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John Dee: Interdisciplinary Studies in English Renaissance Thought

*edited by*

STEPHEN CLUCAS



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STEPHEN CLUCAS
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# ABBREVIATIONS

*Alae* — Thomas Digges, *Alae, seu Scalae Mathematicae, quibus visibilium remotissima Coelorum Theatra conscendi, & Planetarum omnium itinera nouis & inauditis Methodis explorari: tum huius portentosi Syderis in Mundi Boreali plaga insolito fulgore coruscantis. Distantia, & Magnitudo immensa, Situsque protinus tremendus indagari, Deique stupendum ostentum, Terricolis expositum cognosci liquidissime possit* (London: Thomas Marsh, 1573).

*DNB* — *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. by Sidney Lee and Leslie Stephen, 22 vols (London, 1908).

*JDEP* — I.R.F. Calder, *John Dee Studied as an English Neo-platonist*, 2 vols (Unpublished PhD thesis, The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1952).

*Lib.Myst.* — John Dee, *Liber Mysteriorum*, London, British Library, Sloane MS 3188.

*MH* — *Monas Hieroglyphica Ioannis Dee, Londinensis, ad Maximilianum, Dei Gratia Romanorum, Bohemiae et Hungariae Regem Sapientissimum* (Antwerp: Gulielmus Silvius, 1564), facsimile edition of the Latin with facing page translation by C.H. Josten, *Ambix*, 12:2-3 (1964): 82-221.

*MP* — *The Elements of Geometrie of the most auncient Philosopher EVCLIDE of Megara. Faithfully (now first) translated into the Englishe toung, by H. Billingsley, Citizen of London. Wherevnto are annexed certaine Scholies, Annotations, and Inuentions, of the best Mathematiciens, both of time past, and in this our age. With a very fruitfull Praeface made by M. I. Dee, specifying the chiefe Mathematicall Sciences, what they are, and wherunto commodious: where, also, are disclosed certaine new Secrets Mathematicall and Mechanicall, vntill these our daies, greatly missed* (London: John Daye, 1570).

*NP* — Nicholas H. Clulee, *John Dee's Natural Philosophy: Between Science and Religion* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988).

GYÖRGY E. SZÖNYI

# PARACELSUS, SCRYING, AND THE *LINGUA ADAMICA*

## *Contexts for John Dee's Angel Magic*[*]

### 1. DEE, HISTORY OF SCIENCE, AND MAGIC

Two recent monographs have shown once again that John Dee is worthy of the attention of scholars from many different fields of studies, since he was himself involved in the whole spectrum of Renaissance scholarship.[1] In his early career he had had a humanistic orientation and focused on mathematics but from the 1580s he gave up these endeavours and almost entirely involved himself with angel magic, that is to say spiritual séances, or in Dee's terminology "angelic conversations". During these "conversations", Dee – aided by certain rituals, paraphernalia (including a crystal ball or "shewstone"), and a medium, or "scryer" – tried to gain various pieces of information from the celestial beings. This last activity of his, documented in his spiritual diaries written for the most part during his sojourns in East-Central Europe, is also of interest for scholars of Poland and Hungary, and his séances have often been commented upon by historians. Researchers have nevertheless been perplexed by the apparently sudden turn which transformed the venerable scientist into an eccentric enthusiast. Approaches from the viewpoint of the history of science – which, until recently constituted the majority of Dee scholarship – found this phenomenon difficult to come to terms with, and at best a superficial explanation was advanced, according to which the humanist became disappointed in science (based on rational principles and logic), and – in a similar way to Doctor Faustus, although avoiding the direct contact with Satan – could only imagine achieving his intellectual goals with the help of supernatural powers.[2] This explanation seems to have some grounding in Dee's own statement addressed to Emperor Rudolph II in which he tried to summarise his mission:

> Hereupon I began to declare that All my life time I had spent in learning: but for this forty years continually, in sundry manners, and in divers Countries, with great pain, care, and cost, I had from degree to degree sought to come by the best knowledge that man might attain unto in the world: and I found (at length) that neither any man living, nor any Book I could yet meet withal, was able to teach me those truths I desired and longed for: And therefore I concluded with my self, to make intercession and prayer to the giver of wisdom and all good things, to send me such wisdom, as I might know the natures of his creatures; and also enjoy means to use them to his honour and glory.[3]

[*] I wrote this paper at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany. I am grateful to the Mellon Foundation for the three months' scholarship and the staff of the Library for their most helpful assistance in my work. Special thanks are due to William H. Sherman and Stephen Clucas whose comments on the draft have contributed to the improvement of the final version.

Very few efforts have been made to embrace Dee's scientific experiments and angel magic in their entirety and interconnectedness, especially given that such an examination would seem to promise little benefit for the history of science. Until recently, interpreters of Dee's magic have tried to underline the importance of magic as a vital precondition to the development of the scientific revolution, and with this consideration in mind, Frances Yates invented the term, "Rosicrucian enlightenment".[4] After some initial enthusiasm the Yates thesis was severely challenged by historians of science,[5] and, although Clulee and Sherman have to some extent successfully restored Dee's place in the distinguished gallery of the history of science, this would hardly work for his magic. My suggestion is to shift the focus of interest from history of science to cultural anthropology and the history of mentality, by asking in what way Dee's scientific activities inspired his visionary and occult programme. Seeking the company of angels may seem an eccentric monomania for the enlightened researcher; indeed, some historians have even suggested that Dee had become mentally ill.[6] By contrast, anthropologists and historians of mentality have learnt how deep the roots of occult thinking were in the world picture of the sixteenth century. Such an approach may throw fresh light on the strange ambitions and practices of this extraordinary Englishman. Furthermore, it may also provide us with relevant tools to measure the lasting attraction of the occult in our own age.

In the following essay I am going to examine Dee's shift from natural to occult science from the viewpoints of both the history of science and historical anthropology and I will argue that the gulf between the two is much less significant than it may appear from existing studies. First I shall look at the pre-modern traditions of gaining magical knowledge and in this respect I believe it is relevant to re-explore Paracelsus's epistemology. An examination of the magic of Agrippa and Paracelsus leads us to the interrelatedness of Renaissance intellectual magic and popular occultism, with the latter having been entirely neglected by the great Warburgian intellectual historians. A typological analysis of the visions in the angelic diaries will prove that Dee's ultimate "scientific" goal remained unchanged throughout his life: he aspired to universal knowledge, trying out alternative ways of investigation, finally ending up in the search for the angelic language. In the concluding sections I shall try to re-map Dee's standing in intellectual history in relation to two great seventeenth-century trends: the scientific revolution and the new esotericism (or, as Frances Yates somewhat simplistically referred to it, the "Rosicrucian Enlightenment").

Recent studies have done a lot to refine the crude divide between the "scientist-Dee" and the "magus-Dee", and this also applies to the chronology of his career.[7] Yewbrey and Whitby called attention to the fact that Dee did not start his angel magic in 1581, as had been earlier supposed. According to his first angelic diary he had already employed a scryer in 1579 and, commenting on this, he even added:

> From the year 1579 usually in this manner: in Latin, or English; (but around the year 1569 in another and special way: sometimes on behalf of Raphael, sometimes on behalf of Michael it has been most pleasing to me to pour out prayers to God: God works his wonderful mercy in me (est circa annum 1569 alio et peculiari modo: interdum pro Raphaele, interdum pro Michaele ad Deum preces fundere: mihi gratissimum fuit).[8]



This fact is important because in that year, during 1569 and 1570, Dee wrote one of his most ambitious scientific works, the *Mathematicall Praeface*, in which – on the occasion of introducing the *Elements* of Euclid to the English reader – he attempted a synthetical survey of all the mathematical sciences. The question thus becomes even more relevant: what was the relationship, if any, between Dee's scholarly thinking and the angelic conversations?

The *Mathematicall Praeface* offered a scheme for presenting a general hierarchy of sciences and Dee made it clear that the ultimate end of any science should be the understanding of God's creative genius. This means that Dee's work is not in any sense a technical textbook or a manual for engineers, although it does not entirely lack a practical dimension. In the *Praeface* Dee emphasised the cosmic significance of mathematics and suggested that the mathematical practitioner had the power to become a magus, capable of *exaltation*, the emulation of God. The "Mathematicien" is represented as a priest of the new science:

> By *Numbers* [...] we may both winde and draw our selues into the inward and deepe search and vew, of all creatures distinct vertues, natures, properties, and *Formes*: And also, farder, arise, clime, ascend, and mount vp (with Speculatiue winges) in spirit, to behold in the Glas of Creation, the *Forme* of *Formes*, the *Exemplar Number* of all thinges *Numerable*: both visible and inuisible, mortall and immortall, Corporall and Spirituall.[9]

When mapping the hierarchy of the sciences, Dee gave first place to a discipline called *archemastrie*. "So that, this Art, is no fantasticall Imagination: as some Sophister might [...] dash your honest desire and Courage, from beleuing these thinges, so vnheard of, so meruaylous, & of such Importance."[10] Dee also mentions the auxiliary sciences completing the work of Archemastrie:

> To this Science, doth the *Science Alnirangiat*, great Seruice. Muse nothyng of this name. I chaunge not the name, so vsed, and in Print, published by other: beyng a name, propre to the Science. Vnder this, commeth *Ars Sintrillia*, by *Artephius*, briefly written. But the chief Science, of the Archemaster, (in this world) as yet knowen, is an other (as it were) OPTICAL Science: wherof, the name shall be told (God willyng) when I shall haue some, (more iust) occasion, therof, to Discourse.[11]

Nicholas Clulee, writing about Dee's natural philosophy, has identified all three of the above-mentioned sciences as magical practices. The expression "alnirangiat" derives from Arabic sources: the term "nīranğiyāt" meant a certain magical procedure; in the Arabic version of the *Picatrix* the term "nīranğ" referred to magical incantations used to invoke heavenly powers. It is also used in connection with magical images or talismans. Dee's source for this term, as Clulee has shown was Avicenna's *De divisionibus scientiarum*, in which "scientia *alnirangiat*" is listed among the subordinate branches of natural science. Here it is a form of natural magic, for the manipulation of the hidden virtues of things. Dee possessed Avicenna's work in his library and from the surviving copy we know that he underlined the word *alnirangiat* and glossed it in the margin: "magicæ".[12]

The next science mentioned by Dee is the *ars sintrillia* which has been connected with the name of a medieval author, Artephius, who is often referred to in numerous treatises but whose identity is unclear. According to Dee's catalogue, in 1556 he possessed a manuscript which contained Artephius's *Ars sintrillia* but this treatise is not

extant.[13] The only clue scholars have been able to track down is a remark of William of Auvergne, who mentions a certain Artesius known for his ability to conjure up visions by placing a glossy sword over a water-basin so that the glittering of the two caused the viewer to see strange sights.[14] The context of Dee's note makes this conjecture plausible since immediately after the reference to Artephius he lists "opticall science" which, as Clulee rightly points out, involved not only physics but also crystallomancy, or as it was more commonly known, "scrying". As we have seen, Dee started his scrying experiments around the time of the writing of the *Mathematicall Praeface* and his scientific treatise suggests that, at this point in time, he saw no fundamental division between natural philosophy and spiritualism.

