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# FOR THE THELEMITES

ROSE AND ALEISTER CROWLEY'S STAY IN EGYPT IN 1904

A STUDY OF THE CAIRO WORKING  
AND WHAT IT LED TO

BY  
PERDURABO ST



*FRATER PERDURABO, to whom this revelation was made with so many signs and wonders, was himself unconvinced. He struggled against it for years. Not until the completion of His own initiation at the end of 1909 did He understand how perfectly He was bound to carry out this work. (Indeed, it was not until his word became conterminous with Himself and His Universe that all alien ideas lost their meaning for him). Again and again He turned away from it, took it up for a few days or hours, then laid it aside. He even attempted to destroy its value, to nullify the result. Again and again the unsleeping might of the Watchers drove Him back to the work; and it was at the very moment when He thought Himself to have escaped that He found Himself fixed for ever with no possibility of again turning aside for the fraction of a second from the path.*

*The history of this must one day be told by a more vivid voice. Properly considered, it is a history of continuous miracle.*

THE EQUINOX OF THE GODS, 1936 E.V.

**A scientific treatise on the history of the words ‘Konx Ompax’, stated to have been uttered at the mysteries of Eleusis in Greece, and later given as ‘Konx Om Pax’.**

## **Κὸγξ, ὀμπαξ**

[As found in: HESYCHII Dictionarium. Venice: Venetiis in Aedibus Aldi & Andreae Soceri Mense Augusto. MDXIII (1514).]



**This treatise, which is taken from *For the Thelemites*, Chapter 7, is here printed separately. It was written by Perdurabo ST in 2009 E.V.**

The “*Khabs Am Pekht*” used in the Golden Dawn, which was translated as “LIGHT IN EXTENSION”, was looked on as ancient Egyptian words, which had been transliterated by the Greek as “*Konx Om Pax*”, and said at the conclusion of the mysteries of Eleusis. Let us look at the words “*Konx Om Pax*”, and their history, examining their source.

The source of these words is the famous lexicon by Hesychius Lexicographus of Alexandria. Hesychius Lexicographus, who flourished 5th century A.D., and whose name in Greek is spelled ΗΣΥΧΙΟΣ, was a lexicographer from Alexandria in Egypt who produced the most important Greek lexicon known from antiquity. The lexicon is of very great importance since it contains many rare words and phrases, but also much literary, and archaeological information from earlier grammarians and commentators, whose works now are lost. The lexicon also has a number of words of various ancient languages. Hesychius’s lexicon survives in a deeply corrupt MS. dating from c. 1430, and preserved in the library of St. Mark’s in Venice.<sup>1</sup> It is an alphabetically arranged lexicon containing approximately 51,000 entries of rare words and phrases, but is an abridgement of the original MS. The main source of the lexicon, as given by Hesychius in a dedicatory letter, is, apart from various glossaries, the Lexicon of Diogenianus of Heraclea (2nd century A.D.), who was a language scholar from a Greek colony in what is now southern Italy. The Venetian MS.’s editor unfortunately extensively interpolated and disfigured the MS., and also deleted the sources of the entries. The lexicon known today thus appears as a copious glossary. It is mostly believed now that the MS.’s words “Κὸγξ, ὄμπαξ”, ‘Konx Ompax’, which later became ‘Konx Om Pax’, are a misunderstanding in the surviving MS.

When looking at the use of the words from the 15th century and onwards I note that most of the old scholars who mention them besides mentioning that they are found in Hesychius’s lexicon, also suggest that Hesychius writes that they were words used at the mysteries of Eleusis, and this is, in fact, not stated in the surviving MS. Let us examine the principal printed editions of the Venetian MS. The first printed edition was published by Marcus Musurus in Venice in 1514.<sup>2</sup> A faulty reprint of the first edition was published in Florence in 1520<sup>3</sup>, but already the year after, in 1521, was a corrected reprint of the first edition issued in Haguenau, France.<sup>4</sup> Marcus Musurus (c. 1470-1517), was a professor of Greek, born at Crete, who lived for many years in Italy. In 1499 he edited the first Latin and Greek lexicon, *Etymologicum Magnum*. He also published numerous editions of different classical authors. I note that the mentioned editions of Hesychius’s lexicon have either “Κὸγξ, ὄμπαξ” (1514<sup>5</sup> and 1668<sup>6</sup> editions), or “Κόγξ, ὄμπαξ” (1520<sup>7</sup>), and finally the revised reprint of the 1514 first edition, published in 1521<sup>8</sup>, has what appears to be “Κὸγξ, ὄμ παξ” compared with the other editions, owing to an error in spacing. However, by the publication of the German classical philologist, Moritz Schmidt’s (1823-1888) critical edition in 1860, the phrase “Κόγξ, ὄμπαξ” was restored to “κόγξ· ὁμοίως πάξ.”<sup>9</sup>, which means ‘konx, likewise pax’ (in Latin

<sup>1</sup> Codex Marcianus Gr.[aecus] 622 (c. 1430) • (Biblioteca Marciana Nazionale – Library of St Mark’s, Venice.)

<sup>2</sup> HESYCHII DICTIONARIVM. Venice: Venetiis in Aedibus Aldi & Andreae Soceri Mense Augusto. MDXIII (1514).

<sup>3</sup> HESYCHII DICTIONARIVM. FLORENTIAE PER HÆREDES PHILIPPI IVNTÆ. MDXX (1520).

<sup>4</sup> [HESYCHII] LEXICON; GRAECVM IAM SECVNDVM. Hagenoæ, in ædibus Thomæ Anshelmi Badensis. MDXXI (1521).

<sup>5</sup> HESYCHII DICTIONARIVM. Venice: Venetiis in Aedibus Aldi & Andreae Soceri Mense Augusto. MDXIII (1514).

[“Κὸγξ” – no page-number]

<sup>6</sup> ΗΣΥΧΙΟΥ ΛΕΞΙΚΟΝ. Lugd. Batav. et Roterod. Ex Officina Hackiana, 1668, p. 539.

<sup>7</sup> HESYCHII DICTIONARIVM. FLORENTIAE PER HÆREDES PHILIPPI IVNTÆ, MDXX (1520). [Κόγξ – no page-number]

<sup>8</sup> [HESYCHII] LEXICON; GRAECVM IAM SECVNDVM. Hagenoæ, in ædibus Thomæ Anshelmi Badensis. MDXXI (1521), p. 430.

<sup>9</sup> ΗΣΥΧΙΟΣ. HESYCHII ALEXANDRINI LEXICON post IOANNEM ALBERTUM. Recensuit MAURICIUS SCHMIDT. Volumes

γ becomes η before ξ like in ξφιγξ, sphinx, and thus κόγξ becomes 'konx' or 'conx'). ὁμοίως is an adverb meaning 'likewise'<sup>10</sup>, and is a word used (written in full) in the text of many entries in the lexicon.<sup>11</sup> The reading of the words published by Schmidt had been suggested by the German classical scholar, Christian August Lobeck (1781-1860), in his magnum opus, *Aglaophamus*, published in 1829.<sup>12</sup> Lobeck supposed that the true reading of ὄμπαξ was "ὄμ. πάξ", where ὄμ. was an abbreviation of ὁμοίως. Today Lobeck's explanation, κόγξ ὁμοίως πάξ, konx homoiōs pax, is generally accepted.<sup>13</sup>

The 1514 first edition of Hesychius's lexicon stated under the entry words "κόγξ, ὄμπαξ"<sup>14</sup>:

Κόγξ,  
ὄμπαξ ἐπιφώνημα τετελειωμένοις, καὶ τῆς διαισι-  
κῆς ψήφου ἤχου ὡς ὁ τῆς κλεψύδαρος, πρὸς δὲ ἀπαι-  
κῆς, βλόψ.

The above text – which is printed in the old fashioned system of printing using ligatures and abbreviations – can be translated in two ways, however, most philologists will probably mean that the first translation given here is the one which is correct, i.e.: "An exclamation over a finished work.":

'konx', 'ompax'. An exclamation over a finished work. Also the noise of a pebble used in the law-courts, like the one made by a water-clock. In Attic Greek the word 'blops' is used.

or

'konx' [may also be transliterated as 'conx'], 'ompax'. An utterance made by the initiated. Also the noise of a pebble used in the law-courts, like the one made by a water-clock. In Attic Greek the word 'blops' is used.

Secundum. E – K. IENAE: Sumptibus Frederici Maukii, MDCCCLX (1860), p. 500 (3184).

<sup>10</sup> A form of ὁμοίος / ὁμοῖος.

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., the headword κρόττονες in the 1521 edition (p. 447).

<sup>12</sup> Christian Augustus Lobeck. *AGLAOPHAMUS, SIVE DE THEOLOGIAE MYSTICAE GRAECORUM CAUSIS LIBRI TRES*. 2 vols. Regimontii Prussorum, Borntraeger, MDCCCXXIX (1829), Tomus Primus, pp. 775-83. (*ORPHICA. Cap. XVII. Φυσικά, §. 4.*, pp. 773-83.) • "Aglaophamus" is the name of the priest who was said to have initiated Pythagoras into the mysteries in Leibethra, a city at the foot of Mt. Olympus.

<sup>13</sup> See: Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. With a revised supplement. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 1301. (πάξ)

<sup>14</sup> HESYCHII DICTIONARIVM. Venice: Venetiis in Aedibus Aldi & Andreae Soceri Mense Augusto. MDXIII (1514). [No page-number]

The 1860 critical edition by Moritz Schmidt stated under the entry words “κόγξ· ὁμοίως πάξ.”<sup>15</sup>:

**κόγξ· ὁμοίως πάξ. ἐπιφώνημα τετελεσμένοις. καὶ τῆς δικαστικῆς ψή-  
φου ἤχος, ὡς ὁ τῆς κλειψύδρας. παρὰ δὲ Ἀττικοῖς βλόψ**

This text can like the other translation be translated in two ways:

‘konx’, likewise ‘pax’. An exclamation over a finished work. Also the noise of a pebble used in the law-courts, like the one made by a water-clock. In Attic Greek the word ‘blops’ is used.

or

‘konx’ [may also be transliterated as ‘conx’], likewise ‘pax’. An utterance made by the initiated. Also the noise of a pebble used in the law-courts, like the one made by a water-clock. In Attic Greek the word ‘blops’ is used.

