon

Leviathan, the fast snake - Leviathan, the coiling snake

Gog - Magog

Death - The Shadow of Death

The Beast - The Beast's Beast

Hadrian - Constantine

Paganism - The Papacy

We can see from this table that Bureus wants to emphasize that the Roman Catholic Church is a follower of paganism, that it is the shadow of death and the seat of the beast. Using a kabbalistic calculation based on the numerical values of the Greek letters of the name Thanatos, Bureus concludes that his number is 631, but explains that this number, interpreted kabbalistically, must be reversed to reveal its true meaning, which is 136, a year central to Bureus associated with Hadrian. Bureus explains that Kabbalah has been despised and hidden and therefore people have not been able to read the Bible correctly and have only now been able to find the truth: "So long has the veil hung over their eyes / and it was impossible to find the truths" (Bureus 1644: 24). In the word *rabbim*, *RBIM*, Bureus finds through *notarikon* the names of

four peoples, R as in the Romans, B as in the Babylonians, I as in the Javaninim, which is the Hebrew name for the Ionians, i.e. the Greeks, and finally M as in the Medes.

The two-fold star mentioned by Bureus is, among other things, Saturn, which is ominous in astrology. Saturn is the star that holds the key to the bottomless pit. Bureus writes that: "Hwi thenna Stjärnan kallas Saturnus wäller thet at Han höls uthi Hedendomen waraen fader för alla theras Afgudar / hwilka i Skrif- ten kallas Styggelser" (Bureus 1644: 27). The other half of the double star is the planet Mars, which holds the key to the well of hell. Saturn is the father of the pagan gods, Bureus proclaims, while Mars is responsible for the saints and the papal priesthood, which Bureus equates with the scorpions of the apocalypse. Based on astrological reasoning that the planet Mars belongs to the constellation of Scorpio, Bureus proclaims that the Catholic priests are the scorpions that haunt humanity and that the Jesuits are the poisonous tails of the scorpions. He believes that the underlying paganism of the Roman Catholic Church is revealed by their adoption of several pagan festivals. Saturn and Mars being the two representatives of the evil double star is in line with astrology's view of these planets, in particular how they were interpreted during this time. However, the two planets begin to be gently valorized by natural magicians during the Renaissance such as Ficino in whose writings they are given positive qualities, provided their powers are used carefully. In *The Lion's Roar of the North*, however, they represent political and religious principles without any positive attributes.

The Pope represents the old serpent and the Antichrist. The two horns of the second beast in Revelation, which speaks like a dragon, represent the Catholic Church's use of the Law and the Gospels. The Pope, Bureus thunders, has turned the Law into excommunications punishable by worldly power, the "Weldsliga Swärdet", and the Gospels have become nothing more than sacrificial masses and indulgences (Bureus 1644: 32). Bureus interprets the wound that the beast receives in verse 13 as the time when the Goths and Lombards fought the Roman Empire, which of course Bureus perceives as something heroic, while the healing of the wound was when Charlemagne (742-814) Christmas

day in 800 was crowned the new Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III, with the title 'Carolus Augustus, the great and peaceful Emperor of Rome'.

In a couple of short paragraphs with headlines about the years between 603 and 711, ruled by the abyssal angel Abaddon and the god of death Thanatos, Bureus briefly refers to Luther, who writes in *Chronologia* that Muhammad begins to spread his teachings and that the Muslims take over Spain. He certainly calls Mohammed's message a corrupt doctrine, but does not enter into a longer polemic against Islam, because in these final years of the Thirty Years' War he is fully occupied with the reprehensibility of the Catholic Church. Bureus's interest in Arabic may also have influenced his judgment of Islam, and just as he does not criticize Judaism, his opposition to Islam is non-existent. In the grand political arena of sixteenth-century Europe, the antagonists were the papacy and the Protestant princes.

### *10.2 The second Azara: The time of Jan Huss and the emergence of Luther*

After these brief passages on Islam, we reach the second ledge of the North Landa Lion's Ride into the Temple, which, like the first, bears the name Azara. This second Azara is the inner courtyard of the temple and corresponds to the time of the appearance of Jan Hus, which Bureus dates to 1396.

In this part of the book, Bureus calculates the numerical value of the star that falls to earth after the second angel blows his trumpet in the eighth chapter of Revelation, where we read: 'a great star from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. And the name of the star is Wormwood. And a third of the rivers became wormwood, and many people died of the water, because it had become bitter.' Bureus tells us that the numerical value of wormwood is to be calculated from its Greek name *absinthium* and the numerical value of the Greek letters, and arrives at the number 111. These three ones in 111 show us, Bureus explains, that the star whose name is wormwood is actually three stars, namely

Mercury, Jupiter and Venus. These represent a positive force that teaches man to follow God's ways. Bureus interprets the wormwood star that comes with death as a positive force that brings man to salvation through death.

The number three and the three planets, Mercury, Jupiter and Venus, used to be perceived in medieval and Renaissance magical manuals as positive, while the number two, headed by Mars and Saturn, represented ominous powers. Mercury, Jupiter and Venus are also astrological expressions for the three men who show humanity the right path to the kingdom of God, away from the teachings of Catholicism, i.e. Jan Huss, Martin Luther and Johannes Bureus (Bureus 1644: 36). The fact that Bureus chooses to let the planet Venus represent himself and his deeds is indicative of the role he attributes to himself. We can probably ignore the fact that Venus, the morning and evening star, represents the fallen angel Lucifer in the Old Testament, even if it would be interesting from a Gnostic interpretation of Bureus' teachings, but it is rather its role in the New Testament that Bureus wants to associate himself with. In Revelation 22:16, it is Christ himself who is symbolized by the "Morning Star", and in 2 Peter 1:9, the "Morning Star" speaks of Christ's return. Perhaps Bureus perceived himself as this Morning Star, foreshadowing the return of Christ in the last days.

Bureus continues with a long tribute to Jan Huss, or Johan Huss as he also writes, probably because the two are thus given the same name. Huss corresponds with both Mercury and the cherub in Ezekiel that has a human face. Jan Huss, writes Bureus, "preached the pure Word of God against Pāwen and his Dieflian Doctrine" (Bureus 1644: 38). Bureus then expresses a Gothic religious view of geography in which the north represents the compass point from which the true doctrine will be proclaimed. All three stars will rise north of Rome and the papacy, and be the ones to crush Babel (Rome). Bureus writes that: "Johan Huss was then the first among the destroyers of Babel who would come North after in Ararat / that is Bohemia after they have recently come from Armenia where Noe Archt wanted / and live highest in Europe among the mountains" (Bureus 1644: 40). In the Gothic interpretation of

According to the Bible, after the Flood, people first sought out the northern lands of Europe. Olof Rudbeck develops these speculations in *Atlantican* and is one of the first to develop a theory of why human high cultures emerged by water (King 2005: 62). Rudbeck wondered how the animals and people from the Ark could find any food after the Flood. Apart from themselves, all land creatures had died. Rudbeck concluded that they must have lived on fish in the early days and that the North was particularly rich in fish. The Gothic history was based on the Bible and ancient myths, but also on the natural sciences of the time. The needle of the compass always points north, it was noted, and in the same way nature has taught the hearts of men to turn towards their original homeland in the north, like the magnet in a compass (King 2005: 63).

Under the heading 'Here is the tridie Teknet in Stiernorne/Name-ly/Uthi MERCVRIO" analyzes Bureus' meaning of the astrological symbol of Mercury. It consists of three parts, the lower part in the form of an equal-armed cross corresponding to the two Azara, while the circle in the middle is Harel and the topmost semicircle is Ariel himself, facing upwards towards infinity (Bureus 1644: 43). Given Bureus' familiarity with *the Monas Hieroglyphica* and its basis in an expanded version of the Mercury sign, it is likely that this speculation, like the complex models for the adalruna symbol, may have been inspired by John Dee.

Like the section on the outer court and the lower ledge of Azara, this section on the inner court concludes with passages on the misfortunes of the fourteenth century, headed by the abyssal angels Abaddon and Apollyon, again associated with Islam, but now with the advance of the Turks. Before that, however, Bureus devoted a page to an argument in which Huss and Luther represent the two pillars of *Jacob* and *Boaz* in Solomon's Temple (Bureus 1644: 44-45).

With the next part of *The Lion's Roar of the North Country*, the reader comes on his journey to the next level of the temple and the time in history when Luther appears, which Bureus dates to 1530. Luther proclaims:





From the Bureus seal book



"the fall / fall is then the great City of Babylon" and we are told that the second of the three preachers of the true doctrine appears on Earth at this time (Bureus 1644: 48). Luther corresponds with the planet Jupiter, which Bureus calls Fortuna Major, the great fortune. Bureus repeats an association that recurs in his various writings that Jupiter is the same as Jove and Jehovah, the names of the Roman and Jewish supergods respectively. Bureus calculates that the time between Luther's death in 1546 and the apocalyptic year of 1666 is 120 years, which are years of trial. Bureus calculates that the word for 'deluge', *DILVVIVM* (Latin *diluvium*), conceals the year 1567, which is the year when the Lord becomes king forever, or as Bureus writes: "If one takes the memorial sign / *DILVVIVM*. About whose FLOOD David / by the Spirit of God / so sings: The LORD (Jehovah) sits to make a flood: and the LORD will be a King for ever" (Bureus 1644: 55). Bureus then goes on to explain that Luther is the crane, while Huss is the swallow. The reasoning is based on a song written by Hezekiah, king of Judah, in Isaiah 38:14: "I mourned like a swallow, like a crane, I sighed like a dove", and in Jeremiah 8:7: "Even the heron under heaven knows his appointed time, and the turtledove, the swallow and the crane take note of the time of his return". Bureus thus connects Christ and his three Reformed prophets with not only Ezekiel's four cherubim, but also with four birds, as well as their corresponding crucial years in history, and their planetary aspects. Jesus is called the "Sun of Righteousness" and the highest world in *Adulruna Redivi- vas* runic mysticism is illustrated by the sun-beaming rune of Thor. The correspondences are thus as follows:

Man, Swallow, Mercury, Jan Huss 1396  
 Taurus, Crane, Jupiter, Martin Luther 1530  
 The Lion, the Turtledove, Venus, Johannes Bureus 1614  
 (1613) The Eagle, the Stork, the Sun, Jesus Christ 1647

Bureus has a bombastic exposition of how the Book of Revelation proclaims the year of John Bureus' birth. The year 1568 when Bureus is born is what is predicted in the tenth chapter of Revelation, where we can read: "And I saw another great angel coming

came down from heaven. And he was clothed with a cloud, and the rainbow was upon his head; and his face was like the sun, and his bones like pillars of fire: and in his hand was an open little scroll. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth. And he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth." This gives the reader an explanation of the meaning of the title of *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*. Bureus is the herald who, through his Gothic Kabbalah, reveals the hidden truth that is concealed in both the Bible and nature. He identifies the time of his own birth as the time of the 'Then uthlowfade Morning Star', which is the planet Venus (Bureus 1644: 58). He draws parallels between Venus and the brazen altar mentioned in Second Kings chapter 16: "Then he took away the brazen altar, which had stood before the Lord in the front of the temple, and placed it on the north side of the new altar". The placement of the brazen altar in the north is consistent with Bureus' Gothic view of geography. Second Kings 16:15 also states that the brazen altar is to be used for sign interpretation, which is something Bureus does in his esoteric and apocalyptic work. In other words, the Bible confirms his own importance.

Under the heading for 1600, Bureus tells us that in 1613 in Husby in Bergslagen, i.e. during the journey when he received his revelation in Tuna, he heard about a strange oak tree that had been found in Güstrow in northern German Mecklenburg in 1600. In the oak, which had been cut down and split, the number 4771 was written in pitch black. Bureus believed that Jesus died on the cross in 3994 after the creation of the world and calculated that the oak's number was this year and the number 777. The number 777 is interpreted by Bureus as the number of the cross, which lies between the number 666 of the beast and Jesus' own number 888. By analyzing the story of the oak tree in Güstrow, Bureus draws the logical conclusion that Jesus' cross must have been made of oak wood (Bureus 1644: 61). Bureus' source for the story of the oak tree in Güstrow was Johannes Colerus' *Oeconomia* of 1640. Bureus objects to the fact that a "learned man" claimed that the numbers in the oak should be 4781, but that Colerus writes the correct year 4771. However, Colerus wrote in earlier editions of his work the number that Bureus considered incorrect, which shows that Bureus had access to several versions of

In Bureus *Nymäre Wijsor* song 11, verses 42-46, he retells the story of the oak in verse form.

Bureus has a kabbalistic method of removing a (1) from numbers he is counting on, so that their true meaning can be revealed. When he writes in *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* that Venus will rule in the year 1645, we can interpret it partly as the year of the book's distribution, but perhaps above all the year of its printing in 1644. Similarly, Bureus has an explanation in the following section about the year 1614 about this double meaning. He names the year with IVDI- CIVM, the judgment. It is partly the year 1614 when he begins to work as a prophet, but also the year 1613 when he received his enlightenment. He writes about when he on December 5, "Tå man alment skreff IVDICIVM. Hwilken Dag är ibland dem som hör til thet året 1614", is told the mystical words *rIVos IaM CLaVDe pVer sat prata bIberVnt* which contains the year of the final judgment 1673 (Bureus 1644: 65). However, if we calculate the meaning of IVDICIVM we get the year 1613, the year in which we know, according to sources such as *Cabbalistica*, he received his enlightenment in Tuna. One of the reasons for Bureus' cabbalistic method of subtracting one from a number stems from the fact that Bureus makes an analogy between conception and birth and other phenomena in his calculations. His conception as a human being was in 1567, while his birth was in 1568. Similarly, his spiritual conception was in 1613, while he comes into the world as a newborn prophet in 1614.

Bureus calculates the year 1614 based on the number 1290 found in Daniel chapter 12:11: "From the time when the daily sacrifice is abolished and a desecration is set up, 1290 days shall pass". By adding this number to the year 324 when Emperor Constantine introduced the papacy, Bureus arrives at 1614. Bureus is quite creative in his solutions when he has to make different years fit into his apocalyptic models. Years can be moved back and forth on the grounds that it is the hidden Kabbalistics he uses to reveal the hidden truths. Bureus goes on to show how the year 1614 (1613) is hidden in other sentences, such as *stVLta MVnDI iLIclt gratla*.

In a section on Luther, Bureus praises his struggle to get the Bible translated into German. He explains that it is God himself who uses Luther to get the Bible translated. Bureus goes on to say that God worked through Johan Reuchlin to establish education in Hebrew and through Johan Gutenberg for the printing press to come into being and help the Bible to spread (Bureus 1644: 67). It is easy to understand the importance of these three Germans in Bureus' worldview. Luther brings Protestantism, Reuchlin brings Kabbalah and Hebrew, and Gutenberg makes it possible for his apocalyptic book *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* to be printed and distributed. Bureus, with his admiration for language and his mysticism of letters, celebrated the art of printing as the greatest proof to date of the creative power of the human spirit (Friberg 1945: 139). Reuchlin's contribution to the spread of Hebrew also had a political dimension for Protestant ideologues. The emphasis on Hebrew, like the appreciation of the vernacular languages, in Bureus's case Swedish, was linked to the opposition to the Pope and the Catholic Church's claim that only Latin should be spoken within the Church. Martin Luther, who would later make anti-Semitic statements, nevertheless emphasized the special status of Hebrew (Beitchman 1998: 129). Greek and Hebrew could be used as arguments to claim that Protestant doctrines went back to older truths than what was preached in Latin in the Catholic Church.

It is a conscious and well-considered choice for Bureus to write his last major work in Swedish. Writing in one's own language was an important part of the struggle for Protestantism and Gothic history. With humanism and the Reformation, interest in the vernacular languages increased, and Latin's unchallenged position among scholars gradually began to decline. The Bible was translated into new languages and, with Luther, the language of the Protestant churches shifted from Latin to the vernacular. New spheres of power, both religious and secular, began to compete with Rome. This competition also included an ideological struggle over the importance of Latin in relation to other, national, languages. Gustav Vasa wanted to create a nation state and Protestantism became part of the national resistance against the Pope and the Church. It was certainly the papal faithful Johannes Magnus who first

expressed the desire for a translation of the Bible into Swedish. Gustav Vasa believed that the country's priests were ignorant and could not preach the word of God to the people. The Bible must therefore be available in the vernacular, and by freeing the Church from the Catholic Church, Vasa could gain greater control over Sweden. The fact that Bureus, as one of the foremost intellectuals in the growing Protestant superpower, chose to write his apocalypse in Swedish can be interpreted as a religious as well as politically motivated choice.

Although *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* makes essentially no mention of political events in Bureus's time, we must understand it in the context of the Thirty Years' War. In a number of passages in the book, he explicitly mentions events in the war, as for example in a biblically interpreted discussion of how the war begins in 1618 with the Protestant Christians, or in short "Christians" as Bureus sees it since the Pope for him represents paganism, rising against the Roman power. The concrete references to the war are few, although the dates mentioned in connection with it could be interpreted as references to events in the war, explained in biblical terms. One such example could be a reference to August 28, 1626, possibly referring to the battle of Lutter am Barenberge, which ended on August 27 (Bureus 1644: 71). It resulted in a devastating defeat for the 20,000-strong Protestant army, led by the Danish King Christian IV. After the battle, Christian IV was forced to seek peace with the Emperor and the Catholic League (Englund 1997: 67). The Protestant defeat ended the Lower Saxon-Danish phase of the Thirty Years' War, which lasted from 1623 to 1629, and then entered the phase when the Swedes entered the arena and initiated the Swedish-German phase, between 1630 and 1635, and the final Swedish-French phase, 1635-1648. For a period at the beginning of the war, the message was spread that the Danish king was the North Atlantic Lion who would save the Protestants, but with Denmark's victory at Lutter am Barenberge, Gustav II Adolf would take over the role of 'der Löwe aus Mitternacht'.