Before touching upon the various traditions of crystallomancy in the Renaissance, I want to refer to another aspect of "opticall science" which is also pertinent in Dee's works. As early as 1558, in his first synthesising work (*Propædeumata Aphoristica*) he refers to "catoptrics" of which he wrote:

> If you were skilled in 'catoptrics', you would be able, by art, to imprint the rays of any star much more strongly upon any matter subjected to it than nature itself does [...]. And this secret is not of much less dignity than the very august astronomy of the philosophers, called inferior [i.e. alchemy], whose symbols, enclosed in a certain Monad and taken from my theories, I send to you along with this treatise.[15]

Catoptrics in classical natural philosophy meant the study of the radiation and reflection of light and it was Roger Bacon in the Middle Ages who devoted much work to this field.[16] As we know, Dee was most interested in Bacon's work and it was partly this influence which raised his ambition to catch the power of the stars by the help of mirrors, interpreting this activity as a scientific version of ancient talismanic magic. Talismanic magic which had been much discussed in medieval Arabic and Latin sources, was reinvented by the Florentine neoplatonists,[17] and its scientific application was proposed by Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus. Of these magical images, or "sigils" Agrippa noted:[18]

> So great is the extent, power and efficacy of the Celestiall bodies, that not only naturall things, but also artificiall when they are rightly exposed to those above, do presently suffer by that most potent agent, and obtain a wonderfull life which oftentimes gives them an admirable Celestiall vertue [...]. Such an image, best prepared to receive the operations and powers of the Celestial bodies and figures, and instantly receiveth the Heavenly gift into it self; then it constantly worketh on another thing, and other things do yeeld obedience to it.[19]

Agrippa developed an intricate typology of these magical symbols from direct emblematic representations of celestial demons through traditional signs of planets, metals and zodiacal signs to the numerologically symbolic cabalistical characters or sigils. One of his notable examples describes the power of planetary amulets:

> This fortunate Moon being engraven on Silver, renders the bearer thereof grateful, amiable, pleasant, cheerful, honored, removing all malice, and ill will. It causeth security in a journey, increase of riches, and health of body, drives away enemies and other evil things from what place thou pleasest; and if it be an unfortunate Moon engraven in a plate of Lead, where ever it shall be buried, it makes that place unfortunate, and the inhabitants thereabouts, as also Ships, Rivers, Fountains, Mills, and it makes every man unfortunate.[20]



## 2. PARACELSUS AND MAGICAL WAYS OF KNOWING

Dee scholars have only recently become aware of the fact that Paracelsus may have had a much greater influence on the English doctor's natural philosophy than has previously been believed. Frances Yates systematically overlooked Paracelsus in her accounts of Christian magic, and Peter French, although he noticed Dee's massive holdings of Paracelsica, gave only superficial references to the philosophy of Paracelsus and its influence on Dee's system of thought.[21] More surprisingly, Paracelsus has only one mention even in Clulee's monograph on Dee's natural philosophy. Roberts and Watson, in their edition of Dee's library catalogues, have revealed the fact that Dee possessed an unusually large collection of Paracelsica which he neatly grouped according to size and language in his inventory: "Paracelsi libri compacti" (*R&W* 1461-1501), "Paracelsici libri latinè compacti" (*R&W* 1502-1522), "Paracelsici libri non compacti" (*R&W* 2220-2240), "Germanici" (*R&W* 2241-2275), etc.[22] Dee's interest in Paracelsus can also be seen in his entry in the *album amicorum* of the famous Swiss natural scientist, Conrad Gesner whom Dee visited in Zurich in April 1563. In the album, next to Dee's signature, Gesner commemorated his English guest's great knowledge of and interest in Paracelsus.[23] From a 1562 edition of Paracelsus (*R&W* 1476) annotated by Dee in 1594, we learn that he was preoccupied with the German sage even in his later career and discussed it with his disciples, Mr. Barker and Mr. Alped. The names of his good angels, Anchorus, Anachor, and Anilos, noted in the same book, indicate the interrelatedness of Dee's interest in Paracelsus and angel magic.[24]

In this context, it is pertinent to juxtapose Agrippa's remarks on "sigils" with what Paracelsus wrote about images and his definition of *Gamaaea*:

> OF IMAGES [IMAGINUM]. This science represents the properties of heaven and impresses them on images, so that an image of great efficacy is compounded, moving itself and significant. Images of this kind cure exceptional diseases, and avert many remarkable accidents, such as wounds caused by cutting or puncturing. A like virtue is not found in any herbs.
>
> OF GAMAHEI [GEMAHEORUM]. These are stones graven according to the face of heaven. Thus prepared they are useful against wounds, poisons, and incantations. They render persons invisible, and display other qualities which, without this science, Nature of herself cannot exhibit.[25]

Let us compare this to Dee's thesis in *Propædeumata Aphoristica:*

> The stars and celestial powers are like seals whose characters are imprinted differently by reason of differences in the elemental matter [...]. You will therefore consider talismans rather attentively, and other still greater *things* [*Hinc Gamaaeas considerabis attentius, aliaque maiora*].[26]

and with the *Monas Hieroglyphica*, written in 1564:

> This our hieroglyphic monad possesses, hidden away in its innermost centre, a terrestrial body. It [the monad] teaches without words, by what divine force that [terrestrial body] should be actuated [...]. When this Gamaaea has (by God's will) been concluded, [...] he who fed [the monad] will first himself go away into a metamorphosis [*quo finito Progressu: qui aluit, in METAMORPHOSIM, Primus Ipse abibit*] and will afterwards very rarely be held by mortal eye.[27]

It becomes clear from this otherwise obscure passage that the monad as a symbol has two levels of reference. One points to the earthly material which during the

alchemical process is clarified and becomes supernatural. In its other meaning the monad is a talisman ("Gamaaea") by the help of which the magus, who so far has been feeding and fuelling the oven of the *opus magnum*, undergoes a transmutation himself, and escaping the prison of matter ascends to the level of transcendental reality. The above quotations from Dee redirect us to Paracelsian contexts, since in his various tracts connected with his great later work, the *Astronomia magna sive Philosophia sagax* the German doctor made it clear:

> Man is born of the earth, therefore he also has in him the nature of the earth. But later, in his new birth, he is of God and in this form receives divine nature. Just as man in nature is illuminated by the sidereal light that he may know nature, so he is illuminated by the Holy Ghost that he may know God in his essence. For no one can know God unless he is of divine nature.[28]

And indeed, it is in this similarity to God that man can himself become a creator of things, even more powerful than the upper and lower firmaments:

> Thoughts create a new heaven, a new firmament, a new source of energy, from which new arts flow [...]. When a man undertakes to create something, he establishes a new heaven, as it were, and from it the work that he desires to create flows into him [...]. For such is the immensity of man that he is greater than heaven and earth.[29]

Creation, the establishment of wondrous things, happens through magic – "after all, God has permitted magic, and this is a sign that we may use it; it is also a sign of what we are",[30] and Paracelsus in his writings introduces magic according to the three tiers of the Agrippan model, from *magia naturalis* through planetary, astrological magic up to mystical rebirth: "He who imitates the image of God will conquer the stars".[31] This is nothing else but the doctrine of *exaltatio*, or Man's deification through white magic, also proposed by Paracelsus's contemporary and compatriot, Agrippa, in his *De occulta philosophia*:

> Man being united to God, all things which are in man, are united, especially his minde, then his spirits and animal powers, and vegetative faculty, and the Elements are to the matter, drawing with it self even the body, whose form it hath been, leading it forth into a better condition, and an heavenly nature, even until it be glorified into Immortality. And this which we have spoken is the peculiar gift of man, to whom this dignity of the divine image is proper, and common to no other creature.[32]

At this point Agrippa connects the topic of deification with an alchemical parallel which can be related to the alchemical subtext of Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica*:

> Geber in his summ of Alchimy teacheth, that no man can come to the perfection of this art, who shall not know the principles of it in himself; but by how much the more every one shall know himself, by so much he obtaineth the greater power of attracting it, and by so much operateth greater and more wonderfull things, and will ascend to so great perfection, that he is made the Son of God, and is transformed into that Image which is God, and is united with him, which is not graunted to Angels, the world, or any creature, but to man only.[33]

The highest magic is angel-magic and in both Agrippa and Paracelsus we find Dee's ambitions prefigured:

> He who inherits God's wisdom walks on water without wetting his feet; for in the true art inherited from God, man is like an angel. But what will wet an angel? Nothing. Similarly, nothing will wet the wise man. God is powerful and He wills it that His power be revealed to men and to angels in the wisdoms of the arts. He wills it that the world and the earth be like Heaven.[34]



In fact, this was Dee's most ambitious magical programme: he aspired to this state of *exaltatio* in order to fully understand the work of Creation and become God's partner. His whole scientific program was subordinated to this goal, and this is why he was experimenting with astrological catoptrics as well as with the monad, extracted and transmuted from talismanic magic into geometry and alchemy.