The critical edition of the MS. published 1953 E.V. & 1966 E.V. by the German philologist, and classical scholar Kurt Latte (1891-1964), agrees mainly with Moritz Schmidt’s edition.<sup>16</sup> As stated so can the words “ἐπιφώνημα τετελεσμένοις” be translated in two ways, which I shall discuss below. Hesychius thus tells us that the words mean “an exclamation over a finished work”, or, perhaps, as it in 1619 was translated by a scholar: “an utterance made by the initiated”, and furthermore that it is an attempt to render onomatopoeically the sound of a pebble dropped into a voting urn.<sup>17</sup> In classical Greek, πάξ, pax, ‘enough!’ is an exclamation ending a discussion. Under the headword πάξ’ Hesychius writes:

πάξ· ὑπόδημα εὐυπόδητον· ἢ τέλος ἔχει<sup>18</sup>

‘pax’. An easily tied sandal. Or else signifying ‘it is at an end’. The former definition is looked on as misunderstood by him.<sup>19</sup>

I notice that in October and November 1864 took a short but interesting exchange of notes and replies on the words Konx Ompax place in the English weekly journal, *Notes and Queries: A Medium of Inter-Communication for Literary Men, General Readers, etc.* – a journal publishing notes on literary subjects from readers together with queries and answers from readers. The journal, published in London printed on its title page the words: “‘When found, make a note of.’ – Captain Cuttle.” The exchange of views ended with a critical reply giving a qualified view on the words Konx Ompax in Hesychius’s lexicon, together with especially one scholar’s comment on them,

<sup>15</sup> ΗΣΥΧΙΟΣ. HESYCHII ALEXANDRINI LEXICON post IOANNEM ALBERTUM. Recensuit MAURICIUS SCHMIDT. Volumes Secundum. E – K. IENAE: Sumptibus Frederici Maukii, MDCCCLX (1860), p. 500 (3184).

<sup>16</sup> HESYCHII ALEXANDRINI LEXICON. Recensuit et emendavit; Kurt Latte ; Regiomontanus. 2 vols. Hauniae: Ejnar Munksgaard Editore, MCMLIII (1953) & MCMLXVI (1966) ♦ Vol. II, p. 496 (3184). (κόγξ· ὁμοίως πάξ.) • HESYCHII ALEXANDRINI LEXICON. Volumen III: Π-Σ. Recensuit et emendavit; Peter Allan Hansen; Kurt Latte. New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> See also: *Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott. A Greek-English Lexicon. With a revised supplement. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 966. (κόγξ)*

<sup>18</sup> Hesychii Alexandrini; Lexicon. Editionem Minorem. Curavit Mauricius Schmidt. Ienae [Jena]: Sumptibus Frederici Maukii, MDCCCLXIII (1863), p. 1185.

<sup>19</sup> See: *Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott. A Greek-English Lexicon. With a revised supplement. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 1301. (πάξ)*

Lobeck – a reply written by the English classical scholar William Hepworth Thompson (1810-1886), of Trinity College, Cambridge, who not saw any “mysteries” in the words found in Hesychius’s lexicon. Thompson does not translate ἐπιφώνημα τετελεσμένοις as “an utterance made by the initiated”, but as “an exclamation over a finished work”, and further states his opinion that “there is, and can be, no allusion to the Eleusinian or any other mysteries in the passage of Hesychius.”<sup>20</sup> On κόγξ ὄμπαξ and their gloss, quoted from a 1766 edition of Hesychius’s lexicon published by the Dutch Professor of Theology, Johannes Alberti (1698-1762)<sup>21</sup>, together with Christian August Lobeck’s theory on them published in *Aglaophamus*, Thompson writes:

### KONX OMPAX.

(3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263, 296.)

Your readers ought to know that the words κόγξ ὄμπαξ are found in the Lexicon of Hesychius, upon the meaning attached to the gloss or explanation with which they are accompanied. In Alberti’s Hesychius, the edition best known to scholars, the text runs thus: –

κόγξ. ὄμπαξ. ἐπιφώνημα τετελεσμένοις. καὶ τῆς δικαστικῆς ψήφου ἤχος, ὡ ὁ τῆς κλεψύδρας. παρὰ δ’ Ἀττικοῖς, Βλόψ.

“κόγξ. ὄμπαξ, an exclamation over a finished work. Also, the sound of the dicast’s pebble” (i.e. as it drops into the urn), “as likewise the sound of the clepsydra. Among the Attics Βλόψ” (is used instead of κόγξ).

In all this, you will observe, there is no word of the “mysteries.” None of the numerous commentators on Hesychius have seen any allusion to them in his words; only Meursius, in his work on the Eleusinian Rites, has understood τετελεσμένοις as if Hesychius had written ἐπὶ τοῖς μεμνημένοις. He was followed by Warburton and others, among whom I may mention the ingenious Dr. Lempriere. It is clear, from his punctuation, that Alberti thought ὄμπαξ a part of the interpretation of κόγξ – in fact a synonym for it. And in the note we find the conjecture, “Forte Βόμβαξ [i.e., ‘perhaps Βόμβαξ’, cotton<sup>22</sup>], vid. sup.” Βόμβαξ, however, does not meet the case, nor does Πύππαξ (!) [Bravo!], another ἐπιφώνημα [‘a witty saying’], suggested by Alberti.

If now we turn to πάξ (Hesych., ii. col. 856), we find the gloss, τέλος ἔχει (so we must read for τέλος ἔχειν, as is evident from the passage out of Cyril’s Lexicon, given in the note). This τέλος ἔχει, it will be observed, is identical in sense with the gloss on κόγξ, ἔπι τετελεσμένοις (= the well-known phrase ἐπὶ ἐξεργασμένοις). Perceiving this, Lobeck supposes the true reading of the disputed passage to be, Κόγξ. ὄμ. Πάξ. ἐπὶ τετελεσμένοις, where ὄμ. is an obvious abbreviation of ὁμοίως, as we find sim. for “similiter,” or “similarly,” in Greek-Latin or Greek-English lexicons. Hesychius, or his annotator (for the words ὄμ. Πάξ were very likely written in the margin), intended to say that κόγξ was a synonym of πάξ, both being exclamations or interjections used under similar circumstances.

<sup>20</sup> Notes And Queries: A Medium Of Intercommunication For Literary Men, General Readers, Etc. Strand, Middlesex: William Greig Smith. ♦ Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 150, Saturday, November 12, 1864, p. 392. (*Replies. Konx Ompax.* (3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263, 296.), p. 392.)

<sup>21</sup> Joannes Alberti. ΗΣΥΧΙΟΥ ΛΕΞΙΚΟΝ. HESYCHII LEXICON. 2 vols. Lugduni Batavorum, Apud Samuelem et Joannem Luchtmans, MDCLXVI (1766). ♦ Tomus Secundus, p. 290.

<sup>22</sup> Βόμβαξ = Βάμβαξ, Turkish pambuk, cotton.

*This account of the matter has commended itself to most (but for your correspondent's letter I should have said all) of those whose attention has been called to the passage of the Aglaophamus to which I made reference in my former letter. Your correspondent was possibly not aware of the exceedingly slender foundation on which the notions of Meursius, Warburton, &c., reposed, that in fact they had absolutely nothing to rest upon but a probably corrupt, and certainly by them mistranslated, gloss of Hesychius. I should add that Lobeck's conjecture has been adopted by the latest editor of Hesychius, Moritz Schmidt.*

*... Your correspondent will observe that I pass no opinion upon the merit of his explanation, which I am willing to believe as ingenious as it is learned. But, as I said, there is and can be, no allusion to the Eleusinian or any other mysteries in the passage of Hesychius.*

*... In cases like the present, learned men should remember the fable of Charles II., the fish, and the Royal Society, and be quite sure of their facts before they trouble themselves to seek explanations.<sup>23</sup>*

William Hepworth Thompson had started at Cambridge as a sizar and ended as Master of Trinity College – Crowley's old college where the English mathematician, natural philosopher, antiquarian, and astrologer to Queen Elizabeth I Dr. John Dee (1527-1609), after graduating from St John's College in 1545, taught Greek for a while. As stated above, ἐπιφώνημα τετελεσμένοις has been translated both as "an exclamation over a finished work", but also as "an utterance made by the initiated". Τετελεσμένοις<sup>24</sup> is a form of the verb τελέω, with the meaning 'fulfil, accomplish, execute, perform' but also 'initiate in the mysteries'.<sup>25</sup> Thompson argues that the only translation can be "an exclamation over a finished work" since no mysteries is being mentioned. This is true, but since the Venetian MS. is an abridgment of the original work of Hesychius we cannot know whether "mysteries" was mentioned originally, or not. I notice that Thompson devoted his attention almost entirely to Plato and published some of his works. Plato uses the word in question with its meaning of 'initiate in the mysteries' in his dialogues: *Euthydemus* (277d); *Phaedo* (69c); and *Phaedrus* (249c). In magical papyri the word is also used with the meaning of performing talismanic operations: 'endow a thing with potency, consecrate it'.<sup>26</sup>

The debate in *Notes and Queries* had started with a short note from an industrious contributor, T. J. Buckton of Lichfield in Staffordshire, claiming that Konx Ompax apart from being words used in the Eleusinian mysteries, also were Egyptian (Coptic) words – two statements that evidently had provoked the Master of Trinity College. T. J. Buckton's note stated:

*KONX OMPAX. – In Mr. Fitzpatrick's entertaining Memoirs of Archbishop Whately (i. 16), when mentioning Historic Doubts as appearing under the pseudonym of Konx Ompax, he says it is "a name from the old Cabala." The Cabala is a general receptacle for the unintelligible, but, as usual, is guiltless in this instance. The words Κόγξ Ὀμπάξ, Konx Ompax, were used in the Eleusinian mysteries on dismissing the assembly. I believe they are Egyptian, κεν ἀψ ἰμπψα, khen ash impsha, "in what kind of worth," meaning, as I conceive, that initiation was given in proportion to worth = fitness. Freemasons will recognise*

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<sup>23</sup> Notes And Queries: A Medium Of Intercommunication For Literary Men, General Readers, Etc. Strand, Middlesex: William Greig Smith. ♦ Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 150, Saturday, November 12, 1864, p. 392. (*Replies. Konx Ompax.* (3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263, 296.), p. 392.)