In an argument in a short section on the year 1621, Bureus reveals that the key of the papacy and hell is hidden in the number 331, while the key of the everlasting gospel is found in the number 1290. Bureus explains that

The gates of hell were closed in 331. Adding these speeches of good and evil gives 1621. It is not clear how this year should be understood in a wider context. The Swedes conquer Riga from the Poles and the Livonian period 1621-1625 begins, Bureus complains in his diary about being suspected by the king of heresy, but none of this is apparent when he writes about the year 1621 in *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*. The same applies to a number of years between 1626 and 1641, which are devoted to complicated explanations of how the years are connected to apocalyptic years such as 1666. The year 1626 is related to the year 1666 because the colors of the rainbow occur 40° from its center, which corresponds to Jesus, the "Sun of Righteousness". Under the heading for 1628 and 1629, he refers to the Hermetic Emerald Tablet, which contains the key esoteric formula 'as above, so below'. The Emerald Tablet, *Tabula Smaragdina*, originates from Hellenism and has been translated countless times and is considered one of the true key texts of esotericism. A famous translation was made by the alchemist and scientist Isaac Newton in 1680. The short text describes how the Philosopher's Stone should be prepared. For Bureus, it fits into his view of the apocalypse. The events of the apocalypse correspond to the refinement of metals by alchemy and the production of the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life, which we will return to in the final part of the thesis.

Under the heading for the year 1641 we learn the names of the four cherubs, of whom he himself is one. They bear traditional angelic names such as Eromiel, Uriel, Zaniel and Azaela. Uriel is the most common of these names in esoteric texts from the Renaissance. Uriel appears as one of four angels in Agrippa's tables in *De occulta philosophia*, while the other three have other names.

### 10.3 *Hekal, the upper ledge*

The significance of what begins to happen in 1641 is explained by the typically cumbersome subtitle of the book: "Here begins the Kingdom of Christ / Which is likened to Solomon's. For he is here first anointed as king over Israel / while the king David

lefwer / same Dagħ as Adonijah uphoff sigh for the king of Israel". We are with this year on the stairway to the holy of holies in the temple of Salo-mo. The six remaining years to the first judgment in 1647 are likened to six steps, and we can conclude that this corresponds to the six steps up from the material plane in Bureu's seven-slab height where six out of seven runes represent an ascent towards enlightenment. The reader approaches step by step the fire burning on the copper altar in the temple. This fire is the same as the light of the morning star Venus, and Bureus writes: "The fire that was lit here on the Copper Altar / is a Morning Star / and shines over the whole world" (Bureus 1644: 85).

Using Kabbalah, Bureus calculates the numerical value of the archangel Michael, who appears in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelation: 'And there was a battle in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought against them'. In Michael's name is hidden the number 101 and Bureus that Michael is the one who proclaims that "Uthan migh so funnen i intet" (Bureus 1644: 88). Bureus then develops a reasoning about how Huss and Luther were both Germans, while he is Swedish and how Germans and Swedes are brothers in the same household and family. He then argues that the letter **T** is the nineteenth letter and therefore linked to the moon, and that **T** symbolizes the cross while the letter **V** symbolizes an opened book (Bureus 1644: 90).

The year 1647 corresponds to the letter *omega* in the Greek alphabet. He has taken the messianic meaning of the letter from Revelation 1:8, where Christ calls himself *alpha* and *omega*, the beginning and fulfillment of all things. Omega is the forty-seventh letter in Bureu's key to the Bible in the introduction to the book. By starting from the year when the oak tree in Güstrow was cut down in 1600 and adding it to the numerical value he gives to omega, he arrives at the year 1647, which, based on the Bible's meaning of omega, means the year of completion. Bureus calls this year the true IVDICIVM, or *Mishpat*, that is, 'the judgment'. In IVDICIVM, as we know, the number 1613 is hidden, but with the Kabbalisticism of the Northern Lion we must take into account the years between the birth of Christ and his death, which in the book is counted as 34 years. If we add 1613 to 34, we end up in



1647. Sometimes Bureus reckons that Jesus died at 33, but by bringing in conception and his number mysticism where one is subtracted from a number, he manages to correct the calculations to fit smoothly into his model.

Bureus explains the difference between the Hebrew *Mishpat* and *Din*, the former denoting the year 1647 and the latter the year 1674, where we should note that 47 and 74 have the same numbers reversed. 1647 represents *Mishpat* and the first judgment and 1674 represents *Din* and the final judgment (Bureus 1644: 93). In Kabbalah, the principle of *Din* in particular plays an important role in explaining both how the world is created and in describing its eschatological course. The tree of life with its ten sefirot represents various attributes of God. Two of the characteristics that, according to the Kabbalists, most clearly influence human existence are God's mercy and his judgmental side. The lowest sephirah, Malkuth, and the human world are constantly affected by God's grace and His judgments, as the Old Testament testifies. On the tree of life, the sephirah Chesed represents God's gracious side, while the sephirah Geburah or *Din* represents God's stern and judgmental side. Chesed governs the forces in life that unite, connect and associate, while *Din* is the principle that divides, draws boundaries and analyzes. Chesed and *Din* are at the top of the seven sefirot that correspond to creation and the seven days. Chesed and *Din* thus exert a fundamental influence on creation. When these two attributes of God are in balance, they act harmoniously with the other sefirot. Chesed belongs to the right side of the tree of life and *Din* to the left. The left side of the tree of life is associated with the principles that create boundaries and laws and is called the 'pillar of rigor'. The right side is associated with the principles that create unity and forgiveness and is called the "pillar of grace". Bureus believes that man has two judgments to expect, but also two forgivings if he is righteous. In other words, he will experience God's judgmental side as well as his gracious side.

The reversal of years continues when, under the heading for 1665, Bureus instructs the reader to calculate the year when signs appeared in the moon. By subtracting the lunar number 19, which he explains is the sum of the important numbers 12 and 7, the year 1646 appears. Under this



he provides us with another key in the form of a table in which we are instead given the numbers 1666 and which, by the same count, takes us back to 1647. Bureus then lets us jump back in time to 1657 when, in our temple walk, we reach the highest ledge called HAREL. The page of the book is crowned by Bureus' Adulrunian cross. When the reader reaches this part of the temple, Bureus explains the different worlds of creation and eschatological history: "Thetta Christi or Solomon's Kingdom and Eagle's Nest have many names" and Bureus lists names such as Third Heaven, Second Heaven, Paradise, Garden of Eden, Promised Land, New Earth and New Jerusalem (Bureus 1644: 100-103). In accordance with Bureus and the Renaissance concept of a threefold reality, Bureus explains that the Moon and silver belong to the middle world, the Morning Star Venus and the metal copper belong to the lower world, while the Sun and gold belong to the upper world. In *De occulta philosophia*, Agrippa systematized the correspondences and magic associated with the three worlds, and although Bureus does not refer directly to Agrippa's three-world system, he is close in terms of thought. It is in the thought pattern of the time that the green planet Venus is associated with nature and the lower world, while the sun corresponds to the upper spiritual world, with the moon occupying an intermediate position.

In addition to these worlds, both Agrippa and Bureus have a lower, infernal world with many names. Bureus calls it *Meon Tannin*, *Habitaculum Draconum* or in Swedish Draka Boning. It is also called grave, mine, pit, ball, Scheol, and Hell. We are told that iron belongs to this sphere ruled by Mars, which is the star named Remphan mentioned together with Moloch in Acts 7:43. *Remphan* or *Romphas* is usually associated in other contexts with the other dark planet Saturn. With the description of Hell, Bureus gives us another reference to the correspondence doctrine inherent in his writings. He also calculates that the Hebrew word for iron corresponds to the number 239, which multiplied by four becomes 1673. Bureus describes how the Devil and the fallen angels are locked in the darkness of the abyss, but that life can enter the abyss the day the door is unlocked:

"The darkness is out in the Abyss / Bottomless / But Liws can enter the Well when the hatch or lid is opened" (Bureus 1644: 106).

After 1666, six thousand years will pass until 1672. In a table, we see how each year from 1667 onwards corresponds to a thousand years each, although Bureus then adds in the text that each day during these years counts as a thousand years. When we finally reach 1673, the reader encounters Jesus holding the sun, the seventh star, in his hand. We have thus passed through all seven planets of Renaissance cosmology on our way to the Holy of Holies in the Temple. We started with Saturn and Mars, the evil planets, then passed the three benevolent planets Mercury, Jupiter and Venus, and finally arrived at the seventh star, the Sun, via the Moon and its signs.

The reader approaches the golden altar of ARIEL in this palace of wisdom. We are told that, for better or worse, the tree of knowledge stands at the altar and that human reason must return here. Again the words *rIVos IaM CLaVDe pVer sat prata blberVnt* are repeated, denoting this year and this place in the temple. It is God himself who says these words to his only son Jesus, and Bureus translates their meaning: "Now shut up the Renniles / my Arrow, the Angels are still awake" (Bureus 1644: 110). As mentioned earlier, Bureus heard these words in Tuna in 1613.

#### *10.4 Adytum and the altar of Ariel*

With the year 1674 we have reached *the adytum*, the innermost room of the temple, and the altar ARIEL itself. In front of the altar and the holy of holies hangs the inner veil, *the parocheth*, which separates *the Hekhal*, the temple, from *the Kadosh Kadoshim*, the holy of holies. The veil is mentioned in Hebrews 8: "Behind the second veil was the room called the Holy of Holies. There stood a golden altar of incense and the Ark of the Covenant, which was completely overlaid with gold". With Christ, the new covenant begins and the sacrificial blood of goats and calves has been replaced by the more magnificent sacrifice, the blood of Jesus. Bureus reproduces this part of Hebrews almost verbatim. In Matthew chapter 27 we can

read how the pardon is torn in two the moment Jesus dies. The earth shakes and the rocks fall. Many bodies of saints come to life. The year when God's eternal kingdom begins is, according to Bureus, 1675, and he finds support for this in Deuteronomy 31, where the spoils of war are divided and 675 sheep are given to the Lord, as well as 16,750 gold shekels. Bureus calculates that if you subtract 365 from 6000, the total age of the earth from creation to its destruction is 5635 years. At the same time, we should remember that a year, or even a day, in Bureus' eschatology can mean a thousand years. It is therefore not obvious that he envisioned the apocalypse during the earthly sixteenth century.

With the coming of the Kingdom of God, we are given a detailed description of the new kingdom, which has countless names. It is a new Eden, a new Jerusalem, which needs no sun because it is a sun itself. It is a supralunar paradise that has the moon as its footstool. We can identify this process with how the Kabbalah describes a possible ascent through the sefirot associated with the moon, Mercury and Venus, and then by passing through the curtain, *the parocheth*, to reach the sefira Tifaret of the sun and the Messiah.

Bureus pays tribute to gold, which belongs to the world of the Sun and the kingdom of the gods. It was the foremost of the magicians, the priests of the East, he explains, and in the spirit of alchemy he calls gold the most active of all things (Bureus 1644:130). Before he concludes the section on the final year 1675, he tells us that the four cherubim, of which he is one, are on the curtain that he calls God's chariot, *Merkaba*, after the description in Ezekiel. This is a direct reference to *Merkaba* and a hint that Bureu's Kabbalah has some ideological influences from, or at least similarities with, the early Jewish Merkaba mysticism. The description of the kingdom of God concludes with the biblical words: "As paradise was called the promised land where milk flows: so Eden is called a land where honey flows" (Bureus 1644: 132).

From Revelation 20 we learn that after Armageddon Satan will be thrown into the abyss, to be released for a short time after the Millennium: "He seized the dragon - the old serpent, who is Satan himself - and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him down

into the bottomless pit, which he then closed and locked. And he sealed the door so that he could deceive the people no longer, until the thousand years had passed. Then he will be let out again for a short time". With these biblical words as a starting point, Bureus gives a detailed account of the abyss and its various names and levels, which are, to name a few: *Eretztachtioth*, *Terra inferorum*, the lower Earth; *Tachtioth haaretz*, *Inferiora Terræ*, the lower room of the Earth; *Katotera meretes ges*, *Inferiores partes terræ*, the lowest room of the Earth, where, according to Bureus, Jesus would have been during the time in the Kingdom of the Dead; *Bor thachtioth*, *Lacus inferorum*, the lowest hollow, or ball as Bureus writes; *Skeol thachthith*; *Thanatos Mors*, Death, *Meon Thannim*, the Dragon's abode, and a place called *Gezera*, which he describes as a secluded land and a wilderness. It is out here that the goat driven out to Asasel (Ghazazel, as he writes) in the Old Testament ends up. He goes on to mention *Abyss* and *Thehom*, which he says are in the heart of the sea. He reveals that one should be careful because where the sea and water are mentioned, Hell and the Abyss are often also referred to (Bureus 1644: 132-133).

As *the Ride of the Northern Lions* draws to a close, the reader is given another key where we learn that the first cherub that resembled a man came with the heather, or lightning, in 1396, then the ox came in 1530 with the voices, thirdly the lion-king came with the thunder, or thunder, in 1614, while the eagle came with the earthquake in 1647 and finally the Lord comes with the word of God in 1673 and cleaves the world with his two-edged sword. The fact that this chapter is crowned with the letter Y, which is also the second highest rune in Bureu's seven-letter ladder, is significant. The letter, which in esoteric contexts should be interpreted as a Pythagorean Y, divides the world between the righteous and the unrighteous. It is found in *Monas Hieroglyphica* by John Dee (Håkansson 2001: 166). As a rune, it represents the step before entering the gate of God/Thor.

The book ends with Bureus listing in a table the most important dates in his eschatology, which he believes are hidden in Jesus' last words on the cross. This is followed by a couple of his URNA squares with references to RUNA, ALRUNA and ADULRUNA. On the last page he concludes by explaining that the final year

1674 can be deduced from the fact that he used the three alphabets of Greek, Latin and Hebrew in his Kabbalistic key to the Bible. Together, according to his calculation, there are 74 letters. "Then Öron hafwer han höre" will be Nordlandalejonet's last words in the book, before the place and year of printing, "Upsala 1644".





### III Analysis and conclusions

In this third part of the thesis I intend to:

- 1) discuss how Faivre's criteria for esotericism are applicable to Bureu's writings;
- 2) analyze the Burean runes in relation to the emblematic tradition;
- 3) examine and structure Bureu's apocalypticism;
- 4) and finally discuss the legacy of Bureus in Swedish esotericism and Gothicism.

## 11 Bureus' Gothic Kabbalah and Western Esotericism

At first glance, Bureu's texts appear incomprehensible and delirium-ric, but a closer analysis of the structure and content of the texts reveals a systematic approach that reveals that they are the result of a lifetime of intellectual work. Moreover, when we compare Bureu's texts with ideas in circulation at the time, as well as with the direct references he himself gives, the Gothic Kabbalah emerges as a product typical of its time and genre. The typicality of Bureu's work does not mean that the ideas were commonplace or that the performances were widespread, but that they were typical of the time within the context in which he found himself. The contextual framing that has guided this thesis is Faivre's, despite my objection to the specifically Western. Even if Bureu's esotericism is classified as European and Gothic, the discourse becomes tangible by applying the criteria formulated by Faivre. The question then is how well Bureu's Adulrunian mysticism and Gothic Kabbalah correspond to Antoine Faivre's criteria for Western esotericism? Faivre's six criteria are 1) the correspondences, 2) the living nature, 3) conceptions and mediations, 4) the transmutation experience, and 5) correspondences and 6) transmission. The last two are not primary but relative and need not be found in all esotericism.

The doctrine of correspondence is the ontological basis of the Renaissance view of magic. Renaissance magic is based on the theory that everything is a unity that is connected by a web of supernatural forces.



provisions, links and reflections. The magician makes use of the inherent attraction and sympathy of the universe and, for Ficino, magic is linked to love and eroticism. The universe is permeated by an erotic force that binds different objects together and, by controlling this force, the magician can exert influence on different objects in the world. The view of the connection between eroticism and magic in Renaissance magic is developed by the scholar Ioan P. Couliano in his now classic 1987 study *Eros And Magic In the Renaissance*, where he explains that the magical power of love was not a poetic metaphor but was perceived by Ficino and his followers as a physically acting force:

"Love's arrows", held in high esteem by the French poets of the Pléiade, were not for Ficino a mere metaphor. They were equipped with invisible pneumatic tips able to inflict severe damage on the person shot (Couliano 1984/ 1987: 30).

In Wouter J. Hanegraaff's article "Sympathy Or the Devil: Renaissance Magic And the Ambivalence of Idols" discusses what practical Renaissance magic could look like. The basic premise of the practice is the theory that love and magic are one:

The key to his approach lies in the fundamental doctrine of sympathy. In considering the meaning of "sympathetic magic", one easily forgets the everyday-meaning of the word "sympathy". But for Ficino, sympathy was an obvious equivalent for love (amor). Love was the foundation of magic (...). As we will see, this way of describing the dynamics of cosmic attraction was not "merely symbolic", but was intended with a realism which is hard for us to understand today. Moreover, these neoplatonists were not thinking of "platonic love"! Frequently the connotations are explicitly sexual (Hanegraaff 2000: 11).

Correspondences form a central part of Adulrunian argumentation. The runes not only represent different principles, but on a spiritual level directly correspond to them. This is what Bureus tries to show in the universal Adulrunan where the individual runes emanate. The seven runes in the seven-syllable height, that is, the



## En Nyfil til Cabalam.

1	Α	α	I	10	ι	ι	X	100	ק	ס	C
2	Β	β		20	κ	κ		200	ך	ס	
3	Γ	γ		30	λ	λ		300	ש	ט	
4	Δ	δ		40	μ	μ		400	ת	υ	
5	Ε	ε	V	50	ν	ν	L	500	ך	φ	D
6	Ϛ	ς		60	ο	ξ		600	ם	χ	
7	Ζ	ζ		70	υ	ο		700	י	ψ	
8	Η	η		80	φ	ω		800	ף	ω	
9	Θ	θ		90	ζ			900	ץ		
								1000	Ν	A	M

## En en Biblist Nyfil.

Then och så wiffser Sidsta åhren.

