This morning, after having dug and weeded the flat beans, having nothing to do, I went to see my friend Leon, the Kabbalist, to his farm of Scicli.

I found him under his favorite carob tree, sitting on his stone seat and very busy studying some ancient books, supposedly discovered in the library of the town of Modica (as far as I know Scicli has no library while Modica, home Nobel prize Salvatore Quasimodo, has an ancient library full of ancient books).

"Do a good thing, will you?..." he said "go inside the house to take a nice bottle of Nero d'Avola, with a corkscrew and two sturdy glasses. The door is open. I am finishing the research and will be all ears to hear your bullshit!"

I was at home at the farm and did what had suggested Leon, because I still handle well getting hold of wine, I can dig out the hidden bottles whereever they hide and I can always open them without help.

I managed very well the job and with little wine shedding, in spite of shaky hands, managed to pour two glasses, one for Leon and one for me. After having tasted the wine clicking his tongue against his dentures, Leon opened his mouth and said: "Few people know the power of Hermes Trismegistus. I like this ancient deity. Hermes Trismegistus literally means "Hermes the three times great." With this name they wanted to assimilate Hermes, greek god of logos and communication, with Thoth,
the Egyptian god of letters, numbers and geometry. (The word Total is derived from Thoth?) Since the custom of the Egyptians was to iterate the adjective "great" before the name of the gods, Hermes was so precisely referred to as the "great" three times (tris-Megisto). Compare the French: *très bon* which means delicious! This is a name which, according to the astronomer Massimo Teodorani, is given to many newborn children in Romagna (when they are too small to complain about it).

According to the seventeenth century scholar Athanasius Kircher: "The Arabs call it Idris from the Hebrew Hadores, the Phoenicians call him Tauto, the Egyptians call him Thoth but also Ptah and the Greeks Hermes Trismegistus. »

I think I will adopt him as my Holy Protecting Saint.... as I am a geometrical - geological kabbalist who delights himself with metaphysical esoteric subjects."

"Never heard of him ..." I answered.

"In Romagna there are many farmers with strange names. I knew a Gisto, but there are also Weginto (Washington), then Edele, like the farmer of my cousin, and of course Circoncis, Nicodemus as my great-uncle and Ricciotti, like my grandfather. There are also the Hermes and Eros because in Romagna peasants didn’t lack inventive when it came to putting names that did piss off the priests. A friend of mine gave the name to his son Taul, instead of Raul, to spite the priest who insisted that this was not a Christian name."

I laughed out loudly and I had to pour me another glass to regain consciousness and not to strangle myself.

Leon finished his wine and opened a book showing me an old image of the god Trismegistus then continued: "Here He is. He is not the responsible of everything, like the Probability and the Law of $\Psi$ (also known as the Law of Menga) that all commands and is allmighty. He is only God of the Logos, the mathematical, geometric thought and has no dogmas, no laws and commandments, but he only gets pissed off if you don’t respect the axioms of mathematics and geometry ...

Another of my laughter was followed by a swig of the second glass, so as not to choke.

I am a literate farmer, I went to the classic high school and I am completely ignorant of math and geometry, while Leon had made several discoveries in mathematics, and had specialized on zero and infinity. Among other things he had destroyed the
Catalan conjecture with brilliant intuition. The conjecture of Catalan (1814-1894) says that among all the possible powers of integers, the only pair of consecutive powers of integers (excluding 0 and 1) that differ by 1, is composed of 8 and 9. This means that you could spend your life looking for two such numbers and you will not find them. The numbers 8 and 9 are both powers. Eight is 2 to the third power and nine is 3 to the second power. As we learn from the Kabbalist Leon also 0 and 1 are power of numbers. (1 and 0 are both powers of numbers because they can be elevated to the nth degree and remain always equal to themselves). That’s where the Kabbalist Leon, with a strike of genius had managed to destroy the Catalan conjecture, which had been inferred originally by another Kabbalist: Levi Ben Gerson (1288-1344) and confirmed by the mathematician Robert Tijdeman in 1976, after years of study.