<sup>24</sup> Participle, plural, perfect, middle/passive, neut, dative.

<sup>25</sup> See τελέω in: Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott. A Greek-English Lexicon. With a revised supplement. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1996, pp. 1771-2; Supplement, pp. 291-2. (τελέω)

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

*this qualification. See Warburton, Meursius, Sainte Croix, Ouvaroff, Bougainville, Class. Journal, xiii. 399, xiv. 165, xv. 117, and Eschenburg, P. ii. s. 63, P. iii. s. 77, 4: P. iv. s. 41.*

T. J. Buckton.<sup>27</sup>

Thompson had written a reply published the week after stating his surprise of that Buckton had omitted to refer to “*the classical authority on such questions – the Aglaophamus of the great Lobeck.*”, and further written:

*I will not ask for room in your columns for the passage of the Aglaophamus to which I have referred, nor will I attempt to give an abstract of an argument which in the original is enlivened by a more than usual share of its author’s wit and sarcasm.*

*The Aglaophamus, which ought to be in every scholar’s library, may be found in that of the Club from which I write; and, doubtless, also in the London Library.*

W. H. Thompson.

*The Athenæum.*<sup>28</sup>

Thompson was writing from the notable London club the Athenæum, a private Gentlemen’s club located at Pall Mall which was noted for its large library. The club is mentioned by Crowley in the novel *Moonchild*.<sup>29</sup> However, Thompson changed his mind and wrote the detailed reply, quoted above, in the journal’s next issue owing to that Buckton had written a reply where he criticized that Thompson not had supplied his omission, an omission concerning which he says (he presumably not knew it before Thompson’s note, although trying to make it look like the opposite):

*I will therefore supply such omission by stating that in the opinion of Lobeck κόγξ ὄμπαξ is a corruption for κόγξ ὀμοίως πάξ: if this has any meaning at all in Greek, it must be rendered clink like hush; which is, of all the explanations I have seen, the most irrelevant and absurd. This was my reason for not referring to Lobeck, who does not appear to possess the kind of learning needed to settle this point.*<sup>30</sup>

T. J. Buckton had ended his reply to the Master with a quotation from Horace’s *Epistle*<sup>31</sup>:

*Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Notes And Queries: A Medium Of Intercommunication For Literary Men, General Readers, Etc. Strand, Middlesex: William Greig Smith. ♦ Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 144, Saturday, October 1, 1864, pp. 263-4. (*Notes. Konx Ompax*, pp. 263-4.)

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 145, Saturday, October 8, 1864, p. 296. (*Replies. Konx Ompax* (3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263.), p. 296.)

<sup>29</sup> Aleister Crowley. *Moonchild: A Prologue*. London, UK: The Mandrake Press, 1929, p. 233. (*Chapter XVI*, p. 215-34.)

<sup>30</sup> Notes And Queries: A Medium Of Intercommunication For Literary Men, General Readers, Etc. Strand, Middlesex: William Greig Smith. ♦ Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 147, Saturday, October 22, 1864, p. 336. (*Replies. Konx Ompax* (3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263, 296.), p. 336.)

<sup>31</sup> Horace, *Epistle*, 1,1,14. • Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus) (65 B.C.-8 B.C.). Roman lyric poet.

<sup>32</sup> Notes And Queries: A Medium Of Intercommunication For Literary Men, General Readers, Etc. Strand, Middlesex: William Greig Smith. ♦ Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 147, Saturday, October 22, 1864, p. 336. (*Replies. Konx Ompax* (3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263, 296.), p. 336.) • “*Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*” later became the motto of Ralph Shirley’s *The Occult Review*.

– not being bound to swear or speak according to the dictates of any master. However, Thompson's reply to this was a Greek quotation from Hesiod's *Work and Days*:

*Your correspondent ends his letter with a Latin quotation ("Nullius addictus," &c.); perhaps you will allow me to end mine with an equally recondite Greek one: ἐσθλὸς δ' αὖ κακεῖ νος ὅς εἰπόντι πίθηται [and he, again, is good who listens to a good adviser].*  
W. H. Thompson.  
*Trinity College, Cambridge.*<sup>33</sup>

T. J. Buckton wrote in twenty years, from 1851-71, over 700 notes and replies on various subjects in the *Notes and Queries*. He was apparently the Thomas John Buckton (1797-1871), who was momorary secretary of the Hull Committee on the India and China trades in the 1830s.<sup>34</sup> W. H. Thompson only wrote the mentioned two replies to Buckton's note on Konx Ompax! Concerning modern scholarly work on Konx Om Ompax, I notice that a study in 2007 E.V. was published by the Italian-born scholar Dr. Marco Pasi (1968-).<sup>35</sup>

Crowley must have known the 'modern' definition of the words found in Hesychius's Lexicon from his copy of Liddell & Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* – giving Lobeck's theory pointing to the misunderstanding – which he used as source for his Greek Qabalah, *Liber 1264*.<sup>36</sup> Crowley has known that the gloss explains 'konx' by the word 'pax', and that there is no mentioning of the mysteries of Eleusis. So when he on one of the surviving slips containing counted words from the lexicon wrote "κογξ ομ παξ" together with the numerical value of 404 he was counting 'Konx Om Pax' of the Golden Dawn.<sup>37</sup>

As seen above, the Venetian MS. does not link 'Konx Ompax' with the mysteries of Eleusis, something sometimes suggested in modern works that mention Konx Ompax. Regarding the finding of this linking in older works I note that the English scholar, and Archbishop of Canterbury, John Potter (1673/4-1747), when Chaplain at Canterbury in 1706, published the second

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<sup>33</sup> Notes And Queries: A Medium Of Intercommunication For Literary Men, General Readers, Etc. Strand, Middlesex: William Greig Smith. ♦ Third Series, Vol. VI, No. 150, Saturday, November 12, 1864, p. 392. (*Replies. Konx Ompax. (3<sup>rd</sup> S. vi. 263, 296.)*, p. 392.) ♦ The quotation from Hesiod's ΕΡΓΑ ΚΑΙ ΗΜΕΡΑΙ, *Work and Days: Hesiod. The Homeric Hymns and Homeric Works with an English Translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Works and Days. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London, UK: William Heinemann Ltd., 1914.* ♦ *Works and Days*, 296.

<sup>34</sup> See: China Trade: Containing the Entire Substance of the Evidence Laid Before The House of Commons, in the Session of 1830; Extracted and Condensed, From the Report of the Committee; For Commercial and Political Uses. By Thomas John Buckton. Hull, UK: Printed and Published by I. Wilson, 1831.

<sup>35</sup> Marco Pasi. Aux origines du mystère des mystères : Konx Om Pax. ♦ In: Jean-Pierre Brach et Jérôme Rousse-Lacordaire. Études d'histoire de l'ésotérisme ; Mélanges offerts à Jean-Pierre Laurant pour son soixante-dixième anniversaire. Paris, France : Les Éditions du Cerf, 2007, pp. [219]-33. (*Troisième partie. Franc-Maçonnerie et occultisme*, pp. [171]-247.) ♦ Dr. Marco Pasi is assistant Professor of History of Hermetic Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam.

<sup>36</sup> Every edition of Liddell & Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* from 1850-1897, i.e. 4th-8th Edition, gave Lobeck's theory: "Κόγξ, the sound made by the voting-pebble, as it fell into the urn (κάδος), Hesych. : on κόγξ, ὄμπαξ (corrupt for κόγξ, ὁμοίως πάξ), v. Lob. Aglaoph. 775 sq." ♦ A Greek-English Lexicon; Compiled by Henry George Liddell, D.D., &c., and Robert Scott, D.D., &c. Seventh Edition, Revised and Augmented Throughout. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, MDCCCLXXXIII (1883), p. 820. (Κόγξ, p. 820.)

<sup>37</sup> 20 (κ) + 70 (ο) + 3 (γ) + 60 (ξ) + 70 (ο) + 40 (μ) + 80 (π) + 1 (α) + 60 (ξ) = 404 ♦ For the word in *Liber 1264*, see: O.T.O. Newsletter. Ed. William E. Heidrick. Berkeley, CA: Ordo Templi Orientis. Vol. II, No. 7-8, Winter-Spring, May 1979 e.v. (*Liber MCCLXIV; The Greek Qabalah by Aleister Crowley.*) ♦ Aleister Crowley. *The Greek Qabalah. Liber 1264*. Ed. Kieren Barry. Auckland: Kantharos Oasis O.T.O., 1984. ♦ Aleister Crowley, et al.. *Liber MCCLXIV: A Dictionary of Gematria*. London: Albion Lodge O.T.O., 1989.

edition of his two-volume work *Archaeologia Graeca, or the Antiquities of Greece* and here gave a colourful description of the mysteries stating, among other things:

*Then the Priest that initiated them, call'd Ιεροφάντης [Ιεροφάντης, Hierophantes, Hierophant<sup>38</sup>], propos'd certain Questions, as, Whether they were fasting, &c. to which they return'd Answers in a set form, as may be seen in Meursius's Treatise on this Festival, to which I refer the Reader. This done, strange and amazing Objects presented themselves, sometimes the Place they were in, seem'd to shake round them, sometimes appear'd bright and resplendent with Light and radiant Fire, and then again cover'd with black Darkness and Horror; sometimes Thunder, and Lightning, sometimes frightful Noises, and Bellowings, sometimes terrible Apparitions astonished the trembling Spectators: The being present at these Sights was call'd Αὐτοψία [Autopsia], i.e. Intuition. After this, they were dismiss'd in these Words, Κόγξ, Ὀμπαξ.<sup>39</sup> [Written with modern typography.]*

Potter was, as stated by him, using a treatise by Johannes Meursius (left) as his source. Johannes Meursius, or, Johan van Meurs (1579-1639), was a Dutch philologist, and historiographer, who in 1610 became professor in History, and Greek in Leiden, and in 1624 professor of history and politics, together with royal historiographer, at Academia Sorana (Sorø Academy) in Sorø, western Zealand, Denmark.<sup>40</sup> Meursius was matriculated in 1591 at the age of twelve at the University at Leiden where he studied philology. For about a decade from 1599 he was engaged as tutor to the two sons of the leading politician, and Land's Advocate of the province of Holland, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619), and also the two boys' travelling companion on journeys in Europe where he visited not only the princely courts, but also their libraries, as he wrote in a brief autobiography written in the third person in *Athenæ Batavæ* ('The Athens of the Dutch') in 1625: "[...], maximorum totius orbis Christiani principum aulis vidit, & bibliothecas."<sup>41</sup> he saw the palaces of the greatest princes of the Christian world, and also their libraries. Meursius is today mostly remembered more for his vast erudition than keen critical sense. However, his principal work *Græcia Feriata. Sive, de festis Græcorum*, a work on Greek festivals and games in six books published

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<sup>38</sup> Ιεροφάντης, hierophantes, hierophant, 'one who teaches rites of sacrifice and worship' – the initiating priest of Eleusis.

