Chapter 16

Spear, Sword and Axe

Spear, axe and sword are symbols of the cosmic axis of descent and ascent. Their ends are the poles, as is the double-edged blade. Duality is revealed in opposites – light and dark, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, mercy and wrath, inhaling and exhaling, creation and destruction, building and demolishing.

The Praised is the first of the people of peace and the spear and the sword are symbols of his mission, prefigured in the words of Jesus: “I came not to send peace, but a sword.” The sword signifies just war against injustice, war against war. This is the lowest level of meaning in our quest for ourselves. The self is a theatre of war between two infinite armies – darkness and evil against light and good. To return to Unity and Peace we must win that war.

Only victory in that war will satisfy. We must transcend illusion and rise to true meaning, as received from God in the very act of our creation. We must reunite the names into One, Sacred, Ineffable. That is being on the battlefield, in the mihrab.

Waging war has two forms – war against the external enemy for peace and order and war against the internal enemy that blocks our path of return. The Praised called the first the lesser war. The weapons it requires have symbolic meaning in the greater war, the realization of the Word and adherence to the Light that shines in the darkness.

We are told the chalice from the Last Supper was used to collect the blood that flowed from the wound made by the centurion Longinus’ spear. The spear’s symbolic meaning is clear: interior exteriorized and re-interiorized. Its place in the historical story of the Praised expresses certain key messages of the perennial wisdom.

The mystery of the Anointed flows with his heart’s blood down the spear into the chalice held by Joseph of Arimathea. The spear represents the cosmic axis on which the Spirit of Truth descends from Unity to the centres of each level of existence. The eternal Gospel, the Preserved Tablet, was transcribed by this descent to bring us and the world back to God. As symbols of axis and heart, spear and chalice correspond to hill and valley or hill and cave.

---

1 See Qur’an, 6:163.
2 Matthew, 10:34.
3 Related in ʿAjlūnī, Kashf al-khafā wa muzīl al-ilbās ʿammā ishtahara min al-ahādīth ʿalā alsina al-nās, 1:481–82.
Spear, arrow, sword and axe symbolize the relationship between Peace and the people of peace, Beloved and lover, Known and knower, Light and enlightened. If the heart is the vessel of the Word, these weapons are the path of its descent. The tip of the centurion’s spear points upwards so that mystery may descend.

The Praised thrust a spear into the ground before worshippers he was leading. It was the cosmic axis and his mighty morality. Perfect recipient and returner of praise to God, the Praised encompasses that axis from the depths to the height, Vale to Mount. The centurion’s spear points upwards, the Praised’s downwards, symbolizing his role as our guide.

Their different directions suggest the close relationship between the Praised and the Anointed. The Praised is the eternal principle of human perfection through which God reveals His Word; the Anointed is the Word revealed through his mother Mary. The spear of the Praised symbolizes the war against the self in darkness for the self of the heart’s-blood. The Praised says: “I have been sent with the sword so that God alone is worshipped, without associate to him. He puts my daily bread under the shadow of my lance. He brings lowness and smallness to those who disagree with my command.”

This saying is connected to the prophet Isaiah’s prediction of his coming: “Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow.”

A Bosnian manuscript records the Anointed as saying of the Paraclete:

A man shall come to me from the right, from the sunlit east. I am not worthy to receive the dust from his shoes upon my cheek. Receive all his teachings and all that he passes down. God’s heaven in his kingdom, amen, amen. His name shall be the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, of the lineage of Abraham. And whosoever will not follow him shall be put to the sword.

---

4 The Praised says: “I am most close to Jesus, son of Mary, among the whole of mankind in this worldly life and the next life.” Muslim, 4:1260–61.
5 Ibn Ḥanbal, 2:50.
6 Isaiah, 41:2.
7 Manuscript no. 3488 in the University Library in Bologna. See also: Bojanić-Lukač, “Un chant a la gloire de Mahomet en Serbe,” 58–59.