

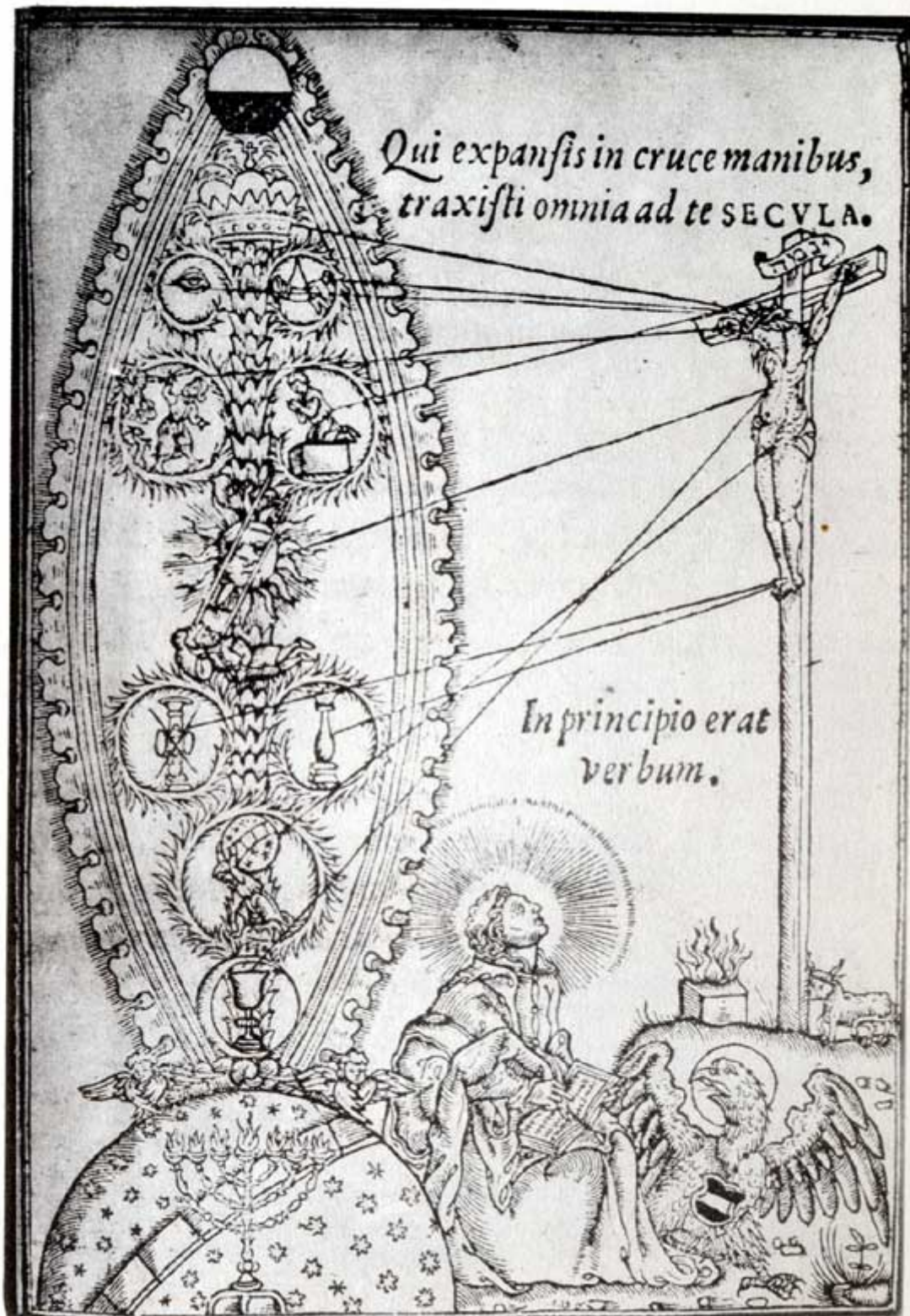
Note on a Sefhirotic Illustration in a Syriac New Testament.