<sup>39</sup> John Potter, *D. D. Chaplain to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*. *Archaeologia Græca, or, The Antiquities of Greece*. 2 Vols. The Second Edition very much Augmented and Improved. London, UK: Printed for S. and J. Sprint, &c.; &c., MDCCVI (1706) • Vol. I, p. 391. (*Book II. Chap. XX. Grecian Festivals*, pp. 361-440; *ΕΛΕΥΣΙΝΙΑ*, pp. 389-93.)

<sup>40</sup> Dansk Biografisk Leksikon (DBL). Redigeret af Svend Cedergreen Bech. 3. udg. 16 vols. København: Gyldendal, 1979-84. ♦ Bd. 9, 1981, pp. 527-8. ♦ Karen Skovgaard-Petersen. *Historiography at the Court of Christian IV (1588-1648)*; *Studies in the Latin Histories of Denmark by Johannes Pontanus and Johannes Meursius*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2002, pp. 61-84. (*CHAPTER III. THE AUTHORS; Johannes Meursius*, pp. 61-84.)

<sup>41</sup> IOANNIS MEVRSI. ATHENÆ BATAVÆ. Sive, de Urbe Leidensis & Academia, virisque claris, qui utramque ingenio suo, atque scriptis, illustrarunt: Libri duo. LVGDVNI BATAVORVM; Apud Andream Cloucqium, et Elfevirios, MDCXXV (1625), p. 193. (*ATHENARVM BATAVARVM; LIBER II; IOANNES MEVRSIVS*, pp. 191-8.) • Also in: [Johannes Meursius] *Illuftrium HOLLANDIAE & VVESTFRISIAE Ordinum Alma Academia Leidensis. LVGDVNI BATAVORVM*. Apud Iacobum Marci, & Iuftum à Colfter, Bibliopolas. Anno MDCXIV (1614), p. 219. (*IOANNES MEVRSIVS*, pp. 216-20.) • The portrait on the plate below is an anonymous engraving of "IOANNES MEVRSIUS I.C. ET. HISTORIÆ GRÆCÆ PROFESS." printed in *Illuftrium HOLLANDIAE & VVESTFRISIAE*, 1614. ♦ *Ibid.*, p. 216.



Johannes Meursius, or, Johan van Meurs (1579-1639), Dutch philologist, and historiographer.  
(*Illustrium HOLLANDIAE & VVESTFRISIAE*, 1614.)



one had participated in the mysteries, and, having been initiated in the mysteries of the common people (or 'of the community'), to be permitted thereafter to make them available to certain other persons for their initiation. Since the above Latin/Greek text is very complicated, and its meaning very important, it was handed over to a classical scholar (who remains anonymous) who supplied this translation together with a commentary:

*The phrase 'Cereris mundum' is ambiguous. 'mundum' in Latin can mean either 'world' or 'decoration/adornment'. The Greek word is 'cosmos' which similarly has both meanings (the shared basis for both meanings is, 'a pleasing orderliness'). The passage seems to make it overwhelmingly likely that here the word in fact refers to some article belonging to Demeter which was shown to initiates. Such articles are often known in English as 'sacred emblems'.*

*There is also ambiguity in the phrase 'hunc in modum initiatis'. The phrase can mean equally 'those who had been initiated in this way cried out ('conx, ompax') [in this case 'initiatis' is known technically as the 'dative of the agent']', or alternatively 'the cry of ('conx, ompax') was made to those who had been initiated in this way' [in which case 'initiatis' is the 'dative of the indirect object']. It is impossible to tell from the Latin which meaning is intended.*

As mentioned so has Hesychius's words been translated as "an exclamation over a finished work", however, Meursius translates it as "an utterance made by the initiated", although no mysteries are being mentioned, and writes that 'conx, ompax' were words used at the secret initiation at Eleusis. Meursius also mentions Lucius Apuleius, the Roman philosopher, rhetorician, and novelist, who was born c. 125 A.D., and thus flourished some two centuries before Hesychius. Apuleius, whose masterpiece was *Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass*, married Aemilia Pudentilla, whose family accused him of winning her by magic art, and as a defence he wrote the surviving book called *De magia*, 'On Magic', or, *Apologia*. Apuleius' philosophy was Neoplatonic and influenced by the oriental mysticism of the cult of the Egyptian Isis. Was Meursius's mentioning of Eleusis and its mysteries something that he had dreamed up, or was it something that he on his travels in Europe had seen in some manuscript that not has survived? Recalling the critical reply by Thompson in *Notes and Queries*, he directs attention to that Hesychius first of all is the only source of *κόγξ ὄμπαξ*, and since no "mysteries" is being mentioned in the gloss, a translation like "an utterance made by the initiated" thus not supported. However, regarding Meursius and his work on the Eleusinian mysteries, let us not forget that a thing that may have been obvious to him owing to a MS. studied in one of the princely libraries that he visited during his year-long travels in Europe for us today easily can be a mystery if that MS. no longer is extant. And as I argued above, since the Venetian MS. is the only surviving MS. of Hesychius's lexicon, and since it is an abridgment – and probably a heavy abridgment of the original MS. – we cannot know for sure whether "mysteries" or "Eleusis" was mentioned in the original MS., or in the MS. that the Venetian manuscript's editor was copying from. Some four-hundred years have passed since Meursius wrote his treatise, and even if it may seem unlikely it is reasonable to mention and at least consider the possibility of that he on one of his travels had access to a work, not extant today, which mentioned these words from Hesychius's lexicon together with the Eleusinian mysteries, or even an unknown MS. of Hesychius's lexicon, or a fragment of one, not extant today, that mentioned Eleusis, and that it for him, since not mentioning it, just was the 'Lexicon of Hesychius'. It is a fact that the Roman and the Greek were able to use the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, and that written keys on how to write and read ancient Egyptian texts in all likelihood were in the



Reconstruction of the inner propyleum in Eleusis. In the background the great Temple of the Mysteries. The town Eleusis of Attica was the home of the Eleusinian mysteries and the seat of the cult of Demeter and Persephone – whom the Roman identified with Ceres and Proserpina.



The Roman Goddess Ceres – the Greek Demeter.

great Library of Alexandria, which was burned around 48/47 B.C. Furthermore, the surviving scrolls and books from this fire were perhaps stored in the Serapeum in Alexandria, a temple that was burned down by a Christian mob in 391 A.D. Many written sources must have been destroyed in fires in castles all over Europe throughout the centuries, and some were likely burned by conquerors who were unable to read them, and not saw them as a treasure, but as trash which only had value in their fireplaces. Some MSS. were of course destroyed by people who saw their knowledge as a threat, as sin, incompatible with their religion, and other MSS. and written sources were destroyed in order to destroy the history they contained! Furthermore, throughout the centuries many written sources have also been destroyed by mice, rats, insects and mould. Finally, remember the Greek and Roman works which are missing today, but whose existence are known since mentioned by other writers. I shall return to the destruction of the Library of Alexandria and Serapeum, together with the deciphering of the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics in Chapter 10.

From 1737-41 a large work was published by William Warburton (1698-1779), Lord Bishop of Gloucester, entitled *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*, and a chapter dealing with the Mysteries said about Konx Om Pax, its origin and meaning:

[...] *the Assembly was dismissed, with these two barbarous words, ΚΟΤΕ ΟΜΠΑΕ, which shews the Mysteries not to have been originally Greek. The learned Mr. Le Clerc well observes, that this seems to be only an ill pronounciation of kots and omphets, which, he tells us, signify in Phœnician tongue, watch and abstain from evil.*<sup>45</sup> [Written with modern typography.]

The mentioned Mr. Le Clerc was the Swiss theologian, and biblical scholar, Jean Le Clerc, or Johannes Clericus (1657-1736), who became famous for promoting critical interpretations of the Bible.

I note that it is mentioned in several older works that Iamblichus Philosophus<sup>46</sup> in *De Mysteriis* declares that the language used in the mysteries was not Greek, but that of the sacred nations, Egypt and Assyria. For instance, found in a work from 1803 by the Anglican theologian, George Stanley Faber, is the following dealing with the mysteries of Eleusis:

*Jamblichus plainly declares, that the language, used in the Mysteries, was not that of Greece, but of Egypt and Assyria. Accordingly, he highly censures the folly of those, who imagined that barbarous words possessed no inherent signification; and tells us, that the language of the Mysteries was the language of the gods, the first and most ancient language which was spoken upon earth.*<sup>47</sup> [Written with modern typography.]