## 3. FROM NEOPLATONIC TO POPULAR CONTEXTS OF MAGIC

It would be a mistake, however, to see the source of Dee's magic lying solely in the hermetic neoplatonism of Agrippa or Paracelsus. What makes his esoteric experiments fascinating is the ease of syncretism with which he freely exploited quite distinct traditions, from medieval Baconian magic through Old Testament traditions to some semi-scientific, semi-popular practices of dubious origin. I have already mentioned the technique of Artephius ("ars sintrillia") which operated with glittering mirrors in order to bring the viewer into a trance where logic is suspended. The ancient and venerable nature of this practice derived its authority from the Bible where, in Genesis 44.5, we read about Joseph who hides a silver chalice in Benjamin's pouch saying, "Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth?"[35] In the Second Book of Moses we learn that the priestly garment made for Aaron contained a golden breastplate with twelve shining jewels, symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel. This shining breastplate could also be used for purposes of divination (helping the gazing prophet to fall into a trance) and it is in this sense that medieval lapidaries refer to it.[36] Paracelsus also speaks about a particular way of divination by using shining surfaces. He calls it *ars beryllistica* which aims at gaining visions from diamonds, mirrors and other glossy materials, such as black coal:

> VISIONS. This species sees in crystals, mirrors, polished surfaces, and the like, things that are hidden, secret, present or future, which are present just as though they appeared in bodily presence.[37]

The most important difference between *catoptromantia* and *crystallomantia* was that in the former the operator – after proper preparations and sufficient fasting – did not want to conjure spirits in the mirror, rather he expected visions relating to the future. In scrying, the magus or his medium definitely aimed at calling spiritual beings (angels or the spirits of already dead persons), hoping to gain information, not necessarily about the future. It looks as though Dee possessed instruments for both kinds of magic: a shining black obsidian mirror may have been used to practise *ars sintrillia* or *catoptromantia*, that is divination from mirrors,[38] while his much exploited crystal ball served the purposes of scrying. What becomes perplexing for the cultural historian is that Dee, having been acquainted with the most complex magical theories and techniques, finally ended up practising the crudest divination, that is *crystallomantia*, and, having pursued it till the last days of his life, lost no faith in it at all.

*Crystallomantia*, or scrying, was relatively neglected in the works of Renaissance humanists, although some references can be found in the works of Trithemius and others, in a context following the anti-magical condemnations of medieval authorities

and encyclopedias, such as John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*, or Gregorius Reisch's *Margarita philosophica nova*.[39] It seems that by the sixteenth century, *crystallomantia* had become most widespread in popular culture as a common form of magic. We have two groups of sources to document such practices. Humanist literature, on the one hand, has anecdotes recording these kinds of magical practices. Girolamo Cardano, for example, tells a story about the conjuration of a young scryer who sees angels in a crystal by the help of Saint Helena.[40] Another type of source-material for the popular usage of the crystal ball (or *beryl*, or *sphera*) is the protocols of witchcraft trials and ecclesiastical visitations. In my own city, Szeged in Hungary, judges would regularly ask the suspect as late as 1730: "Wie hast du aus Kristall, aus Glas, Spiegeln den Menschen (ohne Schaden) gewahrsagt?"[41]

Needless to say, scrying was strictly damned by both secular and ecclesiastical law. In England law-court processes took place in 1467, 1534, and 1549 and the 1541 statute against conjuration and witchcraft specifically prohibited it.[42] Since scrying was mostly used for finding lost or stolen property, the possibility of financial gain meant that the law was often disregarded. Although such practices were strictly private, almost all astrologers and alchemists can be suspected of having exercised them. Another Elizabethan astrologer and "magus", Simon Forman kept a journal not unlike Dee's, and he noted about the year 1584: "a reasonable, good, and quiet yere; but I had certain braulles and sclaunders fell out against me aboute detecting of one that had stollen certain thinges, whereby I was like to have bin spoiled". As if he were dissociating himself from scrying at this point but by 1588 he openly admitted that he "began to practise necromancy and to call angells and spirits."[43]

It is worth noting that the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscript literature abounds in secret diaries, notes and copies of grimoires, revealing the widespread magical practices of the day. Journals of actual divination are nevertheless more of a rarity: interested amateurs seemingly did not get much beyond collecting and copying magical materials, prayers, incantations, and books of rituals which, at least theoretically, were intended to equip the reader for contacting the spirit world.[44]

Dee seems to have become interested in divination in 1569 and started scrying in 1579. His "glass" is first mentioned on 10 March 1575, when he notes a significant event in his diary:

> The Queens Majestie with her most honourable Privy Councell, and other her lordes and nobility, came purposely to have visited my library; but finding that my wife was within four houres before buried out of the house, her Majestie refused to come in; but willed me to fetch my glass so famous, and to shew unto her some of the properties of it, which I did; her Majestie being taken downe from her horse (by the Earle of Leicester, Master of the horse, by the wall of Mortlack), did see some of the properties of that glass, to her Majestie's great contentment and delight, and so in most gracious manner did thank me, &c.[45]

The first well-documented instance of scrying with the help of a medium, Barnabas Saul, took place on 22 December 1581.[46] Prior to this, Dee may have developed more interest in this kind of magic during his continental journey in 1578, when he visited some German courts with the purpose of consulting medical doctors about the Queen's



condition. Stopping over in Hamburg and Berlin, finally, on 15 December 1578, he met Leonhard Thurneysser, the famous doctor, alchemist and interpreter of Paracelsus in Frankfurt-am-Oder.[47] He might have taken the meeting as an omen, since at that time the learned doctor came under attack of conjurations and crystal-magic. A year later Franz Joel, a doctor of Greifswald published a book about witches and black magic in which he openly attacked Thurneysser as a stubborn sorcerer whose source of knowledge – especially of foreign languages, including Chaldee, Hebrew and Sanskrit – was a dæmon, appearing in his showstone.[48] Thurneysser had to write a passionate apology, very much in the manner of Dee's own "Digression Apologeticall" in the *Mathematicall Preface* of 1570: "And for these, and such like marueilous Actes and Feates, Naturally, Mathematically, and Mechanically, wrought and contriued: ought any honest Student, and Modest Christian Philosopher, be counted, & called a Coniurer?"[49]

Barnabas Saul – a household servant or a laboratory assistant – became Dee's scryer after having complained to his master about a spirit which had tortured him at midnight.[50] Dee, being himself ready for the parapsychological experience, employed the following prayer-formula, (suggesting that he had had vague experiments with mediums before) "perceived by some slight experience, with two diverse persons, that thou [God] hadst a special care to give me thy light, and truth, by thy holy and true ministers Angelicall and Spirituall."[51]

Another entry from the period prior to meeting Saul reinforces this hint: "I had sight in κρυσταλλω [i.e. *crystallo*] offered me, and I saw".[52] This early personal experience was not continued later: he scarcely saw the visions himself, they remained communicated through his scryers.

## 4. SCRYING AND THE LINGUA ADAMICA

As has been mentioned, Dee pursued angel magic until his death. During these years he had three regular scryers, of whom he worked longest with Edward Kelley who accompanied him on his journey to East-Central European courts. As for the general contents of the angelic conversations, they differed significantly from the average scrying sessions, which usually aimed at finding thieves or lost property. Dee hoped to gain mystical knowledge through the angelic conversations which would arm him with universal knowledge. To possess this knowledge, he believed, one had to learn the lost primordial language, the *lingua adąmica*, a medium of direct communication with God which Adam spoke when he named the parts and things of the created universe.[53] Consequently, his ultimate scientific programme became centred on the acquisition of this universal language because, as he wrote, "the logos of the creative universe works by rules so that man, godly minded and born of God, may learn by straightforward work and by theological and mystical language".[54]

Dee's ideas on primitive language seem to have been influenced by one of his favourite authors, Johannes Trithemius, Abbot of Sponheim, and a future task for Dee scholarship would be to look at his speculations on the angelic language in the context of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century deliberations on a universal or artificial language.

It is noteworthy that Dee hardly appears in studies on this topic,[55] perhaps because of the curious turn of his thinking, namely, that since his pursuits concerning the above goal in the terrain of natural sciences remained futile, he turned to angel magic and during the conversations repeatedly and passionately petitioned God to order his heavenly servants to share secret knowledge with him. Umberto Eco's recent book is the first attempt to place Dee in the context of universal language schemes and Eco also offers interesting links between Dee and his acquaintance, Guillaume Postel, who also asserted that every "demonstration of the world" results from geometric elements, such as point, lines, circles and triangles.[56] One immediately remembers Dee's argument in the *Monas Hieroglyphica* concerning the origin of the alphabet: "the first and mystical letters of the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Latins, issued from God alone and were [by Him] entrusted to mortals; [also] the shapes of all those [letters] are derived from points, straight lines and the circumference of circles,"[57] and these considerations again clearly establish the link between Dee's scientific and magical programmes.

In this respect, the most interesting parts of the angelic diaries are the so-called *Book of Enoch*,[58] the *48 claves angelicæ* (1584) and *De heptarchia mystica* (1588)[59] in which one finds invocations and complicated tables, summarizing the orders of angels. Most of this is written in hardly comprehensible "angelic language", although some scholars of occultism claim to have already penetrated into the depth of its meaning.[60] Since most of the Enochian magic material has been included in Meric Casaubon's printed edition of the angelic diaries,[61] one can use this collection to set up a typology of Dee's angelic visions:

1. Verbal descriptions of visions of the divine cosmic order and the world of angels sustaining it. On 20 June 1584, Dee and Kelley received such a vision in Cracow:

> There appeared to him [E.K.] four very fair Castles, standing in the four parts of the world: out of which he heard the sound of a Trumpet [...]. Out of every Gate then issued one Trumpeter, whose Trumpets were of strange form, wreathed, and growing bigger and bigger toward the end [...]. After the Trumpeter followed three Ensign bearers. After them six ancient men, with white beards and staves in their hands [...]. *The 4 houses, are the 4 Angels of the Earth, which are the 4 Overseers, and Watch-towers, that the eternal God in his providence hath placed,* against the usurping blasphemy, misuse, and stealth of the wicked and great enemy, the Devil [...]. *In each of these Houses,* the Chief *Watchman, is a mighty Prince, a mighty Angel of the Lord: which* hath under *him 5 Princes* [...]. *The seals and authorities of these Houses, are confirmed in the beginning of the World. Unto every one of them, be 4 characters, Tokens of the presence of the Son of God: by whom all things were made in Creation.)*.[62]

2. Descriptions of rituals and magical invocations, either verbally communicated by the Angels – mediated by Kelley, or seen by Kelley as visions in the crystal:

> E.K. There appeareth in the stone, like a white Curtain all over the stone: After awhile it was drawn, and layed on the back-side of the stone, on a heap together. Now here standeth one in a white Garment, with a white Cerclet about his head like a white smock, I remember not that ever I saw this Creature before, his Garment is tucked up [...]. Now is there fire come, and hath consumed this Creature all to pieces, and he is fall'n down to ashes. Now he riseth up, *and he is brighter then he was before.*
> [*margin:* Δ: *Quasi figura de terra renovanda.*] [...] *So doth the Glory comfort the just, and they rise again with a threefold glorie.*



> Δ. A place was made.
> E.K. Now he spreadeth the aire, or openeth it before him, and there appeareth before him a square Table. Now he taketh off the Table a black Carpet. Now he taketh off a green Carpet. Now he taketh off a white Carpet. Now he taketh off a red Cloath. And now the Table appeareth to be made of earth, as Potter's Clay, very raw earth.
> [*margin:* Δ. The Table of the Earth. He taketh off the coloured cloaths in due order, respecting the four parts of the World.]
> E.K. The Table hath four feet, of which two touch the ground, and two do not [...]. The Table is square. E.K. On the left corner (farthest from E.K.) did a T appear on the Table: Out of the top of this T do four beams issue of clear collour bright).[63]

3. A considerable portion of the angelic communications consists of obscure historical prognostications in the Enochian style of prophecy. The predictions foretell the coming of a new age in which Dee and Kelley would have an important role since they have been chosen by God to perform certain rituals. Dee is quite explicit about this when he tells Emperor Rudolph:

> [God's] holy Angels, for these two years and a half, have used to inform me: and have finished such works in my hands, to be seen, as no mans heart could have wished for so much: yea they have brought *me a Stone* of that value, that no earthly Kingdom is of that worthinesse as to be compared to the vertue or dignity thereof, &c. [...] The Angel of the Lord hath appeared to me, and rebuketh you for your sins. If you will hear me, and believe me, you shall Triumph: if you will not hear me, The Lord, the God that made Heaven and Earth, (under whom you breath, and have your spirit) putteth his foot against your breast, and will throw you headlong down from your seat. Moreover, the Lord hath made this Covenant with me (by oath) that he will do and perform. If you will forsake your wickidnesse, and turn unto him, your Seat shall be the greatest that ever was: and the Devil shall become your prisoner: Which Devil, I did conjecture, to be the Great Turk, (said I) This my Commission, is from God.[64]

4. Finally, those pieces of angelic information belonging to the fourth category, which were meant as a direct instruction of the *lingua adamica*. These messages communicated names of angels as well as ritualistic expressions in the Enochian language of a cabalistic nature, each letter having numerical equivalents. Dee's *idée fixe* was that the comprehension of these numerical relations would lead to the ultimate enlightenment. That Dee's mathematical expertise did not desert him during his visionary episodes, can be seen in the following passage where he accuses the angel Nalvage of arithmetical miscalculation. Kelley was certainly a far less able mathematician than his master, but his (or the Angel's) wit was more than a match for Dee's suspicion:

> Nal[vage]. *Pray* [...] Δ. We prayed.
> *There is an error in the last, not in the Number, but in the Letter. I will first go through the Letters, and after come to the Numbers. How many words have you received this day?*
> Δ. Thirteen, where of *Iaida* was said to be the last of the call.
> Nal. [...] *They be more worth than the Kingdom of* Poland. *Be patient, for these things are wonderful.*
> N (*The number must needs go to*) *the sixth, descending* 309.
> A *The 7th ascending* 360.
> O *The 9th ascending* 1000.
> O *The 13th ascending* 1050.
> V *The 17th ascending* 2004. *It is* Vooan. *It may be sounded* Vaoan.
> Adde those last Numbers [...]
> Δ. Vooan *is spoken with them that fall, but* Vaoan *with them that are, and are glorified.*
> The devils have lost the dignity of their sounds.

Δ. They make 4723.
NAL. [...] *It is called the Mystical roote in the highest ascendent of transmutation.*
Δ. These phrases are dark; when it shall please God they may be made plain.
NAL. [...] *It is the square of the Philosophers work.*
Δ. you said it was a roote.
NAL. [...] *So it is a roote square.*[65]

After this somewhat humorous quotation it is worth returning to a longer passage which deals with more theoretical issues concerning the power of numbers and the Cabalistical ur-language. At the session held in Cracow on 21 April 1584 it was the Archangel Gabriel himself who joined Nalvage to deliver the teachings to Dee and his scryer:

Gab[riel]. [...] *Every Letter signifieth the member of the substance whereof it speaketh. Every word signifieth the quiddity of the substance. The Letters are separated, and in confusion: and therefore,* are by numbers gathered together [...].
E.K. Whether is this Language known in any part of the World or no? if it be, where and to whom?
Gab. ..... *Man in his Creation, being made an Innocent, was also authorised and made partaker of the Power and Spirit of God: whereby he not onely did know all things under his Creation and spoke of them properly, naming them as they were: but also was partaker of our* [i.e. the angels'] *presence and society, yea a speaker of the mysteries of God; yea, with God himself: so that in innocency the power of his partakers with God, and us his good Angles [sic], was exalted, and so became holy in the sight of God until that* Coronzon *(for so is the true name of that mighty Devil) envying his felicity,* [...] *began to assail him and* [... *Man*] *was driven forth (as your Scriptures record) unto the Earth* [...] *where being as dumb and not able to speak, he began to learn of necessity the Language in the which* [...] *he uttered and delivered to his posterity, the* nearest knowledge he had of God his Creatures: *and from his own self divided* his speech into three parts, twelve, three, and seven: *the number whereof remaineth, but the* true forms *and* pronounciations *want; and therefore is not of that force that it was in his own dignity, much lesse to be compared* with this that we deliver, *which* Adam verily spake in innocency, and was never uttered nor disclosed to man since till now, *wherein the power of God must work,* and wisdom in *her true kind be delivered: which are not to be spoken of in any other thing, neither to be talked of with mans imaginations; for as this Work and Gift is of God, which is all power, so doth he open it in a tongue of power* [...].[66]

This "tongue of power" became the ultimate object of Dee's investigation, and he grew so obsessed with his search that he not only abandoned his scientific experiments, but also neglected his humanist philological caution and overlooked the serious warnings against angel magic to be found even in the works of his favourite occult authors. I have already referred to the Bible's reservations concerning divination,[67] but he could have easily found similar warnings in Trithemius or in Paracelsus:

Spirits often teach those persons who deal with them to perform certain ceremonies, to speak certain words and names in which there is no meaning, and they do all such things [...] to have some sport at the expense of credulous persons. They are seldom what they pretend to be, [...] on the whole, all these spirits surpass each other in deception and lies.[68]



## 5. HISTORICAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

The Eastern-European context of Dee's prophecies has been discussed elsewhere.[69] The present paper aims at exploring the pertinence of the angelic conversations to the history of mentality and to cultural anthropology in relation to what we know about the systems of science, knowledge, and beliefs in the Renaissance. Areas of further investigation might include:

1. An examination of the reasons why Dee, who began his career as a serious natural scientist, could devote himself entirely to crystal gazing, and how this activity satisfied his desire for universal knowledge. This question would benefit from more extensive comparative study of Dee's prophecies in the context of a wide range of sixteenth-century traditions and practices: the revived interest in Enochian writings as well as in medieval prophecies such as those of Joachim of Fiore; Paracelsus's obscure *Papstbilder* prophecies; Guillaume Postel's highly idiosyncratic visions; some trends of Reformation chiliastical mysticism; and, last but not least, the humanist interest in classical prophecy as manifested especially in Psellus and Iamblichus.[70]

2. An equally interesting question to address is why, although Dee's Continental mission was far from successful, he was never branded a charlatan, or locked up in an asylum like his fellow enthusiast, Guillaume Postel a few decades earlier? Apparently Dee, in spite of his occasional financial and existential difficulties, managed to retain his dignity and in 1589 he returned to England in relatively luxurious circumstances.[71]

3. Another task is to examine Edward Kelley's role in generating the visions and the whole system of Enochian magic, since Dee appears to have been only a scribe who noted down the angelic messages dictated by Kelley. Although many interpreters have considered Kelley a fraud who ruthlessly cheated the credulous Dee,[72] a recent unorthodox trend of Dee-criticism has suggested that it was actually Dee who victimized his scryer. As Geoffrey James writes, "Kelley was forced to stay with Dee because the money that the doctor gave him supported Kelley's wife and brother. It was Dee, not Kelley, who was gaining the benefit from the magical ceremonies, for it sated his lust for 'radical truths'."[73] Whichever interpretation we choose (the extraordinary and strained psychotic symbiosis in which the two men spent their days invites rather a combination of arguments) we cannot help feeling that Kelley either must have believed in the prophecies he was communicating or, if it was all pretence and invention, he successfully deceived himself, too. A characteristic and recurring episode was recorded by Dee on 24 May 1584 in Cracow:

Δ. Because *E.K.* came not (according as it was bidden yesterday) to follow the Action: I went to his Study door, and knocked for him: And I requested him to come; and he refused so to do, and gave me a short and resolute answer, That he would never more have to do with these Actions [...]. After half an hour and lesse, he came speedily out of his Study, and brought in his hand one volume of *Cornelius Agrippa* his works, and in one Chapter of that Book he read the names of Countries and Provinces collected out of *Ptolomeus* (as the Author there noteth). Whereupon he inferred, that our spiritual Instructors were *Coseners to give us a description* of the World, taken out of other Books: and therefore he would have no more to do with them. I replied, and said, I am very glad that you have a Book of your own, wherein these Geographical names are expressed, such as (for the most part) our Instructors had delivered unto us: and that, [...] they (our Instructors I mean) are very greatly to be thanked, and to be deemed (in all reasonable

> mens judgements) most friendly [...] I had here brought [Gerardus's] [...] description Geographicall of the whole earthly Globe [...] to the intent he might see the verity of their words yesterday delivered unto us.[74]

Dee's naive logic is wonderful but Kelley's behavior is no less perplexing if we suppose him to have fabricated the visions. In this case he found himself in a situation similar to that of Edward Alleyn, leading actor of the Elizabethan age, who had once so perfectly identified himself with Doctor Faustus that at the appearance of the stage devils he stopped the performance and together with the whole audience spent the rest of the evening in fervent prayers.[75]