A	1	L	11	X	21	θ	31	σ	41	γ	51	ב	61	ם	71
B	2	M	12	Y	22	ι	32	τ	42	η	52	ο	62	י	72
C	3	N	13	Z	23	κ	33	υ	43	γ	53	υ	63	ף	73
D	4	O	14	α	24	λ	34	φ	44	ι	54	פ	64	ץ	74
E	5	P	15	β	25	μ	35	χ	45	η	55	ז	65		
F	6	Q	16	γ	26	ν	36	ψ	46	ט	56	ק	66		
G	7	R	17	δ	27	ξ	37	ω	47	י	57	ך	67		
H	8	S	18	ε	28	ο	38	Ν	48	כ	58	ש	68		
I	9	T	19	ζ	29	ω	39	כ	49	ל	59	ת	69		
K	10	V	20	η	30	φ	40	λ	50	מ	60	ך	70		

CLaVDIte IaM rIVos pVerl fac  
prata blberVnt.

vertical line, corresponds to the sciences, the spiritual levels of man, alchemical steps and biblical events (e.g. Bureus N 24, pp. 53 and 76; Bureus 1644: 6-7). Bureus can find most things in this seven-degree line. Together with the number three, the seven forms the basic structure of existence, which is found at all levels.

Viewed in a different way from the seven-level division, man consists of three parts (SAL, *soul, spirit, body*), just as creation is made up of earth, water and air. God, like man, is triune, as Bureus tries to convince us that the ancient Sveo-Goths knew with their trinity TOF. In the same spirit, Bureus explains that the Svea kingdom consists of the three authorities represented by the three crowns. Reality is revealed in three forms: scripture, macrocosm and microcosm, and these express the same universal truth. The whole world is permeated by signs and symbols, which is consistent with Faivre's explanation of the doctrine of correspondence: 'The entire universe is, as it were, a theater of mirrors, an ensemble of hieroglyphs to be deciphered (Faivre i den Broek and Hanegraaff 1998: 119).

In *Nord Landa Lejonens Rytande*, however, the doctrine of correspondence is not explicitly prominent, although it is always present as an undercurrent. Thus, it can be categorized, according to Henrik Bog- dans's four categories of esoteric texts, as belonging to category 2, that is, a text belonging to one (or more) esoteric currents in which the basic components of the esoteric form of thought are implicitly present.

Faivre writes that the idea of a living nature is based on the view that the cosmos is a complex, diverse and hierarchical entity in which nature occupies an important place alongside God and man (Faivre 1995: 14). Alongside revelations directly from God, or the study of man himself, the macrocosm and nature are the most important source of knowledge for Bureus. Faivre explains that the esotericist perceives that nature is imbued with a light or a fire and is rich in potential revelations and should therefore be read like a book. Bureus often returns to how the divine signs are naturally found in nature, directly recorded on natural objects. Nature is filled with signs and secret knowledge. Bureus equates Byrghal, the

bottom rung of his hierarchical system, with Mother Earth. The rune represents Freya and has many positive qualities. The relatively positive view of Byrghal reveals that Bureus does not want to turn his back on nature, but rather to reunite it with the divine. The adept should not leave nature but unite nature and God.

If the view of nature is positive, the view of the human body is negative. In *Nymäre Wijsor*, the Soul faces the temptation to follow the Body out into the Devil's outlands (Bureus 1637: song III:8). At this point, there is an unworldly, ascetic trait in Bureus, which is reminiscent of the hostility to the body usually attributed to Gnosticism.

The runes, speech and language act as the mediating principle between the divine and the earthly. In this respect, Bureus is entirely an esotericist and not a mystic, according to Faivre's third criterion, which explains that esotericism is distinguished from mysticism by the emphasis on intermediate levels between the earthly and the divine (Faivre 1992: 15). Bureus constantly returns to the intermediate worlds and their importance. Christ, Odin, Byrger Tidesson, and not least himself, are mediators between the planes. The division of man and the world into three levels presupposes an intermediate plane and Bureus attributes great importance to this. In the Gothic trinity TOF, Odin was the mediator and for the threefold structure of man SAL, the soul acted as mediator. Bureus previously thought that the spirit was the intermediate level, but, according to himself, revised his view after 1613. Consistently, the formula SAL (soul, body, spirit) should then have been reformulated as ASL (spirit, soul, body), but the order of the letters in the formula does not seem to matter much to Bureus, since SAL refers to a paracelesian principle. *Adulruna Rediviva* bases its reasoning on the doctrine of correspondence and the idea of emanations and intermediate levels.

Adulrunan and the Gothic Kabbalah are not merely passive observations on the structure of the universe, but Bureus wants his system to show a path from one plane to another. The word *transmutation* is taken from alchemy, and in *Cabbalistica* Bureus makes direct references to the alchemical process and compares it to his jerkabalistic initiation ladder. Adulrunan is a transmutation

path where Byrghal will ascend and unite with Thor. The transmutation need not be exclusively about man but also about nature, as Faivre makes clear when he explains the transmutation:

This term refers to the belief that people, and (from an alchemical perspective) parts of nature as well, may undergo a modification of their very being (Faivre i den Broek and Hanegraaff 1998: 120).

For Bureus, this transmutation also takes place on a societal level where he himself plays a key role as reformer and prophet in an apocalyptic alchemy. The Catholic Church and the Habsburg Empire, representing the lower levels, will be replaced by his own esoteric Protestantism and finally by the eternal Kingdom of God.

Bureus is a typical representative of esotericism according to Faivre's four primary criteria. Of the two relative criteria, the former is consistent with Bureus' view, while the latter does not fit him.

Bureus, in the spirit of the Hermeticists, is a supporter of the idea of a *philosophia perennis*, an original tradition that carries the hidden truth. The ancient Sveo-Goths had also known about the Trinity and the true doctrine, as their trinity TOF testified. The true doctrine was perverted by sorcerers who claimed to be the three Nordic gods. The sorcerers made the Norse stop worshipping the Trinity and start worshipping the wooden belts instead. Bureu's illustration showing the tetragrammaton in different languages can be seen as an expression of his belief that the true teachings could be found in different religions. However, Christianity and Hebrew wisdom had a primary place, as did Sveo-Gothic primordial wisdom, which he felt he was reviving with Adulrunan. Bureus not only sees correspondences between the religions, but actively seeks to demonstrate them.

It is more difficult to assess how Bureus intended the teachings to be transmitted, since no order or initiatory school was formed around his Adulruna. Even Stiernhielms, who was Bureus's foremost disciple, did not adopt the Gothic Kabbalah.

As we have seen, Faivre's criteria correspond fairly well with the ideas found in Bureus' texts. The criteria fit into a material from this time, while modern esoterism developed in a somewhat different direction. Henrik Bogdan emphasizes the central function of the will in modern Western esotericism, where it is something positive to be developed, but Bureus' sixteenth-century esotericism equates the will with desire and the body. For Bureus, man can only achieve liberation if he subdues his will. If she gives in to the will, she must remain in the cage and the prison of the physical plane (Bureus 1637: Song VIII:12). The anti-corporeal side of Bureus is not found in Faivre's criteria, but is not atypical of either religion or esotericism at this time. Although the Renaissance brought with it a much brighter view of the body, as expressed in the teachings of Paracelsus, there is a parallel dualism that sees the material plane as evil. In Lurianic Kabbalah, the root of evil lies in the nature of creation itself (Scholem 1991: 83). Bureus expresses an ambivalence between a positive and a negative view of the physical plane.

Faivre claims that his criteria are not ideal-typical, but rooted in historical material:

the referential corpus of esotericism surveyed here is limited in space (the western world) and time (Modernity). i have made no attempt to discuss a "universal esotericism", because neither the sum of the components described, nor each single one of them, for that matter, are meant here as universal invariants (Faivre i van den Broek and Hanegraaff 1998: 120).

Although Faivre's criteria are not based on a typological approach but on a historical one, they tend to be either redefined or idealized as a result of the spread of esotericism research. They have been applied, for example, to Eastern material such as Elizabeth De Micheli's *A History of Modern Yoga* from 2004 and Gordan Djurdjevic's *Masters of Magical Powers* from 2005. As several scholars have pointed out, Faivre's criteria fit well with Renaissance material (Hanegraaff 2004: 340). In this dissertation, I have found it fruitful to clarify rather than redefine Faivre's

model. By pointing to the specific Gothic context, instead of adding new suggestions for content, Faivre's criteria can retain their historical character instead of becoming ideal-typical.

## 12 Adulrunian practice in comparison with Renaissance magic

Is Bureu's adulrunic esotericism a purely theoretical system or was it practiced in some form of magical ceremonies or other occult practice? From the source material there is not much to reveal any practice. It is possible that Bureu's system functioned as a personal reading mystery where the text itself gave access to higher dimensions. Bureus's strong emphasis on language and text could indicate this. However, Bureus engaged in language mystical practices such as *aiq bekr* inspired by Agrippa and it would be somewhat strange if Bureus did not allow himself to be inspired by other magical practices from the sources he read. We also know that he practiced alchemical experiments and he illustrates runic gestures in which his fingers form runic symbols, which hints at some kind of practice. His view of the influence of the planets could be partly inspired by Ficino, as well as the musical mysticism found in Bureus, where the terminology and symbolic language correspond to that of Ficino and his disciples. Bureus speaks on several occasions of the lyre of Orpheus, which is central to Ficino, both as a metaphor and as an actual instrument (Walker 1958/2003: 19).

In the last part of *De Triplici Vita*, called "De Vita Coelitus Comparanda", Ficino describes how music, food, medicines and talismans can be used to capture the planetary energies. Ficino argues that magic must stimulate the seven levels of the human being, which are the five senses and also imagination and reason. For this reason, a set of objects and



expression to perform a successful ceremony in which the coveted planetary power is brought down. Ficino assumed that the educated people he addressed often suffered from excessive influence from Saturn, resulting in melancholy; to remedy this, the magician needed to evoke the life-affirming powers of the sun, Venus and Jupiter. Ficino celebrates gold as a solar and jovial (i.e. belonging to Jupiter/Jove) metal that cures melancholy. The venereal color green is also helpful, which led Ficino to recommend walks in nature as a cure for melancholy (Goodrick-Clarke 2008:40).

Ficino sets up a table of correspondence, which is developed by Agrippa and will be characteristic of occult literature until our days. The following things help to attract planetary influences, but also stimulate the various senses of man, for a successful ritual:

1. Stones and metals for the moon
2. Plants, fruits and animals for Mercury
3. Powders, vapors and odors for Venus
4. Words, songs and sounds for the sun
5. Emotions and imagination for Mars
6. Discursive reason for Jupiter
7. Intellectual contemplation and divine intuition for Saturn

It is interesting to note that Saturn here represents the highest principle, while in other contexts the planet represents the dark and negative. Exactly this arrangement of the planets is found in *the Sumlen*. It is not the usual planetary arrangement at this time and since Bureus elsewhere refers to Ficino, it is likely that the order of planets is a legacy from him. Bureus equates these with the runes on the rune ladder, thereby correcting the God-rune thor with the planet Saturn (Bureus, F.a. 12: 652).

The most detailed description of a ritual based on Ficino's magic was recorded by his favorite pupil and successor Francesco da Diacceto (1466-1522) in *De Pulchro*, which he began writing in 1496 and completed in 1499, the year of Ficino's death. Since

Since Bureus, like virtually all contemporary esotericists, was influenced by the magic and astrology developed by Ficino and the circle around the Platonic Academy of Careggi, we can assume that an adalrunic practice would be based on components we find in the stream Bureus himself is part of and which is recounted by authors we know he read. It may be that *Nymäre Wijsor* would function as the Gothic Kabbalah's counterparts to the Orphic hymns of Ficino. We also have illustrations of a Rosicrucian-inspired altar in the *Ara Foederis Theraphici F.X.R.* crowned by an Adalrunic symbol. We have examples of Adalrunic clothing and runic gestures, but there is no explicit evidence for the existence of an Adalrunic practice. Nothing in Bureus' writings explicitly shows that his adalruna mysticism was of a practical ritual nature, but mainly a reading mystery, where words, images and numerological calculations were part of a contemplative mysticism.

## 13 Runes as divine emblems

Bureau's ideas about the hidden meaning of the runes and their correspondence with ultimate reality are in line with the Renaissance esoteric imagination. The renewed interest in Platonism led to a worldview in which the world and its objects were seen as expressions of archetypes, images and ideas rooted in an eternal, distant world of ideas. While Byzantine icons and medieval Gothic rose windows were perceived as windows away from the human world, Renaissance images and artistic creation were not merely expressions of a world beyond, but equally expressions of an incarnation of the divine in nature and the body. Renaissance Platonism did not see the world of the senses as negative, but as a mirror of the divine (Goodwin 2005: 7).

The world was seen emblematically and nature was thought to be a book full of symbols and signatures. In the search for the written language that best corresponded to reality, the preference was for pictorial languages, and Egyptian hieroglyphics were given a special status. These were mistakenly believed to be purely ideographic signs and were thought to depict reality in an immediate way. Manuals on the art of deciphering hieroglyphs were sought after, and one such manual by the probably fictitious author Horapollo, found by chance in the fourteenth century, became the starting point for the Renaissance humanists' hieroglyphic studies (Friberg 1945: 14). Emblematics was born with the Italian jurist Andrea Alciati's (1492-1550) *Emblematum liber* from 1531, but the most powerful and remarkable manifestation of the emblematic worldview is Francesco Colonna's (c. 1433-1527) allegorical *Hypnerotomachia*

**III** Wÿsheit är af Herrand Gudi/och  
Evenska  
**ABC**  
**W D R G N**  
med  
**RVROK.**

**SVEA ARVN**

**PSALM RVNA**

**Anda förkunnat henne. Zan hafwer vethgattic henne öfwer all syn wari.**

**Anda förkunnat henne. Zan hafwer vethgattic henne öfwer all syn wari.**

**I** Gudh3 fruchtan är  
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**Stockholm/ 1 6 1 2.**  
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**Anda förkunnat henne. Zan hafwer vethgattic henne öfwer all syn wari.**

*Poliphili*, of which hieroglyphic symbolism is an important part. The Phoenician historian Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) found notes on hieroglyphics in a German monastic library written by the late antique historian Ammianus Marcellinus (c. 325-330 - c. 391), who also discussed the Egyptian obelisks. These monuments covered with hieroglyphics would have been of particular interest to Renaissance esotericists. In *Adulruna Rediviva*, Bureus shows an obelisk he wishes to erect, filled with symbols from his adulruna mysticism. According to Bureus, the hieroglyphs are the secret signs of the Greeks and Egyptians, corresponding to the Kabbalah of the Jews and the Adulruna of the Sveo-Goths (Schück 1932: 65).

Bureus's innovation is to combine the Renaissance passion for hieroglyphics and its emblematic worldview with the motifs of Gothicism. The embryo of this was already present in Olaus Magnus, who during his exile in Italy came into contact with Italian humanism and its esoteric ideas (Friberg 1945: 20). Olaus Magnus wanted to show that the Norse wrote in their own Gothic hieroglyphs and, like the ancient peoples, erected pyramids and obelisks, which he saw evidence of in the rune stones. In his history of the Nordic peoples, Magnus writes:

Among the ancient Goths and Swedes it was customary from time immemorial to erect stones, like pyramids in Egypt, in open fields or in mountainous regions where great battles were fought (...) These pyramids and pillars are found more abundantly in Hälsingland than elsewhere in the Nordic region. But the obelisks or the high stones, erected by strong giants and fighters, are nowhere more numerous than among the East Goths and West Goths and among the higher living Swedes ... (Magnus 1555, from the new edition 2001: 64).

Bureus refers to Olaus Magnus on several occasions and we understand that Bureus did not come up with his ideas in a vacuum, but that he is part of a tradition of ideas, which he further develops and adapts to the Gothic context. What is unique about Bureus is that he is the Swede who, in his time, most quickly and most clearly adopted ideas that were in circulation on the continent. He also brings together different currents in a way that is typical of the time, but at the same time innovative. The

Gothic esotericism is the logical consequence of the legacy of earlier Gothicism, Renaissance Neoplatonism and Kabbalah, as well as other esoteric currents that in him meet linguistics and ancient studies.

For Bureus, language and words are a mediator between man and the divine. Bureus explains that among the greatest gifts with which God has honored the human race, as opposed to the animals, are "reason and understanding" with its two sensual means, speech and writing. In the introductory part of *Adulruna Rediviva*, Bureus explains the meaning of the runes, words and writing. The spoken word is the mediator between the speaker and the listener, just as writing is the mediator between the writer and the reader. The Son of God is the Mediator between the Creator and the created and that is why he calls himself *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The Son of God is the Holy Scripture. This scripture exists in three forms: the divine, and the macrocosmic and microcosmic.

Divine writing can be revealed as when Moses received the Ten Commandments or can be interpreted as divine signs on objects in nature, such as mystical inscriptions on fish in the sea. The signs are engraved in nature and form basic patterns outside of humans.

Bureus believes that language has three levels, which are reflected in the runes. The bottom and middle levels belong to the cosmos and correspond to the micro- and macrocosm respectively. The top level corresponds to the sacred scripture, the Bible. Together with the macrocosmic middle level, it constitutes the Word of God. While the top level is the revealed scripture, the Bible, the middle level is the macrocosmic book. We recognize this reasoning from Paracelsus and many other thinkers who claimed that God wrote two books. The first of the two books was the Bible, which was the revealed supernatural scripture. The second book was the book of nature that we find all around us. The exaltation of nature as one of God's two books legitimized nature studies, but was also interpreted literally by Paracelsus, Bureus and others. Paracelsus, with his doctrine of signatur, believed that nature could be read in such a way that plants that resembled a heart medically were good for the heart, while an eye-like flower was

good for the eyesight. In his story of the tree in Güstrow, or of a strange fish caught in the Baltic Sea, Bureus reveals that God wrote Latin numbers and letters directly on them. The Book of Nature was thus not only a metaphor for the importance of studying nature as we think of science today, but God could also have put messages directly into natural objects, among trees, animals or stones. In Bureus, there is a third book and it is the one that exists within mankind in the form of our own language. The three levels of runes and language are reflected in three ways of gaining knowledge. At the lowest human level, the microcosm, we obtain knowledge through our senses. The middle level, which is nature, the macrocosm, is the level we gain knowledge of through science, while the top level is only available through the knowledge that faith gives man.