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<sup>45</sup> *William Warburton*. *The Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated*. In *Nine Books*. The Fifth Edition, Corrected and Enlarged. By William, Lord Bishop of Gloucester. 5 vols. London, UK: Printed for A. Millar, and J. and R. Tonson, MDCCCLXVI (1766). ♦ Vol. I, p. 237. (*Book II. Sect. IV.*, pp. 188-392.) • The first edition of his vast work *The Divine Legation of Moses: On the Principles of a Religious Deist, From the Omission of the Doctrine of a Future State of Reward and Punishment in the Jewish Dispensation* was published 1737-41. The work was never completed. • For Le Clerc's statement, see: BIBLIOTHEQUE UNIVERSELLE ET HISTORIQUE. 25 vols. Amsterdam, Chez Wolfgang, Waesberge, Boom & van Someren, MDCLXXXVI (1686) – MDCXCIII (1693). ♦ *Jean Le Clerc ; Jean Cornand de Lacroze* (Éditeurs). BIBLIOTHEQUE UNIVERSELLE ET HISTORIQUE DE L'ANNE'E MDCLXXXVII. Tome Sixie'me, p. 86-7. (*L'HISTOIRE ET LES MISTERES DE CERES*, pp. 59-93.)

<sup>46</sup> Iamblichus (c. 250 – c. 330 A.D.). Syrian mystic and Neo-Platonist philosopher. Founder of the Syrian branch of the philosophical school of Neo-Platonism.

<sup>47</sup> *George Stanley Faber, A. M.* *A Dissertation on the Mysteries of the Cabiri, or, The Great Gods of Phœnicia*,

However, as we have witnessed above in other works the source is not correctly reported, and the chapter in *De Mysteriis* that contains the above passage does in fact not mention the mysteries of Eleusis. The chapter states (here in Thomas Taylor's 1821 translation):

*But you ask, "Why, of significant names, we prefer such as are Barbaric to our own?" Of this, also, there is a mystic reason. For because the Gods have shown that the whole dialect of sacred nations, such as those of the Egyptians and Assyrians, is adapted to sacred concerns; on this account we ought to think it necessary that our conference with the Gods should be in a language allied to them. Because, likewise, such a mode of speech is the first and most ancient. And especially because those who first learned the names of the Gods, having mingled them with their own proper tongue, delivered them to us, that we might always preserve immoveable the sacred law of tradition, in a language peculiar and adapted to them. For if any other thing pertains to the Gods, it is evident that the eternal and immutable must be allied to them.*<sup>48</sup>

Iamblichus thus states that barbarian names are preferred since the Gods have shown that the entire dialect of the sacred people, such as the Egyptians and the Assyrians, is appropriate for religious ceremonies and for this reason communication with the Gods should be in an appropriate tongue. The Eleusinian mysteries was the most important of the Greek mystery cults, and owing to Iamblichus's words it was likely imagined by later writers that the language spoken during its rites were of foreign origin, and it was perhaps to a certain extent also the case – the Eleusinian mysteries and the cult of Demeter and Persephone, the cult of light and darkness. The Greater Mysteries at Eleusis took place in the third Attic month, Βοηδρομιών, Boedromion, in the autumn. The first day of the Greater Mysteries was Boedromion 15, the day of the ἀγυρμός, aghyrmos, (assembly).<sup>49</sup> The Greater Mysteries lasted eight days, from Boedromion 15 to Boedromion 22.<sup>50</sup> The words under discussion were thus uttered on the eighth and last day of the Greater Mysteries. There was also the Lesser Mysteries, a preliminary initiation of the μύστης, mystes, (one initiated) which took place in the eight Attic month Ἀνθεστηριών, Anthesterion, in the spring, and which was held in Athens at the site of Agra or Agrai on the east bank of the river Ilissos. The celebration of the mysteries was conducted from at least the archaic period (seventh-sixth centuries B.C.), and continued till they were put an end to by the destruction of the temple at Eleusis, and by the devastation of Greece in the invasion of the Goths under Alaric in A.D. 395.<sup>51</sup> All

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Samothrace, Egypt, Troas, Greece, Italy, and Crete. 2 vols. Oxford, UK: At the University Press for the Author, 1803.

• Vol. I., p. 22. ("*Jamb. de Myft. fect. vii. cap. 4.*")(*Chap. I. Preliminary Observations*, pp. [3]-31.) • George Stanley Faber (1773-1854). Anglican theologian, controversialist and prolific author. Faber considered that all the pagan nations worshipped the same gods, who were only deified men.

<sup>48</sup> *Iamblichus*. Iamblichus on the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians. Translated from the Greek by Thomas Taylor. Chiswick, London, UK: Printed by C. Wittingham... for the Translator, 1821, pp. 293-4. (*Section VII. Chap. IV.*, pp. 289-94.) • See also the Greek/English critical edition: *Iamblichus*. Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*. (Writings from the Greco-Roman world; v. 4.) Translated with introduction and notes by Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon, and Jackson P. Hershbell. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003, pp. 296-9. (*Book VII, 4*, pp. 296-9.)

<sup>49</sup> *George E. Mylonas*. Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961, pp. 247-8. (*First Day: Boedromion 15 (Aghyrmos)*, pp. 247-8.)(*CHAPTER IX; THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES*, pp. 224-85.) • Hesychii Alexandrini; Lexicon. Editionem Minorem. Curavit Mauricius Schmidt. Ienae [Jena]: Sumptibus frederici Maukii, MDCCCLXIII (1863), p. 26. ("ἀγυρμός: ἐκκλησία. συγκρότησις. ἐστὶ δὲ πᾶν τὸ ἀγειρόμενον. καὶ τῶν μυστηρίων ἡμέρα πρώτη")

<sup>50</sup> *George E. Mylonas*. Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961, p. 247f. (*CHAPTER IX; THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES*, pp. 224-85.)

<sup>51</sup> See: *Edward Gibbon; Dean Milman; M. Guizot; Dr. William Smith*. The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman

Greeks could be initiated. Men, women, and children, and even slaves were eligible unless guilty of manslaughter, but also Romans were initiated since regarded as of Greek origin. (I notice that a distinctive difference between the Greeks and the Romans was that in Greece the practice of carrying a walking-stick was common, as seen on vases etc., but in Rome common use of walking-sticks were unknown.) On the plain of Eleusis man, according to tradition, was first taught to plant wheat, and like the planted seeds of wheat that had to spend some time in the dark soil so had Persephone to spend one third of the year with her kidnapper and husband Pluto in the dark nether world and two thirds with her mother Demeter in the world of light. So the utterance "*Light in extension*" of the Golden Dawn of course also recalls Eleusis and its initiation – the passing beneath the dark earth of that which was just planted and its travel out into the light, the climbing of Mt. Olympus! And as it is today in the cultivation of plants so should the 'grain' in Eleusis be of known origin and without diseases.

At the time of Meursius the Eleusinian mysteries was an almost untouched subject that he threw himself into, and none seems to have come across the barbarous words "konx ompax" in Hesychius's lexicon before him. I find it noteworthy that a scholar like the seventeenth-century German Jesuit, and polymath Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), not had come across Meursius and Konx Ompax, which he unquestionably would have studied and mentioned. I shall return to Kircher later and look at his incredible attempt to decipher the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Since Meursius scholars have mentioned the use of the words at the initiation at Eleusis giving his treatise or Hesychius lexicon as source. And as we have seen, in the 1690's John Potter refers to Meursius's treatise on giving his description of the mysteries of Eleusis and the use of "*Κόγξ, Ὀμπάξ*", and Potter's work was for a long time the standard reference work on Greek art, religion and civil- and military life, not only in English but it was also translated into Latin<sup>52</sup> and German.

Several imaginative essays describing what took place during the initiation at Eleusis were published and they were written in such a way that a reader must have thought that they were based on surviving sources. For example, an essay was published by the dramatist Richard Cumberland (1732-1811), an English playwright and diplomat who was an enthusiast of ancient history and Greek comedy, and a prolific dramatist who penned both tragedies and comedies. In the first volume of his *The Observer*, published in 1786, he wrote about the initiation at Eleusis:

*The initiated were enjoined to honour their parents, to reverence the immortal gods, and abstain from particular sorts of diet, particularly tame fowls, fish, beans, and certain sorts of apples.*

*When this was finished the priests began to play off the whole machinery of the temple in all its terror; doleful groans and lamentations broke out from the fane, thick and sudden darkness involved the temple, momentary gleams of light flashed forth every now and then with trembling, as if an earthquake had shaken the edifice; sometimes these coruscations continued long enough to discover all the splendor of the shrines and images, accompanied with voices in concert, dancings and music; at other times during the darkness severities were exercised upon the initiated by persons unseen; they were dragged to the ground by the hair of their heads, and there beaten and lashed, without knowing from whom the blows proceeded, or why they were inflicted: Lightnings and thundering and dreadful apparitions were occasionally played off with every invention to terrify and astonish; at length upon a voice crying out Conx! Ompax! The ceremony was*

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Empire. By Edward Gibbon. With Notes by Dean Milman, M. Guizot and Dr. William Smith. 6 vols. New York, NY, and London, UK: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1905. ♦ Vol. III, p. 41, note "a". (CHAPTER XXV, pp. [13]-95.)

<sup>52</sup> *Joannis Potteri*. ARCHAEOLOGIA GRAECA, SIVE VETERVM GRAECORVM. Tomus Primus. LVGDVNI BATAVORVM, Excudit PETRVS VANDER Aa, Bibliop. MDCCII (1702), p. 369. (*Lib. II. Cap. XX. ELEYSINIA*, pp. 367-70.)

concluded and the initiated dismissed. The garment worn upon this occasion was not to be laid aside, whilst it would hang together, and the shreds were then to be dedicated at some shrine, as a tattered trophy of the due performance of the mysteries of Ceres.

These initiations were conceived to lead to the enjoyment of a happier lot in this life, and to fit a man for a more dignified place amongst the blest hereafter; and they were in such general respect, that it afforded great cause of reproach against Socrates, for having neglected his initiation.<sup>53</sup> [Written with modern typography.]