According to Whitby, Dee's firm belief in scrying had two principal motivations. One was his disappointment in the ordinary natural sciences, in comparison with which he considered his crystallomantic operations successful. The other was a paradigm-shift which took place within magic during the sixteenth century. Whereas for the fifteenth-century Neoplatonic Magus there were clear boundaries between white and learned magic on the one hand and popular, superstitious practices on the other, after the all-embracing syntheses of Agrippa and Paracelsus the boundaries had become less distinct and unambiguous.[76] The Renaissance transformation of natural philosophy and science produced an epistemological vacuum which was temporarily filled by various kinds of magic. This explains the great popularity and prestige of magic during the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, and also the readiness of patrons to support such experiments. The development of such complex and intellectually ambitious alchemical patronage was most characteristic of the German *kulturkreis* of Central Europe, as seen in Emperor Rudolph's Prague or in some of the German princely courts which all had strong connections with their local universities and always had a supply of learned enthusiasts (Heidelberg, Kassel, Weikersheim, Wolfenbüttel). John Dee, who never enjoyed that kind of patronage in England (as Sherman has recently noted, Dee's rather modest house was his own castle, museum and academy), may have easily found such scholarly and intellectual prospects attractive.[77] In fact, he had already had first hand experience of European courts before setting out on his long journey to Central Europe, since in 1562 he had visited Pozsony (today's Bratislava in Slovakia) and witnessed Emperor Maximilian's coronation as King of Hungary; then, in 1578 he had taken a rather mysterious journey to Berlin and Frankfurt-am-Oder, allegedly in connection with the Queen's health.[78] On his way to Frankfurt he must have visited several German princely courts and Kassel would have been a natural stop. Kassel was the location of the intriguing court of William of Hesse-Kassel which his son, Moritz, soon turned into a centre of hermetic and alchemical research. As we know Dee briefly visited Kassel in 1586,[79] and later exchanged letters with both father and son (1589 and 1595),[80] and the prospect of German alchemical patronage haunted his imagination until his death. It was probably the court at Kassel which was the subject of one of his last scrying sessions. Between 11 July and 15 July 1607, during the last recorded conferences with Bartholomew Hickman as scryer, the ailing doctor asked his angel, Raphael, whether he should put up one more journey to the continent to spread God's message delivered to him in the angelic conversations. The answer was ambiguous, as befitted a message from spiritual beings of dubious origin:



> Raph[ael]. John Dee, *thou hast been a Traveller, and God hath ever yet at any time provided for thee in all thy Journeys* [...] John Dee, *he that hath commanded thee to take this Journey in hand, he will provide for thee in* Germany, *or any other Country wheresoever thou goest. Therefore let thy good will and liking be in placing thy self, if thou wilt be near unto* England *or far off* [...] *And for the good health of thy body, God will so carry thee in good health, that thou shalt set forth such service when thou art there placed, that shall be thy great comfort unto Gods honour, in* making of his marvellous works to be known. *And thus much for thy comfort through Gods merciful goodness.*[81]

The journey never took place, Dee died on 26 March 1609.

## 6. BACK TO THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Looking at the relationship between magic and science in the early modern age it would be a simplification to claim, as Frances Yates did, that Renaissance neoplatonist magic, let alone hermeticism, fostered the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in a direct way. On the other hand, it is possible to say that in the works (as well as in the mind) of Dee and his fellow scientists/magi layers of discursive logic and irrationalism, scientific thinking and occultism happily coexisted in a variety of ways which would be dangerous to generalize. Each case should be approached individually: some of them have magical conceptions which complement their scientific thinking (Bruno, Bacon), in others the two orientations show an almost total discontinuity (Kepler, Newton), in other cases science and magic are intermixed in a disorderly concoction (Paracelsus) and in Dee's case it seems that his magical ideas totally absorbed his scientific orientation, although in his middle career one can still see independently functioning subsystems in his thought (his geographic interests, or his ideas about public science, for example).

If one contrasts the last three important views on Dee in modern scholarship – those of Yates/French, Clulee, and Sherman – one sees that each of them has contributed at least one important proposal to our understanding of Dee. The Yates School brought magic into the awareness of historians of science, legitimising a preoccupation which had previously been considered no more than obscurantism. Clulee highlighted the diachronic reorientation during Dee's career and brought into the discussion the medieval roots of sixteenth-century magic and science which had been overshadowed by Yates's enthusiasm for neoplatonic hermeticism.[82] Sherman's approach has revealed a synchronic multiplicity in the English doctor's diverse interests and activities. If we look at this historiographical line, we see a direction of scholarship moving from a somewhat static and simplistic interpretation of Dee as an English magus towards a more complex contextualization in intellectual history in which elements of discontinuity have become emphasized and in which the originally proposed "master narrative"[83] has become subverted by more and more – often conflicting and contradictory – subtexts. It may seem surprising, but at this point I would still avow a return to the Yatesian "master narrative", albeit with some modifications. I am inclined to see Dee as a "magus", who had an amazingly wide range of interests but who also increasingly had a focusing obsession, a magical program, not necessarily to improve the sciences in order to prepare for the scientific revolution, but rather to find an alternative system of knowledge. And we are really talking about alternative systems of knowledge, since Dee clearly distinguished between science after the Fall and that of

the primordial wisdom. His aim was to restore the Adamic or Enochian wisdom of the Golden Age and that would not be compatible with the methods and means of fallen science relying on discursive logic.

Dee's program is by no means exceptional in the intellectual spectrum of the Late-Renaissance. The humanists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – with their passion for the restoration of all ancient thought and texts – rediscovered a number of alternative systems of knowledge: the Chaldean prophecies, the Zoroastrian writings, the corpus of the hermetic and pseudo-hermetic treatises, and the mystical speculations of the cabala.[84] Some of the Renaissance *intellecti,* such as Erasmus, abhorred and deeply mistrusted these "lunacies". Others entertained a scholarly philological interest, combining it with a religious program to prove the general superiority of Christianity over Judaism and Islam (Reuchlin and the early Postel).[85] It is interesting to note that while in sixteenth-century Germany heterodoxy manifested itself primarily in religious mysticism (Sebastian Franck, Kaspar Schwenckfeld, Valentin Weigel, and Johann Arndt), there was also a more active and less abstract trend of speculative thinking, often taking its impetus from classical humanism, occasionally dabbling with magic, and finally definitively rejecting the logical sciences in favour of intuitive and revelatory ancient wisdom. Dee's somewhat older contemporary, Guillaume Postel, is one of the best examples of this kind of active enthusiasm and his stubborn insistence on his visionary ideas parallels Dee's unshakeable belief in his angels.[86] This sort of alternative thinking has not often been examined in its own terms. It has mainly been looked at as "proto-science" or religious dissent and this approach may be highly misleading. The course of alternative thinking becomes especially interesting around the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the rapid development of the natural sciences destroyed the conceptual foundations of the animistic universe, the correspondences, and the great chain of being. In spite of these assaults, amazingly, esoteric or occult thinking has not completely disappeared; on the contrary, it has persisted up to the present day. The only sensible account of this phenomenon must come from the area of anthropology and what Gershom Scholem decades ago wrote about the significance of mystical-cabalistical trends within Judaism perfectly applies to the whole early modern esoteric movement:

> It is characteristic of Kabbalistic theology that it attempts to construct and describe a world in which something of the mythical has again come to life. [...] Mystics and philosophers are as it were both aristocrats of thought; yet Kabbalism succeeded in establishing a connection between its own world and certain elemental impulses operative in every human mind. It did not turn its back upon the primitive side of life, that all-important region where mortals are afraid of life and in fear of death, and derive scant wisdom from rational philosophy. Philosophy ignored these fears, out of whose substance man wove myths, and in turning its back upon the primitive side of man's existence it paid a high price in losing touch with him altogether.[87]

Since this esoteric movement heavily relied on primordial wisdom, an important source of which, besides the Enochian legends and gnostic and neoplatonic speculations, was the Egyptian-Hellenistic *Corpus Hermeticum*, I do not share Clulee's and Sherman's serious reservations about using the term "hermetic philosopher" for Dee.[88] Dee was, or at some point *became*, a hermetic philosopher who went beyond science and when we situate him in the context of the seventeenth-century epistemological paradigm-shift we should not see him as a predecessor of the members of the Royal Society, but rather as a forefather of those seventeenth-century thinkers – Heinrich Khunrath, the Rosicrucians, Jakob Böhme, Robert Fludd, Athanasius Kircher – who, in spite of the advancement of learning, preferred to adhere to an alternative system of knowledge and work for a spiritual (if not a corporeal) restitution of the lost Golden Age and the exaltation of man.



For a flexible approach to John Dee's intellect and psyche I can recommend the attitude of Wayne Shumaker, who came to the following conclusion while reading four seemingly bizarre Renaissance magical texts, including Dee's angelic diaries:

> Evidently the consciousness of learned Renaissance men [...] was structured in ways I had failed to imagine. [...] I began to perceive that, far from being eccentric, such ideas have characterized most times and cultures – an insight corroborated by anthropology. [...] Dee, Cardan, Trithemius, and Dalgarno all demonstrate that intelligent men could, and did, hold ideas that now seem extraordinary; and I should think that a reader [...] would lay the book aside with an enhanced realization of the possible varieties of intellectual orientation.[89]

A modification of perspective from evolution-oriented history of science to anthropology seems particularly useful in Dee's case and opens up further vistas of research.

