



Phosphorus





Cover by:
The Oreads 1902 by William-Adolphe Bouguereau

Back cover:
John William Waterhouse "The Danaïdes" (c.1903)

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First Printing: 2025

Don Houston
www.cyclops.org



Phosphorus

Commentary

Chapters in the Book of Service

Series 5

Vol. 1

Don Houston



Artists are here to disturb the peace.

We are responsible for the world in which we find ourselves, if only because we are the only sentient force which can change it.

The victim who is able to articulate the situation of the victim has ceased to be a victim: he or she has become a threat.

James Baldwin

The Commentaries represent the implied part of the Sacred Blood Hermeticus. As Jean-Léon Gérôme painted her, the naked Truth was at the bottom of a well. The only exceptions to his work were that Truth, in this instance, was at the bottom of the Well of Sorrow, and she was a Black woman. Her call came as a whispered howl. The task was to look down into the shades of darkness, record what I saw and heard, create the plays, and then assist in her rescue by employing the clue held in her hand, a mirror, the feminine aspect of self-reflection. She emerged from the well in image and sound. Her rescue, the process of deciphering her needs and desires by creating the commentaries, took courage, a fearlessness I did not know I had.

Truth is at the Bottom of the Well (1895) by Jean-Léon Gérôme, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon.

Truth coming from the well to chastise mankind (1896).





Dedicated to:

Claudia Aron Ross

June Rettig

Charles Kuhn

Daniela Becker

and

Barbara Ryan

Know whence you came. If you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go. The details and symbols of your life have been deliberately constructed to make you believe what white people say about you. Please try to remember that what they believe, as well as what they do and cause you to endure, does not testify to your inferiority but to their inhumanity and fear...

*My Dungeon Shook
A letter to his nephew
James Baldwin*



Table of Contents

<i>Preface</i>	9	<i>Appendices</i>	
<i>The Light in the Darkness</i>	12	<i>Appendix A</i>	75
<i>Phosphorus: the light bearer and the use of matches</i>	17	<i>The Fall of Phosphorus</i>	78
<i>Phosphorus and Nymphs</i>	20	<i>Appendix B</i>	83
<i>Veiling the Light</i>		<i>Appendix C</i>	86
<i>The Dark Night of the Soul</i>	29	<i>The Hathors</i>	93
<i>Bastards</i>	32	<i>Appendix D</i>	96
<i>Children in Darkness</i>		<i>The Redevelopment Betrayal</i>	98
<i>Psyche and Eros</i>	35	<i>Appendix E</i>	
<i>The Traitors</i>	40	<i>Io: Strange Dreams</i>	109
<i>The Labors of Herakles</i>		<i>Want to know more</i>	
<i>The Nemean Lion</i>	45	<i>6/19/08</i>	118
<i>Cernaen Hydra</i>	50		
<i>Life in Darkness</i>	55		
<i>The Curse</i>	58		
<i>Tending the Light</i>	61		
<i>Journal Entry</i>	67		



My nieces



Preface

When 23andMe offered genetic testing to trace ancestry, my daughter gave me a kit for my birthday. I had always wondered which Native American tribe I belonged to, as it was assumed that my great-grandmother was Native American due to her complexion and long, straight black hair. There was also the belief that we had Italian ancestry in the family, stemming from my great-grandfather. No one knew for sure. Slavery had blurred the lines of lineage. The test results come back, and everyone is shocked. No Native American or Italian blood is to be found. Instead, I am of African, Irish, English, and Scandinavian descent. Everything I thought I knew about my ancestry proved to be false, and I was more Caucasian than I imagined.

The Scandinavian blood turned out to be of particular interest because some months later, I attended my son-in-law's sister's wedding in Norway. When I let it be known that I had Scandinavian ancestry, they immediately took up the chant, "He's a Viking!" It was quite welcoming to become a Black Viking. But this is the story of the African American experience, one of discovery when viewed from a positive outlook. However, there is another way that not knowing from whence you came plays out. These are my nieces, the offspring of my brother and his domestic partner of 20 years. They are grown now but leading quite different lives.

The youngest is a student at the University of Hawaii studying environmental sustainability. She, unlike her older sister, embraces her African American heritage. The other lives in West Virginia and has cut off her family, at least the African American side. African Americans have a name for this behavior called "passing." In the land of Caucasians, if she doesn't expose it, no one will know that she is part African American. The story here is one of denying one's origins.



Nymphs and Satyr
William Adolphe Bouguereau



James Baldwin said it best: "when you begin to really know something intimately, you ultimately come to know its ugly dark side."

In the case of god/cult Phosphorus, this is to know how the cult's activities came to create bastards, which, in turn, eventually led to the suicidal destruction of the African feminine world and ushered in white supremacy.

It's hard for us to imagine a familial system where biological fathers are not the centerpiece of the family unit. Our prejudice, nonetheless, obscures historical fact. The family began matrilineal; wealth and status were passed down through the mother, and the father was absent. That's not to say fatherhood did not exist; it did, but not in the way we understand it. Duties taken for granted today were denied to fathers in the past. Rearing a male child, for example, was not the father's obligation.