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The accompanying illustration is from a photograph of a diagram found in a Syriac New Testament printed at Vienna in 1555. It is inserted at the commencement of the Fourth Gospel and represents a vision of St. John upon a mountain near Ephesus when he was shown by inspiration the prologue of his Gospel: "*In principio erat verbum.*" The Evangelist, in an ecstasy, is seated at the foot of a Calvary Cross upon which is the figure of the Crucified One. He is accompanied by his Eagle, symbolising, perhaps, the Element of Water, rather than Air, its usual interpretation (the two being often interchangeable); whilst on the Mount of Calvary are the Ox of Earth, and an Altar with Fire upon it, the Figure of the Crucified One thus representing the Reconciling Air, with the Hebrew letters **י נ מ ה**, *i.e.*, I.N.M.H., sometimes regarded as the equivalent of the Latin I.N.R.I., above it. The exact interpretation of these letters has been a subject of much controversy. The Hebrew form of the word Nazareth seems to be unknown, unless we take a title given in the Talmud, **בן-נצר** = B N N Tz R as authoritative. The restoration given in Hastings' Dictionary is:

ישוע-ה-נצרי-מלך-ה-יהודים

("Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews.") If one takes the initials here, one is in the difficulty of using the article **ה** in the second and not in the first instance. It has been suggested that the sentence should read: **יהשוע-נזיר-מלך-ה-יהודים** ("Jeheshua the Nazarite, King of the Jews"). Here the initials would be those given in the superscription, the word **נזיר**, NZIR, meaning "set apart" or "devoted to God," and would refer to the prophesy and Jewish play upon the words "Nazarene" and "Nazarite": "And he shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. ii., 23); and "The child shall be called a Nazarite unto God from the womb." (Judges xiii, 5).



Behind St. John, occupying the left half of the picture, is a scheme of the Sephirotic Tree enclosed within a large Vesica Piscis. This is approached below by the Seven-Branched Light-bearer, and the Belt of the Zodiac encircling the Starry Universe, and guarded by the Two Kerubim. From the individual Sephiroth run lines of attribution to the figure of Our Lord. Malkuth is occupied by the Cup in the Lunar Crescent, a fitting symbol of the Church, the Bride, receptacle of the Sacred Blood from the Wounded Side. Yesod, the Foundation, is suitably represented by the supporting figure of Atlas, the force behind and upholding the material. Hod and Netzach shew the Twin Pillars, one on each side of the Tree, and are fittingly attributed to the two lower limbs. Horizontally above the lower four Sephiroth and below Tiphereth, lies the Patriarch Jacob, the symbolic Ladder of his Vision passing through Tiphereth to Chesed. The Beauty of Tiphereth is symbolised by the Sun in his strength, and its line of attribution passes to the Heart of Jesus; whilst Chesed and Geburah, Mercy and Severity, are occupied respectively by Isaac, the Sacrifice spared, and Abraham ready to immolate even his own son at the Divine command. Behind the latter can be seen the Angel and the substituted ram. In Binah is seen the All-Seeing Eye, understanding all things and receptive of the Light, keeping the watch of the Supernal Mother over Creation. The symbol in Chokmah is obscure. It may, perhaps, be a Horn of Plenty, representing the pouring forth of the Gifts of Wisdom; or it may possibly be the Horn of the Watchman or the Herald proclaiming that Wisdom to the World. The lines of Attribution from these two Sephiroth pass to the Brow of the Crucified, whilst the Diadem of Kether and the Crown of Thorns are united by the uppermost link. "*Qui expansis in cruce manibus travisti omnia ad te secula*"—Thou Who, with Thy Hands outstretched upon the Cross, hast drawn all Ages (Cycles of Emanation) unto Thee.

Above Kether are seen the Three Circles of the Negative Veils, the Ain, the Ain Soph, and the Ain Soph Aur, whilst the whole is surmounted by the Circle of the Supreme divided into the Dual White and Black of the Positive and Negative, the Qabalistic Symbol of Salt, from whence all things in the beginning proceed.

The whole diagram forms an interesting Qabalistic Résumé. To the above short note much might doubtless be added by those learned in Qabalistic lore, and I have much pleasure in asking the Supreme Magus of the S.R.I.A. to accept this copy of the diagram for the Archives of his Society.