## NOTES

[1] See *NP* and William H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995).
[2] A typical example of this sort of argumentation can be found in *PA*, 12.
[3] *T&FR*, 231. Cf. "Ad omnipotentem Deum Protestatio fidelis ad perpetuam rei memoriam", *Lib. Myst.*, fol. 7.
[4] See Frances A. Yates, "The Hermetic Tradition in Renaissance Science" in Charles S. Singleton, ed., *Art, Science and History in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968), 255-274, and Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972).
[5] Cf. for example Robert S. Westman, "Magical Reform and Astronomical Reform: The Yates Thesis Reconsidered" in Lynn White, ed., *Hermeticism and the Scientific Revolution (Papers read at the Clark Library Seminar, March, 1974* (Los Angeles: UCLA, W.A. Clark Memorial Library, 1977), and Brian Vickers, "Frances Yates and the Writing of History," *Journal of Modern History* 51 (1979): 287-316. Both Clulee and Sherman give a good historiographical account of reactions to the "master narrative" of Dee as magus.
[6] *PA*, 15, 43.
[7] In this paper I primarily rely on the following studies: Graham Yewbrey, *John Dee and the "Sidney Group": Cosmopolitics and Protestant Activism in the 1570s* (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Hull, 1981); Wayne Shumaker, "John Dee's Conversations with Angels" in Wayne Shumaker, *Renaissance Curiosa* (Binghamton: Center for Medieval & Early Renaissance Studies, 1982); Christopher L. Whitby, "John Dee and Renaissance Scrying," *Bulletin of the Society for Renaissance Studies* 3:2 (1985): 25-36; *NP*; *R&W*; Sherman, *John Dee.*
[8] Cf. *Lib. Myst,* fol. 5. Commented upon by Yewbrey, *John Dee and the Sidney Group*, 169.
[9] *MP*, sig. *j$^{r-v}$.
[10] *MP*, sig. A.iii$^{v}$
[11] *MP*, sig. A.iii$^{v}$.
[12] *NP*, 167 and 285 (notes 55-58). Avicenna's *De divisionibus scientiarum* can be found in Dee's copy of *Avicennae [...] compendium de Anima* (Venice, 1546), *R&W*, no. 395, which is presently in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Dee purchased it in 1557. See also Toufic Fahd, *La divination arabe: Études religieuses, sociologiques et folkloriques sur le milieu natif de l'Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1966).
[13] Cf. Dee's booklist in Oxford, Corpus Christi MS 191: *J. Dee Libri antiqui scripti quos habeo anno 1556.* According to Roberts and Watson the "Ars sintrillia" was originally included in the codex (*R&W*, no. CM4), which has been identified with parts of Oxford Corpus Christi MS 233, but the "Ars sintrillia" is missing from

the extant manuscript (*R&W*, 126; *NP*, 167-68). For scholarly literature on Artephius see Clulee's references.

[14] *NP*, 168, gives a detailed description of the complicated interrelatedness of medieval manuscripts and sixteenth-century references by Gianfrancesco Pico, Cardanus and others to Artephius. As John Ferguson notes, Artephius has always been regarded by the alchemists as one of the masters. By virtue of the elixir he is reputed to have lived a thousand and twenty-five years; see John Ferguson, *Bibliotheca Chemica: A Catalogue of the Alchemical, Chemical and Pharmaceutical Books in the Collection of the late James Young of Kelly and Durris, Esq., LL.D., F.R.S., F.R.S.E.*, 2 vols (Glasgow, 1906), I, 50-51. Although Ferguson cites mostly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources for this legend, it is interesting to note that Dee's contemporary and personal acquaintance, Postel, was also fascinated by Artephius and compared the magus's long life to his own "restitution". Cf. Guillaume Postel, *De orbis terræ concordia libri quatuor* (Paris, 1543), 90-91. See also François Secret, "Alchimie, palingénésie et metempsychose chez Guillaume Postel," *Chrysopœia* 3 (1989): 50-51.

[15] *PA*, 148-149.

[16] See Hero of Alexandria, *Mechanik und Katoptrik*, eds. Ludwig Nix and Wilhelm Schmidt (Leipzig, 1900). For mediaeval optics and Roger Bacon's experiments in this field see David C. Lindberg, *Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1976), and Urszula Szulakowska, *The Alchemy of Light: Geometry and Optics in Late Renaissance Alchemical Illustration*, Symbola et Emblemata, 10 (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

[17] A few pertinent works among the extensive scholarly literature on Renaissance talismanic magic include Franz Boll and Carl Besold, *Sternglaube und Sterndeutung: Die Geschichte und das Wesen der Astrologie*, ed. Wilhelm Gundel (Berlin, 1926); Richard Hans Laars, *Das Buch der Amulette und Talismane: Talismanische Astrologie und Magie* (Leipzig, 1932); Karl A. Nowotny, "The Construction of Certain Seals and Characters in the Work of Agrippa of Nettesheim," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 12 (1949): 46-57; D.P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1958); E. A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Talismans* (New York: University Books, 1961); Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964); Liselotte Hansman and Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Amulett und Talisman: Erscheinungsform und Geschichte* (Munich: Callwey, 1966), etc.

[18] In Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, *De occulta philosophia* (1533). I am quoting the seventeenth-century English edition: *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* (London, 1651).

[19] Agrippa, II, xxxv, 290-1.

[20] Agrippa, II, xxii, 242.

[21] Cf. Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 150-1, 251; Peter J. French, *John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 76-78; 127-8. French, however, must be credited with being the first to label Dee as an English Paracelsian. Another pre-Roberts and Watson scholar to associate Dee with Paracelsus was Charles Webster (see his "Alchemical and Paracelsian Medicine" in Charles Webster, ed., *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[22] As Roberts and Watson remark, collecting Paracelsica "must have been one of his chief preoccupations in the twenty years before his departure for Europe" (*R&W*, 36). It seems that Dee started collecting the works of Paracelsus from 1562 and a heavily annotated German edition (*R&W* no. 1476 – "*Libellus de balneis*", 1562) with marginal translations proves Dee's command of that language. All in all, there are ninety-two editions of Paracelsus in 157 copies mentioned in Dee's catalogue and the concordance with Sudhoff's catalogue (*Bibliographia Paracelsica*, Berlin, 1894); cf. *R&W*, Appendix 5, which documents Dee's possession of works covering the whole spectrum of Paracelsian thought. The author of the only post-Roberts and Watson monograph, William Sherman, has acknowledged Dee's interest in Paracelsus but since his book is not primarily concerned with Dee's natural philosophy, his remarks are restricted to the technical aspects of Dee's book-collecting habits and marginal annotations (Sherman, 43-44, 76-79 & 98-99).

[23] This *album amicorum* has been acquired by the National Library of Medicine (Bethesda, Maryland) and reviewed by Richard J. Durling in *Gesnerus: Revue trimestrielle, publié par la Société suisse d'histoire de la médicine et des sciences naturelles*, 22 (1965): 134-59. Roberts and Watson knew about this inscription in Gesner's album (*R&W*, 20, n.23) but thought that it had been lost. Sherman refers to Durling, (Sherman, 215, n.83).

[24] *R&W*, 101. The book – *Libellus de balneis germanicè*, today in New York Society Library – contains extensive notes by Dee, including translations from the German.



[25] *Erklärung der ganzen astronomei*, in Karl Sudhoff and Wilhelm Mathiessen, eds., *Paracelsus, Sämtliche Werke. Abteilung I: Medizinische. naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften*, 14 vols (Vols. 6-9 Munich, 1922-5; Vols.1-5 and 10-14 Berlin, 1928-33), X, 656. After the Sudhoff edition numbers, I am also giving the references to the definitive sixteenth-century edition by Johann Huser, *Der Bücher und Schriften [...] Philippi Theophrasti Paracelsi: Jetzt auffs new auß den Originalien, und Theophrasti eigener Handschrifft, soviel derselben zu bekommen gewesen* [etc], 10 vols (Basel, 1589-90), X, 464. See also: A. E. Waite, ed., *The Hermetical and Alchemical Writings of Aureolus Philippus Theophrastus Bombast* (London, 1894), II, 295. I have also used the following English compendiums of the writings of Paracelsus: Franz Hartmann, *The Life and the Doctrines of Philippus Theophrastus Paracelsus, extracted and translated from his rare and extensive works and from some unpublished manuscripts* (New York, 1891) and Paracelsus, *Selected Writings*, ed. Jolande Jacobi, Bollingen Series 28 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951).

[26] *PA*, 134-135,

[27] *MH*, sig. B3$^{r-v}$, 135, 137. The Latin parenthesis has been added here for the reader's benefit.

[28] Paracelsus, *Sämtliche Werke*, XII, 326; Huser, X, 290; Jacobi, 44.

[29] Paracelsus, *Sämtliche Werke*, XII, 183; Huser, X, 162.

[30] Paracelsus, *Die Bücher von den unsichtbaren Krankheiten*, *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 271.

[31] Paracelsus, *Sämtliche Werke*, XII, 41-2; Huser, X, 35.

[32] Agrippa, III, xxxvi, 460-1.

[33] Agrippa, III, xxxvi, 460.

[34] Paracelsus, *De fundamento scientiarum sapientiæque*, *Sämtliche Werke*, XIII, 306; Huser, IX. 430. On Agrippa's magical notions see Charles G. Nauert, *Agrippa and the Crisis of Renaissance Thought*, Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, 55 (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1965); Alexandre Koyré, *Mystiques, Spirituels, Alchimistes du XVIe siècle allemand* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971); Wolf-Dieter Müller-Jahncke, "Von Ficino zu Agrippa: Der Magie-Begriff des Renaissance-Humanism im Überblick" in Antoine Faivre and Rolf Christian Zimmermann, eds., *Epochen der Naturmystik* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1972), 24-51; Paola Zambelli, "Le problème de la magie naturelle a la Renaissance" in *Magia, astrologia e religione nel Rinascimento, Convegno polacco-italiano, Varsavia 1972* (Warsaw: Ossolineum, 1972), 48-82; Charles Webster, *From Paracelsus to Newton: Magic and the Making of Modern Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Michael Keefer, "Agrippa's Dilemma: Hermetic "Rebirth" and the Ambivalences of *De vanitate* and *De occulta philosophia*," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 41:4 (1988): 614-53. On Paracelsus's concepts of the mystical rebirth (*corpus glorificationis*) I have consulted the following studies: Carl Gustav Jung, "Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon" in Jung, *Paracelsica: Zwei Vorlesungen über den Artz und Philosophen Theophrastus* (Zürich, 1942); cf. Jung, *Alchemical Studies* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 109-91; Ernst W. Kämmerer, *Das Leib-Seele-Geist-Problem bei Paracelsus und einigen Autoren des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Kosmographie, 3 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1971); Wolf-Dieter Müller Jahncke, *Astrologisch-magische Theorie und Praxis in der Heilkunde der frühen Neuzeit*, Sudhoffs Archiv, Beiheft 25 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1985); Massimo Luigi Bianchi, *Signatura rerum: Segni, magia e cognoscenza da Paracelso a Leibniz*, Lessico Intellectuale Europeo, 43 (Roma: Edizioni dell' Ateneo, 1987); and Elisabeth Ann Ambrose, "Cosmos, Anthropos, and Theos: Dimensions of the Paracelsian Universe", *Cauda Pavonis*, 11:1 (1992): 1-7.