The child's uncle(s) on the mother's side and her clan's men carried out this function. Since childbirth made it nearly impossible for a mother's identity to be concealed, inheritance traveled through her, and what we refer to as a bastard could not exist within this tradition. But when Caucasian tribal leaders enslaved women and instituted their system of virtue by insisting on arranged, exclusive, monogamous marriages as the only means of legitimizing a child's family and clan affiliation, the entire social fabric of the time was torn to pieces, and the family type we have today took shape.

This isn't to say that these changes went unchallenged. Scholar and philosopher Hypatia of Alexandria symbolized the opposition to the will of God. Her refusal to accept the Christian church and, by extension, its form of family prompted Christian monks to demonize, torture, and burn her alive. It was a necessary evil since she was a woman of the "Light"—a Phosphorus or, in their eyes, a Lucifer.



The Light in the Darkness

Who is this God? What “Light” did it offer? Why was it discarded and written from history, leaving behind a confusing set of mythic associations between Phosphorus, Lucifer, and the Devil? Phosphorus’s Roman counterpart, the god Lucifer, was a pagan god associated with light and Culture, as seen in Appendix A.

The god and cult of Phosphorus are of African origin, originating from the search for fire, as well as later in mining activities. Before the tribes, who later became the Egyptians, settled in the Nile Valley, they were mountain dwellers. They lived on the shield volcanoes of the Tibesti mountain range, found in the central Sahara. Fortunately for them, their choice of homeland offered unique advantages. It provided easy access to the Sahara, a verdant oasis, caves for shelter, fresh water, and continuous access to fire.

These early cave dwellers utilized their environmental knowledge to provide fire to their tribes, which gave them a distinct and unparalleled advantage in survival. Fire from within the earth is the “first light,” associated with the Egyptian god and cult of Ptah. This cult of stone craftsmen was said to be the world’s first “Light” that shaped it from darkness, metaphorically suggesting light from within the earth, fire, was the principal tool in manufacturing the man-made environment.

Still, there was a second “light” from within the earth that gave cult Phosphorus its name. Extracting inorganic phosphate, a substance that glowed when separated from rock and exposed to oxygen — a magical property the mineral has never relinquished — undoubtedly fascinated ancient Egyptians when they encountered it. They surely smelted it to produce white phosphorus, given their ever-present curiosity as to the effect of fire on minerals. Their experimentation certainly revealed that prolonged exposure of white phosphorus to sunlight altered its properties.





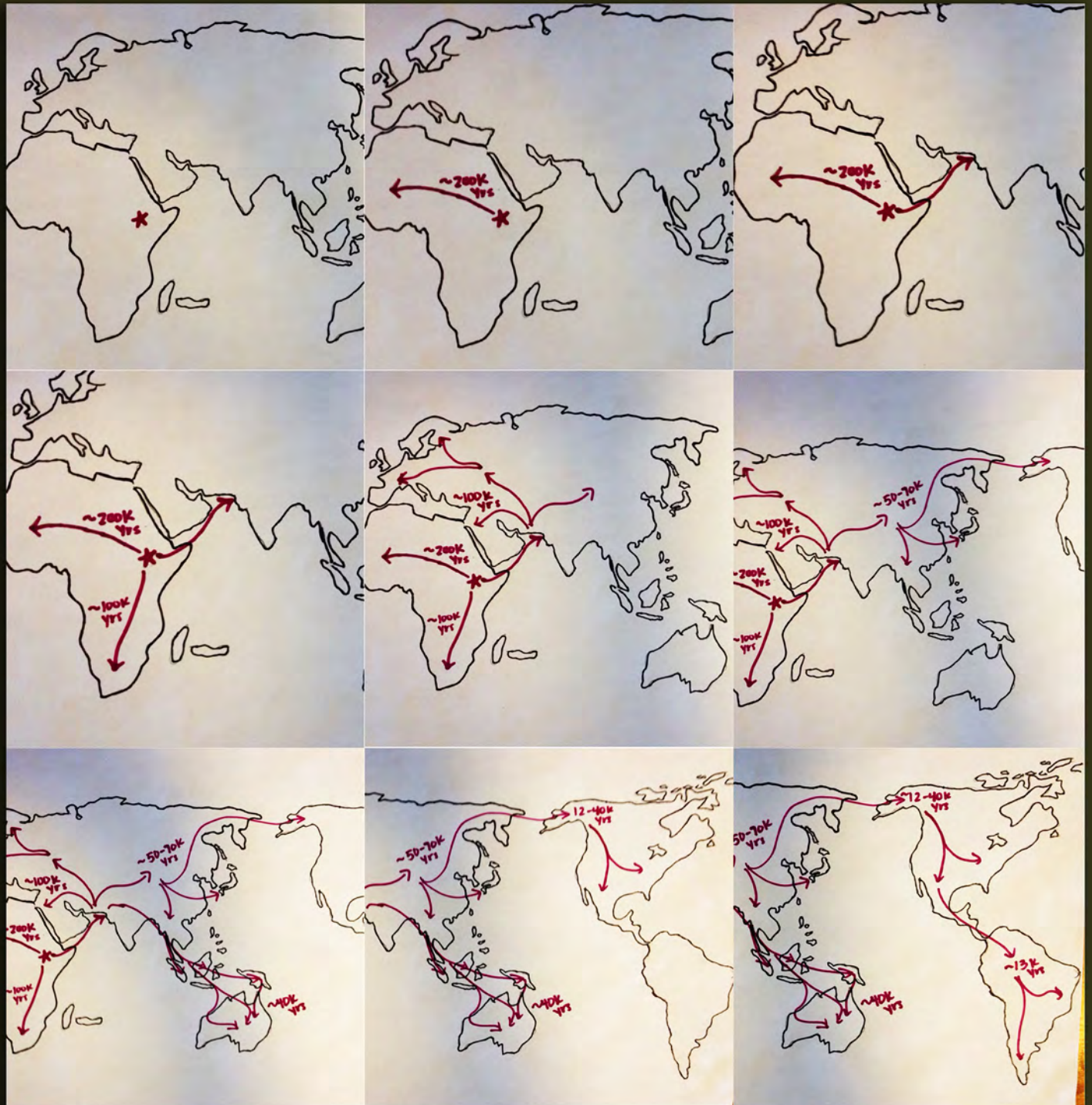
It became crystalline, changed color, and, most importantly, became stable—the necessary condition for making a portable match since the heat from friction can be sufficient to raise the temperature of white phosphorus to its ignition point.

