

HEKHAL · SOURCE OF RECORD · MMXXVI



The Inner Chamber

What Hekhal is, why it was built, what it has become, and what it is for

היכל

HEBREW · HEIKHAL

هَيْكَل

ARABIC · HAYKAL

Ἱερόν

GREEK · HIERON




an open reference for the world's mystical, contemplative, and esoteric traditions

hekhal.org

founded & edited by **Vincent Couey** · Substrate Geometry Research Program · deepsynthesis.org

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I What this is

 ekhal is an open, rigorously sourced reference for the mystical, contemplative, and esoteric traditions of the world. The name comes from the Hebrew **heikhal** (היכל), the inner sanctuary of the Temple, the hall behind the porch and before the Holy of Holies. The same Semitic root yields the Arabic *haykal*. The word names the thing: an inner chamber where serious texts can be read carefully.

The aim is reverent rigor. Primary sources where they exist, named translators and provenance for everything else, and a clear structural separation between canonical tradition, scholarly reception, and the modern fringe.

🔑 Most public esoterica online is Wikipedia-shallow, locked behind academic paywalls, or lost in fan-fiction noise. Hekhal fills the gap between them. 🔑

It does so by combining three things no existing institution combines: a curated cross-tradition primary-text library, a serious editorial framework written in Hekhal's own voice (the codex layer), and a purpose-built translation engine with a public audit trail. The combination is the contribution.

II Who built it, and why

Hekhal is built and edited by Vincent Couey, who also founds and runs the Substrate Geometry Research Program and works across a portfolio of research and software projects at deepsynthesis.org. Hekhal and its translation engine, Targum, are the tradition-facing work of that program.

The reason it exists is simple. The primary texts of the world's esoteric traditions are, for the most part, either trapped in copyrighted modern editions, scattered across un-curated archives, or available only in century-old translations no one has set side by side. A serious student who wants to read the Heikhalot ascent literature, the Akbarian metaphysics of Ibn Arabi, or the apophatic theology of Pseudo-Dionysius, in a form that names its sources and shows its work, has had nowhere to go. Hekhal is built to be that place, and to be free.

Two editorial laws define the project's character. **No synthetic content anywhere:** every primary-text claim traces to real source material with verifiable provenance; nothing is stubbed, fabricated, or paraphrased as original. **No fabricated translations:** no machine-assisted rendering is ever presented as verified without a human editor's sign-off, and every translation carries explicit provenance and a visible status. The project's whole reputation rests on these two rules.

III The editorial law

Three tiers govern every page, enforced structurally (schema, separate routes, distinct visual treatments) and editorially.

TIER	WHAT IT HOLDS	CITATION RULE
CANONICAL	Primary texts, traditional commentary, Hekhal's own codex framing of a corpus	Provenance always; translator named; original language hosted alongside
RECEPTION	Modern scholarship and bridge work (Scholem, Idel, Corbin, Wasserstrom, Hanegraaff)	Marked apart from canonical so synthesis is never mistaken for source
CONTAINMENT	Folk reception, modern occult orders, contemporary fringe	Indexed, never authoritative; lives on a separate subdomain

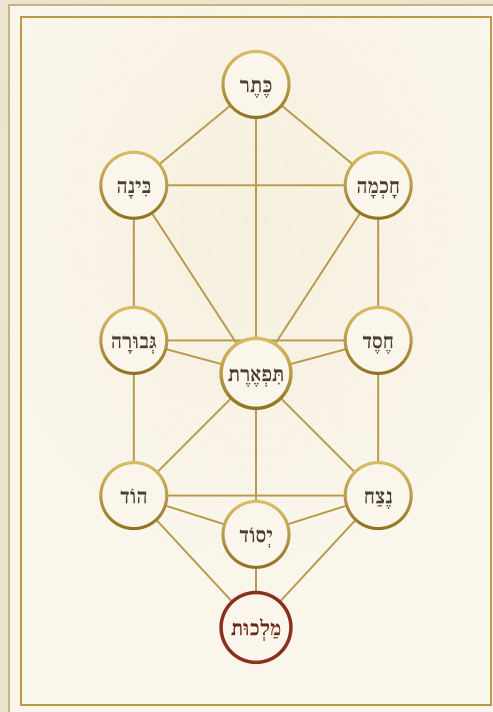
One asymmetry rule holds it together: **a canonical page never cites containment; containment may cite canonical.** That asymmetry is the central discipline of the site.