"Bullshit " Leon told me a few years ago "even the infinite, according to Cantor, is the power of infinity raised to the nth power and infinite +1 is the power of infinite +1 to any higher power. And infinite and infinity +1 are consecutive powers that differ by 1. Why? Because you can not go beyond the infinite, which is the limit of how far you get with numbers!"

We ended up drinking the second glass pleased with that information that I received and that Leon gave to me, then Leon continued to preach the new truth.

"You must know that Hermes was since ancient times associated with Thoth, the Egyptian god. Both are at the service of a superior deity (Hermes is a messenger of Zeus, Thoth is the scribe of Osiris); Hermes is the god of the word, that is the Logos, and therefore of thought, of writing and mathematics and geometric logic and Thoth was the god of the oral word, that is, oral Logos, but also of abstract mathematical thinking; both are leaders of the souls of the deceased in the afterlife. Thoth and Hermes are also, in their respective cultures, the gods of magic. In the Roman Empire, Hermes Trismegistus became the god that revealed the truth both mathematical and geometrical and was the mediator between men, that understand nothing of that stuff, and the gods, for whom the scientific truth is obvious."

I was beginning to enjoy myself and to reassure Leon, who, worried by my silence, looked at me puzzled, I said, "Very interesting ... go ahead!"
Leon could not wait any longer and went on: "According to some scholars there are lots of works inspired by Hermes, to be precise Hermetic literature of great antiquity and immense importance, prior even to Pythagoras and Plato, who from those texts got their best ideas. The Egyptian origin of Hermetic doctrines was later confirmed by some modern scholars such as Martin Bernal.

Were attributed to this god Hermes Trismegistus the inspiration of a set of initiation and philosophical writings, collected in Byzantine times in the Corpus Hermeticum, part of which also was found among the Nag Hammadi codes dating from around the fourth century A.D. together with the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas, which underpins my Pantheism."

I realized that everything Leon said was a copy of some published material from the Internet, which obviously he had memorized, but I asked him:

"Did you find all this information in the books you are reading?"

"Partly yes, partly I learned from Google and I know it by heart!" Leon said, pleased by my obvious interest in what he was saying.

"But let's move on. Hermes Trismegistus is important to me especially for the theory, inspired by him, of the "negative theology." According to the Corpus Hermeticum: positive theology is not appropriate to capture the Absolute, because it stems from the ability of reason to move only in the plurality and diversity, unlike the One that is total unity and total equality. Naming God by the names that come from the sensible world, can make us fall into idolatry. Hermes Trismegistus in that book said: "Since God is the Universe of things, no name is proper to define Him, since it should be necessary that God was called by all the names or that all things were called by His name." This means that no name can be attributed to Him. So from the positive theology that names God with definitions and properties that originate from the sensible world, we should switch to negative theology: no name can name God (Nicholas of Cusa reworks these aspects of the thought of Hermes Trismegistus in his work of 1400 "Learned Ignorance" Book I chap. XXIV. According to Cusano the positive names apply to God only roughly because He is infinite and He is beyond what words express)."

I pretended to have understood, and in response I poured the third glass of Nero d'Avola. "Beastly great!" Was all I said, as I watched Leon with sincere eyes and with infinite admiration in them.
Leon continued: "For Christianity hermeticism had a decisive influence, since in the Council of Nicaea in 325 a.D., had won the hermetic doctrine (which affirmed the coexistence of human and divine natures) from the Aryan doctrine (that separated the two natures). I must confess though that I, while admiring the Unification theory of the Logos, am more a follower of Arianism, because I've never been able to believe that Jesus existed in God even before His birth and I never digested the theory of the Holy Trinity. I'm an inveterate heretic!"

At this point for me Leon might as well have been a Martian, because we had drained the bottle, that was now empty, so I took the opportunity to say: "You're great Leon, you're as deep as ever. Thanks for the wine and for explaining to me the god Hermes Trismegistus. I must run now. "And a bit “wobbly” I got in my car and left, and through countryside roads and other countryside roads I went home. The Sicilian police had better things to do than to control an old literate farmer like me."