The runes are the original signs that mediate between the creator and the created, between the scribe and the reader. The runes exist in two main forms: an external exoteric form which Bureus calls "the obvious" or "the knowledgeable and sensitive" runes which were of great interest, but not the most important. These obvious runes could be learned by anyone. Of much greater importance, however, was the inner esoteric dimension of the runes, the so-called adul runes, which related to the ordinary script such as the Kabbalah of the Hebrews and the hieroglyphs of the Egyptians (Hildebrand 1910: 42). In addition, there is an innermost third runic dimension called the mandrake. The runes thus have three dimensions, which Bureus develops in *Cabbalistica*. The first level is natural and the next two increasingly spiritual.

1. Apparent runes
2. Adalrunor
3. Mandrake

The three levels correspond to the three worlds of the esoteric tradition. Symbols and the spiritual dimension of language are something of a foundation of esotericism, developed as early as Plato and given a magical touch by Ficino and Pico. Wouter J. Hanegraaff writes in his article "Sympathy Or the Devil: Renaissance Magic And the Ambivalence of Idols":



the magical use of non-causal correspondences was based upon a doctrine of "natural symbols", and was crucially concerned with images. (...) the symbol became not a mere substitute for the spoken word, but a starting-point for contemplation of ideal truths which are beyond verbal expression. The role of such symbols in the context of a tripartite neoplatonic worldview was explained by Pico della Mirandola in his *Heptaplus* (...) The key to this conception is that the correspondence between symbol and reality was not considered to be conventional, but real. Symbols did not "stand for" abstract concepts, but somehow embodied supreme realities (Hanegraaff 2000: 12-13).

In Bureus's view, the runes are signatures that are engraved in the basic structure of the universe and the attentive adept can find them physically written down in nature. Paracelsus' doctrine of signatures is another example of this approach, where plants and natural objects could be deciphered so that their intrinsic qualities could be read from their outward appearance. Jacob Böhme (1575- 1624) also shared this view and argued in *De signatura rerum* that there is no created thing in nature that does not also reveal its internal form on the outside. Bureus' stories about the fish and the oak tree that bore secret signs illustrate how he thinks that God can communicate with man through what is in nature. Bureus divides the rune line into three groups of five runes each. This does not correspond to the traditional division of the rune line into the races of Freyr, Hagal and Tyr. Bureus has removed the last rune in the 16-type runic line. It is runologically worth noting that the grouping Bureus makes of the first lineage, or fifteen as he calls it, forming the word FUTHOR is found in the eighth-century roundel *Abecedarium Nordmannicum* (Flowers 2002: 3). By grouping the runes in the way he does, Bureus obtains a symmetrical rune row with 3 x 5 runes. Normally, the 16-type rune row has three sets where the initial Frej set consists of the six runes **f**, **u**, **th**, **a**, **r**, **k**, which has led to the rune row being called a futhark. The two remaining lines consist of five runes each. In the usual rune line, **m** comes before **l**, but Bureus reverses them and lets his rune line end with the letter **m**. He has probably taken this from the 19-type rune calendar where these runes also have this



order. That he is counting on the runic calendar is clear because he mentions when some of the runes are 'golden ages', that is, marking a year in a nineteen-year time cycle. Bureus's so-called fifths begin with the runes for **f**, **k** and **s**; Frey, Kyn and Sun. He calls the first fifth the 'birth fifth', followed by the 'birth fifth' and finally the 'foster fifth'. Around this triad Bureus develops the speculations about the adul runes. His first group of runes is not a futhark. The rune **a** instead denotes **o**, which it began to do towards the end of the Viking Age. Bureus' first five then becomes **f**, **u**, **th**, **o**, **r**, i.e. *futhor* which in his adulruna stands for 'father', 'birthgiver', 'ska- pare'. Bureus also lets the runes denote numbers. In the first fifth, the runes bear the odd numbers between 1 and 9. In the next fifth, they have the same number multiplied by ten, i.e. 10-90, and in the last fifth multiplied by a hundred, i.e. 100-900. This forms the basis of his Adulrunic *gematria* and the apocalyptic calculations. The symmetry of the rune row and the correspondence of the runes in numbers and different principles are of the utmost importance when Bureus develops his runology. He therefore prefers to represent the runes **u** and **r** in their stenographic form as they appear in the Health runes. In this way, these two runes become mirror images of each other. As far as possible, Bureus represents the runes so that they appear as mirror images of each other. The symmetry of the runes is important in esoteric speculation. According to Bureus, the runes derive directly from a Platonic world of ideas and emanate from the perfect geometry of the adul rune.

### 13.1 *The meaning of runes*

In this part of the thesis I intend to briefly systematize the meaning of the fifteen adulruns through a comparative reading of Bureus' various writings. Henrik Schück writes in *Kgl. vitterhets, historie och antikvitets akademien: dess förhistoria och historia* that Bureus spent his whole life interpreting the secrets of the adulrunes, but that he never came to a conclusive result, and that no interpretation of these adulrunes was ever printed (Schück 1932: 44). The question is whether Bureus himself would not have meant that *the adulrunes*

*runa Rediviva* is the end result of his adulrunic mysticism. It is true that no interpretation was printed, nor was there a systematic explanation of the meaning of the Adulrunes. By comparing the fragmentary information Bureus gives us about the fifteen runes, it is nevertheless possible to decipher the meaning he put into the individual runes. Below I make an attempt to systematize the meaning of the fifteen runes. The description that follows of Bureu's interpretation of the runes is taken from *the Runa ABC-book*, *the Runic Book* and the esoteric *Adulruna Rediviva*. The etymological reasoning is Bureu's own. The numerical values are from *the Runa ABC book* and the etymology from *Runaräfssten* and *Adulruna Rediviva*.

### 13.1.1 *The feeder fifteen*

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FREY: In *Adulruna Rediviva*, Bureus calls this rune the Rod of Joy and according to him the word *joy* means 'wife'. It derives from the word seed, because it is associated with

pat with fertility. Hence, 'miss' derives from this word. The rune has been called *fä* for its fertility in the same way that the letter *aleph* in Hebrew means 'ox'. In *the Runaräfssten*, Bureus calls the rune *Fre*, *frö*, *fröj*, *frägh*, *frigg*. The peasants, he explains, call it *fä* or *fähysing*. Friday is named after the same word as this rune. The rune denotes the letter **f** and consonant **v**. Bureus gives the rune the numerical value 1.

ʀ

UR: This rune denotes original movement and expansion. It corresponds to 1) the Latin *a*, *ab*, *e*, *ex*, 2) "ur" in *urväder* and 3) "ur" in *urverk* "for the sake of movement". Hence comes "yrka". Ur corresponds to the letters **u** and **v**, as well as to **y** in syllabic form (with a dot inside the u), or **to å** in double syllabic form. Ur has the numerical value 3.

þ

THURS: Bureus writes in *Runaräfssten* that the rune of Thurs has the same name as Thursday, the month of Thurs and Cod. It remained in the medieval manuals

longer than the other runes, perhaps for the sake of secrecy, Bureus muses. According to him, Thor can be compared to the Hebrew *Torah*, which means 'law', 'correction', 'teaching', 'word of God'. The name of the god Thor may come from here. This rune, Bureus proclaims, is the highest mark of freedom because it denotes to be *dared* - 'to dare', as well as *to dare*, to return. Bureus exemplifies with Torne, "where the Bottom returns", Tören - Södertörn - "where the three nations return", Törneby, "where the bay of Mälaren Skarfven returns". As an adúlruna, this rune denotes Thor, God, unity, kabbalance Ain Sof and the highest spiritual level. Thor is the rune of God and in *Cab-balistica* Bureus refers to this rune as *unitas Deus* (Bureus N 24, p. 61). The rune Tors denotes **th** and **d** and has the numerical value 5.

**h**

ODHEN: This rune is called the rod of Odin (*mercurii litera*) or the rod of fate (*fata litera*). It is related to *od*, *öde*, *aud*, *öud*, which according to Bureus means possession (he

compare with the words *Svidiod*, *månad*, *härod*, *klenod* ). Odhen can denote **o**, **å** and **ö**. Wednesday is related to the name of this rune. Bureus attacks those who call Wednesday *Wednesday*, *wendisdagr*, etc., saying that they have forfeited the right to the runic script. According to him, the Icelanders have preserved the old and correct name of the day and call it *odensdagur*. In *Runaräfssten*, Bureus writes that Odin was one of the highest of the pagan idols. Frigga was man's nurse and foster mother, who nurtured and assisted man during his childhood. Thor ruled over man's adult life. Odin, on the other hand, ruled over man's *final destiny* or 'fate' and corresponds to Mars, Pluto and Mercury. The rune has the numerical value 7.

**r**

RYDHUR or REDH: This rune is associated with 'advise', 'ride', 'rudder' (with which one rules the ship).

Rydhur is a mark of lordship and of right. Bureus complains that the rune **r** in its one form has been evicted from this place and placed last in the 16-type rune row. There, Bureus explains, it has lost the honorable name of knight and is instead simply called *stupmadher*. Rydhur has the numerical value 9.

### 13.1.2 The birth fifteen

**Y** KÖN or KYN: Bureus gives the rune many synonyms such as *kaghn*, *gaghn*, *kaghvänd*, *gaghnum*, *göir*, *geir*, *käir*, *git*, *kan* (*naturæ kân*, *notitiæ*, *nosce*), as well as *generosæ*

*naturæ litera*, 'the rod of generous or noble nature'. The name of the rune denotes "the generating power of nature", but is also related to the word "*able*". The rune can also denote 'sex' with the meaning 'boil'. When this rune is golden, animals and humans suffer from boils, warns Bureus. The rune's name *kyn* also stands for 'knowledgeable' and 'authoritative'. When the rune widens in both directions like a Y, it corresponds better to the meaning 'king', *König*, which comes from *kön*, *kyni* and *kunna*, explains Bureus. The rune then corresponds to Pythagoras' Y, which symbolizes man's choice between the evil left-hand path or the good right-hand path. The three lines in this Y or in this form of *Kön* also denote *intellectualis*, *animalis*, *corpo- ralis*. The rune corresponds to **c**, **k** and **g**, but also to **ch**, **gh** and **q**, although Bureus remarks that **q** is not in the correct Swedish and that one should stick to Swedish because it is as good as any other tongue. Bureus thinks that the tongues would be best left alone, "unrestrained and unrestrained". The rune corresponds to the number 10.

**\*** HAGHAL: This rune describes 'the one who hag or does everything and with whom there is favor'. The name of the rune can be compared to words like *haglek*, which means 'art'

and 'cunning'. Bureus believes that this rune is made up of the union of the runes **n** and **a**, which stand for 'grace' and 'honor' respectively. Haghal is the embrace between these principles and the rune corresponds to the Latin *grando*. The rune corresponds to the letter **h** and the numerical value of haghal is 30.

**†** NÅDH or NODHER: Also called *nodh* and *nödh*. The rune name means both 'grace' and 'distress'. Grace because one side of the closing stroke rises, but distress after which it faces on the right-hand side," explains Bureus

The rune denotes the letter **n** and has the numerical value 50.

**I** IS or IDHER: This staff is "completely naked" and is therefore called *poenitentiae litera*, 'steamer staff'. It is also called *idstav* (*studii literi*). According to *Runaräfssten*

the name *idher* comes from Edher who was the first to invent runes. From this come the terms *idingar*, 'scribe' and *idh* which means 'study'. It stands for 'i' and is spelled with the letter 'e'. This rune has a numerical value of 70.

**†** AR: This rune sometimes denotes **a** and **ä** and sometimes **å**. Therefore it has different names such as *honor*, *äru*, *är*, *ar*, *ari*, *are*, *year*, *year rod*, *gloria perpetua requises*, *littus*, *aquila*, *annus*, *annona*, *sufficiencia*. The rune symbolizes the honor and the eagle.

According to Bureus, the appearance of the rune is best suited to *gloria* and *perpetua requises*, since the sloping line rises at the end. So does honor and the everlasting rune after distress. The rune ends the second fifth and has the numerical value 90.

### 13.1.3 *foster fifths*

**I** SUN or SOL: This rune is called "sun highest in the sky" and also has the designations *sunstav*, *from sun*, and *sön*, naming Sunday. Sun may have been one of the highest

gods and some call it, according to Bureus, instead *sel* which means 'soul' (*beatus*, *anima*). The sun is named after light that was created on Sunday and the sun is likened to the son of light. The words for 'son' and 'sun' thus correspond to each other. Linked to this rune are the words *sona*, *suna* ('to forgive through the son') and *ransuna* ('to release what has been stolen'). This rune denotes the letter **s** and has two forms, **I** and **h**. The former, according to Bureus, is most correct and is called the 'hanging sun' because it hangs from the lime snake on the rune stone inscriptions. The latter, however, is more common and is called 'kneeling sun'. The number of the rune is 100.

**1** TIDHER: Has the same name as Tuesday. Some call it Taurus and in Dalarna it is called *tijr*. It is called the time rod and the mar-time, as well as festivals and solemn services. In the old days, the priests were called *tidmen* and *tijar*, says Bureus. The foremost of these, according to Bureus to have been Byrger Tidesson, the mythical creator of the adulruna. Because of its speed, time is likened to a sword, a crossbow arrow. The rune's appearance is reminiscent of an arrow. The rune was also called *a roof* because of its appearance. It was also called *tyri*, which means 'tar torch', because when this rune is golden many fires happen. Tidher represents the ascending (*ascensus*) and the elements air and fire. The rune Tidher denotes **t** and sometimes **d**. The rune has the numerical value 300.

**B** BYRGHAL: Also called *Birka*, *Birke*, *Birkal* and *Björk*. In *Runaräfssten* Bureus writes that some believe that this rune was named after Berik. Berik is the legendary Gothic king that the Roman historian Jordanes recounts in his work *Getica*. On three ships, the Goths left the motherland of Scandza and set out into the world under the leadership of Berik. The rune is also called *byrkal* after *byrkarl*, 'the master of the dwelling', as well as *byrgall*, 'all containing and in all containing'. The name of the rune is also related to 'begin', 'the one who begins'. The rune's name is a compound word of *byr* and *ger* or *dear*, as this is the patron of the house, the fatherland and the burghers, as *bur* means burgher, Bureus argues. Some use the word *Burgeir* and it means 'son of war' in the same way that *german* means 'man of war' (Bureus, Rål 9 8°, p. 44). Since one of the names on the rune is Byrger, the rune names the mythical creator of the adulrunes. This rune represents man, the microcosm and the spirit immersed in matter. Byrghal is the opposite of the Thor rune. While the Thor rune or God rune represents the highest planes of unity and enlightenment, Byrghal symbolizes darkness, opposites and duality, matter and the mind. In *the Cabbalistica*, Bureus refers to Byrghal as *Binarius the Demon*, in contrast to the rune of Thor, which represents *the unitas Deus* (Bureus, N 24, p. 61). In the same work, Bureus shows how this rune is composed in its duality of the sun and the

moon, day and night (Bureus, N 24, p. 73). It is important to point out that Bureus does not regard this rune as evil or negative. The aim is to bring this rune to the level of the Thor rune, that is, to divinize man and matter. Byrghal denotes **b** and **p** and has the numerical value 500 (whereas Thor's has the numerical value 5).



LAGHER: Also called *lag* and *lauger*, it comes from the same root as Saturday. The name of the rune comes from *lökkia* meaning 'to drip', *laug* meaning 'lie' or 'bath', as well as a name for Lake Mälaren, Luugen, we learn from Bureus. The rune is thus associated with water. The rune's name *lag* (*lex*) comes from *laga* ('to arrange'). The name is also linked to *the team* ('that is how my team is'), as well as to the word *lägga* as in intercourse. In addition to being linked to water, this rune represents the law and, as an adulruna, usually appears with Tidher. These so represent time and law: that everything has its time and place. Lagher represents the descending (*descensus*) and the elements water and earth. Lagher opposes the letter **l** and has the numerical value 700.



MAN: The rune has the same name as Monday and it corresponds to the moon. Some people call it *madher*, says Bureus, and it illustrates a man with arms outstretched. It denotes the sound **m** and therefore corresponds as the last rune to "the one who covers his mouth". The rune Man can be linked to Stiernhielm's letter and noble rune mysticism, where the letter **m** corresponds to the lowest and last part of a Neoplatonic emanation series that begins with the vowels and ends with the consonants. **M** is the lowest and denotes earth, gloom, darkness and muteness (cf. "the one who clogs his mouth"). In Bureus, **M** corresponds to the moon as the light of night. Bureus also calls Man for *mane staff* after *mani* (moon). In a variant of the rune (☿) it shows a man scratching his head. Bureus explains that this is actually the last rune, but that *Stupmadher* (𐌺), which denotes **R**. According to him, it is then demoted from its original place together with the fifth rune Rydhur. The rune Man is equated by Bureus with "man as the measure of all things" and with the center of the world (Stähle 1975: 258). It has the numerical value 900.

## 14 The savior's garden and the trolls in the wilderness: The runes as a map of a dualistic world

Bureau's esoteric thinking and religious worldview is characterized by a clear dualism, with good on one side and evil on the other. Good and evil are associated with a series of attributes that allow us to reconstruct Bureau's worldview.