IV What has been built

Hekhal is live and serving at hekhal.org, built static-first on a modern web stack, with a separate subdomain for the containment tier. The current state of the work:



The traditions span the Jewish (Kabbalah, Heikhalot and Merkavah, Hasidism), the Islamic (Akbarian Sufism, Illuminationist, Ismaili esotericism), the Christian (apophatic theology, hesychasm, esoteric exegesis), and the Hermetic and late-antique theurgic corpus, with further traditions framed and reserved. Every primary text is presented in a bilingual reader with four modes, and every translated passage carries a visible status, from public-domain edition to editor-verified to machine-assisted draft.



THE TREE OF SEFIROT · THE TEN EMANATIONS AND TWENTY-TWO PATHS · FLAGSHIP OF THE KABBALAH CODEX

◆ TARGUM • THE TRANSLATION ENGINE

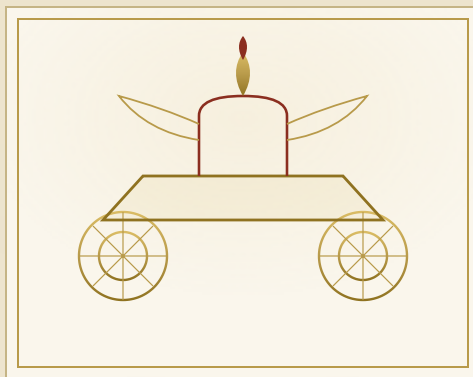
The novel contribution. Targum is a purpose-built engine for translating esoteric primary sources, scaffolded over Hekhal's editorial infrastructure, not a generic model behind a prompt. It is a deterministic, multi-layer pipeline distinguished by eight architectural commitments: a controlled cross-tradition lexicon injected per passage; school-and-period scoping; hermeneutic-frame awareness (PaRDeS, *zahir* / *batin*, kataphatic / apophatic); cross-translator memory against the public-domain renderings at each passage; original-script and gematria awareness; a multi-pass workflow named after PaRDeS; a per-word-choice audit trail; and a hard editor-in-the-loop gate that never auto-publishes. Around the generation sits a transparent audit chain, drift detection, a citation registry, and a source-of-record archive, so a reader can see why each line reads as it does. A methodology paper documenting the engine and its evaluation has been prepared for the scholarly literature.

The discipline matters most for the texts the standard editions skipped. The corpus already includes editor-verified and public-domain Jewish material: Sefer Yetzirah, Sefer ha-Bahir, selections from the Heikhalot Rabbati, the *pardes* ("four entered the orchard") narrative across its Bavli, Tosefta, and Yerushalmi witnesses, and Zohar selections, with the Kabbalah codex as the flagship framework essay.

⦿ V What is being built now

The active frontier is twofold: extending the translated corpus, and bringing the work into relationship with the institutions that steward these texts.

The immediate institutional focus is the **Jewish world**. Hekhal is named for the Heikhalot corpus, and the merkavah-mystical material is native ground. The present work builds deliverables that serve Jewish schools, academic Jewish-studies departments, rabbinical colleges, and Hebrew and theological institutions: comparative source sheets in the lingua franca of Jewish learning, transparently-sourced translations of the gap corpus the major editions left aside (Tikkunei Zohar, under-served Heikhalot units), and a contributor-first relationship with the scholars and digital-Judaica organizations already doing rigorous work in this space.



MA'ASEH MERKAVAH · THE CHARIOT-THRONE AND ITS WHEELS · THE CORPUS HEKHAL IS NAMED FOR

☞ *Lead with the scholarship, never with the machine. Never claim authority. Give before any ask.* ☞

This Jewish thrust is the spearhead of a wider institutional trajectory. The same engine, the same audit discipline, and the same contributor-first posture extend next into the Islamic world, the Akbarian and broader Sufi scholarly communities, and onward across the traditions Hekhal already maps.

✦ VI What this is for

The long-horizon goal is to build the largest open, freely licensed corpus of carefully translated esoteric primary texts on the internet, many rendered into rigorous English for the first time, across the full range of theological schools, mystical lineages, and esoteric traditions, each translation transparent in its sourcing and honest about its status.

NEAR TERM · deepen the Jewish corpus and the institutional relationships that steward it; publish the Targum methodology into the scholarly record; widen the bilingual library tradition by tradition.

MEDIUM TERM · extend the audit-chained translation work into the gap corpora the standard editions skipped, and into the Islamic and further traditions, in partnership with the scholars who know them best.

THE ASPIRATION · that Hekhal becomes the standard open reference for cross-tradition esoteric study, and that its translation discipline, machine-assisted but human-verified and fully auditable, becomes a model for

how sacred and difficult texts are brought into new languages with integrity.



The traditions it holds were written to be read with care. The chamber is for that.

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Every primary text traces to a real source. Every translation carries its provenance and status. No synthetic content; no fabricated translations.

A source of record for the project's mission and state of the work · mmmxxvi