By the mention of Richard Cumberland we are in fact back at Trinity College, Cambridge, since he in 1732 had been born in the Master's Lodge of the college. His grandfather was the classical scholar Richard Bentley (1662-1742), who was long-time master of the college. Later Cumberland himself went to Trinity College.<sup>54</sup>

As to the lexicon of Hesychius, I notice that in 1956 E.V. it was argued by the American classical philologist Aubrey Diller (1903-1985), that the MS. in the library of St. Mark's in Venice was written by Caesar Strategus whom Diller stated was working in Florence in 1492, and that the MS. apparently dated from around that time.<sup>55</sup> However, in the third volume of Kurt Latte's edition of Hesychius's lexicon, completed and published in 2005 E.V. by the late Danish classical philologist Peter Allan Hansen (1944-2012), we are informed that this is rendered groundless since the late Danish classical philologist Ole Langwitz Smith (1943-1995), in 1975 E.V. published the discovery that the Venetian MS. was written by the same hand as the codex Holkhamensis gr. 88, a codex containing eight plays of Aristophanes now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, and on the basis of the watermarks both manuscripts were dated to about 1430.<sup>56</sup>

After Meursius many scholars have mentioned the words Κόγξ, Ὀμπάξ as barbarous words spoken at the mysteries of Eleusis and also discussed their meaning. As mentioned, a work published in the 1680's by the Swiss biblical scholar Le Clerc stated that "*Conx & Ompax*" seemed to be an ill pronunciation of two Phœnician words signifying 'watch and abstain from evil' and given also were the etymological connexions with the Hebrew קוץ ("*Kots*"), feel a loathing, abhorrence, sickening dread, and the Syrian חמפז ("*Hampfets*"), to be innocent.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> The Observer: Being a Collection of Moral, Literary and Familiar Essays. Volume the First. London, UK: Printed for C. Dilly, MDCCLXXXVI (1786), p. 133-4. (N° XV., *Short account of the Myfteries: Athenian Hiftory brought down to The fiege of Troy, and the death of Meneftheus*, pp. 132-43.)

<sup>54</sup> See: *Richard Cumberland*. Memoirs of Richard Cumberland. Written by Himself. Containing an Account of His Life and Writings, Interspersed With Anecdotes and Characters of Several of the Most Distinguished Persons of His Time, With Whom He Had Intercourse and Connexion. Boston, MA: David West, John West and O. C. Greenleaf, 1806, p. 13f.

<sup>55</sup> *Aubrey Diller*. Studies in Greek Manuscript Tradition. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1983, p. 161. (VIII. *Pausanias In the Middle Ages*, pp. 149-62.) • It was originally published in an article in *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* (TAPhA) 87, 1956, pp. 87-97.

<sup>56</sup> HESYCHII ALEXANDRINI LEXICON. Volumen III: Π-Σ. Recensuit et emendavit; Peter Allan Hansen; Kurt Latte. New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter, 2005, p. XX ; note 24. (*Klaus Alpers, Corrigenda et Addenda to Latte's Prolegomena to Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon Vol. I: A-Δ*, pp. [XV]-XXIII.) • *O. Langwitz Smith*. A Note on Holkham Gr. 88 and Marc. Gr. 622. ♦ *MAIA*. Rivista di Letterature Classiche. Firenze: Casa Editrice Cappelli. Número 27/3, 1975, p. 205.

<sup>57</sup> BIBLIOTHEQUE UNIVERSELLE ET HISTORIQUE. 25 vols. Amsterdam, Chez Wolfgang, Waesberge, Boom & van Someren, MDCLXXXVI (1686) – MDCXCIII (1693). ♦ *Jean Le Clerc ; Jean Cornand de Lacroze* (Éditeurs). BIBLIOTHEQUE UNIVERSELLE ET HISTORIQUE DE L'ANNE'E MDCLXXXVII. Tome Sixie'me, p. 86 ; Note 42, p. 127. (*L'HISTOIRE ET LES MISTERES DE CERES*, pp. 59-93 ; *PREUVES DE L'EXPLICATION DES MYSTERES DE CERES*, pp. 93-127.)

In 1795 the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), wrote in his essay *Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf*<sup>58</sup> (Towards Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Project), here quoted from a later English translation:

*Perhaps we can explain the ancient intercourse of Europe with Tibet – a fact at no time widely known – by looking at what Hesychius has preserved on the matter. I refer to the shout, Κοῦξ [sic] Οὔπαξ (Konx Ompax), the cry of the Hierophants in the Eleusinian mysteries*<sup>59</sup>

Kant gave as source a German translation of the French 1788 novel *Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis en Grèce, dans le milieu du quatrième siècle avant l'ère vulgaire* (Travels of Anacharsis the Younger in Greece, During the Middle of the Fourth Century Before the Christian Era), by the French archaeologist, and author Jean-Jacques Barthélemy (1716-1795), a novel which rekindled the interest in Greece and was considered a well-documented introduction to Hellenic culture, one of the most widely read books in nineteenth century France, which also created widespread attention throughout Europe.<sup>60</sup> I notice that the first edition of Kant's philosophical essay translated from the German and published in London in 1796 strangely enough lacks his mention of Konx Ompax, and therefore do some later editions based on the 1796 translation lack them too.<sup>61</sup> When the words and their connexion with the mysteries of Eleusis later were considered a misunderstanding after the publication of Moritz Schmidt's critical edition of the lexicon in 1860 they were removed from various works of reference, for instance, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*<sup>62</sup>.

In 1799 a soldier, and Orientalist, apparently of Hanoverian birth, Captain Francis Wilford (1750/1-1822)<sup>63</sup>, pointed to a connexion between “Κοῦξ, Οὔ, Παξ [sic, but Παξ]; *Conx, Om, Pax.*”

<sup>58</sup> Immanuel Kant. *Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf*. Königsberg: Nicolovius, 1795. • Immanuel Kant. *Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf*. Frankfurt und Leipzig: [No publisher], 1796, p. 39. (*Dritter Definitivartikel zum ewigen Frieden*, pp. 36-42.)

<sup>59</sup> Quoted from an English translation from 1903: Immanuel Kant. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*. Translated with Introduction and Notes by M. Campbell Smith; M. A. London, UK: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1903, p. 140. (*Second Section; Containing the Definitive Articles of Perpetual Peace Between States*, pp. 117-42.) • In 1779 the German Protestant theologian, philosopher and mystic, Johann Georg Hamann (1730-88) published an essay titled: ΚΟΓΞΟΜΠΑΞ; *Fragmente einer apokryphischen Sibylle über apokalyptische Mysterien* (Weimar, 1779). Kant wrote to Hamann pointing out that Konx Ompax derived from Tibetan, a statement Hamann refused to accept. For this, see: KANT; *Political Writings*. Edited with an introduction and notes by Hans Reiss. Translated by H. B. Nisbet. Second, Enlarged Edition. (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought.) Cambridge, UK: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1991, pp. 106-7; Note22 (to p. 107.) on p. 277. (*Third Definitive Article of a Perpetual Peace: Cosmopolitan Right shall be limited to Conditions of Universal Hospitality*, pp. 105-8.) (*Notes to the Text; Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, Note22, p. 277.) • For Hamann's essay, see the 1824 reprint in: *Johann Georg Hamann. Hamann's Schriften*. Herausgegeben von Friedrich Roth. Sechster Theil. Berlin: D. Reimer, 1824, pp. 1-22. (ΚΟΓΞΟΜΠΑΞ; *Fragmente einer apokryphischen Sibylle über apokalyptische Mysterien*, pp. 1-22.)

<sup>60</sup> See: Jean-Jacques Barthélemy. *Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis en Grèce, dans le milieu du quatrième siècle avant l'ère vulgaire*. Cinq tomes. Chez de Bure l'aîné, A Paris, MDCCLXXXVIII (1788). ♦ Tome troisième, pp. 524-38. (*CHAPITRE LXVIII. Fêtes et Mystères d'Éleusis*, pp. 524-38.)

<sup>61</sup> Emanuel Kant. *Project for a Perpetual Peace; a Philosophical Essay*. Translated from the German. London, UK: Vernor and Hood, 1796.

<sup>62</sup> The eighth edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, published just before Schmidt's edition between 1853-60, mentioned “Konx, Ompax” under the headword “Mysteries”. • *The Encyclopaedia Britannica or Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and General Literature*. 21 vols + Index. Edinburgh, Scotland: Adam and Charles Black, 1853-60. ♦ Vol. XV, 1858, p. 753. (*Mysteries*, pp. 752-5.)

<sup>63</sup> The birth year of Captain Francis Wilford is in many places stated as being 1761, however, the tomb of him in a cemetery in Benares states that he died on 4th September, 1822, aged 71, and he can therefore not have been

the words used “at the conclusion of the mysteries of Eleusis”, and the Sanskrit words “Canscha, Om, Pacsha”, which he stated were spoken by the Brahmins at the conclusion of religious rites.<sup>64</sup> His splitting of “κογξ, ομπαξ” into the three words “Conx, Om, Pax.” soon created the “Konx om pax”, which is found in a book in French *ESSAI SUR LES MYSTÈRES D’ÉLEUSIS*<sup>65</sup> (Essay on the Mysteries of Eleusis) published in 1815 by the Russian classical scholar, statesman, and president of the Russian Academy of Sciences Sergey Semyonovich, Count Ouarov (1786-1855), who stated about Wilford’s theory:

*Cette belle découverte de Wilford fixe non-seulement la véritable origine des mystères, mais nous fait voir encore les intimes et nombreux rapports qui avoient entretenu l’influence des idées orientales sur la civilisation de l’antiquité.*<sup>66</sup>

This interesting discovery of Mr. Wilford not only fixes the true origin of the mysteries, but shows us the intimate and numerous relations which had maintained the influence of oriental ideas over the civilization of antiquity.<sup>67</sup> Count Ouarov’s book was published in English in 1817.<sup>68</sup> Wilford’s theory immediately became widely accepted and quoted, and the splitting of the phrase into three words apparently originated with him. Francis Wilford was a fellow member of the Asiatic