Dividing the world into pairs of opposites is a basic method of sorting information. Opposite pairs are in relationships that are sometimes symmetric, sometimes asymmetric, sometimes hierarchized, sometimes not. An example of a symmetrical pair of opposites is right and left, in the neutral sense of the word, while an asymmetrical pair of opposites is center and periphery. A hierarchical pair of opposites is "good" over "bad", while two complementary colors are hardly in a hierarchical relationship unless we look at light theory or artistic taste. Throughout history, humans have sought to map the universe, looking for analogies between different phenomena, such as different categories of pairs of opposites. The history of religion in particular shows how a number of different pairs of opposites have been compared and contrasted. Perhaps the most straightforward symbol of opposites in religions is the *Taijitu*, the *Yin and Yang* symbol, which in traditional Chinese philosophy refers not only to their respective colors black and white (or red, with which *Yang* is sometimes associated instead) but to qualities and principles, such as the passive and the active, the female and the male, the dark and the light. In the West, with the introduction of Christianity, a clear hierarchization of the opposites of existence was formulated.



sentences. On the one hand, there is that which leads to salvation and access to the Kingdom of Heaven, while on the other hand we face damnation and the broad road to Hell. This dualism is reflected when, in Matthew 25:33, Christ divides humanity into two camps. The sheep are associated with the right side that leads to salvation, while the goats belong to the other side that leads to damnation. The sheep belong to the inside and those close to the center, which is Christ, while the goats belong to the outside and those relegated to the periphery, something we recognize in ritual contexts from the Old Testament Jewish sacrificial ceremony where a goat is driven out into the desert to Asasel. We can see an ontography emerging where on one side of existence we find the sheep, salvation, center, upward, heaven, while the other side is associated with goats, damnation, periphery, downward, hell. If we study the history of religion, we find that other pairs of opposites are linked, such as the recurring motif that woman belongs to the left side and man to the right, that woman is naturally weak, carnal and evil, while man is naturally strong, spiritual and good. Woman belonged to nature and man to civilization. This dualism would prove to be a dangerous legitimization for the witch trials and, as Östling writes in his study of the blue ball, so:

(...) at the beginning of the early modern era, women were associated with wild and uncontrolled nature. Nature stood in opposition to civilization and the controlled and cultivated, which was considered above the natural. The man stood for civilization, while the woman was associated with the natural, animal and uncontrolled (Östling 2002: 262).

Evil is perceived differently in different philosophies and religions. The monistic approach presents evil and good as two sides of the same power. This view often questions the objective reality of evil and good, arguing that they are two conceptual abstractions. Even the ancient Heraclitus put forward this idea, saying that: "Good and evil are one", as well as that "To God all is right and good, but men hold some things to be wrong and others to be right". A monistic view is held by many Kabbalists who see evil as part of God's personality. For

a monotheistic religion like Judaism is happy to relegate the principle of evil within the one God. Jeffrey Burton Russell writes:

Satan is the personification of the dark side of God, the element within Yahweh which obstructs the good (...) Since Yahweh was the one God, he had to be, like the God of monism, an "antinomy of inner opposites". He was both light and darkness, both good and evil (Russell 1977:176-177).

This view is common in Kabbalah, where evil is seen as the expression of an excessive impulse from God's punishing side, called Din or Geburah.

Evil is often associated in religious thought with matter and the physical body. This idea is most strongly associated with Gnosticism (which has been challenged by scholars such as Michael Allen Williams in *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*, 1996). The association of the body and nature with something negative is also found to some extent in Platonism and Neoplatonism. According to this view, the highest divine and spiritual plane possesses only positive qualities such as goodness, truth, beauty and justice. The material is in opposition to these qualities and represents evil, inertia and illusion. Matter imprisons sparks of the divine within it. However, Neoplatonists could also see nature as a reflection of the highest planes and thus as something positive. We find this duality to nature in Bureus. By freeing man from the material, the sparks of divine light, which are bound in matter, are set free and good overcomes evil. This view of evil is often combined with ideals of asceticism and a negative view of the physical body. In Iranian Manichaeism, for example, it was thought that the powers of darkness created man to imprison the light in matter. From a Neoplatonic perspective, evil is associated with the material, a negative evil that is relative to the objective positive qualities of the world of ideas.

In Bureus we encounter the view that matter and the physical body are associated with the Devil. In *Nymäre Wijsor*, the body is called an "unholy man" who tries to lure the soul into his "ball",

that is, in the Abyss or Hell. However, there is nothing in Bureus to indicate that he had any thoughts of controlling the body in the form of ashes. The rhetoric about the sinful body is more typical of the times than of Bureus's esoteric ways of thinking. Bureus' ascent, however, is in the Neoplatonic spirit from a darkness of ignorance and a bondage in the body towards gradually higher degrees of enlightenment.

In esoteric traditions such as Kabbalah, alchemy and Gnosticism, speculation on the nature of dualism deepens and sixteenth century Kabbalists such as Sabbatai Zvi and Nathan of Gaza described that there are two lights in existence: a white light associated with God and the right side and a black light belonging to Samael, or Lucifer and the left side. Although it was rarely the official purpose of esotericism, it contains the seeds of a forbidden heretical path of salvation, which turns traditional hierarchical dichotomies upside down. The heretical sixteenth-century Kabbalists took on the roles of holy sinners who broke the religious law in antinomian practice (Scholem 1992: 323). However, the antinomianism of Bureus follows a New Testament view of the Law and a Lutheran view of the Catholic Church. It is thus not a violation of one's own society or religion, but expresses the religious contradictions of the sixteenth century between Catholic and Protestant spheres of power.

Bureus's dualism is hierarchical and asymmetrical, and can be placed in an ontography with a range of connotations. The road to salvation goes upwards, of course, towards Heaven and enlightenment, but also inwards towards the center of the temple and the Savior's garden. The road to damnation goes the other way, towards Hell, darkness, but also outwards towards the wilderness and the regions of the trolls. As we have seen in *Nymäre Wijsor*, the soul travels "in to the spirit" if she is to achieve salvation, but on the other hand it leads to damnation if she goes "out to the flesh". If she goes inwards, it is a journey upwards where she meets Jesus, while if she goes outwards, it is at the same time a journey downwards into the abyss to the Devil. In *Adulruna Rediviva*, we find this ontography again when Bureus explains the symbol of the jerkin and allows the world of the troll to be in the outer areas outside the savior's enclosure within which men

people should restrain themselves if they are not to be plunged into the abyss. In *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*, Bureus describes the hellish worlds, one of which is called *Gezera*, which he describes as a secluded land and a wasteland. It is in *Gezera* that the goat driven out to Asasel in the Old Testament ends up (Bureus 1644: 133). The motif of *Gezera* and the process of expulsion can be compared to the themes of expulsion that developed in a number of ways in Kabbalah. An important theme in Lurianic Kabbalah is the description of the "breaking of the vessels" (*schevirath ha-kelim*). Different vessels are created to capture light and give its energy a form in the bounded creation. The three vessels of the top triad of sefirot capture the light, but when the light flowing down to the next six vessels is too fast, these vessels rupture and fall apart. The bottom sephira is also damaged, although not as severely. The shards plunge into the abyss and with them 288 sparks of divine light. The pure and holy are thus mixed with the impure and unholy, resulting in the emergence of demonic counter-worlds to creation. The cause of the breaking of the vessels was due to a kind of original purification process. In the primordial space, the evil element was mixed with the good. To purify the sefirot from the evil, the vessels burst and the evil was driven away to be replaced by an independent identity in a demonic counter-world. Through the rupture of the vessels, new purified vessels emerge. The evil powers, called *kelippot* in Kabbalah, are perceived as slag products from previous evil worlds. They are compared to the slag or sediment of a good wine. Bureus also uses a dirt theme when he shows that the word for troll, in the form TROL is LORT backwards. The runes that form these two words are cast out to the areas outside the savior's pasture and are described as spiritual wolves bearing the sign of filth and the deceived. With this trident sign, the deceived will be pushed into the Abyss, into Hell and the Devil.

### 14.1 *The motif with the garden*

The savior's garden is an important motif for Bureus, which we mention in *Adulruna Rediviva*. Within the garden, man is protected from the forces of evil. In contrast, the spiritual wolves, trolls and demonic powers are present from the outside. Bureus also mentions *Abyss* and *Thehom* in *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*, which correspond to the sea and the depths of the sea, which could be interpreted as regions outside the ordinary world, and outside the Savior's garden. The garden as a motif has been discussed in detail by the cultural anthropologist Hans Peter Duerr in his book *Drömtid: Om gränsen mellan det vilda och det civiliserade* from 1982 (in German: *Traumzeit. Über die Grenze zwischen Wildnis und Zivilisation*, 1978), where he discusses the garden as a representative of the familiar and orderly, while what is hidden behind the garden's border is the wild and demonic. In pre-Christian times, there were individuals who were on the border between the garden and the wild. He believes that soothsayers and witches are examples of such individuals. One explanation for the word witch is that it is originally a German word that only came to Sweden in the sixteenth century. The term witch derives from the German *Hagazussa* or *Hag-zissa*, which is earliest documented in the fourteenth century and has an etymological connection with 'enclosure', 'hedge' or 'fence'. *Hagazussa* denotes a sorcerer who rides on a fencing cane. In connection with the witch hunts, the term spread from southern Germany and the north across Europe in the late Middle Ages and early modern times. Duerr believes that the witch was a person who sat on the edge of the unknown. The fact that she was on the border could be interpreted both socially and spatially, that is, she was in the outer zones of the village or community. Duerr argues that:

The concept of "inside the fence" is not the characteristic that distinguishes the pre-Christian witch from the witch during the time of the great witch hunts. Rather, the characteristic is the change in attitude towards the witch and the "out there". Christian culture had begun to build up a new form of order, which no longer required its "other side" to be recognized, but instead was suppressed and finally

destroyed (...). An attempt was therefore made to drive the hag out of the farmyard, chase her from the boundary line of culture into the wild, from dusk into night (Duerr 1982: 58).

In the wake of the Counter-Reformation and the Baroque in the sixteenth century, witchcraft persecutions spread epidemically across Europe, not least in the Protestant world. As we have seen in Bureus's diary, it was part of everyday life and an ever-present threat. Bureus was put up against the wall by the king to answer whether he was a Christian or not, and his own father-in-law was beheaded and burned for teaching witchcraft to some women accused of witchcraft. The witches belonged to the outside world, which must necessarily be driven back into the wilderness and into Hell if they entered the world of men. Blåkulla, to which the Swedish witches went on their broomsticks, was synonymous with Hell, or at least the forecourt of Hell, and as Per-Anders Östling writes in *Blåkulla, magi och trolldomsprocesser*:

All in all, we can conclude that Blåkulla was far away from people's everyday surroundings. This can be seen as an expression of the fact that the witches were not considered to belong in the Christian world. According to popular beliefs, witches came from far away, from outside, from a secret, wild and hidden world (...). The witches were the others, who did not belong in the village (Östling 2002: 123).

Trolls were also a threat to mankind at this time. Bureus mentions trolls a couple of times in his diary, and he even brought home bones and blood from the charred trolls he saw in the parish of Denmark outside Uppsala. Trolls represent forces from Hell and the TRUL binding rune from *Adulruna Rediviva* is compared to a poker from Hell. According to Catharina Raudvere in *Kunskap och insikt i norrön tradition* (Nordic Academic Press, 2003), trolls are the name of a rather vaguely defined group of supernatural beings in Norse mythology. They are demonic beings who usually act as a collective of destructive forces, but occasionally as individual trolls. The term *troll* is also used to denote people with special and supernatural abilities, who were sometimes associated with the giants (*jotnar*) who are some of the other dark creatures of the Old Norse. The sorcerers and sorceresses were in league with the dark powers. I

Early Christian literature in the Nordic countries used the word *troll* as a general term for devils, demons, monsters, etc. (Raudvere 2003: 38). Raudvere writes that:

It seems that the different compounds of troll- functioned as signals that powerful forces were at work. The first part of the term, troll-, indicates the mythological background to the representations and actions discussed. We are not talking about John Bauer's fluffy forest creatures, but rather rather abstract, sometimes completely incorporeal, forces (Raudvere 2003: 37).

We need to understand Bureus's extreme dualism in the context of the sixteenth-century worldview. According to the archaeological historian Ola W. Jensen, there were no major differences between learned and popular beliefs during the sixteenth century, but it is only in the seventeenth century that such differences begin to emerge and beliefs about, for example, giants begin to be singled out as popular and as expressions of superstition and ignorance (Jensen 2002: 324). For Bureus, trolls, demons and giants could thus be perceived as a reality, although we know that he sometimes doubted at least the existence of trolls (Strindberg 1937: 58). In the sixteenth century, witches, demons and trolls are not exclusively metaphors for spiritual dangers, but threatening realities that risk leading mankind into the abyss. At the same time, we cannot rule out the possibility that Bureus's creative imagery also allows motifs with trolls, and the expulsion to the outside, as well as paradise and its angels, to function as poetic images for a neo-Platonic-colored ascension process.

## 15 The Lion of the North: Bureus and alchemical eschatology

From the days of Luther, Protestantism was already characterized by late medieval cultural pessimism with its idea of depravity, which asserts that the development of humanity and Christianity runs along a downhill slope towards gradual deterioration. Luther, like his predecessors in the medieval reform movements, would come to the conclusion that the root of evil lay within the Church itself (Sandblad 1942: 30-31). Christian historiography was characterized by a reverse evolutionism in which history was perceived as a process towards increasingly worse conditions (Jensen 2002: 70). A cultural pessimism and cultural criticism immanent in Christianity would be directed against the church by Reformed and heretical thinkers, and as Henrik Sandblad writes in *De eskatologiska föreställningarna i Sverige under reformation och motreformation* (1942), it was natural that these ideas would flourish in Reformed environments:

It goes without saying that this eschatological attitude, which implies the strongest criticism of the prevailing conditions and a fervent hope for a better existence, came to be held mainly by the heretical and reformatory movements (Sandblad 1942: 15).

The ancient research of the Great Power era was characterized by the idea of decay and the notion of a golden age in the past, where Sweden had stood as the cradle of culture. The Sveo-Goths had been faithful to the true god before they began to worship wooden idols as part of the decline. In Christian historiography there was an inherent paradox



where, on the one hand, the entire history from the Fall was experienced as a gradual deterioration, but on the other hand, the birth of Christ was seen as the turning point in history for the better (Jensen 2002: 75).

Christian eschatology as we find it in Bureus has its prehistory in Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202) and his doctrine of the three kingdoms, which has influenced millenarian and messianic movements throughout European history. According to Joachim of Fiore, history passes through three phases, each governed by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The first kingdom belonged to the Father and corresponds to the time until the birth of Christ. This time was associated with winter. The next kingdom belonged to the Son, Christ, and was a kingdom of spring, in which Joachim and his later successors considered themselves to live. It was a kingdom on the brink of destruction, but a long-awaited destruction that would lead into the third kingdom of summer and the Holy Spirit. It was dreamt that the last kingdom would be a kingdom of love, characterized by light and warmth, as in summer when the sun is at its highest. Joachimite ideas influenced countless movements, including Thomas Müntzer's social Christianity in the 15th century. Expectations of the Kingdom of the Holy Spirit could legitimize religious preachers claiming to speak inspired by the Spirit of God. The time of prophecy was not over; on the contrary, it would increase on the threshold of the Kingdom of the Spirit. Bureus believed he was communicating the word of God during prophetic moments such as the revelation at Tuna in 1613. In *The Influence of Prophecy In the Later Middle Ages: A Study In Joachimism*, Marjorie Reeves describes three ideas that would inform millenarian Christianity. The first was the idea of the millennium and the millennial kingdom which drew its support from Revelation 20:1-3 where Satan is bound for a thousand years. The second idea was the concept of the Sabbath, which was based on the Bible's message that on the seventh day God rests from the act of creation. The third concept was the hope that future revelations from the Holy Spirit were to be expected (Reeves 1993: 295-296). Bureus developed the doctrine of the three kingdoms in his own Gothic and Lutheran style, which we will return to a little later in the structural analysis of *the North*

### *Land Lion's Ride.*

At Bureus, history moves in a rollercoaster-like fashion, with alternating declines and turning points for the better. At Bureus we can discern the following movements:

1. The movement out of Eden after the Fall goes down through the 3000 years or so he thought had passed between the Fall and the birth of Christ.

2. With Christ, it is a steep climb to an unprecedented peak.

3. With Emperor Constantine and the incorporation of Christianity into the Roman Empire and the establishment of the papacy, things go downhill.

4. The turnaround then begins with Jan Huss in the thirteenth century, and then in two further steps goes uphill, first with Martin Luther and finally himself.

5. With the Kingdom of God in 1675, history ends and time comes to an end. The paradise is regained.

Not only Gothic historiography, but equally esotericism at this time, was characterized by apocalyptic expectations. The strongest eschatological influence of the esoteric currents in Europe on the Swedish great power came from the pseudo-Paracelsian lion prophecy. The prophecy warns that the time before the coming of the Lion will be characterized by a multitude of plagues and hauntings. The dream of a Lion from the North defeating the Eagle flourished in chiliastic and reformatory circles.

The Rosicrucians invoked Paracelsus' prophecy and waited for the Lion to come from the North and save the righteous. The Lion would establish the earthly kingdom of glory that would precede the kingdom of heaven (Nordström 1934: 16).

At this time, tensions between Catholics and Protestants increase. In 1608, the Evangelical Union is formed and, in response, the Catholic League is formed the following year. Bohemia enjoys a brief period of freedom but is crushed by Austria in 1620. Denmark goes to war but the Danish troops are defeated in 1626. Nothing seems to be able to defeat the Emperor and the Catholic League, which has all of northern Germany in its grip. The Roman Eagle rules over the Protestant areas and the Protestant inhabitants are desperately looking for salvation.

sare. Through Rosicrucian literature, we read Paracelsus' prophecy of the Lion of the North and now our eyes turn north. For a while it was thought that this lion might be the Danish king Christian IV, but after his defeat, the gaze is directed even further north. Could it be that the successful king of Sweden, Gustav II Adolf, could be the midnight lion they were waiting for? Johan Nordström describes the spirit of the times in *De yverbornes ö* from 1934:

Never has the Protestant world, in spite of the warnings of the professional theologians, indulged in more fervent and romantic hopes of a blissful age to come than in these years of so terrible a reality. Nothing reveals the rapture of this generation than its preoccupation with the Rosicrucian mystery. The Rosicrucian message of the coming general reformation, when, after the overcoming of papal tyranny, men shall be united in the true religion of Christ, and, possessed of the revealed secrets of nature, live in paradisiacal bliss, this message, itself a child of the spirit of the age, found everywhere believing and devoted hearts, penetrated into the castles of princes and the dwellings of the common people, won the adhesion of scholars at the universities and of the burghers in the market towns, was condemned by many, defended by still more, even by Lutherans, even by Lutheran priests, discussed by all (Nordström 1934: 24).