As a result, African chemical ingenuity and scientific know-how led to the same experiment that German chemist Hennig Brand would perform four thousand years later, indicating that the production and use of matches stretch back farther than we imagined. The ancient invention of matches wasn't by luck. It was a tool that enabled the cult to fulfill its spiritual purpose: the continuation of the group family arrangement, which was linked to fire and its use in the creation of civilization.





Bacchanal #1 by Nicolas Poussin





Phosphorus: the light bearer and its use of matches

As Africans traveled to Greece from the Egyptian city of Memphis, they brought with them a sacred sexual ritual, the Orgia, which was rooted in the mythic resurrection of Osiris and the conception of his son Horus. There, the god and cult Ptah, representing the "light," and the god and cult Khonsu, also known as the Child God, are combined into the god and cult of Phosphorus.

The cult was capable of creating a sacred fire with matches and carrying torches as a call to worship. They defended against danger, such as wild animals at night, and acted as attendants during ritual services. Light-bearing in this manner defines this cult as one of the most influential yet unacknowledged cults in Western civilization. This is due to the connections between firemaking and the group family structure they evangelized.

The human family's historical past is a group family arrangement. Men occasionally had more than one companion, while women had more than one partner under other conditions. In many cases, the family was fluid and provisional; a member could, at times, float in and out of a family grouping. However, these initial group families were small and comprised the same native totemic stock of clans and tribes, where entry to the group was a matter of birth. Children entered their mother's group and were wed by birth to members of another complementary clan(s).

However, as Africans ventured out, particularly female cults, into the Wild and encountered "others," the ritual of inclusion by marriage at the sacred flame evolved as a necessity for assimilating strangers, such as Neanderthals. The social mechanism of assimilation through marriage became the ideal non-violent means for cultural expansion, as the individual had to consent to "marry" to gain entrance.



La Reine Bacchanal by Fritz Zuber Buhler



The oath at the sacred flame was their assent to a group family network that wrapped its members in a tribute of joy, affection, and Rebirth.

Upon colonizing Ahhiyawa, one of their three names for ancient Greece, the group family system and fire ritual followed, bringing with it marriage. A central feature of this rite, managed by the god/cult Phosphorus, was the reenactment of the birth of the Child God Horus in The Passion of Osiris, see Appendix B.

The pantomime centered on the Orgia—sexual intercourse as a pre-Christian baptismal rite and the children it intentionally produced. The sacrament of initiation involved using fire to signify spiritual cleansing and water – intercourse – to symbolize a commitment to the irrationality of the Union of Opposites, like life after death and Rebirth.

Matches, fire, and oath-taking opened the ceremony, but the water of life was the opposite that awaited the initiate. Once the Passion play began, cult Phosphorus members became “actors;” light-bearing became a metaphor for their role in pantomiming the steps to be taken by the Soul on its journey back to human existence. Bearing light in this manner was done in silence, an act of example.

They reenacted the resurrection of Osiris as conducted by Isis and her sister, and at the inception of god/child Horus, members of the congregation—mutually attracted and affectionate to one another – engaged in a sexual baptismal, a sharing of saliva, sweat vaginal fluid, and semen meant to bring children into the world, and at all stages of the performance, the light bearer’s duties were sacred and essential to the process of worship. They should not be confused with promiscuity or prostitution.