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born in 1761 but either in 1750 or 1751. • *Edward Backhouse Eastwick*. Handbook of the Bengal Presidency. With an Account of Calcutta City. With Maps and Plans. London: John Murray, 1882, p. 222. (“The tomb of Lt.-Colonel Francis Wilford, the well-known archæologist, who died 4th September, 1822, aged 71, is thus inscribed: – Sacred To the Memory of Francis Wilford, Lt.-Colonel in the Engineer Service of The East India Company. Aged 71 years. Deceased on the 4th of September, 1822. [...]”)(SECTION II; ROUTE 22. Bagsar (Buxar) to Banâras, p. 222.) • Also: *Sir Edward Arthur Henry Blunt*. List of Inscriptions on Christian Tombs and Tablets of Historical Interest in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. United Provinces, Allahabad [India]: Government Press, United Provinces, 1911, p. 164. (595.–1822–WILFORD, F., Lieutenant-Colonel, p. 164.) • For his Hanoverian birth, see: The Calcutta Review. Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co. ♦ Vol. XXIX, December, 1857, p. 263. (“Francis Wilford was born in Hanover, of a family of rank and standing. He early entered the Hanoverian army, and as Lieutenant accompanied the forces which were sent to India by the English Government in 1781.”)(*India and Comparative Philology*, pp. 229-79.) • A 2009 E.V. article, “German Voices from India: Officers of the Hanoverian Regiments in East India Company Service” by Chen Tzoref-Ashkenazi published in *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, states that Francis Wilford probably not was a member of the Hanoverian regiments, since his name does not appear in any of the lists of the Hanoverian officers. But it appears that he was admitted to Company service as a country cadet in 1781 in Bengal, which excludes the possibility of his being part of the Hanoverian expedition to Madras in 1782. • *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*. South Asian Studies Association of Australia. ♦ Vol. 32, Issue 2, 2009: German Voices from India: Officers of the Hanoverian Regiments in East India Company Service; By Chen Tzoref-Ashkenazi, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, p. 193. (*German Voices from India: Officers of the Hanoverian Regiments in East India Company Service*, pp. 189-211.)

<sup>64</sup> Asiatic Researches; or Transactions of the Society Instituted in Bengal for Inquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences, and Literature, of Asia. Volume the Fifth. Printed verbatim from the Calcutta Edition. London, England: Printed for J. Sewell; Vernor and Hood; &c., &c., 1799, pp. 300-1. (XIX. *Remarks on the Names of the Cabirian Deities, and on some Words used in the Mysteries of Eleusis*. By Captain Francis Wilford, pp. 297-301.)

<sup>65</sup> M. [le comte] Ouaroff [Сергей Семенович Уваров]. *ESSAI SUR LES MYSTÈRES D’ÉLEUSIS*. Seconde Edition. Revue et augmentée. St.-Petersbourg, Imprimé Chez Pluchart Et Comp., 1815, p. 27. (« Κογξ ὀμ παξ (Konx om pax). «) (Section Seconde, pp. 17-31.)

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29. (Section Seconde, pp. 17-31.)

<sup>67</sup> M. Ouaroff. *Essay on the Mysteries of Eleusis*. Translated from the French, by J. D. Price. London, UK: Printed for Rodwell and Martin, 1817, p. 30. (Section II., pp. 18-31.)

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

Society, however, his papers published in the *Asiatic Researches* were soon to be strongly criticised, as explained, for instance, in *The Calcutta Review* in 1857:

*Up to 1822, we find not a few of the valuable papers in the volumes of the Asiatic Researches from his pen. Of an active and energetic spirit, given to hasty generalization, and desirous to draw support from every source for favourite theories, it need not be wondered at that his facts were not always accurate, nor his conclusions fairly drawn and well substantiated. He had a tendency to find in Sanskrit MSS., not what actually was there, but what he wished to find; and the result was that his discoveries were often of a most startling character, and his theories absurdly extravagant. The Pundits who assisted him, taking advantage of his eager enthusiasm and credulity, imposed upon him; the versions with which they supplied him were often interpolated, the translations incorrect.*

*[...] As an honest man, and as a member of the Asiatic Society, Wilford must retract, must add to his chagrin by exposing the means of his deception, and this the other members forced him to do. But the eager spirit of the scholar was only for a time checked by this circumstance. He pursued his studies, and, we fear, his baseless theorising as before. It is to be regretted that a mind such as his, capable of accomplishing so much, was not more directed by sound judgment.<sup>69</sup>*

In 1886 Augustus (Henry) (Julian) Le Plongeon (1826-1908), a medical doctor, antiquarian, amateur archaeologist, and Freemason, born on Jersey, Channel Islands, who, together with his wife, devoted a large part of his life to the Maya culture, excavating, documenting, and interpreting their ruins and culture of the Yucatan peninsula – creating a theory that Maya colonists transported their ancient religious rites and ceremonies to Egypt and India – stated in his *Sacred Mysteries Among the Mayas and the Quiches* that the words Konx Om Pax were not Sanskrit, but Maya:

*"Con-ex Omon Panex," go, stranger, scatter! are vocables, of the language of the ancient inhabitants of Yacutan, still spoken by their descendants, the aborigines of that country. They were probably used by the priests of the temples, whose sumptuous and awe-inspiring ruins I have studied during fourteen years, to dismiss the members of their mystic societies, among which we find the same symbols that are seen even to-day in the temples of Egypt as in the M.: lodges.*

*I will endeavor to show you that the ancient sacred mysteries, the origin of Free Masonry consequently, date back from a period far more remote than the most sanguine students of its history ever imagined. I will try to trace their origin, step by step, to this continent which we inhabit, – to America – from where Maya colonists transported their ancient religious rites and ceremonies, not only to the banks of the Nile, but to those of the Euphrates, and the shores of the Indian Ocean, not less than 11,500 years ago.<sup>70</sup>*

In 1887 appeared a new theory on the origin and meaning of Konx Om Pax in the short-lived American monthly journal *The Platonist*.<sup>71</sup> This theory, which stated that the words had Akkadian

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<sup>69</sup> *The Calcutta Review*. Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co. ♦ Vol. XXIX, December, 1857, pp. 263-4. (*India and Comparative Philology*, pp. 229-79.)

<sup>70</sup> *Augustus Le Plongeon*. *Sacred Mysteries Among the Mayas and the Quiches, 11,500 years ago. Their relation to the sacred mysteries of Egypt, Greece, Chaldea and India. Free Masonry; in Times Anterior to the Temple of Solomon*. New York, NY: Robert Macoy, 1886, p. 22.

<sup>71</sup> *The Platonist*. Edited by Thomas M. Johnson. Osceola, MO: The Platonist. ♦ The journal appeared from 1881-1888 but was re-titled *Bibliotheca platonica* in 1889 and stopped appearing the year after, in 1890, after only four

roots, was written by an Englishman named Robert Brown, Jun., F.S.A. (1844-1912), however, the theory seems not to have been discussed or mentioned later in sources dealing with Konx Om Pax. Robert Brown, Junior., stated, among other things:

*Κόγξ—Όμ—Πὰξ. Now these are evidently sacred and archaic words; and, as I have said elsewhere, much ingenuity has been exercised in attempts to interpret them. But I see no need and no historical justification in going as far as India or Thibet for a key; and, be it as it may, the Akkadian of the Euphrates Valley supplies a remarkable rendering: —*

*Eleusinian Formula: Konx — Om — Pax*

*Akkadian Translation: Kun-nikh — Umu — Pakh*

*Translation: "End (literally 'tail')-of-the-path — the mother, the King."*

*It must be remembered that our X and O are not used in Akkadian. Nikh also means 'enclosure,' σηκόζ. Umu = Ama (SERVIUS: ad Aen. viii. 314,) a name of the Bona Dea. (Vide Wilder: The Platonist, III, 51.) According to many, the Bona Dea was, at least in one phase, Hekate, (MACROBIUS: Sat. i. 12), the triple-goddess; (as to the Triple-Goddess, vide R. B. jr., The Unicorn, Sec. vi.), — the "Triple Revealer" of the Inscription. At the end of the path of probation and initiation we find Aku = Umu, and lastly, the King. Proklos speaks (in Krat.) of "the father-begotten Hekate."<sup>72</sup>*

Robert Brown, Jun., who was a Solicitor and Registrar of the County Court at Barton, wrote several works on archaic religion, mythology, and astronomy. He was a member of the Society of Biblical Archæology, and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (F.S.A.).<sup>73</sup>

Percy Busshe Shelley was apparently familiar with the words, and his friend the English lawyer, and writer Thomas Jefferson Hogg (1792-1862), who also was Shelley's first biographer, wrote this gem in his two-volume *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, published in 1858:

*I [Thomas Jefferson Hogg] was walking one afternoon, in the summer, on the western side of that short street leading from Long Acre to Covent Garden, wherein the passenger is earnestly invited, as a personal favour to the demandant, to proceed straightway to Highgate or to Kentish Town, and which is called, I think, James Street; I was about to enter Covent Garden, when an Irish labourer, whom I met, bearing an empty hod, accosted me somewhat roughly, and asked why I had run against him; I told him briefly that he was mistaken. Whether somebody had actually pushed the man, or he sought only to quarrel, and although he doubtless attended a weekly row regularly, and the week was already drawing to a close, he was unable to wait until Sunday for a broken head, I know not, but he discoursed for some time with the vehemence of a man who considers himself injured or insulted, and concluded, being emboldened by my long silence, with a cordial invitation just to push him again. Several persons not very unlike in costume had*

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issues.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. ♦ Vol. III, No. 3, March 1887, pp. 133-4. (ETRUSCAN NOTES. II. THE FOIANO LIBATION-BOWL AND THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES. By Robt. Brown, Jun'r., F.S.A.; Barton-on-Humber, Eng. January, 1887., pp. 132-7.)