One of the Swedes involved in the lion prophecy was the poet Lars Svensson (1605-1669), who has gone down in history as Lars Wivallius, after the Vivilla farm outside Örebro that belonged to his family. Like Bureus, he wrote a series of pro-fictions and suggested that he himself was one of the three men who would find the treasures. According to a letter from Wivallius, one of the three men would be born in 1605, like himself, and go by the name Wuliluvasi (Strindberg 1937: 74-75).

The prophecy was to be used in Swedish propaganda, and one of the people Gustav II Adolf consulted for advice on the war was his Paracelsist teacher Bureus. The king once asked him if it was possible to go to war without committing sins. The king had a habit of assuming mythical roles such as

could enhance his charisma and reputation. At his coronation he took on the role of the Gothic chieftain Beric and the role of the Paracelsian lion he would willingly assume when winning battles during the Thirty Years' War. When Gustav II Adolf landed in Germany, he had a medal made with his portrait, which also contained a picture of a lion and a book (Gilly 2008). The medal read:

From midnight I come here, To  
quarrel is all my desire, Will  
always keep good watch, God's  
angels I heed.

Among the Protestants, a song was sung in which Gustav II Adolf calls out to his fleeing opponents:

I am the lion of midnight, I will  
fight with you fresh, I will fight  
by the power of God, God help  
the righteous.

The identification with the Swedish king and the Paracelsian midnight lion spread in print and song across Europe (Englund 1997: 1139) and has in modern times given name to biographies of the Swedish warrior king, such as *Gustav Adolf: der Löwe aus Mitternacht* from 1984, written by Felix Berner. There is a famous story about how Gustav II Adolf had a nocturnal vision in Nuremberg shortly before his death, of an eagle in the sky attacking a large lion. The lion, however, pressed its right foot down on one of the eagle's wings, forcing it to abandon its feathers and flee. However, figures in long robes, which we understand to symbolize the priests of the Catholic Church and their influence on the emperor, force the eagle to attack again. Once again, the lion defeats the eagle. Around them stand other lions, but who dare not enter the fight. The vision then subsided. The king asks those present if they saw the same thing as him and they answered yes. The king then explains that "I see my allies abandoning me. They will not go forward to fight the eagle. But what is to be done about it? The duty of a prince bids him act courageously and persevere. God have mercy on

me!" (Ahnlund 1939: 34). From the turn of the year 1627/1628, Gustav II Adolf had the image of himself as the Lion spread from the North, especially in Germany, through the help of his agent Ludwig Resches. The role of the lion motif is reflected in the extensive lion symbolism on the regal ship Vasa, built a couple of years before the entry into the German war (Oredson 2007: 192).

The extent to which Gustav II Adolf used the lion prophecy for propaganda purposes is a matter of debate. Johan Nordström claims that this was done actively by the king and the Swedish authorities, while Nils Ahnlund, in his 1939 article "Gustav Adolf, lejonprofetian och astrologien" (Gustav II Adolf, the lion prophecy and astrology), questions whether this was the case, arguing instead that these beliefs came to the king spontaneously after being spread in pro-Swedish circles in the Hanseatic cities (Ahnlund 1939: 47). Regardless of how the king saw himself, it was effective propaganda, and Albrecht von Wallenstein would claim that the Protestants were waiting for Gustav II Adolf as the Jews were waiting for the Messiah (Oredsson 2007: 192).

One of those who would pay close attention to the lion prophecy was Bureus. Despite his closeness to Gustav II Adolf, he would have doubts about whether the Swedish king was really the prophesied midnight lion, as so many believed. Through his close reading of the Book of Revelation, Bureus realized that the lion of the tribe of Judah, who opens the sealed scroll the Lord holds in his hand, must be the same lion that Paracelsus spoke of. That the lion of Revelation referred to Christ was not a satisfactory explanation for Bureus. If it was the same lion that Paracelsus had spoken of and that was so much talked about in Bureus' time, then the lion would come from the North. Moreover, was it not the case that it was Bureus himself who, during his enlightenment in 1613, had been given the key to open the apocalyptic years? No, it seemed unlikely that the lion in the Book of Revelation and in Paracelsus' prophecy would point to the Swedish king. For Bureus, the picture became clearer and he concluded that he himself was the Lion. In his last major work, *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande*, he presents himself as the North Landa Lion and proclaims an apocalyptic ascension through the various phases of esotericism and alchemy.

### 15.1 The *eschatological structure of the North Land Lion's Ride*

*Nord Landa Lejonens Rytande* is partly a walk through the temple of Salomos and partly a historical eschatological journey through the ages from the first days of Christianity up to and including the eternal Kingdom of God when history and time end. The structure of the book is as follows, where parts of the temple and the size of the various ledges in cubits represent historical events.

Lower Azara, which is the first ledge of the temple. It is two cubits high and the two cubits represent the time around the year 136 and the emperor Hadrian, while the other cubit represents the year 324 and the emperor Constantine. For Bureus, these emperors are representatives of the Catholic Church gaining power in Rome and thus negative figures associated with the death figures Thanatos and Scheol, as well as the two ominous planets Saturn and Mars.

The Upper Azara, which is the middle ledge of the temple, is four cubits representing the four cherubim in the Book of Ezekiel as well as the years 1396, 1530, 1568 and 1647. The cubits thus represent:

1396, Johan Huss, as the cherub in human form.

1530, Martin Luther, the cherub in the form of a bull.

1567-1568, and 1645, Johannes Bureus, the cherub in the form of a lion.

The dates represent the years of his conception and birth, as well as the publication of *The Lion of Nord Landa*.

1647, Keruben in the shape of an eagle.

Harel, the third and last ledge of Solomon's temple, represents the year 1659, the time when the Devil is cast into the abyss, which for Bureus means the final rejection of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Ariel, which is the altar, but also the name of the lion angel he identifies with, represents 1674 and the coming of the eternal Kingdom of God.

In addition to these levels, the book is divided into the three kingdoms of Christ, with the first kingdom corresponding to the time from 136 and being the one of Christ's kingdoms named after

Saul. The second kingdom begins with the conception of Bureus in 1567 and is named after King David. The kingdom of Christ is named after King Solomon and begins in 1641.

## 15.2 Apocalyptic alchemy

Bureu's Gothic esoterism is a relatively complex system if we look at his later esoteric writings such as *the North Landa Lion's Ride* and the later versions of *Adulruna Rediviva*. It is a combination of Gothic Kabbalah and Runic alchemy, describing at the same time Bureus's personal spiritual development and world-historical events culminating in a pre-existing apocalypse. Bureus switches rapidly, but with a logic that is obvious to him, between a Neoplatonic and Hermetic ascent to higher degrees of enlightenment, and a Protestant eschatology. In Bureus's syncretism, prophecies and biblical passages are interwoven with the correspondence doctrines of Renaissance magic. He allows the runes to emanate from the basic structure of creation and they then represent the levels of ascension through which both the individual and the world pass.

As Jensen has noted, Bureus is not primarily concerned with the decline of history (Jensen 2002: 92), but *Nord Landa Lejonsens Rytande* focuses on a gradual improvement that follows the pattern of the alchemy and ascension. The authoritative account of world history in the Reformation was the Branderburg court chronicle and politician Johann Carion's *Chronica*, published in 1532. According to this chronology, Christ was born 3944 years after the creation of the world (Friberg 1942: 80). Bureus essentially follows this chronology, but modifies it as necessary, placing the birth of Christ *Anno Mundi* 3960 (Bureus 1644: 3).

In Bureu's esotericism, a number of very central dates recur, marking certain key events in the Protestant eschatology into which he weaves his own person. These dates correspond to other aspects of Bureu's esotericism and are based on the seven steps that form the foundation of his ascension thought. The correspondences with metals and planets were well known in the esoteric milieu of the Renaissance and are found in their most detailed form in Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia*. The dates and the rune sequence, on the other hand, are Bureus' own construction.



The eschatological ascension drama begins in 136 A.D. from the death of Christ, with Emperor Hadrian desecrating the site of Christ's crucifixion and his tomb by erecting pagan shrines on these sites. According to *the North Country Lion's Roar*, this is what is referred to in Matthew 24:15: "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that readeth this take heed". This event is under the influence of the sinister planet Saturn. The next dark event in history is controlled by the planet Mars and occurs in 324 when Emperor Constantine establishes the Papacy in Rome, which the pro-testant Bureus sees as a terrible event symbolized by the beast in the Book of Revelation. Saturn and Mars are negative planets, but the next three planets are positive, each representing key events in the struggle against the Catholic Church, as Bureus interpreted it. Mercury rules the events of 1396 to 1415 when Jan Huss questions the teachings of the papacy. When Luther proclaims *the Confessio Augustana* in 1530, Jupiter rules, while the morning star Venus rules the years of Bureus' conception and birth, 1567 and 1568, because Bureus identifies with the morning star and its influences. Venus also prevails during 1645, the year of *the North Land Lion's Roar*. He writes that the metal copper corresponds to Venus in the discussion of the copper altar mentioned in the Second Book of Kings, chapter 16. After the three preachers of true Christianity, in which Bureus places himself as the last and most important, comes the judgment followed by Jesus and the eternal kingdom of God. In 1647 and 1666, which are synonymous with Bureus' logic, the first judgment takes place. There are signs in the moon during this time and in addition to the connection to the moon, Bureus believes, according to traditional esoteric correspondence doctrine, that the moon and silver belong together. Similarly, the sun and gold belong together and represent the final judgment in 1673 and the eternal kingdom of God that comes in 1675. The symbol for this in the ascension ladder is the sunlit gate illustrated by the recumbent rune of Thor. Bureus' apocalyptic alchemy can be summarized by the following table of correspondence:

136 Hadrian, Saturn, lead, Byrghal.

324 Constantine, Mars, iron, Sol.

1396-1415 Jan Huss, Mercury, Mercury, Idher.

1530 Martin Luther, Jupiter, Tin, Man.

1567-1568 and 1645, Johannes Bureus, Venus, copper,  
Haghal.

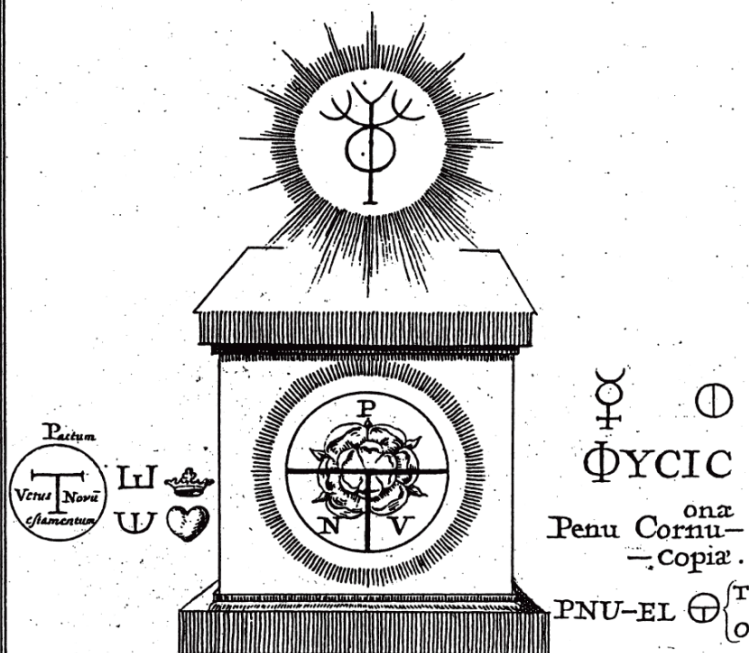
1647/1666, First judgment, moon, silver, sex.

1673 and 1675, Last Judgment and Eternal Kingdom of God,  
Sun, Gold, Thors.

In the esoteric spirit of Bureus, world events correspond to inner processes in man, as well as to different levels of the structure of the universe. Bureus's alchemy is thus both an expression of an eschatology and an initiation into the mysteries, an initiation that also involves an ascension, i.e. an ascent into higher layers of reality.

The third (conceptions and mediations), fourth (transmutational experience) and sixth (transference) criteria of esotericism, according to Faivre, all point to the idea that there are different layers of reality for the adept to explore and penetrate. Concepts such as ascent and descent and the transition of opposites into each other recur constantly in descriptions of the esoteric initiation. The old life is presented as a cage, or a prison of ignorance, from which initiation and esoteric enlightenment provide liberation. Johannes Bureus equates the bottom rung of his runological ladder to enlightenment with a cage (Bureus, Rål. 9 8°, p. 67). The ascent or initiation into the mysteries is not only a vertical process upwards through the worlds towards the divine, or primarily a refining of metals, but also a historically linear process that runs through time from creation to the eternal Kingdom of God at the end of time.

ARA  
FOEDERIS THERAPHICI  
F.X.R.



ASSERTIONI FRATERNITATIS R.C.  
*quam Roseæ Crucis vocant*  
*Consecrata.*

*Franckenberg's version of Ara Foederis Theraphici F.X.R.*

## 16 Esoteric Gothicism after Bureus

In this section I will examine the existence of Gothic esotericism and a Nordic Kabbalah after Bureus. The Gothic esotericism that he spent a lifetime creating has had a very limited influence, which may seem odd when compared to the impact of the equally eccentric John Dee on Western esotericism. We know from the diary that he had a small audience when he lectured on *Buccina iubilei ultimi*, but the extent to which a group of esoteric students gathered around him is uncertain.

### *16.1 Georg Stiernhielm's Gothic Neoplatonism*

One of the few who adopted and developed Bureus' Gothic esotericism was Georg Stiernhielm. Stiernhielm was born on August 7, 1598 in Dalarna under the name Göran Olofsson. After completing his studies at Uppsala University, he became a lecturer at the gymnasium in Västerås. By Gustav II Adolf he was appointed reading master for *Riddarhuset* and after a period as vice president of the *Dorpat Court of Appeal* he was summoned to Stockholm and appointed *Riksantikvarie*. He was a highly regarded poet at court and has been called the father of Swedish poetry. With his poetry, Stiernhielm helped to increase the appreciation of Swedish. Stiernhielm's first collection of poems, *Musæ Suethizantes*, was published in 1668. The title suggests that the classical singing goddesses had originally sung in Swedish. The collection is characterized by the ideals of Renaissance humanism and the most famous poem "Hercules", written in hexameter, is a warning

The book was written for the young Swedish nobility, who, in Stiernhielm's eyes, lived a life at court that was too haughty and debauched. It can also be seen as an allegory of man's choice between the flesh and the spirit.

Georg Stiernhielm was Bureus' foremost disciple and married his niece Cecilia Burae. Stiernhielm became Reichen- tikvarie after Bureus and was strongly influenced by his teacher. In some matters he would tone down Bureus' mystical speculations, in others he went even further than Bureus. Stiernhielm was captivated early on by Neoplatonism and turned against the Scholastics and the boring "quarrelsome" Aristotle, whom he detested. In Stiernhielm's eyes, the logic of the Aristotelians was petty and avoided the great thoughts that he believed philosophers should engage in. "The eagle does not catch flies", "*Aquila non captat muscas*", was his comment on the Aristotelians. Instead, he read Plotinus' Enneads and mystics such as Ficino, Robert Fludd and Giordano Bruno. He was the first in Sweden to accept Bruno's ideas of an animated infinite universe with countless star worlds, although Bureus had already been introduced to this worldview by Franckenberg through his essay *Oculus sidereus oder neu-eröffnetes Stern- licht* (Åkerman, forthcoming: 34). Like Bureus, Stiernhielm believed that the true philosophy was found in the ancient sages such as Plato, Moses, Zoroaster and Hermes Trismegistus. In his unfinished philosophical lifework *Monile Minervae*, Minerva's Necklace, Stiernhielm describes the intertwining of the things of nature. The main theme is the doctrine of the three principles of nature: darkness, soul and light. According to Stiernhielm, the biblical creation story describes how these three principles interact to produce our world. From Night, the empty Nothing, the first principle emerges, *prima materia*, primordial matter, which was a misty mass of water, the home of darkness and cold. Primordial matter is formed and given structure by the principle of the soul (*man*). The soul is an outflow of God's essence, which deposited the ideas or seeds of things in matter. These are first realized or actualized through light (*lux*), which functions as the soul's instrument and drives away the Night so that nature rises from the depths like Venus from the waves (Lindroth 1975: 164f).

Stiernhielm was also a linguist and his linguistic writings are characterized by the influence of Neoplatonism and his teacher Bureus. Following Bureus, Stiernhielm believed that spiritual reality is manifested through words and letters. The original Gothic language would thus not only represent reality, but correspond directly to it. During the Renaissance, some people began to question whether Hebrew was the divine language. Bureus toyed with the idea that the Gothic language was the oldest, but attributed a special status to Hebrew as the divine language above others. Stiernhielm was to take the plunge and declare Gothic the original language that exactly corresponded to the things it described (Lindroth 1975: 268).