[35] *The Holy Bible [...] translated out of the original tongues [...] by His Majesty's special command* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). It should be noted, however, that such divination in the Bible is most of the time condemnable and condemned: "And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord." (2 Kings 20.21). Dee seems to have tendentiously overlooked such warnings whether in the Bible or in his much admired Paracelsus (see later on the angelic conversations).

[36] Exodus 28.15-31. It was Christopher L. Whitby who first called attention to the Biblical context (in the article referred to in footnote 6 above). For lapidaries see the following items from Dee's library: Albertus Magnus, *De lapidibus mineralibus*, – *R&W*, nos. 2290, M24a, M107, M149a, M196a; Lazar Ecker, *Beschreibung allerfürnemsten mineralischen Ertzt und Berckwerksarten* (Prague, 1574) – *R&W* no. 5; "Gesnerus & alii varii de lapidibus & gemmis, 1565" – *R&W*, no. 765; Paracelsus, "De metallis; de mineralibus; de gemmis, germanicè" = *Ettliche Tractatus [...] Von Natürlichen Dingen; Beschreibung etlicher Kreütter; Von Metallen; Von Mineralen; Von Edlen Gesteinen [...]* (Strassburg, 1570) – *R&W*, no. 1485, etc. On the medieval lapidaries see Joan Evans, *Magical Jewels of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, particularly in England* (Oxford, 1922, repr. New York: Dover Press, 1976); on the twelve symbolic jewels

see György Szönyi, "Mannerist Imagery and Thinking in the Prose of András Prágai," *Acta Litteraria, Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 26 (1984): 207-32.

[37] Arthur Edward Waite, *The Hermetic and Alchemical Writings of Paracelsus*, II, 296. Cf. also: *"Visiones, das sind gesicht so man mit künsten macht in spiegeln, crystallen, negeln und der gleichen", Erklärung der gantzen Astronomey, Sämtliche Werke*, XII, 500, Huser, X, 485. Cf. also *Die 9 Bücher de natura rerum, Sämtliche Werke*, XI, 307 and Waite, *The Hermetic and Alchemical Writing of Paracelsus*, I, 171. One of Dee's Paracelsica, "De rebus naturalibus; descriptio aliquot stirpis de metallis, de mineralibus, de gemmis, germanici, Argentoratum, 1570" – *R&W*, no. 1485 (S120 in Karl Sudhoff's *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, Berlin, 1894) can be identified with *Die 9 bücher*. That Dee must have known the "ars beryllistica" concept of Paracelsus is shown by the fact that in the *Monas Hieroglyphica* he had already used the term "beryllisticus" (See *MH*, B3v, 137 and *NP*, 141). There are a great many useful studies on *crystallomantia* in Polish. See for example, Roman Bugaj, *Nauki tajemne w Polsce w dobie Odrodzenie* (Warsaw: Ossolineum, 1976), 120 et seq., and Ryszard Gansiniec, "Krystalomancja," *Lud*, 41 (1954): 1-83. This latter is the most extensive and relatively up-to-date article on crystal gazing I have found.

[38] This mirror, at present in the British Museum, was donated by the eighteenth-century eccentric aristocrat, Horace Walpole. See Hugh Tait, "The Devil's Looking Glass: the Magical Speculum of Dr John Dee" in Warren Hunting Smith, ed., *Horace Walpole, Writer, Politician and Connoisseur. Essays on the 250th anniversary of Walpole's birth* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967), 195-212. Clulee reproduces this precious item (*NP*, figure 8.1).

[39] Gansiniec, "Krystalomancja" gives an excellent summary of these remarks. I am adopting a few of his citations: "Nonnunquam ad quod vocantur demones praenunciant diversis figuris quas miseri homines videre solent vel in polito lapide, ferro, calibe, speculo [...]." Gregorius Reisch, *Margarita Philosphica* (Strassburg, 1512), 7:23 – Dee had the 1504 edition, *R&W*, no. 1385; "Hinc est quod multi profanis artibus dediti dæmones ad circulum, ad speculum, sive ad quælibet alia receptacula horrendis conjurationibus convocare laborantes. [...] Dæmones terrestres commurantur interdum et pollicentur vesanis in vitro vel in crystallo sive in speculo [...]." Trithemius, *Tractatus de reprobis atque maleficis* (Cologne, 1566), *R&W*, nos. 468 and 472. See also "Joh. Trithemii libellus octo quæstionum, 1564", *R&W*, no. 897.

[40] "[Q]uidam sic experiuntur: in crystallo sedens conversus ad orientem, crucem facito cum oleo olivæ, et sub cruce scribe nomen sanctæ Helenæ hoc modo: Sancta Helena. Inde puer natus ex conjugibus, ætatis annorum decem vel circa, virgo, capiat crystallum dextra manu et tu genibus flexis post illum stans supplicationem ter, dices: 'Deprecor te, domina sancta Helena, quæ crucem domini nostri Iesu Cristi invenisti et per illam sanctissimam devotionem [...] debeas demonstrare in hoc crystallo quidquid peto et scire cupio, Amen.' Et cum puer videbit angelum in hoc crystallo, rogabit quæcunque volueris angelusque respondebit." in Girolamo Cardano, *De rerum varietate* (Lyons, 1663), cited by Gansiniec, 12. Dee had the 1557 edition, *R&W*, no. 60. Cardano's example was taken over by Johann Wier in *De præstigiis dæmonum*, Ch. 5. Dee had two copies of this work (*R&W*, nos. 456 and 862); he even lent it to help the clarification of a witchcraft case as late as 1597.

[41] János Reizner, *Szeged története* (Szeged, 1900), IV, 390. For further examples cf. Gansiniec, 11ff.

[42] For more information on these statutes see the introductory section of Whitby's thesis.

[43] James O. Halliwell, ed., *The Autobiography and Personal Diary of Dr Simon Forman* (London, 1849), 17, cit. Whitby, 31.

[44] Whitby mentions two spectacular examples of such manuscript compendia. One is British Library, Additional MS 36,674 which contains magical journals by Dee's associates, Humphrey Gilbert and John Davies, and has marginal notes by Gabriel Harvey. In the neighborhood of these texts, this codex also accommodates a holograph draft of Dee's primer for his Enochian magic, "De heptarchia mystica". The other, Sloane MS 3851 contains standard texts, such as "The Magick of Arbatel", "Signum pentaculum Solomonis", and "The Fourth Book of Agrippa" as well as private incantations and rituals ("Invocations to call a spirit into a chrystall Stone and to keep him there", fols. 92-109; and "To have conference with spirits", fols. 129-31). Some infamous rituals of ceremonial and black magic have been published by Arthur Edward Waite, *The Book of Ceremonial Magic: A Complete grimoire* (London, 1911, repr. Secaucus, NJ: The Citadel Press, 1961). For German examples of magical manuscripts see the Herzog-August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, HAB MS 115 Aug fol (3903), *Allerhand in Kreise gestellte magische oder kabbalistische Figuren*, sixteenth century; *Arbatel, d.i. die Heylige Geistkunst, darinnen der grundliche unfehlige Weg angezaigt würt, wie man zu der rechten wahren Erkentnus Gottes, auch sichtigen vnd vnsichtigen Geschöpff, aller Künsten, Weyssheyten vnnd Handtwercken khomen solle*, seventeenth century, HAB MS 48.2 Aug 4to; *Razijel. Das Edle Buch von der Gottlichen Magia. Unserm Ersten Vater Adam stracks nach dem er auss dem Paradeiss verstossen von dem Engell selbsten Offenbahett. Nebenst anderer Mehrer Cabalistischen und Magischen Maistere Schönen, herlichen und geheimeren Additionibus*, seventeenth century, HAB MS 246.5 Extravagantes.



[45] John Dee, *Autobiographical Tracts*, ed. James Crossley, Remains Historical and Literary of Lancaster and Chester Counties, 1 (Manchester, 1851), 17.

[46] *Lib. Myst.*, fol. 8.

[47] *Private Diary*, 5, *R&W*, 53. Halliwell's transcript is incorrect and must be checked against the original entry in Stadius's *Ephemerides* (1570), which is now available on microfilm: Elisabeth Leedham-Green and Julian Roberts, eds., *John Dee, Renaissance Man: The Reconstructed Libraries of European Scholars, 1450-1700. The Books and Manuscripts of John Dee. Manuscripts from the Bodleian Library* (Marlborough: Adam Matthews, 1991), reel 4. Dee purchased several of Thurneysser's books: his Paracelsus dictionary, published in Berlin in 1574 (*R&W*, no. 2275), a 1569 edition of the *Archidoxa* (*R&W*, no. 1455), and a 1560 edition of the *Quinta essentia* (*R&W*, no. 1445).

[48] Franciscus Joel, *De morbis hyperphysicis et rebus magicis* (Rostock, 1579) cit. Hermann Kopp, *Die Alchemie in älterer und neuerer Zeit: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte* (Heidelberg, 1886), I, 117.

[49] *MP*, sig. Aj$^{v}$

[50] *Private Diary*, 13 [9 October 1581] and 14 [27 January, 12 February, 6 March 1582].

[51] *Lib. Myst.*, fol. 7$^{r}$, cit. *NP*, 179 and 288, note 11.

[52] *Private Diary*, 11 [25 May 1581].

[53] Cf. Genesis 2. 19-20: "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."

[54] *MH*, 23$^{v}$, 201

[55] On the quest for a mystical, universal language, see studies on Trithemius, Dalgarno, Kircher, John Wilkins, Leibniz, etc. A few important works: Alessandro Bausani, *Geheim und Universalsprachen: Entwicklung und Typologie* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1970); Arno Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel: Geschichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker*, 4 vols (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1957-63); Joscelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher. A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979); James Knowlson, *Universal Language Schemes in England and France 1600-1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975); George McCracken, "Athanasius Kircher's Universal Polygraphy," *Isis*, 39 (1948): 215-228; Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Topica universalis: Eine Modellgeschichte humanistischer und barocker Wissenschaft*, Paradeigmata, 1 (Hamburg: Meiner, 1983); Gerhard F. Strasser, *Lingua universalis: Kryptographie und Theorie der Universalsprachen im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 38 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988); Marina Yaguello, *Les Fous du langage: Des langues imaginaires et de leurs inventeurs* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984).