<sup>73</sup> For Robert Brown, Jun., see: MEN OF THE TIME: A Dictionary of Contemporaries, Containing Biographical Notices of Eminent Characters of Both Sexes. Eleventh Edition. Revised and Brought Down to the Present Time by Thompson Cooper, F.S.A. London, UK: George Routledge and Sons, 1884, pp. 175-6. (BROWN, ROBERT, JUN., F.S.A., pp. 175-6.) ♦ For his obituary, see: Nature; A Weekly Illustrated Journal of Science. London, UK: MacMillan & Co. LTD. ♦ Vol. 90, No. 2243, Thursday, October 24, 1912, p. 227. ("THE death is announced, at sixty-eight years of age, of Mr. Robert Brown, fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and distinguished by his works on comparative mythology. [...]")(NOTES, pp. 227-31.)

gathered round him, and appeared to regard him with sympathy. When he paused, I addressed to him slowly and quietly, and it should seem with great gravity, these words, as nearly as I can recollect them: –

*"I have put my hand into the hamper; I have looked upon the sacred barley; I have eaten out of the drum! I have drunk and was well pleased: I have said κόγξ ὄμπαξ, and it is finished!"*

Have you, Sir?" inquired the astonished Irishman, and his ragged friends instantly pressed round him with "Where is the hamper, Paddy?" – "What barley?" and the like. And ladies from his own country, that is to say, the basket-women, suddenly began to interrogate him, "Now, I say, Pat, where have you been drinking? What have you had?"

I turned therefore to the right, leaving the astounded neophyte, whom I had thus planted, to expound the mystic words of initiation, as he could, to his inquisitive companions.

As I walked slowly under the piazzas, and through the streets and courts, towards the west, I marvelled at the ingenuity of Orpheus – if he were indeed the inventor of the Eleusinian mysteries – that he was able to devise words that, imperfectly as I had repeated them, and in the tattered fragment that has reached us, were able to soothe people so savage and barbarous as those to whom I had addressed them, and which, as the apologists for those venerable rites affirm, were manifestly well adapted to incite persons, who hear them for the first time, however rude they may be, to ask questions. Words, that can awaken curiosity, even in the sluggish intellect of a wild man, and can thus open the inlet of knowledge!

"Konx ompax, and it is finished!" exclaimed Shelley, crowing with enthusiastic delight at my whimsical adventure. A thousand times as he strode about the house, and in his rambles out of doors, would he stop and repeat aloud the mystic words of initiation, but always with an energy of manner, and a vehemence of tone and of gesture, that would have prevented the ready acceptance, which a calm, passionless delivery had once procured for them. How often would he throw down his book, clasp his hands, and starting from his seat, cry suddenly, with thrilling voice, "I have said Konx ompax, and it is finished!"<sup>74</sup>

Hogg's work was advertised as four volumes, however, only two were published owing to that Shelley's family who had commissioned the work after the poet's death objected to the two published volumes, which they found focused too much on Hogg himself.

The words found in Hesychius were also equated with the last words said by Jesus on the cross. An article on the Greek mysteries and the gospels published in 1905 E.V. by Slade Butler, M.A. (1850-1923), in the British monthly review *The Nineteenth Century and After* stated:

*After the 'illumination' or consecration of the mystes [at the Greek Mysteries] was completed, a sacred formula was uttered to show that the ceremony was over. What that formula was does not seem to be known, though it has been said by some to have been the words κόγξ ὄμπαξ or κόγξ ὀμοίως πάξ, the first word denoting the sound made by the voting-pebble as it fell into the urn and so 'the vote is cast,' the other words meaning 'likewise enough,' the formula therefore signifying 'all is over.' Now, the last saying or utterance on the cross is in the fourth gospel (John xix. 30) represented by the word τετέλεσται, which in one sense means 'it is finished;' but τελέω, 'to perform,' has in the passive a further meaning, namely 'to be initiated' or 'consecrated' in the mysteries, and more particularly in the last or highest grade of the Eleusinian mysteries – just as τελετή means the 'end' as well as the rite of 'initiation.' To a Greek – and especially to one who had passed through the mysteries – the word τετέλεσται would have the double meaning of 'all is over, the consecration is complete.' It is to be noticed that the words of the last utterance on*

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<sup>74</sup> Thomas Jefferson Hogg. *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*. In Four Volumes. [2 vols]. London, UK: Edward Moxon, 1858. ♦ Vol. I, p. 224-6. (CHAPTER VI, pp. 203-26.)

## Konx Om Pax

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the cross are omitted in Mark (xv. 37) and in Matthew (xxvii. 50), as though they were not known or were too sacred to be reproduced in writing.<sup>75</sup>

Crowley had probably read this since he in *The Gospel According to Saint Bernard Shaw* (1916 E.V.) wrote:

*It is not unreasonable to suppose that this last cry [of Jesus] was the "It is finished" recorded by other evangelists. Now these words are not merely what they seem to be. They, or their equivalents "Konx Om Pax", were the technical cry of triumph used in the initiations of the ritual of the "slain god".*<sup>76</sup>

The British novelist, essayist, and poet John Cowper Powys (1872-1936), wrote in 1928 E.V. in *Enjoyment of Literature*:

*Against the proud sun-smitten lute-strings of Apollo you will feel, rising and falling on the wind, the dark, ensorcerized flute-breathings of Dionysus. To each of them in mystic alternation responds the heart-beat of a universe at war with itself.*

*It is the ritual-dance of creation which is also the ritual-dance of the destruction of creation. It is the sex-dance of Destiny with Chance. "Om! Om! Om!" beat the tom-toms of the one. "Konx! Om! Pax!" clash the cymbals of the other. Greek tragedy may strike us to-day as something austere and wooden, and yet something monstrous and superhuman like the galvanic gestures of vast Cosmic Dolls, who, rising on the rim of our round world, nod and wail at one another bleeding thunderbolts of meteoric malediction.*<sup>77</sup>

'Konx Ompax' was also used as a saying, as for example, in a London weekly newspaper from 1866:

*No, we do not understand it. We give up. The London, Chatham, and Dover Railway is as Konx Ompax to us. It is not that the mere balance-sheets are too much for our skill in figures; not that we have our difficulties about rebate; not that the science of financiering was unknown to us when we had our poor education in simple arithmetic, and in equally simple and elementary morality not that the jugglery and thimble-rigging between preference shares and debentures demands a special study.*<sup>78</sup>

Also in 1866 a book was published entitled *The Humbugs of the World* whose title page bore the slogan "Omne ignotum pro mirifico." – "Wonderful, because mysterious.", and here was said about 'Konx, ompax':

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<sup>75</sup> *The Nineteenth Century and After; A Monthly Review*. Edited by James Knowles. New York, NY: Leonard Scott Publication Co. and London, UK: Spottiswoode & Co. Ltd., Printers. ♦ Vol. LVII, No. CCCXXVII, March 1905, p. 496. (*The Greek Mysteries And the Gospel Narrative; By Slade Butler*, pp. 490-9.)

<sup>76</sup> Aleister Crowley. *The Gospel According to St. Bernard Shaw*. Barstow, CA: Thelema Publishing, 1953, p. 52. (*Jerusalem and the Mystical Sacrifice*, pp. 52-3.) ♦ Facsimile (xerox) reprint: San Francisco, CA: Stellar Visions, 1986. ♦ Also published as: *Crowley on Christ*. Edited and Introduced by Francis King. London, UK: The C. W. Daniel Company Ltd., 1974.

<sup>77</sup> John Cowper Powys. *Enjoyment of Literature*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1938, p. 77. (*GREEK TRAGEDY*, pp. 70-101.)

<sup>78</sup> *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*. London, UK: John W. Parker and Son. ♦ Vol. 22, No. 572, October 13, 1866, p. 443. (*"The London, Chatham, and Dover"*, pp. 443-4.)

*When the Greek priests let out of their doors those who had been completely initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries, they said to them last of all the awful and powerful words, "Konx, ompax." If you want to know what the usual result was, just say them to somebody, and you will see instantly.*<sup>79</sup>

The book whose subtitle was "*An Account of Humbugs, Delusions, Impositions, Quackeries, Deceits and Deceivers Generally, in All Ages*" was written by the American showman, businessman, and entertainer Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810-1891), who founded a circus that later became Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Barnum is often credited the phrase: "*There's a sucker born every minute*" – and Crowley uses the phrase in *The Book of Lies* as concluding words in Chapter 88, called "*Gold Bricks*".<sup>80</sup>

The name "*Ompax*" happens also to have been given to a fish discovered in Australia in 1872. The French Entomologist, and Ichthyologist Comte de Castelnau<sup>81</sup> named the fish, which he described as a ganoid of hitherto unknown species, genus and probably family, *Ompax spatuloides* (Castelnau). However, many years later it turned out that he had been deceived and that the most unusual fish in fact was a practical joke fraudulently manufactured from parts of a mullet, an eel, and a platypus or needlefish.<sup>82</sup> Castelnau based his naming on a detailed illustration of the fish sent to him which had been drawn after the fish had been eaten by the director of the Brisbane Museum who was visiting in Northern Queensland. The director was told that for breakfast a very rare fish, brought in by Aborigines from a freshwater lake, was being prepared in his honour. Castelnau, who lived in Australia from 1862 until his death in 1880, had thus been in good faith when he named the hoax fish.

Lastly, I wish to say that even if the words "*Konx Om Pax*" have originated from a misunderstanding of the words of Hesychius the phrase has been given a certain meaning and ritual power through many years of use, and is a phrase with a message!

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<sup>79</sup> P. T. Barnum. *The Humbugs of the World. An Account of Humbugs, Delusions, Impositions, Quackeries, Deceits and Deceivers Generally, in All Ages.* New York, NY: Carleton Publisher, 1866, p. 315. (Chapter XXXVIII, pp. 314-21.)

<sup>80</sup> [Aleister Crowley] Liber CCCXXXIII. *The Book of Lies. Which is Also Falsely Called BREAKS, The Wanderings or Falsifications of the One Thought of Frater Perdurabo Which Thought is itself Untrue.* London, UK: Wieland and Co., 1913, p. 106. (ΚΕΦΑΛΗ ΠΗ; *GOLD BRICKS*, p. 106.)

<sup>81</sup> François Louis Laporte (1810-1880). French naturalist and diplomat. Also known as Comte de Castelnau; François Louis Delaporte; François Louis Nompar de Caumont La Port Comte de Castelnau.

<sup>82</sup> See: Gilbert P. Whitley. *Ompax spatuloides* Castelnau, a mythical Australian fish. ♦ *The American Naturalist.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Vol. 67, No. 713, Nov.-Dec., 1933, pp. 563-7. • Family: Ceratodontidae [Queensland lungfish]; Genus: *Ompax*; Species: *spatuloides*.