The idea of an original spiritual language is found in many traditions, but for Stiernhielm it was based on Plato's dialogue *Kratylos*. The original words are not just a few arbitrary signs, but correspond fully with things and the principles of existence. According to Stiernhielm, even the individual letters and their sounds correspond to certain principles: **R** denotes movement, **L** lightness, **M** weight (Stähle 1975: 253). Stiernhielm shows how the letters represent different degrees of spirit or matter. The vowels correspond to the spiritual plane and the highest is the letter **A**, which represents God himself, the origin of everything. Closest to **A** are the other vowels in the hierarchical order **Ä**, **E**, **Ö**, **I**, **Y**, **Å**, **O**, **U**. The letter **A** represents light and clarity, while **U** represents darkness and night. The consonants represent matter, but the vowels **I** and **U** are close to materializing and, if they lose light and sound, can be transformed into **J** and **V**. If **V** is further condensed and materialized, it becomes **F** and finally **P**. Of the consonants, **H** is closest to the spiritual. It is almost immaterial. The lowest consonants include **N** and finally **M**, which corresponds to earth and dust, darkness and muteness. Here we see a similarity with Bureus' description of the fifteen runes where **M** is the last rune, "the one that clogs the mouth", as Bureus writes. It was probably this Platonic-influenced linguistic theory that prompted Bureus to rearrange the rune row and place the rune **M** last.

That Stiernhielm was greatly influenced by Bureus is already evident from the title of his first more detailed linguistic work with

The title *Adelruna sive Sibylla Sveo-Gothica* (Stiernhielm, Fd 13). In the manuscript *Specimen philologicum in primam literam A*, Stiernhielm uses the term "adelruna antiqua" (Stiernhielm, Fd 13). In *Mysterium Etymologicum* he uses Bureus' 15-type adulrunrad (Stiernhielm, Fd 3).

We also come across the concept of adulruna in the poet and archbishop Haquin Spegel (1645-1714), who mentions adulruna in his collection *Guds werk och hwila*:

As Moses was first taught by God himself,  
then the Adulunah, whom we believe and  
honor/ And thoroughly understood his wisdom  
with his ear/ Then no philosopher could tell  
him.

Spegel explains the word adulruna in his register and equates it with alruna and points out that the term originates from Tacitus, but that it has been misinterpreted as sorceress, when it should really be understood as an old precious scripture or old noble wisdom (Spegel, new edition by Bent Olsson and Barbro Nilsson, 1998: 373).

## 16.2 Olof Rudbeck and Atlantic Gothic runology

The most influential of all Gothic writers was Olof Rudbeck (1630-1702), who was also influenced by Bureus. In chapter 38 of the first book of his monumental work *Atland or Manheim*, he refers to Bureus' research (Rudbeck, d.ä., 1679: 832). In the same chapter, there is a picture of a Greek caduceus staff in which all the runes can be found according to Rudbeck's description. This staff with two serpents belonging to Hermes or Mercury, or the merchant as Rudbeck calls him, illustrates the three authorities belonging to the three crowns. Rudbeck shows how three runes symbolizing the authority of the three crowns are found in the Caduceus staff. These runes also represent Har, Jafnhar and Third, the mysterious chieftains encountered by King Gylfe in Snorri's Edda. Jafnhar is represented by the I-rune, Har by the H-rune and Third by the T-rune (Rudbeck, d.ä., 1679: 856). Rudbeck's argument for the importance of Sweden is based on

Rudbeck's way of finding all the runes of the rune wheel in a hermetic symbol and deducing correspondences to Gothic and national motifs is reminiscent of Bureus' approach.

Are Bureus and possibly Stiernhielm the only examples of esoteric Götticism? Were esoteric ideas also present in later Götticism? The history of esotericism during the time of Götticism goes over the Rosicrucian revival that influenced Bureus but which then led a fading existence and took other forms in an emerging Freemasonry and religious life. It seems that Gothicism continued to be influenced by esoteric thought, but that it underwent the same changes as esotericism in general.

### *16.3 Johan Göransson's religious runology*

One of the few who bravely defended the Gothic phantasms of the Great Power era when they became outdated in the seventeenth century was the rune writer Johan Göransson. In his book entitled *Is atlinga; It is: De forna göters, här uti Svea rike, bokstäfver ok salighets lära, tvåtusend tvåhundra år före Christum, utspridde i all land; Igenfunden af Johan Göransson* (1747), Göransson develops his theories on the origin of runes, language and religions. Like Bureus, he claims to have rediscovered the original truth about the runes. He describes the sacred speeches that were of great importance to the Sveo-Goths and that corresponded to different runes in the 16-type rune line. Following Bureus, he explains that the first runes **f**, **u**, **th**, **o**, **r** of the rune line denote Father, which proves that the secrets of Christianity are hidden in the runes. He believed that each rune had a great symbolic meaning in itself and that each rune was a sermon. Based on the Icelandic runic song from the fourteenth century, he describes the meaning of each rune in a column that also shows their number in the rune row and which letter they denote (Göransson 1747: 2). Later in the book he tells us about Odin's wife Sibyl (whom we recognize from Bureus)



which predicts Christ through the runes corresponding to different years and eras in history. The first rune<sup>Þ</sup> corresponds to the golden age; peace, bliss, wealth and happiness. Göransson gives a runic sermon:

Adam created, in God's seat in the state of Bliss/ possessed all the wealth of the earth, and the Highest Peace that can be given. this age is called in the Edda, now Freis/ now Thor's/ golden time; also by Greek and Latin Scalds (Göransson 1747: 106)

Rune by rune, Göransson takes the reader through history with mainly biblical references. By multiplying the number of the rune by two hundred, he arrives at the historical years the rune describes. The Nöd rune, which is the eighth rune, stands for the sixteen-hundredth year after creation when the great distress, the Flood, occurred. Göransson is one of the least noticed of the series of rune-loggers who put symbolic meanings into the runes. Unlike Bureus, he is not clearly characterized by esoteric elements, but rather represents a Gothic mystical Christianity with elements of numerology and ideas of predictions.

#### *16.4 Initiatory Gothicism of the Manheim Federation*

Younger Gothicism began in the early nineteenth century. It had been preceded by a period of what the representatives of Younger Gothicism perceived as a lack of interest in the Nordic. The older Gothicism and Rudbeckianism had disappeared or been scorned in scholarly circles and only a few people like Björner and Göransson had spoken for the older Gothicism during the seventeenth century. As a reaction to this, the Götische förbund was founded in 1811, with Erik Gustaf Geijer as one of the leading figures. Its aims were both literary and cultural, as well as generally patriotic. They wanted to revive the "spirit of freedom" and "manliness" of the Goths. The common heroic history of the North, the Norse myths and the Icelandic sagas were highlighted. These would inspire a Gothic revival.

Another similar patriotic association was the Manhem Association. Its members were partly the same as those of the Gothic League. Both associations emphasized the importance of physical, spiritual and moral strength. The Manhem League aimed to develop and improve the new generations. Physical exercises and patriotic songs were to educate the rising generation to become new Vikings. The Manheim League developed a nine-level initiation path that would teach the young adepts the Gothic virtues.

The name Manhem comes from the Old Norse *Mannheimar*, 'the world of men' or 'the home of men'. The symbol of the Manhem association was a Madur rune  $\Psi$  which stands for 'man' or 'manhem'. Above the rune was the letter M and on their larger seal was a symbol of the Trinity surrounded by a halo. Around the edge was the covenant's motto 'Thette eR vaR nidleiti', this is our aspiration, inscribed in runes. The educational nature of the Manhem League was linked to the fact that the League was founded by teachers at the Afzeliuska School in Stockholm. For the Manhem Brother, initiation was a form of education and the aim was to improve oneself both externally and internally. In the last degree, the brother of the order would step out into the ordinary world and work in society with the lessons of initiation in his luggage. The adepts were mainly young men and the society had no age limit, although an informal statement showed that they did not admit anyone under twelve. Initiation was intended to unite the youth with the adult brethren through a common initiatory experience. Although Bureus' hermetic runic initiation with its apocalyptic character differs greatly from the educational and socially oriented initiation system of the Manhem Federation, both are characterized by the initiation mysticism of the esoteric tradition. Bureus emulated the Hermetic and Rosicrucian models that were widespread during his time. The Manhem Society is characterized by the eighteenth-century Romanticism of the order and imitated the Masonic order structure, but in a Gothic-Nordic style.

Whether the Manhem Society should be classified as esoteric at all depends on the importance attached to initiation, religious life and esotericism as a form of secrecy. A spiritual or religious dimension was unmistakably present in the Manhem Society, as

was initiation, religious life and secrecy. If we use Faivre's criteria, it is doubtful whether it can be called an esoteric society. At the same time, we must dismiss large parts of Freemasonry from Western esotericism if we choose not to call the Manhem Society esoteric. The Manhem Society was undoubtedly Gothic, but esoteric only in terms of the discourse of secrecy.

### 16.5 *The Swedish Kabbalah after Bureus*

Although few Swedes have been involved in Kabbalah in the same devoted and personal way as Bureus, there has been an interest in Kabbalistic thought in Sweden. The Christian Hebraist Andreas Norrelius (1679-1749) translated and published *the Zohar* in Latin in 1720 in Amsterdam, annotated by his friend and teacher Johan Kemper (1670-1716), under the title *Phosphoros Orthodoxae Fidei Veterum Cabbalistarum*. Originally called Moshe ben Aharon Cohen, Kemper was a rabbi and Sabbatean who converted to Christianity. He commented on *the Zohar* in another text called *Mateh Moshe* (The Rod of Moses), which Norrelius tried in vain to raise money to print. In his texts, Kemper used gematria calculations and noted that the word *nechash*, which is often translated as "snake" has the same kabbalistic numerical value as the savior *mashiach* (Eskhult 2008: 457). Kemper was originally a follower of the Judeo-Turkish messiah pretender Sabbatai Zvi (1626-1676), who was identified with a snake that would descend into the abyss to save the souls trapped in darkness, or as Scholem writes: "For he who had sunk into the deepest depths seemed to be the one most suited to behold the light (Scholem 1967/1992: 348). The fact that Sabbatai Zvi converted to Islam under threat of burning at the stake could be legitimized in this way. It was interpreted as meaning that he had to go down into the darkness in order to complete his act of salvation. Kemper, who also converted, but to Protestant Christianity, certainly never abandoned his Sabbatean conviction, but it characterized his

interpretations even after his conversion, which he probably did for strategic rather than religious reasons (Huss 2007: 136-138).

The Swedish bishop Eric Benzelius (1675-1743) was one of those who, after Bureus, became involved in Kabbalah in Uppsala. He studied *the Zohar* and invited Johan Kemper to teach Hebrew. Benzelius owned Bureus *Cabbalistica* and we find his signature on the first page of the text collection. In 1716 he published *Notitia litterarie*, the first part of which contains discourses on *the Zohar* and the Kabbalah (Åkerman. forthcoming: 196). Benzelius was the brother-in-law of Swedenborg, who may have been influenced by certain Kabbalistic ideas. Susanna Åkerman writes:

Swedenborg eventually took a different path from Kabbalists and Sufis, but I conclude that he owed a debt of gratitude to their illusory thought patterns (Åkerman. forthcoming: 197).

However, Benzelius was one of those who attacked the radical pietist and alchemist Johann Konrad Dippel (1673-1734), who was born in Frankenstein Castle in Darmstadt, Germany, and may have been the model for Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein.

In the seventeenth century, alongside Enlightenment ideas and scientific progress, a craze for mysticism in all its forms flourished. Freemasonry and Swedenborgianism emerged and united well-established and learned people in society who saw their occult experiments as scientific. Spiritism, animal magnetism and divination fascinated the bourgeoisie as well as the nobility and royal family (Ojas 2000: 280). The count and statesman Gustaf Adolf Reuterholm (1756-1813) was a central figure in Swedish esoteric circles during this period. He exerted a decisive influence on Swedish politics during the reign of King Gustav IV Adolf from 1792 to 1796 and has been described as a charlatan (Bogdan 2005: 1). Reuterholm's political power was strengthened by the fact that he was Duke Karl's confidant and together with him engaged in Freemasonry. They shared a great esoteric interest and Reuterholm's collection of writings contains several cabbalistic texts, a collection that is part of the Swedish Masonic Order's library in Stockholm and cataloged by Kjell Lekeby. Among the texts we find *Cabbalis-*

*the great and secret problems of the universe*, describing the numerical nature of creation; *King Solomon's semiphoras and schemhamphoras*, telling of the sacred and secret names of God; and *De cabala sancta (on the sacred Kabbalah)*, describing the ten sefirot. The text *Reflections on the Kabbalah and the introduction* explain the mythical origins of the Kabbalah and the importance of Hebrew in the Kabbalah:

The cabalists claim that everything has its proper name, by whose association and mention they can accomplish great things. (...) In this, the Ebrean language has precedence over other languages. The works are greater because the words they use express either the name of God or its perfections and emanations.

The naval captain Henrik Gustaf Ulfvenklou was notorious in the 1780s as a necromancer. Ulfvenklou mastered most occult techniques, such as astrology, chiromancy, geomancy and hydromantics (Chrispinsson 2008: 176). He was part of Duke Karl's closest esoteric circle and the duke says in a letter to the king that in Ulfvenklou he met: "...a man quite enlightened in the higher sciences and secrets", and that this contributed to the duke "...experienced that the light of light is stronger than human powers can endure", and that he had now seen spirits (Forsstrand 1913: 113). Ulfvenklou was familiar with various occult arts such as astrology, chiromantics and geomantics, and had a great interest in Kabbalah. During his stay with the duke, Ulfvenklou convinced him that he was in contact with all kinds of spirits and that he had forced the spirit of the queen dowager into a bottle, which he 'immediately stoppered with Solomon's glorious seal' (Forsstrand 1913: 116). In a letter to his friend Carl Göran Bonde, Ulfvenklou encloses two magical pentacles and describes how his friend should go about talking to the holy guardian angel. The letter is signed Chæremon, a name he received on February 11, 1786 at 10 o'clock in the evening when he "unexpectedly received his first ordination by the Angel of the Lord and received the keys of nature, grace and omnipotence in the presence of the witnesses Gabriel, Uriel, Raziel and others" (Forsstrand 1913: 134).

At this time there was also an order with the Kabbalistic name Metatron. Among Kabbalists, the name *Metatron* has been the subject of much speculation. It is often the name of an angel associated with either the highest or lowest sephirah on the Tree of Life. According to one tradition, God took the patriarch Enoch from the earth and transformed him into the angel Metatron. Metatron is also referred to as the heavenly scribe in charge of God's archives (Scholem 1996: 132).

In a newspaper advertisement in the spring of 1781, the previously unknown order had proclaimed its existence, in which they wanted to publicize "the high purpose and history of the society" (Häll 1995: 121). They claimed to have existed for 40 years and to have devoted themselves to charity, among other things. It was pointless to apply for membership in this order as they selected their members through physiognomics, a method that would analyze the human being through his face. The Order claimed to keep the whole of Sweden, and Stockholm in particular, under surveillance to identify suitable candidates. The Grand Master of Metatron had left behind several precious manuscripts, one of which, entitled *Blick der unbekanten gloria*, was the foundation of the Society.

Apart from the advertisement, Reuterholm's essay "Maçonique Händelser" from 1784 is the most important source on the mystical society Metatron. Reuterholm describes the society as "cosmopolitan and magical" (Häll 1995: 124). Initially, Metatron did not turn to the experienced mystic Reuterholm, which is said to have upset him, something that is said to have been rectified the following year when he refers to Metatron as "a familiar and esteemed magical society" (Lundin and Strindberg 1882: 436).

The most startling rumor about Metatron was that, according to Reuterholm, they would possess the Urim and Thummim, which he describes as a mirror in which one can see the true character of men. The Urim and Thummim are first mentioned in Exodus 28:30 where Aaron is to wear them when he goes to meet God. There has been speculation that the Urim and Thummim were a pair of stones used in ancient Israelite divination. Magic, mysticism, freemasonry and Kabbalah were not uncommon at the time. August Strindberg

and Claes Lundin describes the spirit of the times in his book *Gamla Stockholm: Anteckningar ur tryckta och otryckta källor* from 1882:

The mysterious and wonderful nature of the order rose to its height when Reuterholm and his followers found their game in Stockholm. This was the heyday of mysticism (...) The whole of society seemed to want to form religious societies in order to come to terms with the supernatural and lived only for 'magical convictions' (Lundin and Strindberg 1882: 436).

Although people like Duke Karl, Reuterholm and Ulfvenklou moved in an environment where they had the opportunity to support the Kabbalah of Bureus, they do not seem to have been influenced by his innovative Kabbalistic speculations, but instead devoted themselves to a more traditional Kabbalah.

#### *16.6 The transmission of a Gothic esotericism*

If we stop at the question of transmission, Faivre's sixth criterion, we must ask ourselves whether it is strange that Bureu's esoteric system has not been transmitted, or whether it is natural. At first glance, his system would seem so obscure and personal that it was not adopted by later followers for this reason. An environment and the conditions for mediation have been found in everything from Masonic environments in the seventeenth century, as well as in the Gothic national romanticism of the eighteenth century. Is Bureu's system itself the reason why it has not been adopted by later generations, or is the answer to be found in a general trend in esotericism?