[56] Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 185-90. See Guillaume Postel's *De originibus* (Basel, 1553), *R&W*, no. 868. See also *NP*, 88.

[57] *MH*, 5$^{r}$, 127.

[58] John Dee, *Liber mysteriorum, sextus et sanctus*, 1583, British Library, Sloane MS 3189.

[59] Both in manuscript, in British Library, Sloane MS 3191. *De heptarchia mystica* was recently published by Robert Turner (Wellingborough: Aquarius Press, 1986). A not uninteresting compendium of Dee's Enochian magic was edited and translated by Geoffrey James, *The Enochian Magic of Dr. John Dee* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 1994). In this compilation the Enochian passages scattered in Dee's diaries are taken out of their original context and are arranged into a logical sequence, which, obviously, is the invention of the editor.

[60] See, for example, Donald C. Laycock, *The Complete Enochian Dictionary of John Dee* (London: Askin, 1978).

[61] Except for the early diaries in Sloane MS 3188, which until recently have remained unstudied. From the early 1980s on, Yewbrey made use of this manuscript, and later Whitby wrote a doctoral dissertation (University of Birmingham, 1981) which included a full transcription of this material. A facsimile edition of Whitby's thesis was published by Garland (New York) in 1988.

[62] *T&FR*, 168-70.

[63] *T&FR*, 172-3.

[64] *T&FR*, 231.

[65] *T&FR*, 80.

[66] *T&FR*, 92.

[67] See footnote 35 above.
[68] *Astronomia magna*, as quoted by Hartman, 149. An influential source of these kinds of warnings is Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, Book 10, Chapters 9-10, where he attacks Porphyrian theurgy – an attack repeated almost verbatim in Chapter 46 of Cornelius Agrippa's *De vanitate scientarium* (Cologne, 1533).
[69] See Luigi Firpo, "John Dee, scienziato, negromante e avventuriero," *Rinascimento*, 3 (1952): 25-84; Robert J.W. Evans, *Rudolph II and His World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973; London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 214-28; and my articles: "John Dee i jego związki ze Środkową Europą" (John Dee and his Contacts with Central Europe), *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce*, 25 (1980): 99-111; "Traditions of Magic: From Faustus to Dee at European Universities and Courts," *Cauda Pavonis*, 10:2 (1991): 1-8; and "'Eastward Ho!' John Dee a kelet-közép-európai udvarokban" (John Dee at Eastern European Courts), in Monok István, ed., *A III. Hungarológiai Kongresszus előadásai* (Budapest-Szeged: JATE, 1993), 1063-1074.
[70] Some of Dee's books related to prophetic traditions: for Joachim of Fiore see "Joachimi Abbatis Vaticinia" – *R&W*, nos. 436 and M18; "Pauli Scalichii explanatio imaginum abbatis Joachim & Anselmi, Cologne, 1570" – *R&W*, no. 2028; for Psellus and Iamblichus see *R&W*, no. 256. This fascinating *colligatum* (now in the Folger Shakespeare Library) of mystical and pneumatological literature is heavily annotated by Dee; for the Paracelsus prognostications see "Paracelsi expositio magicarum figurarum, germanici, 1569" – *R&W*, no. 956 [Sudhoff 106], "Paracelsi expositio imaginarum magicarum, 1570" – *R&W*, no. 844 [Sudhoff 115]. For Postel's prophecies see "Configuratio signorum cœlestium, 1553" – *R&W*, no. 432 and *De orbis terræ concordia*, (Basel, 1544) – *R&W*, no. D18; etc.
[71] On Postel's alleged madness, see William J. Bouwsma, *Concordia mundi: The Career and thought of Guillaume Postel, 1510-1581* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), 26-27 and Marion L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel: Prophet of the Restitution of All Things: His Life and Thought* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1981), 162. On the circumstances of Dee's return to England, see *Private Diary*, 31, and *Autobiographical Tracts*, 14.
[72] This is echoed in Casaubon's elaborate preface to the *True & Faithful Relation* (see *T&FR*, "The Preface", sig, D3$^{r-v}$ and "Postscript", sig. I2$^{r}$), and in almost all monographs on Dee which aimed at placing him in the venerable tradition of hermetic magi of the Renaissance (Calder, Yates, French).
[73] James, xxv. This is implied by Clulee in relating to the vagaries of patronage, then explicitly stated by Susan Bassnett in her studies of Kelley and Elizabeth Weston (see "Revising a Biography: A New Interpretation of the Life of Elizabeth Jane Weston based on her autobiographical poem on the occasion of the death of her mother," *Cahiers Elisabéthains*, 37 (1990): 1-8 and her article in the present volume.
[74] *T&FR*, 158-159.
[75] This anecdote is mentioned by Anthony Burgess, *Shakespeare* (London: Penguin, 1970), 103. According to the legend, in order to commemorate the event, Alleyn later founded Dulwich College on the site where that amazing revelation had taken place.
[76] Whitby, 33-34.
[77] This is a strong argument, and is by no means invalidated by the sceptical – and somewhat simplistic – references to the general shortage of money and greed of the aristocratic patrons. On the magical contexts of some German courts see Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*; Robert J.W. Evans, *Rudolph II and his World*; Wolf-Dieter Müller-Jahncke, *Astrologisch-magische*; Bruce T. Moran, *The Alchemical World of the German Court: Occult Philosophy and Chemical Medicine in the Circle of Moritz of Hessen, 1572-1632*, Sudhoffs Archiv, 29 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1991); Jost Weyer, *Graf Wolfgang II von Hohenlohe und die Alchemie. Alchemistische Studien in Sloß Weikersheim, 1587-1610* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1992); Debra L. Stoudt, "'Probatum est per me': The Heidelberg Electors as Practitioners and Patrons of the Medical and Magical Arts," *Cauda Pavonis*, 14:1 (1995): 12-18. On Dee's "academy", see French, 126-188; and Sherman's more modern approach (Sherman, chapters 2 and 3).
[78] See *Private Diary*.
[79] In June, when he was banished from Prague and took temporary refuge in Germany, see *T&FR*, 429; and *R&W*, 77-78.
[80] *R&W*, Appendix I, nos. 2 and 3.
[81] *T&FR*, (new numbering), *37, *39.
[82] The medieval contexts have recently been explored by Stephen Clucas in a study of Dee's interest in Solomonic magical manuscripts. See his essay in the present volume.
[83] Sherman uses this term in his book. See Sherman, 12-19.
[84] In spite of all recent criticism, I find the best summary of these discoveries in D.P. Walker's *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1958) and Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge Kegan and Paul, 1964). On hermeticism, see André Marie Jean Festugière, *Hermétisme et mystique paienne* (Paris: Louvain, 1967); Raymond Marcel, "La fortune de l'Hermés Trismégiste à la renaissance" in André Stegman, ed., *L'humanisme francais au début de la renaissance* (Paris: Vrin, 1973), 137-54; Konrad Eisenbichler and Olga Zorzi Pugliese, eds., *Ficino and Renaissance Neoplatonism*, University of Toronto Italian Studies, 1 (Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions Canada, 1986); Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus, eds., *Hermeticism and the Renaissance: Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe* (Washington: The Folger Institute, 1988), etc. On the cabalistic interpretations, see Joseph Blau, *The Christian Interpretation of the Cabala in the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944); and François Secret, *Les Kabbalistes Chrétiens de la Renaissance* (Paris: Dunod, 1964, repr. Milan: Arché, 1985); on Dee and the Cabala, Michael T. Walton, "John Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica:* Geometrical Cabala," *Ambix*, 23 (1976): 116-23, and Karen De Léon-Jones's article in the present volume.
[85] See, for example, Erasmus to Albert of Brandenburg, 19 October 1519 in P. S. Allen, ed., *Opus epistolarum*, 12 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-58), IV, 100. On Erasmus's attitudes to magic and Judaism, see Werner Gundersheimer, "Erasmus, Humanism and the Christian Cabala", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 26 (1963): 38-52; Paola Zambelli, "Cornelio Agrippa, Erasmo e la teologia umanistica", *Rinascimento*, 21 (1969): 29-88; and Charles Zika, "Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy", *The Journal of Religious History*, 9 (1976-77): 223-246 (242-6). For a near-contemporary review of the possible role of the cabala in philosophy, see Johann Pistorius, *Artis cabalisticæ, hoc est Reconditæ Theologiæ et Philosophiæ Scriptorum* (Basel, 1587). On Reuchlin's troubles in connection with his alleged Judaism, cf. Max Brod, *Johannes Reuchlin und sein Kampf: eine historische Monographie* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1965). On Postel, see the next footnote.
[86] For some time I have been preparing myself to engage in a comparative study of the alternative occult thought of Postel and Dee. For more on Postel's esotericism, see Bouwsma and Kuntz, also François Secret, "Notes sur Postel", *Bibliotheque d'humanisme et renaissance*, 37 (1975): 101-19; 39 (1977): 115-32, 573-90; Secret, 'Alchemie'; Frank Lestringant, "Cosmologie et mirabilia à la Renaissance: l'example de Guillaume Postel", *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 16 (1986): 253-79.
[87] Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (Jerusalem: Schocken Publishing House Ltd., 1941, repr. New York: Schocken Books, 1974), 35.
[88] I would argue with Sherman's typological argument according to which magic is passive and contemplative while humanism is active (Sherman, 14-5). These are two different and rather independent paradigms each having a scale from passive to active. In the esoteric tradition this would range from passive mysticism through occult knowledge to active and assertive magical manipulations. In humanism, which is based on explication and discursive logic, one again finds a wide range of attitudes from enthusiasm through stoicism to scepticism. I do not, however, contest Sherman's central argument which considers Dee *both* as a humanist and as a magus.
[89] Shumaker, *Renaissance Curiosa*, 11. These remarks are the more noteworthy since Professor Shumaker had previously written an acerbic and sceptical monograph on the occultism of the Renaissance: *The Occult Sciences in the Renaissance: A Study in Intellectual Patterns* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1972).