

## Editorial<sup>1</sup>

Hermes Trismegistus is the figure that represents the ancient point of encounter between Esoterism and Mythology. His doctrine, transmitted through occultist treatise and philosophical texts (*Corpus hermeticum* and *Asclepius*), enriched many mysteries (Kabbalah, Gnosticism, Renaissance Pythagoreanism, etc). Myth Criticism is interested in the study of these subjects only when their constitutive elements transcend reality and appear in a fictional context. At this moment, critics may ask themselves the following questions: which connections exist between Mythology and Esoterism?, in which ways do we find transcendence in Esoterism?

Even though most esoteric cults teach that natural reason guides the initiates' learning process, the object of knowledge that they aspire to reach is of a transcendent nature. Hermeticists, astrologers and alchemists aim to obtain a wisdom that goes beyond scientific reason; however, their approach differs from the approaches of positive religions in the way of defining transcendence, because they do not consider the supernatural dimension to be one of a personal kind.

Researchers may find some difficulties when considering the possible connections between Myth and Esoterism. In their textual analysis, they will have to consider the heterogeneous nature of its sources (religious, astrological, alchemical), the typology of transcendental dimensions (personal, impersonal) and the cultural origin of the various symbols of the esoteric cult, which are inevitably associated with the environment in which they arise.

The selection between the received proposals has been very demanding. In this issue, readers can find three thematic articles: the study of the hermetic symbolism of water and salt associated with the imaginary of femininity (María Flores-Fernández), the comparative analysis of the gnostic Myth of the pearl in the works of 'Alā' al-Dawla al-Simnānī, María Zambrano and Terrence Malick (Antoni Gonzalo Carbó) and the work on the intersection between Esotericism and Myth in Alan Moore's comic *Promethea* (Carlos Sánchez Pérez). The miscellaneous section includes a study of the mythical features of Arthur C. Clarke's *The City and the Stars* by Monique Villen. Finally, readers can find two reviews of recently published books, *Germanic Myths in the audio-visual culture* and *Cyclops: the Myth and Its Cultural History*.

*Amaltea* continues to offer high quality articles and reviews on myths in contemporary literature and art. The authors have been given full freedom in the choice of works, genres and epistemological treatment.

Madrid, September 2021  
Good reading!

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