Esoteric movements like to claim that their theories stem from an unbroken tradition of initiates. Already in Renaissance perennialism, the idea of an unbroken chain of initiates from ancient Egypt and Greece to the present day was formulated, including all the great scholars such as Moses, Pythagoras, Plato, Hermes Trismegistus and Zoroaster. The idea of an unbroken tradition is one of the hallmarks of esotericism, although this idea has begun to be questioned by contemporary esoteric practitioners, who have

academic skepticism about how unbroken these traditions really are. If we scratch the surface, we see that the traditions are rarely unbroken. The esoteric traditions have, of course, been passed down through the history of ideas by esotericists reading each other and knowing each other, but the individual differences and the will to innovate mean that we can hardly regard it as an unbroken tradition. One example is the Rosicrucian movement, which began in Bureus' time with a number of manifestos written by a group of young theologians and philosophers. The manifestos aroused a great deal of interest around Europe and Bureus was swept up in this wave of Rosicrucian ideas about a new esoteric revival. As Frances Yates has already pointed out, this first wave of Rosicrucian mysticism was limited in time (Yates 1972/2002:127). In various waves of different character, the Rosicrucian ideas have since lived on and have since the seventeenth century, with its upsurge of esoteric orders, given rise to Rosicrucian orders and Rosicrucian mysticism within esoteric order societies. It is doubtful, however, whether the Rosicrucian or any other esoteric tradition can be spoken of as an unbroken tradition, any more than other genres of music, art, literature and philosophy also convey impulses and ideas, or adhere to certain characteristics. As Joseph Dan notes in the case of Kabbalah, there are probably as many interpretations of Kabbalah as there are Kabbalists (Dan 2006: 13). The same can be said of most esoteric traditions. The fact that Bureus is not invoked by the esoteric societies of the seventeenth century is probably due to the fact that they do not use a runic symbolism, which makes Bureus as an esotericist somewhat superfluous. The great power prophecies were useless when the predicted dates for the end of the world were already a hundred years in the past and Bureus's general Kabbalistics could be replaced by a Kabbalah closer to the Hebrew sources. The uniqueness of Bureus was the runic Kabbalah he created, but without an interest in the runes, the attraction of Bureus falls away. The fact that Gothic societies such as the Manhem League do not refer to Bureus can be explained by the fact that he was not a model for the Gothicism of the time, which wanted to be modern and updated, albeit historically romantic. Bureus may have represented too fantastic and baroque a form of esoteric Gothicism for the educationalists.



oriented ideologists behind the Manhem League who wanted to educate young boys in a national liberal worldview.

Could Bureu's Gothic esotericism have gained followers if the conditions were right? If we compare it with the Rosicrucian ideas, which were widely disseminated at an early stage, popularity has gone in waves. If the Rosicrucian motif had not been picked up in the seventeenth century and incorporated into the religious structures of the time, the Rosicrucian mysticism might never have lived on other than as a historical phenomenon. In the twentieth century, Rosicrucian mysticism has gathered many followers. Rosicrucian societies such as the Ancient Mystical Order Rosæ Crucis (AMORC), founded at the beginning of the twentieth century in the United States, and the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, founded in 1935 by the Dutchman Jan van Rijkenborgh, together have hundreds of thousands of members. In addition to them, there are countless societies that profess a Rosicrucian-inspired philosophy. Rosicrucianism has lived on in new forms from the first manuscripts of the early sixteenth century to the Rosicrucian orders that thrive today. It is not a question of an unbroken tradition, but of motifs that have engaged and inspired writers, founders, esoteric ideologues and artistic practitioners in ways best suited to the particular context. Although it is not a question of an unbroken tradition, in the sense of transmitting revealed truths from a mythical primeval age, it is possible to speak of an esoteric or even Rosicrucian tradition. The word "tradition" is Latin and means "handing down" and refers to something that has been handed down from generation to generation and is thus something that links the past with the future. Tradition is a common thread which, in the case of esotericism, is not about family generations, but about people from very different backgrounds who pick up motifs, texts and symbols and reinterpret and construct meanings that suit the present and the particular context. Sometimes it can take a long time for an esoteric thinker to break through into the esoteric milieu. One such example is the court magician John Dee (1527-ca. 1608), whose Enochian occultism did not become more widely known until the Golden Dawn in the late eighteenth century. John Dee's system inspired Bureus, and the two moved in comparable environments where they worked together.

John Dee developed an inaccessible and personalized system and there is nothing in Dee's occult teachings that would make them easier to disseminate than Bureus's Gothic esotericism.

The fact that Bureu's Gothic esoterism has not influenced more people throughout history is not because of the system itself, but because it was not perceived as useful, or appealed to anyone who was prepared to reinterpret it in a way that suited the contemporary context. Had it not been for a few ideologues, Rosicrucianism or John Dee's Enochian occultism might well have met the same fate.

At the same time, Bureus's intellectual influence on his contemporaries should not be underestimated. Uppsala University would devote itself to *Zohar reading*, as explored by Dr. Bernd Roling in the article "Emanuel Swedenborg, Paracelsus und die esoterischen Traditionen des Judentums in Schweden" (2008). Eric Benzeliu is a direct link between Bureus' Kabbalistic interests and Johan Kemper's Sabbatean Kabbalah. Kabbalah as well as the study of Hebrew and Jewish mysticism had a place in Uppsala and Bureus is the one who introduces Kabbalah into this environment. Internationally, Bureus gained some fame and is mentioned as an initiate by Franckenberg in his comments on Guillaume Postel's *Clef des choses cachées* from 1646. Bureus seriously introduced the traditions and ways of thinking of Western esotericism into the intellectual circles of the Swedish superpower. Bureus's ability to quickly pick up, comment on and reinterpret esoteric currents from the continent also made him famous outside Sweden's borders.



## IV Executive Summary



## 17 A summary of Bureus' esoteric projects

In interpreting the runes as expressions of the basic structure of the universe, Bureus follows the idea behind the Italian humanists' view of hieroglyphics. It is a Platonic idea that has been transmitted in the esoteric traditions and in the West has taken its most developed form in Kabbalah. Bureus's attempt to combine literary mysticism and an emblematic view of the world with his own language is not unique to him, but a project that occupied other writers in Europe. The emblematic genre was one of the most representative genres of the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Bureus' Gothicism is a natural starting point in his time, although Bureus is part of a circle in which its most imaginative forms are expressed. As Schück has pointed out, Bureus as a methodological scholar is a follower of Olaus Petri's conscientious research and took great pains to collect, transcribe and record as reliable material as possible, but in terms of conclusions Bureus deviates from Petri's more restrained ambitions and instead joins Johannes Magnus' fantastic descriptions of ancient history (Schück 1932: 95). His brother Olaus Magnus was one of Bureus' often cited predecessors. Another important source for Bureus' ancient research was the Dutchman Johannes Goropius Becanus (1519- 1572) who similarly tried to show how Dutch was the language closest to the core of creation and spoken in the Garden of Eden (Friberg 1945: 124). Goropius' work *Origines Antwerpi- anæ* (1569) was owned by Bureus and in his notebooks he has

made a number of comments and polemical statements against Goropius (Schück 1932: 95).

Bureau's interest in Hebrew is not only a personal passion, but should also be seen in its Protestant context. In the search for an unadulterated interpretation of the Bible, the Reformation saw a growing interest in reading it in the original language. Latin became associated with the Catholic Church, which was considered to have distorted Christianity and with which Bureau Sweden was in open conflict. The appreciation of national languages and culture became a political tool against the dominant position of the Pope and the Empire in the world. There was thus both a humanistic, education-loving side to the language interest of the time, as well as a radical realpolitik side. The fact that Bureau's writings are filled with speculations about Greek and Hebrew is a reflection of the Protestant world's desire to explore the Bible free from the interpretive authority of the Catholic priests. Even Martin Luther, despite his later anti-Semitic outbursts, supported Reuchlin's project to promote Hebrew. Knowledge of Hebrew would serve as an important ideological element in the Protestant Reformation (Beitchman 1998: 129).

If we compare Bureau with John Dee, we realize that Bureau had a predecessor in Dee to similarly portray himself as a prophet who had received unique messages that had to be conveyed to the world. György E. Szönyi describes how John Dee, like other contemporary esoteric enthusiasts, wanted to present himself as a chosen one and therefore did not always point to his sources: "He wanted to become a prophet, an important herald of the great and general reformation..." (Szönyi 2004: 238). Szönyi speaks of Dee's "self-fashioning strategy" in which the mysterious prophet role is cultivated in a very conscious way (Szönyi 2004: 241). There are clear similarities between Dee and Bureau in terms of both ideological content and personality type. Bureau cultivates his role as a prophet and mystic in a very conscious way.

When we add up the influences on the history of ideas that Bureau took part in, the adulthood and its secrets appear as a fairly logical and natural consequence of the world of thought Bureau

was in. The Gothic interpretations of John Magnus and Olaus Magnus provided a Gothic framework that was both natural and strategic for Bureus as a practitioner in the emerging superpower and as a teacher of Swedish monarchs. The esotericism that has been at the center of this thesis is at the heart of Bureus' thinking and he was inspired by predecessors such as John Dee, Heinrich Agrippa, Johann Reuchlin, Pico della Mirandola, Heinrich Khunrath and Paracelsus, to name a few, and draws conclusions about the runes and the Gothic material from their texts. The Adulrune symbol is a creative, but contemporary, synthesis of John Dees *Mona's Hieroglyfica* and Bureus' runic research. Emblematics, Kabbalah and the Platonic view of language bridge the boundaries between language, nature, the world of ideas and images, which results in the mobility between different genres and disciplines typical of esotericism. For Bureus, the runes are not only written signs and the words not only words, but also images and underlying symbols that exist in nature and represent a higher reality. Perennialism and its claim to an unbroken ancient wisdom tradition together with what Ola W. Jensen called an apocalyptic view of history, where history is a descent from a utopian primeval time, would generate the conclusion in Bureus that the ancient runes, by their age, must be close to the original wisdom. With the material from the history of ideas as a backdrop, we can conclude that the Adul rune and the Gothic Kabbalah are a unique and creative, but at the same time typical, creation of Johannes Bureus.





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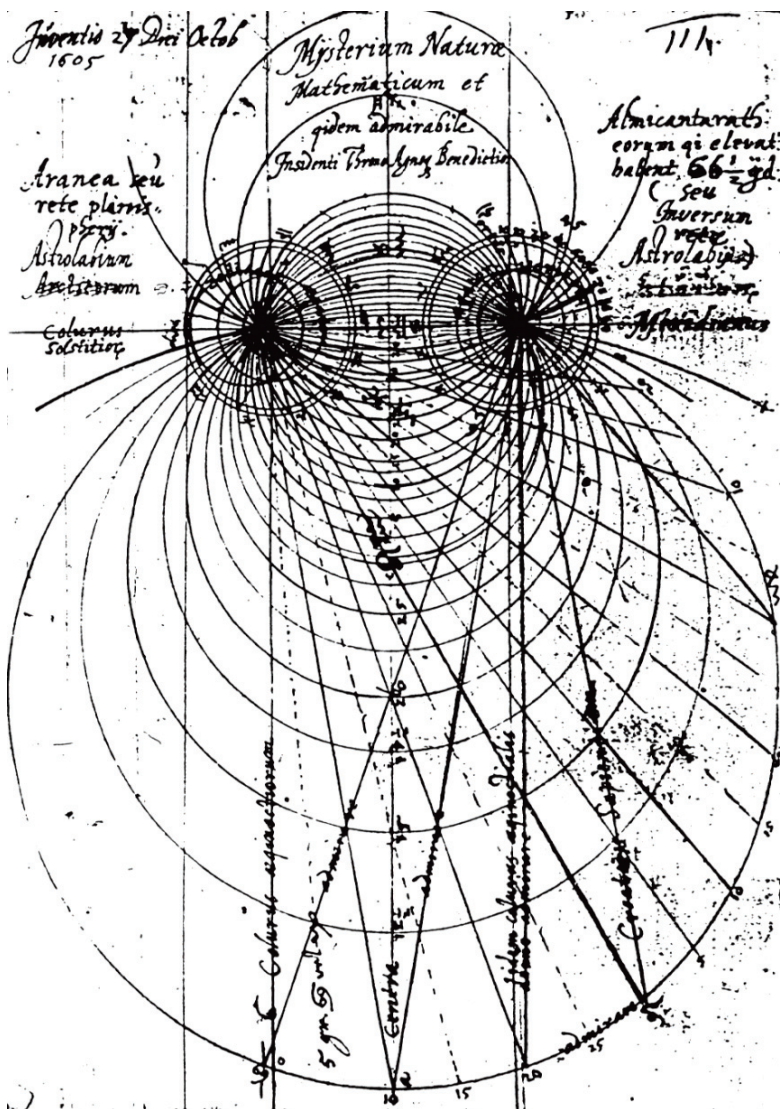
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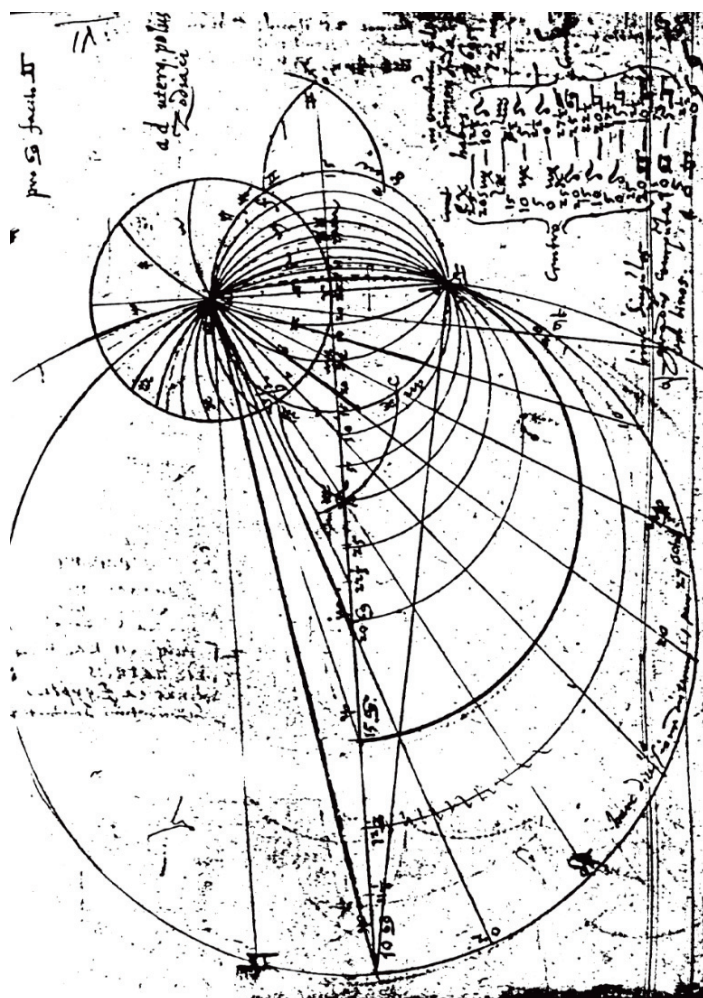








*Blaeuw's astrological calculations*





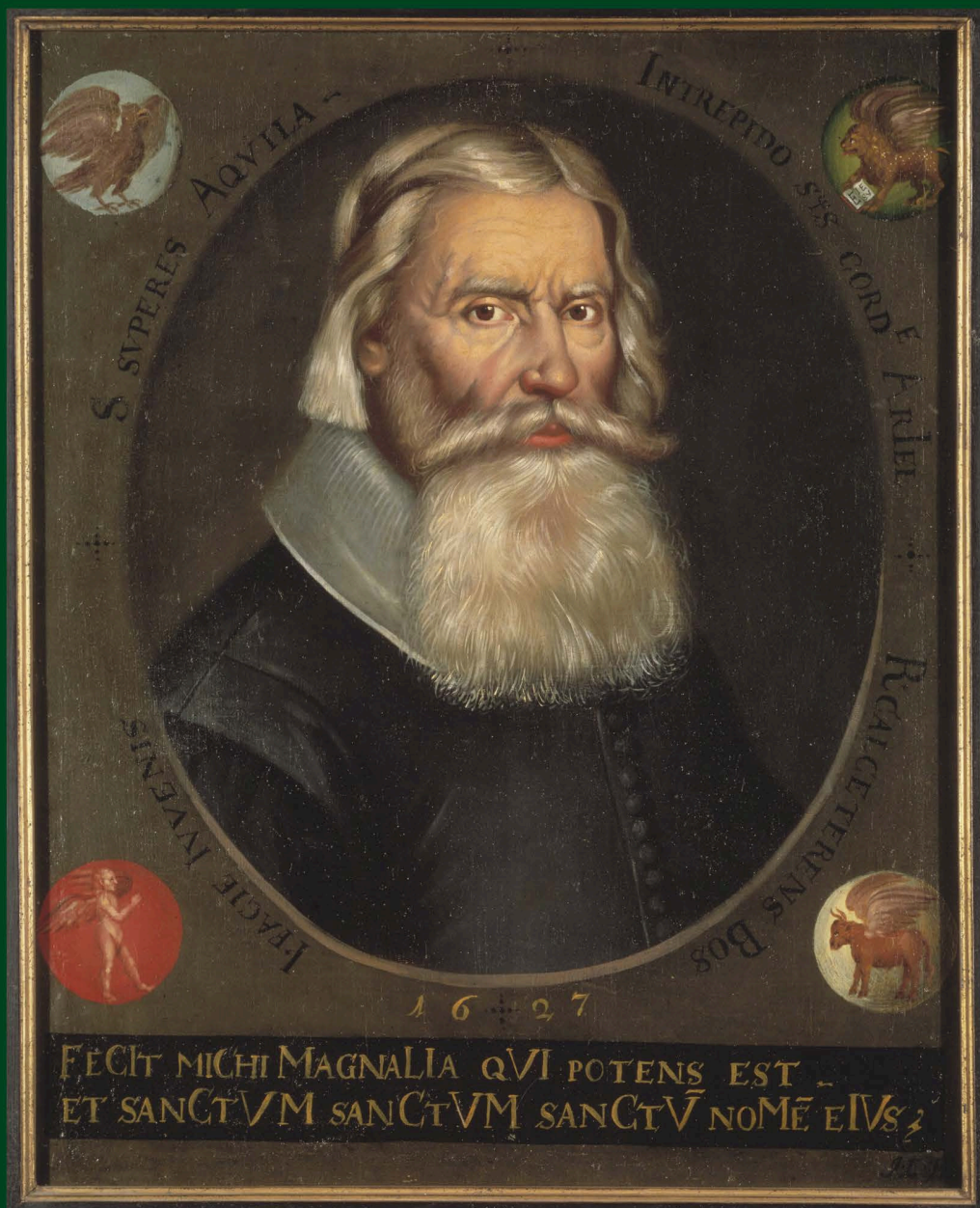
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TRADITION



Johannes Bureus

(1568 - 1652)

Tradition